

**Bridge the Gap with
Women in Skilled
Trades & Technologies:
Saskatchewan's
Summit**

Proceedings Report
July 2011

Hollett & Sons Inc. 

Planning * Facilitation * Evaluation

The Summit and Proceedings Report was compiled with support from the following Working Group members:

Organization	Member
1. Canadian Centre for Women in Science, Engineering, Trades and Technology (WinSETT)	Valerie Overend
2. Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan (PCS)	Leanne Bellegarde
3. Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission (SATCC)	Dawn Stanger Audrey Wolf-Kaminski
4. Saskatchewan Construction Association (SCA)	Doug Folk
5. Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies (SIIT)	Shelley Macnab
6. Saskatchewan Mining Association (SMA)	Pam Schwann
7. Saskatchewan Ministry of Advanced Education, Employment and Immigration (AEEI)	Darcy Cherney
8. Saskatchewan Status of Women Office (SWO), Ministry of Social Services	Pat Faulconbridge Leslie Neilsen
9. Saskatchewan Women in Trades and Technology (SaskWITT)	Kim Andreas Marral Thomson

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TABLE OF ACRONYMS

Acronym	Meaning
CAF	Canadian Apprenticeship Forum
CCWESTT	Canadian Coalition of Women in Engineering, Science, Trades and Technology
CSC	Construction Sector Council
SaskWITT	Saskatchewan Women in Trades and Technology
SATCC	Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission
SIAST	Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology
SIIT	Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies
SYA	Saskatchewan Youth Apprenticeship
WinSETT	Canadian Centre for Women in Science, Engineering, Trades and Technologies

1 BACKGROUND

The Saskatchewan Women in Skilled Trades and Technologies Working Group (membership appended) hosted a Summit to explore barriers and develop solutions to increase female participation in the skilled trades and technology workforce.

The Summit was held in Saskatoon on May 6, 2011 with approximately 80 participants including Presidents and CEO's of major businesses and their associations, tradespersons and technologists, educational representatives, First Nations representatives, senior political and departmental representatives from the government of Saskatchewan and other groups.

The objectives of the Summit were developed by the working group as follows.

1. Better understand the impediments to recruiting and retaining more women in skilled trades and technologies
2. Bring together decision-makers from Saskatchewan business, industry and government
3. Sharing and learning best practices in the recruitment and retention of women in skilled trades and technologies
4. Agree to individual and group actions
5. Agree on a plan to measure the implementation of actions

An external facilitation firm (Hollett and Sons Inc.) was hired in January, 2011 to assist the working group with the planning, design, facilitation and evaluation of the Summit.

In advance of the Summit, participants were asked to complete an online pre-Summit engagement survey. The results of the survey are appended and assisted in planning the agenda and understanding participants' expectations for the Summit and knowledge of this issue.

Members of the working group developed a background document (found on the SATCC Website (www.saskapprenticeship.ca/WOMEN_IN_NONTRAD_TRADES)) which outlined the issues and was also circulated to all participants in advance of the Summit.

This report presents the results of the Summit. The report layout follows the agenda of the day, providing a synopsis of each component. Appreciation is extended to Rick Ewen of SATCC for note-taking throughout.

2 OPENING REMARKS

Joe Black, CEO, Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission (SATCC) greeted participants, introduced Ministers Draude and Norris, and the five panellists. Joe emphasized the value of partnerships in apprenticeship training and acknowledged the contributions of the working group, the sponsors and the participating agencies.

Honourable June Draude, Minister Responsible of Social Services and Minister Responsible for the Status of Women, commented the Summit was the first of its kind and could establish a standard for interested parties across Canada. She added Saskatchewan women's participation in industry is expanding. In the last four years, women have overtaken men in workplace participation and women in Saskatchewan have the highest labour force participation rates in the country.

Minister Draude noted skilled labour shortages and retention are major challenges for many jurisdictions. She encouraged employers to examine their workplace cultures and eliminate the wage gap to attract women to fill needed jobs. She also encouraged parents to create an interest in their children in trades and technologies, not just in academia. In closing, she added that more collaborative and supportive work needs to be done with First Nations to increase their engagement.

Minister of Advanced Education, Employment and Immigration, the Honourable Rob Norris commented that Saskatchewan has, at 5%, the lowest unemployment rate in Canada. He commented that our task is to encourage women to look at careers across a wider spectrum. He said that the government, over the last four years, has invested more than \$2.8 billion in education and funding for Aboriginal people (13,000 of 72,000 adult learners) has also increased substantially.

Minister Norris went on to say Saskatchewan has seen huge growth in apprentice numbers and has worked very hard to address the high demand for skilled labour. Additionally, the Saskatchewan Youth Apprenticeship Program has had a significant impact on introducing young people to the potential of a career in the skilled trades. He finished his address by sharing his recent experience at a silicon mine. The employer attributed success in the heavy equipment operator portion of the workplace to the number of women operators with their strong skill sets and work ethic.

He concluded that he looks forward to seeing the results of today's dialogue, and to a continued action that will create new opportunities for women – not just in the trades and technologies, but across the economy.

Joe Black then introduced the facilitator (Susan Hollett) who outlined the plan for the day, went through the documents in the participant kits and pointed out the resource table where participating agencies and sponsors displayed pamphlets, reports and materials regarding their programs and initiatives.

3 PANEL DISCUSSION (“THE FIRESIDE CHAT”)

Susan hosted a fireside chat with five women:

1. Peggy Vermette, Labour Force Development Project Coordinator, Saskatoon Tribal Council, co-chair of the Saskatoon Labour Market Committee, Saskatoon
2. Roxanne Ecker, Journeyperson Electrician, Saskatchewan Government Services, Regina
3. Keri Fox, Journeyperson Electrician, co-owner of Regal Electric, Moose Jaw
4. Jan McLellan-Folk, Chief Financial Officer, Alliance Energy Group of Companies (electrical contracting), Regina
5. Lynn McNally-Power, Director Talent Management, Cameco (mining company), Saskatoon

Each participant first made introductory comments.

Jan Alliance Energy currently employs eight electricians who are women. The company encourages diversity in the workplace and is developing a supportive culture. They have noticed the younger generation is more supportive and tolerant of diversity and there is an increase in the number of women applying to be electricians.

Lynn All Cameco operations in Saskatchewan are mining/milling in the north - at camp facilities accessed on a fly-in basis. This schedule has been both the best and worst challenge for them. Cameco employs about 23-25% women, many of whom work in technical fields. About 10% of tradespeople are apprentices; there are three female journeypersons, but no female apprentices currently.

Keri works mainly in residential and commercial fields. Her company has employed women in the past, but none currently. Retention has been an issue and she is seeking ways to address that.

Roxanne commented that employer attitude makes all the difference for women working in the trades. She has had experiences with both good and bad employers, and it makes a lot of difference to have a supportive employer.

Peggy has worked on women's trades programs for years and currently provides employment resources and job assistance programs for aboriginal people. She sees tremendous potential for aboriginal women in the skilled trades and technologies fields.

Susan then hosted a discussion with the five women while the audience observed.

3.1.1 What Makes a Good Workplace?

- flexibility is important

- childcare issues
- not being out of town for an extended period of time
- having pre and post pregnancy support in place
- fellow workers not being competitive or judgemental
- a company's workplace culture is very important and needs to be led from the top
- changing demographics are bringing down the barriers
- younger generation, both male and female, are more inclined to want to discuss issues than in the past
- for camp situations, wider access points allows people to remain in their home communities
- First Nations women often feel very isolated in the workplace, when they get support they do very well
- accommodations for single parents are important; there are times when people simply can't work out of town, a good employer will understand that
- a welcoming workplace that values the employee is important
- being hired to work and be productive, not just to say that there is a woman on staff, is very important
- a commitment to teaching [mentoring] in the workplace is essential

3.1.2 What Will Improve a Woman's Experience at the Workplace?

- avoid "tokenism", make them full players on the team
- the workplace drive for high profit at any cost, reduces the commitment to training in the construction environment

3.1.3 How to Interest More Girls in Trades and Technologies?

- start very young
- encourage them by fully supporting them in whatever career path they take (family support is very important)
- ensure they know trades are a viable option
- work experience programs as part of schooling are very valuable
- give them the chance to try things out, many never get to try tools
- the scholarship program with SYA will help spread the word
- female role models are needed, especially at career fairs
- emphasize that the trades can be a "first career choice"
- a workplace shift already happens with good employers, where those who don't accept women are the ones that get looked down on
- training the trainers is one approach
- the benefits make business sense
- it should not be an oddity in any company for a woman to do any job

- when demand outstrips supply, attitudes will change
- as a retention strategy, all new females on staff are mentored by a female already working for the company
- partners taking responsibility is very important

4 CHALLENGES & ENABLERS – SMALL GROUP WORK

The Fireside Chat provided Summit participants firsthand with the experiences of women in trades. The next step in the Summit process was to have participants discuss the challenges and enablers for this issue in small groups (pre-arranged to ensure there was a mixed group at each table).

The topic of discussion was: “What are the Challenges and Enablers? “

Following are the specific questions groups were directed to discuss.

- *When it comes to increasing the participation (recruitment & retention) of women in trades & technologies in Saskatchewan, what are the enablers?*
- *What are the challenges?*
- *What are the causes of the enablers and the challenges?*
- *What actions can address the identified challenges and leverage the identified enablers?*

Each group reported on one challenge or enabler and the actions to address/leverage. The results are captured below.

Challenge	Actions to address
Negative workplace environment, such as unsupportive attitudes, sexual discrimination, facilities being designed for men	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workplace creation and enforcement of supportive policies • Updating facilities • Developing respectful workplaces
Inability to get work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidance counsellors need to better promote the trades in school • Companies need to have realistic diversity targets • Women need to get into the trades workplace early in their career

Challenge	Actions to address
<p>Not enough trades career awareness being done; information is available but programs not known or understood; parents and guidance counsellors sometimes have pre-conceived ideas about who does trades</p> <p>Not enough visible female trades role models</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give women realistic expectations about jobs • Get into schools with better career counselling and profiling role models • The education system needs to promote trades as careers • Use SASKWITT as a link to programs and services • Guidance counsellors can guide and offer information
<p>Difficult work schedules make it challenging to balance work and life</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employers need a strong employee assistance program
<p>Difficult to attract the women who are already trained in the trades; some employers are actively seeking them, but find it difficult to reach them</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There should be a website for employees and employers focusing on equity groups • Employers should evaluate how they market their employment positions and consider different avenues that appeal to women – including advertising on social media
<p>There are few female role models in management (superintendents or foremen); possible causes include the difficulty of struggling through the laddering; lack of coaching; women have different leadership styles, and the collective bargaining process presents barriers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure women receive supervisory training • Identify champion companies where they have addressed this challenge and present them as a success story • Raise awareness in the unions about the need to hire women into management jobs • Change criteria for supervisory positions so seniority is not the main focus
<p>Perception that women have a lower economic value in a cost-driven industry</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quantify the business case for hiring women and promote to trades employers • Promote the (possibly non-economic) benefits that women can bring to the workplace • Offer recognition programs to employers who are making progress in this area • Create and promote videos, radio/TV communications on the business case (including companies that have female employees)

Challenge	Actions to address
<p>Difficult to retain women in the trades workforce, especially the period between completing their initial training and their first on the job experience</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employers need to develop strategies to deal with this first work experience. This could include orientation, special consideration when kids are involved and overnight stays are involved • Employers should introduce mentoring; hire more than one woman at a time so there is support • Management needs to be more proactive in monitoring the workplaces for inappropriate behaviour and make sure there is good communications with new recruits and that they have an effective harassment policy
<p>Difficult to track whether progress is being made in recruiting and retaining more women in trades</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need research done to be able to understand the results of efforts: are girls really considering becoming tradespeople (through school based initiatives); need to know what works in order to improve on it • Need mechanisms as well to understand more about how to attract women returning to the workforce later in life, what programs are available for them and are they effective
<p>The male ego; it has to be recognized that men are competitive by nature and that they communicate differently than women; in a male dominated workplace, these characteristics will tend to prevail</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employers and educators need to understand and address the climate of the male dominated workplace. • Employers need to define what is acceptable in the workplace • Women need to be less sensitive in the workplace environment

Enabler	Actions to leverage
<p>We have a positive experience in storytelling in this province; gives us a good platform for role models to share good experiences and good practices; enables them to reach out to younger audiences; social media is an effective tool for getting messages out to a variety of audiences</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We need to start working with younger people to change their perceptions (both male and female) of who should be in trades • Contact needs to be made with young women to introduce them to trades as a career option and that contact needs to be maintained over a long term • Young people need to be continually exposed to positive trades role models • Potential employers would benefit by being linked to trades promotional programs

5 GUEST SPEAKERS

5.1 Recruitment & Retention of Women: Good Practices in the Construction Sector

(Rosemary Sparks, CSC, Ottawa, ON)

Rosemary provided research and examples of good practices in the recruitment and retention of women. Her presentation can be found on the SATCC website at http://www.saskapprenticeship.ca/WOMEN_IN_NONTRAD_TRADES/.

Summary points of her presentation include:

- Saskatchewan will lose about 20% of its construction workforce to retirement over the next few years.
- A survey of over 1300 women showed that those with a trades certificate do very well financially.
- In 2006, women represented about 4% of those employed in construction trades. Outside of the trades, women are better represented in other construction sector occupations such as management and estimators.
- About 50% of female construction trades apprentices complete their apprenticeship.
- In the CSC survey, women identified the following reasons for their numbers not increasing in the (construction) trades.
 - negative gender stereotypes

- weak career paths
 - hiring discrimination
 - safety concerns (such as ill-fitting equipment)
 - harassment
 - lack of suitable physical facilities
 - barriers to progression in training, leadership and support from management
 - lack of post-pregnancy support and re-introduction to industry
- The following actions could support more girls and women going into trades.
 - expose girls to trades and technology opportunities early in their education
 - introduce girls to role models
 - prepare them for work in the trades
 - provide workplace preparation and work-hardening
 - provide ongoing support
 - provide mentoring and coaching
 - expose them to the full breadth of the trade and training
- At the workplace, the following would be helpful.
 - show leadership from the top
 - assess human resource policies and practices
 - implement non-discriminatory hiring policies and practices
 - introduce gender equity and family friendly policies
 - communicate policies and procedures throughout the organization
 - create well-articulated and supported avenues to report issues
 - provide diversity training to supervisors and tradespeople
 - implement institutional accountability
 - mandate hiring and retention of women (key performance indicators)
 - create a respectful workplace culture
 - provide mentoring and coaching
 - avoid targeting women as the reason for change
- Several ways were identified that industry stakeholders could help.
 - promote the business case for diversity
 - consider family-friendly policies to encourage women to continue working in the industry after having children
 - promote opportunities for women in construction
 - share best practices
 - introduce incentives like scholarships to increase appeal and signal the value placed on women in the workplace
 - promote and support effective women's programs

- According to the CSC, the projected continuing high demand for skilled tradespersons means employers have more incentives to improve their efforts and policies to recruit and retain females in this field.

5.2 Overview of SaskWITT and How it Works on This Issue

(Valerie Overend, WinSETT & SaskWITT, Regina, SK)

Valerie provided an overview of SaskWITT and the programs it offers. They focus on exploring opportunities and career paths; preparing and bridging women to work; promoting workplace retention for women; and key message areas.

Partnerships, particularly with training providers and employers, are very important to SaskWITT and they always seek to work collaboratively with business, education, government and other agencies.

The presentation, as well as the special Summit Edition of the SaskWITT newsletter is found on the SATCC website

(http://www.saskapprenticeship.ca/WOMEN_IN_NONTRAD_TRADES/).

6 DEVELOPING PRELIMINARY ACTION PLANS

After the two guest speakers, the facilitator presented eight themes from the lists of challenges and enablers from the morning discussions. These were (not in any order of priority):

1. Educate employers on why women are good for their business
2. Change attitudes through communication
3. Create mentors and role models
4. Enhance the role of training and education institutions
5. Make workplace culture changes
6. Improve the workplace environment (facilities)
7. Improve employer recruitment practices
8. Raise girls' awareness of trades and technologies

Participants were then asked to join the group discussing the issue in which they were most interested. The groups were given the discussion notes from the morning sessions and asked to:

- develop preliminary action plans for each theme;
- list the most important actions;
- determine who should be involved in the implementation of the action plans;
- estimate the time frame required for the action plan; and
- identify what resources could be required.

The following is a summary of their work.

6.1 Educate employers on why Women are good for their Business

Actions	Who should lead the Actions, Time Frame & Resources
Educate to remove the myth that women can't do heavy construction work by promoting through the various employer organizations	Employer organizations Few resources As soon as possible
Develop a workforce champion program, use existing champions; involve unions, trades associations; must become a corporate philosophy to be effective	Existing champions, companies, unions, trades associations Ongoing
Improve hiring practices – organizations that have information about best practices could share with industry	6 – 12 months Employer organizations

6.2 Change Attitudes through Communication

Actions	Who should lead the Actions, Time Frame & Resources
Create a communications plan that uses the education system and families first, then public advertising; look for success stories on how this has been done in other jurisdictions	Government-led to begin with, then taken over by private funding Start 6 – 12 months; may be a longer timeframe to see results
Engage employers so they implement and appreciate the value of flexibility and of marketing job opportunities to women	
Create programs of gender-specific orientation at work; search out existing resources and replicate/share them	
Change the perception of the economic value of women	

6.3 Create Mentors and Role Models

Actions	Who should lead the Actions, Time Frame & Resources
Formalize mentoring program at the entry level, have an organization in place to run it and do follow-up and accountability	Province, SATCC & SaskWITT would operate it 1 year Funding required

Actions	Who should lead the Actions, Time Frame & Resources
In-school program for young girls; should start in elementary school and will require some changes in the curriculum	Ministry of Education & parents 1 Year Funding required
Get more resources and advertising to rural and remote areas by advertising on northern radio stations and in first nations band offices	Ministry of Education 1 year
Get out the word out on SaskWITT; needs extensive promotion and advertising	As soon as possible Funding required

6.4 Enhance the Role of Training and Education Institutions

Actions	Who should lead the Actions, Time Frame & Resources
Educate people and parents and educators on women in trades and technologies	Funding required
Develop educational packages that will fit into the existing K-12 curriculum; have this ready for the practical and applied arts (PAA) meeting this fall	Ministry of Education to partner with SaskWITT, SIIT, SIAST, School Board Association and Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation Time frame 6 – 12 months
Have people with a vested interest in WITT come into schools to demonstrate the breadth of the trades to the students	Employers associations, SaskWITT

6.5 Make Changes to Workplace Culture

Actions	Who should lead the Actions, Time Frame & Resources
Improve safety regulations, ergonomic tools, safety training, personal protective equipment Anti-harassment	Employer and industry associations

Actions	Who should lead the Actions, Time Frame & Resources
Implement employer preparation programs and education – such as the WinSETT ``Checklist of Strategies``	SaskWITT/WINSETT
Cultivate an environment that is conducive to women – clearly communicate anti-harassment policy, hold people accountable, do necessary training; provide really good mentoring programs; provide diversity and inclusiveness to management training; ensure leadership is involved; celebrate successes; ensure there are good feedback methods for employee	Employer and industry associations & SaskWITT

6.6 Improve Workplace Environment (Facilities)

Actions	Who should lead the Actions, Time Frame & Resources
Ensure safety regulations and equipment are appropriate for women (especially in size)	Ministry of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety
Increase workplace education on safety	

6.7 Improve Employer Recruitment Practices

Actions	Who should lead the Actions, Time Frame & Resources
Strategic advertising to feature women and what they do on the job as tradespersons; use social networks; get more female tradespersons into educational institutions as role models and to answer questions from both male and female students	HR people in companies Technical institutions Industry associations SaskWITT Immediately
Encourage fair and equitable hiring practices; support small businesses which do not have an HR department or policies; may require a review of and/or changes to legislation	Human Resources & Management in companies Industry associations Provincial government Immediately

Actions	Who should lead the Actions, Time Frame & Resources
Provide accurate statistical information for wage equity or disparities	Company human resources & management Industry associations SATCC Longer term
Flexible hours and adaptability is needed; means alterations to company culture as well as organizational change (many companies have already done this)	Industry organizations

6.8 Raise Girls' Awareness of Trades/Technologies

Actions	Who should lead the Actions, Time Frame & Resources
Add information to the educational curriculum; start in grades 4-5; use technology to demonstrate and communicate the message	Multi-stakeholders 12 months
Use the "Bring a kid to work" model, but start younger and do father & daughter specifically for trades	
Have an annual forum for all educational guidance counsellors to inform them of apprenticeship and other skilled trades and technologies initiatives	
Experiment with moving some of the math curriculum to an outside setting to give it a practical application such as a jobsite – this will enable students to see the purpose of math in "the real world"	
Try to have more women as industrial arts teachers to serve as role models – or have women tradespersons in as guest speakers in the industrial arts programs	

7 CLOSING REMARKS

Joe Black gave the closing remarks. He commented that partnerships were important to make progress on this issue, and needed to be maintained to be effective.

The demand for skilled workers is clearly increasing and competition for people is very fierce. The solution is within Saskatchewan to meet those needs. He then quoted Minister Draude, “workplace culture and wage gaps need to be addressed” and Minister Norris, “recognition of the work ethic and skills which women bring to the workplace is very important.”

Mr. Black summarized that:

- support for young people in career choices is critical, as is inclusion
- systemic workplace issues came out of the morning’s small group issues – and they need to be addressed
- systemic administrative and communication issues, such as not promoting skilled trades career choices early enough (guidance counsellors should have the mechanism to do more career work)
- knowledge of existing success stories, programs and services in this area needs to be strengthened
- tightening job market puts women in a strong position to effect changes in the workplace; this will benefit everyone in the workplace by making it more stable, productive, happier and healthier

He thanked all the participants and presenters for their hard work and commitment to the issue and indicated they would all be receiving a copy of the Summit report.

8 APPENDICES

8.1 Working Group Members

Organization	Member
10. Canadian Centre for Women in Science, Engineering, Trades and Technology (WinSETT)	Valerie Overend
11. Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan (PCS)	Leanne Bellegarde
12. Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission (SATCC)	Dawn Stanger Audrey Wolf-Kaminski
13. Saskatchewan Construction Association (SCA)	Doug Folk
14. Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies (SIIT)	Shelley Macnab
15. Saskatchewan Mining Association (SMA)	Pam Schwann
16. Saskatchewan Ministry of Advanced Education, Employment and Immigration (AEEI)	Darcy Cherney
17. Saskatchewan Status of Women Office (SWO), Ministry of Social Services	Pat Faulconbridge Leslie Neilsen
18. Saskatchewan Women in Trades and Technology (SaskWITT)	Kim Andreas Marral Thomson

8.2 Summit Sponsors

1. Canadian Homebuilders' Association - Saskatchewan
2. Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission
3. Saskatchewan Construction Association
4. Saskatchewan Heavy Construction Association
5. Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies, Joint Training Committee
6. Saskatchewan Mining Association
7. Saskatchewan Ministry of Advanced Education, Employment and Immigration
8. Saskatchewan Status of Women Office, Ministry of Social Services

8.3 Participant Agenda

8:00a.m.	Registration & Networking - Continental Breakfast
8:30 – 9:00	<p>Welcome & Introduction of Ministers (Joe Black, SATCC)</p> <p>Welcoming Remarks: Why is this an important issue for Saskatchewan? (Honourable June Draude, Minister Responsible for the Status of Women)</p> <p>Opening Remarks (Honourable Rob Norris, Minister of Advanced Education, Employment and Immigration)</p>
9:00- 9:15	Participant Introductions & Facilitator Overview of the Day (Susan Hollett)
9:15 – 10:00	Why are we here? A moderated discussion of challenges and success stories in Saskatchewan
10:00 – 11:00	What are the Challenges and Enablers to Hiring and Retaining Women in Skilled Trades & Technologies in Saskatchewan? – Small groups share and reflect upon their experiences and the information in the background document
11:00 – 11:15	Stretch & Nutrition Break
11:15– 12:30	What will work in Saskatchewan, on a group and individual basis, to address the challenges and leverage the enablers? (Small groups brainstorm)
12:30 – 1:30	<p>Lunch (provided on site)</p> <p>Guest Speaker: <i>Good Practices in the Construction Sector for the Recruitment and Retention of Women</i> (Rosemary Sparks, Construction Sector Council)</p>
1:30- 1:50	What ideas have been tried in Saskatchewan in the past? (Valerie Overend, Saskatchewan in Women Trades and Technology (SaskWITT))
1:50 – 3:30	Development of and Commitment to an Action Plan (full plenary session)
3:30	Closing Remarks (SATCC - Joe Black)

8.4 News Release

Immediate Release

May 6, 2011

Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission

Saskatchewan Summit on Women in Skilled Trades and Technologies

Over 70 Saskatchewan industry, training and government stakeholders will gather in Saskatoon today to seek strategies to increase women's participation in skilled trades and technologies, and support employers in recruiting, hiring, training and retaining women in the skilled trades and technologies. "*Bridge the Gap with Women in Skilled Trades and Technologies: Saskatchewan's Summit*" is the first of its kind in the province.

"In the Saskatchewan economy, there continues to be a large demand for workers in the skilled trades and technologies," said Marral Thomson, Chair of the Women in Skilled Trades and Technologies Working Group. "Despite the demand, women continue to experience difficulty finding employers and sustained employment in the skilled trades and technologies. We hope the Summit can begin to address this imbalance and create made in Saskatchewan strategies."

The Summit is an opportunity for decision-makers to discuss gaps, outline best practices and develop employer strategies that will increase the participation of women in skilled trades and technologies.

"We applaud the work that Saskatchewan employers are doing to meet our growing talent challenge and foster more inclusive workplaces," Minister Responsible for the Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission (SATCC), Rob Norris said. "The trades and technical professions provide tremendous opportunities for Saskatchewan women to utilize their talents and build fulfilling careers."

"Increasing women's representation in these occupations and industry groups deepens the talent pool available to employers, and strengthens the provincial labour force," Status of Women Minister June Draude said. "Just as importantly, it matches women's demonstrated achievements in learning and skills development with industry's demand for a highly skilled and motivated workforce."

During 2005/06 in Saskatchewan, 1.7% of all the journeyperson certificates issued in predominantly male trades were earned by female apprentices. By 2009/10, this number had increased to only 2.4% despite an overall increase of 41% in the number of journeyperson certificates issued to completing apprentices in these same skilled trades.

Summit sponsors include:

- Canadian Homebuilders' Association - Saskatchewan
- Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission
- Saskatchewan Construction Association
- Saskatchewan Heavy Construction Association
- Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies, Joint Training Committee
- Saskatchewan Mining Association
- Saskatchewan Ministry of Advanced Education, Employment and Immigration
- Saskatchewan Status of Women Office, Ministry of Social Services

The Summit will be led by well-respected facilitator, Susan Hollett, from Hollett and Sons Inc. Special guests include Rosemary Sparks from the Construction Sector Council, Valerie Overend from Saskatchewan Women in Trades and Technologies, and a five member panel consisting of employers and female skilled tradespersons discussing their experiences. Ministers Norris and Draude will represent the Government of Saskatchewan at the Summit.

The Summit summary report will be posted on the SATCC website at www.saskapprenticeship.ca as soon as it is available.

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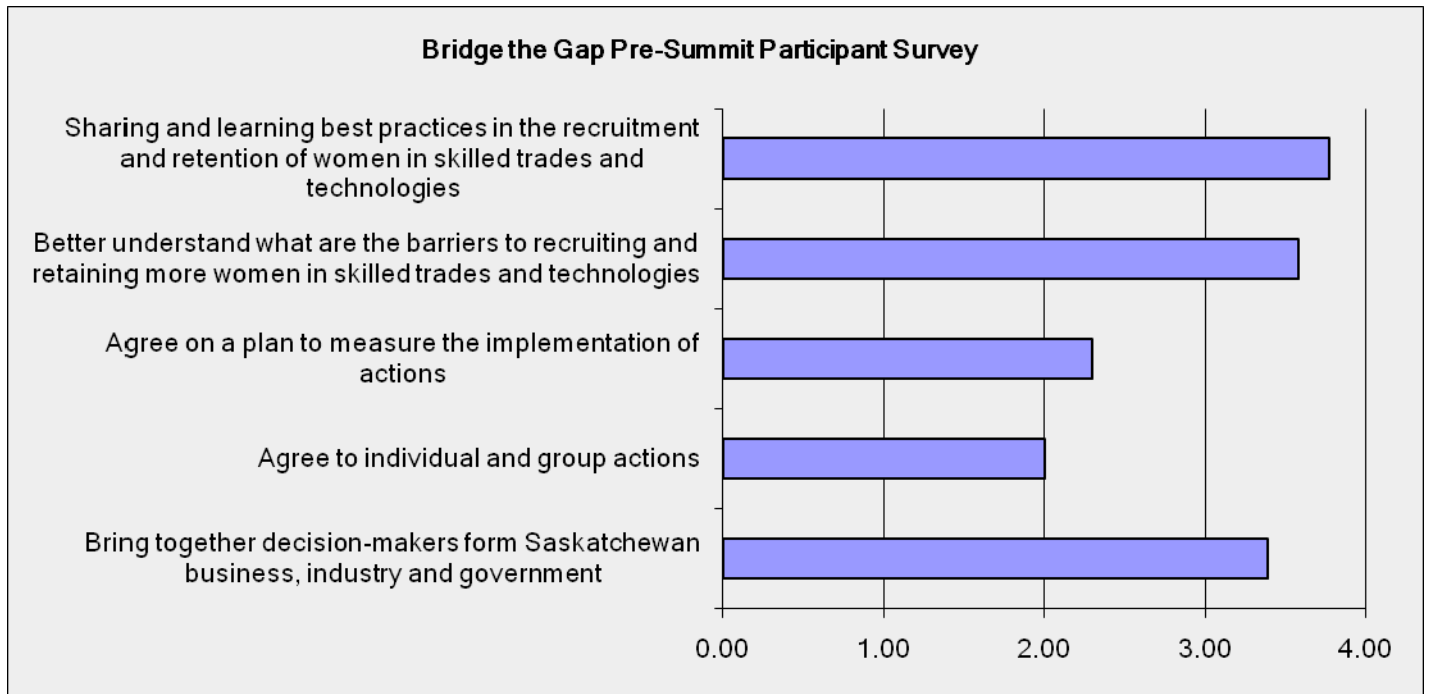
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8.5 Participant Pre-Summit Survey Results

Importance of Summit Objectives

Please place the objectives of the Bridge the Gap Summit in their order of priority as you see them. Choose only one each for highest, 2nd, 3rd, 4th then lowest priority.



Summit Aspirations

What do you hope to get out of the Bridge the Gap Summit?

Multiple responses:

- Better understand what are the barriers to recruiting and retaining more women in skilled trades and technologies Networking with other professionals and women in trades
- Addressing the barriers women face in entering the skilled trades
- Reaching for goals together

- I hope to become better informed of how industry and government perceives the limited amount of women in trades and technology and what they are willing to do to bridge the gap.
- Buy in from Industry and short, medium and long-term action items
- learning best practices in the recruitment and retention of women in skilled trades and technologies
- Tools for attracting and retaining women into trades

Individual Responses:

- That employers understand the barriers and are willing to implement changes that would facilitate the hiring and retaining of women in male-dominated trades
- A foundation for developing our own corporate plan
- Information to assist me in recruiting women into the building trades
- Influence some key stakeholders in the importance of this issue

Challenges

If we could only discuss three challenges to women's full participation in skilled trades and technologies in Saskatchewan, what would they be?

Training barriers

- Not enough support to students
- Financing & other supports
- Education
- Local training
- Having more women complete their apprenticeship in a skilled trade
- Inflexible apprenticeship policies
- Recruitment of women for training institutions in the skilled trades and technologies
- Availability of courses
- Lack of support from family, teachers and counsellors
- Education systems that have poor career counselling departments that do not support trades and technologies and believe that university should be their first choice when deciding a career option
- Early entry education in trades programs to young women while in their high school years

- Education on skills trades starting right at elementary school

Recruitment challenges

- Employers reluctance to hire women
- Finding employment
- The Saskatchewan Disadvantage. Saskatchewan men don't typically hire women if they can avoid it
- Lack of entry level experience

Work/life balance

- Companies understanding family needs
- Impact of family care burdens - in training/education and in work life
- Accommodating work life balance
- Flexible working environment
- Hours and location are not desirable to some women

Stereotypes

- Girls'/women's perspective that they don't belong in trades and technologies (and therefore don't choose the training).
- Stigma that trades are still men's work, women have to work twice as hard to compete
- Having more women enrol in apprenticeships and choose a skilled trade occupation
- Low numbers of women in skills training therefore few available for employment
- Educating women on the opportunities in the field of skilled trades & technologies
- Preconceived notions that society has established limit women
- Why there is a stigma attached to women entering the trades
- Stereo types
- Myths that this is "man's work"
- Parents influence on young women when making a career choice.
- How do we open to more doors and make the Trades more accessible
- Stopping stereotypes
- Male dominated work environments can be difficult on new workforce entrants
- Acceptance
- Overcoming stereotyping and building confidence
- Image of skilled trades and technologies
- Women thinking they are not capable of the work

Retention challenges & job site work culture:

- Equal opportunity to learn and grow within companies
- Being treated equally
- Equal pay

- Jobsite conditions
- Working environment for women within skilled trades and technologies
- Culture needs to change to create inviting workplaces
- On some job sites women are not welcome
- Barriers (especially in small businesses) to hiring a woman (washroom facilities, fear of harassment issues, etc.)
- Body strength
- Sexism
- Physical barriers
- Workplace acceptance of skilled women
- The negative attitudes of tradespeople who don't want more women entering the trades
- Improved attitudes and acceptance levels by existing Trades and workers
- Changing workplace culture leading to acceptance of skilled women
- Older generation who run jobs/own companies have a hard time accepting women in the workplace
- Coaching new entrants on keeping work at work and personal life personal
- Public transportation and affordable housing as pre-cursors to wage market involvement
- Childcare
- Lack of mentors

Other

- Statistics on how many women are registered in the trades
- Racism
- Transportation (especially to shift work); this seems to affect many aboriginal people, including women

Actions

If we could only discuss three ACTIONS to recruit and retain more women in skilled trades and technologies in Saskatchewan, what would they be?

More positive support from employers

- Employers hiring ratio of women to men
- Develop a company support structure for women in skilled trades and technologies
- Offering opportunities to learn and grow within companies
- Create an advisory service for businesses to prepare to hire women (evaluate facilities, supervisor training, etc.)
- Employers grooming women for lead role positions
- Getting more women in upper management

HR training for employers

- Have each company develop a recruitment strategy to hire women in the skilled trades and technologies
- Implementing support systems ie: childcare and women's committees in the workplace
- Commit to hiring women
- More workshops for employer/employees about the different needs of women
- Creating workplace environments supportive of women in skilled trades/technologies

More women/family friendly work environment

- Allow and accept
- Assess public transportation opportunities to industrial areas
- Educating employers and workers about cultural differences

Assist recruitment process

- Access to employment candidates
- Awareness of employers who have the jobs available
- Best practices on recruiting
- Getting women entry level experience
- Ability to forward job postings
- A bridging program for women and employers

Training

- Increased training opportunities for women
- Enhanced training institute commitment ie quotas per course
- Provide tools to the young women to assist in working in a male dominated workplace
- Education and awareness
- Strategies for enabling women to choose and engage in training/education options
- Educating those responsible for hiring / training
- An awareness program
- Spreading the knowledge
- Promote the skills movement in the province to a level it should be.
- Broaden visible trade opportunities beyond traditional carpentry, electrician, mechanical (ie. Crane operator, controls technicians)
- Enhanced SATCC campaign to promote concept

- Education on skilled trades opportunities

Communications strategy aimed at employers

- Educating employers on the value women bring to the job site/debunking stereotypes
- Educate women more that jobs in these trades are available to them
- Educate women and remove barriers, change mindsets
- Show them a sense of pride they receive from being in a non traditional role
- Some serious marketing
- Share success stories
- A media campaign highlighting successful female tradespersons
- Creating positive attitudes to women working in the trades

Use the schools

- Train teachers and counsellors to promote trades and technologies in general (not just to women, but certainly including women)
- Present opportunities and potentials early when career options are being explored
- Go to schools a talk with the girls in trades
- Make younger girls aware they are capable of working in the trades if they wish to
- Work with young girls to complete science/math to prepare for trade/technology training
- Encourage girls to take the proper math and science classes to succeed in technology programs
- Enhancing/directing high school focus on prerequisites for trades
- Promoting apprenticeships and skilled trades at the high school level when career choices are being made
- Have training institutions and high schools promote women in skilled trades and technologies
- Educational awareness to parents and youth on trades and technologies
- A co-ordinated action across the province
- Need to get industry labour and government behind this movement
- Enhanced industry incentives to recruit females
- Established goals and targets
- Role of union

Mentoring and support

- Make it easier for women to talk to other women in similar situations.
- Identify mentors to guide new entrants

- Building capacity/networking and supports for women in skilled trades/technologies
- Provide positive female role models who are already working in these professions

Other

- Ending competition between women
- I am looking to the Summit for potential actions
- Ability to get stats on how many women have certification in the trades

Advice for a Successful Summit

What advice do you have for the facilitator to ensure the Summit is successful?

- Be open to the ideas of the attendees
- Ensure that the time is used effectively and that we leave the Summit with concrete actions that have the potential to remedy the current situation
- Be organized and follow the agenda
- Listen to the key stakeholders and keep the group focused on the task on hand. Remind to have everyone take their hats off at the door and focus on the task at hand
- Be truthful, don't sugar coat too much. Put some pressure on these people to consider making a difference
- Don't be satisfied with 'soft' answers and get firm commitment from government and employers moving forward
- Challenge the status quo...put the evidence in front of the naysayers
- Don't dwell on problems of the past; find today's barriers and solutions
- There are many stakeholders with the same objective - to increase representation of women in trades/technology; efforts need to be coordinated in order for us to be successful
- Keep focused on a commitment to change; educating employers that women can be as productive as men often better; ready the workplace to accept women with "0" tolerance for racism and sexism
- Have a plan to create an action plan
- Ensure that there is a follow up plan to implement pertinent suggestions.
- Allow discussion time to hear other employer's challenges and solutions
- Plenty of time for discussion; there will be many individuals present who have the influence and ability to create change so concerns must be voiced as well as success stories
- Ensure there is ample time to respond to questions from the entire floor not just those persons around the main podium
- Make it interactive

- Make sure enough input from women are incorporated into the Summit
- To ensure they receive a well rounded source of information for participants.
- Keep it light as possible
- I would be pleased if, when leaving the Summit, I felt that the "decision-makers" had been made to see that having more women in skilled trades and technology will help solve the problem of the lack of skilled workers in this province; that diversity is better for their company; and, getting more women into well-paying jobs will be better for our economy- now and for future generations
- Tangible examples/discussions

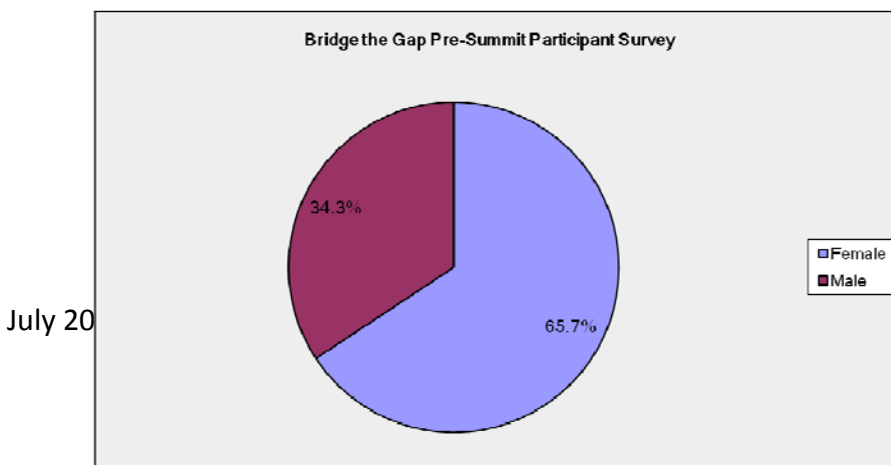
About Respondents

<i>What perspective do you bring to the Summit?</i>	Response Percent
Employer (Industry)	51.5%
Tradesperson	36.4%
Training Institution	24.2%
Technician/Technologist	12.1%
Employee Representative	12.1%
Sector spokesperson	12.1%
Policy maker (Government)	9.1%
Apprenticeship Certification Organization	6.1%

What part of the province are you from?

From what region of the province are you?	Response Percent
Saskatoon	48.4%
Regina	41.9%
Moose Jaw	6.5%
Northern Saskatchewan	3.2%
Prince Albert	0.0%
Swift Current	0.0%

Sex



Other comments

- A persistent, dogged effort that recognizes the need for investment in this issue over generations is key to change
- Looking forward to a lot of learning and sharing
- Let's make it a "game changer"
- Looking forward to this day. Hope I can be of help.
- I am looking forward to this Summit, and I really hope it has an impact
- Looking forward to the day and hoping to come with some ideas that I can use
- Looking for Action Outcomes, small or large
- Until I was around the age of 19 I was not aware of the benefits of working in the trades and also what it entailed. There should be more programs out there for women to develop more skills that are beneficial to the trades. For example, working on cars is a male dominated activity just like the trades. The skills learnt when working on cars are applicable to some trades. Now that I have worked in the trades and am going into Mechanical Engineering Technology in the fall I feel as if I am behind and lack a lot of knowledge that other people (mostly men) will have in my class.
- I have tried every method of advertising for people and have attracted very few women into my organization and have had very little success in retaining them. What can I do different
- I believe more women are seeing the potential in technology areas
- First time at this conference and very interested in this information and what I can do as I am employed with a 100% owned First Nation Company

8.6 Participant Summit Evaluation Results

The following are the full evaluation results from the Summit.

How successful were we in reaching each of the Bridge the Gap Summit objectives?
(Where 1 is Not At All Successful and 5 is Very successful).

Answer Options	1 (not successful)	2	3	4	5 (very successful)	Average
Better understand the impediments to recruiting and retaining more women in skilled trades and technologies	0	1	6	19	24	4.32
Bring together decision-makers from Saskatchewan business, industry and government	0	1	6	22	21	4.26
Sharing and learning best practices in the recruitment and retention of women in skilled trades and technologies	1	2	10	23	14	3.94
Agree to individual and group actions	0	6	7	24	11	3.83
Agree on a plan to measure the implementation of actions	2	5	14	19	8	3.54

- Comments
- Wow! Great to be part of this
- I would say there were ideas generated - great ideas generated, however cannot say there was agreement as much as related directly to the education system. I am not aware of school participation, therefore no agreement. I hope these ideas /concerns/gaps/ can be brought forward to those who can make these ideas known to those who are decision makers.
- Need some more organized ways of actioning this knowledge; need responsibilities assigned; maybe a provincial committee/network
- Would like to have seen a mining presentation as well
- Major decision makers/politicians/funders were missing or under-represented

Are you leaving the Bridge the Gap Summit with...

