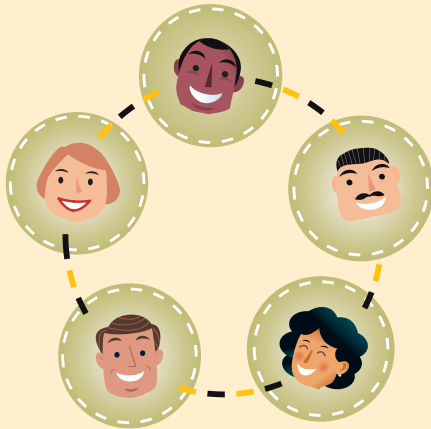


The Bulletin



Become a DIVERSITY CHAMPION

How to Champion for Change and Create Opportunities for Inclusion

~ By Krista Maydew, MA, GCDF and Roberta Neault, PhD, CCC, RRP, GCDF

In this issue

Become a Diversity Champion	1
Do Recessions Hurt "Sustainable Business" Jobs?	4
Yes You Can Get to the Other Side of the Learning Curve	6
The Alchemy Of Transforming Bad Jobs To Good	8
Unleashing Organizational Genius	11
Difficult Clients	14
Identifying Talent	15
Book Club	16
Conference Sketch	17
What's New	20

When you hear someone talking about diversity in the workplace, people often assume the discussion is about cultural or ethnic diversity. Although programs to increase diversity in the workplace have been used by both public and private sector employers for many years; the main focus has typically been on increasing representation of women, visible minorities, Aboriginals, and sometimes, persons with disabilities.

However, diversity in its broadest sense is inclusive of all people. In our own diversity work, we use the term to describe a wide-range of differences, including but not limited to:

1. Newcomers (e.g., Skilled Immigrants/ Foreign-Trained Workers)
2. Ethnicity (e.g., Visible Minorities)
3. Aboriginal Peoples
4. Religion
5. Gender (i.e., Men/Women)
6. Sexual Orientation (e.g., Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgendered)
7. Generations (Gen Y, Gen X, Boomers, Traditionalists)
8. Persons with Disabilities

Clearly, people don't fit within only one of these categories. An individual may have been born in Africa and educated in England, have converted to a non-dominant religion, and be a middle-aged female who is a skilled tradesperson (i.e., in a male-dominated occupation).

Canada is a diverse nation from a geographic and demographic perspective. Immigration figures alone can help us to understand why embracing diversity is so important. With Canada set to welcome approximately 250,000 new permanent residents in 2009, it is important to consider how we as career practitioners can become diversity champions within our own organizations and beyond our organizational boundaries.

From a business case perspective, diversity in the workplace can improve recruitment and retention efforts, increase a business' competitiveness, enhance productivity and creativity, and increase overall employee engagement. When employees can come to work freely, without feeling emotions like discomfort, shame, dread, or fear, they are better able to perform their work to their fullest potential. Although this

A Difference of Ability

Recruiting, Hiring and Employing People with Disabilities



A Difference of Ability examines the daily challenges facing people with disabilities and reveals the reasons why job-seekers and employers experience difficulty connecting and how that can change. This DVD serves as a catalyst for discussion between and among both educator and employer groups and ultimately end in valuable education for all concerned.



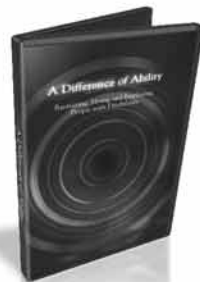
Run time 53 min. Filmed in HD. 100% Canadian. Close captioned. Available in both English and French. Charitable Reg #86093 7911 RR0001

“Realism and pragmatic approaches make this DVD the best ‘how-to’ video that I’ve seen yet for those working in the field of special needs and disabilities. The resounding self-advocacy of the job seekers and the frank perspectives of employers and service providers ensures a rapt audience.”

— James Vandervoort, Instructor, George Brown

“The time is right for this documentary to be seen by employers, service agencies, prospective employees, the government and the public. Its messages are poignant and empowering and gives all groups concerned a blueprint for navigating their way to full engagement.”

— Steven Fletcher, Parliamentary Assistant to the Federal Minister of Health



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The DVD is organized into four Chapters each exploring and offering solutions to existing challenges facing employees, support agencies and employers. A convenient Menu feature makes it easy to view the video according to selected Chapters.

Opening Introduction.

- Overview of employment of the disabled in Canada
- Interviews with business leaders, employment agencies and successful disabled employees in a variety of workplaces
- Needs of the disabled to connect with employers and be part of the work force
- Unique skills offered by the disabled which allows employers to tap into a larger labour market

Stepping Stones. The video uses compelling scenarios from everyday workplaces that assist in developing a positive attitude and approach to the job search process.

- Developing a stable life support system for the employee
- Overcoming barriers: social, psychological and physical for both the visibly and invisibly disabled to create confident well trained job seekers
- Setting realistic goals
- Focused training, education and skills development
- Interview preparation: Disclosure – is it necessary?
- Accessibility and Transportation
- Social networking
- Inspirational interviews with people who were born with disabilities and those who acquired them

Bridging the Gap. This chapter explores the challenges faced by employers interested in connecting with potential disabled employees.

- Support Agencies as effective intermediaries between employer and persons with disabilities
- Choosing and securing a support agency
- Legal and human rights concerns
- Connecting: complications for businesses in easily finding, recruiting and retaining disabled candidates
- Solutions from business leaders on developing successful relationships with the disabled community work force

Taking the Plunge. People who have found success offer powerful insights, practical solutions and strategies for those interested in improving the employment situation facing people with disabilities in today's labour market.

- Dispelling myths and misconceptions of hiring and accommodating disabled employees
- Case studies with business leaders on the advantages of hiring the disabled
- How employers can best access with the disabled labour force and successfully create a positive work environment for all employees

DIVERSITY CHAMPION

How to Champion for Change and Create Opportunities for Inclusion

Continued from cover

makes intuitive sense, career practitioners working with diverse clients recognize that many employers do not see the benefits of having a diverse workforce.

As organizations of all sizes begin to recognize how diversity can positively impact the bottom line, they may create or adopt diversity policies and programs. Career practitioners are well positioned to act as change champions, raising awareness of the importance of workplace diversity. To begin, career practitioners can champion diversity within their own organizations. Reaching further, career practitioners can introduce the benefits of diversity to local employers, coaching them to create workplaces that will attract and retain members of diverse groups. Finally, to expand diversity awareness, career practitioners can contribute their knowledge and expertise to champion diversity initiatives within the broader career development community, professional associations, and employer groups.

Become a Diversity Champion in Your Workplace

To become an effective diversity champion, begin within your own organization. Ask yourself, “Are diverse colleagues and clients appreciated and respected”? If the answer is yes, use an appreciative inquiry approach to examine what is working effectively. Envision an ideal inclusive work environment (i.e., even better than what it is today). Identify actions to build upon the existing solid foundation to realize your vision.

If the answer to your question is no, support your organization's leadership in assessing whether existing policies or practices are “diversity friendly.” Next, help leaders to strengthen, develop,

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As organizations of all sizes begin to recognize

how diversity can positively impact the bottom line...

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and/or implement strategies to better support a diverse workplace.

Reach Out to Local Employers
Embracing diversity may help employers with recruitment and retention efforts, as well as improving productivity, employee engagement, and customer service. Consider creating a tip sheet to share with local employers, highlighting the benefits of hiring a diverse workforce, along with tips for recruitment and retention. In this way, you are working as an advocate for your clients while helping to support employers to achieve their business goals.

Share Your Experience and Expertise

As a career practitioner, you've likely heard lots of stories about why clients left past jobs. With your clients' permission, you could incorporate some of these stories into articles, case studies, or presentations at conferences or professional development events for career practitioners, human resource management professionals, or employer groups such as Chambers of Commerce, Boards of Trade, or Rotary. Speaking out about diversity helps to raise awareness;

you might also find a network of diversity champions that you can reach out to, sharing creative ideas and providing mutual support!

Life Strategies Ltd. has recently been working with S.U.C.C.E.S.S. Employment Services in Vancouver to develop and pilot a set of tools to help employers provide inclusive workplaces that embrace and champion diversity. These tools are based on an ROI Model focussing on Recruitment, Orientation, and Inclusion. The comprehensive toolkit comprises a *Cultural Diversity Yearbook* full of quotes, activities, diversity events, and conversation starters, an *ROI Virtual Resources Toolkit*, a *Diversity Champion's Backgrounder and Guide*, designed to support the implementation of the model, and assessments designed to measure the impact.

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Do Recessions Hurt

“SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS” JOBS?

The Prospects for Socially Responsible Employment in a Downturn

– By Mark Swartz, MBA, M.Ed.

Dear Mark,

I work in a large firm that prides itself on setting up “Corporate Social Responsibility” (CSR) initiatives that help its many stakeholders. For example, we were the first in our industry to go green with our production process, we have negotiated “fair labour” contracts with indigenous populations in less developed countries, and we insist that our major suppliers adhere to high levels of environmental and social ethics. I have been leading up a fair number of these programs over the last two years and feel that there is a bright future in this area. But do you think that our economic slowdown will cause employers to cut back on CSR for now?

Rashid D., Edmonton, Alberta

Dear Rashid,

Interesting question. I think the answer depends on how you define Corporate Social Responsibility, which is also known as CSR, corporate sustainability, the triple bottom line, or responsible business.

According to Adine Mees, President and CEO of **Canadian Business for Social Responsibility** (a Canadian business-led, non-profit consultancy and peer-to-peer learning organization), CSR can be interpreted in a variety of ways. “Some employers consider such basics as corporate philanthropy or community

involvement to be sufficient,” says Adine. She adds, however, that this is merely a beginning: an important though relatively superficial definition of responsible business.

Employers who are at this sort of level only in CSR are unlikely to invest heavily in additional support for this area during our economic downturn.

The Maturing of CSR

Adine does point out that there is an evolution in a number of organizations to a higher stage of corporate citizenship. At this deeper

level, “Companies are more mature in their CSR efforts and have begun to realize increased return on investment” based on these activities. For instance, an employer may have gained entry into new international markets by introducing the “fair labour” practices you mention above, or have convinced government to reconsider passing tough legislation that might have unnecessarily restricted a firm’s operations. After all, why impose new laws when your operating standards exceed that of the proposed bill?

For employers at this higher level of engagement, CSR will likely continue to play a key role despite a rocky economy, adds Adine. “The next 12 to 18 months present a challenge in terms of living up to expectations and commitments in a cash constrained environment.” But as a CSR employee (sometimes called a *Social Intrapreneur*), “You will need to push back and ask, does your employer see the value you are contributing? Are staff, suppliers and customers aware of your efforts?” If you can put forward a solid business case, including a Return On Investment (ROI) analysis, your ability to secure needed resources increases.

And in this writer’s view, you bolster your own job security at the same time, by differentiating yourself as a capable employee who can also get profit-enhancing CSR done.

Being a Strategic CSR Employee Adding to the discussion is Dr. Andrew Crane, George R. Gardiner Professor of Business Ethics and Director, Business & Sustainability Program at the **Schulich School of Business**, located at York University. He says that this the right time to clarify your role as an employee involved in CSR initiatives: “You are not merely the company’s conscience or donations person. You are uniquely prepared to deal with complexity and multi-stakeholder relationships on a strategic basis.”

Andrew adds that those who can create new socially responsible products and services (e.g. fair trade coffee, green mortgages), or who can reshape processes to enhance the triple bottom line (e.g. using fewer scarce resources, leaving less of a carbon footprint, making governance more effective), will be in demand. He also notes that “Consumers will purchase responsibly – assuming that price, quality and branding are equal to the alternatives. Thus we need business-savvy employees who can make or promote exciting products and services that have CSR built-in and the potentially daunting tradeoffs removed.”

Jobs for Responsible Business Employees

As for where the jobs might be, Andrew says that you needn’t focus your search exclusively on employers in the environmental or not-for-profit sectors. “When you look at who is winning awards for being socially responsible, it includes companies such as Walmart, IBM, Loblaws, Vancouver City Savings and Home Depot; places you may not have thought to look first.” Each of the companies cited above is on the “Best 50 Corporate Citizens” list for 2008, prepared by *Corporate Knights* (the Canadian magazine for responsible business).

How to find an employer that might value your CSR credentials? Well, it makes sense to look at that Best 50 list

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Consumers will purchase responsibly –

assuming that price, quality and branding are equal to the alternatives.”

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above and review the CBSR membership roster, for starters. Also that of the **Canadian Centre for Ethics and Corporate Policy**, and the top performers on the *Jantzi Social Index*.

Another tip from Adine: “Seek out industries where there are already obvious aspects of CSR that directly impact profitability and the capacity to function within communities, such as mining or oil and gas.” Your goal is to be at the intersection “where significant stakeholder concerns and corporate strategy meet head on.” As well, search for employer websites where they boast of their sustainability efforts. And keep an eye out for those that issue a CSR or Sustainability Report in addition to the standard Annual Report.

Andrew adds that “So far there are few actual jobs with CSR in the title, yet employers often look for people who match their values and vision statement, who can position themselves as a solid recruit based on respecting integrity while also being a champion of innovation, profitability and sustainability.” He reminds us that to meet the needs of multiple stakeholders (both internal and external), you may need to prepare yourself to be “politically astute and tough, declaring yourself a true agent of change.”

Earn and Return

So Rashid, there’s your reply. Employers who aren’t serious about CSR yet may well cut back in this realm during a downturn. Those who have seen that the benefits of deeper corporate citizenship outweigh the investment are likely to continue their core commitment to CSR,

though they may need to defer major projects until conditions improve. In any event, I salute your efforts to make a living while making a difference. It’s a great way to improve your marketability as an employee – while genuinely making our world a little better.



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FULL DISCLOSURE:

I (the writer) am a graduate of York University’s MBA program, from back in 1984, years before the business school became known as Schulich. I chose to interview this school for the article strictly because they are ranked number one in Canada (and number three in the world) for their CSR/Sustainability program, by *Corporate Knights* magazine.

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significant stakeholder concerns and corporate strategy meet head on.

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Yes, You Can Get to the Other Side of the LEARNING CURVE

What Baby Boomers Need to Know about Social Media to Make it in Today's Marketplace

– By Anne Ptasznik

Is your LinkedIn profile complete?
How about your Google profile?
Do you have a blog?

If you're an early adapter to new technologies and have answered yes to all of these questions, congratulations! (You can probably stop reading now.)

But if you get brain cramps even thinking about learning how to use Twitter, Facebook and all the other social networking sites that pop up daily, and think you're far too old and way too busy to learn these "younger generation" tools, here are a couple of good reasons why you may want to reconsider.

You have an online reputation

Everyone does, and if you apply for a new job, one of the first things your employer will do is Google you. If you're in private practise, your clients will check you out online. Any bad reviews of your counselling service, they may want to reconsider. As a career practitioner you will also need to be able to advise your clients about the basics of online reputation, just as you traditionally have with their resume, or at least, where to get some help.

Social media today is often where the jobs are

Beyond dynamic new positions opening in the social media field itself, a range of jobs is increasingly being advertised through social networking sites or through the use of social media tools.

The second annual Social Recruitment Survey conducted by Jobvite (www.jobvite.com), a recruitment solutions provider, (as posted on the www.zdnet.com blog) found that

employers are increasingly recruiting on social networks, such as Facebook and Twitter. According to the survey, recruitment and human resource professionals are using a variety of online sites to research candidates: LinkedIn (76 percent), search engines (67 percent), Facebook (44 percent) and Twitter (21 percent). Respondents reported that 24% of candidates disclose their social networking presence when applying for a job.

To help you get started, I have outlined some steps that you and your clients can take to improve your online presence:

1. Monitor your name online
Google allows you to set up alerts for key words including your name. Just Google "Google alerts," enter your name, and set the search type as comprehensive. Whenever your name appears online, you will receive an e-mail notifying you and the link to the article, or blog or other source where you have been mentioned. If you have a popular name, you may receive a lot of alerts, so you may want to

filter these in your inbox and take a look when you have some down time.

2. Review your online status

Google yourself using your first and last name in quotations (e.g. "Grace Kelly") and check out the following:

- > Do you appear (as opposed to others with your name)?
- > How close to the top do you come up in the search results?
- > Is there anything unflattering or untrue about you in any of the links?

You can also check out:

www.onlineidcalculator.com, which helps you walk through the steps of assessing your online reputation.

3. Fix what you can

If there are unflattering or mean-spirited comments that come up in your name search, and they are ones that you posted yourself on a website or another online site that you control, delete them. If there is a link to a photograph of you at your college reunion when you got drunk, which a friend of yours has posted on

their Facebook site that has not been made private, ask them to remove it. It is true that some digital dirt will remain behind, so do be careful out there.

4. Fill in your LinkedIn.com profile

The best way to grow your online identity, particularly if there are other people with names similar to yours, or there are some negative items you would like to push further down on the first Google search results page, is to use some of the social media tools. Google ranks these active links higher than links on a static website. LinkedIn.com is a great first choice, because it is a business-oriented social network site, very user friendly and enables you to connect with other business contacts and their connections.

5. Create a Google profile

Google now allows you to create a profile for yourself (search for Google profile), which like LinkedIn will surface rather quickly to the top of the search results. While it allows you to input personal information, you may want to confine your profile to career or business related information.

6. Become the expert

If you are passionate about the work that you do and would spend time researching the area even if you're not getting paid, then share that knowledge with others. You can do this through either posting comments on other people's blogs or becoming a blogger yourself. There are many free blogging tools available including those found at www.wordpress.com and www.blogger.com. Blogs also helps raise your profile to the top of Google searches, where a potential employer can see how knowledgeable you are about the subject.

7. Decide what is private and what is public (for the most part)

Everything you do online is searchable. Even if you make your Facebook page private, all someone needs to do is copy and paste the information to a more public site. Having said that, you do need to make some choices about which tools you will use with your business colleagues, with your friends, and with associates who are both. For example, I "friend" my personal acquaintances on Facebook and invite my business associates to be

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LinkedIn.com is a great first choice, because

it is a business-oriented social network site...

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LinkedIn connections. For Twitter (the microblogging social networking site where you can post only 140 characters to people who have opted to follow you), I communicate with both my personal and professional contacts, although I tend to only tweet (post comments) about business related issues, with the occasional personal comment thrown in.

8. Listen to what employers are talking about

In developing company's social media strategies, the first recommended step is to listen to what their customers are saying online. You can do the same. Find companies that you would like to work for and check out what they are talking about. You can do this in several ways: Go to www.technorati.com to search for blogs about business areas of interest; search for the company blog and read it regularly; or check out the company's Facebook site, and get first hand insight into the company culture and their current projects.

9. Use social networking tools to find work

In addition to using online job sites (many of which are listed at www.poss.ca), you can use some of the newer social networking tools to connect with potential employers. These are just two of the many options:

- > Join networking groups available through LinkedIn. The site also posts jobs and has a Q and A section, where you can respond to people's questions and establish yourself as an expert.
- > Sign up for a Twitter account (and no, only some people tweet what they are

having for breakfast. Most people use it to tweet industry related news and important world developments). Then set up Tweetdeck, which is a dashboard for Twitter, where you can search for representatives from companies you would like to work for and click on follow. You can then see their tweets and respond, when appropriate, with useful information. Some of these companies are now tweeting when they have jobs available.

As a seasoned professional, you have a lot to offer, even in this tough economic market. Social media tools are just one more way of connecting with those employers who need your skills.

Anne Ptasznik, a writer and communications strategist, and a Certified Personality Dimensions Facilitator, has her Masters degree in Social Work and is currently completing the George Brown College Career and Work counselling program. Through her company, Creative Fusion, she helps individuals and companies manage their online reputations and leads Overcoming Your Fear of Online Exposure workshops for groups new to social media. For more information, please contact Anne at anne@myonlineid.ca.

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Beyond dynamic new positions opening in the social media field itself, a range of jobs is increasingly being advertised through social networking sites... ”

The Alchemy Of Transforming BAD JOB TO GOOD

Interested in helping your coaching clients to transform a bad job situation into a better one?

– By Jeff Garton

Based on a new book published by ASTD, titled *Career Contentment: Don't Settle for Anything Less*, this article discusses the transforming power of career contentment when dealing with dissatisfying job conditions.

The term alchemy originates from medieval times and refers to the efforts by chemists to transform metal into gold. The process didn't work, but the idea of magically transforming something bad into something good still intrigues us, and has become the foundation for billion dollar products and services, including: Plastic surgery, hair coloring, cosmetics, anti-aging, liposuction, anti-depressants and so forth.

Anything a person is willing to pay for can be transformed into something better. But buyers beware! The effects last only a short time before you begin thinking you need something new, better or different. Continuous improvement is in our genes, and so is complaining if we don't get what we want or when things don't always go our way. True alchemy or genuine transformations applied to people must come from within, not from the outside.

Job satisfaction is a proposition made by employers from the outside-in. It's dependent on what employers provide and conditional on whether your expectations were fulfilled. You can't simply choose to be satisfied, and because you lack control over your employer, job, boss, pay, benefits, and other things that make you satisfied, the probability exists that you may never be completely satisfied. But there still exists the possibility of a positive transformation even when faced with dissatisfying situations.

While you don't have total control over the people and circumstances that affect your life and job satisfaction, you still have control over how you choose to experience these things from the inside-out by your reasoning and contentment. The pathway to positive transformations begins from within, provided you choose to avoid complaining and look for ways to benefit from your unfortunate situations. Like the flower that sprouts through dirt, you learn and grow from your pain and adversity.

These are trying economic times, and to illustrate how the alchemy of contentment works, consider the many people who have been suddenly laid off and can't find work similar to what they had. Or imagine being forced to take a lower paying job outside of your normal career path just to feed your family. I coached such a person. I'll call him John and this is his story of transformation.

John is an information technology expert who managed a team of twenty five people prior to his being downsized from a company that he worked with for eleven

years. When John and I met his unsuccessful job search was approaching ten months, and for the last two months he had been working behind the hardware counter at Sears, often waiting on his former employees. He contacted me for coaching that would lead him back to his true calling and life purpose within his original career field. Had it not been for his interim job with Sears he couldn't have paid his bills or fed his family.

John was eager to escape what he believed was a humbling situation at Sears that included lower pay, a controlling boss, and work that was beneath his interests and abilities. His job search produced several interesting interviews but he could not convert them into employment offers, and the longer he worked away from his career field he feared his credibility would suffer.

After meeting with John for the first time it was apparent that his problem in locating his next ideal job was not his interim job, low pay, controlling boss or resume, but rather his misery and desperation. Try as he might to mask his

complaints and resulting lack of optimism, the desperation and residual anger was in his eyes and skilled interviewers were able to spot it. John was having difficulties landing another manager job because interviewer's perceived him as a potential liability. John lacked a basic sense of career contentment.

Soon after John started his coaching he began to realize that taking just a job out of necessity to pay his bills and feed his family was a noble purpose. And although he was not working within his preferred career path, there was virtue or goodness in working with a clear conscience that he was doing his best to fulfill his purpose. By shifting his focus in this new direction John found meaning in his purpose, and gratitude despite circumstances, which inspired him to take pride in his efforts.

This simple change in thinking to produce positive emotions enabled John's contentment or resilience to endure rather than allowing his unhealthy emotions to jeopardize his demeanor, health and interim job by complaining. At the same time, the problems with his boss seemed to disappear, and John couldn't remember how or when this happened. Only when John decided to change did his situation magically transform around him. Even though John lacked job satisfaction, he was advantaged by the alchemy of his career contentment.

Within four months after his coaching began, John was offered an excellent job that put him back on his original career track, and for a moment he questioned whether he should leave Sears. He felt transformed, rejuvenated, revitalized, challenged and proud of his accomplishments. Sears was sorry to see him go and his new employer was delighted to get him. They respected his attitude, humility, ethics and integrity, and it didn't matter what he had been doing over the last year, but that he had put his heart into doing his very best, and it showed.

Career contentment is not about the corner office, perks or bonuses. It's about the journey and loving what is as you work towards a better future, and in the process growing from the experiences that life brings your way.

If you expect your job to be perfect or if you choose to remain dependent on things you don't have or people and events you can't control to make you satisfied, it's guaranteed that you will be dissatisfied, frustrated, angry, disillusioned and worried. You could complain or quit, or you could reason to recognize your contentment with what you have and leverage it to persist and endure until you can turn your situation around. If you can't recognize your contentment, your discontent signals that you may be in the wrong situation and should leave rather than waste your time and talents complaining. It's your sense of contentment, or lack of it, that helps to guide your transformations.

Unfortunately, you don't have John's real name or you could ask him yourself about the alchemy of career contentment. He's happily working for a major firm as their director of Information Technology. But if you happen to be visiting the Chicago area, stop by a Sears store and you might find him behind the auto parts counter where he still works on weekends.

The alchemy of career contentment occurs from within and is the source of your personal empowerment. It involves transforming your circumstances from bad to better by learning how to love what is. This ability not only inspires hope, but also your enduring resilience, self-motivation and natural engagement. Without it, you're dependent on the world to make you satisfied.

Jeff Garton, is author of, *Career Contentment: Don't Settle For Anything Less* (ASTD Press, 2008). His company produces innovative learning materials and delivers Coach and Train-The-Trainer certificate programs to employers on the topic of career contentment. For information or to explore training options, visit www.careercontentment-thebook.com.

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**Elizabeth McTavish
Cannexus 2010 Bursaries**
In recognition of Elizabeth McTavish's valuable contribution to career development, CERIC is providing six bursaries for Cannexus 2010 courtesy of The Counselling Foundation of Canada. For further information including criteria and application forms visit www.cannexus.ca.

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CANADIAN EDUCATION AND RESEARCH INSTITUTE FOR COUNSELLING

"Thank you for the opportunity to present at Cannexus 2009. I enjoyed the opportunity to share and network with colleagues doing similar work. It was an excellent slate of sessions with so much to choose from (yet again!). I'm looking forward to 2010 in Ottawa."

— Sonya Hardman, Assistant Executive Director, VCCS Employment Services, Kawartha Lakes

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



Linda Duxbury, Ph.D.

Linda Duxbury is a Professor at the Sprott School of Business, Carleton University and the Director of Research at

the Centre for Research and Education on Women and Work. She is a widely published author and one of Canada's leading workplace health researchers and workplace demographic experts.



Mark Savickas, Ph.D.

Mark Savickas, Ph.D., Professor and Chair of Behavioural Sciences at the Northeastern Ohio Universities College of Medicine and

Adjunct Professor of Counselor Education at Kent State University. He is a respected author and speaker on vocational behaviour and career counselling.



Denise Bissonnette

Denise Bissonnette is an internationally renowned writer, trainer and keynote speaker. For two decades, she has inspired people and organizations

throughout North America to look beyond traditional concepts of career development and to craft livelihoods rooted in the individual "genius" of each person.

Unleashing ORGANIZATIONAL GENIUS

– By Star Ristow-Bell, M.Sc., Director Leadership Development and Kelly Kozar, BEd, CDFI, Director Training Development

"Intellectuals solve problems; geniuses prevent them."

Albert Einstein

Organizational vitality and innovation depends on our abilities for creative thinking, for early identification of opportunities and to confidently manage change. These abilities have never been more essential and least available than in the context of our current global economic crisis. The external context in which human service organizations have been operating has left many organizations overwhelmed with how to survive, let alone how to thrive! After decades of funding uncertainties and financial constraints, "doing more with less" has become more than a solution to a transient problem – it has become a habit of thinking and behavior. Like most habits, "doing more with less" may have become so automatic that we have resigned ourselves to never again operate from a different framework.

"Problems cannot be solved by thinking with the framework in which the problems were created."

Albert Einstein

Changing our framework or perspective is the key to generating new solutions and unleashing our genius for creating healthy and more successful organizations. Understanding how habits of thought and behavior are formed can provide the power to choose new and more effective patterns. This article uses

systems thinking concepts to illustrate some practical approaches drawn from cognitive and positive psychologies which can provide short term methods for increasing our capacity to thrive even in the midst of crisis.

Systems Thinking Approach

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

Margaret Mead

Understanding the dynamics of groups or systems provides valuable insights for changing our world. A system can be considered as an organized group of elements or parts, distinguishable from other parts outside the system, acting in dynamic relationship so that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. From this perspective we have access to a number of ways of looking at the consistent patterns of interaction which organize the structure and processes of the system. Concepts and patterns isomorphic to systems in general permit us to develop a similar understanding of the various system levels and subsystems within the broader organizational system. A system is only as healthy and vital to the extent its constituent parts or members are empowered to function at the level of their full potential. The ideas discussed below are more powerful when applied to all system levels of the organization including the level of "self in the system".

Creative Thinking

"Creative thinking is not a talent; it is a skill that can be learnt. It empowers people by adding strength to their natural abilities which improves teamwork, productivity and where appropriate profits".

Edward de Bono

One dimension of understanding a system or organization is to consider the degree to which the system is open or closed. Characteristics of open systems include higher self-esteem of individual members; clear communication; greater ability to change rules when needs arise; respect and encouragement of differences; and, an increased flow of information between the system and the outside world. Self-esteem of individuals in closed systems tends to be lower; communication is indirect, unclear and incongruent; rules are often out of date and rigid; "group think" is imposed to reduce the fear of differences; and, the system tends to exist in isolation from the outside world.

An open system provides the progressive climate needed to support creative thinking abilities. Greater self esteem of members enhances confidence to think the unthinkable. Clearer communication increases constructive sharing of ideas leading to the discovery of more ideas. The ability to democratically negotiate rules provides opportunities to update rules that have become barriers to creative interaction. Encouragement of differences

Unleashing ORGANIZATIONAL GENIUS

Continued from page 11

provides an environment that is conducive to the expression of new ideas thus avoiding the stagnation of “group think”. Bringing in new information from the outside supports the discovery of new ideas to address old problems or bringing old ideas together in new ways to reveal innovative solutions.

The openness of a system can be increased by employing cognitive processes to explore current beliefs and attitudes, develop an understanding of how these beliefs and attitudes were formed and taking action to update beliefs and attitudes to enhance the capacity of the system to discover its innate creativity. Through these processes we can bring back into awareness the limiting thoughts that have become “just the way we do things” and introduce new habits of thinking and behavior more appropriate to our current context.

Understanding the nature of limiting thoughts makes it possible to identify and then replace them. The stronger the identification or attachment we have to a particular thought or belief the more likely that it will become limiting. Limiting thoughts can be identified by paying attention to feelings of stress or anger. Thinking limiting thoughts does not feel great. One tends to feel constricted and diminished when thinking them. Limiting thoughts are often accusing, blaming and critical in nature, putting the fault on something external. Language can also help us identify limiting thoughts as they are often attached to words like need, should, always or never. Limiting thoughts are most likely attached to our self-image and can restrict the freedom to express one’s full potential. Unlimited thoughts on the other hand are expansive and provide freedom from unhealthy stress.

Identifying Opportunities

“Instead of pouring knowledge into people’s heads, we need to help them grind a new set of eyeglasses so that we can see the world in a new way.”

John Seely Brown

Biologically, the brain processes 400 billion bits of information per second, but is only aware of 2,000 bits at any one time.¹ It is not surprising therefore that many potential opportunities go unnoticed. We do however have access to a very sophisticated piece of technology to help us notice what is most important – the mind! At the base of our brain stem is a group of cells known as the Reticular Activating System (RAS). The RAS is a little control centre that serves as a filter for what enters our conscious and unconscious mind. The RAS is also very obliging and without question filters what enters our minds based only on where we focus our attention. Do you focus on the problem or the solution? When we consciously activate the RAS by focusing

on solutions we draw to our attention the information and opportunities that will assist us in putting the solution into action.

Very often solutions have been staring us in the face but the blind spots created by our past conditioning have kept us from noticing them. When we change our thinking we gain the ability to see things from a new perspective. Changing faulty beliefs and assumptions and maintaining new habits of thinking does, however, require some consistent effort. Our opinions result not only from our experiences (what is said and done to us), but also the way we interpret these experiences. Over time these opinions become the thoughts, beliefs and attitudes we assume to be true and our choices and behavior reflect these “truths”. Eventually some of our behaviours become redundant patterns that totally bypass our thoughts, cognitive processes and conscious choices of intention.

Creating change means bringing back into consciousness our “self-talk” cycle: our self-talk determines our self-image, our self image determines our behavior, our behavior reinforces our self-talk and round and round we go! To create the change we desire we need to start sending ourselves

the right messages. Vision statements are a powerful tool for changing our “self-talk” cycles. Visioning can move us away from the problem and put our focus on what it would look like with the problem already solved. In order to correct negative self-talk we need to actively and emotionally engage our cognitive processes with the visions we aspire to create. Unfortunately for some the use of visioning is not considered to be a valuable exercise. This limiting thought becomes a barrier to understanding how vision statements can be introduced to the process of the mind to create dynamic change.

Divergent thinking abilities are closely related to creative thinking and are essential for writing vision statements with the power to inspire and energize new patterns of thinking and behavior. Divergent thinking is expanding in nature, starting at a single point and moving outwards to many possible answers. Convergent thinking on the other hand is a process of reducing information towards one correct answer. Both thinking styles are necessary for increasing knowledge, however the over emphasis of convergent thinking in our education systems has possibly led to devaluing divergent thinking and by extension the devaluation of the essential role vision statements play in creating positive change. Approaching the visioning process from the perspective of convergent thinking gets us stuck in trying to define how we will progress towards the vision. Visioning is a divergent thinking process which activates the RAS and opens our minds to the expansiveness of possibilities.

Managing Change

“And the trouble is, if you don’t risk anything, you risk even more.”

Erica Jong

Flexibility is a systems thinking construct postulated by David Olson, professor at the University of Minnesota, to describe functional systems in terms of balancing stability and change. In Olson’s three dimensional Circumplex Model (1999) unbalanced systems with a high degree of flexibility are described as

“

To create the change we desire

we need to start sending ourselves the right messages.

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chaotic – lack of leadership, dramatic role shifts, erratic discipline and too much change. At the other extreme unbalanced systems with a very low degree of flexibility tend to be rigid – authoritarian leadership, strict discipline, roles seldom change, too little change. Flexible systems balance stability and change, leadership can be shared and decision making is a democratic process, negotiations are open and include all parts of the system, roles are shared, rules can be changed, and when necessary, change is accomplished with ease. In times of stress balanced systems will adapt, while unbalanced systems will tend to resign themselves to their extreme patterns of chaos or rigidity creating a cycle of more stress.

Resignation is an unawareness of our ability to make different choices and opting instead to take for granted even the things we find distasteful about our situations. This attitude that we are powerless to change things translates into blindness for exploring possibilities. Playing it safe or choosing to look good rather than risk failure characterize the limited thinking of resignation.

Every member of the organizational system brings with them their own tolerance for change – their own “comfort zones”. “Better the devil you know than the devil you don’t know” is the limiting thought that keeps us invested in the familiar and fearful of change. To make the familiar strange and the strange familiar (to change), we must first experience discontent with our current comfort zones. Visioning plays an important role in changing our self-image

to include the changes we desire thereby making the familiar unacceptable and providing the motivational energy to discover opportunities to achieve the new.

Our Vision for Unleashing Genius Through exploration, understanding and action we access the creative power to construct open, flexible systems with the ability to unleash the full potential of the whole and each component part. Consciously choosing to understand our context from new perspectives challenges the current beliefs, attitudes and assumptions that have led to our current limited thinking and behavior patterns. Dynamic visioning converts resignation into vitality, innovation and the pursuit of opportunities.

Introducing this vision to one’s daily self-talk starts the process of becoming the change one desires and supports the growth of dynamic organizations ready and able to go beyond solving problems and unleashing the genius to proactively meet the demands and challenges of our every changing external context.

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REFERENCES

¹ *What the Bleep do We Know?* Dir. William Arntz, Betsy Chase, Mark Vicente. 2004. DVD. Down The Rabbit Hole, Quantum Edition. Fox Home Entertainment, 2006.

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When we change our thinking

we gain the ability to see things from a new perspective.

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DIFFICULT CLIENTS

A Lawyer's Advice to Career Counsellors

Difficult clients are a part of any professional practice where you are paid to give expert advice.

– By Juliet Wehr Jones, Vice President, Career Key Canada

While generally the stakes are higher for lawyers than career counsellors in dealing with difficult clients (the risks and costs of malpractice lawsuits are greater), counsellors can use the same techniques to successfully handle them.

But unlike lawyers, counsellors are more likely to be Social personality types (RIASEC) and shy away from conflict with others. So to avoid conflict, you need to be proactive and directly handle problems early.

Here are a few things I learned in my ten years as a labour and employment lawyer, representing employees, unions, and management.

The Non-Paying Client

Always have a fee agreement in writing. If they delay paying their bill more than a couple of months, let them go. I represented unemployed clients so I understand how difficult (and guilt producing) it is to charge money to people without a job. On the other hand, you have to pay your bills and they will benefit from your help. There is an opportunity cost to your time; if you spend it with this person you will not spend it with a paying client or on marketing.

The Bill Questioner

If your client questions your bill more than once, you need to let them go. One question is usually a misunderstanding (or on rare occasion, your mistake). Two questions is likely signs of a “chronic bill questioner” who will question every bill you send, waste your time and aggravate you. You can nicely say that you think he or she would be better served elsewhere.

The Client Who

Doesn't Take Your Advice

If your client continually refuses to take your advice, you need to let them go. They are paying you for expert advice and if they are unwilling to take it, then they need someone else.

The Potential Client that Makes Your Gut Contract

If you talk with someone interested in your services and you do not make a connection with the person or you feel turned off, no matter how much you need the client's money, don't take the client. This was advice from my first mentor and the only time I disobeyed this feeling, I made a regretful decision.

The Dissatisfied Client Who Wants a Refund

Hopefully you will avoid many of these by following the advice above. But if you get one, just give them the refund. It will take more time, and be more stressful if you fight it out over principle. There are some people who are unrealistic, lazy, or opportunistic (see “gut contraction” above) and the less time you spend with them the better.

The Dissatisfied Client that Complains to Your Boss

If you work at a place where you have no choice over the clients you must handle, it is best to keep your boss in the loop early with difficult clients. Managers hate ugly surprises. And as simplistic as it sounds, if you have a boss who is unsupportive or doesn't trust you to make good decisions, you need to get a new job. Difficult clients, when they sense sympathy and weakness from your employer, will make things worse –

and potentially damage your professional reputation. You need a supportive boss who backs up your decisions.

Finally, document your work. Right after the client leaves your office, take 15 seconds to write down in the file a few words to remember what advice you gave someone. It doesn't have to be complete sentences or a full picture – just enough to trigger your memory.

Most lawyers do “pro bono” (free) legal work so there are exceptions to some of my advice about fees. But it is easy, especially when you want to help people in need, to take on more unpaid work than you can afford.

We work in career development because we want to help people, but we need to be careful not to kill the goose that lays the golden egg. In the long run, the more financially secure you are, the more “pro bono” work you can accept.

Juliet Wehr Jones, J.D. is Vice President of Career Key Canada, www.careerkey-ca.org, the #1 Internet source for helping people choose careers. Her popular blog, The Career Key Blog, <http://careerkey.blogspot.com/>, is featured on Alltop Careers.

IDENTIFYING TALENT

Even in difficult times, there are always opportunities for talented people in the job market.

– By Tim Rutledge, Ph.D

It's important for organizations to create objective criteria for identifying exactly who their talent is. (“I know it when I see it” won't cut it.) Armed with this information, companies can proceed to target their retention efforts on the employees they can least afford to lose.

Organizations need to strive to keep their best employees because there aren't enough people to replace the baby boom generation that's already begun to retire from the workplace. According to Statistics Canada, there are only 1.9 replacement workers for every employed person in Canada, down from 3.7 in 1983. You can see where this is trending; at this rate, there will be fewer and fewer people to recruit. Companies will need to keep the talent they've got.

Here are some suggested criteria for identifying talent. Every organization will have its own set.

Talented employees:

1. Exceed most of their performance objectives.
2. Are well and favourably known to senior management.
3. Have a 'big picture' orientation, showing interest in aspects of the business that they're not directly involved with.
4. Volunteer for cross-functional teams.
5. Actively seek out performance feedback.
6. Pursue continuing education opportunities.

Since talented people are being courted by headhunters, managers need to create a work environment that makes it feel unlikely that the grass is greener elsewhere. If talent walks, it may not be possible to find comparable replacements.

Tim Rutledge, Ph.D. is the president of Mattanie Consulting. His practice helps organizations with their Human Resource Development needs. He is the author of the book *Getting Engaged: The New Workplace Loyalty*, Mattanie Press, Toronto, 2005, 2009, and the e-book *Employee Engagement, Get To The Point* Books, Dallas, 2009. Here is his contact information:
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In our efforts to minimize our impact on the environment, we will be reducing the print volume of our Bulletin. We encourage our subscribers to get involved and migrate to the electronic version of the newsletter.

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Not For Sale: Why We Need a New Job Search Mindset (first edition)

AUTHORS:
Cathy Keates

PUBLISHER:
Career Considerations 2009

ISBN:
978-0-981 1034-0-2



For the most part, there is the traditional textbook study guide set-up which makes it an easy and fast read. The book is written in the traditional style with each new item introduced at the end of the previous chapter and repeated at the beginnings of the next chapter. We find a table of Contents, Acknowledgements, a Preface and an Introduction and then the book is divided into two parts with the first four chapters in the first part dedicated to an explication of "The Sales Mindset of Job Search". The author details her exploration of "what the Sales Mindset is, the metaphor it is based on, and why it has become so popular in the first part." Part II has three chapters dedicated to "Defining an Integrity Mindset of Job Searching". There are various graphic aids throughout the text which really do help, for example visual aids or graphs as summary aids. We then get an Appendix, Endnotes and an Index. These are all components of a traditional text book which are familiar to most of us. In her Preface the author tells us the "why" for the book;

establishes the "what we know"; and finally states her "Intentions for This Book". The Introduction sets the stage and gives us an abstract of the two parts of the book.

So what is going on in this book? I believe this is the story of an epiphany and the catharsis which often follows life changing realizations. A process that I feel is ongoing for the author and has been a long arduous task. She affirms what Career Counsellors have been trying to say to all the other professionals involved in helping people find work or jobs. Career counselling is not about getting a job although that can be one of the affects or results. It is about finding out who you are and what you want to end up doing. A job or various jobs along the way are just a way to either get there or make a living while trying to get there. I offer kudos to the author, for not only bravely sharing her story, but also for her caring approach to sharing her ideas with others. She has detailed beautifully and clearly that the "one size fits" approach is the wrong one.

I think the book is a must read for Career Counsellors as a validation, for HR and job developers for helping them understand the difference between them and Career Counsellors and for anyone looking for career counselling who has had to deal with getting job search help instead of the career advice they wanted.

Jaz Bruhn has studied at Georgian College in the DSW program and Humber College in the Teachers of English as a Second Language program. In 1990 he received his B.A. with specialized honours in Linguistics and in 1994 he received his M.A. with a focus on the Style and Stylistics of English, both from York University. He is currently working and has worked for the last three years on the Cannexus, National Career Development Conference, project at CERIC.

CONFERENCE SKETCH

Not to be missed events in your area!



Cannexus 2009 Engaging and Inspiring

~ By Paula Wischoff Yerama

As a self admitted conference junky I carefully consider every conference opportunity I come across. Because of my connection to the Career Development Association of Alberta (CDAA) and my interest in connecting with professionals in the career development field I regularly attend the Building Tomorrow Today (BTT) Consultation in Edmonton, and the professional development opportunities offered by the Association's Chapters. This year, in an effort to build partnerships for CDAA and spread the word about BTT, I decided to travel to Toronto, Ontario for Cannexus 2009. What began as a professional trip with a mission soon became personal as well as I found myself engaged in conversations with people I would have likely never met had I not attended Cannexus.

In order to take full advantage of the Cannexus experience I flew into Toronto a day early to attend Norman

Amundson's preconference workshop, Active Engagement: The Being and Doing of Career Counselling. Dr. Amundson's session set my frame of mind for the entire conference. I can summarize my learning during his session with this quote:

*"If you do what you've
always done,
you'll get what you've
always gotten"*

(Unknown)

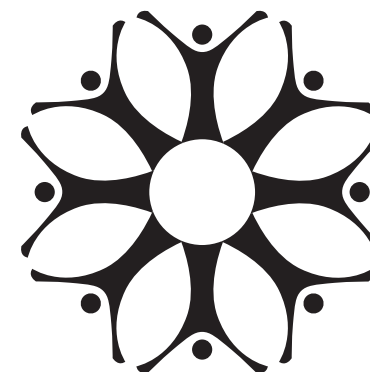
Dr. Amundson actively engaged his session participants in 'doing' the counselling process differently to get different results and shared a variety of techniques to engage clients and help them realize their strengths and achievements in a way that is meaningful to them. With refreshed enthusiasm I carefully reviewed the concurrent session offerings and chose those which I hoped would build on the learning I had experienced during Dr. Amundson's preconference session.

Choosing just one session from a selection of twelve to fourteen proved to be a difficult task; there was definitely something for everyone. One session in

particular stood out for me and that was "Valuing the 'Human' over the 'Commodity'" with Cathy Keates, MA, and Carol Roderick, MEd, PhD. I was inspired to rethink and re-evaluate my personal beliefs about job search metaphors and their impact on my clients. Cathy and Carol provided food for thought with their well researched topic that is sure to gain momentum in the field.

Innovation and passion are abundant in the field of career development and conferences such as Cannexus and the Building Tomorrow Today consultation (among others) are excellent opportunities to connect with others. Cannexus 2009 was a phenomenal experience and I am looking forward to keeping in touch with my new friends!

Paula Wischoff Yerama, CDDP, is the President of Career Designs for Life Inc. and the Vice Chair of the Career Development Association of Alberta (CDAA).



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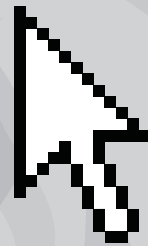
Work Destinations – Labour Mobility
www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/workplaceskills/labour_mobility/index.shtml?lang=en

FuturePaths – a Saskatchewan solution connecting young people to careers
www.futurepaths.ca/

WORKink – an online career development and employment portal for Canadians with disabilities
www.workink.com/

Career Guide for New Immigrants – Monster.ca
http://content.monster.ca/16052_en-CA_p1.asp

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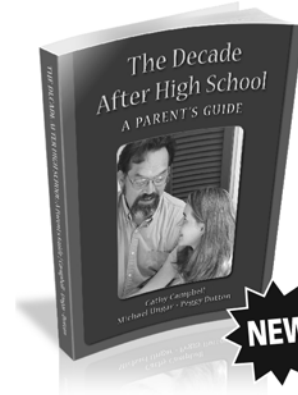


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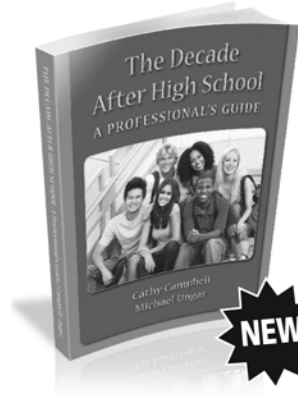


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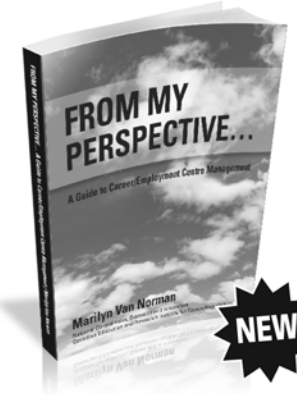
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Extreme Makeover!

As you may have noticed, ContactPoint.ca underwent a radical new design earlier this year in our continual efforts to improve and be of greater service to it's users.

Based on feedback from industry professionals, colleagues, and partner organizations, the need for doing this was clear. With our expanded content and content delivery channels, we can now reach a larger, more diversified group of professionals, and also provide our partners with more options in reaching their intended audiences through advertising.

The goals of the re-design were to enhance the online experience, making it as user-friendly as possible; deliver relevant and timely information to our end-users; implement industry standard technologies; allow for better performance and traffic monitoring; and update our overall image.

New features on ContactPoint.ca include RSS feeds, discussion forums, live chat, YouTube-style video, an upgraded ListServ which now has over 1,700 subscribers, and practitioner blogs written by our esteemed colleagues, Dr.John-Paul Hatala, Melissa Macfarlane and Isabel Savoie.

What hasn't changed is our focus on delivering content that is both useful and current. Our popular sections continue to be our Online Resources, Job Boards, Bulletin newsletters, and Networking lists.

We are mindful of our mission to advance the knowledge of our colleagues by delivering content they depend on to make informed decisions. We are confident that our new website will allow us to fulfill our mission and ultimately enhance end-user value.

We wish to thank you for your patience and feedback during the process and if you have any questions or comments regarding our new website, please contact us at: admin@contactpoint.ca.



Write an Article for the Bulletin!

ContactPoint is looking for writers interested in submitting articles for an upcoming issue of the Bulletin newsletter. **Deadline for submission is September 15, 2009.**

To submit an article or for more information, please contact us at admin@contactpoint.ca

The Fall 2009 issue will feature articles on the subject of HR/Corporate/Workplace Issues.

Potential topics could include:

- > Organizational career development
- > Human resource information for small and medium businesses
- > Hiring practices of companies
- > Privacy trends and practices affecting human services in private sector
- > Conflict resolution in the workplace
- > Conflict mediation
- > Human rights in the workplace
- > Workplace bullying
- > Evaluation of training results in the corporate environment

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