

*Final Report*

# A Passionate Consensus: Creating a new Sector Council for the Canadian Printing Industry

**A report on the results of the  
“Partnership in Human Resource Development” workshop,  
Montreal, Quebec, June 10 & 11, 2004.**

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Canadian Printing Industries Association



Graphic Communications International Union

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# A Passionate Consensus: Executive Summary

*“We share the same problems. The challenge of tomorrow will be to share the solutions.”*  
*Workshop participant*

Canada’s print industry is the fourth largest manufacturing employer in the country, with a workforce that exceeds 90,000 people. Print operations are found in every province and territory, making it a truly national industry. The size and structure of the industry varies considerably, but seventy five per cent of commercial print companies employ fewer than 20 people — making this sector of the industry a particular focus for human resource development. Over the past 15 years, the value of manufacturing shipments, has increased substantially to record levels of \$10.5 billion in 2000.

But like many industries, the printing industry also faces a number of challenges, brought on by rapid technological change and the prospect of an ageing workforce. The nature of printing has virtually re-invented itself, as state-of-the-art computer technologies have become a standard in production equipment. Those who work in this vital industry must combine not only graphic arts skills, but a thorough knowledge of technologies. In an age of digital information formatting, manual processing has been greatly reduced.

The industry has responded to this kind of change by investing in new equipment and at a high cost. This includes not only the cost of the equipment itself, but the costs of retraining staff, production slow-downs while staff are learning.

In terms of the workforce, those aged 45 to 54 years make up 23 per cent of the key print occupations, and are likely to retire over the next ten years. Eleven per cent are already over 55, creating immediate replacement needs. Yet, young people are entering the industry in fewer numbers. Most training now takes place on the job, with varying degrees of success. These issues, coupled with the fact that many college print industry programs and journeyman apprenticeships are disappearing, are creating a major human resource challenge for the industry.

*“We have a unique opportunity to ensure the growth of our industry.”*  
*Workshop participant*

The need to address this challenge has already been recognized by the Canadian Printing Industries Association (CPIA) and the Graphic Communications International Union (GCIU), who, together with Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC), are working to develop a human resources sector council for the Canadian printing industry.

Some of the vital first steps in this process have already been taken. In July 2003 a major study, the “Canadian Print Industry Human Resource Sector Council Study,” analysed industry data, surveyed industry stakeholders, and reported on both the desirability and the feasibility of forming such a council. The study published two firm conclusions — that the industry is facing a human resource challenge, and that there is a definite need for a mechanism like the sector council to address these challenges on a national scale. It recommended that HRSDC and the steering committee involved in the study take the next steps towards establishing a print industry sector council.

In June 2004, the CPIA and GCIU followed up the study with an industry-wide survey. The responses to the survey were striking — there was an unusual and passionate consensus about issues that were seen as being extremely important to sustaining the industry. Respondents wanted to see **occupational standards** developed that reflected the skills, knowledge and aptitudes required by the printing industry in Canada. They wanted the creation of **consistent standards in training and skills development** across the country. In terms of workplace training, they supported **blended learning solutions**, combining hands-on training with distance learning and other options. There was also considerable support for industry-specific training and education programs, and greater collaboration with institutions offering post-secondary print programs. The respondents also felt it was extremely important to **attract new workers** to the industry, and that one of the best ways to do this would be to **enhance its public image** — by promoting the benefits and career opportunities offered by printing occupations.

*“We’re an amazingly enthusiastic group. We worked individually in the past, but now coming together we’ll be able to work more powerfully.”*  
*Workshop participant*

The next step towards the creation of a print sector council involved the need to reconfirm the support of industry stakeholders. On June 10 and 11<sup>th</sup> 2004, a joint workshop and meeting, organized by the Canadian Printing Industries Association and the Graphic Communications International Union, took place in Montreal. The workshop brought together employers, labour representatives, academics with an interest in the printing industry, and government officials involved in the development of sector councils. The workshop was structured around the 2003 study, and the priorities identified in the June, 2004 survey.

The workshop reflected the same passionate consensus that emerged in the survey. There was unanimous and resounding support for the establishment of a sector council. Again and again the same priorities were identified and discussed. The dynamism of the print industry itself was reflected throughout the entire workshop discussions, as stakeholders grappled with the specific human resource needs of the print sector, and came up with over thirty concrete recommendations for change.

Perhaps not surprisingly, the recommendations paralleled the issues that emerged from the survey. Participants wanted the development of occupational profiles so that national standards for training and certification could be established. They wanted training needs analysed, as well as existing training programs. Blended learning solutions, such as technology-supported programs and distance learning, were a key priority. A marketing strategy to improve the public image of the industry was also suggested. But perhaps most significantly, participants wanted to see a structure and a work plan developed for the creation of a sustainable sector council for their industry, one that would help them meet the critical human resource challenges they face both now and in the future.

## Introduction

The Canadian Printing Industries Association (CPIA) and the Graphic Communications International Union (GCIU), together with Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC), are working to develop a human resources sector council for the Canadian printing industry.

Some of the vital first steps in this process have already been taken. In July 2003, the “Canadian Print Industry Human Resource Sector Council Study” analysed industry data, surveyed industry stakeholders, and reported on both the desirability and the feasibility of forming such a council. This major study, completed by CS/RESORS Consulting, Ltd., published two firm conclusions — that the industry is facing a human resource challenge, and that there is a definite need for a mechanism like the sector council to address these challenges on a national scale.

In June 2004, the CPIA and GCIU followed up the study with an industry-wide survey. The responses to the survey were striking — there was an unusual and passionate consensus about issues that were seen as being extremely important to sustaining the industry. Respondents wanted to see **occupational standards** developed that reflected the skills, knowledge and aptitudes required by the printing industry in Canada. They wanted the creation of **consistent standards in training and skills development** across the country. In terms of workplace training, they supported **blended learning solutions**, combining hands-on training with distance learning and other options. There was also considerable support for industry-specific training and education programs, and post-secondary print programs. The respondents also felt it was extremely important to **attract new workers** to the industry, and that one of the best ways to do this would be to **enhance its public image** — by promoting the benefits and career opportunities of working in the print industry.

The next step towards the creation of a print sector council involved the need to reconfirm the support of industry stakeholders. On June 10 and 11<sup>th</sup> 2004, a joint workshop and meeting, organized by the Canadian Print Industries Association and the Graphic Communications International Union, took place in Montreal. The workshop brought together employers, labour representatives, academics with an interest in the printing industry, and government officials involved in the development of sector councils.

## Vision / Goals for the Workshop

The goal of the workshop was to validate once again the industry’s overwhelming support for the creation of a print industry sector council, and to bolster this support with additional research. The vision involved the creation of a compelling document that would reflect the collaborative efforts of the participants, their passion for a vital and key industry for Canada, and their unequivocal consensus on recommendations for sector council strategies that would ensure a competitive and sustained industry well into the future.

## The Need for a Sector Council

Does the industry perceive the need for a sector council? The answer continues to be a unanimous and resounding yes. This perception has already been observed and well-documented. What this workshop focused on was first a “reality-check” of the specific human resource needs of the printing industry, and secondly, an industry-led look at some of the strategies a sector council might undertake to address these needs.

The discussions were positive, forward-thinking, realistic, cooperative and, as mentioned before, passionate. The turnout was outstanding, with participants demonstrating a sincere desire to actively listen to one another and creatively discuss meaningful issues to the industry. The CPIA and GCIU sponsors of the workshop were delighted to discover that the need for a sector council was matched by the expertise and determination of those in the industry to create one.

## The Workshop: A Collaborative Process

Some 41 stakeholders representing small and large industry firms, unions, suppliers, education and government participated in the workshop.

The participants were rotated individually through four groups over the two-day workshop so that the mix of participants in the groups was ever changing. This facilitated fresh and spontaneous deliberations at the group level and established a dynamic impetus to the workshop as a whole.

Each of the four groups were asked to consider a number of topics within four different themes surrounding the 2003 Report, the pre-workshop CPIA/GCIU survey, potential projects for a printing sector council and priority activities for an emerging sector council. The discussion was highly animated, enthusiastic and prolific. The results of this collaborative effort are outlined below.

## Key Findings

### Theme: Responding to the 2003 Report

#### *Topic 1: What strategies must we put in place to safeguard the engagement and retention of skilled workers for the printing industry?*

According to participants, the problems associated with attracting and retaining skilled workers fell into four main areas: the absence of a clear career path for workers, along with matching training support and opportunities for skill development; the limited earning potential of some entry-level industry jobs, with few opportunities to re-train; and, the negative image of the industry.

*“We need to build a solid foundation of new recruits to the industry.”*  
*Printer/workshop participant*

#### **Interpretation/Recommendations**

Participants were quite clear about the direction the industry needs to take to turn this situation around. One of the most consistent solutions to be suggested was the development of new apprenticeship models and mentoring programs, where people could learn on the job, maintaining their earnings while upgrading their skills. In-house training based on industry standards and certification programs were also proposed, along with incentives for experts to become trainers within the industry. Participants also came up with the idea of flexible work schedules, with training opportunities offered during lay-off periods. As a general strategy, participants also suggested that printing occupations as a career should be promoted in schools and colleges, as well as overall positive promotion of the printing industry.

#### **Key sector council strategies:**

- ✓ *To develop occupational and training standards across the industry.*
- ✓ *To create a marketing strategy that will promote a positive image of the print industry, including career awareness.*
- ✓ *To explore various options for workplace learning.*

## ***Topic 2: What are some of the ways that we can address the need for more computer-based skills within the workforce?***

There was little disagreement among participants that new technologies have created skills gaps within the industry. Computer skills are now seen as essential to the industry, along with training solutions that address this issue, as well as the rapid rate of technological change. They pointed out that print workers needed to be more than just computer-literate, and needed to understand a variety of diverse applications related to the print process in order to advance their careers.

*“I see the council providing current information on new technology — a resource centre for the industry.”*  
*Company trainer/workshop participant*

### **Interpretation/Recommendations**

Blended learning solutions were proposed again and again as a means of keeping Canada’s print workforce competitive in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. These solutions included distance education, flexible scheduling of courses, self-paced, technology-based learning approaches, and on-the-job or classroom-based learning that followed a core curriculum customized for the print industry. Participants also pointed out the need for “just-in-time” training solutions offered through suppliers of equipment and software, areas that are constantly changing due to new technology.

Participants also identified the issue of how to motivate young people, those whose perception of the industry has made them reluctant to enter the printing industry. It was suggested that through co-operative programs, schools and employers could work together to educate youth about the industry, its high-tech focus and its opportunities for growth and advancement. The absolute necessity of computer skills was also seen as a key message in marketing career opportunities to young people.

### **Key sector council strategies**

- ✓ *To undertake a Training Needs Analysis across the industry, including a detailed analysis of computer-based skills requirements and the nature of existing training programs.*
- ✓ *To propose training delivery options suitable for the printing industry.*

## ***Topic 3: What changes are emerging in the existing printing industry workforce that demands our immediate attention?***

An ageing workforce, coupled with a decrease in the number of younger people entering the industry, was one of the most significant changes that participants described as needing immediate attention. Participants also cited rapid technological change, and a lack of awareness about the print industry as a career choice — a significant barrier to recruitment efforts. They also identified the need for a more clear sense of the career paths available within the industry, in order to attract and retain workers.

*“We are craftsmen and women — we need to make printing a recognized trade.”*  
*Labour representative/workshop participant*

### **Interpretation/Recommendations**

The need to market a positive industry image was a key priority. This was seen as especially true for young people, new Canadians, and women, who are currently under-represented within the industry workforce. Participants felt that it was vital to “brand” the industry with a progressive image, through an educational outreach program targeted

at youth, their teachers, and especially their guidance counsellors. This program would make effective use of multi-media including video, CD-ROM and the Internet, as well as a speaker’s bureau.

In addition to continuous on-the-job training and workplace mentoring programs, participants also suggested that training and occupational standards, along with blended learning solutions, would ensure consistency and quality in training as workforce demographics change.

#### **Key sector council strategies**

- ✓ *To develop a marketing strategy that will “create, package and sell” a new image for the print industry – one that will attract new workers and make existing workers feel more pride in their work.*
- ✓ *To explore best practices, including those from other sector councils, for industry skill and knowledge retention and transfer, and to share the findings of this research widely with industry.*
- ✓ *To continue mentorship and on-the-job training alongside other more structured training and learning programs within the industry.*

#### ***Topic 4: What future changes do we expect for the printing industry workforce and how might a new sector council address these?***

Participants felt that the pressures of a global economy would probably mean that smaller companies would consolidate into larger ones, in order to keep up. They also identified environmental and regulatory changes, which would create new training requirements and reinforce the need for industry-wide standards. A wave of retirements, coupled with ongoing technological change was also predicted — underscoring the need for print industry workers to be increasingly multi-skilled.

Concern about entry-level wages was again expressed, as participants specified the need for a better understanding of existing and projected income distribution within the industry.

#### **Interpretation/Recommendations**

The need for better labour market information specific to the printing industry came up a number of times in discussion, including income distribution analysis, trends in the marketplace, and the effects of industry over-capacity. Participants also thought it would be highly beneficial to improve access to training, and to offer a standardized curriculum with certification. This idea was linked to suggestion of taking a complete inventory of training opportunities currently available, and developing occupational standards.

#### **Key sector council strategies**

- ✓ *To develop national occupational standards, which would then form the basis for certification programs.*
- ✓ *To carry out a detailed sector analysis.*
- ✓ *As part of an overall Training Needs Analysis, to take an inventory of existing training programs, in order to identify any gaps.*

## Theme: Findings from the Survey

### ***Topic 1: How is the print industry’s image portrayed and by what communications strategies might this be changed?***

All participants seemed to agree that the print industry needs an image makeover. And there was no shortage of suggestions as to how this image could be improved.

#### **Interpretation/Recommendations**

There was strong support for a marketing or educational outreach program, including some analysis of who the audience for such a program might be. A major communications strategy was also proposed, one whose messages could include the fact that print media is still alive and well, despite the advent of the Internet, that there are many complex skills needed by the industry, that the work can be satisfying and challenging, and that there are a wide variety of career opportunities. A web site devoted to promoting a positive image of the industry was also suggested, along with the use of existing corporate networks, promotion/recruitment in schools, specific targeting of women, currently under-represented in the industry, and joint initiatives with other sector councils.

National occupational standards were also suggested, so that workers could take advantage of greater career opportunities — benefits that would be promoted as part of any marketing campaigns.

#### **Key sector council recommendations**

- ✓ *To develop a marketing/communications strategy that will “create, package and sell ”a new image for the print industry – one that will attract new workers and make existing workers feel more pride in their work.*
- ✓ *To develop an educational outreach strategy, in consultation with teachers and guidance counsellors, to promote the industry as a career choice and to recruit new workers.*

### ***Topic 2: How will national occupational standards be useful to the print industry?***

Participants felt strongly that national occupational standards were an absolute necessity for the industry. There was unanimous agreement about the need for consistency and quality with respect to work performance, and the related training programs that would support their industry.

*“I expect the council to provide the solutions and tools our industry needs.”*  
*Printer/workshop participant*

#### **Interpretation/Recommendations**

Participants noted that the first step towards occupational standards involved the development of occupational profiles in consultation with industry subject matter experts and industry's' most experienced and skilled technicians. They felt this would also pave the way for national accreditation standards and a certification process for workers. The employment opportunities created by making skills compatible and transferable this way would also make it easier to recruit new workers and attract a younger workforce into the industry.

Many also wanted to see a “vision” for the industry developed, along with the identification of career paths for existing workers, allowing them to plan for their futures and learn along the way. The development of a standardized national curriculum was strongly recommended. Some participants also wanted the development of national training standards to include environmental issues.

Participants stressed that smaller companies must have access to these occupational standards and related training programs.

### **Key sector council strategies**

- ✓ *To develop industry-wide occupational profiles, based on industry data, leading to the development of occupational standards across the industry. This would involve a review of existing standards, expert consultations with industry stakeholders, a review of existing literature related to print industry occupational profiling in other countries, and consultations with other sector councils and/or the Alliance of Sector Councils (TASC) as appropriate.*
- ✓ *To undertake focus testing on the issue of environmental concerns as part of the development of training standards, so that people could be trained consistently with respect to environmental issues.*
- ✓ *To organize an environmental committee to review new environmental standards and “greening” issues that may affect the training needs of the print industry.*
- ✓ *To encourage larger companies to partner with smaller firms in terms of access to training.*

### ***Topic 3: What can we do as an industry to encourage more interest in the pre-press, press and bindery occupations?***

Participants noted that pre-press occupations were increasingly computer-oriented, requiring continuous skills upgrading within the existing workforce. They felt that combining on-the-job learning with structured in-class training programs, along with systematic computer-based training, would help to ensure that sufficient, and adequately trained workers were available to fill these jobs.

They also pointed out that the press and bindery occupations seemed less attractive to potential employees. According to many, the negative perception of these occupations, and even the lifestyle associated with them, was a considerable barrier to recruitment efforts, especially for younger people. They identified the need to promote an evolving “work ethic” that values a modern lifestyle, variety, challenge, and opportunities for personal and professional growth.

### **Interpretation/Recommendations**

Many suggestions were made to deal with this problem, including promoting links between bindery and press job opportunities; encouraging employees to participate in job scheduling and sharing; and getting industry associations, unions and organizations involved in the “selling” of these jobs. Participants also reiterated the need to develop a positive industry image and to develop marketing/educational outreach programs.

Recommendations also included the development of screening tools for potential recruits, certification programs, apprenticeship programs, and more accessible training, in order to increase career interest in the industry. Incentive programs for workers within press and bindery jobs were also suggested.

### **Key sector council strategies**

- ✓ *To develop industry awareness and marketing/educational outreach programs.*
- ✓ *To develop certification standards, and new apprenticeship models/programs.*
- ✓ *To establish human resource best practices and guidelines, to demonstrate how the implementation of innovative human resource programs and incentives might benefit individual companies and the industry as a whole.*
- ✓ *To organize a human resources “Innovation and Best Practices” committee.*

### **Topic 4: How is existing training not sustaining the needs of the printing industry and what might a new sector council do about this?**

Participants agreed that the existing approaches to training were not meeting the industry’s needs and that a sector council could work closely with industry to develop training standards and cost-beneficial, blended learning solutions customized for the printing industry.

*“By providing additional training for my members, a sector council can improve their job skills, increase their job satisfaction, and improve their relations with their employers.”*  
*Labour representative/workshop participant*

### **Interpretations/Recommendations**

Participants were quick to point out that large companies can send people out to train while smaller companies often can’t afford to. They agreed that there must be more commitment to training on the part of both employers and employees. They also noted that there is a real need to capture the skills and knowledge of existing experts within the industry; to capitalize on their experience and that of other sector councils.

Participants also reiterated the need to analyse existing training — on-the-job, academic, formal and informal. They pointed out once again that national training and occupational standards need to be set, and that young people need to be encouraged to enter the printing industry.

### **Key sector council strategies**

- ✓ *To work with all industry stakeholders to develop cost-effective, change-capable, technology-supported learning and training programs and systems that will better address the industry’s human resource needs.*
- ✓ *To conduct an industry-wide training needs analysis.*
- ✓ *To recommend ways that both smaller and larger companies will have access to standardized training.*

## **Theme: Identifying Potential Projects**

### ***Topic 1: What immediate projects might be undertaken by a new sector council to improve the image of occupations within the industry?***

The development of a marketing strategy — one that would target youth, visible minorities, and women — was cited again and again as a priority.

#### **Interpretation/Recommendations**

A number of ideas were suggested as part of an overall marketing strategy, including the creation of a promotional slogan, posters for high schools, subways, and bus shelters, and a special web site designed for students, teachers and guidance counselors. There was also support for small, focused, technical training sessions, branded promotionally for the entire sector, for existing workers in order to improve their morale and their pride.

#### **Key sector council strategies**

- ✓ *To develop targeted, widely-advertised, “branded” technical training sessions as part of the in-service education of existing workers within the printing industry.*

### ***Topic 2: What existing assets within the print industry might be used to address immediate training needs?***

Participants identified numerous assets within the industry that might be used to address immediate training needs, including: experts within the industry itself; print shops; current web-based and CBT training courses and educational programs; provincial sector council initiatives (in Québec); structured in-house mentoring programs; industry associations, unions, and clubs; US resources; the Internet; an established culture of in-house training; wage-subsidy programs for training/re-skilling; suppliers; and retired personnel.

#### **Interpretation/Recommendations**

Participants were well aware of training assets within their sector, and were very receptive to the idea of training innovations that would make use of these assets to retain skilled employees, particularly those at risk of leaving the industry.

#### **Key sector council strategies**

- ✓ *To develop a thorough inventory of existing training assets within the industry, along with their potential for use in various training “delivery” options.*

### ***Topic 3: What are the most effective ways to train people today for pre-press, press and bindery related occupations?***

Participants pointed out the differences between the “art” of printing (printing theory and the overall print process, etc.) and the “science” of printing (tools and technologies that support this theory and process). They stressed the importance of considering this distinction when answering this question.

### **Interpretation/Recommendations**

In the pre-press occupations, participants reported that there should be some form of continuous, in-service technical updating and re-skilling.

As more general training strategies, participants cited on-the-job training (peer to peer) with some structured programming; on-line and computer-based training (CBT); co-op programs; blended (classroom and computer-based) learning solutions; the use of desktop simulators; training centres with part-time industry instructors; and webcast/broadcast satellite learning solutions. They also recommended that training programs capitalize on manufacturers’ and suppliers’ training materials, and suggested specific supplier-based seminars where smaller companies could participate in larger companies’ sponsored events.

Participants also stressed the importance of prior-learning assessments and pre-screening of learners, as well as the by-now familiar application of national standards based on occupational profiles.

### **Key sector council strategies**

- ✓ *To develop National Training Standards that reflect the fact that any printing curriculum must involve both theoretical, print process education and practical, technical skills and knowledge.*
- ✓ *To establish a continuous, in-service, technical updating and re-skilling programs*

### ***Topic 4: How can the barriers of access, cost, time and sufficient content best be addressed through specific training initiatives?***

Participants felt that learning technologies were probably the most efficient way of addressing these concerns.

### **Interpretation/Recommendations**

Participants came up with the following initiatives: print, web-based, CD/DVD, broadcast satellite, and video materials; cost sharing of “expert” trainers/speakers; an on-line, Internet-based training portal with self-nominating training resources, awards and recognition for those who volunteer as subject matter experts; just-in-time training solutions; new forms of apprenticeship and workplace mentorship; simulators; and national and international access to training programs.

Participants reiterated their view that education must be seen as a cost of business, with a definite return on investment. They repeated their assertion that national training standards, based upon national occupational standards, were vital, and that trainers within the industry must also be working to a standard of excellence — the need for train-the-trainer competencies.

### **Key sector council strategies**

- ✓ *To study the various cost-benefit and return-on-investment scenarios for different types of training “delivery” methods, and to factor these into the development of industry-wide training.*
- ✓ *To develop national train-the-trainer competencies, standardized for the industry to ensure the highest quality training possible.*

## **Theme: Prioritizing Next Steps for an Emerging Sector Council**

### ***Topic 1: What are the most critical human resource needs for the printing industry today?***

Participants reported that the most pressing human resource issues facing the industry today were the need for: a positive industry image; an inventory of existing training programs and assets; a training needs analysis; technology-based learning strategies to support the industry; an analysis of the differences between human resource issues affecting smaller and larger companies; and the need for occupational profiles and national standards for training and certification.

### ***Topic 2: How might a new sector council plan to address these needs?***

There were numerous ways that a sector council could address the human resource needs of the industry, according to participants. They felt that a sector council could promote a positive image of the printing industry, and take an inventory of existing training programs and assets, followed by a training needs analysis. They also felt that a sector council would be uniquely placed to develop occupational profiles, and to create national occupational and training standards, leading to certification and accreditation programs. Participants also suggested that a sector council could analyse and help implement the best blended learning solutions for the industry, including up-to-date, technology-based learning strategies. An analysis of the differences and similarities in the human resources issues affecting smaller and larger companies would also be a highly useful sector council initiative.

*“It has taken our industry many decades to arrive at this place. I hope we can pull it back up before it is too late.”*  
*Educator/workshop participant*

### **Interpretation/Recommendations**

The development of an industry image awareness strategy was one of the most consistent initiatives that participants recommended for the council, as well as the creation of an educational outreach program for high schools.

Participants also stressed the importance of mapping out existing training programs, analyzing industry trends, studying off-shore and global industry impacts, and creating national occupational and training standards, working in close partnership with industry. They also suggested that a sector council develop small, manageable projects that can demonstrate its effectiveness quickly.

### **Key sector council strategies**

- ✓ *To develop an industry image marketing strategy.*
- ✓ *To conduct more detailed human resource analysis of the printing sector for planning purposes.*
- ✓ *To develop national standards for occupations, training, accreditation, and certification.*
- ✓ *To develop manageable projects that will demonstrate the effectiveness of the new sector council.*
- ✓ *To develop a short-term work plan as soon as possible.*

***Topic 3: What would you like a new print industry sector council to achieve within the next year? Why?***

In its first year of operation, participants suggested they would first like to see an organizational structure developed that will sustain the council well into the future. They also hoped to see the launch of a national print industry awareness program, and an inventory of training assets. They also expected that the sector council would liaise with TASC and other sector councils to capitalize on best practices already established in other industries. In addition, participants felt that the council should begin the process of creating national occupational profiles, and establish a forum for the creation of national training and occupational standards, leading to certification.

*“ I am encouraged by the possibility of an industry council that will address our human resource needs and guide the industry to spend their dollars wisely.”*

*Workshop participant*

**Key sector council strategies**

- ✓ *To design a sector council whose organizational structure and governance safeguard the interests of the sector as a whole, by creating a sustainable, exemplary council with a clear understanding of the industry’s needs.*

***Topic 4: What would you like a new print industry sector council to achieve within the next five years? Why?***

Participants were very clear about what they expected their sector council to achieve within their first five years. These achievements included: national occupational standards and a related accreditation/certification process; a well-established and positive print industry image, along with an awareness/educational outreach campaign; a standard core curriculum for the print industry which reflects occupational standards; increased involvement of the academic community in research for the industry; and strategies in place to encourage industry-standard workplace learning.

**Interpretation/Recommendations**

Participants wanted their new sector council to remain focused on and responsive to real and changing training needs. They also wanted to see measured and reported results to the industry in order to demonstrate the council’s achievements. The need to communicate effectively with the public and industry stakeholders was also emphasized. Participants also suggested the council build a database dealing with human resource information about and for the industry.

**Key sector council strategies**

- ✓ *To create a sector council that will communicate effectively with all stakeholders, be responsive, adaptive, responsible and accountable.*
- ✓ *To develop a database using the metrics identified in the detailed sector study/analysis, and to keep it adaptable and responsive to the needs of the industry.*

## Summary of Recommendations

### Training Development and Delivery:

- ✦ *To carry out a detailed human resources sector analysis for planning purposes.*
- ✦ *To undertake a Training Needs Analysis across the industry, including a detailed analysis of computer-based skills requirements and the nature of existing training programs.*
- ✦ *To develop national occupational profiles leading to the development of occupational standards across the industry. This would involve a review of existing provincial standards, expert consultations with industry stakeholders, a review of existing literature related to print industry occupational profiling in other countries, and consultations with other sector councils and/or TASC as appropriate. This would then form the basis for training programs with certification.*
- ✦ *To develop National Training Standards that reflect the fact that any printing curriculum must involve both theoretical, print process education and practical, technical skills and knowledge.*
- ✦ *To develop a thorough inventory of existing training assets within the industry, along with their potential for use in various training “delivery” options.*
- ✦ *To explore various options for workplace learning, including distance learning technologies and blended learning solutions.*
- ✦ *To propose new and innovative training delivery options suitable for the print industry.*
- ✦ *To study the various cost-benefit and return-on-investment scenarios for different types of training “delivery” methods, and to factor these into the development of industry-wide training.*
- ✦ *To develop targeted, widely-advertised, “branded” technical training sessions as part of the in-service education of existing workers within the printing industry including technical updating and re-skilling.*
- ✦ *To continue mentorship and on-the-job training alongside other more structured training and learning programs within the industry.*
- ✦ *To develop national train-the-trainer competencies, standardized for the industry to ensure the highest quality training possible.*
- ✦ *To establish human resource best practices and guidelines, to demonstrate how the implementation of innovative human resource programs and incentives might benefit individual companies and the industry as a whole.*
- ✦ *To organize a human resources “Innovation and Best Practices” committee.*
- ✦ *To work with all industry stakeholders to develop cost-effective, change-capable, technology-supported learning and training programs and systems that will better address the industry’s human resource needs.*
- ✦ *To recommend ways that both smaller and larger companies will have access to standardized training.*
- ✦ *To encourage larger companies to partner with smaller firms in terms of access to training.*

- ✦ *To undertake focus testing on the issue of environmental concerns as part of the development of training standards, so that people could be trained consistently with respect to environmental issues.*
- ✦ *To organize an environmental committee to review new environmental standards and “greening” issues that may affect the training needs of the print industry.*

#### **Industry Image, Recruitment and Retention:**

- ✦ *To develop a marketing strategy that will “create, package and sell” a positive image for the print industry – one that will attract new workers and make existing workers feel more pride in their work.*
- ✦ *To explore best practices, including those from other sector councils, for industry skill and knowledge retention and transfer, and to share the findings of this research widely with industry.*
- ✦ *To develop an educational outreach strategy, in consultation with teachers and guidance counsellors, to promote the industry as a career choice and to recruit new workers.*

#### **Post-Secondary Education Programs:**

- ✦ *To take an inventory of existing training programs, in order to identify any gaps.*
- ✦ *To develop new apprenticeship models/programs.*

#### **Sector Council Development:**

- ✦ *To develop manageable projects that will demonstrate the effectiveness of the new sector council.*
- ✦ *To develop a short-term work plan for a sector council as soon as possible.*
- ✦ *To work with industry stakeholders to explore the potential of educational awards, subsidies, and assistance to those entering the industry workforce.*
- ✦ *To design a sector council whose organizational structure and governance safeguard the interests of the sector as a whole, by creating a sustainable, exemplary council with a clear understanding of the industry’s needs.*
- ✦ *To create a sector council that will communicate effectively with all stakeholders, be responsive, adaptive, responsible and accountable.*
- ✦ *To develop a database using the metrics identified in the detailed sector study/analysis, and to keep it adaptable and responsive to the needs of the industry.*

## Conclusions

There is indeed an enthusiastic willingness on the part of the industry to begin the process of creating a sector council for the printing sector. Industry stakeholders seemed to have a realistic sense of the analysis, planning, and national-scope effort required to do so. There is also a desire to achieve manageable results within the first operational year, in order to demonstrate its effectiveness, and perhaps more encouragingly, a co-operative spirit amongst all stakeholders within the printing industry and a desire to work together to achieve excellence.

This report is a “call to action” — an eagerness to develop a sustainable sector council for the printing industry as quickly as possible.