

Career Lens

Volume 30

Office of Employment Equity for Persons with Disabilities Newsletter

Client Profile: *Craig Pike*

Life Transformation

By: Craig Pike

One of the biggest tests of my resolve began approximately six years ago – it quickly engulfed every aspect of my life. At the time, I was enrolled in the Programmer Analyst program at the College of the North Atlantic. It wasn't long after the start of my second semester that I started to have problems with my lower back – something that had plagued me years earlier. As a child with Spina Bifida, I always hoped that I'd grow out of these problems, but I learned very quickly how wrong I was.

Physically, I was in agony. My mind and spirit had also become consumed by illness. After much soul-searching and consultation with my parents and my wife, I decided to put my education on hold and dedicate all my resources towards finding a solution to my misery. This was the beginning of my life transformation. My family doctor referred me to a pain management specialist. After twelve difficult days, I was discharged and walked out of that hospital nearly pain free and feeling like a new man.

I now felt that I was ready to find my calling – I weighed all of my options, and finally decided that at the age of 28, finding meaningful work would be my

goal. This is where the Office of Employment Equity for Persons with Disabilities (OEEPD) entered the picture.

Once I got in contact with someone at the OEEPD, the wheels were set into motion. Things kind of unfolded slowly at first – mostly because I live on the West Coast of the island and the majority of the jobs I was qualified for were in St. John's. However, the great job counsellors at the office told me to be patient and things would work out. Boy, were they ever right! I was offered a chance to interview for a Clerk II position at the Department of Environment & Conservation's Wildlife Division as part of the Targeted Wage Subsidy program.

As you can imagine, this was very exciting. I jumped at the chance, and began to prepare for any and all questions I thought they might ask me in an interview. Two weeks later on November 26, 2008, I reported for my first day

Continued Inside



Please let us know if there is anything you would like to see in future issues of Career Lens.

INSIDE LOOK FOR NEW PROGRAM UPDATES!

Fall 2009

PROGRAM UPDATES

New Employment Initiative

The Office of Employment Equity for Persons with Disabilities has introduced a new employment initiative to help support Government's commitment to diversity within the public service. Temporary Opening Doors positions are now being created in order to encourage and support inclusiveness within each provincial department. These positions are for a minimum of three months and may have the opportunity to be extended subject to budget availability.

Opening Doors positions are filled based on merit. Persons with the education and experience requirements – which are listed in the position statement of qualifications – will be identified by the registry system and “screened into” the competition. Client résumés are then referred to

the hiring department for the selection process. The candidate who best meets the qualifications for the job and who demonstrates this in the interview process is then offered the position. For information on our application process, please contact our Office.

Regional Visits

Office staff will be travelling across the province during the month of October to meet with clients, community agencies, and government representatives. Please contact our Office to schedule a meeting.

Mistakes at Work

What to Do If You Make a Mistake at Work

Everyone makes mistakes, they say. Usually you can correct your error or just forget about it and move on. Making a mistake at work, however, can be more serious. It may cause problems for your employer and even affect the company's bottom line. Repercussions will ultimately trickle down to you. Simply correcting your mistake and moving on may not be an option. When you make a mistake at work your career may depend on what you do next.

Admit Your Mistake:

Tell your boss about your mistake immediately. The only exception is if you make an insignificant error that will not affect anyone. Otherwise, don't try to hide your mistake. You will look terrible if someone else discovers it.

Present Your Boss With a Plan To Fix Your Mistake:

When you go to your boss to confess your mistake, you must have a plan for correcting it.

Present your plan clearly. Tell your boss how long it will take to implement your plan and if there are any costs involved.

Don't Blame Anyone Else for Your Mistake:

Pointing fingers won't help anyone if you make a mistake. Encourage those who may share responsibility to follow your lead in confessing to your boss.

Apologize for Your Mistake But Don't Beat Yourself Up:

There's a big difference between admitting your mistake and beating yourself up about it. Take responsibility but don't berate yourself for making it, especially in public.

Correct Your Mistake on Your Own Time:

If you have to spend extra hours at work to correct your mistake, don't expect to be paid for that time. You can also use your lunch hour or come into work early.

Source: http://careerplanning.about.com/od/workplacesurvival/a/mistake_at_work.htm

Life *Craig Pike*

Continued from Front Cover

on the job. I can't begin to describe how proud I felt that morning as I rolled out of bed thinking I have to go to work today. What a feeling! Perhaps the biggest concern I had was how I would fit in with my co-workers, but I was immediately accepted – not as “Craig, the guy who has Spina Bifida,” but as Craig, “the co-worker and friend.”

