

KOOTENAY ROCKIES SEASONAL STAFFING SURVEY 2019

Results Report

Background:

During the period of September 23 – October 25, 2019 Kootenay Rockies Tourism and go2HR conducted a Seasonal Staffing survey for the Kootenay Rockies region.

The goal of this survey was to gain insights into the labour market needs and composition of the tourism and hospitality workforce during the peak of the 2019 summer season. This important information will help us identify trends, challenges and opportunities to better provide HR-related support for employers within the region.

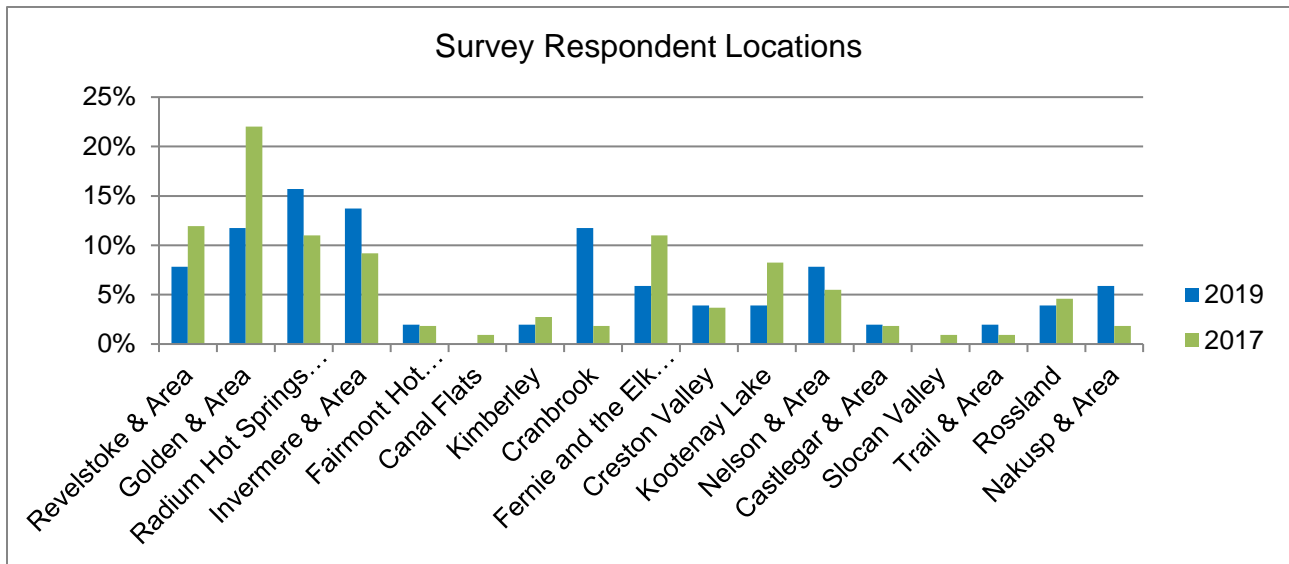
Overview:

A total of 51 responses were received from almost all areas around the entire Kootenay Rockies region (except Canal Flats and Slocan Valley), across all sectors of the industry. The bulk of responses were received from Radium, Invermere and Cranbrook areas around those locations.

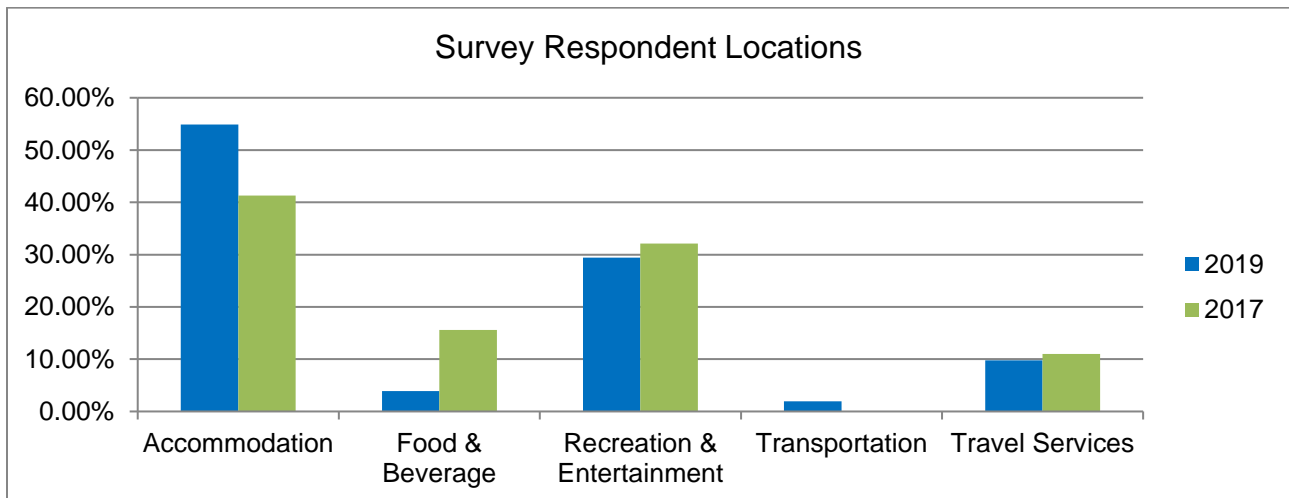
This report is intended to provide an overview of the Staffing Survey results, with a focus on identifying top responses and common themes within each question and focus area. Names and identifying factors have been removed to ensure anonymity. Comments are not verbatim.

Should you have any questions about the results of this survey or this report, please feel to contact Ginger Brunner, Regional HR Specialist 778-721-5523 gbrunner@go2hr.ca

Q1: In which of the following areas is your business/operation located?



Q2: Which of the following characterizes the primary category to which your business/operation belongs?





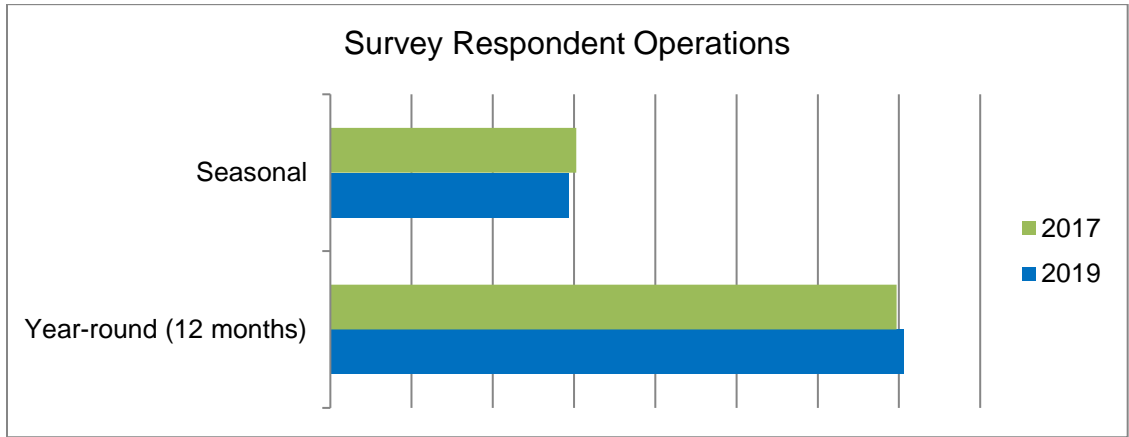
Q3: Please indicate more specifically your type(s) of business/operation.

Responses received from all sectors, specifically:

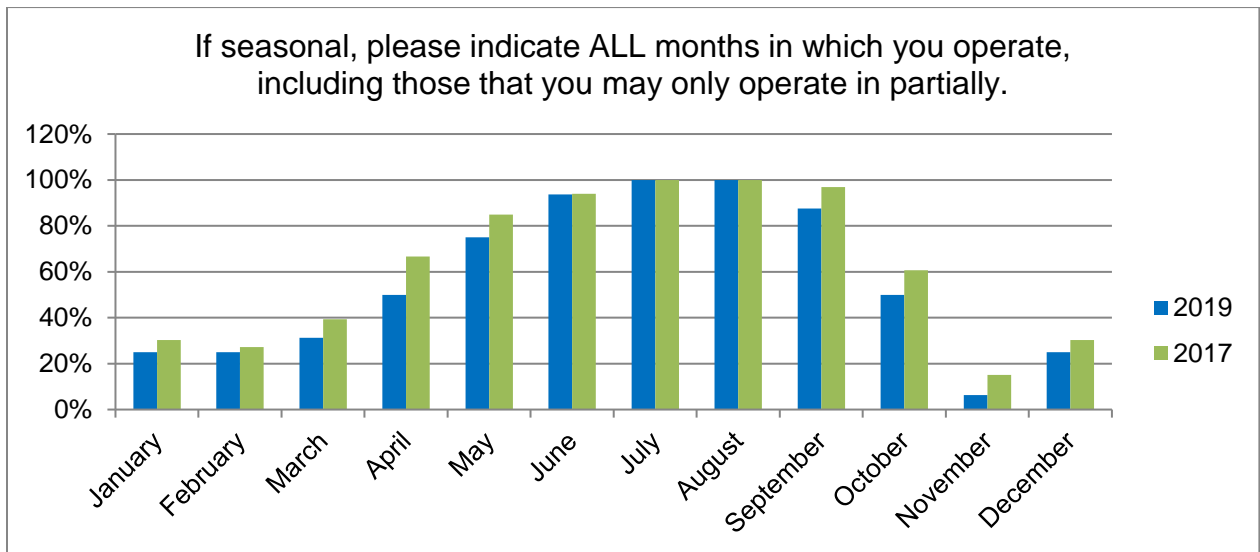
2019	2017
Museums	Hotels & Motels
Airline	Restaurants
Hotels	Lodge & Heli Ski Operation
Restaurants	Wetland education & awareness programs, walking/canoe tours, hiking and biking
Golf Courses	Retreat/Inn
Rafting Company	Whitewater Rafting tours
Ski hill/Bike park	Golf Courses
Hot Springs	Municipality - Visitor Centres
Adventure Tourism	Visitor Centres
Chamber of Commerce	Vacation Rental company
Resort & Recreation/Tours	Hot Springs
Cabins, General Store & Restaurant	Ski Resort
Heli Skiing/Cat Skiing & Remote Lodge	Winery and Guest house
RV Park	RV Parks
Bed & Breakfasts	Brewery
Campgrounds	DJ
Visitor Centres	B&B
Zipline/Rock Climbing	Property management /w nightly rentals
Backcountry Skiing/Summer Lodge	Caterer
Vacation Home Rentals	Pub
B&B, Guest House, Ecotourism & Farmstay	Bookstore/bakery (other retail) with cafés
	Back country lodge
	Mountain lodge
	Museum
	Guiding services
	Outdoor camp for kids & retreat
	Brewery
	Zip line tours
	Resorts

Q4: Which of the following best describes your business operations?

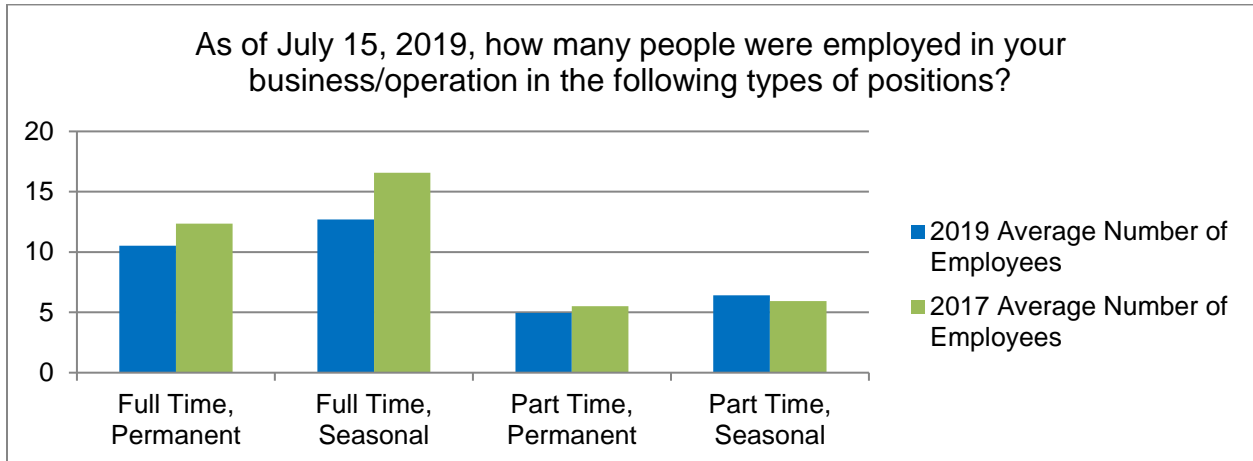
71% (36) respondents indicated that their business operates year-round (12 months)
 29% (15) operate seasonal businesses



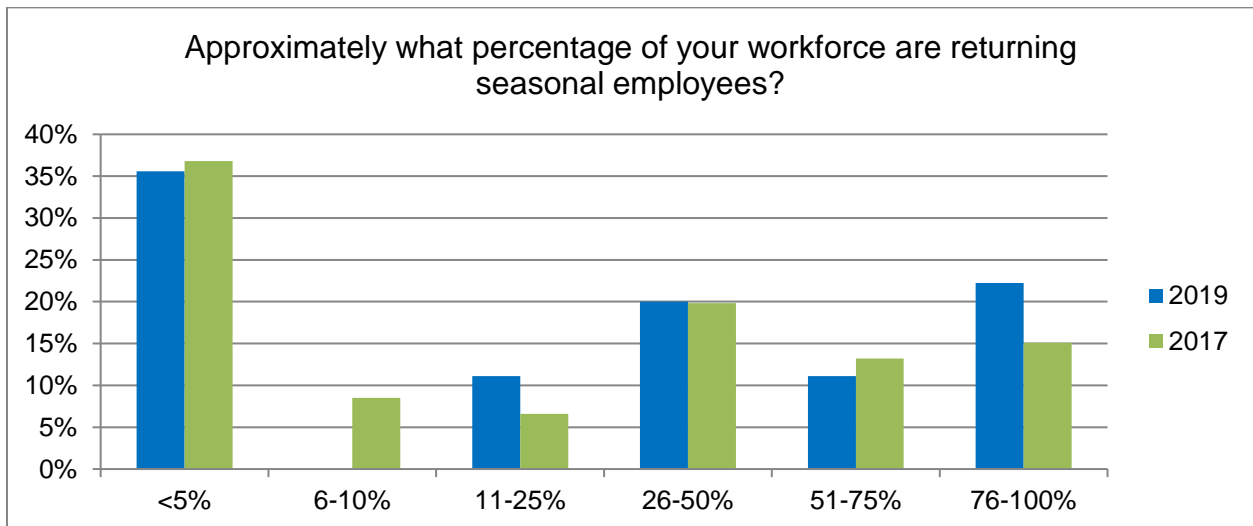
Q5: If seasonal, please indicate ALL months in which you operate, including those that you may only operate in partially.



Q6: As of July 15, 2019, how many people were employed in your business/operation in the following types of positions? Count yourself or any other family members if you or they worked in the operation.



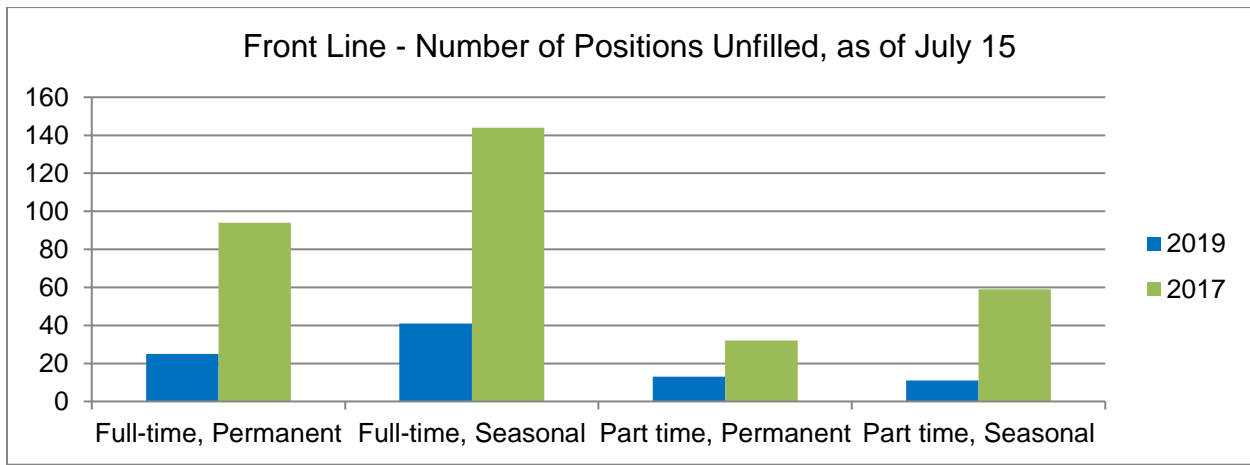
Q7: Approximately what percentage of your workforce are returning seasonal employees?



Q8: For each of the following categories, please indicate the number of positions that remained unfilled, as of July 15, 2019.

27 respondents reported a total of 90 vacant **front-line** positions:

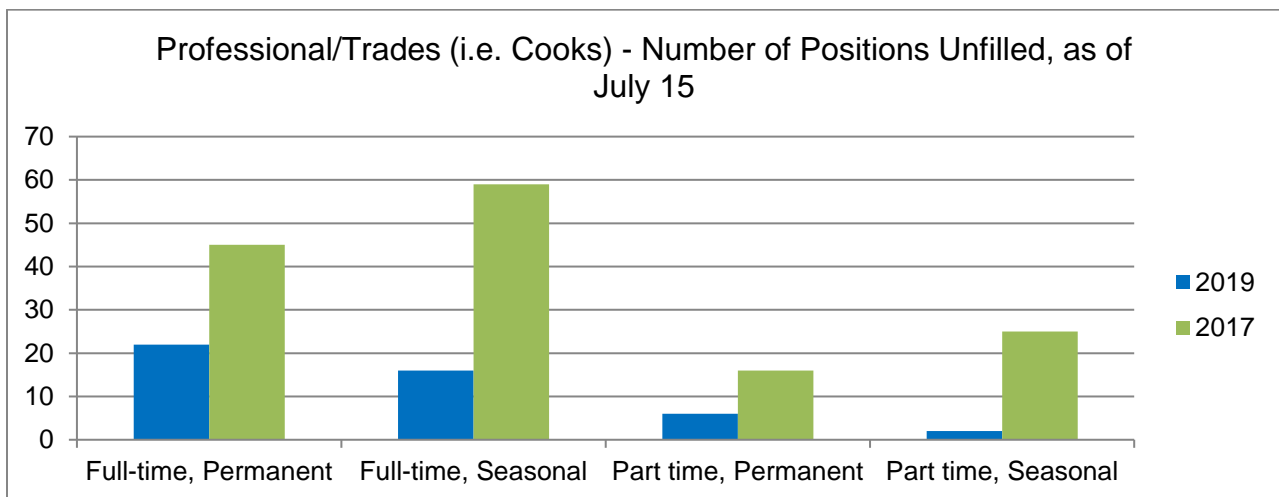
- 25 (27%) Full time, permanent
- 41 (45%) Full time, seasonal
- 13 (14%) Part time, permanent
- 11 (12%) Part time, seasonal



Q9: For each of the following categories, please indicate the number of positions that remained unfilled, as of July 15, 2019.

21 respondents reported a total of 46 vacant professional/trades (i.e. cooks) positions:

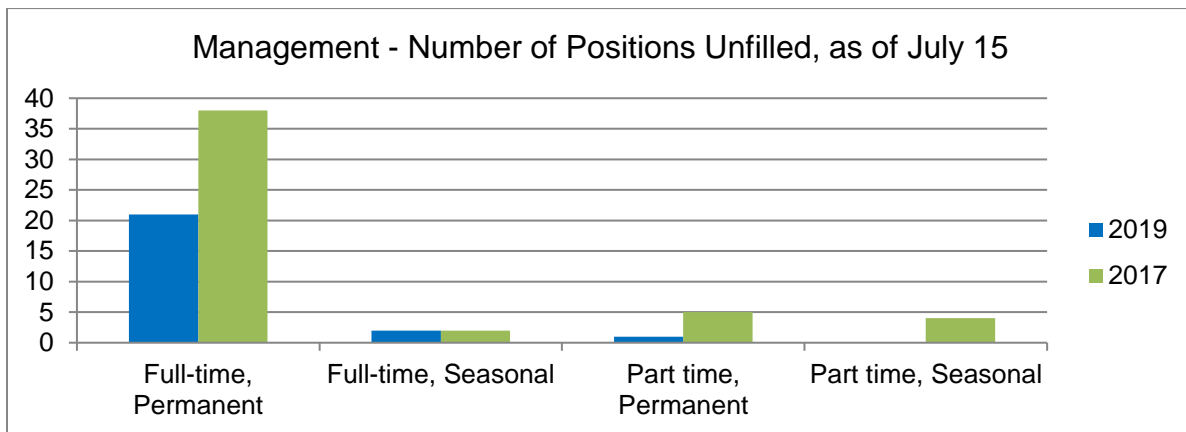
- 22 (48%) Full time, permanent
- 16 (35%) Full time, seasonal
- 6 (13%) Part time, permanent
- 2 (4%) Part time, seasonal



Q10: For each of the following categories, please indicate the number of positions that remained unfilled, as of July 15, 2019.

19 respondents reported a total of 24 vacant management positions:

- 21 (88%) Full time, permanent
- 2 (.08%) Full time, seasonal
- 1 (0.5%) Part time, permanent
- 0 Part time, seasonal



Q11: If you used any of the following programs to recruit international workers, please indicate the approx. number of front-line positions filled by each applicable program, as of July 15, 2019.

Working Holiday Visa

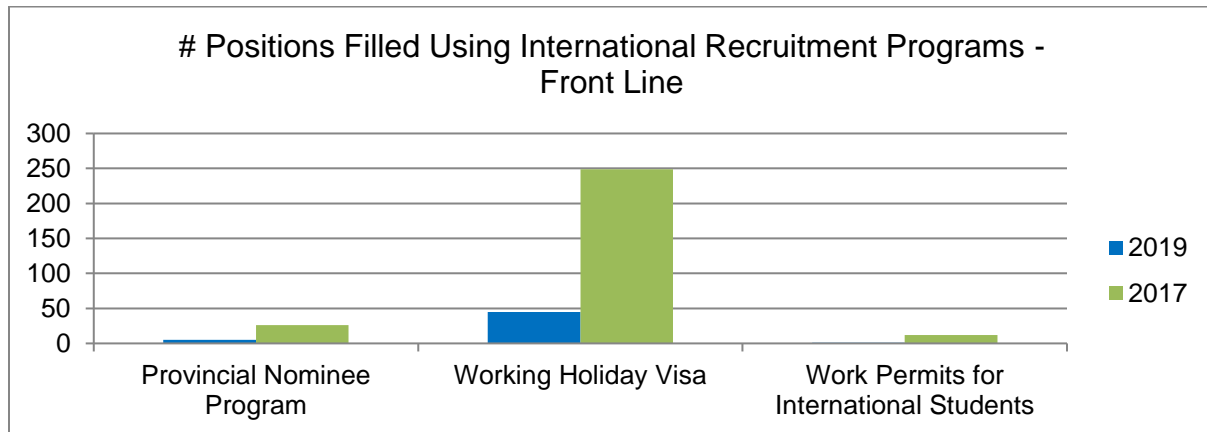
The Working Holiday Visa program remains the most popular of the international recruitment programs for front line employees. 14 respondents indicated that they have used this program to recruit a total of 45 front line employees.

Provincial Nominee Program

11 respondents indicated that they have used the Provincial Nominee Program to recruit a total of 5 PNP front line employees.

Work Permits for International Students

10 respondents indicated that they have used the Work Permits for International Students to recruit a total of 1 or less, for a total of 1 front line employee hired.



Q12: If you used any of the following programs to recruit international workers, please indicate the approx. number of *Professional/Trades (i.e. Cooks)* positions filled by each applicable program, as of July 15, 2019.

Temporary Foreign Worker (TFW) Program

The Temporary Foreign Worker (TFW) Program was the most popular of the international recruitment programs for Professional/Trades (i.e. Cooks).

10 respondents indicated that they have used this program to recruit a total of 17 employees.

Provincial Nominee Program

9 respondents have used this program to recruit a total of 6 Professional/Trades (i.e. Cooks) employees.

Federal Express Entry Program

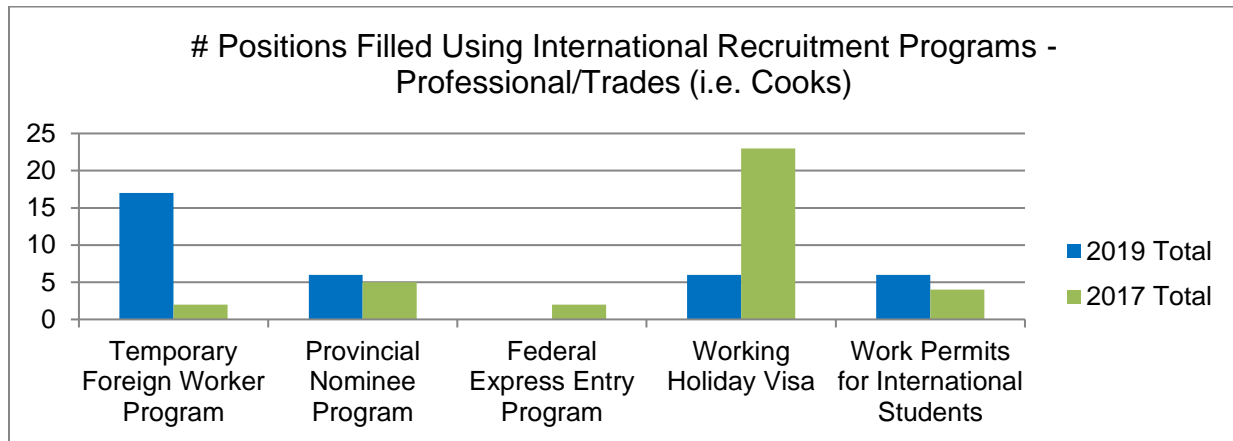
8 respondents reported using this program however it resulted in 0 hires. *NOTE: This may result may warrant further investigation.*

Working Holiday Visa

10 respondents indicated that they have used this program to recruit a total of 6 Professional/Trades (i.e. Cooks) employees.

Work Permits for International Students

9 respondents have used the Work Permits for International Students to recruit a total of 6 Professional/Trades (i.e. Cooks) employees.



Q13: If you used any of the following programs to recruit international workers, please indicate the approx. number of *management* positions filled by each applicable program, as of July 15, 2019.

Of 8 responses to this question, **zero (0)** indicated that they have used any of the International Recruitment programs to recruit management employees.

2017 Comparison:

Provincial Nominee Program (PNP)

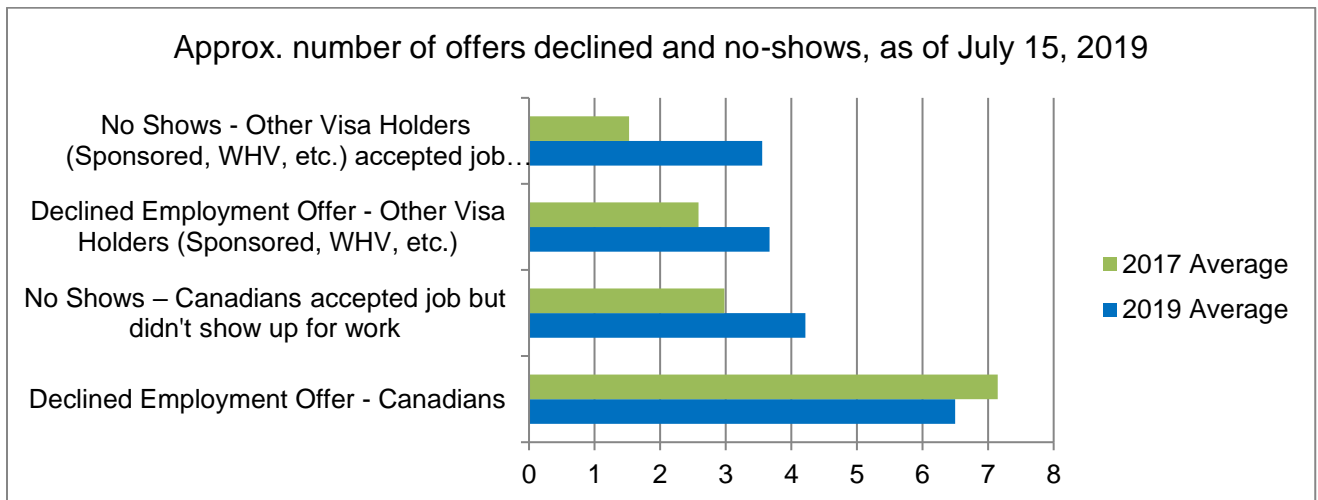
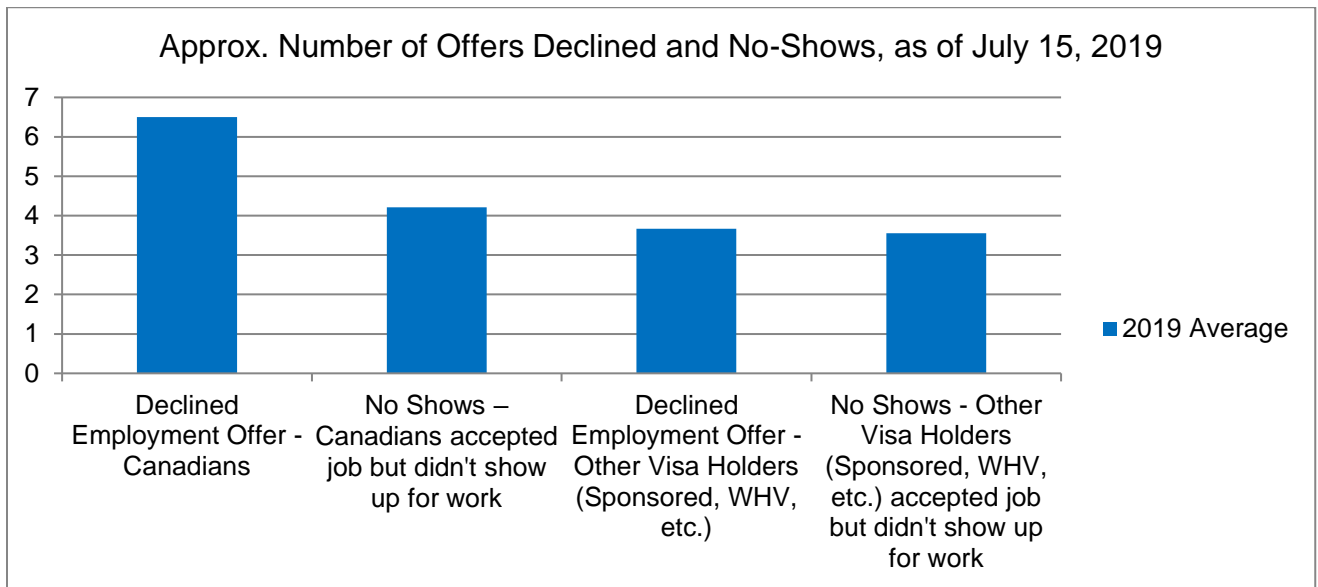
1 respondent has used the Provincial Nominee Program (PNP) program to recruit a total of 2 management employees.

Zero (0) respondents indicated that they have used the Federal Express Entry Program, Working Holiday Visa, or Work Permits for International Students to recruit management employees.

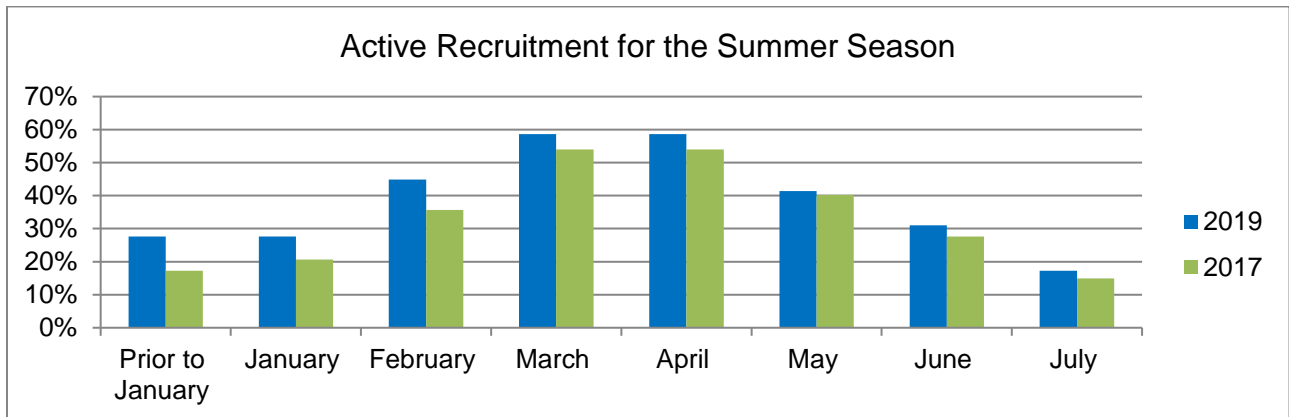
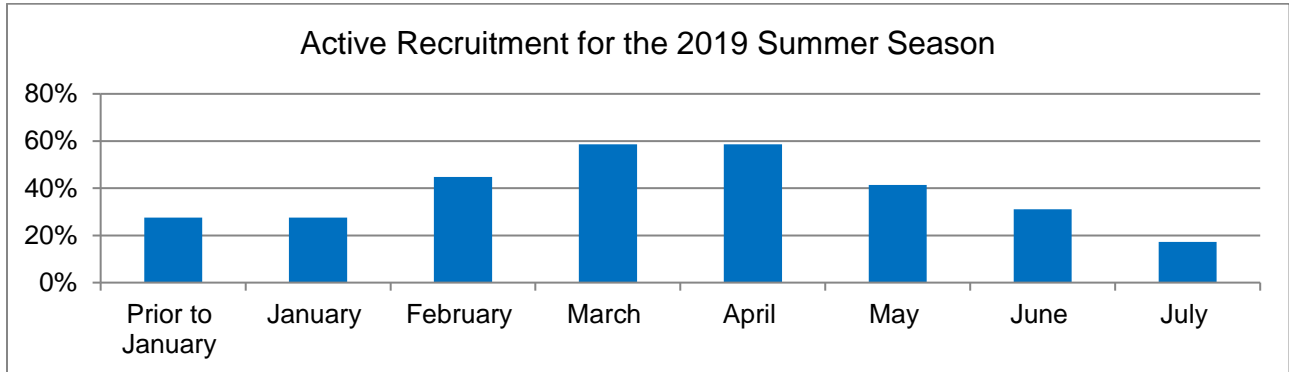
Q14: Please indicate the approx. number of offers declined and no-shows, as of July 15, 2019.

- 18 respondents indicated that an average of 6.5 Canadians declined employment offers, representing a total of 117 positions
- 29 respondents indicated an average of 3 Canadians accepted the job, but didn't show up for work, a total of 146 positions.
- 9 respondents indicated that an average of 3 Other Visa Holders (Sponsored, WHV, etc.) declined employment offers, a total of 62 positions.
- 6 respondents indicated an average of 2 Other Visa Holders (Sponsored, WHV, etc.) accepted the job but didn't show up for work, a total of 32 positions.

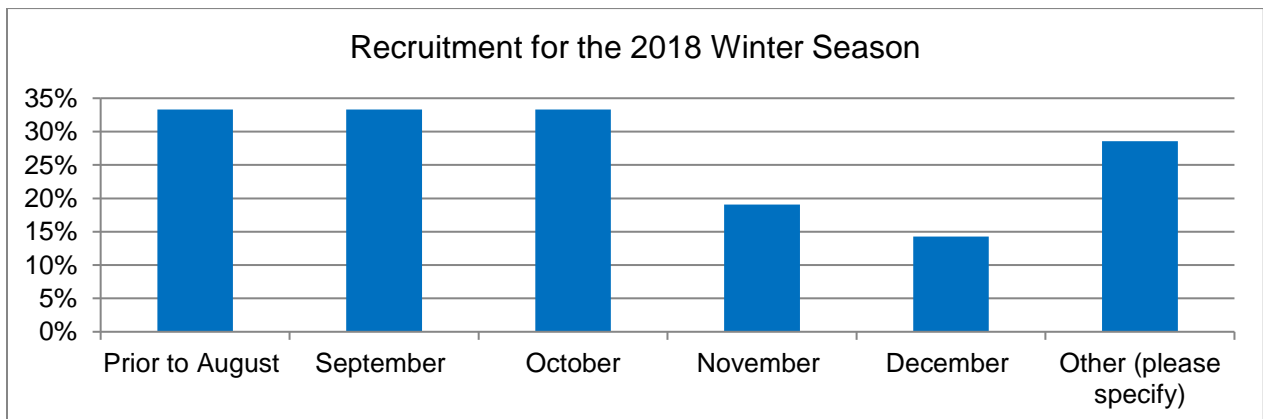
The average number of offers declined and/or offer accepted and then no show, appear to remain consistent when compared to the 2017 survey results.



Q15: When did you conduct the majority of your recruitment efforts for the 2017 summer season? (check as many as are appropriate)

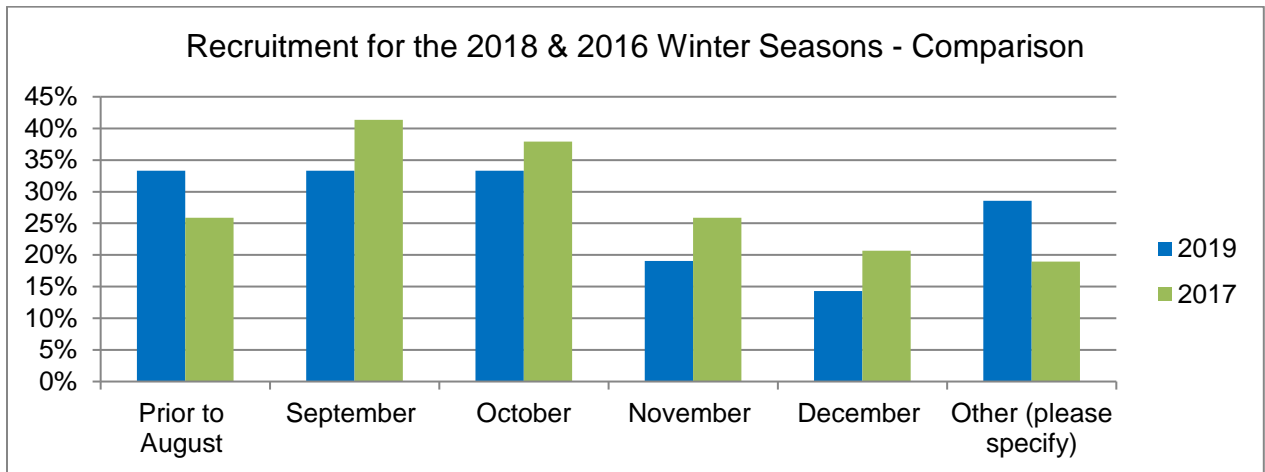


Q16: If you operated in the winter, when did you conduct the majority of your recruitment efforts for the 2018 winter season? (check as many as are appropriate)



“Other” Comments:

- All return staffing
- Did not recruit
- We do not hire additional staff in winter
- We have only 1 year-round employee



Q17: What method(s) does your organization use to recruit staff and managers? (Please indicate the effectiveness for all that apply)

Recruitment Method	2019		2017	
	Effective	Not Effective	Effective	Not Effective
Word of mouth	76%	24%	88%	13%
Help Wanted Sign	9%	91%	20%	80%
Staff Referrals	85%	15%	85%	15%
Unsolicited resumes/walk ins	50%	50%	53%	47%
Company/organization's website	67%	33%	55%	45%
go2HR Job Board	40%	60%	38%	62%
Other Job Boards (i.e. hcareers, Castanet, indeed, Kijiji, Kootenay Business Mag, etc.)	81%	19%	75%	25%
Social Media	71%	29%	69%	31%
Online daily newspaper (i.e. Castanet)	0%	0%	0%	0%
Other websites (i.e. Kijiji, Craigs List, etc.)	0%	0%	0%	0%
Job Fairs	58%	42%	19%	81%
Under Represented Labour Pools (i.e. Aboriginal, immigrants, youth, persons with disabilities)	22%	78%	3%	97%
Relationships/partnerships with other Employers	57%	43%	49%	51%
Recruitment through high schools	0%	0%	0%	0%
High Schools, Colleges or Universities	52%	47%	53%	47%
Colleges or universities	0%	0%	0%	0%
Job postings with community agencies	0%	0%	0%	0%
Community newspapers	21%	79%	47%	53%
Industry/Trade publications	11%	89%	3%	97%
Private Recruitment/Placement Agency	14%	86%	24%	76%
Local Employment Agencies (i.e. WorkBC)	47%	53%	57%	43%
International Hiring Fairs	25%	75%	3%	97%
Immigration Recruitment Agency	25%	75%	12%	88%

Q18: Do you use any other effective recruitment methods that are not included in the choices above? If so, please describe below:

- Look after your staff properly
- Indeed
- Newspaper

Q19: What would help your organization address the challenges of recruiting?

Affordable housing and foreign recruitment options (access and cost) were the top mentions in this year's survey. Below is a snapshot of verbatim comments:

Housing

- housing in the area or staff accommodation from the town that business could rent out
- Local initiative to bring more families and businesses to town. Lack of local workforce and housing.
- A place to live for workers
- More Affordable Housing Options
- Affordable housing for frontline staff.

Foreign Recruitment

- Currently we are finding that Working Holiday VISA are the largest growing demographic that can accommodate our season. More and more post-secondary schools who offer co-op terms are changing their programs to require students back to school in September but we still operate until Roughly October 1. More resources to recruit overseas or at least advertise overseas. We are working with a variety of programs but having a source like Go2HR to help with that is always appreciated. Larger supply of culinary talent.
- Making the short term (90 days) Temporary Foreign Workers program less expensive than the long term one. It's a lot of money and effort to hire someone for 3 months, yet it is challenging to find experienced raft guides, especially trip leaders.
- LMIA and PNP
- Easy access, fast tracking of foreign worker programs.

Seasonal Recruitment

- Have more seasonal employers work together to share employees. When winter employers are closing have job fairs open all employers, not just a certain handpicked employers.

Post-Secondary

- Education that you can have a long, successful career in the hospitality/tourism industry - it's not just a job you have during high school, college, etc. until you get a "real career."

Transportation

- A regular shuttle or bus to and from Ainsworth

Other

- I really don't know, looking for suggestions!
- there seems to be no challenges in recruiting, we receive many more resumes than there are job positions.
- Better representation for our tourism area. Employers working together to bring talent to the area
- Recruiting doesn't seem to be the problem; it is keeping seasonal staff that seems to be the problem.

2017 Comparison:

Affordable housing, access to foreign recruitment options and students as well as improved HR practices were mentioned most amongst the responses to this question in 2017.

Q20: To what extent is it a challenge for your organization to retain employees? (Select all that apply)

Of 28 respondents who answered this question, 75% indicated a moderate to significant challenge to retain front line employees. 77% indicated moderate to significant challenges to retain professionals/trades (i.e. Chefs). 50% indicated moderate to significant challenges retaining management.



2017 Comparison:

Of 91 respondents who answered this question, 77% indicated a moderate to significant challenge to retain front line employees. 74% indicated similar challenges to retain professionals/trades (i.e. Chefs).

Q21: What challenges do you face in recruiting and retaining employees? (Select all that apply)

27 responses to this question indicate that the challenges vary between front line, professional/trade and management positions. The top 3 challenges for each employment category were as follows:

Front Line

1. Lack of community infrastructure (e.g. transportation, etc.)
2. Lack of time/resources to recruit
3. Unattractive work

Professional/ Trades (i.e. Cooks)

1. Location of work
2. Lack of affordable housing
3. Lack of employment for spouse

Management

1. Lack of employment for spouse
2. Lack of affordable housing
3. Low wages



2017 Comparison:



Q22: Which incentives/supports does your organization find to be the most effective for retaining employees? (Select all that apply)

The top 3 incentives/supports indicated as most effective in retaining employees are:

1. Flexible work schedule
2. Training
3. Professional Development, Special Benefits & Mentoring (tied for 3rd)

Comments:

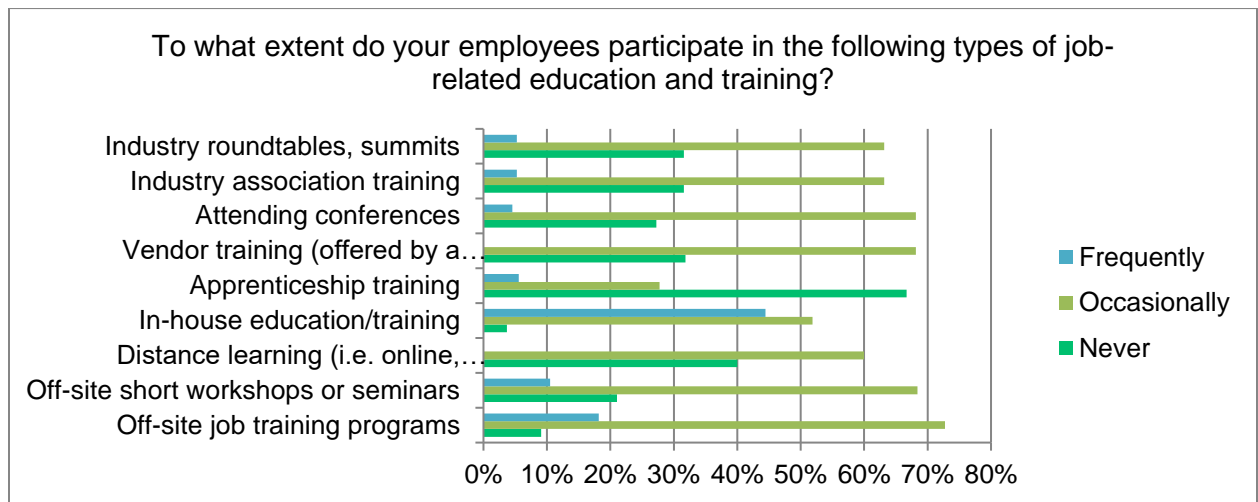
- We use a Stay Bonus but not sure of effectiveness.
- Staff perks such as season's pass for the ski hill, spousal passes, etc. Also work/life balance (ride breaks, free skiing at other mountains). Working in the ski industry with other like-minded individuals also helps retain individuals as they experience career enrichment and keeps them engaged. The ability to move up relatively quickly due to the high turnover of the ski industry.
- Unionized work place
- Good working relationships
- It is an enjoyable job and students can learn without too much stress.
- We offered end of season bonus this summer and that was not effective.
- Staff accommodation



Q23: To what extent do your employees participate in the following types of job-related education and training? (Complete for all that apply)

27 respondents who answered this question indicated that their employees participate in:

- Inhouse training/education (96%)
- Off-site job training programs (92%)
- Off-site short workshops or seminars (79%)



Examples of “Other” training provided:

- Parks Canada comes onsite to provide animal awareness as well as education living and working in the area
- Self-guided learning
- All staff are required to take the Tourism Visitor Information Counsellor training. They are also encouraged to take SuperHost training, and whenever possible to participate in FAM tours locally and regionally.

2017 Comparison:

83 respondents who answered this question indicated that their employees participate in:

- Inhouse training/education (88%)
- Distance learning (i.e. online, webinars) (64%)
- Off-site job training programs (59%)

Respondent comments indicate that training often happens on the spot and just in time, as needed.

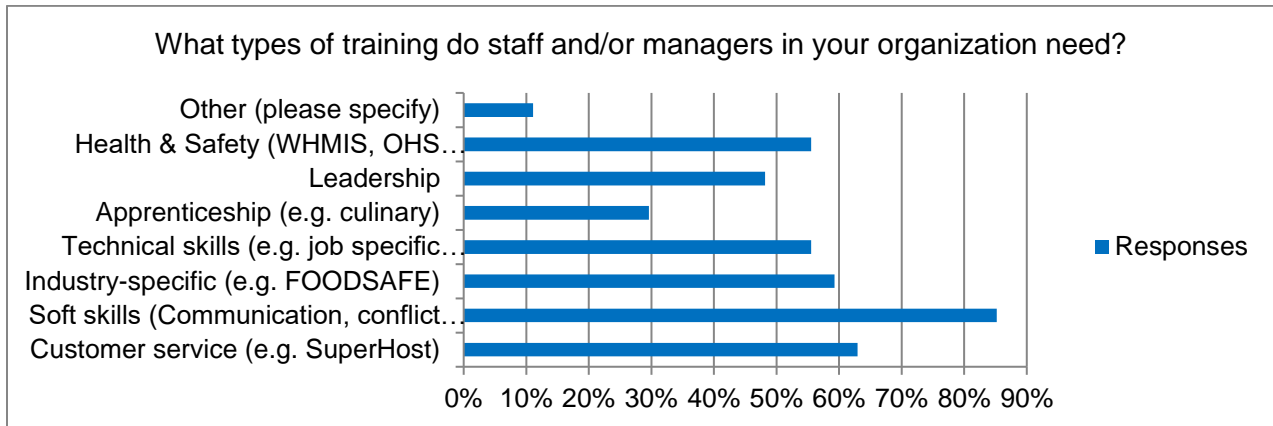
Q24: What types of training do staff and/or managers in your organization need? (select all that apply)

The top 3 training needs identified remain the same as the 2017 Seasonal Staffing Survey:

1. Soft Skills (68%)
2. Customer service (66%)
3. Industry-specific (e.g. FOODSAFE, WHMIS) (56%)

“Other” training needs include:

- Raft guide certification (professional association) Swiftwater Rescue certification Wilderness First Aid certification
- First aid from the college
- Emergency prep/comms, Emotional Intelligence (resilience)



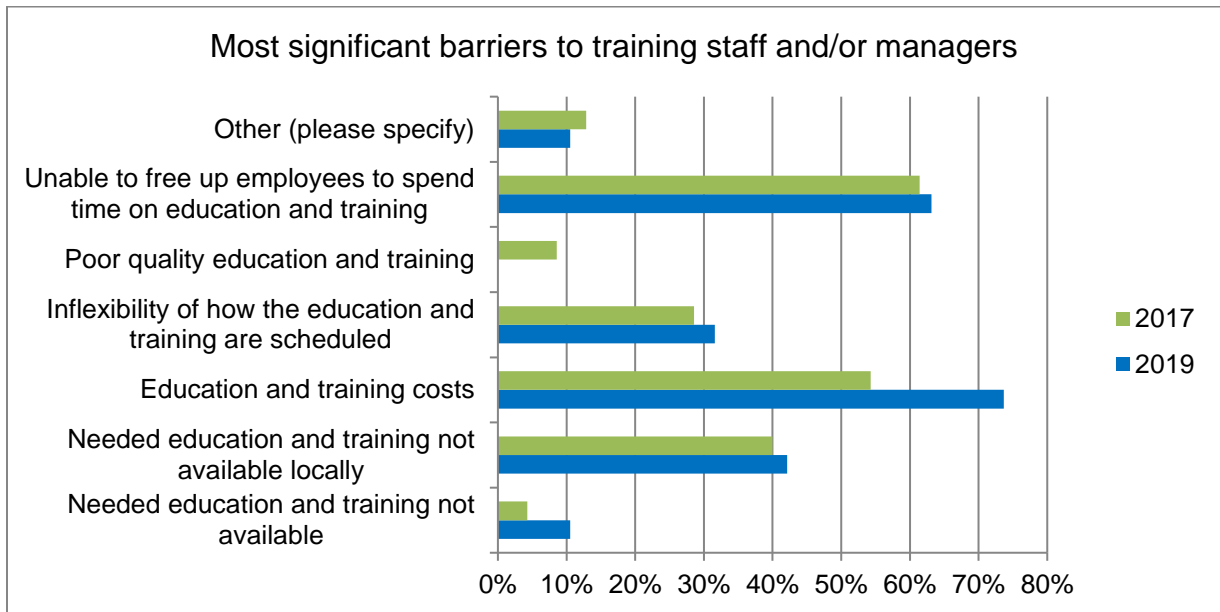
Q25: What are the most significant barriers to your staff and/or managers receiving necessary education and training? (Select all that apply)

Of the respondents who answered this question:

- 74% indicated that cost is the most significant barrier to training and education.
- Inability to free up employees to participate (63%) and needed education and training not available locally (43%) were also identified as significant barriers.

Other Barriers mentioned, include:

- Most employees are scheduled to arrive a week or so prior to open. Most training is provided during this time. Once the season starts it is hard to free up additional training.
- Not wanting to invest time or money into extensive training of employees who are only employed for 4 months.



Q26: What is your TOP CHALLENGE related to recruitment, retention and training of your employees?

Recruitment:

- Availability (May - October)
- Small pool to pick from
- Low wages
- Location & remote location
- Nature of the work
- Lack of affordable housing
- No housing, no sponsorship provided
- We hire only students
- Not enough people applying to sustain operations
- Availability of post-secondary students looking for work here
- Far too many entirely inappropriate applicants
- Finding staff who are willing to work in housekeeping as it's physically demanding
- Lack of services

Retention:

- Staff accommodation (remote location)
- Seasonal employment
- Lack of upward movement (can move up to supervisor usually quite quickly, but unless the manager chooses to leave, that employee could be at the same level for many years)
- On-site training, lack of housing
- Remote location
- Seasonal nature & down time
- Wages and competition

- (In)ability to promote from within
- Seasonal/nature of industry
- Students graduate and move away
- Wages
- The issue is if they are not a good fit for the type of work. Even with extensive training if they do not have a keen eye for details.
- Lack of services
- The position is a low paying seasonal position, so employees leave for other positions.

Training:

- Hard to make time with limited staff and full time operation
- Location
- Time & motivating employees
- Short time of employment
- cost
- Always at a distance
- budget / learning needs awareness
- funding
- don't stay for very long
- cost of ongoing training & conferences for management

2017 Comparison:

Respondents indicated a wide range of challenges however *the* most common challenge for recruitment and retention is the **lack of affordable housing**.

Q27: What type(s) of information/resources would help you to effectively plan, manage and develop your organization's human resources?

- Understanding what others in the industry are offering (Staff accommodation (Cost), Wages) as well as better ways to attract candidates to the area.
- Hiring grants,
- More webinars to allow for our remote location.
- information about FREE online training modules geared specifically towards customer service and tourism
- A list of schools with job fairs that have co-op programs for hospitality.
- Regional resources available
- Talent pool, labour market
- more candidates to choose from
- Housing assistance for frontline staff. Central place to post jobs across different websites etc.
- Having another person to assist me to get things done.

Q28: Is there anything else that you would like to tell us about your recruitment, retention or training challenges or practices?

- Culinary talent was extremely hard to find, given wages, location and duration of season.
- The hospitality/tourism industry as a whole, needs increased wages in order to demonstrate that this is a real, career-long option. Although we are typically a more attractive industry than say forestry, we should be able to make a living and not pay minimum wage to front line staff. Many people would rather go pile lumber for a living in order to enjoy their life outside of work instead of running a ski lift.
- Hospitality programs while beneficial also, need to do a better job of setting expectations for the students that they will not be managers the minute they get out of school.
- small numbers, hard to get economy of scale
- We have always paid three dollars above industry average. The rising minimum wage is making this more difficult
- Housing is a big challenge - availability and cost.

NEW Q29: What is your TOP CHALLENGE related to the health and safety of your employees?

- Emotional health in working / living in close proximity (staff housing).
- The high turnover rate and ensuring consistency across all levels in regards to OH&S training.
- Mental health, lack of resiliency in youth
- Hard to get buy in, and it's something that if HR does not stay on top of...it doesn't happen.
- Travel to and from work with limited housing options
- Adoption of safe work practices when the boss is not around
- Ensuring that young, invincible staff learn to lift properly.
- Training
- Work Safe BC does not actively engage with our business.
- Guests bringing illness to lodges and potentially spreading it.
- Time required to provide training
- Getting buy in, and making sure monthly meetings are happening.
- Staff working alone

NEW Q30: What type of information/resources or training would help you better manage the health and safety of your employees?

- Mental health 'first aid kit'
- An extra person on my team to deal with health & safety.
- Driver training and public transportation
- Accessible training - remote/virtual, and cost effective
- Our staff is often young and female. Resources for them in dealing with unwanted (usually male) attention might be helpful. It does not come up often, but it can be stressful.
- Information/workshops on how to protect employees that are having to work alone.



New Q31: Is there anything else that you would like to tell us about your health and safety challenges or practices?

- How do we influence the tourism related course curricula at COTR?
- Lifting boxes of brochures, standing on concrete and paper cuts are probably our most hazardous situations, so health and safety is not a high concern.