



A Publication of the

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

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 • Web Site: <http://www.exec.gov.nl.ca/openingdoors>

Spring/Summer 2009

Volume 29



Program Update

INTRODUCING OUR NEW

CAREER DEVELOPMENT COUNSELLOR

We are pleased to announce the recent appointment of Ms. Krista Legge to the position of Career Development Counsellor with our Office. Krista comes to us with a strong background in the field of career development and community involvement. Her most recent role included community employment facilitation with the Community Centre Alliance/ Rabbittown Community Centre.



The Office welcomes Krista as the newest addition to the team! Krista can be reached at (709) 729-6435 or by e-mail at kristalegge@gov.nl.ca.

WAGE SUBSIDY INITIATIVE EXPANSION

Funding from this Office is now available for the creation of contractual work experience opportunities for persons with disabilities in provincial agencies, boards, commissions and crown corporations throughout the province. Placements to date have been made with the NL Liquor Corporation, NL Housing Corporation, the Labour Relations Board, and the Bay St. George Campus of the College of the North Atlantic.

We continue our partnership efforts to secure more placements in the coming months. To be considered for these and other opportunities that may become available through our Office, please ensure your client file contains an up-to-date resume and current contact information.



"NO ONE KNOWS WHAT THEY CAN DO UNTIL THEY TRY."

-- LES BROWN

STUDENT SUMMER EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

Since the launch of the Student Summer Employment Program in March, the Office has been steadily receiving applications from post secondary students province-wide. In the coming weeks, applications will be reviewed with a view to matching students with positions throughout provincial government departments applicable to their field of study. Applicants who decide to accept summer positions elsewhere are asked to contact Denise Hann-Hicks, Job Development Specialist, so files can be updated. Enjoy your summer!



Interview Preparation Tips

Interviews are anxious situations. You need to know how to sell yourself, clarify why they should hire you, and answer tough questions. Below is a list of some helpful tips to consider:

1. Dress appropriately to look professional.
2. Research your prospective employer.
3. Be seen as someone who will add value and not be a problem.
4. Show up with positive energy.
5. Be able to communicate and demonstrate your comfort level when speaking with your interviewer.
6. Prepare and practice for interviews. Know how to answer tough questions, such as, "why should we hire you?", or what is your greatest weakness and strength?". How you answer matters greatly. The "deer in the headlights" response will only get you back out pounding the pavement.



Source: http://www.seattlepi.com/business/401000_workcoach23.html?source=rss

CLIENT SUCCESS STORY!!



By: Justin Mercer

As a student with a disability (Cerebral Palsy) I have always had many barriers to face. But with much determination and, at times, fierce debates with those in authority, I was able to overcome the many difficulties.

In September 2007, I enrolled with the College of the North Atlantic (CNA) as an Architectural Engineering student. I must admit that the administration staff at Ridge Road Campus did its utmost to make the building user friendly for me as possible and, for that, I commend them. During my first semester at CNA, I worked diligently in the hope that I would do well. At the end of my first term I had achieved a GPA of 3.4 - something I was very proud of.



It was during my second semester that the thought of summer employment crossed my mind. What type of job could I possibly get? As a person with a disability, I knew my options were quite limited and the idea of getting a summer job using the skills I had acquired at CNA was just fantasy at that time. But I was determined, nevertheless, to prepare my resume and forward it on to everyone I could think of. I met with a number of potential employers, my MHA, and anyone that I thought would be of assistance to me. I was also registered with the Office of Employment Equity for Persons with Disabilities (OEEPD).



My hope was, naturally, to obtain any type of employment - anything that would occupy my time over the eight or so weeks that I had off during the summer break. Like all students in that situation, I waited for that all important phone call. During the intercession period at CNA, I was beginning to lose hope, thinking that the call would never come.

However, several weeks into the intercession I received a call that there may be a potential offer through the OEEPD's Student Summer Employment Program. I was overjoyed with the prospect. I was soon called in for an interview with the Engineering and Inspection Services Division, Department of Government Services. I had an interview and, although I was apprehensive about the interview, I quickly learned that I was to review and prepare documentation for

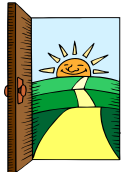


registration of buildings under the Accessibility Act and Regulations and design reviews for on-site water and sewage systems and gather information pertaining to building design or water/sewage design plans. However, I cannot express the elation I felt when I realized that this offer was in the realm of my studies of Architectural Engineering. The interview went well and then more waiting.



After a few more weeks of waiting and wondering, I was offered the position. For the next eight weeks, I worked alongside some very well experienced individuals in the technical field. From them, I gained immeasurable work experience that I could apply to my chosen area of study. My specific task was to pursue architectural plans, paying particular attention to the accessibility code. I gained valuable knowledge and real life experiences during my time there.

The work completed by the OEEPD staff certainly provided me the opportunity to gain practical skills and knowledge directly related to my field of study. I am truly thankful to the Student Summer Employment Program. I value the work that is being done to help open doors for students with disabilities to secure summer employment. I highly recommend that individuals with disabilities register with this Office. I would also encourage the private sector to get involved as well. It must be made clear that **DISABILITY DOES NOT MEAN INABILITY**. We have much to offer.



