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Looking for a job?

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If you're looking for a job, you shouldn't have much problem landing yourself a position as the country is experiencing quite the labour shortage these days.

With a current unemployment rate of 7 per cent, you would think people would be scrambling for jobs, but they aren't.

The nationwide labour shortage is really causing problems in business and industry.

Of course, this all began with the pandemic and sudden restrictions on business that saw restaurants and other businesses forced to close their doors.

When this happened, people had to look elsewhere for employment, and many of them made transitions to other lines of work.

When the restaurants opened up, they had no one to serve the customers. This seems to be happening across the board.

With a shortage of workers, many businesses are running behind on the jobs they need to accomplish. This translates to a loss of growth for businesses who just don't have the people to take on more work and expand their operations.

Some business owners having started offering incentives to bring people on board, however with only 40 per cent of small business making their normal sales, offering people more money to work at those businesses just isn't in the cards.

According to Statistics Canada, there were 731,900 job vacancies in the second quarter of 2021.

That represents a lot of work that has to be done.

While many different industries are feeling the squeeze, it seems the hospitality industry is sinking under a workload that just hasn't seen people return to work.

One restaurant owner in B.C. said his former employers told him it was easier for them to survive on pandemic benefits than to return to a minimum wage job.

The health care industry is also having a lot of problems, noting that nearly half of all vacancies in this profession have been open for 90 days or more.

Pressure during the pandemic caused many highly trained nurses to pack it in or retire.

Other hard-hit industries included retail and trucking, off all things, with an average of 18,000 truck driver positions open in the second quarter of 2021.

The real question is where did all these people go?

If they were let go from their regular job during the pandemic, they went somewhere. Not everyone is at home collecting benefits and waiting for the gold at the end of rainbow.

It seems like this pandemic shook up a lot of people's ideas of what life shouldbe about.

Those that were working in the high-stress corporate world suddenly found themselves able to work from home ? at least temporarily.

Suddenly, the stress was gone. There was no commute, and no 24-hour dedication to the job.

I recently interviewed a woman who had started her own business in town. She told me that one day she realized that being at home and not spending two hours every morning on the highway changed her life so much that she quit her job and decided to work for herself.

That sounds good for her, but the reality is, her husband still makes the commute ? someone has to bring home the bacon.

Of course, there was a certain segment of the population that was older and simply decided it was time to retire and not go back to any job at all.

If someone is currently off work and planning to go back, the least they should be doing is upgrading their skills so when it's time to start handing our your resumé it will be a little heavier than it was before you were let go.

It's a very strange situation and it's not local, it's a nationwide problem.

Some economists predict this situation won't change anytime soon.

Part of the problem is a good deal of these jobs that are available tend to be low paying and not exactly in the glamour line-up of careers.

I can understand why some people might prefer to stay home rather than work an overnight shift in dirty factory producing widgets for a whopping $15 per hour.

A manufacturer around the corner from where I live is struggling to fill 50 desperately needed positions. However, when you start at their location, you automatically do night shift for as long as they say, with no benefits and work in a noisy, uninviting environment, while being paid minimum wage.

Management seriously needs to think about their employees as people, and a benefit to the company, if they want to attract, and keep workers.

I guess a labour shortage is better than a shortage of labour positions, but those positions will have to be filled to get the economy back on robust trajectory.