



# WINTER 2010-2011 NEWSLETTER

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**Osborne Village**  
RESOURCE CENTRE

# DIVERSITY IN WINNIPEG'S WORKPLACE

By Marg Law - Centre Coordinator, OVRC

In Canada and across the Industrial world, we have begun to see evidence of labour shortages. Canada like other industrial nations is facing the same demographic realities: longer life expectancies, falling birth rates, and a large "baby boomer" generation reaching retirement age. Now between the ages of 45-63, the boomers are poised to retire; many already have.

The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives in 2005 predicted that Manitoba and Winnipeg particularly would be a "hot spot" for future skill and labour shortages. The Conference Board of Canada was projecting that the labour shortages already being felt in Winnipeg in 2005 would intensify by 2009. Now 2010, Winnipeg has indeed begun to feel this intensity regarding labour shortages. The Canada West Foundation predicted that the worst shortages would be felt in the Information Technology, Food Processing, and Health Care sectors. In 2008-2009 we also began to see shortages and potential shortages in the Construction industry and other trades which prompted the Manitoba Government to take measures that would entice people into the trades through the Apprenticeship Program. So, the question is who will fill these shortages in Winnipeg?

Manitoba has one of the highest Aboriginal populations in Canada and Winnipeg has more Aboriginal residents than any Canadian city in Canada making up 10% of its population. In 2006, there were 68,380 Aboriginal people living in Winnipeg and it was predicted that that population would grow by 22% over 5 years which would put it at approximately 83,424 in 2010. The Manitoba Bureau of Statistics projects that by 2016, one in every five labour market participant will be Aboriginal. M. Mendelson in his paper, "Aboriginal people in Canada's labour market: Work and unemployment today and tomorrow" (2004, p.38) says that "the increasing importance of the Aboriginal workforce to Manitoba...



cannot be exaggerated. There is likely no single more critical economic factor for (the Prairie) provinces." It is imperative that Winnipeg employers recognize the Aboriginal population as a vital pool of talent and skills which can fill the labour shortages to come.

Our Manitoba government however has realized that, in order to fill our future labour market shortages, we will need more people than our Aboriginal population can offer. In 2006 the Premier's Economic Advisory Council made the following statement: "It is clear that Manitoba needs an increase in immigration to keep its population and work force in balance".

In 2009, over 12,000 immigrants entered Manitoba. Manitoba saw 11,221 immigrants come to this province in 2008 with 8,063 of them settling in Winnipeg. Seventy-one percent of those immigrants represented Manitoba's Provincial Nominee program. "A target of 20,000 arrivals over the next 10 years means that the Immigration Division will work with stakeholders along with federal, provincial and regional governments to maximize the benefits of immigration as well as strengthen understanding and support for multiculturalism among citizens." (Manitoba Labour and Immigration Website)

To insure that immigration strengthens the province's labour market, the Manitoba Government put in place

a Qualification Recognition Strategy which promotes new approaches to information, assessment, bridge training and integration.

Clearly the people who must fill Winnipeg's labour shortage now and in the future are our Aboriginal and New Immigrants populations. As these populations fill our labour force, it is imperative that employers/companies and the new recruits recognize the importance of understanding cultural differences in order to effectively work together.

In their book *Recruiting, Retaining and Promoting Culturally Different Cultures*, Lionel Laroche and Don Rutherford talk of realizations they have come to through their extensive work helping hundreds of people prepare for life and work in a different country. They are as follows:

- "Most professionals vastly underestimate the impact of cultural differences in their work. Whether it be accountants, engineers, or doctors, the common belief is that the technical skills can be universally recognized and that these skills are what will "make or break" the professional equally in any country. This belief is common among both the recent immigrants looking for work and North American organizations recruiting employees.

- Professional recent immigrants are often passed over in some stage of the recruitment process, not because of lack of technical skills, but rather because of cultural disconnects or misunderstandings. Organizations are cutting themselves off from an incredible talent pool because they are misinterpreting the behaviours they are seeing in resumes, interviews, and probation periods.
- By being coached on cultural difference, both the recruiting organizations and recent immigrant job seekers can make a number of minor changes to their approach that will allow them to connect successfully." (Page xii Prologue)

These realizations that Laroche and Rutherford speak of would hold true for Aboriginal people living and working in Winnipeg as well.

In this OVRC newsletter, we have asked newcomers to Winnipeg to write about their experiences applying for and retaining their first job in Canada. We also have articles from companies and organizations discussing diversity in the workplace and the course of action/training they have developed to ensure positive experiences for their existing employees and their new recruits. I hope you enjoy these articles and also learn from them.

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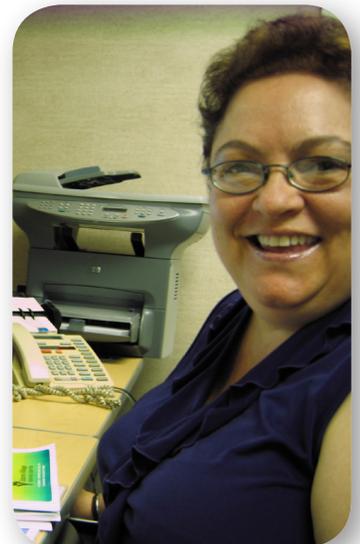
## A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

I would like to start by thanking the person who inspired the topic for this newsletter, Lionel Laroche. I had the pleasure of interviewing him on diversity in the workplace for this newsletter which I am sure readers will find very interesting and enlightening. Lionel distills this timely subject down by using real life, practical examples of employee's experiences in the workplace.

I also wanted to thank the wonderful individuals, Alicia, Wilson and Chol, for their inspiring personal stories that I hope will be motivating for readers and new immigrants arriving in Canada.

And finally, much appreciation goes out to Partners for Careers, Manitoba Tourism Education Council, Assiniboine Credit Union (Buffalo Branch), Manitoba Lotteries and Boeing Canada for contributing articles. They have established their leadership when it comes to diversity in the workplace and have demonstrated a positive approach on this subject.

Sincerely, *Patti Malo*



# COMING TO CANADA: MY STORY

By Alicia A. Franco-Espinosa

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If somebody would have asked me seven years ago, where I saw myself working in the next decade, my answer would not have been even close to my present day reality. I never thought I would be living and working in Canada.

So why am I here now? I came from Mexico City in 2004; I decide to learn English and took some courses in the city. At that time, I was working for the Federal Government and had no intention of moving anywhere else. After three months of taking the English courses, I figured out that, in order to best learn the language, I would have to “live it”, so I decided to come to Winnipeg for six months. When I was here, I learned about “volunteer jobs” and I approached three different organizations to work as a volunteer and improve my language skills.

My first volunteer experience was as a Volunteer Assistant Instructor at Osborne Village Resource Centre (OVRC). I really enjoyed working there, although, at that time, I only understood one quarter of what they were talking about and spoke even less. I remember trying to express myself when assisting computer students. I knew what to do with regard to computer software, but it was very difficult to express it in English words. Consequently, in the beginning I basically communicated using my non-verbal communication skills such as pointing at something on the computer monitor or guiding students with the mouse.

At the end of every class, I felt more and more satisfied with my progress. After six months of this volunteer work, I returned to Mexico. One year after that, life brought me back to Winnipeg once again, this time to stay. Upon my return to Canada, I went back to the OVRC and applied for and was given my volunteer job again. I was happy to be back. After a few months, the Computer Instructor/ Newsletter Editor/ Volunteer Coordinator position was offered to me. Now I was part of the full time staff!

I worked mostly with Richard and Keith, both of whom were Employment Facilitator and Computer Instructors.



They didn't miss any opportunity to joke around with me, but also taught me to “keep things simple”. I also had the support and fine work of the wonderful volunteers whose contribution were always very valuable.

Working in Canada is much different than working in my country. For example, in Mexico, having volunteers in the workplace is not common. As well, the office work environment here is more relaxed and the dress code more casual. In Mexico, everything is more formal. For example, the boss's office doors are regularly closed. If you want to talk to him/her, you have to request his/her secretary to book a time for a meeting. On the other hand, if your boss wants to talk to you, you would go to his/her office. The power distance is significant. My experience at OVRC was totally different. I remember Marg Law, the Centre Coordinator, going to my work space to talk to me. Marg always had her door open, and was very supportive and very easy to approach.

As an immigrant, my biggest challenge was, and still is, the language. However, I am learning to be patient with myself while I am doing my best to improve my language skills. Volunteering has had many benefits for me. It introduced me to a Canadian work environment, helped me to improve my English skills and allowed me to network. I will always be grateful to the Osborne Village Resource Centre staff for opening the doors for me, first as a volunteer and then as a full time employee. Finally, I would like to express my gratitude to Richard Huggard for his support and guidance during my time at OVRC. Although he is not longer with us, his memory remains very much in my heart.

# STARTING LIFE ALL OVER: AN IMMIGRANT STORY

By Wilson Okwenje

I immigrated to Canada about two decades ago. Prior to that, I was a refugee in Kenya for one and a half years and in Zambia for about three years. Through the good offices of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Zambia I applied for migration to Canada. The process took nearly three years. When my application was finally approved I was excited and overjoyed. Within two weeks I embarked on my journey to Canada, thankfully on a government assisted program.

I was born and raised in Uganda. I had my primary and secondary education in the country. I attended Makerere University, Kampala, from where I graduated with Honours in Geography and Economics. Subsequently I pursued post graduate studies in Management and International Relations at the University of Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania, and at the United Nations Institute for Training and Research in Geneva, Switzerland. I served in the Diplomatic Service of Uganda for many years in different capacities both at home and abroad. I was a senior public servant when a democratically elected government that I served was militarily and violently overthrown in 1985. I was personally affected, leading to my forced exit into exile and to seek refuge. I landed in Canada in 1990.

The questions often asked of me in conversations or out of curiosity are, simply put: "Why did you, a middle aged and seemingly educated man, immigrate to Canada?" or "What motivated you to come to Canada and to place yourself in a situation, entailing a drastic change in your life and personal circumstances?"

The answer is complicated. It is not easy for an average mainstream Canadian, who was born, raised and has lived all his/her life in this stable, peaceful and economically advanced Canada, to imagine or comprehend why and how people get so totally uprooted from their homelands that they are forced to seek refuge in other lands.

Canada is a wonderful country. It is universally admired for its robust democracy and political stability, as

well as for the rights and freedoms accorded to all its citizens. Besides, the Canadian society is associated with decency and morality – qualities that are reflected in the generosity, compassion and empathy of its citizens.

Contrast that with some jurisdictions where there is or has been political turmoil, resulting from civil wars, political instability, ethnic conflict, political persecution and dictatorship, plus the evils of corruption and economic mismanagement. This panoply of factors has compelled many people to flee their countries and seek political sanctuary or better economic opportunities outside their countries of origin.

Regrettably, my homeland, Uganda, is one of the countries in Africa that have been troubled and ravaged by violence and political instability. History, it is said, tends to be unkind to people who neglect it. Uganda appears not to have learned from its history.





## STARTING LIFE ALL OVER: AN IMMIGRANT STORY (CONTINUED)

those in the opposition and the abuse of human and democratic rights, continue unabated, under the pretext of maintaining national security.

This was the scenario when, as a senior public policy manager in the Uganda government, I witnessed an assault against democracy launched, with the planning and execution of a violent military coup in July 1985. In the aftermath, I, and many other citizens, including government ministers and officials, were arrested by the military and jailed. I was detained in one of the most notorious army barracks in the eastern part of the country. My home was ransacked, property taken or destroyed and my family terrorized. There was looting of public and private property all over the capital city Kampala and elsewhere around the country. I was detained in a dungeon of a place amidst unimaginable squalor. I was subjected to humiliation and to physical and psychological terror.

When I was finally released, thanks to the intervention of some friends, I was emotionally stressed. I had lost hope in the goodness of human beings. All I could think of was an escape to freedom, far away from a military dominated environment. Soon enough an opportunity presented itself and I made a quick exit to the neighbouring Kenya and later to Zambia.

In the preceding paragraphs I have tried, in a round about way, to answer the earlier question: Why did you migrate to Canada?

I arrived in Canada in May 1990. As we landed at Pearson Airport in Toronto, I had a sense of relief and a feeling of euphoria. At the same time I experienced moments of anxiety. I had left behind my family and friends, some in Zambia and others in Uganda. I was uncertain about what to expect in Canada.

Before I left Lusaka, Zambia, I had been told by the Canadian Consular officials that the month of May was an ideal time to arrive in Canada because it was spring time and relatively warm. Well, that was not so on that evening in May. As we walked off the plane we were greeted with a burst of cold air that left one shivering in

**“I had lost hope in the goodness of human beings.”**

Since its independence from Britain in 1962, the country has witnessed multiple military coups and violent changes of government, leading to enormous losses of human life. In the 1970s the dictator General Idi Amin, who overthrew an elected government, unleashed a reign of terror, in which tens of thousands of citizens were killed, including the Anglican Archbishop, the Chief Justice and many political, business, academic and professional figures. Hundreds were abducted or disappeared, never to be seen again. The theatre came to be known as, “Amin’s killing fields.” Since then violent changes of government were repeated in 1979, 1985 and 1986, all involving the military. The present government is a military regime that seized power twenty four years ago. It now claims to have metamorphosed into a democracy! Nevertheless, the oppression and suppression of the citizens, especially

my tropical clothes. In the airport building I noticed that most people had coats on, including the official who met us. It seemed like winter to me, and quite an interesting introduction, to say the least! However the feelings of surprise soon dissipated as we drove to downtown and details of the tricky Canadian weather were explained to me and fellow immigrants. It was clear then that my new experience in transnational migration would be challenging.

Nevertheless, as we arrived at a downtown facility, managed by the Interfaith Immigration Council of Manitoba, and were allocated transitional accommodation, for a moment, the hazards and frustrations experienced earlier in being a refugee for nearly four and a half years were temporarily forgotten. Unlike my fellow immigrants who were younger, I already had a full professional life behind me and I believe I had a worldview different from theirs. I decided that my focus would henceforth be to rebuild my life all over. I was determined to explore all opportunities, try to find work and adjust to my new environment and circumstances. However, the realization that I, a fifty year old man and a father of five, had no job, no friends, and no money troubled me a great deal. But it also motivated me. Although things looked bleak, I had a feeling of hope and a sense of purpose.

As I settled down and began to adjust and understand my new environment and to feel my way around, I met a few surprises. The first was language. I had studied and worked in an English speaking environment for many years, yet I was now informed by my Counsellor that I had to attend ESL classes. It was required for purposes of improving my English but also as a condition for receiving financial assistance, part of the settlement procedures! At first I did not challenge it. I was not familiar with the rules. As well, I soon realized that for some Canadians, I spoke with a funny accent. There was a Canadian way of speech, of making jokes, as well as slang and nuances with which I was not familiar. Nevertheless, after two weeks of frustration and learning nothing new (I was in a class with new immigrants from Eastern Europe and South East Asia, who had little or no English background), I was able to convince my Counsellor that my time would be better spent if I devoted it on job readiness activities.

Having “overcome” the language issue, I came face to face with an even bigger foe – technology. The Canadian environment and workplace are technologically based. Yet, I was an example of what someone has described as, “a digital immigrant” I was not familiar with the ubiquitous computers or the Internet (this was before the advent of the now familiar social media – Facebook, twitter, etc). I quickly realized that I could not function or survive or get a job in my circumstances. I needed a bridge to transition from where I had been to where I should be.

Accordingly I made a decision to enrol for computer classes at the South Winnipeg Technical Centre (now Winnipeg Technical College). It was a useful experience. I learned new skills in Keyboarding, Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint, to the intermediate level. Yes, an old dog can be taught new tricks! Although in the end I was not absolutely computer savvy, I gained useable skills. Later I supplemented this with business courses at the Horizon Management Systems, a human resources training outfit in Winnipeg.

Meanwhile, I made connections with various people, sought information and advice about the job market, wherever and whenever I could. I kept myself active by joining a gym near where I lived and occasionally went out to socialize. I made new friends, built a network and learned new experiences. It was not difficult for me to fit in because the Canadian society is tolerant and people are generally welcoming. It also helped that in my earlier career as a Foreign Service Officer I had worked abroad. I travelled to many foreign countries and interacted with people of different races, cultures and religions. I was already a global citizen and could get along with people of different backgrounds.

Finding work was a different ball game. There were unsuccessful applications, interviews and rejections. As I came to know later, I was not alone. Many new immigrants, especially visible minorities, were equally frustrated. They felt they were victims of racial discrimination, but I had no facts.

A break for me came when an interview was arranged with the principals of a prominent human resources management consulting company in Winnipeg. The President of the company and the Managing Partner

## **“I was elated when soon afterwards an offer was made. I was appointed Research Consultant.”**

subjected me to a long, intensive and almost intrusive interview. Obviously they sought to establish my background, credentials, experience, immigrant status and suitability as an employee in their firm. A second interview was arranged for the following week. I was elated when soon afterwards an offer was made. I was appointed Research Consultant. Much later I came to learn that my life experiences, including my past diplomatic and international development work were dramatically different from those of the other employees and therefore made me somewhat attractive.

I started work as a Research Consultant in January 1991. The consulting firm specialized in training, research and analysis of key social, historical and political issues, and in conducting impact and organizational studies as well as international briefings. It produced for clients print as well as audio-visual materials on various issues. Among the company's clients were agencies in the public, private and voluntary sectors. Federal government departments such as CIDA, the Public Service Commission, Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Indian and Northern Development had previously been awarded to the company training and research contracts, as did various Provincial governments and institutions such as the Bank of Canada, Petro Canada, etc.

The set up at the office was interesting. It seemed like an academic institution. Staff members engaged in research of various issues and in round table policy discussions. They prepared reports, training modules and workshop materials. There seemed to be an academic culture and intellectualism. This was no surprise because the President of the company holds a PhD and is a former Professor of History and most of the staff had advanced degrees. I was pleased to be part of this stimulating environment.

My work exposed me to a deeper understanding of Canadian issues and citizenship. I was forced to quickly learn and grasp concepts in Canadian politics, such as multiculturalism, diversity, equity, human rights, Aboriginal treaties and land claims, etc. I had to get to grips with such key legislations as Human Rights Act, 1978, the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, 1982, the Employment Equity Act, 1986 and the Multicultural Act, 1988. It was like a crash course in Canadian history, law and politics. It was tough and demanding but I welcomed the opportunity.

Two months following my appointment arrangements were made for me to visit the nation's capital, Ottawa, for one week, all expenses paid. The object was to enable me to learn, first hand, the workings of the Federal system and to make personal contacts with key people in the departments that were clients of our company, such as CIDA, PSC, Foreign Affairs and International Trade. I gathered a lot through meetings and conversations and established avenues for future contracts, especially for training and international briefings.

During the years I worked at the company, I carried out multiple assignments. Two examples illustrate the extent to which my personal participation was valued and how consulting work was carried out.

In the first instance, our firm was contracted by Corrections Canada to undertake a review of issues impacting the relationships between the correctional staff and inmates at the institutions in the Ontario Region. The relationships had frequently turned ugly, especially concerning minority inmates. I travelled to Kingston, Ontario, in the company of two colleagues. We visited all the prisons in the Kingston area and talked to correctional staff as well as to a cross section of the minority inmates. We were able to establish that a major factor contributing to conflict was poor cross cultural communications between the staff and the inmates. The staff was mostly Caucasian and blamed the misunderstanding on the alleged insubordination of the inmates, while the inmates accused them of racism and insensitivity to the concerns of the inmates, especially

to those who were of Islamic faith. For example, they complained, to no avail, that they lacked a proper place of worship. As well they were angered by the fact that their food was often cooked in the same pots that also cooked pork. This was unacceptable. In the end we wrote a report and made several recommendations, and designed a multicultural training program for the correctional staff, with particular focus on increased awareness and sensitivity to the cultural characteristics of the ethnic minority inmates. This assignment opened my eyes on the prison conditions, and on the lives that prisoners, many of whom were African Canadian, led.

The second example is a research project I coordinated in 1992. It concerned the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill in Alaska, USA. Our company was hired by Exxon Oil Company to undertake a study of the sociocultural impacts of the oil spill on the Native Alaskan communities in the coastal areas of south central Alaska. The oil company faced a Class Action suit from thousands of Alaskans affected by the oil spill and the clean up. The company needed all the help and advice it could get to build up its defence.

The background to this issue is that a ship owned by Exxon (before it merged to become Exxon Mobile) ran aground on the southern coast of Alaska in March 1989. Approximately 11 million gallons of crude oil was spilled (this was a record prior to the present BP blow out in the Gulf of Mexico). A stretch of approximately 1200 miles of coastline was affected. The people most affected were the native communities, as well as local commercial fishermen and business people. Accordingly Exxon faced many suits for compensation.

My employers chose me, in my new capacity as Senior Research Consultant, to head a team of four professionals to undertake this study. I first flew to Seattle, Washington, alone, to be briefed by the American lawyers of Exxon, in connection with the assignment and to review some of the existing documents. After three days I joined my colleagues who had earlier flown directly to Anchorage, Alaska. Then we embarked on the exercise. Regrettably, the legal restrictions imposed on Exxon by the ongoing litigation prevented us from interviewing the people in the affected communities, although we interacted with them informally. In the end we were able to find that, four years after the spill and the cleanup, the



social impacts were real and observable. The health conditions of the communities had declined, judging from the frequency of visits to medical clinics, there were increased rates of depression and anxiety as well as drug abuse and domestic violence. We reviewed dozens of published reports and documents in the libraries and universities, many of which dealt with the sociocultural consequences of the spill. Many confirmed that damage to individuals, families and communities had indeed occurred. Our report lacked specificity in terms of accurate assessment of the sociocultural impacts but it provided much of the facts as we found them. As well, our assignment did not involve a study of the impacts on the ecosystem. This was done by other consultants and scientists.

Overall, I benefited a great deal from the exposure and the experience of working at that company. I learned to work with experts from many different disciplines. I also recognized that to do a good intelligent job you are going to pull from lots of different sources in order to develop the best analysis of a given problem, rather than thinking that you know it all.

I left the company in the late 1990s, by which time I was ready to launch myself as a private consultant. A friend of mine and I incorporated a new company to do business involving international trade. Our main focus was Africa: to assist Canadian companies and institutions to access information, business and research on Africa,

## STARTING LIFE ALL OVER: AN IMMIGRANT STORY (CONTINUED)

utilizing our expertise and our first-hand knowledge of the social, economic and political conditions and issues on the continent. We were able to provide to potential investors a whole range of business services, including market research, business networking and international briefings. In 1999, I travelled back to East Africa to concretise business arrangements and to renew contacts. They proved enormously useful.

It is challenging to do consulting business in the Canadian market. However we are convinced that, for as long as you work hard, stay honest and dedicated, success is not inconceivable.

I have always been interested in volunteering, especially in the fields of international development and social justice. To this end, ever since coming to Canada, I have volunteered for a number of organizations. For example, I volunteered with OXFAM Canada in Manitoba for several years, and for a while I was its representative on the Board of the Manitoba Council for International Cooperation (MCIC). In terms of cultural groups, I have served on the Executive Committee of the Ugandan-Canadian Association of Manitoba (UCAM). I have volunteered with the African Association of Manitoba, as well as its successor, the African Communities of Manitoba, Inc (ACOMI). Most recently I have been on the Board of the African Canadian Cultural Heritage Centre (ACCHC). Being a member of these community organizations has helped us not only to create relationships but also to learn more about each others hopes and fears, aspirations, values and issues.

Arguably the most challenging but also engaging volunteer work I have carried out has been serving as President of the Friends of Makerere in Canada, Inc (FOMAC) for the past four years. FOMAC is a non-profit charity organization which was founded about eighteen years ago. Its main objective is to champion the cause of and raise funds for projects at Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda. Makerere also happens to be my Alma Mater. The university is eighty eight years old and was once the premier academic institution in East and Central Africa and trained most of the present professional,

political, economic and business elite in the East African region. Unfortunately, the ongoing economic down turn has exacerbated the university's financial difficulties, at a time when it badly requires extensive capital renewal. Through fundraising and other activities FOMAC has been able to fund a number of projects at Makerere.

However, that is not all. We have utilized the organization as an effective medium for development education in Canada. Some years ago FOMAC established the Julius Nyerere Memorial Lecture Series, named after the late President of Tanzania, Mwalimu (Teacher) Julius Nyerere. He was universally admired as one of Africa's greatest, ablest and inspiring leaders. He was a graduate of Makerere University. We have periodically organized benefit dinners to which we have invited prominent public figures to deliver lectures on the important issues of the day. The most recent guest speaker was Senator Sharon Carstairs, in September 2009. In the preceding years we were fortunate enough to host other distinguished leaders. For example, Dr. Lloyd Axworthy, President and Vice Chancellor of the University of Winnipeg, Dr. John Loxley, Professor of Economics at U of M, Professor Ali Mazrui of Binghamton University in New York and the recently retired President of Tanzania, Mr. Benjamin William Mkapa. The subjects covered have ranged from Africa's position in the global economy, to Building Solutions for Development in Africa and to the Role of the International Community in Africa's Development.

At this point I wish to make a few general remarks about the African community in Canada. I am a proud Canadian and I am also proud to be part of this ethnic group within the Canadian mosaic. There is a debate going on: whether to call us Black Canadians, Afro-Canadians or African-Canadians. Personally I believe it is proper to refer to peoples of African origin as "African-Canadians." Of course I am recognizing the diversity within this group. There are Canadian-born descendants of African slaves who have lived in Canada for generations (since the 17th century); descendants of those who migrated from the United States during and after the American

Civil War and through the Underground Railroad; and those who have immigrated from the Caribbean, Africa, South America and other countries in recent decades. The group is highly heterogeneous. People have different social, economic and cultural backgrounds. Even their skin colour is not the same. However, they have one thing in common: they share an umbilical cord or a genealogical tie to Africa. Hence they are African-Canadians.

The second point is that the number of African Canadians has grown exponentially in the past three to four decades. The number is still numerically small in terms of the total population of Canada. However, there is no denying that African Canadians have become a visible part of the Canadian landscape. For example: the Black History Month, the African and African/Caribbean Pavilions in the annual Folklorama festival in Winnipeg, Africville in Nova Scotia, and the annual Caribbean festival in Toronto. To crown it all, the Queen's representative in Canada, Governor General Michaëlle Jean, is African Canadian. Therefore, in my view, while it is great that African Canadians are recognized or accommodated as equals under the law, and African Canadian culture is seen as a legitimate component of the Canadian mosaic. The time is right for the rest of the Canadian society to share an understanding of the history, circumstances and achievements of African Canadians, as well as to learn and appreciate the social constructions that have shaped their history in Canada. Public education is one of the ways by which the nation can counter, once and for all, stereotyping as well as irritating questions such as "Where are you really really from," which basically implies that a black person, even if they are fourth or fifth generation, cannot possibly be a "true" or "full" Canadian.

