

# Squamish Hiring & Retention Guide

Economic Development

District of Squamish

October 2018

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to access this guide online and interactive!





## About This Guide

This guide is intended to provide an overview of the Squamish workforce, as well as provide practical tips and tools to help your company find and retain employees in Squamish.

Through our latest business survey, we heard that finding employees was one of the biggest challenges facing local companies today. With that in mind, this guide is intended to address local hiring challenges by empowering businesses with knowledge about our workforce, along as provide practical ideas to support hiring and retention.

To build this report, we used data from a variety of sources to give you the most accurate and complete picture of the Squamish workforce. This included data sets from the Statistics Canada Census, employment data from EMSI Analyst and statistics from the job posting scraping tool, Talent Neuron. We also worked with subject matter experts Niagara Workforce Planning Board and WorkBC to assist in data collection for this report. Data for this report was funded through a grant received from the Province of BC in collaboration with our partners the Squamish Chamber of Commerce and Tourism Squamish.

Going forward, we will continue update and refresh this report as new data becomes available. While Census data is only available every five years, job posting data is available quarterly, as an interim measure.



# WORK at a FORCE GLANCE

## SIZE OF WORKFORCE

Squamish (2016)  
11,835



British Columbia (2016)  
2,471,665



## EMPLOYED WORKFORCE

SQUAMISH  
(2016)



11,185

VS

BRITISH COLUMBIA  
(2016)



2,305,690



SELF-EMPLOYED  
**SQUAMISH** @ 16.2%  
change from 2011  
**↑ 15%**  
versus provincial growth  
of 6% in this field

SQUAMISH  
UNEMPLOYMENT  
@ 5.5%  
CHANGE FROM 2011 **-33%**

The province of B.C. had an unemployment rate of 6.7% (2016) with a decrease from 2011 of 14%.



## Top Takeaways

### 1. We're becoming a knowledge-based community

Education is changing rapidly for residents in Squamish. University-educated residents among us have nearly doubled in proportion since 2006.

### 3. Sales and service occupations: top jobs posted

From January to March 2018, the majority of hiring through online job postings came from the service-producing sectors.

### 2. Local talent leakage across all sectors

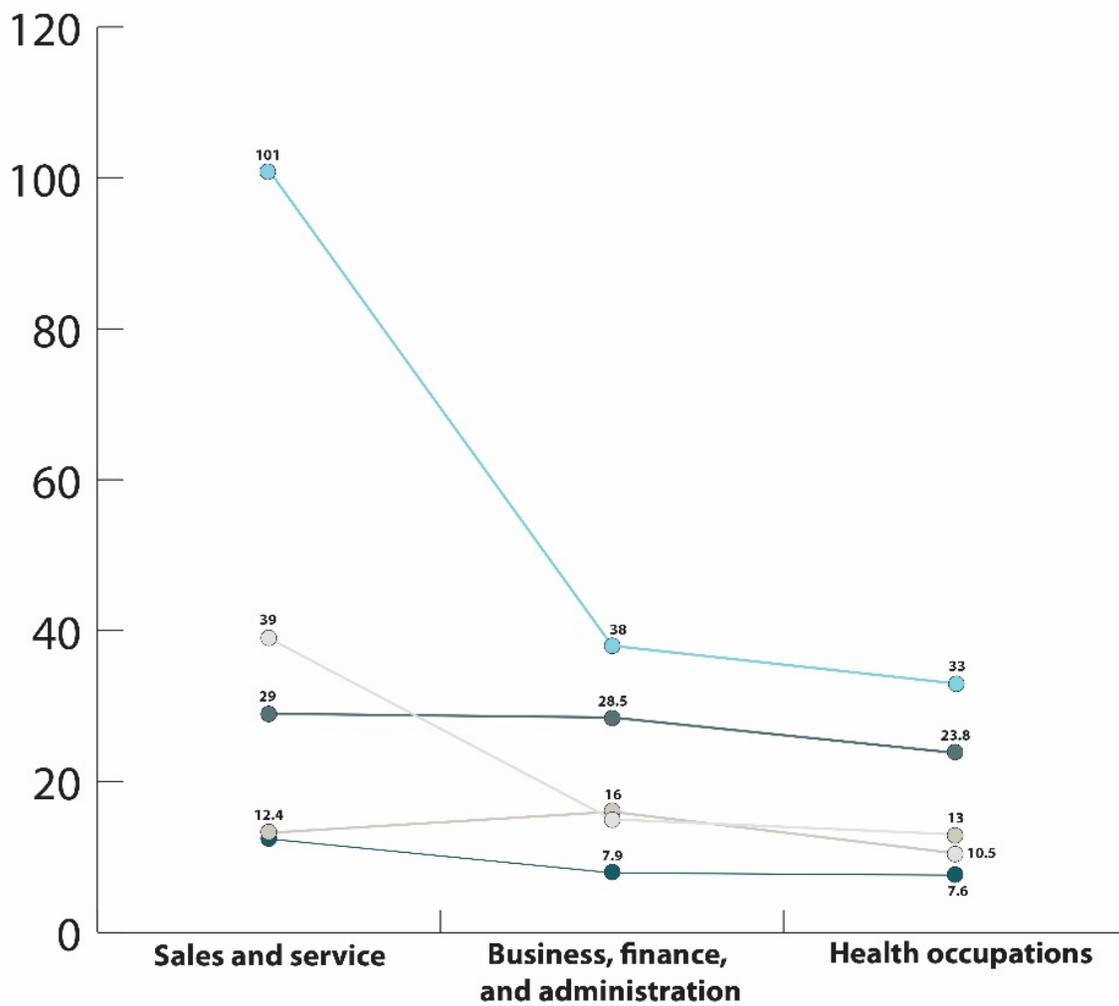
There is a great opportunity for Squamish businesses to attract workforce, as we see many residents commuting outside Squamish for work.

### 4. Squamish compensation in line with Vancouver, Whistler

Our wages are competitive — new data reveals that for nearly every occupation, the median hourly wage is similar to our neighbours.



## We're becoming a knowledge-based community



- No certificate, diploma or degree (%)
- Secondary (high) school diploma or equivalency certificate (%)
- Apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma (%)
- Share of Total Postings (%)
- Number of Postings

**What we found out:** Education is changing rapidly for residents in Squamish. University-educated residents have nearly doubled in proportion since 2006. Meanwhile, despite the increase in construction and development throughout Squamish, our trades and apprentice-educated residents have stagnated, shrinking from 13 percent in 2006, to 10.5 percent in 2016.

Today, over half (53.4 percent) of Squamish adults, aged 25-64, have a post-secondary diploma or degree, rising from 40.5 percent of adults in 2006. Within this group, the highest growth category was seen in adults with a Bachelor's degree or higher, which has grown 40 percent in Squamish since 2011. This growth follows, but far outpaces the Provincial trend, where the proportion of post-secondary educated adults has grown by 9.5 percent between 2011 and 2016.

**Why this matters:** If your company is seeking university-educated staff, this could be great news. As you'll read later in this report, based on our most recent analysis on job postings Squamish is lacking local opportunities for knowledge sector workers. The recent influx of university-educated residents means that you may notice applicants with higher education levels than you'd expect for a given role. During your recruitment and screening, it would be wise not to pass over these applicants as over-qualified, as more and more university-educated people come to live in Squamish.

**What we found out:** Meanwhile, the proportion of Squamish residents with an apprenticeship or trades certificate/diploma has seen a small decline, shrinking from 13.2 percent of the population in 2006, to 10.5 percent of the population in 2016.

**Why this matters:** If your business is hiring staff in the skilled trade professions, you may experience fewer qualified candidates than in previous years. For those dependent on skilled trades workers, it is more important than ever to focus your efforts on engaging and retaining your employees. To ensure you have a sustainable long-term hiring pipeline, consider developing a long-term talent development strategy, which could involve formal apprenticeship programs, or creating your own in-house, on-the-job training and certification.

#### TALENT ATTRACTION TIP:

Consider implementing additional tactics, such as launching an employee referral program, working with a professional recruiter, partnering with education providers, joining a hiring fair, and/or leveraging the hiring support services available from Work BC Sea to Sky.



## Local talent leakage across all sectors

**What is it:** Recent data provides a look into Squamish residents' commuting patterns, by industry. If you're an employer, this data can help you assess whether your industry is retaining the local workforce in town, or whether they're commuting outside Squamish for a better opportunity.

**What we found out:** As the chart depicts, there is a great opportunity for Squamish businesses to retain more local residents to work locally, as we see many residents commuting outside Squamish, across all industries and sectors. This suggests that residents are being offered better opportunities outside of town, although further research with comparisons to similar occupations in neighbouring communities is needed to understand what those "better opportunities" entail.

In 2016, the top-5 industries employing Squamish residents were accommodation and food services, retail trade, health care and social assistance, education services, and public administration. Converting a small share of commuting residents from these sectors to local employment would make a sizeable impact on the total available workforce. For example, retaining 10% of the commuting work force from these five sectors would lead to an additional 151 residents available for local employment.

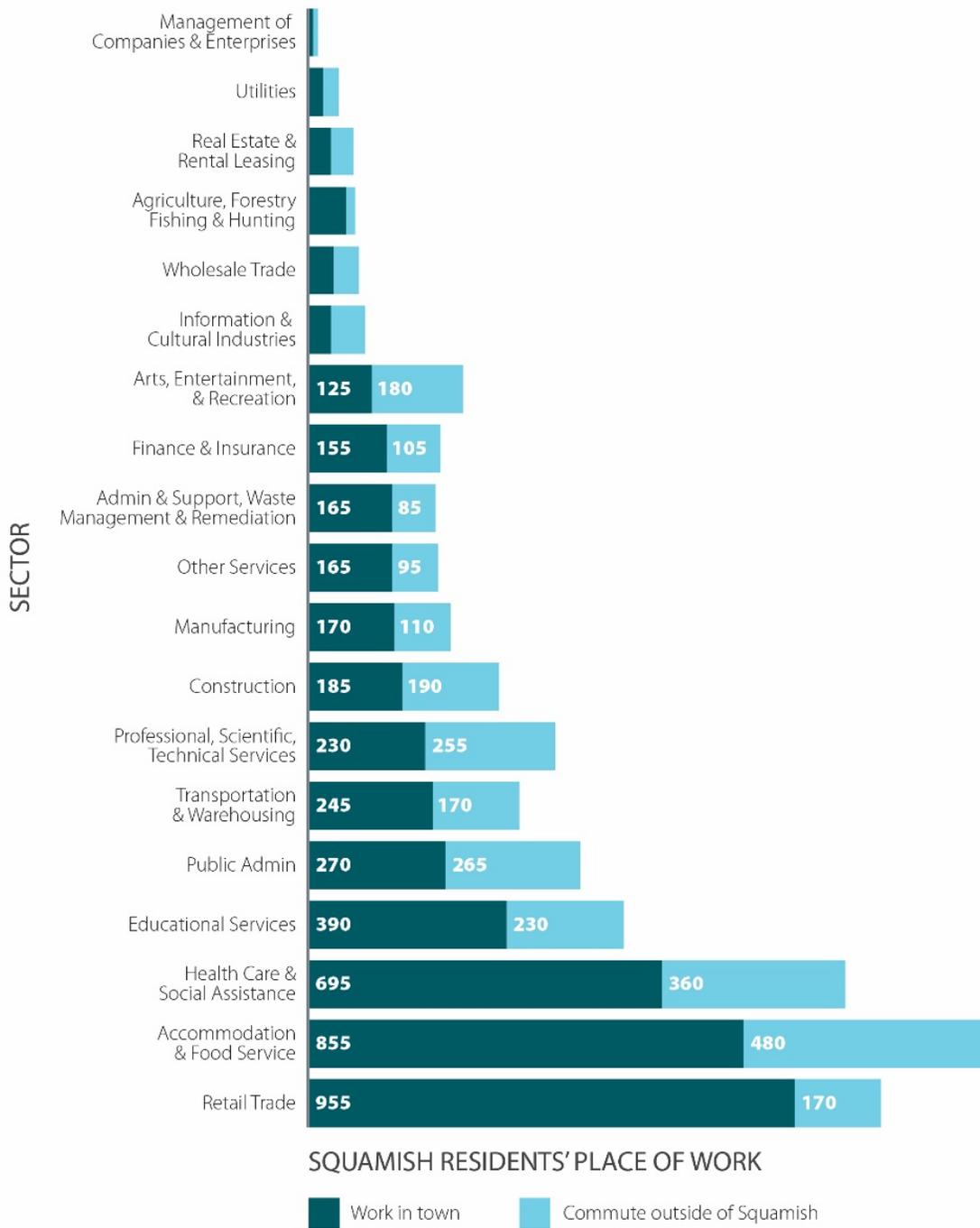
**Why this matters:** If you're an employer in Squamish with an active business licence and you'd like to drill-down further into the commuting occupation data, reach out to us and we'd be happy to provide you with tailored insights for you and your team. We'd be happy to take a peek at the commuting flow for your particular industry or the specific job you're hoping to hire for.

### TALENT ATTRACTION TIP:

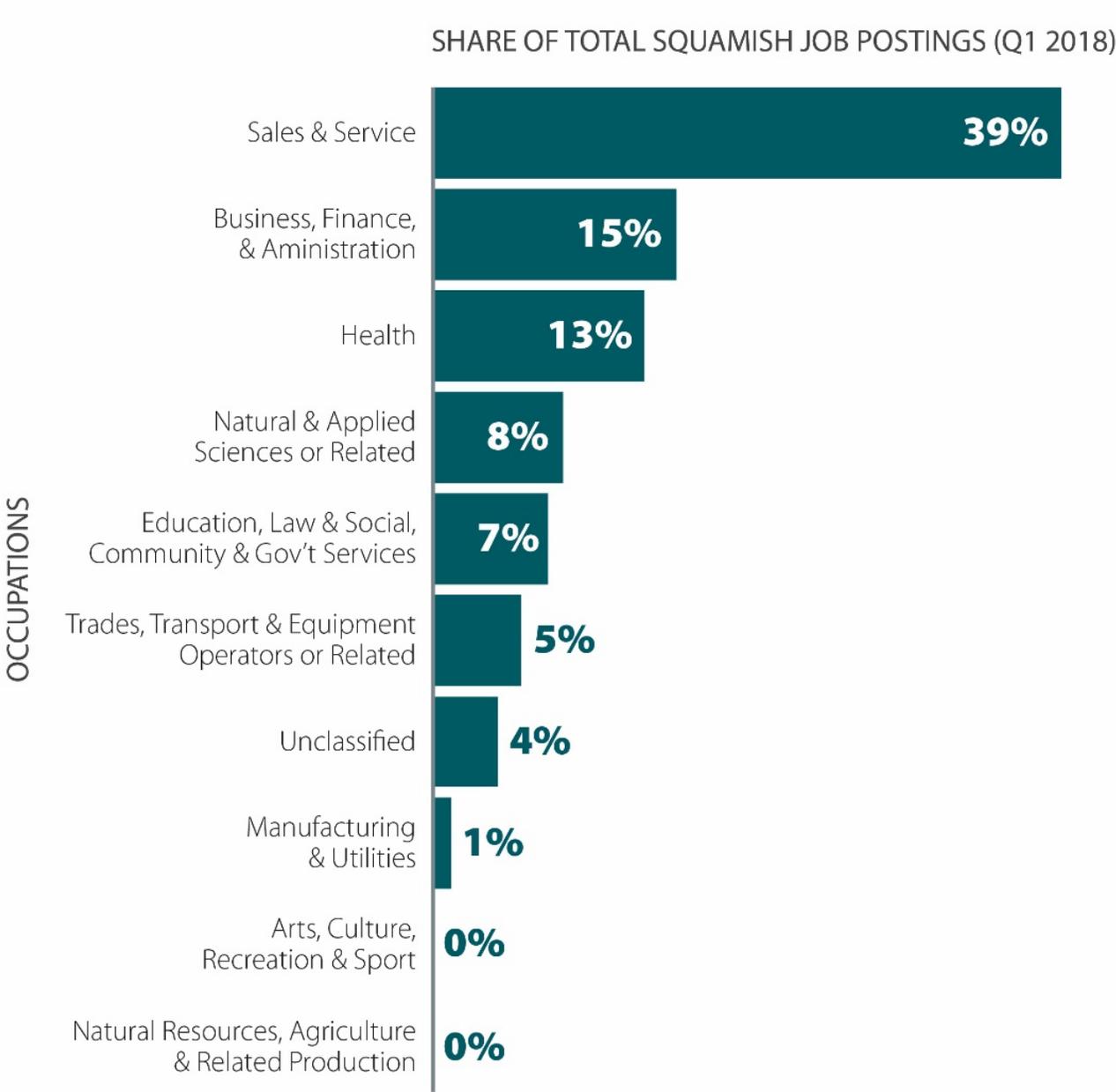
If you've already got a great value proposition for employees, be sure to clearly communicate what that means in your recruitment campaign. Discuss your strengths, workplace culture, and any unique benefits to set your company apart.

(To learn more, read [this article](#) by Go2Hr.)





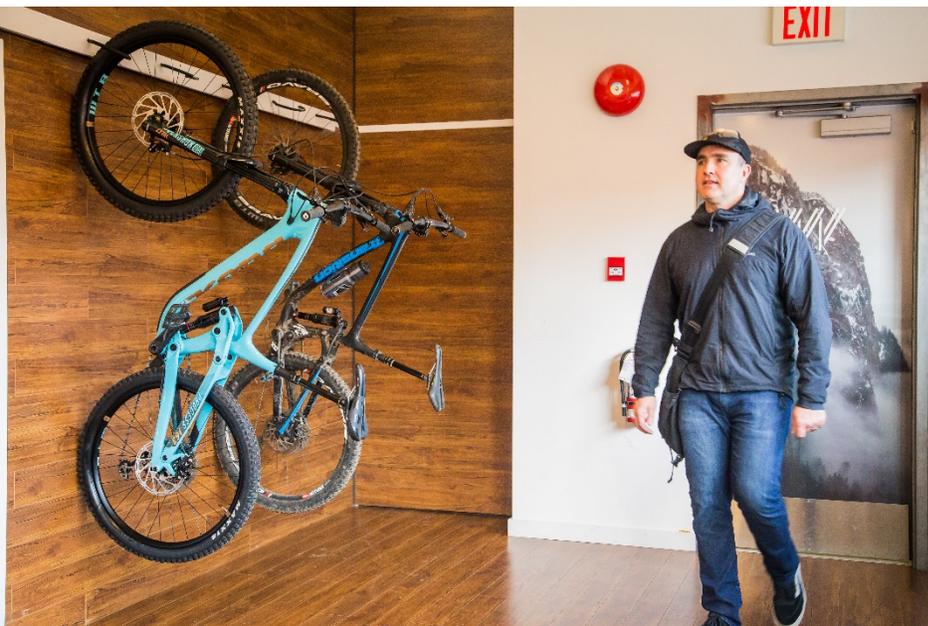
# Sales and service occupations: top jobs posted



**What we found out:** In the first quarter of 2018, the majority of hiring activity through online job postings came from the service-producing sector, with 39 percent of all postings advertising work in sales and service occupations (101 postings). The most common positions within sales and service, were for retail salespersons (15 postings), retail sales supervisors (13 postings), customer and information services representatives (12 postings), service supervisors (11 postings), and chefs and cooks (10 postings).

**Why this matters:** If your business is hiring for a position in sales and service, based on the volume of postings we observed in Q1, you'll want to consider how to cut through the clutter. Find ways to stand out by offering competitive salary and/or benefits, developing an excellent work culture with training and growth opportunities, and moving beyond job postings as your company's sole recruitment strategy. For example, you could complement your online job posting activities with an employee referral program, which has been found to generate up to 40-60 percent of some employer's new hires, according to go2HR.

Meanwhile, lesser-posted positions from the first quarter of 2018 reveal areas less abundant from a job-seekers' perspective. These include occupations in natural resources, art, culture, recreation and sport, manufacturing and utilities, and trades occupations.



#### TALENT ATTRACTION TIP:

To remain competitive and attract the best employees, it's vital that you can differentiate what makes your company a great place to work. Just as you would optimize the value proposition of your product or service to attract customers, the same principles apply to attracting employees. Figure out your strengths and what sets you apart, as an employer, and communicate that at every possible opportunity to potential staff.

## Squamish Compensation in Line With Vancouver, Whistler

**Why this matters:** Competitive compensation is a key factor in attracting and retaining talented employees, and ever more so in Squamish, with a rising cost of living. In a recent Harvard Business Review [article](#), pay was cited as the most important element that candidates consider when evaluating potential companies, especially when a candidate has multiple options.

**What is it:** To assist you in formulating your compensation strategy, we've compiled the median hourly wage reported in 2017 for all occupations, alongside wage data from competing employer jurisdictions, Vancouver and Whistler. We're presenting the data relative to Vancouver and Whistler, because it's important to consider the rate of pay being offered by competing employers in neighbouring jurisdictions. Let's face it: the Sea to Sky Highway is a beautiful commute, and as we saw in the last section, both Vancouver and Whistler are a draw for our workforce.

**What we found out:** Overall, most occupations are paid within a 5 percent range of competing jurisdictions in Vancouver and Whistler. Of all the occupations, there were three occupations that tended to be paid lower:

 **SENIOR MANAGEMENT**  
Tend to be compensated **16%** less than Vancouver, and **4%** less than Whistler.

 **DISTRIBUTION, TRACKING, SCHEDULING CO-ORDINATION**  
Tend to be compensated **2%** less than Vancouver, and **5%** less than Whistler.

 **SALES REP AND SALESPERSONS-WHOLESALE AND RETAIL TRADE**  
Squamish staff in these rolls tend to be paid **8%** less than their counterparts in Vancouver.  
However, they tend to be paid **6%** more than similar occupations in Whistler.



**Why this matters:** If your company is hiring for these roles, it may be timely to consider reviewing your compensation package, and comparing to employers in Vancouver and Whistler. While compensation adjustments seem expensive, consider the cost of turnover. According to a [recent Harvard Business Review article](#), the cost to replace a staff who leaves is roughly 21 percent of the value of their annual salary.

Finally, to support your employees in staying with your company, consider whether the compensation will meet the employee's basic living expenses. While a living wage estimate has not yet been calculated specifically for Squamish, the [Living Wage for Families Campaign](#) has calculated the hourly amount a family needs to cover basic expenses for Vancouver, which can serve as a useful proxy.

## Tips for Workforce Attraction & Retention

### Attraction

#### 1. Develop your value proposition-- as an employer

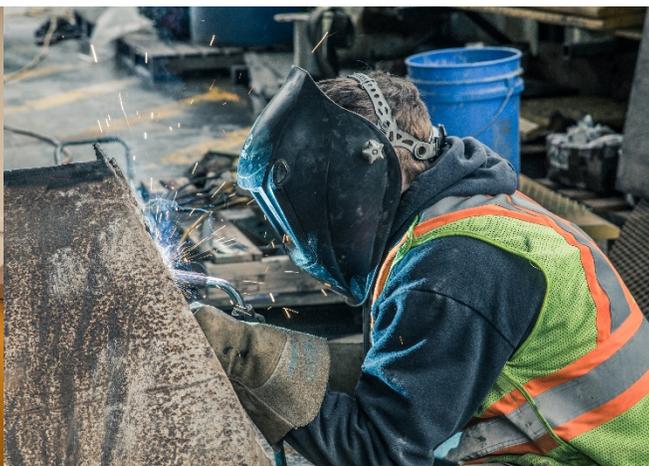
- To remain competitive and attract the best employees, it's vital that you can differentiate what makes your company a great place to work. Just as you would optimize the value proposition of your product or service to attract customers, the same principles apply to attracting employees. Figure out your strengths and what sets you apart, as an employer, and communicate that at every possible opportunity to potential staff.
- If you've already got a great value proposition for employees, be sure to clearly communicate what that means in your recruitment campaign. Discuss your strengths, workplace culture, and any unique benefits to set your company apart. (To learn more, read [this article](#) by Go2Hr.)

#### 2. Review your compensation & benefits

- As we saw earlier, compensation is one of the top considerations when candidates are comparing two job opportunities.
- According to advice from the Society for Human Resource Management, best practice is to review salaries every eighteen months. (Read more, [here](#).)

#### 3. Move beyond job postings as your sole recruitment tactic

- If you're hiring for a role in the Squamish service industry, you will be facing lots of competition in job postings, and you'll be rewarded for thinking out of the box when it comes to recruitment.
- Consider implementing additional tactics, such as launching an employee referral program, working with a professional recruiter, partnering with education providers, joining a hiring fair, and/or leveraging the hiring support services available from [Work BC Sea to Sky](#).



## Retention

### 1. Invest in staff training

- Investing in your employees improves customer service and creates greater job satisfaction, which in turn reduces turnover and improves productivity.
- 85 percent of employees who say they are **not likely** to leave their job say they have training opportunities. (WCC)
- 40 percent of employees who receive poor job training leave within their first year. (go2hr.ca)

### 2. Create an employee onboarding program

- 69 percent of employees are more likely to be retained for three years if they went through an onboarding program. (Society for Human Resource Management)
- Create an employee onboarding program that speaks to your company's history, mission, and values, and you'll be much more likely to see your employees stay. To get started, read [this article](#).

### 3. Focus on recognition

- Recognition has a strong positive correlation with retention. (Forbes)
- 90 percent of employees who receive recognition from their manager indicate higher levels of trust in them. (Forbes)
- Recognition can take many forms, and it doesn't have to cost money every time. Get some inspiration with [this toolkit](#) from the Society for Human Resource Management.

## Hiring Resources



FIND EMPLOYEE TRAINING PROGRAMS IN SQUAMISH  
<https://www.squamishchamber.com/>



ACCESS RECRUITMENT SUPPORT AND WAGE SUBSIDIES FROM WORKBC SEA TO SKY  
<https://www.squamishesc.com/>



FIND ACCESS TO TRAINING GRANTS  
<http://squamish.ca/economicdevelopment>

## Get Custom Data

Are you a locally licensed business, and looking to gain personalized insights to help your hiring?

Squamish Economic Development can offer you customized data, tailored to your industry and the specific questions you're interested in.

Some of the data we offer includes:

1. Job posting hiring activity by sector and sub-sector, (to 4-level NAICS) and by occupation (to 3-level NOC) for Squamish-based jobs
2. Most common hard skills and soft skills that are in demand for those jobs being advertised in Squamish
3. Wage data by sector and sub-sector, (to 2-level NAICS) and by occupation (to 2-level NOC) for Squamish
4. Counts of firms, both with and without employees, in Squamish, Vancouver and Whistler (statistics from December 2017)

Contact us at [economicdevelopment@squamish.ca](mailto:economicdevelopment@squamish.ca) to enquire about customized data for your company.

## About Squamish Economic Development

The District of Squamish, through its [economic development services](#), supports the vibrancy of the existing business community while strategically positioning the community for future economic growth. Economic Development works with the business community to ease business constraints, provide expertise and tools to local business, and liaises with the business community and government to support policy development and programs that lead to growth opportunities for the community. Specifically, our mandate is to: support a vibrant and profitable local economy; promote Squamish as place of business; support a collaborative relationship between private and public sectors; and provide information in support of a healthy local economy

### About our partners:

#### **Squamish Chamber of Commerce**

The Squamish Chamber of Commerce is the oldest and largest business organization in the Squamish community. We are dedicated to enhancing the quality of life in the Squamish community by actively supporting business, economic growth and economic diversification. The Chamber takes a leadership role in advocating for the interest of Squamish business and provides member services such as networking, educational events, training, promotional opportunities and partnerships with other organisations.

The Squamish Chamber is excited to partner with the District of Squamish and Tourism Squamish in providing this guide and in delivering Squamish Excellence, a partner initiative to provide affordable customized training to Squamish businesses to address challenges with recruitment and retention, and provide tools to grow your business. Find out more about the Squamish Chamber and our tools to help your business grow at [www.squamishchamber.com](http://www.squamishchamber.com)

#### **Tourism Squamish**

Tourism Squamish is a non-profit community destination marketing organization (DMO). Tourism Squamish takes the lead in promoting Squamish and coordinating destination marketing efforts. Our role includes developing coordinated strategies in the areas of marketing and sales to promote overnight stays in Squamish. Tourism Squamish executes targeted promotions and consumer campaigns that include online and print marketing, social media and traditional media. [www.exploresquamish.com](http://www.exploresquamish.com)

## Glossary

- **Median:** the value in the middle of a group of values. (For example, the median of three wages \$15, \$20, and \$30 would be \$20.) In a case where the total number of values is even, the median is then determined to be the average of the middle two. (In that case, the median of \$15, \$20, \$22, and \$30 would be the average of \$20 and \$22, so \$21.)
- **Average:** the sum of a set of values, divided by how many values are being averaged. (For example, the average of three wages \$15, \$20, and \$30 would be \$20.)
- **Squamish Census Agglomeration (CA):** this is a Statistics Canada term, referring to the geography included in the statistics. Statistics Canada describes that "... a census agglomeration (CA) is formed by one or more adjacent municipalities centred on a population centre (known as the core)... other adjacent municipalities must have a high degree of integration with the core, as measured by commuting flows derived from data on place of work from the previous Census Program." Typically, the District of Squamish elects to communicate statistics at the CA level, as it includes the Squamish Nation communities.
- **Size of Workforce:** as per Statistics Canada's definition, this is the number of Squamish population aged 15 years who are "in the workforce". "In the workforce" includes both those who are employed and those who are unemployed, but it excludes those who elect to not participate in the labour force.
- **Unemployment rate:** Statistics Canada describes this as the number of unemployed, expressed as a percentage of the labour force. Unemployed refers to "the number of persons who, during the reference week, were without work, had looked for work in the past four weeks, and were available for work. Those on layoffs, or who had a new job to start in four weeks or less, are considered unemployed..."
- **Commuters:** in our data, we're presenting commuters as anyone who travels outside of the Squamish municipality for their usual place of work. That would include trips to Vancouver, Whistler, and beyond.
- **Self-Employed:** in this definition, Statistics Canada includes any self-employed people who are "15 years and over with or without an incorporated business, with paid help or without paid help, as well as unpaid family workers."
- **NOC:** NOC stands for the National Occupational Classification, which is a standard used by Statistics Canada to define occupations. To understand the specific definitions that comprise each occupation, access Statistics Canada's definition of all the NOC occupations, [here](#).
- **NAICS:** NAICS stands for the North American Industry Classification system, a common statistical framework shared by Canada, the US and Mexico for defining which type of

business activities make up each industry. Learn more about the definitions for each sector, [here](#).

Is there a term you'd like clarified? Connect with us by emailing [economicdevelopment@squamish.ca](mailto:economicdevelopment@squamish.ca), and we'll be happy to help clarify!

## Sources

To bring you the best perspective, we seek to source data from a variety of resources. Below you will find the sources for each section of this report.

### *At A Glance*

- [Statistics Canada](#). 2017. Squamish [Census agglomeration], British Columbia and British Columbia [Province] (table). Census Profile. 2016 Census. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-X2016001. Ottawa. Released November 29, 2017. (Accessed September 6, 2018)
- [Statistics Canada](#). 2013. British Columbia (Code 59) (table). National Household Survey (NHS) Profile. 2011 National Household Survey. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 99-004-XWE. Ottawa. Released September 11, 2013. (Accessed September 6, 2018).
- [Statistics Canada](#). 2013. Squamish, CA, British Columbia (Code 934) (table). National Household Survey (NHS) Profile. 2011 National Household Survey. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 99-004-XWE. Ottawa. Released September 11, 2013. (Accessed September 6, 2018).

### *We're Becoming a Knowledge Based Community*

- Statistics Canada. 2017. Focus on Geography Series, 2016 Census. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-404-X2016001. Ottawa, Ontario. Data products, 2016 Census.

### *Local Talent Leakage Across All Sectors*

- Statistics Canada 2016 Census, custom cross-tabulation for Squamish CA.

### *Sales and Service Occupations: Top Jobs Posted*

- Talent Neuron, via Niagara Workforce Planning Board.

### *Squamish Compensation In Line With Vancouver, Whistler*

- EMSI Analyst, via Niagara Workforce Planning Board.



SQUAMISH