



SPRING 2010 NEWSLETTER

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COVER LETTERS IMPORTANT?

You're Darned Right They Are!

By Marg Law, Centre Coordinator, Osborne Village Resource Centre

On March 24th, Osborne Village Resource Centre advertised for a Client Service Representative/Computer Assistant Position in the Service Canada Job Bank. The next day the flood gates opened. I had 110 resumes within 48 hours in my email and 162 by the closing of applications. Needless to say, I began scanning through them quickly (5-7 seconds) as most employers do first time around. **Because this position is the front-line of our Centre, my first priority was that the person in that position have the personal qualities that would make people coming to the Centre feel welcome, safe and cared about. I needed a person who genuinely loved interacting with people and did so with warmth, humour and compassion. I realized that the only way I might get a sense of those qualities was through a well written cover letter.** I was prepared to spend time carefully reading the cover letters. You cannot imagine my disappointment and frustration when I found that approximately 75% of the people applying were sending me their resumes with **NO cover letter** and too many people who sent me a cover letter **only repeated their technical skills which were in their resume.** Only one person out of 162 applicants indicated they even knew what Osborne Village Resource Centre was and what services we delivered. That person knew because they had used our services. A number of times when I was overjoyed to see a cover letter, I realized, as I began to read it, that it was a **generic cover letter** that had been developed for a few thousand employers in the city of Winnipeg and not to me at all (we do not provide clients with legal documents and advice and calling me or the agency the wrong name is a dead give-away).

I read cover letters with numerous grammar and/or spelling mistakes which made me want to delete the resume before I had opened it. If applying for an

Administrative Support position that is not acceptable.

It was obvious to me that most of the applicants had not bothered to do any research on our Centre before applying. Ten minutes on the OVRC website would have shown them that our Centre specializes in resumes, cover letters and job search strategies. With that knowledge, you would think those applicants would have put a little more effort into the application process.

I must say, this process certainly brought home the importance of what we teach in our Cover Letter Workshops and our one-on-one resume development. With competition the way it is in the present labour market, **cover letters are important!!**





ASK THE CAREER COUNSELLOR

Tips for Job Seekers

By Jude Gaal

Dear Career Counsellor:

I got laid off a month ago and have been sending out my resume and cover letter to at least 50 job postings. I haven't even had one call for an interview! Help!

- No Bites in Winnipeg

Dear No Bites in Winnipeg:

If you were to visit me at OVRC the first thing I would review would be your cover letter. I have found that job seekers have a false belief that cover letters are not very important. Because of this belief most people send off generic cover letters to a variety of employers for a variety of positions. This strategy tends to get zero results. Employment Counsellor, Keith Robinson, surveyed 110 employers about cover letters. Only seven percent of employers stated that cover letters were not important. Ninety three percent of employers believe that cover letters are indeed necessary when applying for jobs!

Keith also found that employers had specific complaints about cover letters which included:

- Lack of clear connection between job requirements and candidate's qualifications
- Poorly written letters that do not catch the reader's interest
- Spelling and grammar errors

Eliminating spelling and grammar errors is fairly simple, but the other stuff! "How can I do that," you may be wondering? By reviewing the job posting and researching the company. This will help you identify why you want to work for the organization, and the top 3-4 key qualifications the employer is looking for. "That will take too long, and I have so many resumes to get out!" is the response I usually get. Put yourself in the employer's shoes. You have a position to fill and 200+ applications to review.

Over 50 cover letters have started out with the typical cover letter opening, Please accept my resume for the _____ position in the Winnipeg Free Press. How inspired are you? Chances are—not very! You eliminate yet another generic cover letter that has no connection to the job posting and resign yourself to another letter with the same introductory sentence. Much to your surprise the next cover letter has a different opening sentence.

The applicant starts by explaining why he/she is excited about the position with the company and immediately begins to connect the job requirements with his/her qualifications. Now you are interested and want to know more. Every word in the cover letter continues to address the skills the candidate has that would make him/her a good fit for the job. You can't wait to read the resume. That's the reaction you want to elicit in the person reading your cover letter! The only way to achieve that is to do your homework.

Doing your homework by identifying the job duties and researching the company has extra benefits—it will also help you prepare for the interview. Not only will you be able to speak clearly about your skills and experience you will also be able to prepare specific on-the-job examples for behavioral descriptive questions.

Remember, cover letters, in addition to being very important, are also your first opportunity to sell yourself to an employer. Don't waste it by being unclear and too generic. Seize the day and make every word count with a fantastic cover letter followed by a great skill based resume!

ARE YOU MARKETING YOUR SKILLS TO EMPLOYER NEEDS?

By Keith Robinson, Employment Facilitator/Computer Instructor,
Osborne Village Resource Centre

Osborne Village Resource Centre is always trying to stay current with what Winnipeg employers are looking for when recruiting for job positions within their company. We also invite companies down to our Centre to discuss career paths in their industry and how applicants can stand out from other applicants resulting in more interviews and job offers. When you are job searching the first meeting with your future employer is your resume. That being said, does your resume make that first meeting interesting enough that the employer wants to call you in for a interview because you fit their needs. The whole recruitment process is all about how you market your skills and abilities to the buyer who is your future employer. If your resume clearly shows that you have the qualifications for the job position they will call you for the interview to decide if you are as good as advertised on your resume.

Osborne Village Resource Centre conducted a recruitment survey into what specifically Winnipeg employers are looking for when recruiting. It was a detailed survey that 110 Winnipeg employers completed on what they look for in resumes, cover letters and interviews. This article will deal with what employers want to see when reviewing resumes. Does your resume meet their needs? Will it stand out above other applicants? After reading this article take the time to review your resume and make any changes to market your skills. This will result in more interviews and getting hired faster over applicants that are not marketing their skills and abilities as well as you are.

28.04% of Winnipeg employers stated that communication and interpersonal skills are extremely important, while 47.73% stated they were very important. This means that 75.77% of employers want



to see these skills on your resume. If you market these skills better than other applicants you will get the interview first. Now does this mean just writing that you have "strong communication and interpersonal skills?" The answer is no. Employers want applicants to be specific when displaying their skills. You would want to state your skills more like the following if you were a chef or cook:

- Skilled in organizing and preparing a kitchen for breakfast, lunch and dinner sittings including large banquets
- Ability to create a teamwork atmosphere with servers, prep cooks and kitchen workers to ensure a smooth running kitchen resulting in excellent customer service
- Efficiently dealt with unusual circumstances and customer food allergy concerns that took place within a kitchen atmosphere
- Complimented by management for the ability to stay focused and calm during peak dinning hours ensuring that company food quality and customer service standards are always met

The more specific and clear you are in writing your skills the easier it will be for the potential employer to have an understanding of how you will fit into their workplace culture. The applicants that display these skills will get the interview. If you want

positive results market yourself better than the other applicants. Remember you are the seller and the employer is the buyer. Your resume is your commercial to the employer.

Here is an important tip. When you have a major accomplishment, or management compliments you for something specific, write it down to use when applying in the future. The better the product (your skills) the greater the need for your skills which will result in higher wages.

65.42% of employers stated that experience was extremely important, while 29.91% stated it was very important. This means that 95.43% of Winnipeg employers want applicants to clearly display how their skills and experience match their specific skills for the job position. This is a major reason why OVRC promotes skilled based resumes over chronological resumes. Ask us today to explain the difference. 34.58 % of employers also stated that technical skills are extremely important, while 50.47% stated they were very important which means 85.05% of the employers want you to display your technical skills in relation to the job position that you are applying to. The applicant that better markets their skills and experience will get the interview over other applicants. When displaying these skills be specific so the recruiter does not have to guess what you can do, they will know what you can do. Here are some examples for a general labourer position:

- Skilled in using power tool such as skill saws, sanders and drills when performing framing on new homes
- Safely operated and maintained a wide variety of landscaping equipment such as chain saws, tree trimmers, riding lawn mowers and tillers
- Proven safety record with no workplace injury's for 15 years

You never want to oversell your skills however you want to tell the recruiter what makes you the best applicant in a clear and concise manner. If you do this better than other applicants you will get the interview. Take the time when developing your resume. It is worth the effort.

14.81%% of employers stated that seeing results

was extremely important, while 44.44% stated it was very important. This means that 59.25% of Winnipeg employers will be more likely to contact an applicant for a interview who quantifies their skills by stating results in their work with past employers. Again the applicants that better market themselves will get the interview. Here are some examples of showing results on your resume.