Finally, I referred earlier to the increase in the number of refugees and immigrants to Canada, especially from the African continent, in the recent decades. Other Western countries have experienced a similar surge. There are multiple reasons. The socio-economic conditions in many African countries are desperate. Their economies have lagged vis-à-vis those of other developing regions but also they have been devastated due partly to the mismanagement and corruption of their leaders. Some of these leaders have squandered the wealth of their

countries and in some cases they have salted away public funds into personal private bank accounts in the West. Due to the general state of poverty and deprivation in Africa the lure of developed economies such as Canada is immense.

The most significant contributory factor, however, is the political instability or chaos arising from civil wars, ethnic conflicts and the absence of effective democratic systems. Many Africans immigrants have escaped pogroms in their countries, e.g. Somalia, Rwanda, Ethiopia, Sudan the Democratic Republic of Congo. As well, many Africans have been victims of terror, persecution and human rights abuse. In many of these countries political crimes have been committed against citizens, with impunity, and leaderships have failed to establish viable democratic institutions and good governance. Instead they have imposed repressive measures and denied their citizens basic human and democratic rights.

The international community needs to do more to bring to account some of the leaders in Africa and elsewhere who have terrorized their citizens. The establishment of the International Criminal Court (ICC) was a good start and Canada deserves credit for spearheading its creation. The arrest and trial of the late Yugoslav leader, Slobodan Milosevic, and most recently that of Charles Taylor of Liberia as well as the notorious rebels from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) Thomas Lubanga and Jean Pierre Bemba, has sent a sound warning to all who abuse power that they can run but they cannot hide. If or when the arrest of Sudanese President, Omar Bashir, the perpetrator of Darfur, is finally carried out, it will be clear to all African dictators and there are many, that no one is above the law.

In conclusion, I wish to state that I am now retired. However, I continue to volunteer. As well, I provide part time consultancy to a small investment firm in Winnipeg, where I work on occasional projects. I do spend some time at the Osborne Village Resource Centre (OVRC) where I read, carry out some computer research and confer with the good people of the Centre, to whom I am grateful for their courtesy and support.

# THE FEAR AND EXCITEMENT OF BEING IN AN UNFAMILIAR COUNTRY

By Chol Kezekiah Kelei

The endeavour to succeed in life makes people explore all possible ways which might lead to the desired goals of their life. Many people, including me, immigrated to Canada for one reason, "for a better life". But how does one pursue their life considering the differences between themselves and people here in Canada. It was not, and it is not easy for some immigrants to adjust to Canada's socio-economic environment. Some might find it difficult to adjust and integrate into Canadian life while others find it a little easier. Some of the reasons for that could be over expectations about living in Canada, cultural rigidity to change, and so forth that make it difficult to adjust to life in Canada.

As a youth, I have lived in refugee camps for half of my life and it was not easy when you compared it to the move of coming to Canada. There was nothing to fear and worry about in the new country except where to find jobs like other Canadians. I was excited to come to Canada and I also felt anguish, because of leaving behind my family, relatives, friends and memories of war in the Sudan. As well, there have been difficulties of sponsoring some of my relatives to come to Canada.

The agony of leaving relatives behind is not only my personal problem but it is mostly associated with people emigrating from Africa to Canada, due to cultural norms and family ties. Culturally, Africans are bound by their family's social values that depict personal issues as community issues and therefore everyone has to participate and have a share of responsibility. Because of the way I was brought-up, this makes it even more depressing to see my distanced-relatives so far away from me, besides my immediate family. Individualism doesn't exist in most of African cultures, and this problem normally fuels the anguish of leaving someone you love behind. But the courage I received from my aunt and my mom gave me moral fortitude to pursue a better life in Canada.

When I got my first job in Canada, I made African rituals of thanks giving so that I would receive blessings from my grand mother. I gave my first pay cheque money to my grand mother, not for the sake of giving her something, but for the intention of getting blessings from her. No one in Africa eats the food from the first crop produced in the season without giving thanks first to their supernatural being or God. This is a much respected aspect of culture, and elders are considered closer to God, and if they are not happy, you will not be happy. Veneration is important to elders in African society.

My first job in Canada lasted for two days, with 31 continual hours of work. It is quite strange for some people to hear that, but for me, it was just a drop in the bucket. I was hired by Vector Security as security guard when Canadian Railways workers in Winnipeg where on strike. It was my first winter in Canada and it was extremely cold. I learned from one of my friends that Vector was hiring, because the strike was stretching the available workforce. It took



me less than a day to get hired, bypassing all mandatory requirements such as criminal record check and child abuse registry check. I was just two months and some days in Canada, but it didn't matter. But for legality I acquired my records afterward.

It was actually strange and confusing because of what I was required to do at work. I was given a site to watch and a car to use. Strangely enough I had never driven a car in my life, at that time. I told my supervisor that I didn't drive. His reply was you will be fine; you need not drive the car but go inside the car to get warm. That was the end of the orientation. I took the keys and opened the car and when I looked around – he was gone. There was no one to ask but the picketers whom I was supposed to watch. Tackling the car was scary but I gave it a try. I inserted the key into the engine and tried it. It didn't work the first time. Then I gave it a second try and the engine went on. Another puzzle I found myself confronted with was how to keep myself warm. I carefully read the car features. My worry was that if I touched anything which would make the car move, it may cause danger to me and picketers. After carefully observing the car's features, I noticed the red and blue signs, and the "handle-bar". I tried the blue sign, it blew cool air. Then I moved the second handle-bar and the warm air started coming out. It was a learning process.

It is worthy to look beyond personal benefits in Canada and try to analyse inter and extra dependence of immigrants in shaping their outside and inside communities in Canada. The fear and excitement of being in an unfamiliar country was not part of my expectation for my life. I was given a choice of three places by UNHCR; my choice was Canada.

I personally appreciate Canada for giving me what was denied to me by the war in the Sudan and therefore I am now able to contribute effectively to making this world a better place for all people.

I was so exciting that I graduated on October 17th 2010 with a Bachelor Degree in Economics. It is with great pleasure that I have achieved, at least something within seven years of being in Canada. This city has given me all the opportunities to excel in my education and made me believe that there is nothing impossible, but through determination one can achieve the desired goal. I am proud of University of Winnipeg because of its commitment to give education to anyone regardless of financial difficulties. It is worth mentioning that if you need to get an education and have financial difficulties then University of Winnipeg is where "you matter most". Anything is possible at University of Winnipeg. Therefore, this achievement is not the end of the journey but just a beginning.

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## ASK THE CAREER COUNSELLOR

### Tips for Job Seekers

By Jude Gaal

**Dear Career Counsellor:**

*I am a new immigrant to the city. I have a degree in Computer Science from Pakistan, and am now enrolled in an IT program at a private college. I will be graduating in December and am wondering what I can do before then to get a job. I would even be willing to work for no pay. Can you help me?*

*- New in Winnipeg*

Dear New in Winnipeg:

Yes, I can definitely help you. But first, I'd like to welcome you to Winnipeg! Second, I am so happy to hear that you are willing to work for no pay. Volunteer work is an excellent way of getting job experience and a current reference. Contact Volunteer Manitoba, at [www.mbvollunteer.ca](http://www.mbvollunteer.ca) and click onto the Volunteering tab to get more information about volunteer positions. In

## ASK THE CAREER COUNSELLOR (CONTINUED)

addition to volunteering there are many things that you can do before graduating from your program.

In order to eliminate the competition, I highly recommend that you access the Hidden Job Market. This involves:

1. Deciding who you want to work for in a particular sector, and what you want to do
2. Researching organizations/companies
3. Sending targeted resumes and cover letters for each specific job
4. Preparing for the interview and following up

Deciding who you want to work for in a particular sector, and what you want to do might seem like a crazy way of doing things. However, think of it from an employer's point of view. By knowing exactly who you want to work for, you demonstrate to the employer your preference for their company and enthusiasm. Employers want to see this in potential employees. The Government of Manitoba website at [www.gov.mb.ca/business/](http://www.gov.mb.ca/business/) (click onto Business Research) has excellent information in their Business Research section to access to the following:

- Industry Sector Specific Information
- Searchable Business Databases

For many more ideas on research resources come into the Centre and pick up the Resources For Research booklet.

Another excellent way to learn about a sector, occupation, and perhaps even potential employment opportunities, is to create a network. You could:

- Investigate and join sector and professional associations
- Go to workshops, lectures, or any other event related to your occupation
- Conduct Informational Interviews with people already working in the particular sector and job that you are interested in (pick up an Informational Interviews booklet at the Centre)

From all the information you have gathered, compile



a list of 10 - 15 companies or organizations that you—really—want to work for.

At this point I would highly recommend making an appointment with one of the Employment Facilitators here at the Osborne Village Resource Centre. We can help you write a targeted cover letter and skills based resume by using your research information. The Centre also offers one-on-one appointments for mock interviews and job search strategy, as well a variety of workshops including: career exploration, accessing the Hidden Job Market, interview skills and writing cover letters.

If you have any further questions give us a call at 989-6503. We're here Monday through Friday to help.

# DIVERSITY IN THE WORKPLACE – RHETORIC OR REALITY

By Roberta Hewson of Partners for Careers

In 2006, the Conference Board of Canada released a report that said while Canadian organizations say diversity is a priority, less than half of those surveyed had any plans for it. Companies know that a diverse workforce can positively affect their bottom line and that there is a high return on their diversity investment.

Why is a diverse workforce important?

- Customer attraction:  
Customers/clients will see themselves reflected in the makeup of the organization and be attracted to that workplace.
- Expanded recruitment reach:  
A diverse workforce can help that organization reach a new and untapped customer base.
- Expanded market reach:  
A diverse workforce can introduce an employer to a new market. The Vancouver experience is very telling.
- Innovation and Creativity:  
Differing opinions and different perspectives create better teams. “We have always done it that way” is a deadly mindset for a workplace. New perspectives on corporate problem-solving can inject exciting new life to “group think”.
- Lower recruiting costs and higher retention rates:  
When a diverse workforce is truly valued for the new perspectives and new connections that they bring – workers are reluctant to leave and feel valued and appreciated.

So, according to the Conference Board, almost all employers say that diversity is important, but only 42% have a “strategy” for diversity. Why?

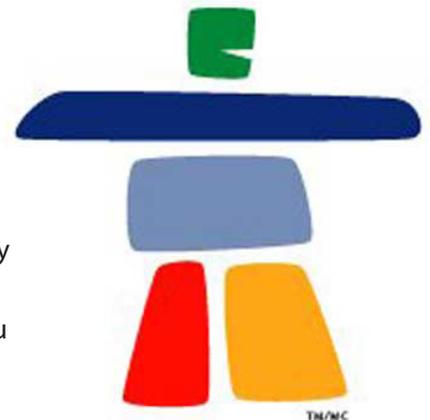
- The investment:  
Investing in diversity is just that - an investment. Companies like instant return on their investments and a diversity strategy is often a long-term strategy. Tapping into new recruitment sources – those new and unfamiliar pools of candidates - takes time and effort.

- Employers may not be able to articulate the reason for diversity efforts:

Employers may not be familiar with the reasons why women, visible minorities, Aboriginal people and people with disabilities – why those “target” groups require special consideration. Learning about the historic path of EXCLUSION that those groups have historically travelled does not inform their thinking.

For Aboriginal people, as a designated group for employment equity/diversity efforts, corporate investment in recruiting, retaining and advancing of Aboriginal people can show a great return on their diversity investment. The Baby Boomers of the 50's are retiring in record numbers. All sectors of the economy are facing critical labour shortages. On the other hand, the Aboriginal population is growing at a rate 6 times faster than the non-Aboriginal population. Aboriginal peoples' graduation rate and enrollment in post secondary education is rising steadily. Aboriginal people are Manitoba's new baby boomers and we all know how important baby boomers of any generation are to the economy.

The reasons for the disconnect between reality and rhetoric relative to the importance of having a diversity strategy are as varied as the companies and the communities themselves. However, when companies are ready to invest in diversity, The Osborne Village Resource Centre can help direct employers to agencies and services that can support their diversity strategies and to enjoy the ROI that diversity can bring. There are several organizations dedicated to assisting employers with their recruitment of Aboriginal people and the other equity groups and the OVRC can direct you to those services.





# AN INTERVIEW WITH LIONEL F. LAROCHE, PH.D., P. ENG ON THE TOPIC OF DIVERSITY

By Patti Malo

People have been migrating to Canada for hundreds of years, with the level of immigration and number of source countries varying throughout time. Canada still accepts more immigrants per capita than many other countries. First and second generation immigrants make up approximately 41% of people currently living in Canada. It is also interesting to note that in Canada, immigrants consistently have higher education levels than people born and raised in Canada.

I attended one of Lionel Laroche’s workshops on “Diversity” last year and found it very fascinating and extremely informative. While at the workshop I purchased a copy of Mr. Laroche’s book “Recruiting, Retaining, and Promoting of Culturally Different Employees” which he co-wrote with Don Rutherford. Reading the book introduced me to finer points of working with, and understanding culturally different people. I felt I had received a thorough schooling about cultural differences in the workplace and it has definitely expanded my world view. Recently, I had the good fortune of interviewing, one of the authors, Mr. Laroche from his office in Toronto; we had set up a telephone interview for early September 2010 and I was thrilled.

The topic of this newsletter is “Diversity in the Workplace” and I felt Laroche’s illuminating book would be an excellent source of material from which to educate our readers on this topic. The following statement is taken from the Prologue of the book. “The immigration of earthlings is bringing us face-to-face with more culturally different people than ever before. This fusion, clashing, and coevolution of cultures are fascinating and important. The future of work and the workplace will be changed by it, as will all aspects of society.”

Here is a brief biography on Lionel Laroche, Ph.D. P. Eng. and his accomplishments over the past ten year. Lionel

Laroche has provided cross-cultural training, coaching and consulting services to over 15,000 people in nine countries including Canada, the U.S., Bermuda, Mexico, Peru, France, Belgium, Switzerland and China. Lionel specializes in helping professionals and organizations reap the benefits of cultural differences in their work.\*

Lionel is the President of MCB Solutions which is a cross-cultural consulting company which focuses on increasing awareness about the impact of cultural differences in the workplace and on helping immigrants integrate successfully into the Canadian workplace. He has written two books: “Managing Cultural Diversity in Technical Professions”, and co-wrote “Recruiting, Retaining and Promoting Culturally Diverse Employees”.\*

Before getting to the interview it would be good to define the word diversity. A Google search on the word “diversity” found:

The “business case for diversity”, theorizes that in a global marketplace, a company that employs a diverse workforce (both men and women, people of many generations, people from ethnically and racially diverse backgrounds etc) is better able to understand the demographics of the marketplace it serves and is thus better equipped to thrive in that marketplace than a company that has a more limited range of employee demographics.

Lionel Laroche’s book is divided into two parts, the first focusing on the recruitment process and the second examining the retention and promotion of culturally different employees. The following interview questions were set up to give you an overview of the book, thereby allowing you a brief glimpse into the study of human relations regarding cross-cultural communications.

**Q.** *Why should people in Canada care whether or not their company employs culturally different employees?*

**A.** Fundamentally, because of the baby boomers and the birth rates are going down (below what is needed to replace the population) the only way to keep the population and work force going is through immigration. If people come to Canada and can't find jobs, immigrants will stop coming and those who came will probably go back [home]. If we don't do something about that, we will have a problem sooner or later - we won't have enough people to care for the older folks when they age. This is the main driver.

A good example is what is happening in Japan. Japan has a very low birth rate; being on the losing side of World War II, it did not have a baby boom after the war like Canada, the UK, France or the U.S. So their population is actually shrinking right now. Japanese people have decided that they don't want immigration. They are very clear on that – it is essentially impossible to become a Japanese citizen. As a result they have an aging population that is decreasing – the total number of people in Japan is actually going down. A lot of their manufacturing is being moved to other jurisdictions with cheaper work forces. They are also trying to create robots; their approach to replacing the labour force is to automate. As a society they would rather have robots than immigrants.

**Q.** *What are some of the critical issues faced by immigrants when they come to Canada?*

**A.** You have to differentiate between apparent issues and real issues. The average immigrant ends up in the situation where he/she is told quite often that "you are not getting a job because you lack Canadian experience". The real reason is that his/her soft skills do not match the employer's expectations. Under that category you can have so many negative things: from "you have body odour" to "you have too much perfume", "you sound abrupt", "you are not answering my questions", "you're not letting me finish my sentences", "you leave too long a silence", "you're not looking at me in the eyes", etc. To me that is the fundamental issue, because most immigrants come from cultures where what really matters is technical skills – and they are accepted into Canada based on their technical skills.

Of course, applicants need to have a minimum of technical skills to be considered for a position. But after that the person who gets the job is the person who

has the highest soft skills amongst the candidates. So, very often it ends up being someone who is not an immigrant, if an employer has a choice. Not because he/she does not want to hire an immigrant, but because he/she is looking for someone who has good soft skills by Canadian standards. How do you acquire good soft skills by Canadian standards? Well, it is usually by going through the educational system in Canada.

**Q.** *How can Canadian recruiters minimize the risk of eliminating solid candidates in the interview stage solely due to a cultural difference?*

**A.** The biggest thing is training the people involved in the recruiting process. The other one is coming up with questions and selection tests that compare candidates in real life situations. I will give you an example. This test was actually created by a recruiting company; they wanted to test how people performed under pressure. They were recruiting for help desks; in this kind of positions, when it rains it often pours. Suddenly there is a problem on the system and everyone is calling with their problem. The question is, you have a backlog of 10 requests and people are coming in all the time, so how do you deal with that situation? Do you ball people out or do you deal with it nicely?

The way this search firm tested candidates is like this ... they would tell the candidates, "Here is a test, you've got 30 minutes to answer as many questions as you

**“Of course, applicants need to have a minimum of technical skills to be considered for a position. But after that the person who gets the job is the person who has the highest soft skills amongst the candidates.”**

## AN INTERVIEW WITH LIONEL F. LAROCHE (CONTINUED)

can." It was very clear from the number of questions on the test that the candidate would be really hard pressed to answer all the questions. The candidates would go in their own room; while he was working on the test, somebody would come and ask him a question about his application. The real test was how the person responds to that interruption. Does the candidate say, "Get lost - I need to finish this test." Or does the candidate interact with the person who is interrupting in a friendly way. In other words, does the candidate demonstrate good soft skills or poor soft skills...

Another approach an employer could use is a trial period. Internships are wonderful because you can test people and you have no obligation. And it is very clear that the internship will end. It is not always possible, for example, in a unionized environment. For those who can do it, these are good methods.

**Q.** *What do immigrants need to do in order to be taken seriously in the Canadian job market?*

**A.** Work on their soft skills! The biggest thing they need to understand is that when you move from one country to another – you lose two critical things. The first one is the ability to influence people (to convince them of your ideas/perspective) and the other is the ability to see yourself the way others see you. This is something that is very difficult for immigrants. Most immigrants coming to Canada today came from developing nations where they had a very high social status.

In their home countries, people are defined by their degrees – you are an engineer because you have an engineering degree. In Canada, your degree has a five year shelf life. What matters is what you did in the last five years. The other thing is people here do not define others based on their education, but based on their experience. As a result immigrants who are defining themselves through their degree are perceived as being out of touch with reality. For example, I remember working with a guy from Guyana. He had obtained a degree in aerospace engineering in the U.K., and went back to Guyana. As you can imagine, there is not a huge amount of aerospace industry in Guyana so he couldn't

get a job in that field. He got a job in a sugar factory. He worked in that plant for nine years. He was a really good process engineer. He became the equivalent of what we would call here, a senior process engineer. When he came to Canada, he looked for a job in the aerospace industry because in his mind he was defined by his degree – he saw himself as an aerospace engineer. Clearly we defined him as a senior food processing engineer. When he stopped knocking on the doors of Bombardier and places like that, and instead looked at Maple Leaf Foods and that kind of company, he got a job. The problem really is how do Canadians evaluate an immigrant's experience? That's what I mean by losing the ability to see yourself as others see you.

Here is another example: I worked with one guy from India. He had a degree in architecture. When he came to Toronto and looked for a job with an architectural firm. Canadian employers in the architectural field kept telling him "You are not an architect". He then applied for a license with the Ontario Association of Architects and was told again "You are not an architect." This infuriated him tremendously because he did have a degree in Architecture. Somebody eventually told him, "Look, an architect in Canada is somebody who designs a single building. What you designed are developments, we don't call you an architect, we call you an urban planner." When he started looking for urban planning position and networking with urban planners he got a job. He was looking in the wrong place.

One of the big challenges I find people have is really understanding where their skills are needed. In my workshops I ask all immigrants one question. "What problem are you good at solving?" That is the way Canadian organizations recruit. They don't know how to solve a problem they have in-house and they don't have the time and the resources to learn how to solve it, so they look for somebody who is good at solving that problem. Immigrants don't think in terms of what problem they are solving, they think in terms of the education they have: "I have a degree in XYZ so I am XYZ" and that doesn't match.

So, to come back to the original question, the biggest challenge is really for people to learn to see themselves the way Canadians see them. In other words, learn to identify what skills they bring and what skills are needed. I remember this one lady who had a PhD. in Environmental Science from Nepal. In Nepal, she was solving the problem of eliminating the garbage produced by a town market. Well, that problem in Canada has been solved 100 years ago. We created a garbage collection system. Her solution was very different, she was creating composters. But Canadian markets are not going to start composting fruits and vegetables downtown – we collect the material after the market closes and ship it to a landfill. As a result, her skills are not needed in a Canadian context.

Immigrants need to ask themselves “What are the skills that I can apply in Canada?” and “Where can they be useful?” For many immigrants the issue is geographical. “Where should I go in Canada?” Many of them end up in a city where there are no jobs for their skills.

My own experience is a good example; I got my Ph.D in Chemical Engineering and studied distillation. The industrial sector that employs the largest number of distillation engineers is the oil and gas industry. In other words, when I looked for a job in Canada, I should have looked in Alberta. But that is not the way I tackled the problem. Fundamentally, I projected onto Canada the structure of French society. France, if you want to have a career, not just a job, you need to go to Paris. It’s that simple. So when I came to Canada I figured I had to go the Canadian equivalent of Paris. Now, in my mind, it was the economic, not the political equivalent, so I was thinking of Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver. Calgary and Edmonton were not on my list so I didn’t look for a job there. When my wife, who is Canadian, said “Well I may have a job opportunity in Calgary can you look for a job there?” my reaction was “Over my dead body we are going to Calgary!” I have now been in Canada for 20 years and I have learned that there were only four organizations interested in my distillation knowledge – three in Calgary and one in Edmonton. So if this is what happens to a French guy, you can imagine what happens to someone coming from Sri Lanka!

How much understanding do immigrants have of



the structure of Canadian society? People project the structure of their home society on the structure of Canada. So they follow a path that would make complete sense in their home country. Here it is a dead end and they don’t even realize it in many cases. Their reaction is, “What’s wrong with Canada?”

The other thing is “How do you identify what is transferable in your experience, and where to transfer it?” People really need to break it down. Typically immigrants describe their experience as if they were generalists; in their home countries, this maximizes their chances of finding a good job. Canada is a country of specialists. I have had many people tell me things like, “I am a civil engineer — I can build anything!” “I am an IT specialist; I can do anything with computers!” The problem is that they quite often are actually specialized; they have a concentration of expertise in maybe one to three areas. They try to sound like they can do everything because back home that is what is valued. Here is the reverse, we don’t value generalists, we value specialists. In order for people to find jobs they need to analyze – in detail – what they have done in terms of technical stuff. Fundamentally it comes back to what problem[s] did they solve?

Here’s another example; I asked a man from Pakistan who was a mechanical engineer, “What do you do?” He said “I am a mechanical engineer!” I asked him again “What do you do?” His response was “I built missiles”. Well, Houston we have a problem! This is not going to be the type of job you can get as a Pakistani immigrant. One,



we don't build missiles in Canada. Two, that work will require security clearance that he won't get. Actually, if he starts getting too interested in the Canadian missile-building industry, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (C.S.I.S.) will get interested in his case. So it is not going to work!

So I tried to really understand what he did. What he really did was supervise the people who were taking flat pieces of steel, rolling them into a cylinder, and welding them to make the casing of a missile. Now that technique, or technology, is used to make tank cars, tank trucks, boilers and high pressure vessels. He was able to get a job as a welding engineer. You need to decompose or break down an immigrant's work experience into small elements and reconstruct it in a different way. This is not easy in my experience. It comes back to having to learn to see yourself the way Canadian see you. This is a huge challenge for immigrants.

**Q.** *What steps can organizations take to improve the integration and retention of its culturally diverse employees?*

In a boom time, the biggest thing an organization can do is provide training so that immigrant employees can learn how the system works in Canada. Also provide training to HR and line managers so that they understand

how they can communicate with immigrants. This is a very important point in my experience; the majority of the training should be directed towards immigrants. My rule of thumb is that 80% of the training efforts need to be directed toward immigrants and 20% towards the internal people.

Right now your question has no relevance for many Canadian organizations in the sense that they don't need to worry about retention. Many organizations have no problem attracting, recruiting and keeping employees. The question only becomes relevant in boom periods. That is a very important point for people to remember. We need to understand that it is not in the interests of employers, in a recessionary period, to worry about retention. In a recessionary period everyone stays where they are. There are only a few opportunities out there.

An organization will hire the best person for the job no matter where the person comes from. Companies hire immigrants in large numbers in boom times. For example in 1999, a Chinese programmer, who could program in C++ or Java, would get a job in the IT industry in two weeks – no matter how bad his/her English was. At that time, Y2K created a huge demand for people with those skills. In 2001, the burst of the “.com” bubble meant that there were far fewer positions in IT and many engineers who may have gotten the job in 1999 often got laid off in 2001. In other words, in boom time soft skills don't matter nearly as much as they do in recessionary times.

**Q.** *With communication being so important ... What are some of the areas and possible solutions for miscommunication across cultures?*

**A.** There is a thousand and one ways we can misunderstand one another even when everybody has the best intention at heart. This is a very important point, because when we don't understand that we are dealing with a cultural difference, we interpret it negatively. We interpret as it being directed against us. People in Canada often don't realize that they are dealing with a cultural difference. Instead they might say “Oh, this person is not communicating well, or his/her behaviour

does not work for me”.

What I tell people, in my workshops, is that in order to be effective (and again we come back to training) we need to learn the dynamics related to these misunderstandings, particularly those related to feedback. I find that this is the number one issue in organizations. People need to remember that communication is not just about sending a message; it is also about making sure the message is received the way it was intended. So people need to check that what they understood was what the person meant, and vice versa; what the person understood was what they were trying to get across. When we work with people of our own culture the probability of misunderstandings is much lower; when we work with people who are different from us, and it could be difference in terms of ability or sexual orientation, what we say may not be interpreted the way we meant it.

**Q.** *In terms of retention when it comes to manager and employee relations what kinds of issues are affected by a culture’s sense of hierarchy?*

**A.** Most immigrants coming to Canada these days come from cultures that are significantly more hierarchical than Canada. As a result, they often come across as lacking initiative. Imagine that your manager wants to delegate a task to you. Imagine that task is, “I want you to draw me a picture of a horse?” A Canadian manager might say “Here is a quick sketch of a horse; I want you to finish this sketch.” A Chinese, Indian, Filipino, Pakistani or French manager will say “Here is a paint-by-number picture of a horse, go finish it.” This is exactly what happened to me when I came to Canada. My manager would say “Well, here is a sketch, go finish it.” I’m used to paint-by-number pictures so my first reaction is, “Well what do you want?” Because in my mind I did not have enough information to complete the task the way my manager wanted. The most common reaction of the average immigrant, in that situation, is to go back to the manager with a list of questions. Their manager might answer one or two questions and after that he/she loses patience and starts saying “Well, you figure it out.” The biggest thing is that this manager will conclude that the employee is lacking initiative.

Conversely, the employee will judge the manager as

**“The problem comes from cultural differences; we have different ideas of what being a good employee and what being a good manager means.”**

not giving good directions and having no leadership. The problem comes from cultural differences; we have different ideas of what being a good employee and what being a good manager means. The most important thing is that the one that has the most problems is usually the employee in that situation. When your manager judges you as lacking initiative, your career does not go anywhere in Canada – actually, you need really good technical skills to compensate this issue and keep your job.

**Q.** *Can you explain the terms “individualism” and “risk orientation” and how they affect a person’s teamwork style? And additionally: How can we as Canadians assist newcomers to adjust to Canadian workplace cultural systems?*

**A.** Individualism is really the extent to which you see yourself as a self-contained entity as opposed to a member of the group. Therefore, when you make decisions, to what extent do you make decisions based on what is good for you personally versus what is good for the group you identify with. Note that people in different parts of the world identify with different groups. For example, in Japan the group people identify with is the company. In Somalia, it is your clan. In Mexico, it is your family. Collective people identify with a group; individualist people see themselves as self contained. The biggest difference is when it comes to teamwork because being a good team player by collective standards automatically makes you a terrible team player by individualist standards and vice versa. The motto of individualist teams is “I do my job, you do yours, we will all be happy.” The motto of collective teams is “One for all, all for one.”

## AN INTERVIEW WITH LIONEL F. LAROCHE (CONTINUED)

Where the average Canadian sees the difference in a very tangible manner is for example, when you go to a restaurant and you call the server, who comes? That will depend on what kind of restaurant you are in. If you are in a Canadian restaurant, the person that will come to you is the person who is assigned to your table. If you are in a Chinese restaurant, the person who will come to you is the one that is the closest to you at the time you called. Why? Because in a Chinese restaurant, there is no such thing as an assigned table. All staff members are collectively responsible for all tables. In a Canadian restaurant serving staff members get their tips from their tables. In a Chinese restaurant, they put all the tips in one box and share them at the end of the shift.

Imagine what happens when you take a Chinese server and put them in a Canadian restaurant or vice versa. It is a disaster. Either way the staff member will be considered as a poor team player, and yet they consider themselves as excellent team players. That is because they have a completely different definition of what being a good team player means.

Risk analysis is how much information I need to make a decision and feel comfortable that I am making the right decision. I created a questionnaire to quantify cultural differences and the higher the score in the questionnaire the less information people need to make a decision and feel comfortable they are making the right decision. That one is really striking in an office environment because then the question will be "How much data do you collect before making a decision? How did you plan your projects? How much adjustment do you expect to make along the way?"

You asked how Canadians can help immigrants integrate into the Canadian workforce. The category of people who are the most influential initially are staff members of Immigrant Servicing Agencies. In other words, people who work for non profit organizations that help immigrants find jobs – these organizations are usually funded by the federal or provincial governments. There are three things they can do: First, they can read my book – it was written for that purpose! The biggest thing that people who work in the non profit sector can do is

learn to understand how people in the corporate world think. Having worked on both sides, I find that people in the non profit sector do not necessarily understand how people in the corporate sector evaluate candidates. They understand it much better than the average immigrant and I am not saying they aren't doing a good job. I have worked with people who are working in the non profit sector, for example in the Bridging Program for Engineers I remember asking this person "Well, have you ever worked in an engineering department?" And they said no. "I have a social work background." And then I ask them well, "Have you been to an engineering consulting firm? Have you seen what the office looks like?" The answer was no.

So my suggestion to that person was well "Why don't you find an engineering consulting firm and talk to an HR person about shadowing that person for a day? Shadow an engineer for a day and try to understand how people do their work." It was very clear to me that a number of staff members of non-profit agencies working with engineers did not understand what engineers really do. They understood a bit but did not have a good enough understanding to be able to give the right advice.

On the corporate side, what can organizations do? The biggest thing is training the HR people, because if HR is aware that some of the things they do may be due to cultural differences then they can handle the situation in a different manner. In particular, I strongly recommend to corporations that they train people in the recruitment process. This will help them avoid rejecting people for reasons that are not related to their ability to do the job.

**Q.** *How can culturally different people reach their professional objective in Canada? And conversely, how can Canadian organizations help their culturally different employees reach their professional objective?*

**A.** The biggest thing on the employers' side is coaching and mentoring, and honest or specific feedback. In other words, a description of what works and what doesn't. As an immigrant I am trying to do things within the organization and I find that I have way less impact than I want to have. Somebody (it could be a coach, a mentor,

my manager, someone in HR, etc.) can really help me by explaining the unwritten rules of the organization to me. It is true for Canadians too; it applies to everyone. However the gap is usually bigger in the case of people coming from other parts of the world.

One of the biggest factors that immigrants need to do is “own” their careers. I remember when I was working with Procter & Gamble and Xerox. I attended a number of career management workshops and every workshop would start with the rhetorical question, “Who owns your career?” We always answered in unison “I do”. But in reality as soon as things were going wrong, it was no longer my problem, it was my manager’s problem, HR’s problem, other people’s problem. It’s a little like when the stock market is going well, everyone has good risk tolerance. It’s when the stock market is going down that people’s tolerance to risk is really demonstrated.

**Q.** *Do you have some final words of advice when working with people of other cultures?*

**A.** Staff members of an agency, the number one thing is that they must recognize is they are doing a good job and they are doing a very helpful job. The biggest thing is being patient with others and also being patient with oneself because a lot of times working with people from other cultures will get you really frustrated and in Canada we don’t like that situation. Sometimes we don’t allow ourselves to feel that frustration. I am not saying people should express it but it is totally OK to allow yourself to feel frustrated.

Lionel talked about many issues from why Canadians should care about immigration, what immigrants need to do in order to be taken seriously in the Canadian job market and the critical issues faced by immigrants. He also suggested what Canadian recruiters can do to minimize the risk of eliminating people due to cultural differences. He spoke on the steps organizations can take in order to improve their retention rate of qualified immigrants, communication across cultures, teamwork style, and how culturally different people are able to reach their professional objectives in Canada. And fittingly the interview ends with some wise words of advice for people working with individuals of other cultures.



Culture influences the way people find employment and perform in a job as well as how organizations evaluate their candidates and develop future employees. Multiculturalism allows people to truly express who they are within a society that is more open minded and can adapt better to societal issues. Culture is not one definable thing based on a race or religion, but the result of many factors that change as our world changes.

Lionel has given us very insightful advice as well as practical real life examples to demonstrate the miscommunication that can occur in the workplace due to cultural differences. His book is a must-read for many people including staff members of non-profit organizations assisting with job search, HR departments of organizations, governments who recruit immigrants, and – all Canadians really. After attending his workshop and reading his book I can personally attest to the fact that the staff here at Osborne Village Resource Centre and I have been greatly enlightened on this timely topic. Lionel’s workshop and book have made a difference in how we think about and communicate with immigrants while providing new Canadians with valuable pre-employment services.

*\*([www.meepa.ca/documents/BIO-LionelF.Laroche.pdf](http://www.meepa.ca/documents/BIO-LionelF.Laroche.pdf))*



# CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS IN THE WORKPLACE

By Susan Jurkowski of MTEC

In 2007, Manitoba reached its immigration target and welcomed 10,955 newcomers into the province. Manitoba's success is largely attributed to the Provincial Nominee Program which focuses on recruiting skilled workers and families to communities to meet labour market and demographic challenges. In the past ten years, over 70% of newcomers have come to Manitoba through this program.

Did you know that the government has now increased its target to attract 20,000 newcomers by 2016?

How does this influx of newcomers arriving to our communities impact Manitoba's tourism industry?

Simply speaking – the impact has been evident in more ways than one and we have been seeing the changes already. For example, business owners have an additional employability group to seek in order to fill their labour shortages.

As a tourism supervisor, you may find yourself experiencing cultural differences when interviewing and training employees who may have a different understanding of Canadian workplace expectations.

As a tourism professional, make sure you have the tools required to meet the needs and expectations of ALL employees and customers by reviewing your policies and procedures and customer service strategies to respond to multicultural inclusion.

Begin by examining your own personal values which, in turn, determine your behaviours. We often make assumptions of others based on our own values and beliefs. Once you understand that everyone has their own beliefs and values, you will be aware of why we cannot ask others to give theirs up. We can only open our minds and understand that multicultural employees may have different values than us or view things differently. Never assume - get to know your employees on an individual basis!

Communication with our employees is key! However, there can be communication barriers when interacting with diverse cultures. There may be different viewpoints and actions on how we view time, personal space, courtesy, hand gestures, language barriers and more – for example, what one person considers rude behaviour may be viewed differently by someone who is culturally diverse. Both verbal and nonverbal communication styles are important to consider when dealing with multicultural employees. More than 90% of our message is delivered non-verbally through our gestures and body language. The good news is that body language is used all around the globe. However, the meanings or interpretations of non-verbal communication may be different based on someone who is culturally diverse and/or if English is not their first language. Some of the strategies service professionals can use to improve intercultural interactions include using visual aids or re-wording your message.

All in all, gaining an understanding of cultural differences and considerations will open the door to communication, customer service, and growth.

In response to the multi-cultured and diverse population in Manitoba, the Manitoba Tourism Education Council (MTEC) is excited to offer training opportunities to build cultural awareness in tourism professionals. Cultural Considerations in the Workplace provides a better understanding of the current immigration demographics impacting Manitoba. An intercultural and diversity trainer will guide participants through experiential activities where they will acknowledge personal biases, values, and assumptions and identify how they relate to cultural sensitivity.

For more information on MTEC's services, contact Susan Jurkowski, Employment Services Coordinator at 1 (800) 820-6832; or (204) 957-7437 or by email at [sjurkowski@mttec.mb.ca](mailto:sjurkowski@mttec.mb.ca)

# BUFFALO BRANCH – ASSINIBOINE CREDIT UNION

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**D**iversity is a term that we all use. It is also a term that can be widely applied to many facets of our lives. It can be so commonly used that we may not truly consider its importance. At our branch of Assiniboine Credit Union, we've embraced diversity. It has not only allowed us to be able to serve our members better, but it has led to enhanced bonds and connections based on our differences. We at the Buffalo branch have found that diversity is not only important, but vital to the way we work.

Diversity can simply be defined as the state or quality of being different or varied. This may be fact, but to us it is much more complicated and encompassing than that. A staff member states our perspective well. She tells us that, "It is the acceptance of each individual person regardless of their religion and/or beliefs, their appearance, gender or sexual orientation. It is the idea that every person is different or unique in their own way." The addition of acceptance into the meaning makes all the difference. Without acceptance, diversity could not have become a part of our everyday lives.

Diversity is important, as it brings different perspectives, values, abilities and fresh ideas. It opens up a whole new way of gaining knowledge through hands-on learning, which in turn enhances an organization's productivity. By learning from each other we maximize our strengths and gain new insight by sharing thoughts and ideas. It also allows us to truly be ourselves around people that we spend probably one of the largest portions of our time with. It provides us with an environment where we can be comfortable with who we are – where we feel respected and our differences are encouraged, rather than discouraged.

By embracing diversity in our branch we have realized the importance and the opportunities it brings to an organization. Through our specialty programs, such as our Immigration Integration program, we are bonding individuals that may not otherwise get a chance to experience working together in an organization

without prejudices or discrimination. We celebrate our differences and expand on our strengths to create an accommodating, supportive and respectful atmosphere. We also acknowledge the fact that each person has unique talents and contributes differently. This helps us identify how each person learns, adapts, and processes information, and how we each interact with members and coworkers. We overcome these challenges by making a point of trying to understand each other. We accept each other for who we are and work together to understand each individual. We do have a diverse team with respect to gender, race, culture and the team here respects that, as do the members. We learn from each other and take an interest in each other's lives.

Having so much diversity in our branch not only enriches our lives, but does improve those of our membership as well. One of our differences includes the ability to speak different languages. We are able to serve members of our community who may encounter difficulties because they are still learning English. This industry can be difficult to grasp normally, not to mention when you're trying to learn a new language. We have been able to give access to people who may not ordinarily have been able to enter into a conversation about their financial needs. We have been able to help members in French, Spanish, Portuguese, Filipino and Korean.

To summarize, our workplace is diversity. Without it, our branch would not be quite the same. Each one of us has a wealth of knowledge, insight, talent and fascinating backgrounds that make us come together as a team. We are only able to connect with our members and create such a bond because of how wonderfully different we all are.



# MANITOBA LOTTERIES EMBRACES WORKPLACE DIVERSITY



By Pauline Day

At Manitoba Lotteries, embracing a diverse workforce means respecting the skills, strengths and perspectives of all our team members, and providing an environment where all individuals can develop and grow to their full potential. A diversity-focused workplace instills values of integrity, social responsibility, innovation, leadership and is learning focused.

Manitoba Lotteries was selected as one of 45 organizations identified as Canada's Best Diversity Employers for 2010 out of a field of over 2,600 applicants. Manitoba Lotteries' acknowledgement of diversity is a reflection not only of our employees but also of the customer base we serve. To that end, multifaceted employee training ensures diversity is understood not only by front-line employees but all staff. Training is the foundation for fostering an engaged workforce.

This training begins at a paid orientation for new employees and continues through the employee's first year of ongoing training. Specific divisions offer additional tailored resources. For instance, Food and Beverage offers customer service training plus Food Handlers certification and more. Senior management positions can access internal training in partnership with two universities through Manitoba Lotteries' Dimensions in Leadership program that builds on core values of diversity.

Manitoba Lotteries has also earned the prestigious Gold Level in Progressive Aboriginal Relations (PAR) from the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business. PAR Gold signifies our contribution among aboriginal people in the areas of meaningful employment, business development, capacity building and community relations. In support of PAR Gold, Manitoba Lotteries has built employee diversity networks, internship programs, mentorship opportunities, and scholarships. Awards applications for the scholarship programs are available on the Manitoba Lotteries website.

In addition to training opportunities, full and part time staff are eligible to attend academic courses on their own time through the Educational Assistance program which provides financial support to help in achieving certificates, diplomas and degrees. The Family Education Awards also support the academic goals of employee family members – children and spouses – so that the circle of learning continues.

Manitoba Lotteries is always searching for high quality employees for positions at McPhillips Station Casino and Club Regent Casino. Casino employees specialize in exceeding guest entertainment expectations. Casino entry level positions can be found in Food & Beverage as banquet servers, hosts, bartenders and cooks and on the casino floor as electronic gaming attendants, dealers, and housekeeping attendants. The casinos are open from 10 am to 3 am with a variety of shifts.

Food & Beverage positions pay between \$10 and \$13 to begin and are an excellent chance to move into specialized positions through internal job postings. Examples of positions available on our internal postings include dealers, customer service representatives and security officers.

Manitoba Lotteries casinos and corporate offices also offer many professional level opportunities to join the organization and make an important contribution.

For these and other employment opportunities, please visit [www.mlc.mb.ca](http://www.mlc.mb.ca) or check with local and national newspapers.

Your resume and cover letter can be received at [careers@mlc.mb.ca](mailto:careers@mlc.mb.ca) or at Manitoba Lotteries Human Resources, 983 St. James Street, Winnipeg, MB R3H 0X2. Applications can be sent by email, postal mail or dropped off at the address provided or at the customer service kiosks at Club Regent or McPhillips Station Casinos.

# CREATING COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE THROUGH DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT

By Nadia Hartung

At Boeing Winnipeg, we work to create and maintain relationships with diverse communities, associations, institutions and agencies in order to strengthen our organization. The Boeing Winnipeg Employment Equity and Diversity Team (Diversity Team) plays a vital role in enabling this vision to become reality. Our Diversity Team is made up of representatives from different cultural backgrounds, genders, ages, interests and various job positions within the organization.

Boeing Winnipeg is committed to diversity. Our mission is to value, embrace and celebrate the uniqueness of each employee, and leverage those differences in our backgrounds, styles, perspectives, values and beliefs to ensure our business and personal success. Employees receive training in diversity and inclusiveness through both Employee Involvement team initiatives and our Management Development Program. This strategy has enabled Boeing Winnipeg to be recognized as one of Canada's Top Diversity Employers in 2008, 2009 and 2010.

## We create diverse opportunities

On top of creating a workplace that is open and welcoming to employees from diverse backgrounds, one of our objectives is to attract members from the designated groups for Employment Equity (aboriginal, women, visible minorities and persons with disabilities). Boeing Winnipeg maintains a close relationship with the Centre for Aboriginal Human Resource Development (CAHRD), and we work together with the Red River College Stevenson Campus to teach Aboriginal students Boeing-specific skill sets in the Aerospace Manufacturing Technician program.

Boeing Winnipeg has partnered with the University of Manitoba to promote women in management through the on-site Management Development Program for Women (MDW). In 2009, the MDW was host to 12

women working at Boeing Winnipeg. In addition, Boeing Winnipeg has partnered with the Manitoba School for the Deaf to provide bursaries for grade 12 graduates intent on furthering their education.

Boeing Winnipeg developed a "Welcome Aboard" onboarding program for new international employees. We successfully rolled it out with one employee hired directly from Malaysia, and we are prepared to do so again in the future. The Welcome Aboard program includes many services that aim to help new employees adjust to their environment, including:

- Sourcing and introducing translators to assist the family in health, education and legal matters that are necessary for immediate settlement;
- Assisting in completing and submitting Canadian government forms for health insurance, tax credits, social insurance number, citizenship/naturalization, licenses; and
- Common tasks such as assisting the family to utilize the public transit system.



## CREATING COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE THROUGH DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT (CONTINUED)

### We can learn a thing or two from one another

Our Diversity Team recently put together an employee Diversity Cookbook. The Diversity Cookbook is a means to share and celebrate our diversity. Employees contributed their favourite recipes to share that may have either reflected their culture or special memories that made them a lasting favourite. Employees also submitted a small introduction to their recipe providing a chance to learn a little bit about each person or their thoughts on diversity.

In the fall, we have an annual event called "Diversity Days" where, over a one week period, different cultures are celebrated through special menus, displays, music and entertainment in our cafeteria. Each month the Diversity Team prepares a slideshow presentation that is played on plasma screens in the cafeteria, outlining specific holidays from different cultures and religions that take place during that month.

Recently, Boeing Winnipeg held an Internal Career Fair giving all employees the opportunity to understand the role

of their coworkers and develop a respect for the contributions each person makes to Boeing Winnipeg's success.

Through the initiatives of Boeing Winnipeg's Diversity Team, we have created an environment that is open to and inclusive of different cultures, beliefs and backgrounds. On all of our recruitment ads we display an "equal opportunity" statement, and upon being hired, all employees are given a voluntary self-declaration form to fill out. Employees are also encouraged to provide new ideas and cultural information to our Diversity Team. We choose to embrace our differences and allow the organizational culture to be shaped by the diverse employees within. The result: An organization full of various strengths and a truly unique employment experience.

If you would like to consider Boeing Winnipeg as your next employer, check out our current job openings at [www.boeing.ca](http://www.boeing.ca).



Canada's Best  
Diversity  
Employers **2010**  
PRESENTED BY BMO  Financial Group



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## WELCOME GURSHARN WANDER

### Introducing the Newest Member of the OVRC Team

Hi, my name is Gursharn Wander. I am the newest member of the OVRC team. I bring over six years of teaching experience related to Computer Science and Engineering to the Centre. Considering the warmth and cohesiveness of the OVRC team, I am ecstatic about joining this organization. I am excited to share my journey up until now with all the clients coming to OVRC.

I lived in Punjab province in India, one of the richest provinces in India. I was raised in a farming community but was sent to study in the city because they had better educational facilities. I graduated with a Bachelor in Computer Science and Engineering and then completed my Masters in the same field. I worked as Computer Lecturer in an Engineering College where I



## OVRC WELCOMES GURSHARN WANDER (CONTINUED)

taught various subjects related to Computer Science and Engineering to adult students.

Then I married a wonderful girl from Winnipeg and that is why I came here to Winnipeg. Fortunately I landed in June 2008 when it all seemed so beautiful. And then reality set in. There it was, it started with flurries and then I witnessed a great snow show. I was nervous about it initially but got used to it with time.

I received support from many non-profit organizations and working here at such a wonderful place will give me an opportunity to give back to the community. I received training in Employability Skills Enhancement Program at Employment Solutions for Immigration Youth during which I learned a lot. I found a job as a

Computer Technician at non-profit organization named Computers for Schools. After which I enrolled in a course for a Network Technician at Red River College and passed with flying colours. I also worked as a shipper and receiver for a little while at Computer Boulevard. I feel passionately about teaching and hence volunteered to teach at Immigration Centre. While I was there, I came across another volunteer opportunity at OVRC. Luckily an opening came up at the Centre and I was interviewed for the position of Employment Facilitator and was subsequently hired. Teaching is so close to my heart and volunteering is one of the best ways to gain and enhance employability skills. I look towards new challenges and having a good time at OVRC.

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## RESOURCES FOR ABORIGINALS IN WINNIPEG

### Center for Aboriginal Human Resource Development (CAHRD)

**Located at 304 - 181 Higgins Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 3G1**

**Main Phone Line: 204.989.7110**

**Main Fax Line: 204.989.7113**

#### **Additional services:**

- Neeginan Institute of Applied Technology
- The Aboriginal Community Campus
- Aboriginal Centre Computer Lab

#### **For Job-Seekers**

CAHRD offers comprehensive services to job-seekers that can lead directly to employment through job preparation (interview skills • resume workshops • job referrals) • or to preparing for employment by accessing further education and training.

The friendly and professional staff from CAHRD's three departments, Central Employment Services, Staffing Solutions and Aboriginal People with Disabilities Program, use current resources and methods to help you become employed.

**Central Employment Services** has five employment counsellors that offer: career exploration options • referrals to education and training • job search strategies • various workshops • resume preparation and a computer resource centre • all at no charge to you, the job seeker.

**Staffing Solutions** has five human resource consultants that offer recent graduates (within the last three years) free services including: personalized job search strategies • customized one-on-one counselling • advanced workshops • skill-testing and a computer resource centre.

**Aboriginal People with Disabilities Program** has two employment counsellors that offer pre-employment preparation for urban Aboriginal people with disabilities. Services include: referrals to skills enhancement

## RESOURCES FOR ABORIGINALS IN WINNIPEG (CONTINUED)



workshops • employment referrals • access to education and training information • supportive one-on-one counselling • a computer resource centre • community outreach and referrals • and resources to outside support agencies.

### Other Services in Winnipeg:

- **Aboriginal Centre Of Winnipeg Inc (ACWI)** - is a gathering place for people and a centre to foster new ideas in education, economic development, social servicing delivery and training • Located at 181 Higgins Avenue Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 3G1 Phone: (204) 989.6395 • Fax: (204) 989.7137 • Website: [abcentre.org](http://abcentre.org)
- **Urban Circle Training Centre** - Utilizing the philosophy of the Medicine Wheel, Urban Circle Training Centre Inc. is a non-profit, community-based organization whose objective is to provide Aboriginal People with skill specific training targeted to job-market demands • Located at 519 Selkirk Avenue Winnipeg, Manitoba R2W 2M6 • Phone: 204.589.4433 • Fax: 204.582.6439 Website: [www.urbancircletraining.com](http://www.urbancircletraining.com)
- **The Manitoba Metis Federation** • Located at 300-150 Henry Avenue Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 0J7 Phone: (204) 586.8474 • Fax: (204) 947.1816 Website: [www.mmf.mb.ca](http://www.mmf.mb.ca)
- **Partners for Careers** - Our core business is job placement: assisting Aboriginal job seekers to find employment, training or continuing education opportunities in Manitoba. • Located at 510 Selkirk Avenue Winnipeg, Manitoba R2W 2M7 • Phone: (204) 945.0447 • Fax: (240) 948.2714 • Toll Free: 1.800.883.0398 • Website: [www.partnersforcareers.mb.ca](http://www.partnersforcareers.mb.ca)
- **The Indian Metis Friendship Centre of Winnipeg** Located at 45 Robinson Street Winnipeg, Manitoba R2W 5H5 • Phone: (204) 586.8441 • Fax: (204) 582.8261 Website: [www.imfc.net](http://www.imfc.net) (under construction as of September 15, 2010)
- **Aboriginal Health & Wellness Centre** - is a community-based health and wellness resource centre committed to serving the Aboriginal community of Winnipeg Programs and services offered in these areas: • Primary Care Clinic • Community Development • Community Outreach and Education • Health Promotion and Prevention with the services of Physicians and Nurses Community Health Workers • Access to Traditional Healers • Abinotci Mino-Awawin (Children's Health) Head Start Program • Fetal Alcohol • Syndrome/ Effects Prevention Program • Medicine Wheel Awareness Workshop • Located at 214 & 215-181 Higgins Avenue Winnipeg, Manitoba Canada R3B 3G1 Phone: (204) 925.3700 • Fax: (204) 925.3709
- **Aboriginal Literacy Foundation Inc.** - is a non-profit adult learning environment designed to provide relevant programming to Aboriginal adults in the Winnipeg Aboriginal community. • Located at 403-181 Higgins Avenue Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 3G1 • Phone: (204) 989.8860 • Fax: (204) 989.8870 Email: [allf@abcentre.org](mailto:allf@abcentre.org)
- **Aboriginal Single Window Service Canada** - To provide a "one-stop-shop" to organizations and individuals who need access to government funded Aboriginal Programs • Located at 100-181 Higgins Avenue Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 3G1 Phone: (204) 984.1415 • Fax: (204) 984.1424

- **Native Addictions Council of Manitoba** - Provide traditional healing services to our people through holistic treatment of addictions • Located at 160 Salter Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba R2W 4K1 Phone: (204) 586.8395 • Fax: (204) 589.3921 • Email: nacm@escape.ca • Website: www.mts.net/~nacm
- **Aboriginal Council of Winnipeg Inc.** • Located at 112 - 181 Higgins Avenue Winnipeg Manitoba R3B 3G1 Phone: (204) 989-6380 • Fax: (204) 942.5795 • Website: index.abcouncil.org
- **Manitoba Indian Education Association** • Located at 200 Albert Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Manitoba R3B 1E7 • Phone: (204) 947-0421 • Fax: (203) 942.3067 Website: www.miea.ca
- **Youth Employment Services (Y.E.S.)** – Provides free employment counselling services, information and referrals, job search workshops and an employment resource centre for people 16-29 years of age Located at 614 – 294 Portage Avenue Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C 0B9 • Phone: (204) 987.8661 • Website: www.youthemploymentservices.com
- **Opportunities for Employment** – Offers a variety of free employment readiness training programs and job placement services for EI, EIA clients who are unemployed or underemployed. Some programs offers are PC technician, forklift/warehouse/air tools training, office/computer skills as well as first aid/CPR training • Located at 352 Donald Street, 2nd Floor, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 2H8 • Phone: (204) 925.3490 Website: www.ofe.ca
- **Job Solution** – Program offered by New Directions intended for people on Income Assistance. It provides pre-employment workshops, training and job placements • Located at 400 – 491 Portage Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 2E4 • Phone: (204) 786.7051 • Fax: (204) 774.6468 • Email: JobSolution@newdirections.mb.ca • Website: www.74.52.31.127/~oldnew/jobsolution/index.html
- **Elmwood Community Resource Centre** - Elmwood Youth Employment Experience Project – Program focusing on youth aged 16-30 who are unemployed, not receiving EI benefits, not attending school but seeking life skill for acquiring and retaining a job Please call: Carissa Newfeld @ (204) 982.1720
- **Personalized Employment Preparation (P.E.P.)** – This program through the Winnipeg Boys and Girls Club, assists youth 16-29 to prepare for and find employment • Located at 929 Main Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba R2W 3P2 • Phone: (204) 982.4948
- **Planning Alternative Tomorrows with Hope. P.A.T.H. Centre** – Providing career counselling, resume writing and personal development support • Located at 627 Selkirk Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba R2W 2N2 Phone: (202) 927.2300 • Email: pathnecr@mts.net • Website: www.pathcentre.org
- **Apprenticeship Training** – If you are interested in becoming a certified trades person, look into the “learn and earn” potential of becoming an apprentice • Located at 1010 – 401 York Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C 0P8 • Phone: 945.3337 Toll free: 1.800.282.8069 • Website: www.gov.mb.ca/tradecareers
- **Human Resource Centres of Canada and Manitoba Employment Centres** – Provide faxing, photocopying of resumes and public access computers for resume writing. This is also where you apply for your Social Insurance Number and Employment Insurance benefits. From May until August, the Student/Youth Human Resource Centres are also open at these locations: 391 York Avenue • 1031 Autumnwood Drive 3338 Portage Avenue 1122 Henderson Highway 510 Selkirk Avenue • For information on services available through Human Resource Centre of Canada visit www.hrsdc-rhdcc.gc.ca or call 1.800. O CANADA. For information on Manitoba Employment Centres and other government programs visit www.edu.gov.mb.ca or call 945.8341
- If you are unsure of where to start, your best bet is to go down to 510 Selkirk Avenue “Partners for Careers” and ask about all the employment services available in Winnipeg. No appointment necessary!

# RESOURCES FOR IMMIGRANTS AND REFUGEES

## Winnipeg's Welcome Program – For Newcomers to Canada

### The Immigrant Centre!

The Immigrant Centre is Manitoba's community leader in providing immigration and settlement services free of charge. It is their goal to empower newcomers to connect, integrate and fully participate in Canadian society • Located at 100 Adelaide Street Phone: (204) 943.9158 Fax: (204) 949.0734 • Website: [www.icmanitoba.com](http://www.icmanitoba.com)

### FIRST STEPS

- Intake and Assessment
- Manitoba Nominee Application Centre (NAC) helps you complete the Provincial Nominee Program (PNP) application forms and supporting documents at no charge. Contact the Nominee Application Centre at 943.2240
- Settlement Services – provides valuable information on housing and other vital support services such as: Community Liaison • public education • cultural bridging and advocacy • sponsorship information and advocacy to support family reunification • Promoting Canadian values and benefits of Canadian citizenship



### LEARNING ENGLISH

- Access English Centre (AEC) – They offer newly-arrived immigrants the opportunity to practice their English language skills in a conversational setting with trained volunteers

### WORKING IN MANITOBA

- Adult Education Services – can assist you with education and career opportunities in Manitoba They can help you in getting credentials assessed or upgraded, and offer part time Continuing Education courses through the Tap-In Program • Adult Education Services also provide assistance with registrations and student loan applications.
- Employment Services – are customized to meet an individual needs • our goal is to help immigrants find employment based on your education • experience interests and language level • we will help you develop a plan for finding work • prepare a resume and provide job leads • group workshops are also available
- Workplace Entry Program (WEP) – is aimed at 18 – 30 year old immigrants who will learn about pre-employability skills • provides information on how people work in Canada, including workplace communication skills • health and safety awareness employer expectations • WEP also includes computer training • students receive resume and further guidance by the employment team • students will benefit from a training allowance
- Computer Lending Library – free self-directed computer training begins with a basic introduction to computers • immigrants who have a Canadian Language Benchmark level of 4 or higher and are unemployed or underemployed are eligible to borrow a computer for 2 years • next, people begin working towards a certificate in office software proficiency

## OTHER SERVICES AT THE IMMIGRANT CENTRE

- Language Bank and Translation – Translation, Interpretation and Notary Public Services – all services are provided free of charge to landed immigrants who have been in Canada less than three years • a nominal fee is charged to those who are in Canada on temporary visa or who have been in Canada for more than three years
- Volunteer Services – EAL for Seniors • One-to-one tutoring for EAL • computer familiarization • driver's education for learner's license preparation • diversity and buddy volunteering and life skill sessions
- Community Outreach Services – cultural diversity awareness • family support • ethnic community organizations • support and promoting Canadian values and the benefits of Canadian citizenship
- Nutrition Services – Nutritionist work with all newcomers including parents • services include: on-site cooking & nutrition classes • grocery store tours • nutrition planning during pregnancy, infant nutrition education • including making baby food • individual counselling for those with other health concerns • nutrition presentations in the community • nutrition label reading, meal plan development and more
- Citizenship Classes – comprehensive program to prepare clients to take the Canadian Citizenship Test

### Additional Employment Resources for Immigrants and Refugees in Winnipeg

- **Entry Program** - provides information on how people work in Canada • Located at Unit 400 - 259 Portage Avenue • Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 3P4 • Phone: (204) 944.0133 • Fax: (204) 944.8062 • Email: ep\_director@mts.net
- **Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization of Manitoba Inc. or IRCOM Inc.** Strives to empower newcomer families to integrate into the wider community through affordable transitional housing programs and services • Located at 95 Ellen Street Winnipeg Manitoba • R3A 1S8 • Phone: (204) 943.8765 Fax: (204) 943.4810 • Email: info@ircom.ca Website: www.ircom.ca

- **Academic Credentials Assessment Services** – Evaluates secondary and post secondary education earned outside of Canada and compares it to educational standards in Manitoba. Assessments are given only when they are required by an employer or educational institution. There is no charge for this service • Located at 5th Floor, 213 Notre Dame Avenue Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 1N3 • Phone: (204) 945.6300 Website: www.Immigratemanitoba.com
- **Credentials Recognition Program** – This program is only for professional and/or technically trained immigrants who want to work in regulated professions in Manitoba. If eligible, the program gives financial reimbursements for a portion of the licensing fee. A wage subsidy may also be available for up to six months, for clients seeking employment in their field Located at 5th Floor – 213 Notre Dame Avenue • Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 1N3 • Phone: (204) 945.6300 • Website: www.gov.mb.ca/labour/immigrate
- **Employment Manitoba** – Refers clients to training, upgrading and employment programs and services • Located at 391 York Street • 1122 Henderson Highway 3338 Portage Avenue • 1031 Autumnwood Drive • Website: www.gov.mb.ca/employment
- **Apprenticeship Branch** – Helps people enter apprenticeship programs and/or gain credit for their experience obtained outside of Canada • Located at 1010 – 401 York Avenue • Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C 0P8 Phone: (204) 945.3337 • Website: www.gov.mb.ca/tce/apprent/about.html
- **Community Unemployed Help Centre** – Provides free counselling and information to unemployed workers Located at 501 – 275 Portage Avenue • Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C 4M6 • Email: cuhc@cuhc.mb.ca • Website: www.cuhc.mb.ca
- **Winnipeg's Welcome Program** – For Newcomers to Canada who have been here for less than four years Located at YMCA.YWCA of Winnipeg: Downtown Branch – 301 Vaughan Street • Phone: (204) 947.3044 or West Portage Branch – 3550 Portage Avenue • Phone: (204) 889.8052 • To find out if you qualify for the program, please call: Ariana Yaftali at (204) 947.3110 Ext 243 • Website: www.ywinnipeg.ca

## RESOURCES FOR IMMIGRANTS AND REFUGEES (CONTINUED)

- **Employment Projects of Winnipeg Inc.** - EPW works with clients to provide programs and services to connect individuals born outside Canada with local employers • Located at Room 990 – 167 Lombard Avenue Phone: (204) 949.5300 • Fax: (204) 944.9918 Email: epwinc@epw.ca Website: www.epw.ca
- **Success Skills Centre** - Offers employment assistance services to immigrant professionals and skilled workers who want to continue their career in Manitoba. They help immigrants have their skills and past experience recognized in the Canadian job market. • Located at 12th Floor – 330 Portage Avenue (Newport Centre) Phone: (204) 975.5111 • Fax: (204) 975.5108 • Email: ssc@successskills.mb.ca • Website: www.successskills.mb.ca
- **Employment Solutions and Employment Solutions for Immigrant Youth** – The primary goal is to improve the employability of immigrant youth and successfully bring them into the Manitoba workforce • Located at Room 200 – 249 Notre Dame Phone: (204) 944.8833 Fax: (204) 944.8787 • Email: employmentsolutions@mts.net
- **The Immigrant Women’s Association of Manitoba Inc.** - Has established counselling services, English as Second Language training, and provided advocacy and research as well as a variety of different programs and projects • Located at 301-960 Portage Avenue Phone: (temporarily out of service, contact by email) (204) 989.5800 • Fax: (204) 989.5801 • Email: immwomenassocofmanitoba@gmail.com • Website: www.iwam.eitb.com
- **Newcomers Employment and Education Development Services Inc. NEEDS Centre –N.E.E.D.S. Inc.** - Provides accessible services and support to immigrant and refugee children and youth and their families. • Located at 251 – A Notre Dame Avenue Phone: (204) 940.1260 • Fax: (204) 940.1272 • Email: needsinc@mts.net • Website: needsinc.ca
- **Life & Employability Enhancement Program** - For war-affected youth • Located at 51 Morrow Avenue Phone: (204) 946.9137 • Fax: (204) 946.9154 • Email: leep.mfc@mts.net
- **New Journey Housing, Resource Centre for Newcomer Housing** – Is a resource centre which trains and assists Newcomers and those who support them, through the process of attaining and retaining decent affordable Housing in Winnipeg • Located on the 3rd Floor Portage Place Mall, opposite IMAX, 312 – 393 Portage Avenue • Phone: (204) 942.2238 • Fax: (204) 942.2239 • Email: info@newjourneyhousing.com
- **Manitoba Interfaith Immigration Council Inc. (Welcome Place)** – MIIC promotes and supports the protection and resettlement of refugees and offers a range of services that welcomes and assists refugee newcomers in their settlement and integration into Canadian society. • MIIC strives to enable independence and full participation of these newcomers in our community • Located at 397 Carlton Street • Phone: (204) 977.1000 • Fax: (204) 956.7548 Website: www.miic.ca
- **Career Destination Manitoba** – Is an innovative non-profit community-based solution to the skills shortages of Manitoba. Its mission is to help meet the human resource needs of Manitoba’s growing economic sectors and show individuals how to achieve their potential in Manitoba by engaging them in online exploration of Manitoba’s workplaces and educational pathways.
- More than a career web site, **Career Destination: Manitoba** is a collaborative storytelling engine, enabling contributors to tell the stories of successful Manitoban workers with interactive multimedia captured from the workplace. This free content service is linked to industry and educational websites throughout the community, ensuring the widest possible audience • Website: immigrantsandcareers.mb.ca

- **Global Welcome Centre** – Helps immigrants and refugees with language barriers between them and post-secondary education and offers advice on how pursue a university degree or diploma here in Manitoba • Located at Room 1E04, Helen Betty Osborne Building • 511 Ellice Avenue • Phone: (240) 258.2929 Fax: (204) 786.7803 • Email: [globalwelcomecentre@uwinnipeg.ca](mailto:globalwelcomecentre@uwinnipeg.ca) • Website: [www.globalwelcomecentre.uwinnipeg.ca](http://www.globalwelcomecentre.uwinnipeg.ca)
- **Pluri-Elles Manitoba** – Job search assistance for francophone men and women. Counselling for women and therapy for children. French literacy classes and a francophone resource centre. Literacy program for all families in Manitoba. All services offered in French Located at 570 Des Meurons Street • Winnipeg, Manitoba R2H 2W4 • Phone: (204) 233.1735 • Email: [plurielles@shaw.ca](mailto:plurielles@shaw.ca) • Website: [www.plurielles.mb.ca](http://www.plurielles.mb.ca)
- **SEED Winnipeg** – Trains people with low incomes to start new businesses • Located at 80 Salter Street Winnipeg, Manitoba R2W 4J6 • Phone: (204) 927.9935 Email: [info@seedwinnipeg.ca](mailto:info@seedwinnipeg.ca)
- **Taking Charge** – Helps women and single parents develop a training plan based on their own needs. Provides help with job search, interviews and finding other community supports • Located at 319 Elgin Avenue • Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C 0B1 • Website: [www.takingcharge.org](http://www.takingcharge.org)
- **Victor Mager Adult Education and Training** – Holistic training program that offers employment and career counselling, upgrading and vocational training • Located at 533 St. Anne's Road • Winnipeg, Manitoba R2M 3E5 • Phone: (204) 254.1618 • Email: [vicmag@mts.net](mailto:vicmag@mts.net)
- **Winnipeg Transition Centre** – Helps with job searches, writing resumes and improving interview skills • Located at 1836 Main Street • Winnipeg, Manitoba R2V 3H2 • Phone: (204) 338-3899 • Email: [info@winnipegtransitioncentre.com](mailto:info@winnipegtransitioncentre.com) • Website: [www.winnipegtransitioncentre.com](http://www.winnipegtransitioncentre.com)
- **Work Start** – Information about workplace health and safety, Canadian workplace culture, job applications and resumes • Located at 3rd Floor – 686 Portage Avenue • Winnipeg, Manitoba • Phone: (204) 953-1072 Email: [closingthegap@mts.net](mailto:closingthegap@mts.net)

# ADULT EAL CLASSES IN WINNIPEG

## Funded Programs

**ENTRY PROGRAM:** Orientation and Language for Newcomers – Room 400, 4th Floor 259 Portage Avenue, Phone: 944.0133

Four-week orientation – for newcomers to MB, a full-time orientation including language learning and employment information.

**\*\*\*AFTER ENTRY PROGRAM, LEARNERS MAY ATTEND THE FOLLOWING CLASSES\*\*\***

### **Winnipeg School Division #1 Adult EAL - Day Program (Continual intake)**

Phone: 775.0416

Locations: The Adult Centre – 700 Elgin Avenue

Sir William Osler School 1600 Grant Avenue

Elmwood School – 505 Chalmers Avenue

1021 McPhillips / 686 Portage Avenue 3rd Floor

Types of classes: CLB 1 - 6

### **Winnipeg School Division #1 Adult EAL - Evening Program (Continual intake)**

Phone 947.1647

Location: The Adult Education Centre – 310 Vaughan St.

Types of classes: CLB 1 - 8

### **Work Start: Language for Employment – (four-week sessions)**

For EAL learners who want to find work immediately –

Phone: 953-1072 for an appointment. Or go in person,

Monday to Thursday, 9:30 am to 2:30 pm

Location: 3rd Floor, 686 Portage Avenue –

Types of classes: CLB 3 - 5

### **Victor Mager Adult EAL Program**

Phone: 254.1618

Location: Centre 24/7 – 533 St. Anne's Road

Type of classes: CLB 1 - 8

Provides part-time classes, with childcare for 2, 3 and 4 years-olds

### **St. Vital Adult EAL Program**

Phone 254.1618

Location: Centre 24/7 – 533 St. Anne's Road

Types of classes: CLB 1 - 8

### **Enhanced English Skills for Employment**

Phone: 927.4375

Location: 15th Floor – 275 Portage Avenue

Type of classes: EAL (conversational)

### **International Centre**

Phone: 943.9158

Location: 100 Adelaide Street

English Access Centre

(Lower benchmark)

### **Winnipeg Technical College**

Phone: 989.6500

Locations: 609 Erin Street – CLB 1 – 7 & specialized reading and writing

1551 Pembina Highway – CLB 1 – 8 (10 – week terms)

### **Louis Riel School Division Adult EAL Evening Program**

Phone: 257.7308

Location: René Deleurme Centre – 511 St. Anne's Road –

Type of classes: CLB 5 - 8

### **University of Manitoba**

Phone: 982.4899

Location: Aboriginal Education Centre – 11 Promenade (behind Portage Place)

Types of classes: CLB 5 - 8

### **Red River College Language Training Centre**

Phone: 945.6151

Location: 3rd Floor 300 – 123 Main Street

Full Time classes (9 – 3, Monday – Friday)

Computer and Language labs

Type of classes: CLB 3 – 7

Classes include workplace experience placement and computer and language labs.

English for:

Business Purposes / Health Care Aides

Professional Purposes / Technical Purposes

Nursing Purposes / Bridge Program for Internationally Trained Nurses

Apprenticeship and Trades

Canadian Communication for Physicians Trained Abroad (CCPTAP)

Academic English Program for University and College Entrance (AEPUCE)

### University of Winnipeg

Phone: 982.1818

Location: 491 Portage Avenue

Type of classes: CLB 7+

English for:

Academic Purposes

Academic Writing 2

Academic Learning

Professionals

Internationally Educated Accountants / Engineering

Professional

Internationally Educated Agrologists / Engineers Online  
IT professionals / Internationally Educated Teachers Online  
Communication for Internationally Educated Teachers  
Specific Purposes Program – Internationally trained students CLB 5 – 8 (intermediate/advanced)

### Community based language programs:

Community EAL Classes for Parents

For parents isolated due to childcare responsibilities

EAL For Seniors

For learner over the age of 55 and not in the labour force

McLeod Adult Education Centre

Types of classes: CLB level 1 – 7

Seven Oaks Adult Learning Centre

Types of classes: CLB levels 3 – 5

Stevenson-Britannia Adult Learning Centre

Types of classes: CLB levels 1 – 4

### English Online – [www.myenglishonline.ca](http://www.myenglishonline.ca)

Self-directed English lessons on the Internet. Teacher support is available.

Email: [info@myenglishonline.ca](mailto:info@myenglishonline.ca)



Osborne Village  
RESOURCE CENTRE

# PRE-EMPLOYMENT WORKSHOPS!

Call the Osborne Village Resource Centre at 989-6503 to register!

## Career Exploration Workshop

January 26. 27. 2011 / April 27. 28. 2011 Wednesday 1 - 3:30 pm / Thursday 8:45 am – 11:30 am

Are you still wondering if you want to be a doctor, lawyer, cowboy or ballerina?

This workshop gives you the tools to:

1. Do a self assessment which includes:
  - a. Values, skills, attributes/strengths, and interests/hobbies
2. Do a work assessment which includes:
  - a. Your last three jobs (if applicable), and the work activities you enjoy
  - b. Work preference, work activities, occupational interests, work/volunteer experience
3. Research careers with Career Cruising and Manitoba Job Futures
4. Assess the suitability of a career
5. Develop a strategic action plan
6. Identify and find solutions to stumbling blocks



# PRE-EMPLOYMENT WORKSHOPS!

Call the Osborne Village Resource Centre at 989-6503 to register!

## FREE Cover Letter Workshop

January 20. 2011 / February 17. 2011 / March 17. 2011 / April 14. 2011, 8:45 am - 3:30 pm

"A well-written cover letter can eliminate at least 25% of the competition for you," stated an employer. The urban myth that cover letters aren't important is just that – a myth. Employers want and expect applicants to include a cover letter with a resume. Don't be one of the many people who work hard at writing a great resume, and then mistakenly take very little effort in composing a cover letter. In this workshop you will get tips from employers, and also learn how to:

- Examine the job ad and identify the employer's needs
- Research the company to identify the employer's goals and values
- Connect your skills and experience with the employer's needs
- Put it all together in a cover letter that will get you an interview



## FREE Interview Preparation Workshop

January 24. 25. 2011 / February 21. 22. 2011 / March 21. 22. 2011 / April 18. 19. 2011, 8:45 am - 3:30 pm

Going on an interview ranks right up there with life events that are major stressors. In light of this fact it is surprising that many individuals mistakenly think they will sound too stiff and scripted if they prepare for an interview. Experience quickly teaches people that just the opposite is true. With practice you will sound natural and be able to converse with ease. Join us for the Interview Skills Workshop and get the skills and confidence to ace your next interview. The two day workshop covers the following topics:

You will have the opportunity to put these skills into practice by rehearsing your responses in mock interviews and getting feedback from workshop participants. Join us for this fun, practical and informative workshop!

- How to make a good first impression
- Identifying questions employers will ask
- Confidently responding to the 3 different types of interview questions
- How to turn a negative situation into a positive outcome

## FREE Hidden Job Market Workshop

January 21. 2011 / March 25. 2011, 8:45 am - 3:30 pm

Did you know that 85% of the jobs actually available are never accessed! That's because most people only apply to job ads. This workshop will give you the tools for a more effective job search. You will learn how to target specific jobs with organizations that you would like to work for! Topics covered include:

- Labour Market Trends
- Sources of Hidden Jobs
- Promising Industries and Occupations
- Marketing Yourself





Call the Osborne Village Resource Centre at 989-6503 In person registration!

## Fundamentals of Personal Computing

5 – 2.5 hour sessions (one night a week) In person registration required, \$65.00 (cash only)

January 11. 18. 25 / February 01. 08. 2011

February 21. 28 / March 07. 14. 21. 2011

May 16. 23. 30 / June 06. 13. 2011

May 17. 24. 31 / June 07. 14. 2011

- Become proficient using the mouse
- Become familiar with Windows XP and its terminology
- Learn basic editing and formatting functions
- Learn how to surf the world wide web
- Set up and learn how to use a free email account



## Basic Microsoft Excel

January 10. 17. 24. 31 / February 07. 2011

April 05. 12. 19. 26 / May 03. 2011

5 – 2.5 hour sessions (one night a week)

In person registration required, \$65.00 (cash only)

Prerequisite: Basic Microsoft Word

- Become familiar with the components of the Excel window
- Become familiar with the various mouse pointers in Excel
- Learn Spreadsheet terminology: books, worksheets, cells, columns, rows, and ranges
- Learn how to enter and edit text within a cell and apply formatting options
- Work with ranges and range names
- Work with basic formulas and simple calculations
- Learn how to proof your Excel spreadsheets: page set-up, set margins, paper orientation & page breaks, spell check, show/hide, print preview
- Learn the basics of Charting
- Work with multiple spreadsheets
- Link Excel spreadsheet into a Word document

## Basic Microsoft Word

February 22 / March 01. 08. 15. 22. 2011

April 04. 11. 18. 25 / May 02. 2011

5 – 2.5 hour sessions (one night a week)

In person registration required, \$65.00 (cash only)

Prerequisite: Fundamentals of Personal Computing

- Learn how to manage your files in Windows XP
- Become familiar with the components of the MS Word Window
- Review various techniques for selecting text: one word, one sentence, paragraphs, all text with single, double and triple click
- Learn intermediate formatting techniques: customizing bullets & numbering, borders and shading, fonts, indenting, cut, copy & paste
- Word with headers and footers, page numbers, tabs, tables, clip art and word art
- Learn to proof your document: page set-up, spell check, show/hide, print preview
- Word with multiple windows
- Learn the basics of the mail merge function

## ABOUT OVRC Free Services

Do you need help preparing a resume or getting ready for a job interview?

Do you need help preparing a cover letter?

Do you want to consult a Career Counsellor?

Contact us at:

PH: 204.989.6503 FAX: 204.477.0903

For further information visit our web site: [www.ovrc.ca](http://www.ovrc.ca)

If you have any comments, questions or concerns about our services,  
contact the Centre Coordinator Marg Law at [marlaw@wtc.mb.ca](mailto:marlaw@wtc.mb.ca)

In Partnership With



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## ABOUT OVRC'S NEWSLETTER

In our upcoming newsletter we will be looking at

### **Volunteerism!**

If you have an idea for an article you would like to see, or contribute to the newsletter,  
or have any comments or suggestions, please contact

Patti Malo, Newsletter Editor at 204.989.6503 or [patmal@wtc.mb.ca](mailto:patmal@wtc.mb.ca)

Newsletter design and layout by our volunteer Kristin McPherson



**Osborne Village**  
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