



CAREER LENS



A Publication of the

Employment Equity and Strategic Initiatives Division • Treasury Board

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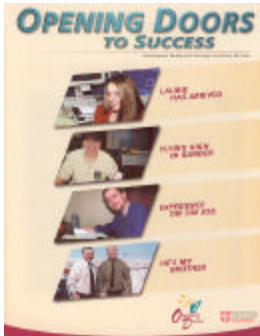
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Winter 2005

Volume 16

Manager's Message



Our new magazine, *Opening Doors to Success*, was officially launched by the Honourable Loyola Sullivan, Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board, in the House of Assembly on December 3, 2004. Building on our first publication in 2001, *Opening Doors to Success* showcases public

service employees with disabilities who began their careers in the public service through the Opening Doors Program. Copies are available upon request or can be viewed on our web site.

This past Fall, we visited the Western, Central and Eastern regions of the province to meet with clients, community agencies and government departments. It was an excellent opportunity to interact directly with clients and agency representatives to familiarize them with our programs and services and address their specific issues and questions. As a result of meeting with departmental managers and directors, we are confident that we have heightened the program's visibility and awareness and are hopeful for increased opportunities in the coming months.

By mid-March 2005, we will be launching our Student Summer Employment Program 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 2005 and registered with our division. Please contact one of our employment counsellors to indicate your interest in gaining valuable career related work experience through our upcoming summer employment program.

Featured Community Support

CAREER CONNECTIONS CENTRE



Linking Young Adults to Successful Employment

Choosing a career is one of the most important decisions a person will make in his or her lifetime. The **Career Connections Centre** provides a supportive and friendly environment to help underemployed youth make informed employment and education decisions. The centre serves young adults between the ages of 15-30 who live in Grand Falls-Windsor and throughout Economic Zone 12 (from Buchans to Leading Tickles).

At **Career Connections**, youth are provided with one-on-one career counselling, job shadowing, information on government wage subsidies, and career planning workshops - **all free of charge!** You are invited to drop in to the centre to use the computers, fax, and photocopier to assist you with your job search and career planning needs.

If you would like to know more about the services, please feel free to drop by 34A Bond Street (next to Windsor Pharmacy) in Grand Falls-Windsor or call 489-7848.

This project is made possible through funding by the Government of Canada, in partnership with the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, under the Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Labour Market Development Agreement and is sponsored by the Central Community Development Corporation of Grand Falls-Windsor.

Feature Your Programs and Services!

The purpose of this feature is to inform our clients of the many community supports that are available to them for accessing career and employment related information and assisting with their job search. Submit your program to be featured in future newsletters, keeping your submission under 100 words, via email to openingdoors@gov.nl.ca.

CLIENT SUCCESS STORY!!

by: Sherry Styles



I first found out about the Opening Doors Program when I was completing my last semester of my Bachelor of Arts degree at Memorial University. I saw one of their posters, so I jotted down the contact information and visited the website.

Being intrigued by all of the wonderful resource information offered on the website, I decided to apply to the program. A few months after graduation, I received a call from Opening Doors offering me an interview for a position with the Department of Innovation, Trade & Rural Development. I gladly accepted the offer.

In January of 2003, I was fortunate enough to begin working with the Department as an Information Officer for the western region. Some of the duties involved with my position are: helping the Economic Development Officers research market and other business related information for their clients, typing and editing various documents and helping to prepare for conferences, presentations and meetings.

One conference this past Autumn in which I was involved with was the Export Canada USA Seminar. For this seminar, a delegation of representatives from the Boston Consulate, led by the Consulate General of Canada in Boston, the Honourable Ronald A. Irwin, were traveling to the west coast of the province concerning a variety of topics dealing with exporting to, and doing business with, the United States. For the seminar, I helped to send out the letters of invitation to our clients, helped in making some follow up calls, and on the day of the seminar, helped with registration. The seminar was held at Marble Mountain Lodge and attended by approximately 50 people.

Along the way, I have been very lucky to work with a terrific and talented group of people in the regional and field offices, all of whom have been so helpful. I would like to say thank you to them for all of their support and guidance over the past two years. I would also like to thank the staff of the Opening Doors Program for providing me with this opportunity that has meant so much to me!

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!

CNIB/AFB

The Match is Lit



The CNIB's Employment Accommodation Service (EAS) and the American Foundation for the Blind (AFB) have partnered to create a North American online mentoring (e-mentoring) program for blind or visually impaired job seekers called MentorMatch.

MentorMatch is an online Internet tool that connects blind or visually impaired job seekers with a blind or visually impaired professional currently working in their desired field of interest. For example, a visually impaired law student could talk to a blind lawyer. Job seekers can learn first hand of the challenges and obstacles they are likely to face. They can gain valuable insight as to how best to cope or manage specific situations. Such information will never be found in any kind of employment manual, because with this web site, one person's experiences become another person's education.

The web site is up and running at www.careerconnect.org/cnib. The program is bilingual and accessible to both English speaking and Francophone CNIB clients.

Do You need to update us??

In order to maintain an accurate employment profile for referral purposes, you are required to provide us, **on a regular basis**, with any changes to your address, telephone number(s), employment status, educational qualifications and your ability/availability to work.

Outdated employment and/or contact information will result in your file being considered inactive, so don't delay, contact us today!!

DISCLOSURE

That big, dark D-word that no one wants to talk about, yet many persons with disabilities think about and employers often wonder about: **Disclosure.**

“Disclosure” refers to letting people know about your disability. Letting perspective employers know about your disability may be the biggest question in your work search. Do you tell them? How and when do you tell them? You have a great deal of control in this area and you have to decide what is best for you. It’s your decision if anything is mentioned on your cover letter or resume, or if you say something during the interview, or if you prefer to tell your future employer at the time of the job offer.



Here are a few things you should know about disclosure:

- It is an important and complex decision.
- It is a very personal choice.
- It depends on the individual and the situation. What is right for one person may not be right for another, and what works for one employer may not be successful for another.
- It should be left up to you. This could be different when dealing with a placement agency that works specifically with persons with disabilities, though you will still have some say in how much is disclosed.

To Disclose or Not to Disclose

Before deciding if, when and how to disclose your disability, think about and discuss the following questions.



- Is your disability visible?
- How do most people react when they learn about your disability? How do you deal with their reactions?
- When do you feel most comfortable and confident disclosing your disability?
- Are there any safety reasons (personal or organizational) that would impact your decision to disclose?
- How will your employer react to your disclosure? Will they think you are dishonest? Can you deal with their reaction?

- What misconceptions might the employer have about your disability?
- If you disclose, will you be able to reassure your employer that your disability will not affect your ability to do the work?
- Do you need accommodations for your interview? Or if you get the job?
- What do you know about this employer’s policies and experiences regarding people with disabilities?

Once you have reached a decision, ask yourself one last question: Will disclosing my disability at this time and in this way help me reach my goal of getting work?

Tips on Disclosing Disabilities

If you have had little success in disclosure situations, or feel uncomfortable, try role-playing the disclosure process. Here are some tips:

- Be positive. Focus on your skills and qualifications and don’t present your disability as a weakness.
- Be prepared to address any concerns employers express, even if they are not directly stated.
- Know what workplace accommodations you may require, including their availability, cost and what funding programs the employer can access.
- Anticipate the employer’s reaction and possible questions to your disclosure and how you will answer the questions.



Advice When Disclosing

- Keep it short and simple.
- Plan what you are going to say.
- Use examples.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Disclosing

Still not decided whether or not to disclose your disability to an employer? Visit the Opening Doors web site – Useful Information for Job Seekers on the Client Features page to learn the Advantages and Disadvantages of Disclosing your Disability. For further information, contact your employment counsellor.

Source: Tips for Job Seekers – Employment Series for Persons with Disabilities. Alberta Human Resources and Employment, Career and Workplace Resources.

Terms and Definitions Associated with Workplace Accommodations



When discussing workplace accommodations, two specific terms need to be understood – “Duty to Accommodate” and “Undue Hardship.” According to the Canadian Human Rights Commission, the duty to accommodate refers to “the obligation of an employer, service provider or union to take steps to eliminate disadvantage to employees, prospective employees or clients resulting from a rule, practice or physical barrier that has or may have an adverse impact on persons with disabilities.” The duty to accommodate is stated in the Canadian Human Rights Act and it requires employers to provide accommodation up to the point of “Undue Hardship” on behalf of the employer.

However, there are limits to an employer’s duty to accommodate and this is where the term “undue hardship” becomes relevant. Just as an employee has the right to accommodation, an employer has the right to have a productive workplace. The Canadian Human Rights Commission states “in order to establish an exception to the duty to accommodate it must be established that accommodation of the needs of an individual or a class of individuals affected would impose undue hardship on the person who would have to accommodate those needs, considering health, safety and costs.” It is the responsibility of the employer to prove that the cost of the accommodation would risk the viability of the organization. It is important to note the size of the employer is very important when determining cost. For example, if the cost for an accommodation endangers an organization’s ability to continue operating, then the cost may be considered “undue hardship.” Undue hardship can also be considered when accommodation for one employee would risk the health and/or safety of another employee.

This article is intended to outline two important definitions which are relevant when a workplace accommodation is requested. Workplace accommodations can sometimes be difficult to determine so employees and employers alike should know what their rights and obligations are.

To learn more about Duty to Accommodate, Undue Hardship, Bona Fide Occupational Requirement, and Employees and Employers Rights and Responsibilities, visit the Canadian Human Rights Commission online at <http://www.chrc-ccdp.ca>.

The Operational Stress Injury Social Support (OSISS) Program was created in 2001 and is mandated to: create a national peer support network for members, Veterans and their families; validate the development of education packages and pre-deployment training modules in partnership with Canadian Forces and civilian health care professionals; and take the lead in developing the methodology required to effect an institutional cultural change regarding the realities of operational stress injuries.

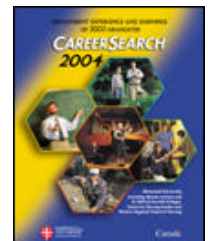
For this Program, an operational stress injury (OSI) is defined as any persistent psychological difficulty resulting from operational duties performed by a Canadian Forces member. OSI include diagnosed medical conditions such as anxiety, depression and post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), as well as a range of less severe conditions.

Contact Information:

Shawn Hearn, Peer Coordinator NL
OSISS, c/o Veterans Affairs Canada
John Cabot Building, 10 Barbers Hill
Box 5068, St. John’s, NL A1C 5V4
Phone: 709.772.2611 Fax: 709.772.4183
peersupportnfld@aol.com www.osiss.ca

CAREERSEARCH 2004

CareerSearch provides current information on job prospects, salaries and debt levels of recent graduates. Knowing the labour market outcomes of programs allows students to make informed choices regarding their career planning goals and post-secondary study. The link www.gov.nl.ca/careersearch allows you to research potential career choices online.



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

Next Issue Spring/Summer 2005

ALTERNATE FORMAT AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