- Increased sales in our store by 15% over a 1 year period by providing excellent customer service
- Reached or exceeded company sales quotas for 6 straight years by developing a loyal customer base by providing excellent customer service and performing cold sales calls
- A proven performer shown by earning a 95% grade point average in the Level 1 Carpentry Program at Winnipeg Technical College

It is clear to see that employers do not have the time to decide if an applicant has the skills to do the job. They want it clearly shown before they take the time to call the applicant for a interview. If you do not want to take the time to develop your resume to meet employer's needs why would they spend the time to see if you are qualified for the position?

In closing these are just a few of the results from 1 of 29 detailed questions that 110 Winnipeg Employers took the time to complete so that applicants would be better prepared to meet their specific recruitment needs when recruiting for job positions within their company. It is worth the time to go over the survey to see if you are meeting the needs of the employers that you are applying to.

If you have questions about the survey contact Keith Robinson our Employment Facilitator/Computer Instructor at our main line 989-6505. You can also make a resume appointment or take part in one of the pre-employment workshops. We can provide you with all the tools needed so you can market your skills better than other applicants. Let's take the path to future employment together ensuring your search for employment is successful.

JOB-HUNTING

Desperate Measures in Desperate Times or a New Approach needed?

By Sandy Hudson, Career Counselor, Osborne Village Resource Centre

With so many people being laid off, at the moment, after years of loyal service, I see more and more people here at Osborne Village Resource Centre who are feeling such pressure to find work they are using desperate measures to find a job. Sending out generic resumes to endless lists of companies, applying to more than 5 jobs a day and applying for jobs people are not really perfect for, are some examples of the desperate measures people are taking to get a job.

I totally understand the pressure and desperation people feel, as I have felt it too. I was not legally allowed to work in Canada for my first 18 months here, so by the time my work permit came I was feeling really desperate for money and under a lot of pressure to get a job quickly. I spent my days sitting at home, scouring the Service Canada Job Bank and getting more and more despondent with every resume I sent out.



We believe in a far different approach here at OVRC. Our advice is to be pro-active rather than reactive - focus your energy and efforts on knowing yourself, researching companies you would like to work for, networking, and finally marketing yourself to the right employer. Traditional approaches - like using job banks and looking in the newspaper for jobs, will mean you are competing with hundreds of others for advertised positions that you may not even be perfect for.

So, where can you look for jobs then, if the traditional approach isn't working for you? The answer is - the "Hidden Job Market" There is a popular myth that employers are not advertising jobs because they are giving positions to friends and family. Actually, the "Hidden Job Market" is more than that and can be split into three categories.

- a) Openings that have just come up
- b) Openings that haven't come up yet
- c) Openings that haven't been advertised

Let's look at each separately.

- a) An unexpected job opening could come about when an employee has gone on long-term sick or left the company unexpectedly
- b) The organization may have an idea in the making that would involve a new position; they may be creating a new position due to restructure or a new initiative, or may not even be aware someone is needed until they come along
- c) Employers don't always have the resources or the time to advertise every position. It costs time and money to replace someone and takes many labour hours to go through the hiring process



So how can you access these “Hidden Jobs?” Here are some of our tips to start you off:

- Know your skills and attributes and how you would be of benefit to employers
- Target your job search - research companies you would like to work for that reflect your values and philosophies
- Tailor your resume to that company and for a specific position
- Be specific – detail your accomplishments and quantify work you did
- Write a personalized cover letter and show enthusiasm for the job and the company!
- Learn how to articulate your skills and attributes for your ideal position
- Build a network of beneficial contacts
- Volunteer - to maintain your confidence and keep your skills and contacts current
- Smile and show your confidence and enthusiasm – there’s nothing more appealing than someone with confidence and positivity

Keith Robinson, Employment Facilitator here at Osborne Village Resource Centre, undertook a Recruitment

Practices Survey last year and out of over 110 employers surveyed, 69% stated that they accept introductory calls from applicants occasionally to frequently. A further 66% of employers hold resumes in a retrieval system to use when opportunities arise! So, from this we can gather that employers do like the pro-active approach and are very happy to receive applications they can look at when jobs come up.

To make the hidden job market work for you and learn how to be pro-active in your job search, pop in to see us at Osborne Village Resource Centre, make an appointment for individual advice or pick up a booklet to gain more information. We also run a one day workshop on The “Hidden Job Market” and due to popular demand we have added more dates to our calendar. In our first “Hidden Job Market” this year, there was standing room only and according to participants it was an astounding success. Here’s what one of the participants said about the workshop:

“I thought the workshop was absolutely amazing and really made me feel more positive about finding a job that I want to work at.”

Happy hunting job-seekers - keep smiling – you never know who’s watching!



CLOSE YOUR EYES AND IMAGINE

By Mandy Rogasky, Employment Specialist, Assiniboine Credit Union

Close your eyes and imagine.

Imagine beginning your career with an employer that offers meaningful employment in a safe and respectful work environment.

Imagine coming to work with a smile on your face and leaving work feeling satisfied and appreciated.

Imagine being part of a diverse workforce that takes pride in delivering exceptional member service while making a positive difference in the community.

Now open your eyes and turn this imagination into reality.

Welcome to Assiniboine Credit Union.

At Assiniboine Credit Union, our policy is to provide a workplace that honours the following employment principles:

- We will be a fair employer
- We will provide for a safe and healthy workplace
- We are committed to employment equity and diversity
- Employees will be treated with integrity and respect
- We support employees by providing opportunities for career development
- We support employees in balancing their commitments to ACU, families and the community
- We will provide an environment of equal opportunity and non-discrimination as set out in the Manitoba Human Rights Code
- We will comply with relevant laws and regulations at all times

We respect that job searching is an important part of life, as is working for an employer who shares a similar outlook and a core set of values as your own.

That's why we seek prospective employees that are a good fit for our credit union – talented individuals who are committed to contributing to our mission while demonstrating our core values of co-operation, integrity and respect, accountability, and excellence. Working for an employer whose values are aligned with your own makes all the difference.

How to turn imagination into reality:

At Assiniboine, where we choose to post external career opportunities often depends on the position we are recruiting for. However, in the end, all external postings are placed on Assiniboine's website (www.assiniboine.mb.ca) in the Careers section. In order to ensure your qualifications receive the broadest exposure possible, we encourage all applicants to apply for posted positions online by visiting our website. For those candidates who do not have access to a computer, paper applications can be submitted by visiting one of our branches.

When applying for a role within Assiniboine, a recommended first step for candidates is to research the credit union as well as the job itself. The easiest way to do this is by visiting our website. Become comfortable with Assiniboine as a company and as an employer. Check out the minimum skills and requirements for the job. Requirements for both education and work experience are clearly stated within our postings.

Qualified candidates for entry level positions within Assiniboine, such as the Member Service Representative role, generally possess a grade 12 education, enjoy mathematics and have good computer skills. Excellent interpersonal skills and the ability to communicate effectively with members and other staff are very important.

Cover letters and resumes should capture how the applicant meets the qualifications of the desired position.

These documents act as a first impression and should be taken as a personal marketing opportunity. The cover letter should highlight the candidate's suitability for the specific role as well as their interest in Assiniboine Credit Union. Key abilities, accomplishments, and skills should then be captured through the use of a resume.

Once they've submitted their application, candidates receive an email confirming receipt. Those candidates whose skills and experience are the best fit for the role are contacted over the phone for pre-screening before proceeding with an in-person interview.

Successful candidates are contacted and an offer of employment is made. All offers of employment are contingent upon a successful background check, including criminal, credit, and reference checks.

We encourage those candidates who are not selected for a specific opening to continue to apply for other positions that fit their experience and skill set. Applications are kept in our database for one year, after which time we encourage candidates to re-apply online.

At Assiniboine, we are committed to workforce

diversity and actively recruit people with diverse backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives - reflecting the community in which we live and work. To help us recruit qualified employees while opening the doors to diversity in the workplace, we actively partner with community organizations to offer workplace training opportunities within ACU.

We are a progressive employer offering a flexible and challenging work environment and opportunities to grow and develop. We also offer a competitive salary and a comprehensive benefits program. We are passionate about our work and consider our workplace policies and practices to be a mark of our success as a responsible company.

Now, with your eyes wide open – won't you consider checking us out?

www.assiniboine.mb.ca

Good Careers Happen Here.



ANNOUNCEMENTS



We are very pleased to announce that Jacqueline Guiboche has joined our team at the Osborne Village Resource Centre. She is our new Client Services Representative/ Assistant Computer Instructor. As well as greeting and helping clients at the front desk and on the floor, Jacqueline will be assisting students in the evening classes.

Jacqueline recently obtained her Information and Office Administrative Assistant Certificate in 2009. Part of her training was in Microsoft Office Suite 2003 & 2007. Jacqueline has one year of related work experience from Dakota Ojibway First Nations Housing Authority Inc. Jacqueline is more than equipped to answer computer questions from clients and students on the floor that may arise.

We are extremely happy Jacqueline decided to accept our offer of employment and hope she enjoys her stay here enough that she will plan to be with us for a long time.

Osborne Village Resource Centre is excited to announce that they have been awarded \$1,000.00 from Miles Macdonell Collegiate in Youth in Philanthropy, a program of The Winnipeg Foundation. The money is to go towards computer course fees.



YOUTH in PHILANTHROPY
A PROGRAM OF THE WINNIPEG FOUNDATION

RECRUITMENT OF NON-INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF FOR THE WINNIPEG SCHOOL DIVISION

By Lois Pare, Human Resources Assistant, Winnipeg School Division

The Winnipeg School Division is the largest of six public school divisions in Winnipeg, serving 77 schools and over 33,000 students. The Administration Building is located at 1577 Wall Street East, Winnipeg, MB, R3E 2S5.

Our mission is to provide a learning environment that promotes and fosters the growth of each student's potential and provides an opportunity for the individual student to develop the knowledge, skills and values necessary for meaningful participation in a global and pluralistic society.

Our size, along with the commitment of our staff, enables us to bring together the full spectrum of services and professional expertise to help ensure the success of our students in the 21st century.

We recognize that employment equity is a desirable and fundamental goal in our society. The Division is committed to the removal of employment barriers, the identification and removal of discriminatory practices and striving towards a fair representation of women, aboriginal peoples, disabled persons and minorities at all levels within the Division.

The Division is a unionized environment with eight bargaining units. Entry-level employment will be on a substitute (casual) basis only, with no guarantee of hours. We utilize a state of the art computerized substitute calling system that enables us to select qualified, available substitutes to cover absences and unfilled positions. The computerized system is an unbiased, efficient and effective method of providing appropriate replacement personnel to schools on a daily basis.

There are a number of non-instructional occupations in the Division, including, but not limited to:



WINNIPEG SCHOOL DIVISION
INVESTING IN THE FUTURE

- Adult Crossing Guard
- Computer Technician
- Caretaker
- Educational Assistant
- Cleaner
- Home Learning Assistant
- Clerk
- School Support Worker

The Division accepts applications on an ongoing basis for all non-instructional position types. Interested candidates may apply to be considered for the substitute rosters by various methods:

- The Division's On-line Application System, which may be accessed through our website at **www.wsd1.org**. Click on the Careers icon and click on the "Current Jobs Available" link. Under "View Current Employment Opportunities", click on "Visitor". Click on "Apply" adjacent to the position for which you are applying
- Printing off an Application Form from the website, completing it and submitting it to us either by mail or in person
- Attending the Human Resources Department at our Administration Building and applying on-line using computer terminals in our Reception Area; and

- Attending the Human Resources Department at our Administration Building and completing an Application Form

Candidates should provide a cover letter and résumé with their Application Form whether submitting on-line, by mail or in person. It is important for candidates to provide relevant, concise information about their past experience, education and qualifications. Including copies of pertinent certificates, transcripts or diplomas is key as this may assist the Human Resources Department in determining suitability. It is also important that candidates do not forget to include volunteer or community experience they may have. Just because candidates may not have received payment for work, does not mean the experience is any less valuable.

Applications are reviewed (no acknowledgment is sent) and should the applicant's qualifications and experience match those of positions we are currently seeking to fill, they may be contacted for a general interview. Should the Division wish to hire an interviewed applicant, they will be contacted by the Human Resources Department with an offer of employment, subject to appropriate documentation being provided (Criminal Record Check, Child Abuse Registry Search, etc.). Applications are kept on file for one year.

The Division partners with a number of post-secondary institutions, such as Red River College and the University of Winnipeg to provide work practicum sites for their students. We have also supported and developed a number of minority-based post-secondary programs. These include the Community-based Aboriginal Teacher Education Program (CATEP) and the International Educated Teacher (IET) Bridging Program both in partnership with the University of Manitoba, and the Manitoba Educational Assistant Deaf Studies Program in collaboration with Red River College and the University of Manitoba.

We also promote recruitment to the Division by regularly attending Job Fairs and by making presentations to a variety of employment-focused, community

organizations and post-secondary institutions. We were fortunate enough to have been invited to present at a recent in-service for the Osborne Village Resource Centre staff, and were most impressed by the support they are providing to their local community with particular emphasis on those new to the city.

The size and diversity of our organization enables us to attract a wide range of applicants with varied backgrounds, experience and qualifications. Although there may be a number of different technical skills or qualifications required for specific positions in the Division, we are currently seeking candidates with the following skills/qualifications:

- American Sign Language
- French
- Other Languages
- Non-Violent Crisis Intervention (NVCI)
- Working Effectively with Violent and Aggressive Students (WEVAS)
- 1st Aid/CPR

However, we contend that no matter what occupation you have in the Division, our employees possess a strong desire to want to make a difference with children.

We encourage you to visit our website at www.wsd1.org, contact us by phone at (204) 775-0231 or visit the Human Resources Department at 1577 Wall Street East. Our offices are located on the corner of Wall Street and Notre Dame Avenue and we are open to the public from 8:30am to 4:30pm Monday to Friday.

Come and explore the many employment opportunities available with the Winnipeg School Division. We look forward to hearing from you.

THE “PROVE IT!” FACTOR

By Stephanie Fries, Human Resources, Airport Terminal Services

Once upon a time—not so long ago the hunt for a new job meant dressing the part with resumes in hand and pounding the pavement in search of one’s next career venture. These days, pounding the pavement means little more than hopping onto the information super highway where one’s next career venture could be a page click away.

While the ease and convenience of technology has certainly broadened the ability of the job seeker, it has also created its own set of challenges both for businesses and job seekers alike.

The ability to seek out and apply for multiple positions has become as simple as the click of a mouse. For candidates and employers the ability to stand out among others in a competitive market can in itself become a challenge.

The employer’s challenge is to find an employee who will ultimately be a good fit within the organization. However the employer must also stand out as a good fit for candidates.

Mutual Substantiation. **The “Prove it” factor.**

Unfortunately there are a group of cliché words and phrases that are a dime a dozen when it comes to resumes, interviews, and even among companies hiring. These create a mess of resumes and job ads that all start to sound the same.

How many ads have you seen that cite, “exciting job opportunities” or “excellent benefit package”?

How many candidates have you seen who describe themselves as a “great team player” or having “excellent organizational skills”.

Suppose for example, in the case of a job seeker, your resume reads, “strong organizational skills”—my challenge is simple—**Prove it.** What makes these skills so strong? What have you done that reflects these skills? Can you draw from experience? Rather than just telling me something, **show me.** Walk me through your process, explain how these skills played a role in your responsibilities and identify how certain skill sets were vital to your position? As well, how you optimized the use of those skill sets to produce results.

The same is to be said to those recruiting. Are your employment opportunities really “exciting”? Is your benefits package really “excellent”? Then prove it.

We are in an era where technology without a doubt gives us worlds of advantages, but with those advantages, comes its own new set of challenges. In the world of job hunting and recruiting online, perhaps it is up to all of us to rise to these challenges, make the effort to stand out among the masses, put our money where our **Mouse** is, and “**prove it**”.



AIRPORT TERMINAL SERVICES



LABOUR SHORTAGE CREATING CAREER OPPORTUNITIES IN CONSTRUCTION

By Mitch Calvert, Communication Coordinator, Winnipeg Construction Association

With Manitoba's stable construction climate and ongoing skilled labour shortage, at an estimated shortage of nearly 9,000 workers over the next nine years, the need for skilled trades people provincially is as high as ever.

According to the Construction Sector Council's annual labour market forecast released in June 2009, an additional 5,300 workers will be required to keep pace with trade occupations, while 5,400 more people will be needed to replace those who retire by 2017.

Not only are there plenty of career opportunities in the field, but the province's high demand for skilled workers have pushed wages up in all trades as well. In Manitoba, the minimum construction wage as established in the Construction Industry Wages Act (CIWA) saw new increases take effect on January 1, 2010. Further still, no matter where a structure is built in Manitoba, the same wage schedule will apply, rurally or otherwise.

"We've had great success in ensuring that a tradesperson in rural Manitoba is equal to a tradesperson in the urban areas, and I think that has gone a long way to promoting the industry," Winnipeg Construction Association President John Schubert said.

Slowly but surely, attitudes are finally beginning to change, with more and more leaning towards construction as a respectable career choice and the apprenticeship system as a desirable avenue to get there.

So where does one start when looking to work in the field?

- Many Manitoba high schools offer trades-related courses as optional academic credits, and by taking one of these courses, you can gain trade-related skills and experience that will lead into post-secondary training and future job prospects.

- Enroll in the Senior Years Apprenticeship Option while in high school, allowing you to obtain high school credits and practical work experience in a trade at the same time. Course credit is available for every 110 hours worked as an apprentice outside of your regular high school courses.
- Prospective apprentices may prepare for a career by enrolling in an accredited program in their trade of choice. These programs are available throughout the province, including Red River College in Winnipeg, Assiniboine Community College in Brandon, and University College of the North in The Pas. They offer technical/in-school training that can be credited towards an apprenticeship program upon completion, and most importantly, allow you to get your foot in the door when it comes time to apply for full-time employment.
- The next step upon completing school? Finding an employer to hire you. Approach this task like a job search, knowing that 80 per cent of all job openings are never advertised. Establishing contacts in the industry through work experience or school is an important step. **Taking your resume in person to a contractor shows you mean business.**
- Once you've been hired, you then register as an apprentice by completing a Apprenticeship Application between you and your employer via the Government of Manitoba website at www.gov.mb.ca. After your application is approved and your apprenticeship agreement is registered, you learn the skills of the chosen trade by working closely with certified trades professionals in the business.

Most apprenticeship trade programs take approximately two to four years to complete and combine approximately 80 per cent paid, on-the-job training with a 20 per cent in-class curriculum.

LABOUR SHORTAGE CREATING CAREER OPPORTUNITIES IN CONSTRUCTION (CONTINUED)

Another new initiative to promote apprenticeship includes the Apprenticeship Incentive Grant (AIG), taxable cash grant of \$1,000 awarded to registered apprentices once they have successfully completed their first or second level in one of the Red Seal trades.

Apprenticeship growth also depends largely on the willingness of employers to register apprentices. Incentives, notably tax credits, are being offered by the federal government to participating employers, but work still needs to be done to promote apprenticeship as a viable option for employers.

Recently released figures by Apprenticeship Manitoba,

Manitoba's Department of Entrepreneurship, Training and Trade, might suggest things are on the upswing, with 5,010 apprentices enrolled in the commercial construction industry alone in 2009. Construction Electrician topped the list at 1,357.

Despite plenty of new incentives aimed at attracting employees to the industry, be aware that construction as a career choice is not for everyone. It regularly involves physical outdoor work, often in remote locations. But for those that thrive, the rewards are significant and the opportunities unlimited.

WHAT STUDENTS AND CLIENTS ARE SAYING

Feedback from Students Attending our Computer Classes!

"This was an awesome class. I am much more comfortable with the computer now after taking this class."

"Keith and Alicia are excellent teachers. As a student who's English is a second language, I have no problem understanding the classes."

"Thank you very much for such a pleasant lesson in computers. Who would have thought that would have been possible. Keith and his assistant are very good at what they do."

"The classes were really interesting and easy to understand."

"Excellent instruction! Helpful volunteer and a great learning atmosphere. Looking forward to taking the next course!"

"Class size was great and atmosphere was relaxing and not intimidating."



Feedback from Clients Attending our Pre-Employment Workshops!

"fantastic – very informative"

"was very helpful"

"encouraging"

"detailed"

"I would like to say I was very impressed in the way the workshop is run."

"The workshop was excellent."

"Very effective, knowledgeable, well spoken."

"Excellent – involves great class participation helpful, resourceful."

"She was great, supportive with helpful insights."

THANK YOU, OVRC!

OVRC client expresses her appreciation to the Osborne Village Resource Centre staff



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

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

In Partnership With



ABOUT OVRC'S NEWSLETTER

In our upcoming newsletter we will be looking at

Diversity in the Workplace!

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

Newsletter design and layout by our volunteer Kristin McPherson



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