

## CHAPTER 6: *Human Resources — Our People Make the Difference*



**A**SOLID PUBLIC EDUCATION system, an extensive network of post-secondary education and training institutions, and a strong belief in the value of hard work have won Canada high praise for the quality of its human resources. Companies doing business in Canada enjoy access to a highly qualified, well-educated, strongly motivated and flexible work-force. This is best exemplified by the country's productivity statistics. Labour productivity rose by 1.4 percent in 1993 and 2.8 percent in 1994.

### EDUCATION

Canada's educational system guarantees industry a ready supply of top-quality graduates from a diverse range of disciplines. In addition to the formal educational system for young people, millions of adult Canadians are committed to ongoing education and upgrading skills throughout their working careers.

Most Canadian universities and colleges now offer cooperative education and training programs, as do an increasing number of high schools. Thousands of Canadian employers are taking part in programs that allow students to spend a portion of their school year or their training terms gaining practical experience in the workplace.

*HP Canada has been favourably impressed by the high quality work-force in the country, particularly within the fields of business, computer science and engineering. These creative individuals are flexible and productive innovators and much more cost-effective than their U.S. counterparts. Our Panacom operation in Waterloo, Ontario, benefits greatly from this knowledge-based advantage, achieving world-wide success. In general, foreign companies are missing a great opportunity in the high quality knowledge-based workers readily available in Canada.*

**Dan Branda**, President and CEO  
Hewlett-Packard (Canada) Ltd.

### *Education Levels Rising*

Canadians are becoming increasingly well-educated. Since 1961, the percentage of the population aged 15 and over that holds post-secondary diplomas has multiplied more than five-fold. Over the same period, the proportion of people with university degrees has increased more than four-fold. (See Table 2.1.) Today, about 3 million Canadians hold university degrees, while another 5 million possess other types of formal post-secondary qualifications. This expanding pool of increasingly well-educated Canadians ensures that industry can readily satisfy its need for scientists, engineers, researchers, technicians, financial analysts, accountants, systems analysts and other skilled workers.

<sup>1</sup> International Monetary Fund, *World Economic Outlook* (October 1994), p. 131; and the U.S. Department of Labor, *Monthly Labor Review* (November 1994), p. 48.