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!



“Once you replace negative thoughts with positive ones, you’ll start having positive results.”

-- Willie Nelson



We have revised our Client Registry database. If possible, please forward your current resume to us in Microsoft Word Format.



FEATURED COMMUNITY SUPPORT

PARTNERS FOR WORKPLACE INCLUSION

The Partners for Workplace Inclusion Program (PWIP) is a one-stop employment service for job seekers with disabilities. Developed by the Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work (CCRW) and funded by the Opportunities Fund, Government of Canada, PWIP enhances the employability skills of persons with disabilities.

Need pre-employment skills?

PWIP can assist you with enhancing the skills you require to obtain meaningful employment including:

- ✓ Learn about essential workplace skills and expectations
- ✓ Set employment goals
- ✓ Cover letter and resume writing assistance
- ✓ Interview coaching
- ✓ Skill development workshops
- ✓ Access to funding for skill-based training programs
- ✓ Access to work trials and targeted wage subsidies
- ✓ Job search assistance
- ✓ Assess to workplace accommodations and employment maintenance support.

Once you are job ready, PWIP will develop a comprehensive vocational plan and provide you with and occupational therapy assessment, if needed, and access to a range of job opportunities.

Do you qualify?

- ✓ Self declared disability
- ✓ Have not collected Employment Insurance benefits in past three years or maternity benefits in past five years
- ✓ Must not be eligible for Employment Insurance
- ✓ Not a full-time student

- ✓ Legally entitled to work in Canada
- ✓ Motivated to find employment.

For further information, please contact PWIP at:

Partners for Workplace Inclusion Program (PWIP)
31 Peet Street, Suite 225, St. John's, NL A1B 3W8

Tel: 709-754-4941 Fax: 709-754-5941
Email: dbambrick@ccrw.org lledrew@ccrw.org



Feature your Programs and Services!
Submit your programs and services to be featured in future newsletters via email to openingdoors@gov.nl.ca.



DO YOU USE YOUR TRANSFERABLE SKILLS?



The concept of transferable job skills is a job search technique that job seekers should master. What are Transferable Job Skills? These are skills you have acquired during any activity in your life, such as completing a special project in school, public speaking, school council representative, parenting, hobbies, sports, and volunteer activities. These skills can be applicable to what you want to do in your next job.



In resumes, cover letters, and during interviews, you should always portray your skills as applicable to the job you seek. If you have good experience(s) and you're seeking a job in the same field you've pursued in the past, portraying your skills as transferable is relatively easy. If you are seeking a job that is entirely different from what you've done in the past, or you are a college student or entry-level job seeker without much experience, begin thinking of everything you've done in terms of how it is transferable to what you want to be doing.



To determine your transferable job skills and its effectiveness, develop a checklist of all the duties you had to complete to accomplish a job. Evaluate how you complete this task such as writing



concisely, listening attentively, expressing ideas, facilitating group discussion, all of which identify your communication skills.

Motivating others, sharing credit, cooperating, delegating with respect are examples of your interpersonal skills. Some examples of management skills are making decisions with others, managing conflict, and delegating responsibility.

To know what skills to emphasize, conduct research on the company at which you are seeking employment and the particular job you're applying for. If you are responding to an ad, clues in the job duties will often indicate the most important skills. You can emphasize the skills that virtually all employers are looking for, such as teamwork, communications, interpersonal, and leadership skills.



Source:

http://www.quintcareers.com/transferable_skills_set.html



WRITING A COVER LETTER

What is a cover letter? It's your first real contact with a person who may become your employer. It's your chance to show an employer what qualifications you have for the job. A concise, well-written cover letter with the right information will make a good first impression.

It pays to take time to learn about the company or organization you are applying to. If your cover letter is tailored to the company and job, you'll show the employer that you can be a good fit.

Helpful Hints ...

- Refer to the job that you are interested in. If there is a competition number, write it down.
- Address your letter to the appropriate contact person, either the employer or a human resources officer. Use their name and title, and double-check the spelling.
- If the ad doesn't supply a contact, phone and get the right name. And never assume a person is male or female based on a first name – check it out.
- Refer to how you heard about the job, i.e. job posting, newspaper article, or from someone in your network of contacts.
- Refer to what the company does, and how your skills, abilities and experience can be a valuable addition to their team.
- Make sure the employer knows what action to take – will you call the employer or should the employer call you, and when?
- Provide your name, phone number and address.
- Keep your letter to one page. Type or print it out on good quality, 8 1/2 x 11 inch paper.
- Proofread your letter, and ask someone else to read it as well. Correct the errors, and print a clean copy.
- E-mail, mail or hand-deliver your cover letter and resume. Keep a copy for your files, and note the date that it was sent out.
- Allow plenty of time for delivery. Don't wait until the last day before a deadline.

Source: <http://www.servicecanada.gc.ca/eng/about/publication/pdf/youth/job.pdf>

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 2009

ALTERNATE FORMAT
AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST