

Addressing the Labour Market Gap: Cariboo Region

In recent years, employers have found themselves grappling with the pressing need to adapt to the needs and expectations of job seekers to attract and retain skilled staff. Meanwhile, job seekers face the daunting task of securing employment despite the myriad opportunities available. The *Addressing the Labour Market Gap Report* is the culmination of an extensive research effort, drawing upon the valuable input of 1,225 job seekers and 812 employers across the province.

Within the Cariboo region, 36 job seekers and 15 employers participated in the provincial survey between February 7 and March 3, 2023.

The region had one of the highest proportions of job seekers who indicated that they are out of work and looking for employment (47%) compared to other regions surveyed. Further, while 65% of respondents across BC indicated that they are employed either on a full time or part-time basis, only 56% of respondents in the Cariboo region indicated that they are currently employed. Finally, job seekers in this region were much more likely than employers to identify as a person with a disability (28% compared to 7%) and this is significantly higher than the provincial average among job seekers (18%).

Key highlights of the findings from the Cariboo region are outlined below.

- **Top Challenge** | Employers in the Cariboo region equally ranked the following as the largest challenges they face: finding interested applicants, finding qualified applicants that match the job description, finding qualified applicants within the salary range, and finding qualified applicants that are interested in the working conditions offered. Job seekers most commonly cited finding jobs that they are interested in as their top challenge. This differs from the findings at the provincial level, where job seekers identified finding jobs that meet their salary expectations as the top challenge.
- **Recruitment Process** | Provincially, employers found it most difficult to define salary ranges and offers as part of the recruitment process. However, in the Cariboo region, employers most commonly identified dealing with applications from unqualified candidates as the largest challenge in the recruitment process. Job seekers in this region felt that negotiating salaries and offers was the largest challenge, which is reflective of findings at the provincial level.
- **Job Postings** | Employers and job seekers had different ideas about what features are most important in job postings. Employers ranked access to additional benefits as the most important “selling feature” of a job posting. In contrast, work-life balance was the most important feature of any job posting according to job seekers. This differs from findings at the provincial level, where job seekers identified salary as the most important feature.
- **Salaries** | Just under 53% of employers described challenges finding qualified candidates within the salary range they offered while 50% of job seekers found it challenging to find jobs that met their salary expectations. These findings are similar to findings from other regions surveyed.
- **Diversity and Inclusion** | Both job seekers and employers identified “creating a workplace that is safe and fair for workers of different backgrounds to feel welcome” as one of the most important factors influencing worker retention. In the Cariboo region, 67% of employers reported having policies in place



to support a diverse workforce, while 69% of job seekers in the Cariboo reported experiencing such policies at their previous workplace. The gap between employer policies and job seeker experience appears to be slightly narrower in the Cariboo region compared to other regions surveyed. However, the proportion of employers in this region with policies in place to support a diverse workforce is significantly lower than the provincial average from employers across BC (79%).

To access the full "Addressing the Labour Market Gap Insights Report," please visit <https://bcchamber.org/addressing-the-labour-market-gap/>