



CAREER LENS



A Publication of the

Employment Equity and Strategic Initiatives Division • Public Service Secretariat

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Summer Employment a Success



As we all settle back into our Fall routine, we would like to extend best wishes to all students, especially those twenty-five that worked within the provincial government as part of the Opening Doors Summer Employment Program the past few months. They were great ambassadors for students with disabilities, showcasing their eagerness to learn new things and professionalism in the workplace while building their resumes with new work experiences and enhancing their networks. We hope to offer our summer employment program again next summer which we will launch in our January issue of Career Lens and through our email list in 2006.

Targeted Wage Subsidy Opportunities

We are in the process of updating our client registry to ensure we are aware of the employment status of each client. We anticipate in the coming months that there will be some opportunities through our Targeted Wage Subsidy Initiative that you may be eligible for. **Please contact one of our employment counsellors**, Chris or Jennifer, to ensure we know if you are in receipt of, or eligible to receive, income support or employment insurance, or have received employment insurance within the past 3 years (5 years maternity). This will make you eligible for positions through our wage subsidy initiative, should you meet the education and experience requirements as outlined in specific proposals we receive.

Regional Visits

We plan to visit the regions of the province again this Fall. If you are a client and would like to meet one-on-one, or part of a community agency and are interested in meeting with us when we are in your area, please contact our office at your earliest convenience. If there are specific issues you would like to discuss, we would love to hear about them.

New Public Service Secretariat Created

On May 16, 2005, the Provincial Government created a new Public Service Secretariat. The Secretariat is responsible for all corporate human resource functions within the provincial government, including human resource policy/planning and the Opening Doors Program, as well as other divisions and programs. Additionally, the Secretariat houses the unit that provides departmental human resource services to government's central agencies. The Opening Doors Program now falls under the new Public Service Secretariat as opposed to the former Treasury Board Secretariat. To view the May 16, 2005, news release, please visit government's News Releases Page at www.releases.gov.nl.ca/releases/.

Disability Disclosure Workbook

The "411 on Disability Disclosure: A Workbook for Youth with Disabilities" is designed for youth, and adults working with them, to learn about disability disclosure. This workbook helps young people make informed decisions about whether or not to disclose their disability and understand how that decision may impact their education, employment, and social lives. It is targeted at a "youth" audience, but is full of helpful ideas for any job seeker with a disability. Available online in PDF and Microsoft Word formats at: www.ncwd-youth.info/resources_&_Publications/411.html.



We could learn a lot from a child ...

At the park, a little girl asked her mother for a dollar to give to a lady in a wheelchair. Her mother is touched by her child's kindness and gives her the money.

"There you are, my dear," said the mother. "But, tell me, isn't the lady able to work anymore?"

"Oh yes," came the reply. "She runs the ice cream stand and I want to buy a cone."

Interview Preparation: Employer Contact

You have been contacted for a job interview and a time and place for the interview has been scheduled. Now is the time to prepare – review the job advertisement, the company's web site and organizational structure, and develop some possible questions the interviewers may ask. All of these are crucial tasks a job seeker must undergo in preparation for an interview.



One interview preparation technique often overlooked is the contact with the potential employer. Even though many job advertisements do not list a contact name or number, it is important to find out as much

information as possible about the position and the employer prior to the interview. Some job postings will specifically state "No phone calls please" and if this is the case, then that request should be respected. However, you can still try to contact someone you know who already works in the organization or if contact information is listed, take it as an opportunity to find out some valuable information about the position.

It sounds simple enough – pick up the phone, dial the number and speak with someone who has knowledge about the vacant position. Even though it seems to be a basic task, many job seekers fail to utilize this avenue for information about the position and organization. Sometimes job seekers may not know what questions are appropriate to ask, or they may be too nervous to speak with someone on the phone for fear of making a negative first impression or, maybe, they feel they will be looked upon as being "pushy." However, if contact information is listed on the job ad, it's listed for a reason.

Before calling, it is important to think about what kind of information you are looking for. Reviewing the job ad and the duties and responsibilities of the position should provide you with some questions to ask. It may also provide some insight on the skills and abilities the hiring organization is looking for in the successful candidate.



Gathering additional information by making the contact is just one benefit. Your interest and enthusiasm about the position is shown by taking the initiative to contact them in the first place. If you ask, you may have the opportunity to speak with the supervisor of the position and see the work environment. This would be an excellent opportunity to make a positive impression on the

supervisor even before walking into the interview! Our employment counsellors, Chris and Jennifer, can provide a wealth of information on preparing for interviews. Additionally, there are many web sites which contain information about preparing for interviews that job seekers may be interested in:

www.deed.state.mn.us/cjs/cjsbook/interview.htm

womensweb.ca/career/interviews/research.php

outreach.missouri.edu/career_options/job.htm

interview.monster.ca/section1942.asp



FREE MICROSOFT OFFICE 2003 TRAINING <http://office.microsoft.com>

It's free, it's fast, it's wherever you are. From the maker of Microsoft Office programs, training shows you how to use those programs more effectively and more comfortably.



Why is it free? So everyone has an opportunity to learn more about it. The more you know about it, the more it can do for you.

What does training do? Training tells you and shows you how Office works. Really tells you — all the courses have audio in them, and many are audio all the way through. And really shows you - every course has hands-on interactive practices, with detailed instructions so you can try for yourself. Training courses start at the beginning, with courses for people who've never used a program. Other courses explain popular features, effective work strategies, and smart ideas that you'll be glad to use yourself.

How do I start? Go to the Office Online Training home page: <http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/training/default.aspx>. There are lots of programs to choose from. Or try basic training: <http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/assistance/HA011465331033.aspx> if you're just getting the hang of Office.

What do I need? A computer and the Internet. When you're not connected, try summaries of training, in PowerPoint or as printable Quick Reference Cards. Because the practices are in Office 2003, you need Office 2003 to do them. But you can read and hear and see the courses with just Internet Explorer.



Featured Community Support

EPILEPSY NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

Back in 1983 a mother was talking with her son's doctor. The diagnosis was Epilepsy. That Mom, like so many Mom's before and after her, was very troubled by the news. Epilepsy - what was it, what would happen, would her son be ok?

The Mom decided to learn as much as she could about Epilepsy. Searching for support and information, she found little. Something was needed in Newfoundland and Labrador to provide people with Epilepsy and their families with the help they needed. And so it was that this Mom decided to do something about it. She gathered together a small team of volunteers and from their work and dedication Epilepsy Newfoundland and Labrador (ENL) was born.



While small at first, Epilepsy Newfoundland and Labrador soon began to grow and expand, offering information and services to those in need, bridging the gap between the medical and the social realities of living with Epilepsy. Today, ENL offers a wide variety of programs and services available to its members and to the public. ENL remains committed to working for awareness, understanding and assistance. You can reach them at 722-0502 or toll free at 1-866-EPILEPSY (374-5377). To learn more about the programs and services available, visit their web site at www.nfld.net/epilepsy.

Did You Know?

- Over 10,000 people in NL live with Epilepsy.
- Epilepsy is the second most common neurological problem (behind headaches).
- People are often more hurt by the ignorance of others and the resulting stigma than they ever are by the seizures.
- There are different types of seizures and many don't involve convulsions at all. Some look like daydreaming, or dazed confusion and some you can't even see.

Feature Your Programs and Services!

Submit your programs and services to be featured in future newsletters, keeping your submission under 100 words, via email to openingdoors@gov.nl.ca.

Advice on Dealing with some of Life's Burdens

- Accept that some days you're the pigeon, and some days you're the statue.
- Always keep your words soft and sweet, just in case you have to eat them.
- Drive carefully. It's not only cars that can be recalled by their maker.
- Never put both feet in your mouth at the same time, because then you won't have a leg to stand on.
- The second mouse gets the cheese.
- When everything's coming your way, you're in the wrong lane.
- Birthdays are good for you. The more you have, the longer you live.
- You may be only one person in the world, but you may also be the world to one person.
- We could learn a lot from crayons. Some are sharp, some are pretty and some are dull. Some have weird names, and all are different colors, but they all have to live in the same box.
- A truly happy person is one who can enjoy the scenery on a detour.



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!!

CLIENT SUCCESS STORY!!

By: George Ingram

I was only seventeen years old when I was involved in a motorcycle accident and became a member of the disability community. I had a Grade 8 education and lived in a very sheltered



community. After 10 months of rehab, I quickly realized that without an education, I was going nowhere fast. I had no job skills since prior to my accident, I had only worked at labour jobs which required little education. This type of employment was no longer a valid option for me because I now utilized a wheelchair for mobility.

In 1984, I met with a counsellor at the Government Service Centre in Clarenville regarding education and skills training. They provided me with all the information I needed to begin the long road to getting back into the work force where I could make a living despite my disability. The result was completing the Grade 12 equivalency, *Basic Training for Skills Development*, and then enrolling in a Clerk Accounting program.

In 1989, I had had enough of living in an area where my only employment options were to work for minimum wage for a few weeks and then draw Employment Insurance benefits for the remainder of the year, with no prospects for long term employment. With the help of the Canadian Paraplegic Association, I landed a job as the Provincial Co-coordinator of National Access Awareness Week in St. John's. I really enjoyed the work but this was a seasonal position and, once again, after 7 months or so, I was back in the job market again.

During a visit with an employment counsellor at the HUB in 1991, I was informed of a Dispatcher training course which I took part in, and subsequently obtained employment as a dispatcher with the HUB. I really enjoyed my 6 years of employment with the HUB, but due to another accident, I had to give up my job and return to EI while I recovered from the accident.



During this time, I met with a counsellor at the AbilityWorks Employment Centre and decided it was, once again, time to retrain and prepare myself for a future in Information Technology. Upon completion of an Information Systems Management diploma at Nortech College in 2001, I set out to find suitable employment.

As part of my job search, I updated my file with the Employment Equity and Strategic Initiatives Division (Opening Doors). In November of 2002, I was contacted regarding a wage subsidy position as a Word Processing Equipment Operator and was granted an interview. It was a couple of weeks later, December 21, 2002, that I received the best Christmas gift possible that year. It was a phone call from my current supervisor, informing me that I had been chosen for the position and to report for work with the Department of Environment and Conservation on January 2, 2003.

Since that time I have been blessed with working with the best group of people that anyone could ask to work with. I would like to take the time to thank those people who believed in me and gave me the opportunity to prove myself as a valuable asset to the Department. I would also like to thank the staff at Opening Doors for helping me not only with my job search, but also for building my confidence, preparing me for interviews, counselling and for helping me to believe in myself.

In conclusion, I would like to say to all persons with disabilities that when your job search seems hopeless and there seems to be one stumbling block after another, don't give up, barriers can be overcome, you just need the will to keep going. There will always be barriers, some we can overcome just by educating the public of the problem, and others we have to overcome ourselves.

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!

Your Employment Resource Centre

If you are a registered client in an active job search, or just need a place to go to get support or direction, the Opening Doors Resource Centre is the place to investigate. Feel free to drop in at anytime to use our centre for any of your job search needs. To learn more about the services that are at your disposal, contact one of our employment counsellors or visit the Resource Centre page of our web site.

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

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ALTERNATE FORMAT AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST