

People just want jobs they can love

By STEVE MacNAULL
The Okanagan Saturday

The human resources mantra has changed from "hire and fire" to "hire and grow."

"For so long, the people part of businesses was secondary to finances, planning, marketing, manufacturing and customer service," said Simon Evans during a stop in the Okanagan.

"Now, human resources is an equal partner. Businesses have recognized the value of human capital and human resources professionals are treating it as the integral part of productivity that it is."

Evans is the Vancouver-based new CEO of the 3,000-member B.C. Human Resources Management Association.

He attended a reception in Kelowna to meet members of the 164-strong Southern Interior chapter.

"We have a skills and people shortage in B.C.," said Evans.

"It means it's harder to find and keep the right person for the job."

As such, employers and the human resources professionals doing the recruitment, hiring, training, payroll,

benefits, pensions and industrial relations, have to be creative.

More and more people working in the field have, or are, getting their certified human resources professional designation.

"People are better educated and they want work-life balance," said Evans.

"They want to enjoy their job, have a dynamic workplace where they can reach their career goals, as well as enjoy life."

That means competitive wages and benefits to initially attract good workers, then offering flexibility, challenge, input and advancement to keep them.

"Quite often, the employee is one of a couple where both the husband and wife work and have children and busy lives," said Evans.

"These people want more than the paycheque. They have to enjoy their work because if they don't, and they are educated, then they have lots of other options in this good economy with its skills and people shortage."

Evans isn't just talking about executives here. Tradespeople, service workers and regular workers have options.

With this skills and people shortage,

Meet and mingle

The next reception for members, and interested non-members, of the Southern Interior branch of the B.C. Human Resources Management Association is Thursday 5 to 7 p.m. upstairs at Kelly O'Bryan's restaurant.

No need to register, just show up.

But if you want more information on the association or the reception call Adele Glennie at Enterprising Partners at 717-8455.

Evans also urged employers to think in non-traditional ways.

"If an employer is willing to offer flexibility and part-time work, they can lure early retirees into some sort of re-employment where their skills and experience can be put to good use. Employers also have to embrace ethnic diversity and maybe even structure certain positions so a disabled person can do it."

Most recently, Evans was CEO of the B.C. Restaurant and Foodservice Association.

Before that he was vice-president of human resources for 7-Eleven Canada.



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