

POSITIVE TIPS FOR THE JOB MARKET

JOBS EVERYWHERE... **Seasonal Patterns in the Bow Valley Labour Market**

By Paul Zilligen

Another busy summer season is slowly winding down in the Bow Valley and local businesses are seeing light at the end of the tunnel in terms of the staffing shortages that are characteristic of this time of year. While the Bow Valley labour market is still feeling the sting of our late summer staffing woes it is a good time to reflect on the roughly predictable patterns in local tourism and in the arrival/departure of seasonal staff. Here is a rough idea of what we can expect from the Bow Valley's labour market in a typical year.

Late September to Mid-November

This is the main shoulder season when job availability drops substantially. During this time an influx of seasonal staff begins to arrive in the area seeking winter employment, especially at the local ski areas. Although the ski resorts are recruiting during this time, most of their staff will not begin work until between Nov 7th and Dec 15th. Demand for employment generally far exceeds supply. Expect a long period of job searching.

Mid-November to Mid-December

Job openings should pick-up slightly and job seeker numbers should drop slightly as the ski resorts open for the season. There is some growth in the labour market during this time as employers take on additional staff in preparation for Christmas season business. Job seekers numbers may still be higher than job openings, expect competition.

Late December to Early January

During the Christmas and New Years holiday season the Bow Valley's tourism industry should be busy resulting in increased hours for existing staff and some opportunities for job seekers. Job seeker numbers more closely match job availability.

Mid-January to March

A slow down after Christmas and New Year's holiday season can be expected but overall the labour market should stay stable as the ski industry continues to keep tourism strong during this period. Job seeker numbers still more closely match job availability.

Mid-March to May

Spring will bring an end to the ski season and many of the seasonal staff that worked in the area through the winter will be moving on to other travels. Due to this turnover, in March and April job availability may outpace the number of job seekers.

May to Late June

A large influx of seasonal staff into the Bow Valley will begin in May, within a couple weeks of most colleges and universities finishing their winter terms. This will usually continue until mid to late June. During this time most local employers hire staff to prepare for the coming busy summer tourism season. Although jobs can be plentiful during this time, job seeker numbers are high. Expect a competitive labour market.

Late June to Late July

July will usually see a significant slow down in the number of job seekers as by this time most seasonal workers have either found a job or moved on. The availability of jobs however remains high and may even increase. Job availability can outpace the number of job seekers.

Late July to Early September

The greatest characteristic of this period is the significant turnover in summer seasonal positions. Many seasonal workers leave their jobs during this time for other travels and to head home before school begins in late August or early September. Tourism, however, is still very strong and employers require staff to carry them through the remainder of the summer so they must refill positions that become vacant as quickly as possible.

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