

BUSINESS & CAREERS

■ northernlife.ca

Keep staff by being a good boss

BY BILL BRADLEY
BBRADLEY@NORTHERNLIFE.CA

There is shortage of good employees in Greater Sudbury.

It could worsen as the economic boom continues, said Brendan Cunneen, vice-president of the Business Development Bank of Canada, at a Greater Sudbury Chamber of Commerce luncheon at the Radisson Hotel Tuesday.

But there are ways to confront the crisis. Start by being a good boss, he said.

You will be rewarded by your staff.

"People don't leave a company. They tend to leave their boss," he said.

One way to ensure that what your staff say about you to others in the community is positive is by surveying them with well chosen questions every two years to gauge what they think about the management in the company, even the remuneration they receive.

But money is not everything though, especially for younger workers, he said.

"I have sons and, believe me, they tell me it is not all about the money when considering who to work for. They want to feel they are making a difference and contributing to the company. That is their value system today."

Retaining staff and attracting new skilled people are vital in the boom economy in Greater Sudbury today and for the decades to come, said Cunneen.

"The projections I have seen are that metal prices are going to remain strong for the next 30 years, fueled by a new consumer market of three billion people," said Cunneen.

But to fuel the booming demand for base metals, large and smaller local businesses must be able to attract and retain workers.

Larger mining companies are grabbing workers from smaller companies by offering them more money. That means the service companies that serve them must offer their workers a higher quality of workplace satisfaction if they cannot pay them more, he said.

Cunneen said Greater Sudbury businesses can attract younger workers to their businesses by making sure they give them summer and part-time jobs while they are being educated. Doing that may even keep them in the community, he added.

Tradesman Michael Quinn said, in his experience, younger people are not given enough opportunities in Greater Sudbury.

"There are not enough apprenticeships available from local employers through the college system. We need more partnerships



BILL BRADLEY

Brendan Cunneen, Business Development of Canada vice-president said Greater Sudbury business owners need to try a diverse approach to maintaining their workforce. That includes being a good boss themselves, he said to 60 people at a Greater Sudbury Chamber of Commerce luncheon.

"People don't leave a company. They tend to leave their boss."

BRENDAN CUNNEEN
Business Development Bank of Canada

between businesses and the colleges to keep these young people here," he said.

Another approach is to consider options for the growing legions of highly skilled workers who have retired early and who may want to work only a few days a week.

"If you are still in your 50s, week after week of golf every day may get tiresome. Some former senior executives, who may have relocated back to the city for the lifestyle, just

may be up to the challenge of contributing to your company. Their advanced marketing or financial skills just could plug that hole in your management team," Quinn noted.

Other ways to recruit workers include appealing to Alberta workers who are paying high living costs in their boom areas, talking to laid off Windsor workers, or appealing to senior governments to help relocate skilled immigrants to the city.

"Alberta has a program called PNP which allows companies to nominate the workers they need and they are fast tracked through the immigration process. Ontario has just finished a pilot program themselves," he said.

