

Newsletter 2015

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Message from the Editor

Jude Gaal
 CAREER COUNSELLOR / WORKSHOP FACILITATOR

This spring has started off wonderfully. March was kinder to us this year and April has seen many days of beautiful sunshine. We've even been lucky enough to have the Winnipeg Jets play in this year's Stanley Cup playoffs for the first time since the city got its hockey team back. Things can only get better from here on in.

Spring is typically the time that we think about health and wellness and that's what we've decided to focus on for this issue. All of us here at OVRC have worked with clients who have come into the Centre a little worse for wear due to a toxic work environment. All of us at OVRC have also experienced a toxic work environment at some point in our working lives. The consequences of this health and safety hazard are costly to both employees and employers, yet the phenomenon appears to be on the increase. Our hope with this issue is to start a conversation and hopefully be the catalyst for even the smallest positive change.

In the article *Striving To Reach My Vision*, our Centre Coordinator, Keith Robinson, starts things off with his reflections on his experience working in a toxic workplace, as well as the actions he takes to create his vision of a 100% toxic free work environment. In this issue we also have a guest writer, Catherine Hajnal, a grief educator, whom I met at the Cannexus 2015 Conference in Ottawa this January. She asks us to consider the importance of acknowledging our losses when leaving a toxic workplace. Our employment facilitator Betty Punkert points out that our physical environment can also be toxic to our health in her article, *Small Changes Add Up: Creating A Healthier Work Space*.

Patti Malo, our employment facilitator and office administrator, has contributed *Understanding Communication Styles* to help us better comprehend how this can also affect our professional and personal relationships. No newsletter would be complete without the contribution of John Perry, our employment facilitator and volunteer coordinator. His work in our volunteer program can be seen in our volunteer Jinah's success story *It Counts!*

As always our fabulous career counsellor and workshop facilitator, Kristina Lonstrup provides advice in her *Dear Career Counsellor* column, and that bit of humour is found in the *Laughter Corner*. The dates and times for both the *Career And Job Preparation Workshops and Computer Courses* are listed for you in our back pages. We hope you will find this issue helpful and look forward to any ideas for upcoming issues as well as your feedback on anything you read in this issue. Have a great spring and summer!

QUARTERLY QUOTE





Far and away the best prize that life offers is the chance to work hard at work worth doing.

Theodore Roosevelt

Striving To Reach My Vision

Keith Robinson
 CENTRE COORDINATOR

We all unfortunately have had the experience of working in a toxic workplace and felt its effects in both our work and personal life. Before joining the team at OVRC I worked in a very toxic workplace. It was negative and stress levels were high because everyone was fearful of losing their job at the drop of a hat. Staff turnover was constant and the morale was low. This atmosphere created a lack of loyalty between team members and left knots in my stomach before I walked through the door in the morning. Most of us were in survival mode which sometimes resulted in staff passing or shifting blame to others. I would not wish that experience on anyone.

I was lucky that Margaret Law, the Centre Coordinator at OVRC when I was hired, gave me the opportunity to work in a positive and caring workplace. With the help of the team and Margaret's leadership, I was able to heal my past wounds and let go of the stress of that toxic job. Unfortunately, here at OVRC, we see clients on a daily basis that are struggling with their experiences from working in a toxic environment. Some never overcome these experiences; you can see it the way they carry themselves or after hearing about their work experiences.

When working with clients we need to look for the signs of stress from previous work experience and be prepared to offer solutions and other assistance to help them become job ready. We must also let our clients know that it is normal to have issues from working in a dysfunctional and toxic work place. If the past baggage of a previous toxic job is not dealt with, there is a very good chanceour clients will be back at OVRC very soon.

Now as the Centre Coordinator at OVRC I have been very humbled. I felt sure that our workplace was nontoxic and that I created a positive workplace environment. After researching articles on toxic workplaces I have discovered there are areas I need to improve and strive to reach my vision of a 100 % nontoxic workplace. I have started to make those changes in my management style and delivery.

During the first few years as Centre Coordinator I had to adjust and change the unrealistic expectations I placed on my

In order to create a working environment where people learn as much from mistakes as from successes, we managers have to lead by example and admit our mistakes not only to ourselves but also to our team.

staff. Because I wanted to increase services to our clients and reduce the three week waiting period for directed services the staff took on an extra appointment per day. This resulted in staff burn out and also created workplace issues due to the extra stress. To make it worse, we still had a three week waiting period! The change did not solve the problem, it just created more problems. I had to admit my mistake to my team and go back to our old appointment schedule. It took some time to repair the damage that my decision created, however we grew as a team and became stronger. In order to create a working environment where people learn as much from mistakes as from successes, we managers have to lead by example and admit our mistakes not only to ourselves but also to our team.

Another area I discovered that needed improvement was my communication with the staff. When I needed to have a task completed or a procedure followed I told them that the task had to be done because it was a part of their job, and I expected it to be done. Period. Some of my staff took this approach as negative. I realize now that it's important to take the time, in the future, to explain the importance of a task and why I need it to be completed or followed. Sharing this information with the staff gives them the opportunity to understand why a task is important and is helpful to our operations. Before I discuss issues with staff I now know to ask myself how I would feel if I was receiving the message that I was delivering.

In closing, working on this article has made me more aware of what it takes to create and maintain a healthy workplace environment, and each month I am going to evaluate my progress because I want all my staff to feel respected and appreciated every day that they come to work. I would encourage all managers to research this serious topic, assess your workplace, and work towards making your positive change.

Dear Career Counsellor

Kristina Lonstrup
 CAREER COUNSELLOR

Dear Career Counsellor:

I always feel that employers want to hire someone who is "outgoing" and I know that is not a personality trait of mine. Will this hurt my job search? What kind of advice would you give to a young job seeker like me?

Dear S.B.,

You are in luck. Employers are NOT all seeking someone who is "outgoing"! I insist that this will not hurt your job search unless you let it hurt your job search.

Each of us as individuals, including employers, has our own professional value systems. Here at Osborne Village Resource Centre, the first exercise in the career counselling process is a **Values Alignment** exercise. I especially get a kick out of assessing a client's values because I enjoy learning a job seeker's strengths. Our values are what energize and motivate us, creating job satisfaction and a happier, longer life.

As individuals, we all bring a variety of values, experience and skills to the workplace. Some people value commitment and loyalty. Some people value competency and focus. Some people value creativity and innovation. Not all people are outgoing, and not all employers value outgoing individuals. Check your perception! Do not perceive your natural personality to be a barrier to finding rewarding work; instead, let the staff at OVRC help you make the right match.

I recommend booking a one-on-one career counselling appointment, or signing up for the Job Satisfaction workshop, to assess your professional values. Also offered in our career counselling and **The Next Chapter** workshop is a **Keirsey Temperament Sorter**, a psychometric test designed to identify your professional personality. Using these two assessments, we take this information to market yourself professionally.

In addition to the career counselling services that OVRC

provides, we have employment facilitators to help you develop your resume and cover letters. It is very important that you highlight your values and attributes so that an employer can identify your professional personality immediately. You want to ensure that a proper match is made between you and the employer. I want an employer to identify with you and value YOU.

But wait, there's more!

S.B.

Visit **www.ovrc.ca** to learn how our workshops can benefit your job search.

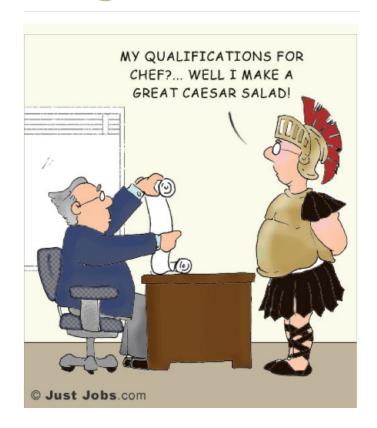
Take our **Ace That Interview!** workshop to learn how to discuss your professional personality with interview answers that are concise and informative.

Register for the **Living In Your Job Search** workshop to not only discover proactive strategies to confidently approach your job search, but how to address your job search with a positive attitude.

Sign up for the **Targeted Job Search** workshop to discover tactics for researching and networking with suitable employers and how to market yourself successfully.

Come on down to Osborne Village Resource Centre and use our services. It is our pleasure to help YOU!

Laughter Corner!



What To Do When The Dream Isn't Working Out As Planned

+ Dr. Catherine Hajnal

ften toxic workplaces don't start out that way. You began a new job in a new organization with the best of intentions. Perhaps there was excitement around what you could learn and curiosity about what opportunities might present themselves. At the very least you might have been appreciative of the income and the sense of stability, structure, and connections the workplace represented.

And then the dream or vision starts to go off kilter. Perhaps the support and connection you were hoping for is not available from colleagues or bosses. Rather than a sense of contribution, perhaps you're feeling like you can't do anything right and that your ways of working and your ideas are not valued. From an initial place of anticipation and confidence, you find yourself questioning your abilities and your decisions. Dysfunction reigns supreme.

What to do? Quitting is one answer. While that may be possible, sometimes it can feel rather impossible especially if the circumstances and level of toxicity are seemingly driving you to quit without knowing what comes next. Scary and not a choice to be taken lightly. So what can you do in the meantime, as you try to figure out up from down and explore what might be options for you?

Acknowledge Your Losses

Consider the possibility that there can be no beginnings without endings. If you're looking for a new beginning, a change, a shift, start with the ending. Our dreams matter to us. Our values matter to us. When they have been shattered or compromised, it can feel like a loss. It is a loss. Perhaps in your toxic environment you've lost a sense of security, a sense of connection, a sense of contribution, a sense of respect and fairness. Hope may be fleeting.

From that place of acknowledging the loss, you are creating the space for grieving. Grief is a natural, healthy response to loss. There is nothing weak, bad, or inappropriate about grieving. It is also a way to offer yourself some empathy. Honor your starting intentions for taking the job, your hopes, your expectations, and acknowledge that things

People are by nature beings who want to understand what has happened and why.

haven't worked out as planned. By stepping into grief you are also inviting yourself to do some meaning make. People are by nature beings who want to understand what has happened and why. We don't always get answers or the clarity we seek, but we can often find enough to help guide us to reconstitute our lives.

So if you find yourself in a toxic environment and are looking for a way forward, begin with the end. Acknowledge your losses and step into some grieving. You may just find a release of some emotions and a new sense of perspective.

Dr. Catherine Hajnal is a Grief Educator, Speaker, and Consultant. She completed her doctorate in Human Factors Engineering at the University of Wisconsin exploring the connection between health and the design of work. Catherine facilitates an understanding of loss and supports the process of grieving for individuals and in organizations. www.catherinehajnal.com.

Understanding Communication Styles

+ Patti Malo

EMPLOYMENT FACILITATOR / OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR

hen you have difficulty with a co-worker or boss or in your personal life for that matter, do you automatically think it's their issue? Most of us do. A lot of people have blinders on when it comes to taking responsibility for their role in work place conflict. A good place to begin to understand conflict is to know that everyone's communication style is hard-wired into us and rarely a conscious choice. You may not realize it but communication styles have surrounded us from birth and they directly impact our interaction and behaviour.

Real communication happens when the sender imparts information and that another person, the receiver, *gets* the message and correctly interprets it. The complete communication loop is realized when the sender can confirm that the receiver has understood the message

as intended. Take some time to sit and reflect on your interaction with your co-workers—are you relating as you intend? The article, 10 Signs Your Interaction Style Is Messing With Your Career, found on the Careerealism website will help you assess if the people you are communicating with are receiving your message:

- 1. You feel like nobody is paying attention to your requests at work.
- 2. Colleagues have informal meetings without you and then tell you the results and how they directly impact your job.
- 3. Your boss dismisses EVERY idea you present to her/him.
- Co-workers always agree with you when you voice your concerns, but then you hear they said something entirely different to your boss.
- 5. You have no close friends at the office.
- 6. You've been told you aren't "management material" yet.
- 7. People get really quiet and don't have any answers or comment when you speak.
- 8. You don't get selected for any team projects or special assignments.
- 9. People love to tease you about how "honest," "funny," and "shameless" you are at the office.
- 10. You're been fired.

OPEN RELATIONSHIPS

THE SOCIALIZER THE RELATOR Warm and Friendly Relationships important Strong feelings of personal worth Slow and easy Shares feelings Fast-paced Enthusiastic and persuasive Good listener Cooperative Not afraid of risks **INDIRECT** DIRECT SLOW-FAST-**PACED** THE THINKER THE DIRECTOR **PACFD** An efficient perfectionist **Emphasis** on results Slow and cautious Little concern for relationships Task-oriented Does not share feelings Seen as dominating Follows directions Works well alone Fast-paced and decisive RESERVED RELATIONSHIPS

The complete communication loop is realized when the sender can confirm that the receiver has understood the message as intended.

To communicate more effectively it's important to know our own style as well as the communication styles of the people in our personal and professional lives. The article *Understanding Communication Styles in the Workplace*, on the Tribehr website, identifies four main communication styles:

Relator: The Relator is relationship oriented and readily expresses their thoughts and feelings. However, Relators are generally slower paced and security conscious, so they prefer less intrusive interactions.

Socializer: The socializer prefers to interact with others rather than work alone. Socializers have a fast paced, aggressive communication style and generally work well with others.

Thinker: The Thinker has a closed, personal style and is analytical in their approach. Thinkers take a while to feel comfortable with others, and tend to take longer to reveal information about themselves.

Director: The Director has an aggressive, competitive nature and is very independent. Directors are results oriented and focus less on the people impacts.

Once you've had time to reflect on your communication style as well as the style of those around you, you will be able to shed some light on how to communicate more effectively with them. Two simple ways of gaining a better understanding include:

1. observing how your co-workers collaborate, settle differences, and communicate their thoughts and ideas.

2. getting feedback from other co-workers you can confide in and who get on well with the rest of the staff.

For those times when the receiver does not get the message, here are some tips from the article *Work it Out: Getting Along with Co-Workers*, found on WebMB.com, that may help you get back on track:

- 1. **Count to 10.** Never react to your co-worker's most recent offense. Always move forward with a cool head. Go home, sleep on it, and plan what you'll say and to whom.
- 2. **Point the finger at yourself.** Use "I" statements. Coworkers will be more open to dialogue when you're asking for help rather than attacking or blaming.
- 3. **Keep it professional, not personal.** This cuts the chances of a defensive response. Try "Here's what I think my job is. Is that what you and others expected of me?" rather than "No one is listening to me."

Remember everyone has their own unconscious communication style. Don't waste your time, energy, and effort trying to win the battle of wills. Learn to recognize and adapt to different communication styles to complete the communication loop.

Sources:

www.webmd.com/balance/features/getting-along-with-coworkers www.careerealism.com/career-interaction-style

tribehr.com/blog/understanding-communication-styles-in-the-workplace



It Counts!

+ Jinah Lee

FORMER VOLUNTEER ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

hen I started to volunteer as an administrative assistant at Osborne Village Resource Centre, I slightly doubted myself and wondered if this experience could be a benefit to me getting a meaningful job.

It was a big challenge for me to learn new things within a short period of time and meet people who had quite a different culture from mine. I was very anxious. However, I now confidently recommend volunteering to everyone. I would like to share my experience with you.

While volunteering at OVRCI was looking to get a meaningful job. Working with Opportunities for Employment to find a job, I got an interview at the Resource Assistance for Youth, Inc. (RaY) As soon as I got into the building, I met two ladies who were going to interview me. It was my third time to have an interview in Canada. I was a bit nervous and very excited to have it at the same time. They asked, "Could you introduce yourself to us?" I told them, "I have extensive experience in teaching computer and in volunteering as an administrative assistant at Osborne Village Resource Centre." They asked me what I learned from volunteering. Although I didn't expect to have that sort of question, I could answer it without hesitation.

After listening to my explanation, one of the interviewers nodded her head. It seemed they were satisfied with my volunteer career. My volunteer experience at OVRC showed me how everyone who worked there took initiative, had a strong work ethic to care for clients and colleagues first, and kept a good relationship between them. I loved every minute of being with them because of this. They inspired me to be professional and taught me critical skills needed as an administrative assistant and a good co-worker.

One day in the morning the world covered with white snow, I received surprising news from the interviewer at RaY that they wanted to work with me. OMG! I couldn't believe it and had no idea what to say for a while. I imagine if I didn't have the opportunity to volunteer learning excellent skills and work ethic at OVRC, I would not have my current job. I understood that the interviewers seriously regarded my



+ SHOWN HERE

Jinah Lee, former OVRC Volunteer Administrative Assistant

volunteer career as real work experience. Now I work as an administrative assistant at RaY and do almost the identical things that I learnt from the staff at OVRC. I won't forget this amazing experience working with the bright and professional ones.

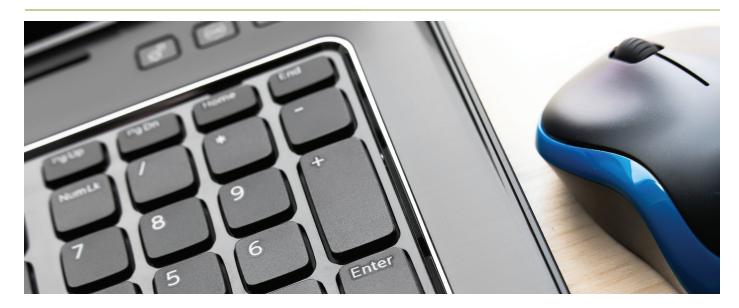
NOTE: We loved having Jinah here at OVRC. She came to Canada in in the spring of 2014 from South Korea. She was a kind, thoughtful and hard working person who brightened our days when she was here. We also love that Jinah's success is a wonderful example of two organizations working together, each in their own way, to help a client achieve success.

John Perry

EMPLOYMENT FACILITATOR / VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

Small Changes Add Up: Creating A Healthier Work Space

◆ Betty Punkert **EMPLOYMENT FACILITATOR / COMPUTER INSTRUCTOR**



hen we talk about toxic workplaces, most people think we're talking about other people. But sitting at a computer all day can be toxic to your health as well.

One of the first places to start cleaning up your toxic environment is your keyboard and mouse. Turn off your computer and wipe down your keyboard and mouse with an antibacterial wipe or some hand gel and a tissue. Wipe down your phone handset and dial pad too. This is especially important if you share a computer or desk with someone else. Germy fingers are no respecter of rank, and doing this at least once a week will help reduce the spread of those nasty colds that make the run of the office.

Irritated eyes may indicate your office is too dry. Look into adding a cold mist humidifier (these won't require a filter) to your office. In a pinch, if you can't have one in your office, buy a small, low maintenance plant such as bamboo, and that will help with the humidity. (It creates oxygen too!) Another cause of eyestrain is inadequate lighting.

If you have flourescent lighting over your head, make sure all the lights are working. Talk to your maintenance person or office manager if bulbs are burnt out. Adding a desk lamp can sometimes help if the overhead light is very far away or indirect.

The most common cause of eyestrain is just staring at the screen too long. Ergonomics specialists suggest we should stop and take a short 10-15 second break every five minutes and a longer 5-10 minute break once an hour. In the real world though, we get involved in a task and completely forget to take breaks. Sometimes we even forget to blink! There are quite a few free applications to help with remembering to take proper breaks:

EyeLeo: eyeleo.com

PC WorkBreak: www.trisunsoft.com/pc-work-break

Big Stretch Reminder: www.monkeymatt.com/bigstretch

EyesRelax: themech.net/eyesrelax/

WorkRave: www.workrave.org

ONLINE options (no installation required):

Regular Breaks: regularbreaks.com

Protect Your Vision (PYV): www.protectyourvision.org

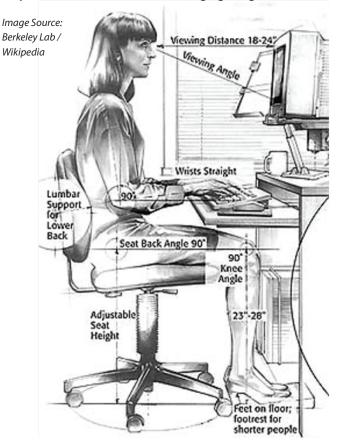
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Small Changes Add Up – Continued from previous page

I have personally been using the free WorkRave software for about a month now and have found it to be very helpful in reminding me to stretch and pause from time to time while working. I disable it while I'm with clients because it would be disruptive to pause, but while answering e-mails or doing data entry it is quite effective and helps a lot with eyestrain as well as hand or shoulder pain from too much typing.

Many people also complain of eyestrain because they have difficulty seeing what's on their screen. Your screen should be about 18-24 inches (that's 45-60 centimeters) away from you. If you can't afford a bigger monitor, or you can't move it closer, try adjusting your screen resolution down a few notches. (My 24" monitor's recommended settings are impossible for me to read.) Right click on your desktop wallpaper, click on Screen Resolution and try moving the slider to one of the lower numbers it suggests. Click the OK button and it will show you the result. If you don't like it, wait a few seconds and it will switch back. If you DO like it, click on Keep Changes to permanently adjust your resolution.

So there you have it: six things you can do to make the cubicle or office a better space to work in. You may need to talk to your IT department before changing settings or installing software on your computer, but the other changes you can do yourself. Now stretch, blink, and go get a glass of water!



Computer Courses At OVRC

Fundamentals of Personal Computing

Tuesdays: May 26, June 2, 9, 16, 23, 9 -11:30 am

- 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

Basic Microsoft Word

Classes will resume this Fall 2015. Call us at 204.989.6503 after August 15th to get dates and register.

- 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 clic
- 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

Classes will resume this Fall 2015. Call us at 204.989.6503 after August 15th to get dates and register

- Become familiar with the components of the Excel window
- 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 spreadsheet
- Link Excel spreadsheet into a Word documen



Career And Job Preparation

Call the Osborne Village Resource Centre at 204.989.9503 to register!

Ace That Interview Workshop!

May 25 & 26, June 22 & 23, 8:45 am – 3:30 pm Location: UFCW Training Centre, 2nd Floor – 880 Portage Avenue (Thompson Room)

July 16 & 17, August 13, 14, 8:45 am – 3:30 pm Location: OVRC, 2nd Floor, 107 Osborne Street

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

Fridays: May 15, 29, June 12, 26, July 10, 24, August 7, 21, 8:30 – 12 noon Location: OVRC. 2nd Floor, 107 Osborne Stre

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 with give you the tools for a more effective job search. Lean 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

Keys to Employment Success Workshop

Wednesdays: weekly, 8:30 – 10:30 am Location: OVRC, 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 plar for their job search, we have created an action planning session to inform, assess and give one-to-one feedback to our clients.

The Next Chapter Workshop

June 29 & 30, July 27 & 28, August 24 & 25, 8:30 – 11:30 am Location: OVRC, 2nd Floor, 107 Osborne Street

May 19, June 19, 8:45 – 3:30 Location: UFCW Training Centre, 2nd Floor – 880 Porta Avanua (Thampson Boom)

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

Living In Your Job Search Workshop

Thursdays: May 14, June 18, July 9, August 6,

8:30 – 11:30 am

Location: OVRC. 2nd Floor, 107 Osborne Street

Has the job search got you feeling down? In this workshop you will:

- Become aware of how negativity affects your life
- Learn three simple ways to amplify your positivity

You will also go home with a toolkit filled with positivity tools that you can use right away to amplify your positivity!

About OVRC

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?

Call Judy, our client services representative at OVRC and schedule an appointment for any of the free services that we provide.

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

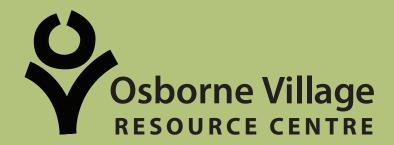


About OVRC's Newsletter

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



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