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Communications Plan for the Aerospace and Defence Human Resources Partnership

Date

October 20, 2009

Client

Aerospace and Defence Human Resources Partnership

Project Name

Communications Plan

Overview



The Aerospace and Defence Human Resources Partnership (HRP) is a non-profit private sector association initially created by the Aerospace and Defence Industries Association of Nova Scotia (ADIANS) and the province of Nova Scotia through its agency Skills Nova Scotia, and the Department of Economic Development. Currently, it is a separate independent and incorporated organization registered in Nova Scotia under the Societies Act. The HRP, while separate, remains a close relationship with the Aerospace and Defence Industry Association of Nova Scotia.

The HRP is an association of stakeholders and is open to all. The HRP is not fee-based or membership-based grouping of business interests. The HRP is an effective means to further develop and oversee the implementation of a sectoral workforce strategy. The viability of the HRP is based on its relevance and the extent to which stakeholders “buy-in” to the activities of the organization.

The Mission of the HRP is to contribute to the economic well-being of the province and its citizens by addressing the human resource needs of the Nova Scotia aerospace and defence sectors. This will be facilitated by bringing key stakeholders together who directly or indirectly contribute to the province’s economic prosperity in this sector.

The general public, and economy as a whole, depend very much on having a vibrant and competitive industrial sector that provides careers and well paying jobs to the people who live in the region, vote and pay taxes. The aerospace and defence sector contributes significantly to the prosperity of the region and the HRP is central to this. The support of a well-informed public is essential if the sector is to deliver on its potential.

The HRP focuses on human capital and the part it plays in ensuring a viable and competitive industry. It is through the joint efforts of industry, educators, and government to ensure the availability of a skilled workforce that the prosperity of the sector can be sustained and improved. Over the past several years the HRP has enjoyed considerable success in a number of its undertakings that included: the development of a comprehensive workforce strategy for the aerospace and defence sector, the writing of an immigration handbook that assisted employers through the immigration process, ongoing participation in the development of a national human resource strategy, and in the ongoing Women in Aerospace and Defence project focused on assisting employers with increasing number of women in trades and technologies positions within their companies.

It remains imperative that the activity and contributions of the HRP be recognized by the industry as a major contributor to the ongoing success of the sector in Nova Scotia. To ensure continued support, the HRP must continue to focus on getting its message out to industry. Therefore the awareness of the sector as a growing value-added industry in the province remains a priority.

Overview



The Need for a Communications Plan

In March of 2009, DG Communications met with members of the HRP to discuss a communications strategy. DG Communications, in 2008 had assisted HRP with some promotional materials and at that time had some discussion on the need for a communications strategy. The HRP decided to move forward with the development of a communications plan that would assist with public awareness, communications with stakeholders and partners, recruitment, and identifying issues within the sector.

The goal of the communication plan is to build a broad base of support for the mandate of the HRP amongst all stakeholders.

Communications Audit – First Steps

The consultants conducted a communications audit to assist in the development of a communications strategy. An audit is a tremendous process for feedback. A communications audit is a survey of an organization's key stakeholders. Sometimes, members of an organization rely on their perception, and they are often based on insufficient information. An audit can quickly and accurately identify problems and is a problem solver. An audit will help clarify goals and evaluate existing and potential programs. The outcomes of the communications audit will be the springboard for the development of a sound communications strategy.

The Process

DG Communications worked with the Board Chair and the Executive Director of the HRP to develop a stakeholder list of approximately 25 individuals. The HRP forwarded a letter to the identified stakeholders outlining the audit objectives and requesting their participation in advance of the consultant contacting them. Twenty-One interviews were successfully completed. DG Communications conducted the confidential interviews by telephone.

Please refer to Appendix One to review sample letter.

Summary of Responses

1. Are others in your organization aware of HRP and its function?

- Yes.
- Yes, at the VP level and we have been active through our HR and training and development people.
- A few people in the funding process chain, but it's not widely known outside the aerospace industry.
- Yes, primarily because of my involvement. Our HR staff is aware and we support HRP initiatives. However, our HR people focus on our own HR initiatives.
- I am an independent consultant, but when I was employed in the industry, others were aware.
- They are aware of our work for aerospace but I am not sure they are aware of HRP.
- Some are, including the university president, but doubt he understands the HRP function. Most people do not even know we have an aerospace and defence industry.
- Yes. In fact we have two individuals assigned to the sector.
- Yes
- No
- Yes, but only a few.
- Yes, many people in my department were around when the HRP was formed.
- The company president is aware but few others.
- Yes, I forward correspondence and information from the HRP to our regional offices.
- Yes
- Only senior people, at the VP level and above.
- Not here in Nova Scotia, but perhaps there are some at our head office in Ottawa
- No
- Yes, several.
- Yes, our staff have supported conferences, training , etc in partnership with the HRP.
- Yes, people in my unit and my director.

Summary of Responses

2. In your opinion, what are the primary human resource issues facing the aerospace and defence industry?

- The primary issue is a lack of skilled labour and the need to foster a Nova Scotia labour pool.
- Skills, skills, skills...We are a small aerospace nation and our industry has relied heavily on ex-military technicians. But this is changing. We need the right number of people (more trained people) and more skills development.
- Shortage of skilled labour, out migration, aging workforce, skills gaps, rural versus urban. These are much the same as other industries. We have become niche players in high value added businesses so skills are key.
- We must recruit enough skilled people to keep the businesses going. We are facing a gap in 4-6 years as the result of retirements. We are trying to get ahead of the gap and are working with schools and parents to make them aware of the opportunities in the industry.
- Mass retirements leading to the loss of essential technical knowledge and, no concrete plans on how to replace these workers.
- There are serious skill shortages which will get worse before they get better because of a growing industry. The industry needs to address this and needs a communications strategy to help accomplish it.
- Most of the focus seems to be on getting good people for the shop floor, not on engineering or management staff.
- Skills shortage. There are people in Nova Scotia looking for work, but they do not have the specific skills unique to aerospace. There is a war for talent going on.
- Motivating the target markets to become part of our industry. Make potential employees aware of us. This is a huge challenge. There is a great deal of work to be done with schools and community colleges and some progress is being made in making high schools more career oriented. The school leaders understand but have difficulty implementing programs. We need to clearly identify what it is we want the schools to deliver – the skills and the outcomes.
- The industry has to clearly identify what their HR needs will be 3-5 years down the road.
- Canadian citizenship and the very restrictive ITAR requirements that are driven by the United States (the ITAR rules restrict certain information, which might be considered strategic in relation to security, from being shared with immigrants who are not Canadian or American citizens). The industry would like to bring in skilled immigrants but are precluded from doing so. This is the single largest limiting factor in finding skilled people.
- They are highly specialized so it is hard to create post secondary training to meet all their needs. This is a huge challenge because the companies want people who are ready to go (trained). There are not the training opportunities here as you might find in areas with a larger aerospace sector. Also, the nature of the sector is cyclical, from contract to contract. Workers tend to leave after contracts are complete so they are always in a mode of hiring and laying off, and it is often the younger employees that get laid off. And, the very stringent certification rules under ITAR make things difficult. They are constantly having to train workers.
- On the electronics side, we are not facing issues we cannot handle. We do training and have not had recruiting problems.
- There needs to be more technical education to get people ready for industry, at least from an aboriginal point of view.
- Shortage of experienced, qualified resources.
- Skills and trades shortage, difficulties in qualifications recognition, out-migration of skilled Nova Scotia workers and the challenges of immigration (security issues, language issues and integration into our businesses and into Nova Scotia as a place to live).
- Access to skilled resources with experience in large project development. We are often forced to push junior people into these roles.

Summary of Responses



2. In your opinion, what are the primary human resource issues facing the aerospace and defence industry? (Continued)

- They need trained people and good entry level people. Until recently there were no training programs tailored for the industry.
- Availability of skilled labour. We need to raise awareness about the industry, which may be considered smaller than it actually is, by people making career choices in Atlantic Canada. We need to get to people early, when they are making career choices and show them that opportunities do exist in a robust Nova Scotia aerospace and defence industry.
- The primary issue is the need to deal with high levels of retirements from the industry in the next decade and, as a result, the recruitment of skilled labour, particularly technical skills.
- Succession planning and dealing with retirements. That leads to recruitment and retention of a diverse workforce. There needs to be baseline communications and education with diverse groups. People are not fully aware of the opportunities in the industry. A nurturing has to take place at the youth level. Young people need to be inspired.

Summary of Responses

3. Do you think the HRP is doing enough to address these issues?

- Yes, by getting the right people together. It is painfully slow, working with partners that just don't move quickly (reference to government and NSCC).
- They cannot do it alone. It is tough to change the school system and attitudes within the school system and by graduates, towards manufacturing as a career. It will take creative solutions and warrants more discussion and industry involvement.
- They are doing what their mandate requires. It is a bigger problem beyond aerospace and defence. There is a general workforce issue in manufacturing.
- There is always more you can do. But there are not enough volunteers to make much of a dent in it. The school system is not receptive. We end up going overseas to recruit people.
- They are on the right track. It is hard to get tangible action, but it is not the HRP's fault. It takes a lot of collective willpower to do it. Aerospace is unique and is set to lose a whole generation of workers. The HRP is trying to generate awareness but is not being heard.
- They are doing the best they can with the resources they have. The project they did with us was courageous. They do not have access to a lot of funding. They need to be creative when seeking funding. They need to be partnering with other organizations like they did with us, become part of a bigger effort.
- It is a volunteer group with limited funding. They need more industry support. They need to do things to show the value of the industry. The problems in aerospace are not unique to that industry.
- Not sure who really owns the labour issue in aerospace sector. For example, IMP as a company is doing a lot with NSCC and is working to address the issues. If HRP clearly owns it, then they are not doing enough. If they do not own it, then they have been doing enough. They should bring more people together, more often, to discuss issues and help in the HR effort. The sector is poised for growth and we need to do everything in our power to support that.
- I do not know for sure. I believe the HRP needs a full-time executive director with full or part-time administrative assistance. They should have a semi-annual strategy workshop for Atlantic aerospace and defence industry HR representatives from the region, to discuss common challenges and solutions.
- When you think they started from nothing, they have done so much. But if I had a wish list and they had the resources, I would like to see them get more involved with the civilian industry so the industry would see the HRP as the focal point to connect industry, government and education.
- No....They talk about demographics and education but they should be addressing the ITAR issue. This would require pressure at the political level. The HRP is not made up of HR professionals so they may not understand the true HR needs in the industry. For example, the work they did to develop education standards with NSCC was good, but only to the benefit of two primary employers, not all partners. Things like salary surveys, benefits surveys and work on the ITAR issue would be of benefit to more partners. It would be good to get the HR professionals together in a forum to discuss issues and compare notes on industry issues....in a venue where there can be open discussion.
- They are doing very well, have stepped up and are playing a leadership role. However, they could expand to more general skill and career areas. They have the right people at the table. Industry is realizing there are problems but is often hard to get them to buy in to initiatives. There have been some success stories and partnerships formed which would not have happened without the HRP.
- Question does not apply to us.
- I think they go beyond what they need to do.
- They have undertaken a number of good initiatives and projects to help move things forward. Is there more to be done? Absolutely, but there is no quick fix.
- They may be doing more but I am not aware of it.

Summary of Responses



3. Do you think the HRP is doing enough to address these issues? (Continued)

- They are making laudable efforts. Have done good work with government and the educators to align students with our requirements, have encouraged women and others to get involved with our industry.
- I am not really aware of what they are doing.
- They are one of the few organizations doing anything to address the issues. They are creating awareness and structure to the challenges we face. They are playing a leadership role and it has been tremendous. We need other organizations to be as active, as these are national issues with regional flavors. We need more awareness at the national level. My fear is that the HRP organization may not be sustainable. There needs to be support and a succession plan for the core guys running the organization. One idea would be to change the executive from time to time to ensure the organization is stronger around the key people.
- The issues are on their radar to the extent it has been necessary. More work will be needed in future.
- They are well on their way to addressing them. The Spring conference showed the HRP is getting to the heart of issues. I appreciate their efforts on behalf of women and Aboriginal people.

Summary of Responses

4. Would you say the HRP is doing a good job communicating information about itself and about the industry to members and stakeholders?

- Yes. A fine job.
- A fair job. Their newsletters are fair relative to the information they have to communicate.
- Yes. They are known within the industry and by government. There is some confusion between the HRP and ADIANS. Perhaps they should be part of ADIANS. There is a possibility an Atlantic aerospace and defence alliance will form in future to take greater advantage of federal funding opportunities so HRP may have to redefine its role within a broader constituency.
- They are doing a reasonable job...using their web site, publications and even some theatre advertising. They are trying to get to places where potential employees may be (schools).
- No. With budget restrictions they are not in a position to do that.
- I do not know what they are doing as I am not part of their industry.
- Unsure of the answer to this.
- The website is pretty good, but it may be a bit dated and could be cleaned up some. Normally I have to seek out information, rather than receiving it, but HRP is very responsive when I call.
- Yes, given the resources they have. Their forums, newsletter are good. The aerospace industry is aware of the HRP.
- No, they need to do a better job communicating what they are doing and what their mandate is. When they were formed, their role was not well communicated and they are seen by many as an adjunct to ADIANS for small projects.
- The web site and newsletters are good first steps, since they are only a part-time organization.
- Yes. They are doing a good job in trying to reach out to the school age population.
- I think so. We see communications about activities. They are doing an adequate job.
- Yes, they do a good job at career fairs and other events.
- It is known by the people who use it. There is an opportunity to broaden understanding within the industry as to the function and role of HRP.
- There is room for improvement there.
- The reach within industry is limited. They need to get to know the HR persons and have a broader base of contact in the businesses, even perhaps with our technical people.
- As a stakeholder, I could be better informed.
- Yes, to members and stakeholders they are doing a good job.
- They have been very good at promoting themselves, especially through the use of regular emails and their newsletter. Compared with other industries, they are high on the list for this and have done an above average job.
- Yes, a good job to members and stakeholders. Their newsletter is good.

Summary of Responses

5. How do you think the HRP should be perceived by policy makers and decision makers at the provincial? What image should it be conveying?

- They should be seen as representing the industry, to be the voice of the industry for human resources. They have good industry people involved, but perhaps could use some more weight behind them. Overall, they seem to have the right people behind them to provide sufficient clout with government.
- As a body of professionals who can speak for the industry. They need to address issues related to standards, facilities for training, more reasonable training costs. The tuition for a two year technical course at NSCC is \$24,000. This must be reduced, fast. The Armed forces offer to pay signing bonuses and pay off tuition, so many graduates are forced to take advantage of this. Industry cannot do this.
- They are a one issue organization, working on a general labour issue. Aerospace is seen a priority sector by ACOA and Nova Scotia, providing good jobs that are somewhat recession proof (defence).
- As an organization that can help government.
- As a representative of industry employers. They represent the interests of significant employers and significant jobs in this province.
- As leaders in providing skilled workers in Nova Scotia. Having said that, there is confusion between the HRP and ADIANS roles. There is a skill shortage and the HRP should be seen as addressing that.
- As a key contact group to reflect the needs of the industry for government. This is unique and positive. They speak for industry and should be taken seriously.
- As the voice of the aerospace and defence industry for HR issues. This will provide them with a certain amount of credibility.
- As the primary drivers of HR policy and initiatives for the industry.
- They should be seen as representing the industry. ADIANS is seen as having a strong military focus and so HRP is seen that way too. Industry and government have to see HRP as representing both military and industry interests. They need a stronger civilian industry focus. That is where the jobs are.
- As a body of ADIANS, so ADIANS could influence policy at the government level. To be strategically significant, should be focused under one body.
- As an industry led partnership, the experts on skills issues in the sector... collaborating among themselves to solve problems. The key is “industry led”... not consultant led. They are leading, collaborating and coordinating. We (government) support them because they have taken a leadership role.
- As a unified voice for industry on the HR side...like ADIANS is for the industry side.
- As representing the industry...the province should be doing more to help them.
- As the “go – to” organization when government has a question about the industry and its HR requirements. Government should see the HRP as having a good outlook on aerospace requirements as well as broader HR requirements across all industries. Government should think HRP first, when they are seeking consultation with the industry.
- As an important bridge between business and government. They do a decent job of making government aware of the importance of the industry.
- They are the representatives of the industry and are part of the ADIANS organization. But, to do this effectively, the HRP needs a broader reach back into the businesses.
- The name HRP...Human Resource Partnership....is confusing in itself. I do not know what image they should be conveying.
- As a body that can assist government and industry and educators to come together to be successful. They should play a more important role with government, but often they are seen as a subsidiary function (HR) within the industry. This is a national issue whereby government needs to understand and support the capability of the aerospace sector.
- As a critical link between the industry and policy makers, providing objective communications regarding the needs of the industry. They should work with policy makers to find solutions and advocate ways to address issues.
- As a legitimate stakeholder in the industry. They are trying to become a united voice and government should listen.

Summary of Responses

6. Should the HRP play a more active role in promoting industry in the province?

- They are doing a great job but they need to work together with all the partners to do this. This doesn't always happen.
- They play a role now, which seems sufficient.
- Yes and No. ACOA funds ADIANS to promote the industry.
- Perhaps, but that is not really the job of the HRP. We should make people aware of what we are doing with NSCC, for example, in developing relevant training modules.
- No. HRP should remain on the challenges of training and education.
- Yes...via the angle of creating opportunities for people here at home. Promote the industry through an HR and employment lens. Good training is available so HRP can play the role of making linkages and connections in this way. For example, our organization worked for HRP and as a result, we are now working with IMP.
- It is not their job. They cannot do everything. It is the job of ADIANS.
- The companies need to do a lot of this themselves. The HRP can act as "connectors", linking industry with key contacts, with events, etc, but the partners must be involved. For example, the Halifax Career Fair is coming up and HRP should be encouraging members to attend. Young people can relate to the companies, but not to an association like HRP, so they need to be exposed to the businesses.
- No. You do not want to dilute the HR focus. There is value in keeping the HR component separate from the industry association. The HRP and the Association can work together but there is value in being separate entities.
- We need the PEI model in Nova Scotia. We do not have a strong enough aerospace focus within government here. We do not have solid aerospace representation in the province so ADIANS fills that role, but is not really in their mandate.
- Yes
- Their focus has been education and skill development. They may want to work with ADIANS to promote the industry in future.
- They could, it would help...but they have limited resources to do this.
- They are doing a good job now, with the money they have to work with. They could do more if the industry partners helped.
- In the context of reaching out to potential employees, yes. In a broader PR sense, no.
- They need to pull the competing businesses together to help do this. I am starting to see more of this, but it is hard, as industries have their own individual priorities.
- They should encourage more people to get involved with (work for) the industry. The industry association should "sell" the industry.
- No, it is a specific issue group and needs to focus on issues and its clients' needs. ADIANS should promote the industry.
- They need to get the real facts on the table, particularly to government. Unfortunately they are only dealing with Nova Scotia, when many defence and aerospace decisions are made at the national level.
- A lot is being done by other agencies. The HRP should focus on building relationships with governments and agencies like NSBI. They should work toward creating joint initiatives.
- Yes, but there is room for collaboration here. They are not a PR firm so they should work with other organizations that also have a role to play to advance the economy of the province (example, the Greater Halifax Partnership). They can't do it on their own.

Summary of Responses

7. What can the HRP do to add greater value to the aerospace and defence sector and your organization?

- Just be a strong voice for industry, particularly to government on HR issues.
- They play a role now, which seems sufficient.
- They are doing what they were set up to do. They need to keep advocating and consider a broader role in the Atlantic Canada context.
- The HRP works with various Government departments and this should continue. Promoting what we do to improve employee competencies and Human resource standards is a real asset in our business to business marketing.
- No. HRP should remain on the challenges of training and education.
- The image of aerospace is one of white/male. It is not perceived as an industry for women. There are ways to reach out to women of all ages. Don't just reach out to schools and youth. Mature women are the largest untapped resource. There is a large number of 30ish women who they should try to encourage to work in the industry. We created a resource for them. Now they should work with us to build on that success and promote the resource.
- There is very little they can do for us. No response on industry value question.
- HRP needs to get the messages out to junior and high schools, guidance teachers and in particular, parents. They need to encourage NSCC to increase their capacity to take students to complement recruiting efforts, because capacity is limited. And, the cost of NSCC tuition needs to be addressed. Perhaps there are ways of having tuition paid if graduates agree to work for a period of time in the local aerospace industry. When the industry begins to ramp up recruiting, it would be good for HRP to organize a career fair just for the sector.
- Work with schools and promote awareness and recruitment projects.
- Would like to see a stronger link between aerospace and government. For example, if I have a funding proposal to put in front of government funding agencies, I should go first to HRP for advice and assistance and have them be a force to help me. If industry would embrace the HRP, they would really be a great resource and a conduit to link government, industry and education.
- Provide data to help the HR people make better decisions. Should consider reaching out to other organizations to learn and partner for mutual gain. One partner might be the Human Resource Association of Nova Scotia which oversees HR certification, training and accreditation in the province.
- They need to get information on workforce; ie., here is the demand we have for people, here are the skills the need, here are the short and long-term employment predictions. This is hard to do because of the contract nature of the business. They need to be able to speak for industry regarding their HR training and skills issues. They need to create a common denominator for industry. They need to make sure their partners are aware of new opportunities like the recent government Labour Market Development Agreement.
- At one point they had a strategy session at NSCC. Some good ideas about promoting the industry came out but I do not know if they were followed up. They need to get to young people, in the old fashioned face-to-face way and by trying modern methods like face-book.
- More on – the – job training and job shadowing. Show graduates the industry.
- The reality is that most of the sector companies are small to medium size and often do not have the resources or experience to deal with issues beyond their own business (government relations and dealing with immigration rules and issues, for examples). Even recruiting is difficult for these businesses in such a competitive industry. There may be things HRP can do to help us in these areas. HRP has done some very effective relationship building between government and the industry. One thing they should consider is to try to draw in more universities (perhaps like Dal's engineering school) to become more involved as is the NSCC.
- Improve the awareness of the HRP within the industry. The HRP needs a greater profile in our organizations and we, as the industry, need to help them do this. Outside the industry, even some of the larger recruiting firms do not know about the HRP.

Summary of Responses



7. What can the HRP do to add greater value to the aerospace and defence sector and your organization? (Continued)

- Continue to work to align education outcomes with industry requirements. Make young people aware of the opportunities in the aerospace and defence sector at a stage in their lives when they can make a decision to join us, before we lose them.
- There is value in having other associations know what the HRP is doing. I would like them to provide more information so I can share it with my members. If it would help, I can offer my committees (such as my Employee Relations Committee) to meet with the HRP and share information.
- The annual events are effective. They could organize industry days with educational organizations and other stakeholders where industry could interact with potential employees, like women and in trades schools and higher education centers.
- Their website needs work. It needs to become more interactive and instructional. They may get some direction on this by reviewing the “Career Options” government website or the “Bright Career Futures” website, which already has some aerospace material. They may want to look at the Information Technology Association of Nova Scotia “Tech Port” website where employers in the IT sector can post job vacancies and where IT job seekers can register for future opportunities. If this model was applied to aerospace and defence HR needs, under the HRP banner, it would be providing a clear service to industry members (particularly small and medium sized employers) and would be more relevant to today’s job seekers.
- Yes, but there is room for collaboration here. They are not a PR firm so they should work with other organizations that also have a role to play to advance the economy of the province (example, the Greater Halifax Partnership). They can’t do it on their own.

Summary of Responses

8. What is the most effective way the HRP can communicate with you?

- Just be a strong voice for industry, particularly to government on HR issues.
- Communications needs improvement. They communicate when they want to hold a meeting. There is no regular forum for discussion of HR issues.
- I am in touch with Jim King and others on a regular basis. They can call any time
- They usually call if they need anything. The newsletter is good as is email.
- The newsletter is good, on line.
- I am on the board. The newsletter is good. Things do not change rapidly.
- Keep the website up to date; email.
- The newsletter is good...plus, semi annual strategy workshops.
- They do a good job and generally keep their web page up to date. But do people know the web site exists. They should take part in as may local events as possible.
- It is hit and miss now...emails, monthly updates and bulletins would be good.
- They do a good job...email and newsletters are best.
- Email, newsletters. It is hard for industry people go get to meetings for more than a half day. On- line conferencing could be an important tool for them to get to more people.
- Email is good. Jim King does a fine job communicating.
- I get regular communications and I like the use of email for newsletters. It would be good to have an industry related HRP seminar at least annually or perhaps semi-annually.
- By having regular meetings...opportunities for face to face contact. This would be very useful. The HRP should consider going to the industry players and getting in front of management teams to make them more aware. When they do their conference, it is exceptional.
- By email, with periodic updates. They should play a more visible role at major industry events and be involved in panel discussions at our trade shows, etc.
- The material I have seen tends to be too verbose, too much text. It is not packaged well for a quick scan and sharing with others. It comes to me as information from an outside group, so it needs to be to the point to get my attention.
- Their newsletters are good. It is difficult, as people are so busy and you are competing for their time. They should be present at regional and national level aerospace events and network (as they do now).
- Their website really needs to have a makeover. It is confusing and not well done. Otherwise, I like emails, newsletters and HRP face to face events.
- Email, newsletters and personal contact

Summary of Responses

9. What information would you like to receive from the HRP? And, in what form?

- It is nice to get updates on broad industry issues and policy changes from one source, like HRP
- Would like to see more formal approach, with a vision, scope, and milestones identified, with regular updates on progress.
- We get updates via personal contact.
- Our members need to receive updates via email or newsletters to show HRP is alive and well and to keep them up to date on what the HRP is doing.
- They usually call if they need anything. The newsletter is good as is email.
- Newsletter
- A lot of stakeholders would benefit from receiving lists and short profiles of who the players are in the industry. Perhaps feature firms from time to time in the newsletter....stories about their own members.
- Would like to have more information on employment trends, employment statistics and on growth potential of the industry. Also, would like to know about events related to labour and any new studies that are available.
- Web-based is fine. I am OK with the status quo.
- Would really like to know the HR requirements of the industry. If HRP could provide even best guess manpower hiring estimates for the next 12 to 24 months it would be great. They may have to work with industry HR staff to get the information, not just senior management.
- Weekly email updates...what's hot right now..the HRANS website is a good example of this.
- They need to blow their own horn on what they have achieved, which is unique in Canada. This is a success story for HRP and the sector.
- Emails...keep them brief...perhaps use bulleted items with hyperlinks so we can get more details on topics of specific interest.
- They keep me up to date. I would like information on the aerospace and defence picture in other parts of Canada; from other provinces so aboriginals would be aware of the opportunities.
- The information I receive is about HRP led efforts. I would like to see more information on federal and provincial policies and programs that may lead to HR related programs for industry. This would help the smaller companies. We need to hear what programs are available. Perhaps HRP could lead seminars about this and show us how to access these programs.
- Continue the regular updates by email. We need to know what is going on.
- Would like to know if they are succeeding in efforts to promote alignment. Would like to know the number of graduates that are suitable for our needs and what opportunities there are for us to shape educational programs.
- I would like to know what is going on and receive it in a form which is easily shared with others in my organization. A consolidated set of facts that are endorsed by the HRP as being accurate....about employment and the impact of the industry. I would like to know where we are getting our resource base today and what they (HRP) think we should be doing to leverage further (with stakeholders to address the issues). Government needs accurate information about the industry and HRP can be the source of this. In doing so, it helps make the HRP an important resource to government and this is good for future funding and sustainability of the HRP.
- Notification of events and any kind of relevant news or announcements about the industry. The newsletter is a good tool for this.
- What industry members are doing, particularly in relation to diversity. Best practices in HR diversity within the industry.

Top-Line Findings



1. All persons interviewed were positive about the efforts of the HRP in dealing with industry human resource issues. There is a clear recognition that the HRP is restricted in what it can accomplish because of limited resources and its reliance on volunteers. Many praised the leadership shown by the organization to tackle issues and raise awareness of key human resource matters on behalf of the aerospace and defence industry. At the same time, there is a view that to be successful, long-term, the HRP needs more depth of support from the industry itself. It is felt that the organization has a great deal of potential for continued success.
2. The need for greater support from within the industry for the HRP was expressed by many interviewees. They suggested the organization should reach deeper into the industry for a stronger base of support. For example, the human resource professionals in the industry do not seem clearly connected to the HRP. This, in turn provides a great opportunity for the HRP to reach out and engage the people within the industry who are facing the day to day human resource challenges. And, in conjunction with this, suggestions were made to encourage the HRP to get in front of business management teams and create a higher level of awareness among the key stakeholders.
3. It was clear that the small and medium sized businesses within the sector would welcome more help from the HRP. These businesses often do not have their own resources to undertake effective government relations initiatives and, to some degree, to undertake effective recruiting.
4. All persons interviewed felt government should see the HRP as a critical link to the industry. Some went so far as to describe the image of the HRP as “the go-to” organization when government needs to consult with aerospace and defence on human resource related matters of policy.
5. There is a belief that the HRP can add more value to the industry and other key stakeholders by continuing to do their awareness and relationship building work. They need to be a strong voice for the sector and they need to find projects that demonstrate their value to the diverse interests represented within the sector. Several persons interviewed want the HRP to be a more credible information source for industry statistics and employment trends, both for the industry and for government. And, they want see a more formal approach to strategic planning and goal setting by the organization, in a way that reflects industry priorities and encourages more industry support and involvement.

Some Suggestions from Interviewed Persons



- Sponsor seminars or informal meetings to enable the human resource professionals in the sector to network and have input into priority setting.
- Develop a PowerPoint presentation about the work of the HRP and present it to industry management and leadership teams (and to other stakeholders, like the media and government decision makers).
- Research what other human resource organizations are doing to see if there are opportunities for cooperative efforts and to learn about their success stories. The CMA Employee Relations Committee and the Human Resource Association of Nova Scotia were suggested.
- Advise the small and medium sized businesses in the sector about what programs and assistance are available for them from government. This could be done as a seminar to include government representatives. As well, representatives from the businesses could be given some tips on basic government relations they can either undertake on their own, or as support partners with the HRP.
- The HRP website received positive marks from several people. However, others were passionate about the need to update its content its presentation and its lack of interactive capacity. One person interviewed gave three examples of websites which could be modeled to improve the HRP approach, particularly the Information Technology Association of Nova Scotia “Tech Port” website, which lists job vacancies in the industry and even encourages registration of job seekers.
- Everyone mentioned the HRP newsletter as a key source of information. However, several suggested the newsletter could be improved, with less detailed articles and a more easily read format. Some persons said they would distribute it within their organization if these changes were made. The development of a formal internal communications plan should be considered.
- A clear annual action plan with goals and objectives would be appreciated by a number of stakeholders.

Our Interpretation and Recommendations



The HRP is highly regarded by stakeholders who are aware of the organization and understand its function.

The primary issue is a lack of skilled labour and the need to foster a labour pool in Nova Scotia. The labour pool is further dwindling and we need more trained people and more skills development to foster the industry. The HRP will face a major skills gap in the next 4-6 year as a result of retirements and it is felt that these skill shortages will get worse before they get better. There is a war for talent going on in this province. Work is being done with high schools to make them more career oriented and the leaders understand but have difficulty implementing programs. The HRP needs to clarify what it is they want the schools to deliver – the skills and the outcomes.

Canadian citizenship and the very restrictive ITAR requirements that are driven by the United States. ITAR rules restrict certain information, which might be considered strategic in relation to security, from being shared with immigrants who are not Canadian or American citizens. The industry would like to bring in skilled immigrants but are prevented from doing so. This is the single largest limiting factor in finding skilled people.

Most stakeholders believe that the HRP is doing a good job but faces so many limitations, and realize that they cannot do it alone. They are doing a great job with very limited resources. What the consultants has concluded is there is a high level of support for the work of the HRP. Key stakeholders realize limitations and it is therefore imperative for the HRP to get these stakeholders more engaged. They need to be partnering with stakeholders and become part of a bigger effort. They need more industry support. Some stakeholders feel that the HRP is not sustainable.

Most stakeholders appreciate the level of communications and efforts that are made by the HRP but overall the general consensus is there is room for improvement. They need to better define their role and do a better job at making the distinction between the HRP and ADIANS.

Most stakeholders shared that they felt that the HRP should be the voice for the industry for human resource issues. As a body of professionals who can speak for the industry, they need to address issues related to standards, and facilities for training. They also feel that the HRP should take on the ITAR issue and start communicating to government in this regard.

Stakeholders would like to better understand the strategic direction for the HRP – what are their priorities – what are outcomes that it has experienced. There is an excellent opportunity for the HRP to implement a communications strategy.

If effectively communicated over the next couple of years, this opportunity will gain momentum and will assist the HRP in being understood and supported by stakeholders.

Based on the communications audit, the HRP and ADIANS must work as a cohesive group to further educate its stakeholders. A communications plan will focus on:

- Building awareness around the work of the HRP
- Building awareness around the role of the HRP
- Build awareness amongst stakeholders around the issues facing the aerospace and defence industry, in particular, shortage of skilled labour
- Build awareness around the potential of career viability in the sector

Communications Approach



Communications Approach

The following is a series of strategies that will guide the development and prioritization of the tactical program and communication vehicles. The aim is to effectively communicate with target audiences through a series of consistent messages and cohesive programs and communication vehicles. There is a need to get stakeholders involved and have a process in place that will effectively collaborate for common goals and objectives.

Communications Framework

The following tactics are designed to create awareness and build confidence in the HRP's ability to fulfill its mandate in the community and wants to be perceived as playing an integral role with key stakeholders.

Key Stakeholders

The HRP has a good sense of who their stakeholders are. It is important for them to work and communicate with stakeholder groups to build a case for support. Key publics and stakeholders include:

- Industry
- ADIANS
- Federal and Provincial Governments
- Employment Consultants
- MIANS
- Community Colleges
- Universities
- High Schools
- Media
- General Public
- Sector Interest Groups
- High School Students
- Sector HR Personnel
- Business Chambers
- Rotary Clubs
- Business Associations
- Women in Business Initiative
- The Hypatia Association
- Status of Women Canada
- Innovacorp
- National Industry Associations
- ACOA
- Canadian Federation of Independent Business
- Black Business Initiative

Key Messages

Key messages should be developed by the HRP that will convey information, alter perception, stimulate interest, provoke reassurance, and reinforce convictions. Based on the audit results, the key messages should support the following priorities:

- Build awareness around the work of the HRP
- Build awareness around the HRP's desire to work with stakeholders
- Build awareness around the priorities of the HRP
- Brand the HRP as the voice of the industry with regard to human resource issues

Strategic Thrusts

The following strategic thrusts will assist in capacity building for the HRP and will help create an understanding and support for the organization:

- Confirm communication priorities
- Brand the HRP as the leaders in identifying and addressing the human resource issues within the sector
- Create public awareness around the work of the HRP
- Create awareness around the viability of a career in the aerospace and defence sector
- Develop a strategy to ensure that the various government departments take action and make changes to support some of the challenges facing the industry and help find solutions.
- Enhance communication activities with existing partners and stakeholder groups.

Communication Methods and Tools

The following tactics are designed to create awareness and build confidence in the HRP's ability to fulfill its mission and be perceived as fulfilling a valuable and integral role with key stakeholder groups.

Compile Research and Background Material

Develop fact sheets that could be used for various stakeholder groups and media.

Develop Media Kits

Develop a new press kit that reflects the HRP and its key objectives. The media kit should contain the following elements and should be distributed to all key financial, business, and consumer media outlets:

- Profile of HRP
- Multi-media that showcase the industry and what it has to offer
- Press releases and/or substantive news articles on HRP that showcase major accomplishments
- A storyline of HRP's role and what it has to offer

Develop Proactive Media Plan

A detailed media plan for the next 18-24 months should be developed that covers and incorporates all of the following elements:

- **Build relationships with local journalists and editors** – The HRP needs to let media outlets know they are out there and their activities. Introduce the HRP to key journalists by scheduling media briefings and making presentations to editorial boards. By engaging and informing this group about the past achievements and future plans – the HRP will be seen as a leader in the sector in the area of human resources and will be looked upon as an information source for journalists. This process will give the journalists the right information that will help build the profile for the HRP.
- **Proactive Media Pitching** – Use key milestones and success stories as platforms to develop themes on the HRP's interest and investment in the aerospace and defence sector.

Media Training

Conduct media training with the HRP team. Dealing with the media is not always an easy task. Media training will provide the HRP with the tools to effectively communicate and work with the media. Media training will provide local insight into how the media work in this region and how best to get their attention. Media training will allow the team to make strong presentations and make sure they get their messages across.

Provide Presentation Training

It is important for the HRP spokespersons to be well versed in the HRP's key messages, It is important that they have powerful and persuasive presentation skills. The HRP team will need to make presentations in boardrooms across Nova Scotia and beyond. The more powerful and persuasive the presentation – the more likely the HRP will be successful.

Schedule Briefings with Industry Sector Stakeholders

Sector stakeholders represent a huge and diverse group. These stakeholders can be extremely instrumental in the HRP's success. By making these stakeholders aware of your goals and objectives – the HRP will be top of mind. By developing a relationship with this group – the HRP will be privy to new developments in the industry and being aware of an emerging issues or trends.

Schedule Briefings with Educational Institutions

Nova Scotia is rich with high schools, colleges, and universities. HRP has to further its relationship with these institutions to raise the profile of the sector and the viability of choosing a career in the aerospace and defence sector.

Newsletter to Stakeholders

The HRP should give consideration to revamping the newsletter to reflect stakeholder feedback.

Communication Methods and Tools

Government Relations

Objective: Secure and build relationships with municipal, provincial, federal, and international government leaders and organizations ensuring that HRP is recognized as a major player in the sector.

Strategy: the HRP should focus on making the case that it is working hard in the area of human resources and supporting the aerospace and defence sector and deserves government support. It is important for government representatives and organizations such as ACOA and NSBI to understand that the HRP has a lot to offer in support of the sector – this should be done through a regular process of ongoing briefings.

Priority Action Items:

- **Inform your Supporters** – all pertinent government officials should be given briefing materials and information packages that clearly describe the work and vision of the HRP. In turn, these individuals, if well informed, can act as ambassadors for the HRP.
- **Identify Government Programs and Build Relationships with Key Influencers** – It is important for the HRP to identify government programs that will help in the effort to achieve the goals in support of the HRP's mission. There are key federal and provincial programs, and it is important for the HRP to develop relationships with key influencers involved in the sector.
- **Set up a Process for Regular On-going Communications** – As the HRP continues to reach new milestones and execute on its mission and business plan – it will be important for HRP representatives to undertake a more methodical relationship building program with key government officials at the various levels. Working closely with government, a grid should be developed for HRP representatives that list out quarterly calls that should be made or update letters that should be sent. All HRP representatives should be well prepared with consistent key messages on issues around government radars as they relate to the sector.

Briefing Papers

Develop briefing papers on the organization to provide as part of the meeting process.

Government Briefings

The HRP should brief the relevant ministers and program people in the next two months and start to build stakeholder support. This is of particular importance based on the fact that we have a new government in place.

Caucus Briefings

The HRP Board and Executive Director should brief all provincial caucuses on goals and objectives of the organization, and when relevant – outcomes.

Stakeholder Forums

The HRP needs to be invited to participate in existing meetings or gatherings of various stakeholder groups. The purpose would be to focus on the goals and objectives of the organization and solicit stakeholder support.

Communication Methods and Tools



Advisory Committee

An advisory committee can be of particular benefit in comparison to single group discussion as it presents combined experience and expertise. Advisory committees can have a number of purposes: the goals of the HRP would be to gain interest, understanding, and support of those selected members. An advisory board could be developed by the HRP and the goal would be to bring various stakeholders (with HR representation) to the table who would like to express their views and share the relevant issues as they relate to the organization.

Partnerships with Other Organizations

The consultant believes that partnerships are an integral part of the strategic direction. The goal would be to partner with other allied organizations and host a yearly conference that would leverage the profile of the sector.

Articles for Publications

The HRP has an opportunity to raise its profile and the stakeholders that it represents. Canned stories should be developed to submit to various publications. The official launch of the yearly conference would be a great opportunity.

Host Annual Conference

Invite individuals identified on stakeholder list to the annual conference.

Special Events or Opportunities

Identify speaking opportunities that will allow the HRP to get out there and tell their story. The organization has already addressed numerous audiences and the goal is to continue to expand to various stakeholder groups.

Public Feedback Opportunities

The web site once further developed could be utilized to receive feedback from stakeholders. The utilization will be a longer-term goal but identified as a priority. Many organizations utilize web sites for public feedback and also the HRP, once better known could conduct a survey.

Web Site Development

Based on stakeholder feedback – it is suggested that the web site be reviewed in detail and revamped to support more interactivity. Because students being one of the key target groups is extremely savvy in this area of communication and the HRP would be well served to treat the utilization of social media as a key communication vehicle. Please refer to Appendix 2 outlining social media.

Public Service Announcements

Develop general PSAs that would support the key messages of the HRP.

Appendix 1 - Sample Letter



Sample Letter



Dear,

The mission of the Aerospace and Defence Human Resource Partnership (HRP) is to contribute to the economic well-being of the province and its citizens by addressing the human resource needs of the Nova Scotia aerospace and defence sector. In support of our mission, we are writing to seek your assistance with an information-gathering activity to enhance the effectiveness of the HRP.

The goal of this project is to improve the communications activities of the HRP as we move forward in support of the sector. The HRP considers we need to be better known to stakeholders within the sector - with the industry, government and academic institutions it directly serves - and externally.

To ensure this initiative is of real value, we believe it is essential to seek the thoughts and opinions of a broad spectrum of key stakeholders such as yourself. This will be done through a brief telephone interview. We are aware that those in our industry are frequently being asked to participate in surveys and have little time to do so but we beg your indulgence this one time and will ensure the interview is concise and relevant.

We have engaged Davidson-Greenwood Communications to administer the interviews, which will be confidential. A representative from Davidson-Greenwood will be in touch with you in the near future to schedule your interview.

We would value your participation in this project and we sincerely hope you will have the time to participate. However, if you feel you cannot, please advise, and we will ensure you are not contacted. And, we would appreciate if you would put forward the names of others in your organization who you feel could make a contribution. Our goal is reach out to the broadest possible representation from those within the sector, and our many other stakeholders.

Thank you for your support. We look forward to hearing your views.

Sincerely,

Appendix 2 - Social Media



Social Media

Defining Social Media

Social Media is an umbrella term for services on the Web that enable consumers, government, business and other organizations to create and share audio, video and text. Social Media covers Blogs, Social Networks (i.e. Facebook), Micro-Blogs, Wiki's, Crowd Sourcing, Video Blogs and Video Sharing, Picture Sharing and Aggregation Services.

Why Is Social Media Relevant in Atlantic Canada?

Access to the Internet is much cheaper today in terms of computer costs, ease-of-use and availability of free wireless and wired access. It's very easy for people to use "Web applications" like a blog. Looking at the statistics below, it's easy to see that Atlantic Canadians are spending more and more time on the Web – using Social Media.

MediaBadger | Strategic Partner

DG Communications has formed a strategic partnership with Media Badger. Formed in 2007, MediaBadger is Atlantic Canada's only dedicated Social Media and Web Communications agency. Their sole focus is researching, developing, and helping implement Social Media and online communications strategies. Our clients range from small businesses and non-profits through to Fortune 500 companies. We see this partnership has a great fit – we are able to provide our clients with traditional and social media expertise.

MediaBadger has offices in Canada and the United Kingdom. Their proprietary research, analysis and monitoring tool, mediasphere360 is a key asset in understanding an organization's "presence" on the Web. This tool is often used to help develop Social Media projects that are more beneficial to an organization looking to engage with Social Media.

mediasphere360

mediasphere360 is designed to find, analyze and understand what is being said about an organization on the Web. We can uncover mentions, news articles and commentary, Social Network activity and more.

The vital difference between mediasphere360 and simple search engine research is using our own search algorithms – we uncover far more than Google, Yahoo or Bing. We go deep on an issue and our Artificial Intelligence Engine then analyses content for positive/negative/neutral sentiment to provide clients with a clear picture to develop better strategies.



Social Media

SERVICES

Presence Analysis

Using mediasphere360 and other tools, MediaBadger can provide your organization with a clear understanding of its position on the Web. You will know who is talking about your organization, where the conversation is taking place and what tools people are using.

Competitor 360

Want to know more about how your competition is using the Web? What people are saying about them? We can provide you with deep insight into your competitors' positions on the Web, from employee activity through to hiring strategies, marketing efforts and media coverage.

Social Media 101 Workshop

You know it's becoming increasingly important to engage in Social Media, or at least to understand it and become more informed. This 90 minute workshop for up to 10 of your staff is designed to get them up to speed. Insightful and delivered in non-technical, plain English with a review booklet. Your team and company will better understand how to leverage Social Media when the time comes.

Workplace Policy

Chances are, over 50% of your staff are active on Facebook and some on LinkedIn or other Social Media services. But do you have a policy in place to ensure they understand what they can and cannot say about your organization? Are you protected as an organization? We can help you establish a policy that meets your needs and ensures you and your employees are protected.

Social Media Strategy

It's important to ensure your communications efforts today include Social Media as a way to get peoples attention beyond just traditional media channels. We work alongside public relations and communications professionals to conduct initial research "listening" and then develop strategies in-line with your traditional public relations efforts.

Blogging 101

For organizations looking to develop and implement a blog, we're here to help you ensure a better chance of success. We can design a blog in line with your current branding standards and then help you understand how to write for a blog and ensure people become engaged.

Facebook Program

Establishing a presence on Facebook is a must today. We'll show you how and set up either a Fan Page or Group Page plus your company page as well. Then we'll help you define the plan on how to get followers and ensure you're found easily on Facebook Search.

Twitter 101

You've heard all about Twitter, maybe you've even started a Twitter page...but you're not sure how to take advantage of it. We'll help you understand how Twitter works, the do's and don'ts and how to schedule your activity to meet with your current communications operations.

Digital Success Measurement

One big advantage to Social Media and digital media as a whole is that there are ways to measure success or failures. We can help do an analysis to measure your current exposure or for campaigns/projects you've conducted over the past 4 years.

Digital Media Seeding Plan

Aside from the usual press release, you can also create a social media release and digital media release. We'll identify what content you should routinely use in digital format, where to put that content and a written plan with guidance on how to use Social Media for press release distribution.