



Ski Town Understaff Surveys key findings and recommendations.

Surveys summary: SEE YOU NEXT SEASON has been running two surveys to better understand understaffing, employee no shows, and early leaves in ski towns. The employer survey was launched on November 4, 2024. The employee survey was published on December 16, 2024. The dual surveys allow us to cross-reference answers from complementary questions to employers and seasonal workers.

Key Findings.

Where are the biggest problems? English speaking countries (Australia, Canada and the USA) have consistently poorer responses indicating high levels of understaffing, employee no shows, and early leaves.

Employers in these three countries have low retention rates. When employees were asked if they plan to return to their current employer next winter, the results for “hard no” were as follows. Canada 53%, USA 38% and Australia 42%. Only 5% of Australian ski workers completing the survey said they would return to their current employer for the 2025 winter. Please note “Maybe” was the third answer option to this question.

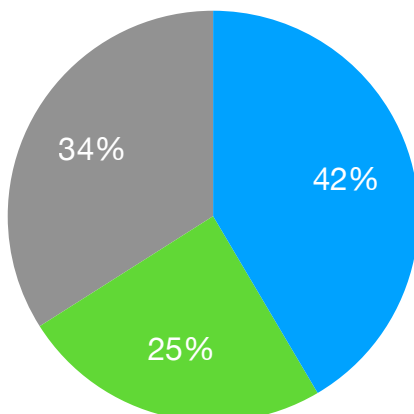
Housing. Safe secure, and affordable housing matters.

The pie charts below indicate seasonal ski workers will put up with poor housing in the short term but precarious, unsafe and/or unaffordable housing drives a significant number of people out of the ski industry and significantly reduces retention rates for employers.

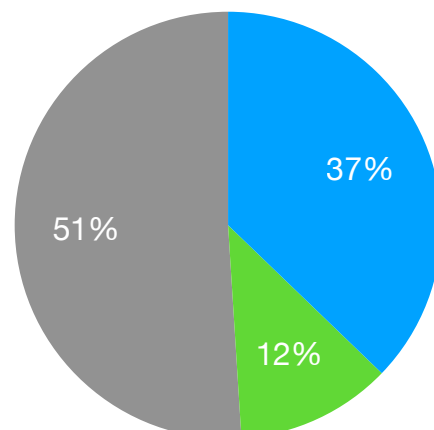
Survey question: Will you return to your existing employer next winter?

● maybe ● Yes ● Hard No

● Maybe ● yes ● hard no



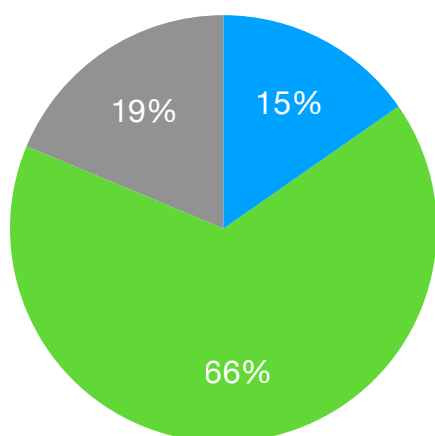
With Affordable, secure and safe housing.



With precarious, unsafe and/or unaffordable housing

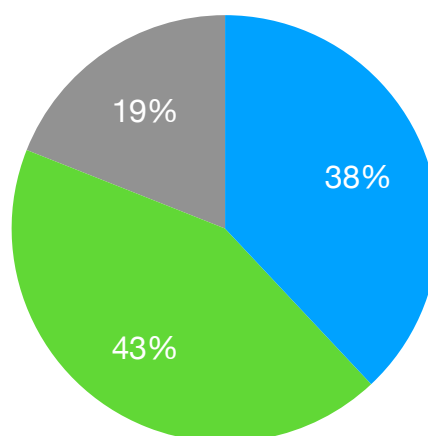
Survey question: Will you finish this ski season with your current employer?

● maybe ● yes ● hard no



With Affordable, secure and safe housing.

● maybe ● yes ● hard no



With precarious, unsafe and/or unaffordable housing

Survey question: "How likely are you to take another job in the ski industry?"

Only 10% of seasonal workers with good housing say "Nope I'm done" while the figure is 28% for workers with precarious, unsafe and/or unaffordable housing.

End of season bonuses work.

