

Calling all Apprentices! Are you trying to find an Employer?

By Shelley Lowe Dorsey

If you are thinking of entering into one of the in-demand areas for finding employment, think about the trades. There are over 150 occupations within the categories of: Construction, Service, Industrial and Motive Power - with 55 of them being Red Seal trades. This means that once you complete your designated hours and become a qualified journeyman, you can work anywhere in Canada.

The first step is to find the employer who will take you on and who is willing to be a dedicated employer and teach you the tricks of the trade.

So, the first place to look is the newspaper. Your local community paper will usually have advertised apprenticeship opportunities that might interest you and the benefit is that those employers might very well be close to your home.

More so, your local unions that represent your field of interest can also be an excellent place to look - along with trade associations and trade journals. The official trade bodies that regulate the fields are always in touch with the employers in the field. If you are affiliated with a local Secondary School or College, check them out as well for opportunities – some administer apprenticeship sessions, pre-apprenticeship sessions, in class sessions and also have connections with employers.

In addition, there are websites that specialize in the trades and apprenticeships such as: www.apprenticeshipsearch.com, www.collegeoftrades.ca and www.skillscanada.com . If you have a company in mind that you wish to work with, check out their website too and don't forget the *Ontario Job Bank* and the *Yellow Pages* for leads. Both of these resources are underused and much forgotten sources of valuable information.

Networking with friends and family can also be very helpful because, those individuals who work in the trades often have links to other trades people. Employers will always talk to their employees when they need to hire staff, therefore, you should ask for referrals everywhere you go.

You can also present your apprenticeship proposal at Job Fairs where you can meet employers and ask questions directly and in person. You'll get inside information and a jump on the competition.

Last but not least, if you haven't uncovered an employer after this, career counsellors will provide valuable suggestions on possible employers and can introduce you to Job Developers who will present hiring incentives to employers on your behalf.

Finding an employer is easy once you are armed with your passion and drive to learn a trade and present the employer with the many incentives offered by MTCU (the Ministry of Trades, Colleges, and Universities).