Answer Options	Yes	No
Greater understanding of the impediments faced by women working in trades and technology in Saskatchewan?	98%	2%
Information about effective practices to address the issue here and in other places?	96%	4%
Knowledge of resources available to help improve women's participation?	94%	6%
Ideas and actions on how to improve women's participation in trades and technology?	90%	10%

Comments

- Very informative
- Great ideas brought forward -- now what
- A reminder for me to engage the industry I am in to hire women
- SaskWITT needs a higher profile
- We need to get a comprehensive list of all resources available to employers
- Would like more promising practice models/programs
- Would like more time for networking with the entire room

What was the most useful part of the Summit?

Learning about the real world of WITT

- The stories - would have liked more speakers on success stories
- Panel was informative - good to hear from employers and women in trades
- Understanding the issues
- Chatting with women who are working in trades
- The acknowledgement that there is a problem the first step to a solution
- Hearing peoples' stories
- Becoming more aware of issues with WITT
- Hearing different perspectives on how important women are in skilled trades
- Getting the opportunity to spread the message about SASKWITT

- The encouragement felt by seeing so many influential people in one room who all agree that more needs to be done to increase women's participation in trades
- Discussion (x5)
- Brain storming sessions
- Identify some barriers - e.g. hours of work & family balance
- Team work - group work
- Interacting with various groups in the construction industry and hearing ideas/concerns of everyone.

Networking

- Interaction with others sharing common goals
- Networking Opportunities
- Networking (X4)
- Meeting people

Learning about SaskWITT & other organizations

- Better awareness of what exactly SaskWITT is and what they do
- knowing what organizations are out there
- Learning about SaskWITT
- Knowledge of alternate training opportunities (i.e., SK trades and Skills Centre)
- Finding out the programs (WITT) that are set up for support for tradeswomen

Getting good data/evidence/information on the WITT issue

- Rosemary Sparks Presentation
- evidence based reasons why woman are valuable to employers, particularly in trades
- Hearing different perspectives on how important women are in skilled trades
- The information (data) provided in the briefing paper and presentations
- CSC Presentation & dialogue in the morning

Creating Action Items to move this issue forward

- Realizing the need for mentorship for women in Saskatchewan
- Sense of urgency created. Attempt at actioning what needs to be done
- I have a responsibility to work on this issue to improve communication in any fashion I can
- Final Discussion Group
- Defining specific areas that require improvements and brainstorming about development of actions

Hearing about employers challenges

- Various industry challenges
- Hearing from employers who genuinely wish to employ women - yet aren't seeing any resumes
- What other employers are doing
- All of it

Are you interested in keeping connected with the topic through any of the following means?

Answer Options	Yes	No
Receiving a copy of the Bridge the Gap Summit Report?	96%	4%
Being added to a mailing list for further information on Participating in committees or working groups to move the issue forward?	87%	13%

Is there other follow-up to the Summit you would like?

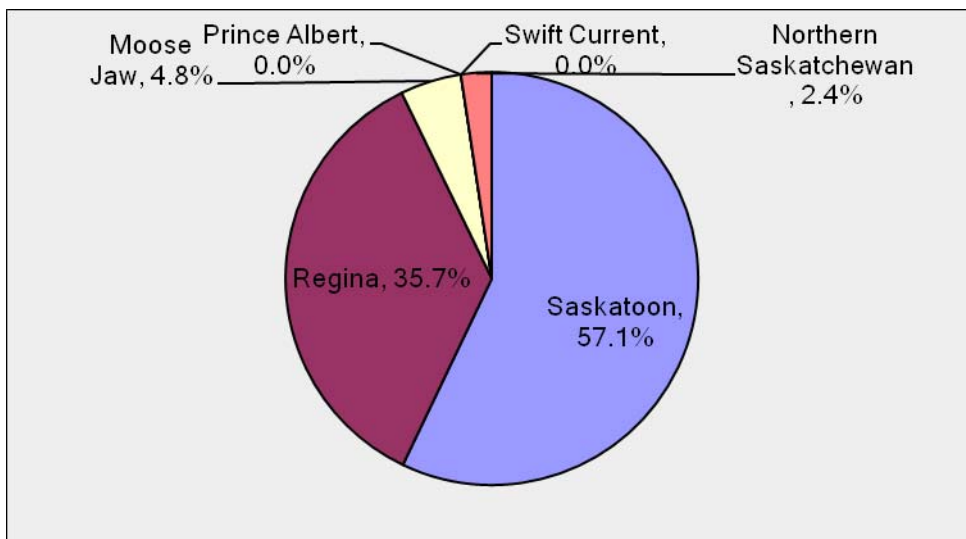
- Participant List
- List of all attendees with contact information
- A list of all participants and function of their organizations
- Action Items
- Action Item documents
- Follow-up on action items
- Our company would be pleased to received information and provide input/information if required in the future
- I would like to be kept informed re: development of programs for women in Saskatchewan
- Membership in SaskWITT
- Copy of Rosemary's Spark's presentation - there were some excellent points that I didn't get a chance to write down.
- Please include me in other events in the future

What perspective(s) did you bring to the Summit? (Please check all that apply)

Answer Options	Response Percent
Employer (Industry)	47.7%
Tradesperson	31.8%
Training Institution	22.7%
Employee Representative	13.6%
Policy-maker (Government)	9.1%
Technician/Technologist	6.8%
Sector spokesperson	6.8%
Apprenticeship Certification Organization	6.8%

From what region of the province are you?

Answer Options	Response Percent
Saskatoon	57.1%
Regina	35.7%
Moose Jaw	4.8%
Northern Saskatchewan	2.4%
Prince Albert	0.0%
Swift Current	0.0%



Are you

Female	72.3%
Male	27.7%

Other Comments?

Suggestions for Improvement:

- Was expecting avenues for employers on recruiting women from certain areas, i.e., where to advertise jobs for women to apply to your organization
- Finding a way to encourage more "right now" commitment of resources from participants (participation, money, signing agreements to allow role models) - have ready to sign; make it easy for participants to make commitments to participate in an action plan - Because without those commitments it is speculation on projects that frankly have little potential to be realized
- Photographer working about was a bit distracting

Positive Feedback:

- I appreciate that something is being done to help future tradeswomen.
- Excellent first steps - kudos to the organizers -this was a very good use of my time today
- Well done
- This was a wonderful event to share ideas and networking. We just need the education system and government to look at funding and curriculum for WITT
- Great Summit - very good information
- Amazing group of people in the room; great to have leaders/key decision makers there
- Thank you
- Thanks kindly - appreciated all the information
- Thank you for the opportunity to share
- Thank You (x2)
- Thanks to all the organizers, facilitators and sponsors who made the Summit possible