



A Publication of the

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

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OFFICE UPDATE

UPCOMING CHANGES

This Fall will bring exciting changes to the Office of Employment Equity for Persons with Disabilities. There will be new positions within the Office's staffing structure with the addition of a Human Resources Consultant, Career Development Officer, and a Job Development Officer. These positions will positively impact the delivery of programs and services by assisting with the roll-out of upcoming initiatives. The Office will be moving forward with recruitment activities to fill vacancies and new opportunities within the Opening Doors Program, Targeted Wage Subsidy Initiative, as well as program expansion to crown corporations and government boards and agencies. We will keep you abreast of developments as they become available.

We will also be publishing a new edition of the *Opening Doors to Success* Magazine which will include a variety of articles and program information.

ARE YOU A MEMBER OF OUR E-LIST?

Please ensure that we have your up-to-date e-mail address so that you can receive electronic notification of upcoming employment opportunities, training and events within the community.



If your organization has information that you would like to share that is employment/career related and inclusive of persons with disabilities, let us know. Our E-List includes clients and partners province wide.

ADDITIONS TO THE RESOURCE CENTRE

We have recently added a number of literary resources to the Centre including information on:

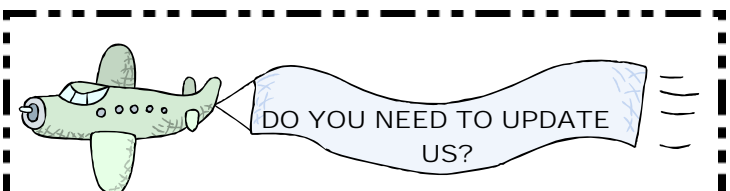
- ✓ Resume and Cover Letter Writing
- ✓ Improving Interview Skills
- ✓ Job Search
- ✓ Career Development
- ✓ Networking



You can access these and other features of the Centre such as the Office Proficiency Assessment and Certification Software, adaptive technologies and career information resources. For more information on the Enabling Resource Centre, please visit our website at:

<http://www.exec.gov.nl.ca/OpeningDoors/CLResourceCentre.htm>

If you live outside the St. John's area, you can contact us toll free at 1-800-950-4414 or e-mail openingdoors@gov.nl.ca. Our staff can assist you over the phone, via e-mail or connect you with an organization in your area to help you with some of the practical aspects of your job search, such as preparing your resume or preparing for an interview. Our staff can also put you on to other resources that may be of assistance in your job search or in identifying financial assistance for training.



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: Rod Mahoney

I have had many roles in my life including business owner, labourer, student, volunteer, candidate for municipal office and provincial government employee. These and other opportunities have created many learning experiences for me. The main lesson I have learned is the importance of an upbeat attitude. I have maintained a positive outlook through all experiences that life has thrown my way – both good and challenging.



I've learned that life is also full of surprises, as was my diagnosis with Multiple Sclerosis (MS) in July 1994. I visited the hospital for what I thought was a pinched nerve or slipped disk from an ATV accident and ended up spending my 25th birthday in the hospital. It took the doctors nearly a month of testing and hospital stays to determine the outcome. At that time, I was completing a three-year Business Management program. I made the decision early on that I was not going to allow this experience to bring me down. However, there were some challenges in the beginning as with most changes in life.

I was in the midst of my education when diagnosed. My focus on school became slightly derailed by my experience with MS. I wondered, "What's it all about?", and sometimes I encountered "what if" thoughts on if things were different. However, I quickly moved on, got in touch with my thoughts, and stayed focused on moving forward.

After a few bumps in the road, I made the decision to pursue a post secondary program in Computer Studies. Over my next three years in school, I worked hard and was very successful. I was more mature and determined and my grades showed it. I focused on completing my diploma and other certifications over and above what was required. I completed micro computer studies and computer programming and became versed in HTML, Web Page, and Webmaster. It was at this time that I first



heard of the Opening Doors program through a family member. I submitted an application and maintained contact with the staff over the years.

In 1999, I completed my program of study and moved into a position with the Office of the Official Opposition. I was employed as an Information Management Technician and my work included research and Information Technology (IT) related duties, including computer support. I finished that

position in 2003 and worked with another company for a period.

Another important lesson is finding balance between accepting support from others and depending on yourself. I take the good out of every situation and leave the rest behind. I've had lots of support from friends and family but I've carved out a perspective of my own. I found the strength internally, by making a conscious decision to be optimistic. It's not always easy but I keep at it.

I feel great and none the worse for wear in the years since the MS diagnosis. I owe the way I feel to my outlook on life. I build bridges in my mind to overcome hurdles and it now comes quite naturally.



A final lesson I've learned is the importance of making friends and allies. I am approachable and say that I have a "degree in socializing". Even where there have been obstacles in my life, I've always returned to my tendency to be social and draw on the perspectives of others. I am easy going and believe it is better to be "loud and clear" when conducting yourself in work and life.

In 2006, I was contacted by Opening Doors about the opportunity for a contractual position with the Office of the Chief Information Officer as a member of the Government Web Team. I was the successful candidate and that's where I am today, dealing with the Government website and the other 16 departmental websites within it. I'm part of the team that develops and manages website content based on government guidelines and provide web support to the various departments. I have recently been involved in researching web accessibility.



As I move forward in my career, I must say that I enjoy my work. However, my future goal is to be a constructive influence in the lives of others. Life is a learning experience, "no woulda, coulda, shoulda." I would like to contribute as an inspirational speaker or move into a position that involves counselling or being in touch with the community. I am in the middle of my career path, there is so much more to come.



"Just do it, don't procrastinate!"

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!



FEATURED COMMUNITY SUPPORT

AUTISM SOCIETY OF NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR

The Autism Society of Newfoundland and Labrador (ASNL) is a nonprofit, charitable organization dedicated to fostering the development of individualized, lifelong, community-based supports and services for persons with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). ASNL is committed to the promotion of acceptance, independence, productivity and opportunities for inclusion in all facets of life for persons with ASDs and their families.

The Autism Society is housed within the Elaine Dobbin Centre for Autism at Shamrock Farm. We are located in St. John's directly behind the Janeway on Clinch Crescent and occupy eight acres within the boundaries of Pippy Park.

Since February 2007, adults and adolescents with Autism have been registering for programs at Shamrock Farm, and our intake process remains ongoing. Participants come individually or in small groups, depending on the support required. The desired outcomes for the participants include:

- ✓ providing the opportunity to become involved in programs and to help assess the strengths and needs of each participant;
- ✓ completion of a vocational assessment;
- ✓ opportunities to socialize, learn and experience vocational skills programs;
- ✓ the opportunity to enhance/teach vocational behavior and communication skills.

Vocational Programs currently include:

- An Office Assistant Program - where participants learn office/reception skills.
- Kitchen Program - the Centre for Autism has a restaurant located onsite, "The Pantry", and offers participants the opportunity to learn vocational skills related to the restaurant industry.
- Maintenance Program - activities/training include: cleaning bathrooms, floors, dusting, vacuuming, and garbage/ recycling collection.
- Greenhouse and Landscaping - a greenhouse is coming onsite this fall and will provide vocational training opportunities year round. Ground maintenance and landscaping vocational experiences are also available.

For more information on our programs, please visit our website www.autism.nf.net or contact our Program Director, Heather Bartlett, by phone at 722-2840 or e-mail hbartlett@autism.nf.net.



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.



New NL Representative for NEADS

My name is Ian Murley and I want to talk about the National Educational Association of Disabled Students (NEADS). NEADS is a consumer organization with a mandate to encourage the self-empowerment of post-secondary students with disabilities. NEADS advocates for increased accessibility at all levels so that disabled students may gain equal access to college or university education. The Association provides information on services and programs for students with disabilities nationwide, publishes a regular newsletter, and conducts research on issues of importance to its members. Members include disabled students, educators, organizations and professional service providers. NEADS is governed by a Board of Directors which represents each of the provinces and the territories. NEADS encourages:

- ☞ improved awareness of disabled students' needs among professionals, other students, and instructors.
- ☞ raising the quality of information and its distribution regarding programs and services for post-secondary students with disabilities.
- ☞ increasing access to all programs of study and courses.
- ☞ raising the current level of provincial and federal funding to provide students with the opportunity to take post-secondary courses regardless of length, weight or choice of program.
- ☞ increasing accessibility to all aspects of the educational environment.
- ☞ improving access to the labor market for post-secondary graduates.

I am the Newfoundland and Labrador representative for NEADS representing students that fall under the NEADS mandate. I will be traveling to Ottawa in November 2007 for a national conference. If you would like information on this conference, or would like me to bring your concerns to the board, please contact me as soon as possible. You can also visit the website at www.neads.ca.

For more information about NEADS, or becoming a member contact Ian Murley at ian.murley@neads.ca.



IS IT TIME TO MODERNIZE YOUR JOB SEARCH ?

So you are looking for a job – maybe it's your first job, a return to work after a period of absence, or maybe you are ready to move from your current position to try something new. There are a number of methods that have been traditionally used by job seekers. However, just as the labour market has shifted over the past few years so have the strategies that are most effective to get the job you want.

Take a look at the traditional methods used to find employment and compare them to modern methods used today. Where does your approach fit it?

- ① *Traditional Method: Mail the same resume widely to employers* – the modern strategy is to **tailor multiple resumes to individual employers**. Once you have researched particular companies, you can create resumes targeting those organizations. You can tailor your resume based on the job titles and duties of the organization which match your background.
- ② *Traditional Method: Be ready to take any job* – **Link job and career objectives to a targeted employer or industry**. A generalized resume displaying basic skill in a variety of areas without focus is no longer effective. Employers are hiring for immediate needs and expect workers to come with the skills to get going with little training. You are expected to research your field and highlight your relevant selling points specifically for the type of work you are seeking.

Structure of an Objective:

Type of work (part-time, summer)	+	Function (what you want to do)	+	Context (type of work environment)	+	Benefit (your strongest assets)
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Adapted from:

http://www.yorku.ca/careers/jsm/resumes.htm#comp_obj

- ③ *Traditional Method: Learn about the job after you are hired* – You are expected to **conduct prior research to learn about an opportunity** through contact with the organization, website research, communication with employees, or other labour market sources. Prepare for the job interview by anticipating and rehearsing questions.
- ④ *Traditional Method: Emphasize specific skills and experiences* – Most working people will make numerous career changes during their lifetime of employment. You should **emphasize transferable skills**, and use work skills derived from other areas i.e. volunteer work, hobbies.
- ⑤ *Traditional Method: Gear job search to available vacancies* – **Gear your job search to your aptitude and interest and not to one type of job**. Your transferable skills can make you an asset to many employers so ensure that you gear your search to where your interests are.
- ⑥ *Traditional Method: Respond to job ads or make “door to door” contact i.e. dropping in on employers in a geographic area to ask about job openings* – **Use multiple approaches to job search**, including networking, phone contact, use of internet, direct contact with targeted employers, use of the hidden job market, follow-up of contacts, and call back.
- ⑦ *Traditional Method: Effort put into job search is part time and sporadic* – **Today your effort should be full time**. Make your job be to find a job.

It is beneficial to balance your job search using traditional and modern methods. However, remember not to limit yourself to job search techniques of the past that may slow you down, or worse, keep you from landing your ideal position.

Adapted from: Shebib, B. (2003). Choices: Interviewing and Counselling Skills for Canadians (2nd Ed.). Toronto: Prentice Hall

A bend in the road is not the end of the road unless you fail to make the turn. -- Mark Verehove



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 Winter 2008

ALTERNATE FORMAT
AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST