



Spring 2014 **Newsletter**

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Osborne Village
RESOURCE CENTRE

1-107 OSBORNE ST. WINNIPEG, MB R3L 1Y4
PH: 204.989.6503 FAX: 204.477.0903 TWITTER: @O_V_R_C

Message from the Editor

+ Jude Gaal
CAREER COUNSELLOR / WORKSHOP FACILITATOR

I'd like to start off by saying how happy I am to be back home after a three year hiatus that included completing a bachelor of arts degree, and working with the immigrant refugee population here in Winnipeg. During that time the importance of targeting a job search and finding a job that is a "good fit" was illustrated with each client I worked with. Realizing that this position was not a "good fit" for me, I was delighted when an opportunity became available at OVRC. It's not often that a person gets a chance to be in a position that satisfies all aspects of career satisfaction, and I consider myself very blessed indeed to have a second kick at the can. In addition to career counselling and workshop facilitation, I am also excited to include editing the newsletter as part of my job description.

Spring has been a long time coming and with it we here at OVRC are feeling rejuvenated and excited to see what the future holds. One major development we've noticed has been the increasing use of online applications. It seems this trend is quickly becoming an integral part of job search, whether a person is applying at Superstore or Great West Life. The topic of online applications is the focus of this newsletter and you will find a number of articles that provide excellent insight and specific suggestions to ensure the success of an online application.

The increasing need for people in the skilled trades is another trend we've also noticed over the past five years. With more people considering the trades we've included an article that provides some eye-opening facts about the pros and cons of two typical post-secondary choices. While money is important in deciding which occupation is a "good fit", a person's values are also an important factor to consider. For this reason we've included an article on values and hope it will be a useful tool for those thinking of post-secondary education, or perhaps a career, or job change.

Check out the latest dates and times for our FREE Career and Job Preparation Workshops and upcoming Computer Classes. As well as a bit of humour, and advise on how to deal with the dreaded question every job seeker hates in our *Dear Career Counsellor* column, do read the article about the benefits of volunteering during a job search and get inspired by reading a client success story.

I'd like to end by wishing you good reading and the quote of the Spring issue selected by our wonderful Client Services Representative, Judy Recksiedler. In my own experience, this has proven, time and time again to be true.



QUARTERLY QUOTE

“Stand up to your obstacles and do something about them. You will find that they haven't half the strength you think they have.”

Norman Vincent Peale

Goodbye Sandy

+ *Keith Robinson*
CENTRE COORDINATOR

Sandy started working at Osborne Village Resource Centre in the spring of 2009. She has been a valuable addition our Centre and the clients that use our services. Sandy redeveloped some of our existing workshops and handout material to assist in our clients' success during her four years at OVRC. In addition she developed the *Career Fair*, *Action Planning* and *Targeted Job Search* workshops—that resulted in increased employed statistic for our clients.

Sandy was an excellent workshop facilitator and ensured all participants were engaged and went away with a positive experience. Her sense of humor made the workshops even more enjoyable and was appreciated by clients and staff.

What I will miss the most about Sandy is the laughter that I would hear coming from her office when she was working with clients. With this laughter she demonstrated what OVRC is about—we are here to help people make positive change. Sandy was a part of many successes here at OVRC and it was

a pleasure for me to work with her. There will always be a special place for her in all of our hearts.

Good luck at Winnipeg Transition Centre Sandy; you are wonderful and will always be helping others become more positive.



+ SHOWN HERE

Sandy (R) with our Newsletter Volunteer Kristin.

Hey Jude...

+ *Keith Robinson*
CENTRE COORDINATOR

It is my pleasure to welcome back a past colleague to our OVRC team. Jude Gaal had left OVRC in the spring of 2012 to complete education at the University of Winnipeg. It was fantastic that Jude applied for a position that became available some months ago.

Our clients' positivity and success will be assisted by Jude's excellence in providing high quality career counselling, resume and cover letter writing, and employability

workshop development and facilitation.

I know that past clients will be pleased when they find out that Jude has come back home to OVRC and new clients will soon be appreciative of her dedication to their success. She is always striving to improve the quality of services that we provide and I and the staff are excited to have a friend and team member come back to where she belongs.

Dear Career Counsellor

+ Kristina Lonstrup
CAREER COUNSELLOR

Dear Career Counsellor:

I am currently unemployed and am finding it difficult to talk about it. Whenever someone asks me "What kind of job do you want?" I want to run and hide under a rock.

Can you help me? How can I talk about myself as a job seeker?

Ivy L.
St. James

Dear Ivy,

Thank you for writing in with this concern. I'd like to first tell you that you are not alone in this—many job seekers have felt this way. It is normal to feel vulnerable when looking for work. However, I think it's wonderful that people are interested and asking you this question. It shows that they care. When someone asks you this question, it is because he/she wants to know what they can do to help. They are trying to determine what advice, or networking opportunity they could provide. Remember, most people love to help people, and give advice!

The good news is there is a FORMULA that we use here at OVRC. This formula will give you the opportunity to:

- Concisely answer the question and provide the information they need to help you
- Develop your networking skills, and
- Prepare an answer for the interview question *Tell me about yourself.*

That formula is **E-Q-A-L**, and is broken down into separate components; each component provides specific information that helps an individual determine what type of help they can offer to assist in your job search.

Here is an exercise to help you develop your **E-Q-A-L** response. Please use a pencil, and fill in the blanks.

Experience:

I have ___ years of experience in _____

Qualifications – Education and Skills:

I have a (certificate/diploma/degree/training) in _____, with skills in _____, _____, _____, and _____.

Attributes:

I am _____, _____, _____, and _____.

Note: pick an attribute that describes your positivity, your professionalism, and how you think.

Life – Volunteer, Community Involvement, Interests:

In my spare time, I enjoy _____ and _____.

Note: pick interests in your life that reflect the values and mission of the organization. For example, here at OVRC, our mission is that we are a "community minded organization", therefore, our organization values volunteerism. Including a volunteer position would demonstrate that the candidate's values reflect that of OVRC.

Let's see what this would sound like.

Kristina: Hi Ivy! So tell me, what kind of job are you looking for?

Ivy: Thanks for asking Kristina.

(E) I have four years of experience working in customer service.

(Q) I have my high school diploma plus Best Service Excellence training from the Manitoba Tourism Education Council, and top quality customer service, cash handling, and sales skills.

(A) I am polite, hardworking, and I enjoy solving problems.

(L) In my personal life I enjoy puzzle books and spending time with my grandparents.

Listening to your EQAL, tells the person you enjoy:

1. Building relationships with customers
2. The challenge of complex problems and troubleshooting solutions
3. Working with a wide variety of people including seniors.

So the next time someone asks you "What kind of job do you want?" smile. They are showing you they care. Then use EQAL to illustrate your specific qualifications so that they can provide you with advice, or better yet, a networking opportunity. Good luck!

No Longer Second Best

+ Sean Perkins

MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST /
WINNIPEG TECHNICAL COLLEGE

While your imagination can help write your life story, it's hard to predict what obstacles you will face along the way. Even though planning for your future can be as intimidating as it is fun, it is not something you can ignore if you want to be successful.

It is important to balance your passions with practicality. Like any good entrepreneur would, you need to research what opportunities are available to you in your marketplace—or in this case, the workforce—and then pursue whichever option offers the greatest possibility for a return on your investment.

The path towards a rewarding career often starts with a solid education—the foundation for future success. Although there are many ways to get an education, the two most obvious options are university or college.

Traditionally, the types of careers that students pursue after graduating from these schools can be completely different, as are the amounts of time and money they spend on their educations and the salaries they can expect upon graduation. A student going to university pays more tuition and spends more time away from the workforce, but receives an education with a high possibility of employment and a commensurate salary. A college student spends less on tuition and returns to the workforce quickly, with a high possibility of employment but lower expectations when it comes to salary. In the last ten years, however, there has been a significant change.

In their 2014 "Guide to Jobs in Canada" *MacLean's* magazine noted that between 2006 and 2011, average salaries for electricians have increased by 22%, and the number of employed electricians has doubled in size. College grads entering the workforce can look forward to a continued need for their services as well as increasing salaries. This trend is reflected by the government of Manitoba, which is projecting a need for more than 40,000 workers in the trades/transportation sector during the period leading up to 2020.*

These trends have been identified south of the border as well. In late February 2014, *CNN Money* released an article

titled "Community college grads out-earn bachelor's degree holders", highlighting how the gap between the two earning potentials has officially closed, and that the average debt currently carried by a university graduate far exceeds that of his or her community college counterpart.

The option of pursuing a skilled trade like welding or carpentry, once seen as a lesser choice by many seeking a post-secondary education, is now the primary recommendation of academic advisors and industry insiders across North America. Winnipeg Technical College can prepare you for your first level of apprenticeship through Apprenticeship Manitoba and have you headed down the path to success in less than one year. Visit our website at wtc.mb.ca or call 204.989.6500 to speak to one of our customer service representatives.



* Source: www.immigratemanitoba.com/working-in-manitoba/trades/

How to Set Yourself Apart in the Online Application World

+ Keith Robinson
CENTRE COORDINATOR



Over the past two years we have seen a large increase in the number of Winnipeg employers that are using online applications as part of their recruitment process. What do these changes mean to the job seeker and how can you separate yourself from the other applicants in a computer generated recruitment process?

I have contacted six Winnipeg employers and asked them to explain the process and what potential applicants do wrong during the process. I also asked what an applicant can do to stand out when submitting an online application that will result in getting an interview.

First, we need to understand what an online application is and how the employer uses computer technology when recruiting. The technology most often in the online application processes is called Applicant Tracking System (ATS). When employers first started using ATS it could search for keywords in a resume and then print resumes that included those words. For example, if the company was looking for a candidate with excellent customer service skills and knowledge of Microsoft Excel, the ATS would only print resumes that had included the words "customer service" and "Excel".

One Winnipeg employer explained some of the early challenges of the ATS program. Initially the software would

print out any resume that had specific key words (key word loading) even though there was nothing to back up or explain the applicant's skills. If someone stated in their online application "Excellent customer service skills and "Understanding of Excel Spreadsheets", the recruiter would still be left guessing how many years of customer service the applicant had, and what the applicant's understanding of Excel was compared to the company's needs. If an employer has to guess at what you can do, you will not be invited for an interview.

However, if that same candidate stated:

- Eight years of experience providing high quality customer service in a fast paced retail environment proven by earning a customer service award

and

- Experienced in developing Excel spreadsheets to track customer sales using various formulas

that would get much different result. The applicant, as you can see in the two bullets above, has provided much needed detail, and will be granted that important interview. Isn't getting the interview worth the time it takes to complete your online application correctly the first time?

Laughter Corner!

Keep in mind the days of just including keywords are over. Employers have told me that just like any computer software program the ATS software has developed and grown with the ability to scan a submitted resume just as closely as a person reading the resume. The ATS can determine dates for training and work experience and how relevant your specific skills are to the job posting. So be specific in your knowledge, skills and abilities if you want to be rewarded with an interview.

Here are some of the common mistakes that the Winnipeg employers have found with potential applicants online application.

1. **Incomplete Forms:** The candidate did not complete the entire online process. This happens when an applicant decides that information is not relevant to the application, or just does not want to include it. One employer stated that leaving a field incomplete will be interpreted in two ways: you do not care, or that your attention to detail is not good. Either judgment will result in you not getting an interview. All the time spent applying will be a waste if you do not follow directions. If you come across a field (or cell) that is not applicable to your situation, in addition to typing in "Not Applicable" explain why it is not applicable so the employer can see that you have read and understand the application process.
2. **Key Word Loading:** Three employers I spoke with expressed their frustration when they go over resumes containing key words from the job description but are not given details illustrating the ability to use the skill. They stated that attention to detail and being specific about your skills is important when applying for a job. Remember that a recruiter cannot assume what a candidate can do before an interview! Giving specific details of your skills and abilities will allow the recruiter to confirm what you can do during the interview!
3. **Spelling and Grammar:** All of the employers I spoke with noted that potential candidates do not worry about spelling errors when applying online, and rely too heavily on Spell Check. Relying on Spell Check could lead to you submitting an online application where instead of describing your great skills with the public, you key in another word _____. One is definitely not appropriate in an application. An employer stated that applicants should use an internet or paper dictionary to confirm spelling before submitting an online application.

There are many more tips and advice that the excellent staff here at OVRC can assist you with. If you would like one-on-one help please call 204.989.6503 to book an appointment with our online applications expert Patti. You also can come down to the Centre on Monday and Tuesday mornings at 8:00 or 8:30 to get assistance from a staff person. The time you invest to do an online application correctly will increase your success. It is a valuable use of your time!

Over on the Dilbert Blog, Scott Adams gave his readers an assignment: "describe your own job in one sentence, preferably in a humorously derogatory way." :

1. **Read things that don't matter, then write papers saying they do matter, for points that don't matter, in order to get a job doing something totally unrelated:** Student
2. **Take numbers on pieces of paper, rearrange them and put them on different pieces of paper:** Tax Accountant
3. **Learn laws created ages ago so that I can tell engineers why I'm smarter than they are while complaining how it's a travesty that they get paid more:** Physics major
4. **Make sure nothing ever happens:** IT Security
5. **Have people spend far more than they estimated:** Building Inspector
6. **Profit from the misfortunes of others:** Cops and Courts Reporter
7. **Sell gluttony:** Cinema Concession Stand Attendant
8. **Shepherd clients through the process of setting their products on fire:** Consumer Products Tester
9. **Arrive after the battle and bayonet all the wounded:** Auditor
10. **Find as many synonyms for "explosion" as possible:** Novelist for Teenage Boys
11. **Pass poisonous gas on command:** Research Assistant in solid state ammonia storage
12. **Provide arcane information on a need-to-know basis:** Chief Accountant
13. **Make corporate propaganda feel like folksy truthisms:** TV Ad Director
14. **Show you innovative ways to burn money in the spirit of patriotism:** Fireworks Stand Manager

Q & A with Volunteer Suzanne Macpherson

+ *John Perry*
EMPLOYMENT FACILITATOR / VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

As the Volunteer Coordinator of the Osborne Village Resource Centre, I get to meet some fantastic individuals from the Winnipeg community. In October of 2013, I had the pleasure of meeting Suzanne MacPherson. Suzanne had some free time and wanted to volunteer with the Osborne Village Resource Centre to learn new skills to enhance her ability in becoming an Employment Facilitator. Recently, I sat down with Suzanne MacPherson and asked her some questions regarding her volunteer experience here at the Osborne Village Resource Centre.

John: What motivated you to apply to volunteer here at the Osborne Village Resource Centre?

Suzanne: After identifying my desire to be an Employment Facilitator, I recognized that I needed work experience in this field. Osborne Village Resource Centre was an obvious choice for me because of its welcoming atmosphere, variety of learning opportunities, and its enthusiasm for volunteers.

John: Can you describe the process of you becoming a Volunteer at the Osborne Village Resource Centre?

Suzanne: After I researched OVRC on the internet at www.ovrc.ca, I set up an interview with you. Once you and I decided that I was a good fit, I signed up for the Osborne Village Resource Centre's FREE Career and Job Preparation Workshops. It is important to be on the same page as the staff when assisting people here at the Centre, and going to the workshops ensured that. I personally believe that going through OVRC's workshops is beneficial for all volunteers regardless of what your position is. Because I am pursuing a career as an Employment Facilitator, my career counsellor Sandy Hudson also had some suggestions for me.



+ SHOWN HERE

Suzanne Macpherson, OVRC Volunteer

Continued on following page...

This included:

1. Taking additional training,
2. Building an employment network,
3. Getting to know employment organizations
4. Joining Toastmasters to further develop my speaking skills.

John: What are some of the benefits of volunteering at the Osborne Village Resource Centre?

Suzanne: As a person seeking full-time employment, volunteering at a pre-employment centre is very helpful. It keeps me motivated and positive about my job search. Moreover, I am using my time productively, doing something I enjoy, as well as improving and learning new skills.

John: How is the Osborne Village Resource Centre meeting your needs as a Volunteer?

Suzanne: Since I am still seeking employment, I wanted to volunteer at a place that facilitated personal and professional growth. Osborne Village Resource Centre offers so many opportunities to learn new things, and the staff has been flexible in scheduling my volunteer hours to accommodate my going on informational interviews and job interviews.

John: In your opinion, what is the greatest service that Osborne Village Resource Centre offers to Winnipeg?

Suzanne: Osborne Village Resource Centre worth the visit! The Centre strives to maintain a positive and respectful environment. You can feel it when you walk in! Otherwise, the most enlightening services that OVRC offers are the FREE Career and Job Preparation Workshops.

John: What FREE Career and Job Preparation Workshops did you find most useful in helping clients here at OVRC? Why?

Suzanne: The Interview Skills Workshop had the biggest impact on my job search experience. I feel more in control and more confident in any upcoming interview. The Job Satisfaction Workshop is also so beneficial. I met a lot of great people, was able to determine my personality type, skills and values; all of which are essential in a job search.

John: How would you describe the Osborne Village Resource Centres' workplace culture?

Suzanne: I love it! Everyone is so friendly and all have positive attitudes. I have met some wonderful people here. While everyone is professional the environment is relaxed. Everyone works so hard with their hearts!

John: What suggestions or advice would you give to future volunteers at the Osborne Village Resource Centre?

Suzanne: There are so many opportunities to learn at the Centre, even if you are not looking to become an Employment Facilitator. There is so much that anyone can contribute to this great organization. I would suggest that anyone interested in volunteering call John to set up an appointment. When you meet with John, talk to him about the skills you would like to develop and he will tell you about the opportunities available here at the Osborne Village Resource Centre.

Please call John Perry – Volunteer Coordinator, at 204.989.6503 or email him at johper@wtc.mb.ca, if you would like to learn more about volunteering at OVRC.

Success Story

Nothing brightens our days here at OVRC, not even chocolate or cheesecake, more than getting positive feedback from clients. On March 4, John, one of the employment facilitators here at OVRC, helped a client with his resume. Later that day John had his day brightened. His client sent him the following email:

Thanks so much John for all the help today. I handed the resumes out and in a few hours I had 3 interviews, and have 4 more next week.

Two days later John got another email:

Only two days later and I've had 9 interviews and I have call backs for second interviews on Monday and Tuesday.

Keep those emails, letters and telephone calls coming!



The Joys and Pains of Personality Tests in Online Job Applications

+ Suzanne MacPherson
EMPLOYMENT FACILITATOR / OVRC VOLUNTEER

I often support clients on the floor at Osborne Village Resource Centre. One of the things that frustrate people the most are online applications. Even worse, people say, is when there is a personality component to the test asking random behavioural/situational interview questions. For example, here is a typical question: What would you do if you saw a co-worker stealing? There could also be True or False questions, as well as Yes or No questions. This is something that people have, in the past, prepared for in an interview. Now employers want this information right away.

I began to wonder if there were tricks to succeeding at these online tests. After researching this topic I have found there is little information about personality tests in online applications. However, my research did give me some insight. Here are some answers to common questions.

1. What is the employer looking for?

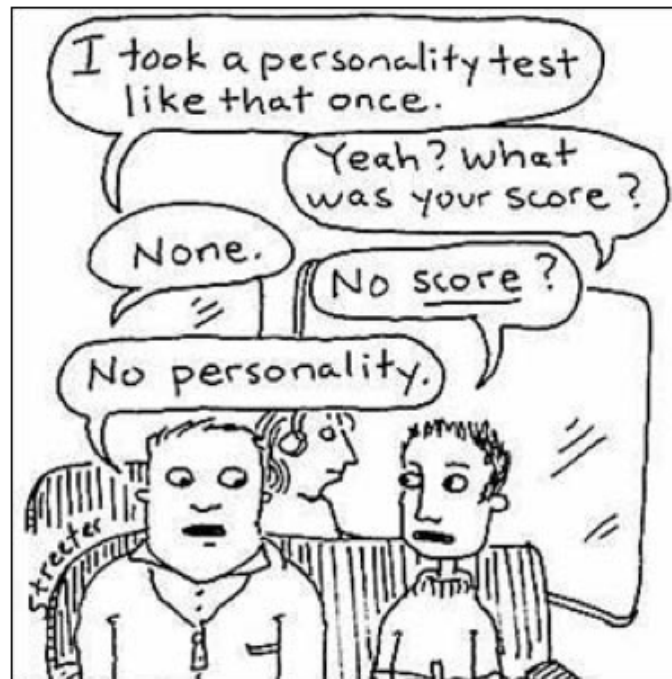
A hiring mistake can cost employers upwards of \$30k, so companies are seeking new ways to find new employees who are a good fit for their company. What each employer is seeking can vary significantly. One company may be evaluating your team work ability while another may be evaluating your customer service skills. In short, you never know what the company is looking for, so it's best to be honest and contemplate each question carefully.

2. Why are some of the questions confusing/contradictory?

In my personal experience completing online personality tests, I've noticed that the same question will be asked in a variety of ways. For example, "Do you find it difficult to work with people?" and "Do you prefer to work alone?" These similar questions are no mistake. The employer is evaluating your honesty. They provide contradictory questions but do not want contradictory answers.

3. Is there a trick to passing personality tests online?

The best piece of advice I can give is to be as honest as possible. There are so many unknowns in this type of hiring practice that it would be misguided to share hypothetical tips and tricks.



4. Is "failing" really so bad?

The general professional consensus about online personality tests is if you "fail" (can you really fail?), the position and or employer was probably not a good fit for you anyways.

If you have had an experience with an online application that included a personality test, and would like to share your experience with our team, please email me, Suzanne, at suzmac@wtc.mb.ca.

What Makes You Great!

+ Kristina Lonstrup
CAREER COUNSELLOR

It is important for us to RECOGNIZE, IDENTIFY, and VALIDATE our professional values because each of us as human beings possess different values to offer to a workplace. Each workplace has values, too. It is important that we align our values with a potential employer to be healthy professionals in a healthy labour market.

Try this exercise to identify what makes you professionally happy.

Check FIVE values that are MOST important to you in the workplace:

- Efficiency New Ideas Leadership
- Challenges Security Learning
- Routine Belonging Independence
- Variety Multitasking Task Completion
- Focus Authority Appreciation
- Harmony Relationships Clear Instructions
- Democracy Privacy Meaningfulness

Now, apply each of the values you have selected to the following statements. For example, if you have chosen "challenges" as a value, you will write:

*I treasure **challenges** in the workplace because I am **energized** by **surprises and adventures**.*

1. I treasure _____ in the workplace because I am _____

2. I do a good job of _____ because I believe ____

3. _____ is important to have in the workplace because _____

4. When I am asked to perform _____ in the workplace, I feel good because it makes me think ____

5. I wish my staff team would allow me to experience more _____ because _____

This exercise works as an affirmation to help you recognize what you need to be happy in a job. Use your values to help market yourself professionally. You never know what employer could benefit from your value system!

If you would like help with your Values Inventory, please call OVRC at 204.989.6503, and book an appointment with a career counsellor. Find out what makes you GREAT!



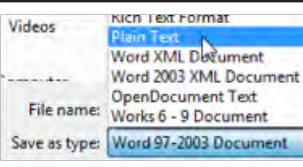
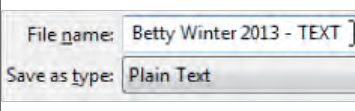
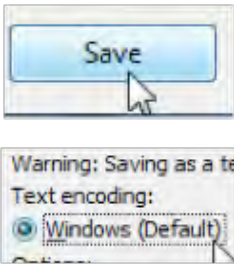


Cleaning Up Your Online Application

+ Betty Punkert
COMPUTER INSTRUCTOR/EMPLOYMENT FACILITATOR

When completing online applications, it is often necessary to upload or copy and paste a text based version of your resume. Here are some tips for converting a typical Microsoft Word resume.

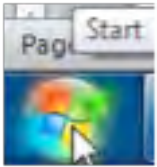
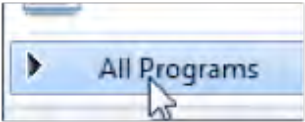

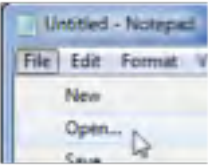
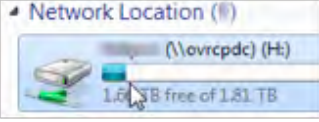
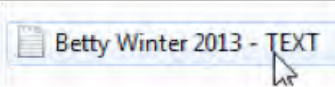
Part One: Save As to Text Format

	Open your resume in Microsoft Word
	Click on the File menu and choose Save As
	Select Plain Text from the Save as Type picklist
	Edit your document name - adding the word TEXT at the end will help you tell it apart from the regular version of your resume
	Click the Save button NOTE: You may be prompted to choose a coding format. By default, this will be Windows – just press OK

Now we'll need to open the document in a text-only editor so we can correct it.

Continued on following page...

Part Two: Open file in Notepad

	<p>Click on the Start Menu</p>
	<p>Choose All Programs</p>
	<p>Click the Accessories folder</p>
	<p>Choose Notepad from the list</p>
	<p>Click the File Menu in Notepad and choose the Open command</p>
	<p>Navigate to where your resume is saved - at OVRC, this will be the Network Location H:\ drive, at home it may be your Desktop or Documents folders</p>
	<p>Select the file you just saved and click the Open button</p>

Depending on how your resume started out, you may only have to make a few changes, or you may have to make a LOT of changes. Unfortunately, Notepad doesn't have any way to see tables, so it strips them out. Here are some pointers:

- If you have a table, all the formatting will be gone and it will likely have crammed all the information together. Again, use spaces and dashes to make this information more readable

Before: EmpatheticResults DrivenArticulate
After: Empathetic - Results Driven - Articulate

- Bullet points should have automatically converted to asterisks / stars (*).
- If you have nested bullet points / multilevel lists, you may want to convert the level two items to dashes instead of little o's and add a space before the dash, like this:
 * Point 1
 - Subheading 1
 - Subheading 2

Continued on following page...

- Bullet points may wrap around to the beginning of the next line if they are too long, and they won't align with the empty space after the star. This is acceptable and quite normal; don't try to make it line up.
- You will end up with an extra blank line where the top of your second page would be. Delete it to remove the ugly gap
- Underneath the bottom of the last page, if your page number was set up as a header, you will see your header information. Delete this line.
- If your page number was not part of the header, it may appear in the middle of the document between your last skill and your work history. Again, delete this line. As far as the machine is concerned, your resume is one long page.
- Depending on your control tab settings, you may have large gaps between your employer and your dates of work or your education and class dates. Delete the extra tabs and use a single space gap to make it more readable:

Before:

Interview Skills Coach (Two Day Workshop) 2013
Winnipeg Transition Centre

After:

Interview Skills Coach (Two Day Workshop) 2013
Winnipeg Transition Centre

That should clean up the most critical issues. Go to the File menu and choose Save to save your corrected changes. Now you can head back to the application and upload your text only resume.

Play Better Than Anyone Else

+ *Patti Malo*

CLIENT SERVICES AND ASSESSMENT CLERK,
OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR, COMPUTER SYSTEMS COORDINATOR

About four years ago we here at OVRC noticed that employers were starting to use online applications and that our clients needed assistance in completing applications. Today the number of employers using online applications has increased and we assist many more clients. In an effort to help OVRC clients understand and navigate the sometimes tricky task of applying for jobs online I have researched experts in the field. I hope the following information will provide the reader with two things:

1. A good understanding of online applications.
2. A strategy for completing online applications successfully.

I'd like to start off with a quote from Albert Einstein. "You have to learn the rules of the game. And then you have to play better than anyone else." In the world of online applications this is excellent advice. This point is clearly illustrated in one of the most common concerns job seekers expressed about the process. They didn't understand why they received a zero response to their applications when they felt they were right for the position applied for. *HireRight's* blog explains that an application may not be screened by an HR person. Many companies are now using an Applicant Tracking System (ATS),

to help simplify, screen applicant submissions and speed up the hiring process. To be successful in today's job market and make it past the ATS to an HR person, start crafting computer-friendly resumes.

Advantage of Online Applications for Job Seekers

HireRight noted that, while applying online is new concept for many job seekers, and adapting to this new technology can sometimes be overwhelming, there are benefits. One such benefit is that an applicant's resume is stored and searchable within a company database at the click of a mouse; this enables a job seeker's information to be readily accessible to anyone within the company.

Why do companies use online applications? Efficiency.

The definition of Applicant Tracking Systems for online applications was also explained by *HireRight*. ATSs quickly and efficiently sort and search large numbers of applicants' data based on specific criteria, such as former employers. In order to determine how relevant an applicant's experience is the ATS evaluates keywords, dates, titles and other important information to establish the candidate's level of experience.

Listed below are some relevant statistics for online applications noted by *HireRight*.

ATS's screen out 75% of candidates	95% of large companies use ATS's, almost all Fortune 500 companies and 59% of mid-sized organizations
Employers face major obstacles when searching for the perfect candidate.	On average 144 people apply for every entry-level position
	89 people apply for every professional-level position

This means 75,000 there are applications in a week.
Keep in mind it costs a company about \$3,479.00 to hire a new employee.

Online application formula for success

In an interview with Miriam Salpeter of US News & World Report, Colin Day, the founder and Chief Executive Officer of iCIMS spoke about the importance of completing online applications. His advice was to be very methodical when reading job descriptions, which are the blueprints for detailing your resumes and shaping cover letters. He also noted the importance of filling in all the fields in the application. ATSs may filter out applications that do not respond to a question.

Plan ahead

While encouraging inclusion of professional data in online applications, Day advised checking, cleaning up questionable content, and updating any social media profile on LinkedIn, Google+, or Facebook before applying online. He advised readers on the pros and cons of including media content within an online application:

If used properly, social media can help you connect with potential employers—just make sure your online data is working for you, not against you. The ability to view your dynamic social profile(s),

allows recruiters to see your current work status and determine whether timing is right to extend you an interview or even a job offer. At iCIMS, we refer to this as a 'social resume'

While many companies now suggest including professional data from social profiles within their online applications, keep in mind that HR departments use this information to identify a candidate's current employment status and in deciding whether to extend an interview, or even a job offer, to an applicant.

Your online profile

Day cautions again having more than one online profile for a company you apply to.

Multiple profiles in one company's system can cause confusion. By only submitting one profile per company, you can eliminate the odds of the wrong profile being disqualified by a first-line recruiter.

However, it is still important to tailor your resume and/or cover letter for each job submission. HireRight lists the do's and don'ts of a computer friendly resume:

The Do's	The Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use keywords from the job description in your resume. Put your contact info at the top of the page (but not in a header). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use a 1 page resume for most applications. ATS robots don't care about length: in fact, a longer resume - may improve your chances. Don't get hung up on fancy formatting. Focus on clearly organized sections.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a bulleted list of qualifications and skills. For your work history. Start with your title, followed employer's name, and then the dates you held the title. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Don't use abbreviations. Don't use tables.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use proper capitalization and punctuation. Spell check. Upload your resume, rather than cutting and pasting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Don't use graphics or logos. Don't use headers or footers. Don't submit a PDF. They're unreadable by some software.

Crafting your documents

HireRight notes that only 35% of job seekers are actually submitting applications for positions they qualify for. Not only is this a frustration for employers, it is a waste of time for both the employer and the job seeker whose application will be deleted. A common mistake of many job seekers is spending mere seconds to read a posting. Before you apply for a position, spend the time and look over the job posting carefully to determine if you are qualified for the job.

Both the Washington County One-Stop Job Centre and OVRC recommend using keywords in your online application. When analyzing job descriptions and company web sites pinpoint the skills, experience and qualities the employer is looking for. Effective use of keywords is essential to moving your application from the company's database to an HR person.

Robert Hellman, author of the *Forbes* online article "How to Make Them Respond When You Apply for a Job Online" also echoes the importance of prioritizing and customizing your resume to the job posting that matches your skill set as well as making sure to include keywords. He advises using the job description, looking for key words and demonstrating how your qualifications meet their specifications. He also suggests checking to see if the terms you are using to describe your skills match the job listing. If they don't, make the appropriate changes on your resume.

But don't stop there. Also write a clear and concise cover letter that addresses the job's requirements and make every word count. Day advises readers on the importance of cover letters.

Despite the cover letter being digital, it's often the first thing recruiters read when viewing candidate profiles—even ahead of the resume. Use the cover letter as an opportunity to showcase your personality, qualifications, and desire for the job.

The Washington County One-Stop Job Center has developed an online application check list for you to review before you start an online application. This will ensure that you will be able to complete the application in one sitting and get past the ATS.

The Check List:

1. Be prepared with the information needed to apply online, this could include any or all of the following: digital copy of your resume, cover letter, certificates, abstracts etc., relevant dates of training and education, company addresses and phone numbers, reference contact information and availability.
2. While some online application programs may allow to you to save an incomplete application, most do not. Make sure to plan ahead for enough time to complete the application in one sitting.

3. Seek advice beforehand if you are unsure about how to attach, emailing, or how to cut and paste documents.
4. It is important to write down each logon and password for every company you apply to. Updating your profile, checking your application status, applying for other jobs, or to follow up with an employer are all reasons for this. There is little chance the website will keep a record of your logon information.
5. One thing I would add the checklist is salary expectations. Be prepared to respond this is question as many online applications do request this information. Do your research by going on the Working in Canada's website at www.workingincanada.gc.ca/wage-outlook_search-eng.do?reportOption=wage.

Be accurate

Day talks further about the importance of accuracy when applying online. Accuracy is crucial when responding and must be mistake free. Multiple errors on applications diminish your chances of being selected for an interview. Always proof carefully you're documents for spelling, content, and grammar. Keep in mind the first HR person that views your resume may be unaware of language or acronyms associated with your field of expertise, so it is important to avoid abbreviations.

First impressions

Before clicking on the submit button check all the data carefully. Once your information is sent to the recruiter there is no going back. Making a good first impression is important! It could mean the difference between having your application included in the recruiters' filtering processes or being discarded into the trash bin.

Networking

Despite the advent of social media it's still important to talk to people. Hellman notes that your most effective tool is still networking. He recommends using your social network to find a personal connection inside the company you are applying to. Whether it's a business contact, family member, or someone you met through social media, networking can make a difference.

Now that you are armed with this information about online applications we hope that you will have a greater appreciation for the process and also avoid the pitfalls that will eliminate your application by the ATS. If you would like further assistance with online applications, call the Centre at 204.989.6503 and book an online application appointment with me, Patti Malo.

Job Fair Success Workshop

Thursday: April 17, 8:30 – 11:30 am

Location: 2nd Floor, 107 Osborne Street

Job Fairs can be crowded and unproductive. Find out how to make Job Fairs work for you.

- How to get noticed amongst the crowds
- Make the best possible impression with a potential employer
- How to follow up after a job fair



Action Planning Session

Wednesdays: Ongoing, 8:30 am – 10:00 am

Location: 2nd Floor, 107 Osborne Street

This workshop will give you an action plan for all your job searching needs. Included:

- Orientation of services
- Individualized action plan
- Take home Road Map/Note Book
- One-to-one feedback and advice

In response to the need for our clients to have a game plan for their job search, we have created an action planning session to inform, assess and give one-to-one feedback to our clients.



Interview Skills Workshop

Mondays and Tuesdays: April 28 & 29 / May 26 & 27 / June 23 & 24, 8:45 am – 3:30 pm

Location: UFCW Training Centre, 2nd Floor – 880 Portage Avenue (Thompson Room)

Get the skills and confidence to ace your next interview. This two day workshop will cover the following topics:

- How to make a great first impression
- How to identify questions employers will ask
- Confidently responding to all types of interview questions
- How to turn a negative situation into a positive outcome

You will have the chance to put learnt skills into practice, by rehearsing your responses in mock interviews, getting feedback from the workshop participants.

Targeted Job Search Workshop

Thursdays: April 10 / May 1 / June 12, 8:30 am – 12 noon

Location: 2nd Floor, 107 Osborne Street

If you are still spending time applying for jobs on the job bank, you are missing out on most of the available jobs. This workshop will give you the tools for a more effective job search. Learn how to target specific jobs with organizations that you would like to work for.

Topics covered include:

- Why employers don't advertise and how to use this to your advantage
- Self-assessment of your top qualities
- How to research hidden jobs
- Presentation skills and marketing
- How to use social networking in your job search



Job Satisfaction Workshop

Thursdays: Apr 17 / May 15 / Jun 19, 8:45 am – 3:30 pm

Location: UFCW Training Centre, 2nd Floor – 880 Portage Ave

(Thompson Room)

Are you still looking to find your perfect career, where you will feel fulfilled and most productive? This workshop gives you the tools to:

- Do a self-assessment which includes: Values, skills, attributes/strengths and interests/ hobbies
- Do a work assessment which includes:
 - Your last three jobs (if applicable) and the work activities you enjoy
 - Work preference, work activities, occupational interests, work/volunteer experience
- Research careers with Career Cruising
- Assess the sustainability of a career using all your assessments





Computer Courses at OVRC

Call the Osborne Village Resource Centre at 204.989.6503 to register!

All computer classes are located at the Osborne Village Resource Centre, 2nd Floor, 107 Osborne Street.

Fundamentals of Personal Computing

Tuesdays: May 27 / June 03, 10, 17, 24

Time: Tuesdays 5:00 – 7:30 p.m.

5 – 2.5 hour sessions (one night a week)

In person registration required, \$70 (cash only)

- Become proficient using the mouse
- Become familiar with Windows 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

Fridays: Apr 04, 11, 25 / May 02, 09

Time: Fridays 9:00 – 11:30 am



Basic Microsoft Word

Mondays: Apr 07, 14, 28 / May 05, 12

Fridays: May 23, 30 / Jun 06, 13, 20

Time: Mondays 5:00 – 7:30 p.m.

Time: Fridays 9:00 – 11:30 am

5 – 2.5 hour sessions (one night a week)

In person registration required, \$70 (cash only).

Prerequisite: Fundamentals of Personal Computing

- Learn how to manage your files in Windows
- 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
- Become familiar with ribbons and tabs

Basic Microsoft Excel

Mondays: May 26 / Jun 02, 09, 16, 23

Tuesdays: Apr 08, 15, 29 / May 06, 13

Time: Mondays / Tuesdays 5:00 – 7:30 p.m.

5 – 2.5 hour sessions (one night a week)

In person registration required, \$70 (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
- Become familiar with ribbons and tabs

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 TWITTER: @O_V_R_C

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 Keith Robinson at keirob@wtc.mb.ca

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



About OVRC's Newsletter

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:

newsletter editor Jude Gaal, at 204.989.6503 or judgaa@wtc.mb.ca

Newsletter design and layout by our volunteer Kristin McPherson



**Osborne Village
RESOURCE CENTRE**

1-107 OSBORNE ST. WINNIPEG, MB R3L 1Y4
PH: 204.989.6503 FAX: 204.477.0903 TWITTER: @O_V_R_C