Ageing Population Means Fewer Youth and Major Labour Shortages

May 18, 2001 – Canada's population is ageing both because there are more older people AND because there are fewer youngsters.

In 2006, the front end of the Baby Boom population cohort will reach the age of 60. Add to this the fact that the average retirement age of Canadians is declining, and you have a problem in the making.

By 2010, the retiring cohort (54-64 years of age) will outnumber the youth cohort entering the market. Simply put, the retirees will leave behind more jobs than there are new people to fill them.

This means there will be increasing competition for a shrinking supply of younger workers. That competition will draw more attention than ever to the quality of work issues that Canadian workers say are important to their choice of a job and that enlightened employers know are critical to a stable and productive workforce.

Employers will also have to pay more attention to ageing workers, whose labour force participation rates are falling just when they are needed most. Employers will need to devise strategies to keep them trained, engaged, satisfied and less inclined to retire early.

While there are some differences in what older and younger workers look for in a job, there is a surprising amount of agreement. Strategies to enhance the quality of the work experience will serve employers well both in attracting new workers and in holding on to the older and more experienced.

Graham Lowe, Director of CPRN's Work Network, underlines the importance of the quality of work in this and other contexts in two recent presentations, available in Powerpoint format on the CPRN Web site today;

"Quality of Work - Quality of Life" was the keynote talk at the Work/Life Balance and Employee Wellness Strategies Conference in Edmonton, 14 May 2001.

You can access or download a copy by clicking here.

"Job Quality: The Key to Attracting, Developing and Retaining Workers of All Ages" was Graham's keynote address to the IPMA-Canada National Training Conference in Fredericton, 16 May 2001.

You can access or download a copy by clicking here.

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