End of season bonuses do not significantly reduce the number of early leaves but...

paying an end of season bonus significantly increase the retention rate from 32 to 38%.

Employers who pay end of season bonuses recruit much less through social media and much more through word-of-mouth. Our previous surveys show word of mouth hiring attracts the most reliable employees while social media attracts the least reliable employees.

Recruiting platforms matter.

Recruiting on social media is free but the costs come late.

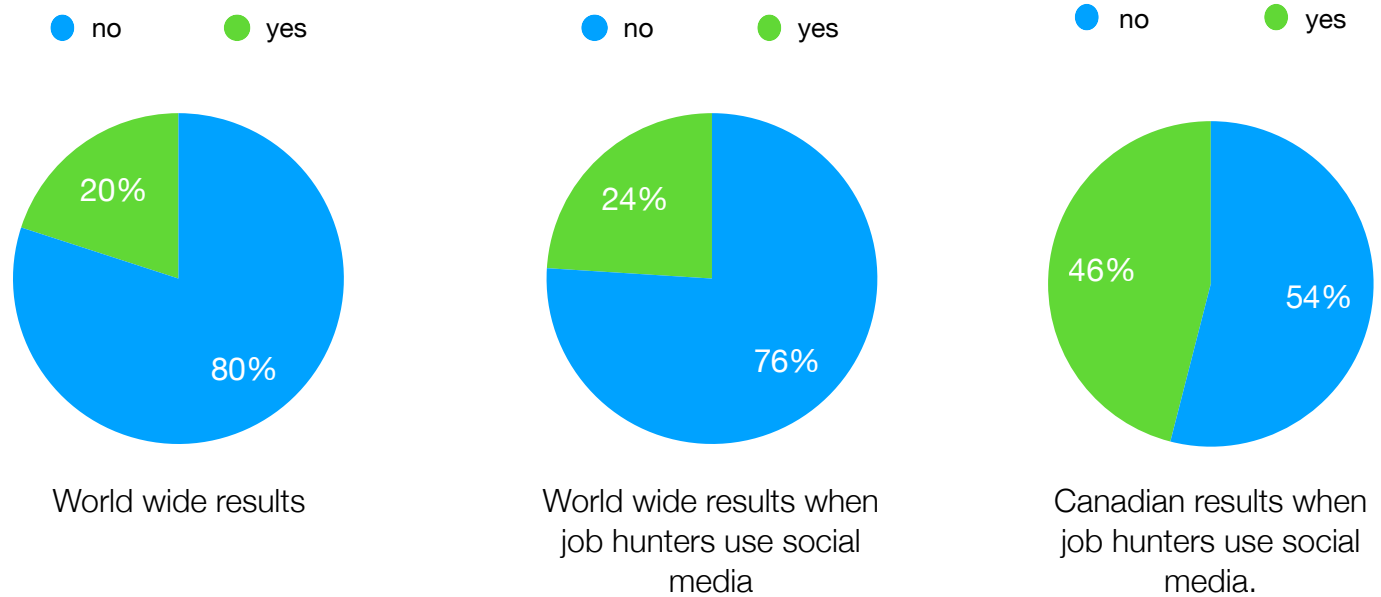
Employee no show rates are much higher when employers recruit using social media. The No Show rate jumps 25.2% when people are recruited through social media.

Our previous survey showed job hunters using social media send out large numbers of resumes because "it's a numbers game". More resumes = more job offers = more jobs accepted. 20.1% of seasonal ski workers admit to accepting multiple job offers.

Employees who search for work on social media are also 30% more likely to leave mid-season compared to employees hired through non-social media platforms according to our data.

There is strong evidence that the problems associated with hiring via social media are particularly bad in Canada. This is consistent with our previous surveys about job hunting and recruiting techniques in ski towns, which show Canadian employers are receiving substantially more resumes per position advertised compared to other countries.

Survey question to ski workers: Did you accept multiple job offers?



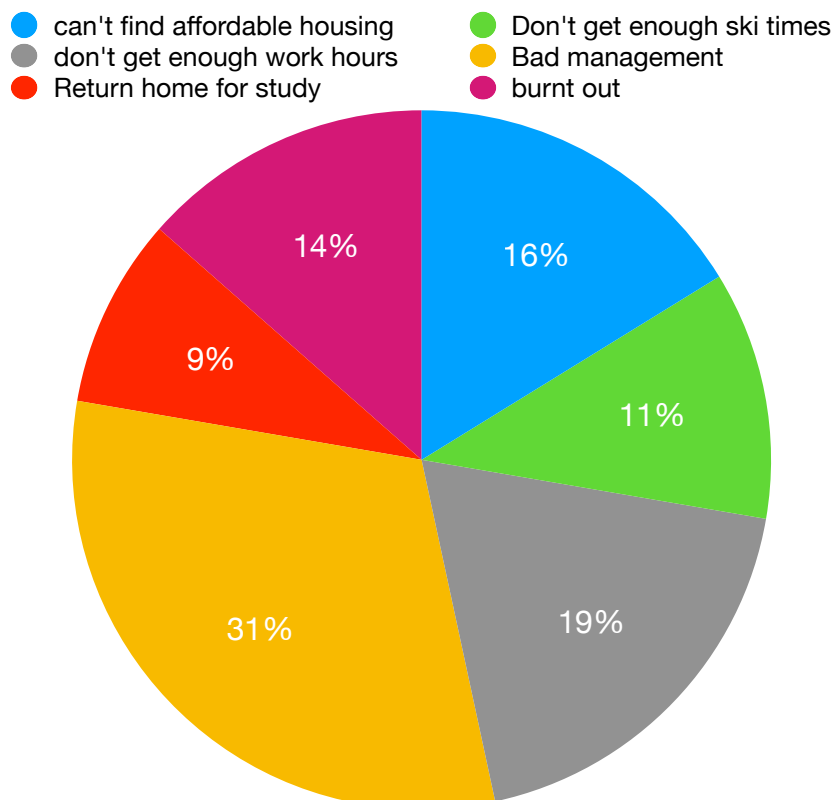
Sign On bonuses vs Assistance with travel to ski towns.

Ski workers say receiving travel assistance to the ski town (17.8%) was more influential in deciding to take a job compared to a sign on bonus (12%)

Rosters and management really matters.

Outside of the USA, staff are more likely to put up with poor housing compared to poor management

Survey question to ski workers: "If you don't finish the season, what is / was the main reason for leaving early?"



Four Key Recommendations to employers and hiring managers in all countries.

Recruiting on social media should be minimised as much as possible. Candidates who come via social media are 30% more likely to leave early compared to other recruitment platforms.

Insure your onboarding process is thorough. 61.8% of seasonal workers in ski towns have received multiple job offer and 20% of candidates have formally accepted more than one job. These people can take up those offers if the onboarding process is poor.

Providing assistance with travel to the resort is a more effective way to get a candidate to accept a position compare to a sign on bonus.

Seriously consider paying end of season bonuses. This improves your ability to recruit via word-of-mouth and reduces the need to recruit via social media.

Interesting quotes from the survey by seasonal ski workers.

"What a mess. The HR dept begged me to come, but when the snow didn't fall, my hours got hacked back but the rent doesn't change. They just dicked so many staff about, it was a joke. Wage earners take a huge gamble with the weather."

"I'd like to keep working in the ski industry but just can't afford too. The pay sucks and so does the housing. It's just so much easier, and more profitable, for me to work full time outside the industry, buy an epic pass and ski on weekends. "

"Horrible accomodation, mould, water leaks, no heating, no warm water at the horrendous price of 1700 yen/night.

"Bad management, overstaffed at one place and severely understaffed at 2 places - giving some people no time to enjoy their season and some people no money ie no work"

"Wife is pregnant and that makes working in the ski fields financially unviable. Even if she wasn't pregnant I'd be gone too. Too many hours, no work life balance, and barely any ski time. No future being an adult wage slave in that industry. "

Interesting quotes from the survey by employers.

"Housing is a massive problem. Many workers at Thredbo are basically hopeless workers who are taking a gap year and have no interest in returning the following season. They show up hungover, miss shifts due to partying, and take powder days off. Lots of spoilt brats, which then make it hard for the great team members"

"It's a nightmare. When staff don't show up or leave early myself and my wife have to pick up the extra hours. We can't just force them on other staff members because if they don't get enough ski time, they will walk too. We are both doing 60+ hour weeks.

For more information or to discuss this survey, please contact Iain Lygo on aus@cunextseason.com or Matt Fuller on usa@cunextseason.com