

Beyond Our Sector: Identify a New Pool of Managers



BEYOND OUR SECTOR: IDENTIFY A NEW POOL OF MANAGERS

The purpose of the project

The Mining Industry Human Resources Council (MIHR) has conducted an industry analysis of the non-technical, high demand skills that will be critical to the industry over the next 5-10 years. The analysis focused on mid-level management and supervisory skills. Research was conducted to determine if and where these skills existed in other industries, creating a better understanding of equivalent occupations in other sectors. This research, summarized on page 5 in matrix format, enables HR managers to see, at a glance, if the required transferable skills for a specific mining occupation may be found in other sectors.

What are transferable skills?

Transferable skills are skills obtained through previous work experience, workshops, classes, parenting, hobbies, sports, volunteering or any other experiences or activities that are applicable to future employment opportunities. Transferable skills are important when changing careers, facing a layoff and/or graduating from college.

Source: Kamloops Work Search Centres

Making it work for your organisation

Case studies on pages 7, 8 and 9 illustrate the successful transition of three supervisors into the mining industry and provide guidance for HR managers considering this process.



Acknowledgement

The Mining Industry Human Resources Council (MiHR) would like to acknowledge the participation of the following mining industry partners in helping us identify key transferable skills for managers in mining:

Sean Junor, Cameco

Ray Chenier, Thompson Rivers University

Donna Palmer, Rio Tinto



The Mining Industry Human Resources Council (MiHR) is the sector council for the Canadian minerals and metals industry. A recognized leader in the development and implementation of national human resources solutions, MiHR contributes to the strength, competitiveness, and sustainability of the Canadian mining sector.

Products and services developed by MIHR are based on sound research into the skills and labour market issues that matter most to the Canadian mining industry.

LIST OF MANAGERIAL COMPETENCIES

Introduction

The following list includes skills that have been identified as transferable and therefore available in other industries at similar occupation levels.

Activities common to Supervisory/Managerial roles

- Plan, organize, direct, control and evaluate operational activities
- Develop and implement policies, procedures and processes
- Develop action plans, organize and control
- Hire, train, assign work, supervise and evaluate staff
- Develop, control and administer budgets

Transferable skills/competencies

Communication - ability to provide, obtain and /or exchange information, thoughts and ideas in:

- a significant range of subject matter both practical and theoretical;
- a variety of formal and or informal environments (face to face, through a variety of media);
- known and or unknown audiences (one on one, small to large groups, face-to-face and/or through a variety of media);
- a variety of situations including: conflict resolution, assessing and evaluating people, providing or following (simple to complex) directions and instructions.

Reading – ability to read material that is in the form of sentences and paragraphs (notes, letters, memos, manuals, specifications, regulations, books, reports or journals). Includes locating multiple pieces of information within complex documents or from numerous documents, being able to synthesize and interpret meaning.

Writing – ability to write texts and documents (notes, letters, memos, manuals, specifications, regulations, books, reports, presentations). Includes the ability to write documents that present information, analysis, evaluations and recommendations, structured appropriately for the content and the audience.

Numeracy – ability to use numbers and having the capacity to think in quantitative terms. Ability to collect, analyze and interpret data. Includes the capacity to manage time, resources, planning and monitoring their use and assessing best value.

Technology – ability to use hardware and software to facilitate efficiency and effectiveness. Includes:

- a selection of the most appropriate software for work potentially including integration of several software programs to accomplish necessary outcome;
- learning new programs;
- effective use of the tools.

Planning and Organizing – ability to identify outcomes, establish priorities, identify various activities required to achieve outcomes, develop and achieve schedules for both sequential and/or simultaneous activity, identify, obtain and appropriately assign resources (equipment, facilities, people, money).



Problem Solving – ability to identify the problem, the various factors contributing to it, identify and evaluate potential solutions and selection of the best solution. Includes ability to address problems that range from simple to complex (complex includes, numerous, obscure and/or interconnected factors, need to change procedures, create new solutions).

Decision Making – ability to make a choice in a variety of situations ranging from simple to complex.

- Errors may have significant consequences (rectifiable but involving loss of resources).
- Reversal of the decisions can be difficult.
- Information about significant elements of the decision may be uncertain.
- Set procedures usually exist, but there is significant scope for discretion or interpretation.
- Previous decisions may or may not provide a precedent for choice.
- A need to consider numerous factors (ranging from well defined to poorly defined).

Critical Thinking – ability to consider and assess information and ideas and to identify and select those that are relevant, meaningful and important to solve problems, make decisions and take action.

Continuous Learning – ability to participate in the process of ongoing acquisition of skills and knowledge. Included are

- ability to know how to learn;
- understanding of one’s own learning style;
- ability to gain access to a variety of materials, resources and learning opportunities and to select, use and/or participate in the most appropriate of them;
- ability to encourage others to learn.

Adaptive Capacity – ability to adjust and conform to changes in the internal and external work environment.

Change Management – ability to establish and facilitate a transition to something different.

Mentoring – ability to provide guidance (direct or lead another’s course) , instruction (establish expectations), and ongoing training (build skills) and coaching (evaluate skills and outcomes, identify of areas for improvement, providing constructive feedback) of others.

Leading – ability to cause people (individual and/or in teams) to willingly follow a course of action and/or a direction.

Team Development – ability to identify required skills/abilities, select participants, facilitate productive interaction and guide (individual and team) achievement.

Empathy – ability to experience as one’s own, the feelings of another.

References

Merriam Webster Dictionary

Oxford Canadian Dictionary

The Art and Science of Competency Models. Antoinette D. Lucia, Richard Lepsinger. Jossey Bass, Pfeiffer. 1999.

Government of Canada – Human Resources and Skills Development – National Occupational Codes and Readers Guide to Essential Profiles.

MID-LEVEL MANAGEMENT CROSS-SECTORAL OCCUPTION MATRIX

*This matrix identifies other sectors with occupations that require similar skills to the corresponding mining occupation.
For example: people with the right transferable skills sets for a General Manager in mining can be found in all other sectors.*

			Other Sectors									
Mining Occupations	Exploration	Mining	Agriculture	Automotive Repair	Supply Chain	Tourism	Construction	Forestry	Petroleum	Military	Printing	Fish Harvestors
Managers												
General Manager	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Public & Corporate Affairs Manager	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X		X	
Camp Manager	X	X				X	X	X	X	X		
Environment Manager	X	X	X				X	X	X	X		
Human Resources Manager	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Administration Manager	X	X	X		X		X		X	X		X
Financial Manager	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
Marketing Manager	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
Plant Manager		X	X		X		X	X	X		X	
Safety Manager	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	
Mine Manager		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Supervisors												
Mine Superintendent		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	
Production Supervisor	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X	
General Supervisor	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X
Plant Supervisor		X	X				X	X	X		X	
Mechanical Supervisor		X	X	X		X	X		X		X	
Site Services Supervisor		X			X	X	X	X	X			
Foreman		X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X	
Sr. Security Supervisor	X	X	X			X	X					
Environmental Supervisor	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X			
Maintenance Supervisor		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	

NOTE: This matrix is a starting point for HR Managers identifying the skills needed from other sectors. It is not a conclusive listing.

COMPARABLE JOB TITLES

The following are examples of job titles from other sectors that are equivalent to mining occupations.

Mining Occupations	Examples of Equivalent Occupations
Mine Manager	General Manager
	Operations Manager
	Farm Manager
	Factory Manager
	Forest Manager
	Captain
	Colonel
Mine Superintendent	Production Supervisor
	Production Manager
	Senior Forestry Engineer
	Construction Site Superintendent
	Plant Manager
	Facilities Manager
	Captain
	Colonel
Foreman	Forestry Supervisor
	Team Leader
	Construction Foreman
	General Supervisor
	Working Supervisor
	Operations Supervisor
	Lieutenant-Colonel
	Commander
Safety Manager	Safety Manager
	Wellness Manager
	Safety Coordinator
	Health and Safety Officer
Environmental Manager	Environmental Specialist
	Sustainability Manager
	Environmental Supervisor
	Lead Environmental Protection Officer
Camp Manager	Logistics Manager
	Camp Supervisor
	Facilities Manager

CASE STUDY

Jim Harris, Dayshift Supervisor, Secondary Extraction, Suncor Energy Inc.

Jim points out the important role that companies can play in helping the families of transitioning workers make the career change. In Jim's case, he, his wife and their children, had to move to a new town where they knew no one. Adequate time to find housing was very helpful and allowed the change to family to find the right place, in the right neighbourhood.

Generally, Jim had a smooth shift into mining. "Pulp and paper and mining have similar operational structures - there is a bargaining unit and line of progression. The process in the two industries is different, but the administration functions are pretty much the same," says Jim. His previous positions and training also helped - Jim has power engineering and process experience and a commerce degree. He has a lot of management experience, dealing with people and running a business. His time in a pulp and paper plant sensitized Jim to the need to operate safely and to ensure that staff with adequate training were working in the right jobs.

Jim suggests that mining firms use tests to help them select managers, as do firms in the pulp and paper industry.

"It is best to test potential managers, especially on mechanical and engineering aptitudes. Myers-Briggs or some other personality trait instrument could also help." These tests, combined with behaviour-based interviewing, can help mining companies determine if a candidate is the right fit for a technical supervisory or managerial position.



Jim Harris transitioned from pulp and paper to the mining industry for the long term career opportunities mining presented him and his family. He wanted to ensure he had a job 10 years in the future and so carefully planned his switch to mining. "I want to retire without too many transitions on the way."

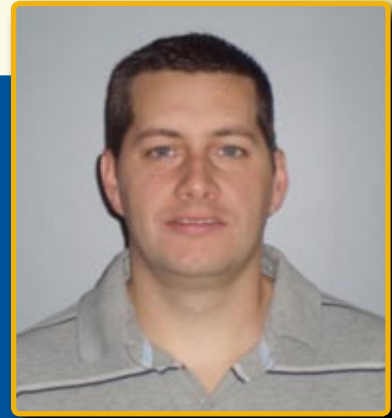
Mario Lefebvre, Maintenance Supervisor, Vale Inco Limited

Mining firms who hire from other industries can receive a lot of benefits. While working outside mining, Mario acquired many managerial skills, including prioritizing work, mentoring/coaching new employees and managing project financials and service contract budgets. “The training, skills and experience I gained played a huge part in being selected for my current position as a Maintenance Supervisor,” he says.

The orientation and safety training that Vale Inco provided was an important to Mario’s successful transition into the mining industry. In his new role, Mario was able to apply all of the managerial skills he gained outside of Vale Inco which made his transition to mining that much easier.

Mario advises that mining firms must also think about the wording of their job postings. “Companies will sometimes ask for 10 years experience in mining supervision - people may have the required experience, but it may not be in mining,” he says. The new manager might need some training to get the background in the sector and firm, but companies may want to keep their job postings more general, to attract a broader range of qualified candidates.

As well, companies who have traditionally recruited managers from among their employees may have some adjustments to make. As Mario notes, “In some places, workers may not be that receptive to a manager who didn’t come through the ranks. They may be a bit surprised when someone is hired outside the company.” However, Mario predicts that as more managers are recruited from other industries, these attitudes will change.



Mario Lefebvre started in the mining industry as a tradesperson, left the industry to work as a manager at a consulting engineering firm and then came back to mining as a manager in the smelter. As such, he has a good understanding of the transitioning process.

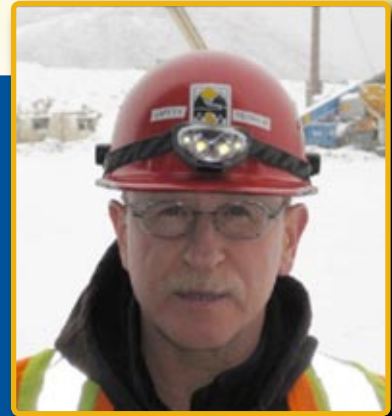
CASE STUDY

Terry Hartford. Safety Supervisor, Kemess Mine

Terry sees benefits for himself and his employer in his transition, even though he realizes that it may have been a risk for them at the time. “I appreciate that they were taking a chance. What does a guy from oil and gas know about mining?” he says. In fact, Terry had a strong background in safety and had recently completed an occupational health and safety certificate course at the University of Alberta. This course had a lot of information that could be applied to any industry and Terry brought resources and materials from it to his new position. He had also completed the National Construction Safety Officer course which again provided him with a solid understanding of safety related issues. With this strong background, albeit from different industries, Terry brought a fresh perspective and new ideas.

Terry also benefited from the move, since mining provided him with new challenges and opportunities. “In the mining industry, people are very proud of its roots, how it got to where it is today. A lot of people know people from other mines—and they really want to make a difference. People want to do a good, safe job and practice better ways of doing thing, but there are some mind sets that have to change.” With his knowledge of safety practices in the petroleum industry and the strong support of senior management, Terry along with his colleagues, made changes to procedures and practices at the mine. In one year, major incidents decreased from nine to two.

“My advice to people coming into mining is to come in with your eyes open, know what the company is looking for, know as much about your new position as you can and just generally be aware, patient and think about the safest way to do a job, not the quickest.”



As a teenager, Terry Hartford was always interested in the mining industry and wanted to ‘check it out’. It took 26 years, but in 2008, Terry switched from the downstream petroleum industry into mining. He now works as a Safety Supervisor, reporting to the General Manager at a copper and gold mine.

CONTACT INFORMATION



260 Hearst Way, Suite 401
Ottawa, ON
K2L 3H1
Tel: 613-270-9696
Fax: 613-270-9399
Email: info@mihr.ca
Website: www.mihr.ca