

# 22 – Mining jobs... then and now

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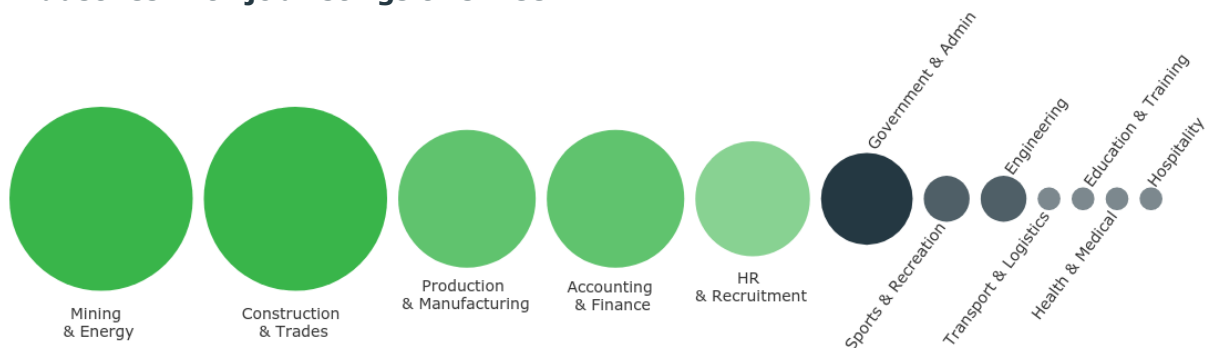
This week, we talk to mining recruitment specialist Wendy Cheney about the changes she has seen in the industry over the past 30 years, and how they are shaping the skills, experience and mindset employers are looking for.

## **But first, it's more important than ever to see what jobs are out there**

If you're an employer, taking a look at jobs in your industry can show you what you are competing with to attract talent.

For job seekers, you might be surprised about the variety of opportunities out there.

## **Industries with job listings this week**



## Where the jobs are

Albury	Mittagong
Ballina	Orange
Bathurst	Parkes
Coffs Harbour	Shepparton, VIC
Condobolin	Sydney
Dubbo	Tamworth
Lismore	Wagga Wagga
Manildra	

## Spotlight



Right now, there are a number of employers looking for Underground Development Operators and [Trade Assistants with experience in welding, sheet metal fabrication, joinery and shop fit outs](#)

## For more information

- Take a look at our [current job opportunities](#)
- Also check out the [Australian Government Jobs Hub](#)

## Safety standards and technology drive change in Mining

**From mineral exploration for Geopeko to recruitment for Northparkes, Wendy Cheney has been involved in the mining industry for over 30 years and shares with us the changes she has seen and what employers are looking for now**

With all the media attention on recent reduction of JobKeeper and JobSeeker payments, you might be surprised to know that some are welcoming the changes.

In a quick poll we took, over 70% of employers found it hard to recruit staff in the COVID-environment during the first half of this year.

Despite unemployment numbers being at their highest, employers of all sizes told us they were experiencing a reduction in job applicants particularly for entry-level and casual jobs; and larger employers were struggling to attract senior-level staff. They believe it is because of people's desire to stay safe and avoid risk.



1934 - Euclid Model 1Z truck, generally considered to be the first off-highway rear dump truck for mining  
[https://mine.nridigital.com/mine\\_yearbook\\_2018/mining\\_vehicles\\_a\\_ride\\_through\\_time](https://mine.nridigital.com/mine_yearbook_2018/mining_vehicles_a_ride_through_time)



2015 - Northparkes driverless trucks head deep underground  
<https://www.northparkes.com/news/northparkes-driverless-trucks-head-deep-underground>



When we catch Wendy, she has just returned from 6.15am shift change at Northparkes Mine, checking in with three new recruits to see how they are settling in.

The new recruits include an underground truck driver and processing technician, both new to mining, and a dust extraction operator with some experience.

### **So what do they all have in common?**

“They’re all good team players, safety conscious, can follow directions, have a willingness and aptitude for learning and are really motivated,” says Wendy.

“These are the qualities we look for in candidates.

“Mining operators like Northparkes make a huge investment in training their people and can give you skills that set you up for life. But there are some things which can’t be taught and these are the qualities we look for, whether we’re recruiting experienced or ‘green’ candidates.

“For example, for young people looking to get a foothold in the industry, I recommend they take the time to find out what a mining workplace is like. The differences between working above ground and underground. The culture they will be a part of. The impact of shift work on their personal life. If they come to the interview having done some research, having some understanding of the realities, it shows us they are motivated and willing to learn.

“A background in agricultural, civil or construction industries is also highly-regarded, because it means candidates have an understanding of working with plant/equipment, and the need for productivity and efficiency, with the right attitude.”

### **What’s changed today from when Wendy started?**

“A greater emphasis on Workplace Health and Safety and the adoption of new technology are probably the biggest changes I have seen.

“There is greater understanding that everyone in a mining workplace, from the office to the laboratory, from processing to logistics, above ground or underground, has a

shared responsibility for each other's safety. Mines like Northparkes have 'Zero Harm' performance standards which everyone who works there contributes to.

"Before you start, there are extensive background checks on everything from your health to police checks. If you've worked in mining before, this will include your safety record.

"Then, the first thing you'll do when you start is undertake extensive safety training specific to the site, which will continue throughout your working life at that mine. And of course there's the PPE, no more shorts!

"Everyone wants you to return home to your family the way you left, safe and well.

"Safety requirements, along with productivity and efficiency goals, also drive the adoption of new technology.

"We're now using different equipment and different methods, and mining employees need a willingness and ability to adapt to innovations, such as block-cave mining, automation and drip rigs, that we've seen introduced over the last 20 years, and new technology we will see emerging over the next 20 years.

"Finally, there are more women applying for mining jobs, and working across all aspects of operations, above and underground. Northparkes strongly encourages women to join the mining industry and believes that a career in mining should be open to a diverse range of people."

### **And the best part of the job?**

"It's a highly-competitive industry, and therefore the challenges never stop, which keeps you constantly learning and growing. There's nothing quite like watching new technology being used, like an underground bogger being operated remotely from above ground.

"I love seeing the enthusiasm of people just starting and the opportunities opening up for them.

"It's also been great to come full circle here at Parkes. To see the end result of the mineral exploration I was involved with here in my 20s and now contributing in a different way by recruiting people to a productive and successful mine."

Find out more about topics covered in this update:

- [New block cave project at Northparkes Mines](#)
- [Northparkes driverless trucks head deep underground](#)

Until next week, stay safe.

**Scott C Small**  
Managing Director

**Andrew Egan**  
Group Manager – Regional Operations

**Victoria Bila**  
Group Manager – Operations

**Damien O'Donnell**  
Group Manager – Regional & Executive