It has now been nearly 10 months since that first day – I love my job now more than ever. Most importantly, I have also learned that I don't ever have to hide behind my disability, nor feel limited by it. I was taught at a very young age that a positive attitude, along with a strong support system of friends and family, can get me past any obstacle, no matter how daunting it may seem – this has become my life motto. I owe every person I work with a debt of gratitude, because each of them has played – and continue to play – an important role in both my life and work. Finally, I want to say a special thanks to my immediate supervisor, to whom I owe the world. She has been my biggest supporter since “Day One”. You know who you are, so THANKS!

The Importance of Self Awareness

As Will Rogers - an actor from the 1930's - so eloquently stated, *“Even if you are on the right track you will get run over if you just sit there.”*

It is important to regularly take time to assess where you are in your professional development and where you want to be. Write down your answers to the following questions – and revisit them often – and get your career and your life on the right track.

- What do I want my life to be about?
- What do I love to do?
- What adds energy and joy to my life?
- What do I value?
- Does my life reflect my values?
- What have I accomplished in the past year?
- How might I be holding myself back?
- What are my strengths (i.e. what activities seem as easy as falling off a log)?
- How can I create an environment where I use my strengths at least 80% of the time?
- What action can I take this week that will have the greatest impact on moving me toward the life I want?

Adapted from:

<http://alumni.unc.edu/article.aspx?sid=6129>

Did You Know



The Office has revamped the E-List?

Our electronic mailing list is now in the form of a weekly newsletter. This newsletter is emailed to the clients and community partners of the Office of Employment Equity for Persons with Disabilities. It includes information regarding employment programs and services, as well as job advertisements from our community partners.

Contact us if you would like to sign up for our electronic newsletter, the E-List.

You can get the Career Lens electronically?

Go Green! Contact us and start receiving the Career Lens in your inbox.

The Public Service Secretariat has launched their new and revised Website?

Learn more about the programs and services of the Office of Employment Equity for Persons with Disabilities! You can also update your employment status online, or submit a question to our Career Counsellor.

Check out the Office's section at:
www.exec.gov.nl.ca/exec/pss/disability_supports



Fall 2009



Career and Employment Disability Case Managers

Career and Employment Disability Case Managers help clients start the process of finding the right career. This program is designed for any individual with a disability. We provide support services, information on careers, educational programs, and employment opportunities. Our goal is to assist persons with disabilities to overcome barriers and develop and become aware of their skills sets to increase their options and independence. We also offer employers the opportunity to hire qualified, dedicated employees.

Career and employment programs are provided by CPA in partnership with the Department of Human Resources, Labour & Employment, Service Canada, and other community and corporate partners. CPA Career and Employment Disability Case Managers will assist clients in developing and achieving a return to work plan.

CPA Contact Information

St. John's Office

Telephone: (709) 753-5901
Toll Free: 1-877-783-5901

Bay Roberts Office

Telephone: (709) 786-1440 / 1442
Toll Free: 1-877-596-2016

Labrador Office

Telephone: (709) 896-3010
Toll Free: 1-877-596-3010

Grand Falls-Windsor Office

Telephone: (709) 489-8445
Toll Free: 1-888-489-8410

Corner Brook Office

Telephone: (709) 634-9909
Toll Free: 1-877-634-0928

Marystown Office

Telephone: (709) 279-2790
Toll Free: 1-877-279-2790

Gander Office

Telephone: (709) 256-7515
Toll Free: 1-877-536-7077

St. Anthony Office

(Opening Soon)

Some of our services include:

- Career Planning
- Skills Training
- Job Search
- Resource Library Services
- Information on Government Programs
- Labour Market Information
- Employment Preparation Information
- Free Career Workshops
- Accessibility Information and Job Accommodation/Modification Information
- Free fax/copying

We also provide referrals for:

- Learning Disability Assessment
- Functional Capacity Evaluation
- Transferrable Skills Analysis
- Job Site Analysis

Career and employment services are offered free of charge to any individual with a disability. Referrals are accepted but not required. Clients may refer themselves for services.

A Publication of the
Office of Employment Equity for Persons with Disabilities
Public Service Secretariat



5th 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

www.exec.gov.nl.ca/exec/pss/disability_supports

Next Issue Winter 2010
ALTERNATE FORMAT AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST