



# CAREER LENS



A Publication of the

Employment Equity and Strategic Initiatives Division • Public Service Secretariat

5<sup>th</sup> Floor, 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](mailto:openingdoors@gov.nl.ca) • Web Site: <http://www.exec.gov.nl.ca/openingdoors>

Spring / Summer 2006

Volume 20



## DIVISIONAL UPDATE

### WELCOME BACK CHRIS!

We are pleased to welcome Chris Moyle back to the Employment Equity and Strategic Initiatives Division. Chris has resumed his previous role as Employment Counsellor and can be reached at (709) 729-2296, by email at [cmoyse@gov.nl.ca](mailto:cmoyse@gov.nl.ca) or by calling our toll free number. Chris, along with Jennifer Lake, is available at your convenience to provide valuable advice and guidance to you as your Employment Counsellors. Please maintain contact with them to ensure your file, including your resume and employment status, remains up-to-date.

### TARGETED WAGE SUBSIDY INITIATIVE

Our Targeted Wage Subsidy Initiative will continue through April 2006 to March 2007. During this time, we anticipate that there may be upwards of 20 contractual work experience opportunities within provincial government departments throughout the province. To be considered for these and other opportunities that may become available through our Division, it is important that you ensure your client file contains an up-to-date resume and that our employment counsellors are aware of your current employment status and income source to determine eligibility for opportunities.

### STUDENT SUMMER EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

Our Student Summer Employment Program has been officially launched to departments and we anticipate that up to 25 post-secondary students will gain career-related work experience in provincial government offices throughout the province. In March, post-secondary institutions and community agencies across the province received information regarding our summer program for promotion among interested students.



### **Interview Preparation: In the Days Before the Interview ...**

1. Draw a line down the center of a piece of paper. On the left side, make a bulleted list of what the employer is looking for based on the job posting. On the right side, make a bulleted list of the qualities you possess that fit those requirements.
2. Research the company, the industry, and the competition.
3. Prepare your 60-second personal statement: Your answer to the, "Tell me about yourself," question.
4. Write at least five success stories to answer behavioural interview questions ("Tell me about a time when..." or "Give me an example of a time...").
5. List 10 questions to ask the interviewer about the job, the company, and the industry.
6. Research salary data and determine your worth.
7. Determine your salary needs based on your living expenses -- what is your bottom line?
8. Get permission from your references to use their names.

Source: [http://interview.monster.ca/7054\\_en-CA\\_p1.asp](http://interview.monster.ca/7054_en-CA_p1.asp)

### **Professionalism 101:**

It is more professional to have your name in your email address, ex. [janedoe@hotmail.com](mailto:janedoe@hotmail.com)



## FEATURED COMMUNITY SUPPORT

# CANADIAN MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION

Knowledge • Communication • Understanding

## Changing Minds

Providing effective communication tools to better understand mental illness

The Canadian Mental Health Association, Newfoundland and Labrador Division, is a voluntary, charitable organization established in 1964 to promote understanding of mental health and mental illness. Being in good health means more than just feeling physically well, it also means feeling mentally well. The Association believes in enabling individuals, groups and communities to increase control over, and to enhance, their mental health. To this end, they educate and inform through mental health education sessions such as their new mental illness awareness program *Changing Minds*.

The Canadian Mental Health Association, Newfoundland and Labrador Division, in partnership with the College of the North Atlantic, will be offering workshops of the new mental illness education program *Changing Minds*. The program features personal stories and insightful communication exercises to help understand the experience of mental illness. *Changing Minds* was created in order to address a community need for mental health education, stigma reduction and to promote a better understanding of mental health and mental illness. The program consists of eight instructional modules including a practice module. Each module has an information component and a communication component. For more information, visit the Association's website at [www.cmhanl.ca](http://www.cmhanl.ca).

### Take Control of your Health Take Care of your Mind

#### 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](mailto:openingdoors@gov.nl.ca).

## THE FIGHTER

By: Renee Kavanagh



Living with a disability is tough. You have to be a fighter at everything you do. And let's face it, when you look around and see people without disabilities getting jobs, you feel a bit envious. Applications, interviews, and searching high and low is tiring and taxing on the self-esteem. However, the key is not to let all of this turn into frustration and then into depression. The fighter in you has to come to the surface, accept the realities and plough a path to success. You must never give up. Initiative, perseverance, and creativity are your weapons. Use them. Look inside yourself and discover your strengths – everybody has them. Instead of worrying about finding a job, focus and think up creative solutions. Listen to other people's suggestions as they may just lead you to solutions that you never even thought existed. Most importantly, do not be bothered about what other people think of you. Just because you have not found a job yet does not make you less of a person than anyone else. Remember, if you believe in yourself you can make things happen. Be a fighter!



### Tips to Improving Communication Skills

- Show interest in the conversation by leaning forward and looking alert.
- Increase your understanding of what the interviewer is saying by watching their facial expressions and body language.
- If you do not understand what the interviewer is saying, do not be afraid to ask for more information. Use phrases like *I'm not sure I understand...*, *Please tell me about...*, *Let me see if I am understanding you clearly* (recap what the interviewer has said) or *Do you mean that...*
- Remember that your appearance, resume, and cover letter each send messages to the interviewer about what kind of person you are.
- Use a video camera to discover any negative communication habits that you have by taping yourself in a mock interview. If you do not have access to a video camera, ask a family member or friend to watch your communication habits.

# CLIENT SUCCESS STORY!!



By: Lisa Gushue

It has always been a dream of mine to work in the public service and make valuable contributions to the social and economic life of the province. The Opening Doors Program has assisted me over the years in achieving this dream.

I first became aware of the Opening Doors Program during my first year of studies at Memorial University in 2001. I had just finished final exams and had moved back home to Spaniard's Bay to find a summer job. I quickly realized that I would be limited in my job selection since many of the local entry-level opportunities involved duties requiring the



extensive use of two hands, such as operating a cash register at sufficient speeds or serving foods. Recognizing the difficulty in finding a suitable summer job, my parents informed me of the Opening Doors Program and I immediately

submitted an application to their Student Summer Employment Program.

I spoke with an Employment Counsellor and discussed my educational background and interest in seeking employment in the public sector. Shortly after, I was offered a Student Assistant position with the Department of Government Services and Lands in Harbour Grace. The following summer, I was offered a clerical/administrative position with the Eastern Health and Community Services Board in Bay Roberts. These positions enabled me to gain valuable experience in working in a government setting and in dealing first hand with the public.

Over the next few years, I focused on completing my university degree. I graduated from Memorial University with a Bachelor of Commerce Honours Co-operative Degree in May 2005. I pursued a major in accounting and received various awards for academic excellence, as well as being a member of the Faculty of Business Dean's List throughout my studies. I was successful in obtaining my co-op work terms with the Atlantic Canada Opportunities



Agency where I gained valuable experience in the area of economic development. Due to this prior work experience, I developed a keen interest in the area of economic development and decided that this was an area I wanted to pursue as a career.

Throughout my studies, I kept in touch with the Opening Doors staff, sending updated resumes and informing them that I had begun my post-graduate employment search. It was frustrating at times as there were limited entry-level government positions in the area of economic development. Many of my friends who I graduated with were also experiencing the same difficulty and were left with no choice but to leave the province to fulfill their career dreams. I feared I might have to do the same - a difficult choice as I had a strong desire to reside in the province.

Fortunately, a few days before my convocation, I received a call from Opening Doors asking me if I would like to compete for a Targeted Wage Subsidy (TWS) position as a Trade and Investment Officer with the Department of Innovation, Trade and Rural Development. Shortly after, I was informed that I had won the competition. I was so happy and excited to be offered a position that corresponded to my education and career goals.

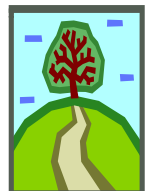
This TWS position has provided me with valuable experience in a wide variety of trade and investment initiatives. I have been heavily involved in the Department's Provincial Nominee Program and have gained expertise in the area of Immigration. I have recently moved beyond the TWS position and into a Trade Officer position within the same department. This opportunity will allow me to enhance my skills in the area of international trade and new trade development initiatives. I cannot express how grateful I am to have the opportunity to work with such a talented and supportive department.



I would like to thank the staff at Opening Doors for the tremendous support and encouragement they have shown me over the years. Opening Doors has been instrumental in assisting me make my initial move from post-secondary education to employment in the public service. As for the future, I plan to pursue French studies and other educational interests such as my MBA or CGA designation.

***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!***

***The key to realizing a dream is to focus not on success but significance - and then even the small steps and little victories along your path will take on greater meaning.***



***-- Oprah Winfrey, Actress and Talk Show Host***



## FIVE KEYS TO JOB HUNTING SUCCESS

So you need a job - a good job. Maybe you're graduating soon and have already gotten tired of hearing your parents and friends ask, "Do you have a job yet?" Maybe you're temping or being underutilized in a McJob and you long for new challenges. Or, perhaps you've been working for a while in a career oriented job, but are ready for a change to something that pays more -- or just suits you better.

Regardless of the situation, the way to get a quality job is basically the same for everyone. You need to:

- **Focus**
- **Have the right attitude**
- **Prepare thoroughly**
- **Devise a smart strategy**
- **Follow through.**

These five key areas will be presented to you as a three-part series over the next few issues of the *Career Lens*. This issue will open the topic and discuss the first key – **Focus**. Be sure to review each of these keys to success to determine what you're doing right and what you may need to work on.

### #1: FOCUS

To get what you want you have to know what you want. Employers are turned off by job seekers that sound unfocused, vague and scattered. You don't have to zero in on one overly narrow job target, but you do need to have a clearly defined picture of what you're looking for.



Let's say you'd like to break into advertising and you send a cover letter and resume to an ad agency you've researched. In your letter you say that you are basically interested in any entry-level position that might be available. Where's that letter going to end up? In the proverbial circular file.

You see, advertising, like many industries, is made up of hundreds of different jobs that require various skills, talents, interests, experience and personality types. If you sound like you're willing to take any of

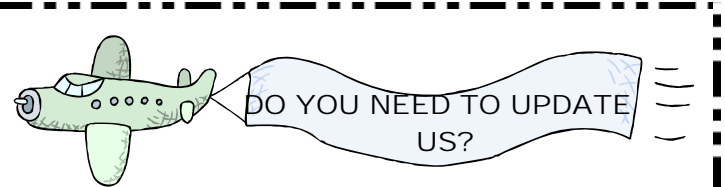
those jobs, not only will you sound desperate, but employers will think you haven't done your homework and don't know what you're getting into.

So, instead of having a variety of unrelated career goals, take some time to assess who you are and what you want. Define some basic criteria you're looking for in a job, such as the skills you'd like to use or develop and the type of work environment you want. When you know what you're aiming for, you'll come across as a more impressive candidate and will find that your search is easier because you can focus on specific types of jobs.



Source: [http://content.monster.ca/6580\\_en-CA\\_p1.asp](http://content.monster.ca/6580_en-CA_p1.asp)

**Be sure to look for Part II of this article in the next issue of the *Career Lens*.**



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!!

**The best preparation for good work tomorrow is to do good work today.**

-- Elbert Hubbard, American Writer  
1859 - 1915



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 Fall 2006**

ALTERNATE FORMAT  
AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST