



A Publication of the

Office of Employment Equity for Persons with Disabilities • Public Service Secretariat

West Block • Confederation Building • P.O. Box 8700 • St. John's, NL • A1B 4J6

Telephone: 709-729-5881 • Fax: 709-729-5446 • TTY: 709-729-5441 • Toll Free: 1-800-950-4414

Email: openingdoors@gov.nl.ca • Web Site: <http://www.exec.gov.nl.ca/openingdoors>

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HELP US ... HELP YOU!

What's Your Employment Status?

For the purposes of timely referrals and marketing of clients, the Office staff needs to know who is available for work and, if they are available, are they currently working or unemployed? If unemployed, what is your current source of income? Are you receiving income support (social assistance) or are you EI eligible? These questions are not asked on the application form, but they are questions which we need the answers to.

For example, if you are working, you may not be interested in being considered for another job at this time. Or, you may be eligible for EI, thereby making you eligible for a wage subsidy. This information gives the staff a tool to use in marketing you to employers. If this information is not readily available, valuable time is lost and, possibly, job opportunities.

Disclosing Your Disability During An Interview

Disclosing your disability to a potential employer can be a very difficult thing to do. Doing so during a job interview can be even more difficult! As the interviewee, you are trying to impress the employer with your knowledge and work-related skills. How do you accomplish this? First of all, there is no one correct method for disclosing a disability. You are the expert on your disability and you must feel comfortable discussing your disability with an employer.



Knowing your disability is a very important factor in disclosure. While preparing for interviews, read through the job description and identify any duties which may be impacted by the nature of your

disability. Then, think about possible solutions to any areas. Solutions can include using assistive devices

or simply thinking of different ways to complete the job requirements. By doing this, you will feel more comfortable discussing your disability during the interview. Try to keep the focus of the interview on your skills and your ability to do the job.

When it comes time to discuss your disability, take the initiative and show the employer that you are comfortable discussing your disability. The most important thing to remember is to concentrate on your skills.

Have You Checked Your References?

"Your resume will get you an interview ... your references will seal the deal." Many job seekers today underestimate the power of their references and are passed over for jobs as a result. Just like checking your credit before applying for a mortgage or a car loan, the smart job hunter will check their references before applying for a job or prior to a job interview.

Today, employers are often forced to make decisions fast as they cannot afford to miss out on the applicant of their choice. Knowing this, you must carefully choose job references that compliment your resume. One bad, lukewarm, or incomplete reference could be the deciding factor between you and another qualified candidate. Along with updating your resume, you must update your references. A good reference candidate will need to be able to answer some of the following questions: date of employment, how long they have known you, their professional relationship to you, position and job duties, oral and written skills, interpersonal skills, strengths and weaknesses, quality and quantity of your work.



To learn more about these topics, please feel free to contact the Office at 709-729-5881 TTY:709-729-5541 Toll Free -1-800-950-4414.

Source: http://www.references-etc.com/choosing_job_references.html

CLIENT SUCCESS STORY!!



By: Keith Noseworthy

Even in my younger years I always needed extra help with studies in school, not realizing I actually had any type of learning disability. People would assume that I had no interest in learning new things.

Around the age of fifteen, I was first diagnosed with a learning disability. Of course it put a damper on my outlook of what the future had in store for someone like me. But after talking with friends and family, I realized that someone like me was quite common in today's society and that each and everybody had a place where they were needed. My instincts told me not to give up. I was thankful that my mother was a strong influence for me as she encouraged me not to give up and guided me all the way. If it wasn't for my Mom, I probably would not be where I am today.

I continued to struggle through school and I eventually gave up. But, I did return to the College of the North Atlantic to complete what was important to me. After successfully graduating and with the help of a family friend, I managed to land a job with a local print shop. During my time there, I conquered many real world fears, gained knowledge and many useful skills. I also came to realize that the field of printing was what I wanted to do for the rest of my life. But I was still unsatisfied with what I was doing and felt I had much more to offer.



After researching many different routes, I discovered an organization named Ability Works, which helped people with disabilities find good work opportunities. While I was involved with them, they introduced me to another local company, the Hub. During my time at the Hub, I worked in their print shop where the skills I had previously gained were put to good use and I also gained many other work skills. I never did feel discouraged on the job, but I still felt I could do more. So, while I was working, I continued to look for better work opportunities. I eventually came across a great program named Opening Doors, where opportunities are never rare for a person with a disability.



Opening Doors really reached out to me and spent time working with me. They made me believe in myself and that anything was possible. The skills I

had were actually needed in the workforce. They tried to keep me in the same field that I was interested in and introduced me to the Director of the Queen's Printer. I was very lucky to obtain a work term where I worked for one month unpaid. Even though there were no pay cheques coming in, I knew in my mind that this was where I wanted to work and strived to prove myself.

After completing my work term, I said to myself, "What's next?" To show my interest in the department, I never gave up nor moved on. Instead, I continuously phoned; until one day the Director finally had some good news. I guess he realized I was either very interested or I wasn't giving up that easy. He told me that he finally got approval for a paid contract for me. I was ecstatic!! I couldn't believe all my hard work and searching had finally paid off.

Of course it paid off, it is six years later and I am currently an employee of the Queen's Printer and I still enjoy getting up in the morning and going to work to a place where I feel I belong.



Without Opening Doors, I would likely still be hunting for that perfect job, and to them I owe many thanks. Hopefully someday I can return the favor, because they will never know the depth of my gratitude. Thank you for making my life what it is today.

If you are interested in telling us your success story or know someone with a story to tell, we would love to hear it. Contact us!

"Stories hold potency and power. They are medicine for the teller and the listener."

- Brenda

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ATTENTION STUDENTS !!

STUDENT SUMMER EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

In mid-March, we will launch our Student Summer Employment Program for 2009, placing post-secondary students with disabilities in provincial government department offices throughout the province. To be eligible, students must be currently attending a post-secondary educational institution,

returning to school in the fall of 2009 and registered with our Office. Contact one of our staff to indicate your interest in gaining valuable career-related work experience through our upcoming Student Summer Employment Program.

66 Kenmount Rd., Suite 204, St. John's, NL
A1B 3V7
Phone: (709) 753-1445 Fax: (709) 753-4747
Email: ldanl@nl.rogers.com



FEATURED COMMUNITY SUPPORT

LEARNING DISABILITIES ASSOCIATION OF NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

The Learning Disabilities Association of Newfoundland and Labrador Inc. (LDANL) acts as the provincial voice for individuals with learning disabilities and those who support them, and offers programs to build social competence and independence skills.

Their vision is that individuals with learning disabilities are identified and fully accommodated at the earliest opportunity, enabling them to reach their full potential.

The LDANL has two lines of business:

1. **Information/Programs** – offering information and programs to individuals with learning disabilities and those who care for/support them based on available funding, and offering source of reference suggestions.
2. **Membership** – offering membership holders access to resources, newsletter, discounts to conference, and other benefits which may vary from time to time.

The LDANL provides information to individuals with learning disabilities, parents/guardians, school personnel, employers, health professionals, and justice personnel. For individuals with learning disabilities and parents/guardians, the Association will provide information on how to advocate with the various provincial systems. Limited written and technological resources are available.



Contact the LDANL at:

Feature your Programs and Services!
Submit your programs and services to be featured in future newsletters via email to openingdoors@gov.nl.ca.

GET GOOD JOBS THROUGH NETWORKING



After graduation, thoughts turn to beginning your job search. While want ads, employment agencies and college career planning offices can be reasonable places to begin looking for work, there are hundreds of jobs that still remain hidden from the public, the key is find out how to access these jobs.

Networking is an important tool for any job seeker to learn. While it may sound complicated or sophisticated, networking is the simple idea of using friends or family to make contacts in the workforce. Though not all contacts will lead to your dream job, networking can greatly increase your chances of finding work faster.

The following are six rules for developing a successful network of contacts, courtesy of "The Very Quick Job Search" by J. Michael Farr:

Rule 1: Set up a meeting ~ An essential criterion for a person to be in your network is that they are willing to talk to you.



Rule 2: Present yourself well ~ To increase the chances that each contact thinks well of you, be friendly, well organized, polite and interested in what he or she has to say.

Rule 3: Learn something ~ Be open to learn from your contacts, even if they don't know very much about the type of job you are seeking. They might know others in the field.

Rule 4: Get two referrals ~ Don't give up until you have at least two names of other people who might help in your job search.

Rule 5: Follow up on referrals ~ There will be occasions when you do get the name of a person

who has a job opening. When this happens, you should follow up right away.

Rule 6: Send thank you notes ~ Sending a thank you note is a simple act of appreciation that denotes good manners, and helps the contact remember who you are.

Source:

"The Very Quick Job Search: Get a Better Job in Half the Time" by J. Michael Farr



Beat the Winter Blues: Active Job Search Tips for the Winter Season

Winter is in full force and you may find yourself feeling tired and unmotivated and wanting to stay put rather than pursue an active job search. Maybe you have a bout of the winter blues? Here are some helpful tips on how to keep yourself active during your job search over the winter months.

1. Get Moving -- Organize your week with planned activities that will inspire you to get moving with your job search. Keep a checklist of your activities for future follow-up.



2. Sleep -- Try to sleep 7 to 8 hours at night and try to keep your bedtime and getting up time consistent. Sticking to a routine gives you more energy. Avoid those long weekend lie-ins: they can make you feel even more tired. Don't forget naps: a 20 minute power nap can give you the energy you need for the rest of the day.

3. Get Out -- Spend time with friends and family who motivate you. Schedule visits to places that allow you to meet new people and learn what is happening around you. Spend time networking with friends or family who are employed as they may become aware of opportunities at their workplace.



4. Exercise and Eat Healthy -- Exercise not only regulates your weight and keeps you healthy, it also relieves stress, helps you let off steam, and releases feel good chemicals that improve your mood. A balanced diet is essential in the winter as we do tend to turn to food for comfort. Make your meals light and healthy. You will look and feel better.



5. Work on Your Image -- Don't neglect your self image. Give yourself a makeover! Challenge yourself to remain positive and keep your appearance neat and tidy. Keep your approach and attitude towards your job search positive as this will boost your self esteem and confidence.



6. Think of Others -- Help out in your community or join a charity. It is a good way to network and make you feel useful! It also provides an opportunity to enhance your skills and learn new ones.



7. Seek Help If You Need It -- If you need more help, avail of the community agencies that can provide you with further assistance and support. They will help you stay focused with your job search goals over the long winter season.



Source: www.employmentdigest.net/2006/07

"Live neither in the past nor in the future, but let each day's work absorb your entire energies, and satisfy your widest ambition."

-- Sir William Osler (1849 - 1919)

UPCOMING REGIONAL VISITS

Office staff will be visiting the regions in the coming year to meet with clients, community agencies, and government representatives. We are currently partnering with government crown corporations and agencies to create new employment opportunities across the province. Further information will be provided as this initiative develops.



We have revised our Client Registry database. If possible, please forward your resume to us in Microsoft Word Format.

If there is anything you would like to see in future issues of the *Career Lens* or on our website, please let us know.

Next Issue Spring/Summer 2009

ALTERNATE FORMAT
AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST
