

# LEARNING CURVES

CONTINUING EDUCATION • JOB TRAINING

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*“Take your finger out of your nose.” “Don’t lick your shoe.”*

## THE PERILS OF MOTHERHOOD AND SCHOOL WORK

BY: S.P. MARLAY

*“Put that down and get over here now!”*

These are just a few of the things one might overhear me saying, to my incredibly active three year old son, at any given time. The role of mom is quite different from anything I could have ever imagined. Professionally I have competently trained over 5,000 people, managed sales teams, implemented strategic training plans, designed and developed courses and materials for the public and private sectors.

However, none of this could have prepared me for the never-ending demands of a three year old while I have been attending Ryerson University in pursuit of a psychology degree.

I’ve always considered myself to be a well-organized individual with an innate skill for multi-tasking, but motherhood brought the term “multi-tasking” to a whole new level. I’ve heard it said that, “You don’t

know what it means to be tired, until you have a child.” I used to dispute this sentiment and take offence. There were times when I would work overtime and by the end of the week I would be exhausted. Hah! What did I know about being exhausted? Nothing!

Raising a toddler can be stressful too, at times, as well as tiring and extremely draining. Due to the seemingly unlimited amount

CONTINUED ON 5



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# EARN WHILE YOU LEARN

BY ANNE MCDONAGH

(Note: For the sake of simplicity I refer to “tradesmen” but you should know that women are also apprentices.)

In the last few years, we have been increasingly made aware that Canada needs skilled tradesmen, perhaps more than it needs the lawyers or dentists that parents want their children to become. Why? Because of demographics! . According to the government, the skilled trades’ workforce is aging and their replacements (apprentices currently in training) have not added up to the numbers that are required to replace them.

What is an apprenticeship? It is a hands-on training program for people who enjoy working hard physically, who are manually adept, who learn by doing and who would like to earn while they learn. Eighty to ninety percent of your training is on-the-job. The rest of the training—the theory underlying your on-the-job experiences —takes place at a community college. (There are some variations in apprenticeship programs but this is the basic model.)

A certified tradesman, who has completed his training, is known as a journeyman. He trains new apprentices at a ratio of no more than three to one. The journeyman is there to answer immediately questions that you may have as you perform a variety of tasks. You do not “get lost in the crowd” as so many college and university students do in classes of one hundred or more.

What if you do not know if you could be a skilled tradesman? There are pre-apprenticeship programs which prepare you for an apprenticeship usually with a co-op component so that you see what the work is actually like before you commit yourself. You can also get career counselling at any of the Employment Ontario Centres. Many union training centres and private career colleges offer opportunities to begin trade-specific in-class training as an entry point to an apprenticeship. They will also help you find a sponsor (employer) if you decide to continue.

Will you make a good income? Many apprentices, upon completion of their training, make over \$40,000 a year often with the employer they have been apprenticed to. Others start their own businesses as independent contractors in their fields. And they all have been earning a decent wage each year of their apprenticeships. They certainly don’t end up thousands of dollars in debt from student loans. And they have skills that will last them a lifetime.

Where do you find an employer? In order to become a skilled tradesman, you have to complete an apprenticeship successfully by working under the guidance of a journeyman, i.e., a tradesman with a Certificate of Qualification. And you are required to find your own sponsor/employer to take you on and train you in a particular trade. Until recently that requirement discouraged many would-be apprentices. Unless you knew someone who was a journeyman, it was a daunting task. Asking someone—a complete stranger—to take you on as an apprentice is a bit like applying for a job having no idea whether the employer

is hiring. Needless to say, this requirement probably stopped lots of potential apprentices from following through. Fortunately, there have been a number of changes, which have made pursuing an apprenticeship much easier.

1. Community colleges offer Co-Op Diploma Apprenticeship programs which allow you to get apprenticeship training while earning a college diploma.
2. As already mentioned, a pre-apprenticeship program gives you a chance to try out an apprenticeship but it also leads to a real apprenticeship and sometimes counts towards the hours you need to complete it.
3. You can find an employer through a website Apprenticesearch.com. This website connects employers who want an apprentice and would-be apprentices who are looking for an employer.
4. Employment Ontario will also help you find an employer.
5. If you are a recent immigrant and a skilled tradesman, Skills for Change, www.skillsforchange.org, will prepare you for the Certificate of Qualification test and generally prepare you for the Canadian workplace.

What are the pre-requisites to becoming an apprentice? Apprenticeships last from two to five years. You must have completed high school and may require senior courses in math and science. All require good communication skills. The minimum age is 16 with no upper age limit, and all apprenticeships are open to both men and women.

What else does a would-be apprentice need to know? There are 22 regulated trades. When you have completed your training in one of these trades, you must prove you are competent in the skills of your trade by writing an exam for certification. You must receive 70% to pass. Then you receive a Certificate of Qualification. As a journeymen you can work anywhere in the province and in some cases anywhere in Canada. There are over 100 unregulated trades which means you don’t have to have a Certificate of Qualification although employers and unions prefer that you have “voluntary certification”.

There are four apprenticeship sectors: automotive, construction, manufacturing and service. Here are some examples:

- AUTOMOTIVE**
- Automotive Service Technician
  - Automotive Painter
  - Fuel and Electric Systems Technician
  - Truck and Coach Technician

- CONSTRUCTION**
- Bricklayer
  - Carpenter
  - Construction Electrician
  - Painter and Decorator

- MANUFACTURING**
- Industrial Electrician
  - General Machinist
  - Mould Maker
  - Tool and Die Maker

- SERVICE**
- Arborist
  - Baker
  - Electronics Technician
  - Hairstylist

How can a person actually become an apprentice?

1. First you must find an employer to train you. As already mentioned there are various paths to do this.
2. Then either you or the employer must contact a training consultant at the closest Ministry of Education and Training apprenticeship office.
3. The training consultant will meet you and the employer at the workplace and assess the ability of the employer to train you.
4. There is financial help for tools, etc.

Consultants for Toronto and the GTA can be reached at: 1-800-387-5656. Here are their addresses:

**Toronto District Office**  
625 Church Street  
1st Floor  
Toronto, Ontario M7A 2B5  
General inquiries: (416) 326-5800  
Front desk: (416) 326-5775  
Fax: (416) 326-5799

**Pickering Regional Office**  
1420 Bayly Street  
Unit 1  
Pickering, Ontario L1W 3R4  
Telephone: (905) 837-7721 or 1-800-461-4608  
Fax: (905) 837-6726 or 1-800-461-5385

**Mississauga Regional Office**  
The Emerald Centre  
10 Kingsbridge Garden Circle  
Suite 404  
Mississauga, Ontario L5R 3K6  
Telephone: (905) 279-7333 or 1-800-736-5520  
Voice-mail: (905) 279-7709  
Fax: (905) 279-7

*Please let us know what you think about this article at [learningcurves@hotmail.com](mailto:learningcurves@hotmail.com)*



## READERS REACT TO STUDENT FEES\FREE TRADE, LEARNING CURVES, SPRING 2014

Hi, I really enjoyed your article and it did provoke some thought. I would agree that education is one of the most important elements in a person's success in life, and I believe it should be sponsored and encouraged by the government especially for the less fortunate ones.

Skilled trades also should be highly promoted. I know that free trade has enriched the eastern countries, but I also hear about miserable working conditions and a poor social environment.

Knowing all this makes me think that free trade is more of a world problem and the solution in my opinion would be to live in harmony with nature and a sense of equality for all the living.

Thank you for the article,  
*(Tim) Shpetim Avdiaj*

Education and a proper health care system make a country prosperous.

College and university tuition should be more affordable so the poor can attend post secondary education.

Large corporations should encourage lower tuition fees.

*Athlin Kerr  
Toronto*

Interesting article but I would like to see you go a little more in-depth especially with regards to possible solutions.

Thanks for bringing this topic to the public's attention. It definitely needs to be major election issue.

*Ms. Wade  
Oakville*

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# PETE’S SUMMER SCHOOL\*

A PROFILE OF AN ADULT STUDENT BY MINA WONG

I have a little story about Pete, a student in my sociology class several summers ago.

Pete was in the classroom when I showed up for the first meeting. He had already read the course outline and purchased the textbook. In short, Peter Teller (Pete) came across as someone who wanted to succeed.

“Today’s class taught me a lot about myself”, Pete said after our first class.

“Glad to know that, Pete. I hope you’ll find this course interesting”, I replied.

“It’s very interesting. All my courses are really useful. I wish I had gone to college as a twenty-something. This is ten years later with a family and no time to lose”, he volunteered about himself.

“What are you studying?” I reciprocated with curiosity.

“Travel and tourism management”, he smiled with a twinkle in his eye. “I’ll be a travel agent and work my way up”.

“How much longer before graduation?” I genuinely wanted to learn more about this student who stayed to talk with me.

“If I pass all seven courses this summer, I can finish another seven this fall and graduate at Christmas”, Pete revealed a course load that seemed enormous to me.

“Seven courses this summer? Wow, you must work very hard”, I hid my

disbelief behind benign optimism.

“I get up early and go to bed late. But my wife and I know if I do that for another two semesters, I can start working full-time after Christmas”, Pete assured me.

“My wife, Angela is a bookkeeper. She encouraged me to get an education. She even wakes me every Saturday for work, and she makes sure we stick to our budget”, he started to tell me about his family.

“So your wife is a bookkeeper, and what’s your job?” I became very interested in this family living on a shoestring.

“I am a tour guide. I take visitors to Niagara Falls every Saturday morning and bring them back in the evening. It’s steady work, the money’s not bad, and I can pay for tuition and some of the rent”, Pete was honest about his responsibilities.

From Pete, I also found out he and Angela had a nine-year-old son, and that the couple had met while working together in retail when Angela was attending college part-time. Back then, Pete had never thought about much beyond survival jobs.

Pete had acceptable high school grades but little family encouragement to try college or trades school because tuition seemed out of reach.

His parents ran a small diner in Scarborough that they sold for a modest return when Pete was twenty-two.

As a young man, Pete knew how to work at a diner but not much else.

“So I tried retail, but the money just wasn’t there”, Pete said sheepishly. “I wanted to do more, but all my options meant school or training and money I didn’t have.”

“But Angela pushed me. She said it wasn’t enough just to be cute and clever. She said if we were to have a future, both of us had to make more than minimum wage. Then Angela finished college and got a full-time bookkeeping job. She promised to help me if I went back to school”, Pete was grateful for his fiancée’s support even back then.

“But I hummed and hawed for another few years in retail hoping to make better money as a supervisor. Well, the money just wasn’t coming but I couldn’t go any further with only high school”, Pete candidly assessed his career limitations.

Pete and Angela did marry while he was still thinking of school. However, on a tight budget, they hung on to a small apartment even after the birth of son, Joshua.

“We’ll have to live there until we can afford a bigger place”, Pete appreciated the family’s sacrifice while he was in school.

“Joshua must look up to you and Angela”, I said with sincere respect for the family’s determination.

“Oh, the little guy does his homework when I do mine – we’re study buddies that take up the whole kitchen table. Josh thinks his mom is the smartest person with money”,

That summer, Pete did stand out in my class of twenty sociology students – not because he earned the highest marks, but because he tried the hardest. With a family to raise and bills to pay, he did his very best with all seven courses – getting up early and going to bed late every single day. With his family’s support and sacrifices, he earned an overall B+ average.

That’s the story of Pete who studied sociology with me several summers ago. It’s one of many shared stories of the challenges and successes of adult learners.

*\*With permission from Peter Teller, a travel specialist in Toronto*

*Please let us know what you think about this article at [learningcurves@hotmail.com](mailto:learningcurves@hotmail.com)*

*Mina Wong has taught post-secondary social sciences since 1999. A lifelong learner, Mina is also interested in adult education, prior learning assessment, educational research, and learning styles across culture, gender, and economics in different parts of the world.*

# GAME CHANGERS: BOOMERS IN THE CLASSROOM

BY JOANNE MACKAY-BENNETT

These days when you say that your grandparents rock, you don’t mean in a rocking chair! Baby boomers, many of whom are now seniors, have dramatically changed the face of retirement. They are curious, healthy, engaged and more likely to be learning about social media or taking a dance class than retiring to a sedentary life.

In the eighteen year period following World War II, 8.2 million babies were born in Canada. Now firmly bracketed between the ages of 50 and 68, boomers continue to defy stereotypical notions of what is age-appropriate.

As the idea of retirement at 65 is itself becoming a relic, boomers tend to approach their senior years with the same iconoclasm that typified their youth. For them, ‘the golden years’ means a time for learning or improving skills, for exploring personal interests and for maintaining their physically fit lifestyles.

At Overland Learning Centre (55 Overland Drive), one of the TDSB sites for continuing education, General Interest classes cover everything from Art to Zumba. On a recent Saturday morning, I spoke to a group of senior students and discovered what it is that keeps them coming back to school.

Cynthia, an educator with a graduate degree who has taught every level from kindergarten to university, and a jazz musician, enrolled at Overland because she needed to develop her computer skills. She has job interviews coming up. “You simply cannot expect to get a job today

without computer competence,” she tells me. Exuding an enthusiasm for the new, Cynthia sees her current class in Excel as just one in a long line of future classes: “It’s impossible to learn everything there is to learn about computers!”

Like Cynthia, Joan and Claire are also enrolled in computer-related classes, but for different reasons. It was Joan’s teenaged son who made it clear to her that her computer skills needed some serious updating. Like many parents, Joan feels that “getting” computers is one way of keeping in touch with the younger generation.

As a freelance visual artist and photographer, Claire is aware of the importance of being able to build and maintain a website in order to showcase her work. She has taken classes in Photoshop and Web Design and is already planning on taking a course next year in Microsoft Office.

Typically, boomers like Bob (not his real name), are highly-motivated learners. They are curious by nature. In fact, Bob was so ahead of the curve that when his parents discovered that he had bought a computer in the 1980’s, they wanted him to return it and get his money back! With almost ten years of Continuing Ed. courses under his belt, he knows that mastering computer technology is vital in today’s fluctuating job market. “Companies don’t have any loyalty anymore when it comes to their employees,” he says. “You have to keep upgrading your skills even for contract work.”

Boomers like Marietta, Kris and William, enroll in recreational classes for the joy of physical activity and for the social component. All three are taking ballroom dancing and to listen to them talk about how much fun it is, you want to sign up! For Marietta and Kris who have been married for 31 years and are both still working, dance class allows them to spend time together as a couple and immediately introduces them to a like-minded circle of friends. “We often go out dancing as a group during the week,” Marietta tells me. “It’s a great way to meet new people and to have fun.”

What came through loud and clear

in my conversations, is that there is a huge demand for more General Interest classes, not fewer! Seniors are constantly being advised to remain intellectually, socially and physically active. Is there a better way to accomplish all three than to sign up for a class? The boomer market is well, booming, and the government would be wise to take note.

Here’s my advice to them: Tap into the spirit of curiosity that animates this demographic and save some of the costs of caring for isolated seniors. The drive to learn, that so many boomers and seniors possess, is all about health. As Bob told me, “I just can’t stop learning!”



# MOTHERHOOD AND SCHOOL WORK

CONTINUED FROM 1

of energy young children possess and their constant requests (i.e. more juice mommy, more, more!) they test your patience, your physical ability, your mental capacity and your self-control (as in “This child is going to force me to eat a tub of Ben and Jerry’s!”). But my son is also extremely adorable and lots of fun.

I’ve been home with my son since birth and am grateful for the experience. Deciding to return to school full-time was both terrifying and exciting. I was excited about learning but terrified it would be too challenging and stressful. My first year was challenging and stressful but also mentally stimulating and inspiring. The main source of my stress was affordable daycare. Unfortunately due to a lack of available support and resources, I missed classes in order to take care of my son.

He is always right by my side, my little buddy, mimicking my keystrokes on the computer or picking up one of my books for English class and pretending to read it. He’s familiar with my campus and gets excited when I tell him, “We’re going to school!” He always says, “Yay mommy. We go to school. I go to school too.” On campus he proudly greets people and tells them he goes to school there, which always gets a chuckle.

Due to lack of childcare I had to bring him to a couple of meetings. I must say though that having an active toddler sitting on your lap while getting feedback from a professor about an assignment is not ideal. Straining to follow

their words while your child says, “Mommy I want to go park now. Now mommy, now!” I have been blessed with very understanding professors who have been gracious about my plight.

I’ve also had to juggle studying while potty training. One such session went like this:

“Did you go poo?”

“No mommy.”

“Well, you smell like poo poo.”

“No mommy. Poo go bye bye.”

“Poo go bye bye?”

“Yeah poo gone. Poo went to the park.”

“Really... Let me check your pull-ups.”

“No mommy no poo, poo gone.”

And so the conversation goes. There is in fact no poo in his pull-ups, just trace amounts. Yes he was correct the poo went to the park, that is, if by park he means smeared on his bedroom wall.

The key for me this year has been discipline and planning. I’ve had to plan, plan, plan and then plan some more! I’ve had to plan for the unexpected because when you have a child there is always the unexpected.

The decision to go back to school has been one of the best decisions I’ve ever made next to having my son, even if it does mean being constantly interrupted when I am studying to play ball with him or wipe poo off his bedroom wall.

*Please let us know what you think about this article at [learningcurves@hotmail.com](mailto:learningcurves@hotmail.com)*

In the last issue of Learning Curves we asked for readers to send us poetry or short stories they had written. Here is a poem that we received in answer to our request.

## DEMITASSE

BY CAROL-FAYE PETRICKO

Long ago in a world  
Enchanted before time knew me,  
Anonymous I exulted in my creation.  
Possibilities myriad beckoned  
For my exploitation -  
Delectation.  
Goldmines, the El Dorado of my reveries

Lay resplendent before me;  
And promise, a tincture of gold  
Made me bold -  
Imbued my life,  
Immune from strife -  
Fancy free.

Banished now from the promised  
land of my youth,

Time has wrought changes -  
So many as to astound,  
Confound.

It has brought me onto a plain  
Barren.

Perfect view to see  
What lies in wait for me -  
Eternity.  
Curious it is to be known by  
What once I dismissed as  
Innocuous,  
But which one day now I see  
Will extinguish me.

To come to heed  
As down life’s path I lead -  
Time.

The green-eyed golden lass no longer  
Unencumbered by any caveat, but now  
Bereft  
Of the illusion of my anonymity  
By decay’s proximity.

For behold, my name’s inscribed

By the One beyond all bribe,  
There - in the book of  
Mortality.

## LEARNING IN THE SUMMER 2014-JUNE, JULY AND AUGUST

BY WENDY TERRY

Summer is not a down time for learning. It is just that in the summer, it’s more work to find what’s offered. There are fewer courses offered than in the fall, winter and traditional spring terms, but still there are plenty of courses to choose from; however, start dates are spread out over, June, July and August.

If all the continuing education providers printed a calendar with schedules, you could scan the start dates to find the courses offered in the summer months. Learning Curves scanned all available calendars in order to present our overview articles on Learning in the Summer for our 2010, 2011, and 2012 summer issues. You can find these by going to [www.learning-curves.ca](http://www.learning-curves.ca).

Some of the Toronto and GTA providers print calendars with schedules. They are the G.Raymond Chang School of Continuing Education at Ryerson University, the School of Continuing Studies at the University of Toronto, Centennial College, Sheridan College, Durham College and the Toronto District School Board Learn4Life program and the ESL program.

### Ask a Program Officer –save time

Unfortunately to save printing costs, some educational organizations have stopped publishing hard copies of course calendars with schedules.

To save yourself the frustration of drilling down on the computer from the program area to the course description, to the schedule only to find it is not offered in June, July or August, here’s what to do. Call a program officer for the course area you are interested in and make your inquiries as to what is available in the summer months.

### Career Colleges and Community Programs

These providers have start dates year round. For community programs go to [www.211Toronto.org](http://www.211Toronto.org). Select Employment, Education and Training, then select Vocational Training. For career colleges go to [www.ontariocollegeseach.ca](http://www.ontariocollegeseach.ca).

Readers, if you would like schedules printed, tell the Dean of Continuing Education or the program head, the ones who make the decisions about budgets. Don’t just complain to the front line information staff. You could point out that you are more likely to register for a course if you could easily see how to fit it in.

# Learning Curves wants your writing.

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# TELL YOUR NURSING FRIENDS OR RELATIVES BACK HOME!

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Jean Robles as founder of CCACT along with the professional teaching and nursing staff of CCACT have over 15 years experience in the Philippines and 24 years in Canada as the owners and operators of a Private Career College and over 30 years of Canadian nursing experience. Mrs. Robles reports that CCACT is building on their experience in South Asia and in Canada to bring continuing education to nurses, medical technologists, physiotherapists and other health care professionals from many different countries.

"We believe that now is the time to present our vision and passion worldwide to reach prospective new immigrants to Canada prior to their arrival in our country. By offering training within their home country, health care professionals will obtain the skills and knowledge expected from not only Canadian employers but employers around the world. All of our courses are designed to enhance career opportunities".

The health care industry is one of the largest professional groups worldwide. Globally, nursing is projected to be a high growth employment area given the increase in the aging population. There will be an increased need for medical care delivered at home, in hospitals and nursing care facilities by all health care practitioners and in particular nurses.

All workshops offered by CCACT are taught by Canadian Registered Nurses and experienced health care professionals. Workshops can assist you in advancing your career within your home country, the Middle East, Canada and the United States and around the world.

"This September we are prepared to bring educational courses for nurses that will range from upgrading of basic nursing skills to advanced theoretical and practical courses for nurses of all professional levels and educational backgrounds."

Some of the nursing workshops being offered are:  
OSCE practical assessment prep course;  
Patient communication  
Phlebotomy Procedures  
Infection Control  
Nursing Skills-IV Therapy, Wound Care  
Stroke Management  
Psycho-Geriatric Care  
Alzheimer's Disease & Dementia  
Gerontology

## REGISTER TODAY FOR A ONE DAY NURSING WORKSHOP

Jeanelle Robles at: info@theccact.com or  
call 416 619 0816

Colombo Sri Lanka  
September 19th, 20th or 21st, 2014  
Kuala Lumpur Malaysia  
September 26th, 27th or 28th, 2014

All students will receive a "CCACT Certificate of Attendance" and are invited to attend a FREE 3 hour information session on studying or working abroad!

# DON'T WAIT TILL AFTER LABOUR DAY TO REGISTER.

If you wait, the class maybe full or cancelled for the lack of a few more registrations.

Registrations for the Fall Term 2014 starts in July and some in August

Information Sessions for the 2014-2015 year are held in August

**Call to find out dates now!**

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## Bryan Wright 1949–2014

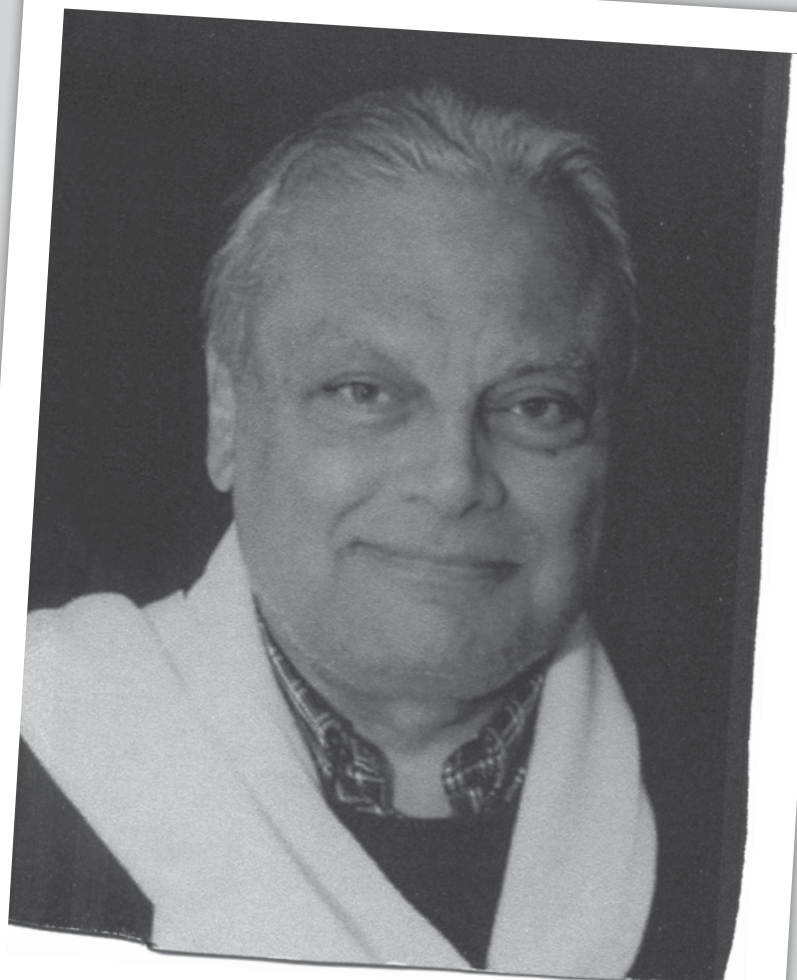
**On March 20, Bryan Wright, a great friend of Learning Curves, died suddenly at the age of sixty-five.**

Bryan was in charge of advertising for Learning Curves from 2001 to 2010. But he was much more than that. He gave us many ideas for the paper, from topics for articles to layout of the paper. He was well-read, well-educated and curious about everything; he was a real lifelong learner.

Bryan was a truly creative person. He was a musician and had made his living as a folk singer in his youth. While he was working for Learning Curves, he was also composing songs both lyrics and melody with his beloved son, Matthew. He also invented board games and had successfully brought one to market called "Shout it Out".

Bryan was lots of fun and enjoyed teasing us about our pet peeves and passions. Although he knew better than most of us what a computer can do, he refused to learn how to use one, much to our chagrin and puzzlement. In retrospect, it was an endearing quality; it also meant we had to meet somewhere and go over our current draft every time we brought out a new issue. It was time-consuming and inefficient, but it was fun and we all got to know each other better than we would have if he had used a computer.

Bryan's influence on the paper was profound. We were extremely fortunate to have his help both in the early days of Learning Curves and later as it became more established.



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# BROCK U OFFERS FLEXIBLE OPTIONS TO ACHIEVE A BEd AND CERTIFICATE IN ADULT EDUCATION

For the last two decades, the Centre for Adult Education and Community Outreach (CAECO) in the Faculty of Education at Brock University has been providing experienced and aspiring adult educators the knowledge and skills to enhance their work with learners in adult teaching and learning contexts.

Offering a BEd as well as a certificate in adult ducation, CAECO is proud to offer one of Canada’s most recognized adult education programs. Incorporating innovative e-learning technologies and the expertise of faculty and subject matter specialists, and the talents of facilitators, the Centre offers a robust academic program of courses exploring theories and practices of:

- Adult learning through the lifespan in work-based, post-secondary, community outreach and global environments
  - Curriculum design, delivery and facilitation in traditional and digital contexts
  - Learning assessment and program-based evaluation strategies
  - A Leadership development in learning organizations
  - Exploring relations of power, gender and diversity in learning processes
- Courses are offered in flexible study

options to meet the needs of a diverse group of students; adults managing the complexities of life who, “often work during

the day, juggle family responsibilities or are trying to transition into a new field in mid-career,” says Director Dr. Sharon Abbey.

CAECO offers learners options of engaging in small, site-based courses or entirely online courses on a part-time schedule. This allows them to balance academic, professional and personal life goals.

In addition to foundational core courses, the program also offers a variety of Adult Education electives – all available online – that allow students to specialize their skills. With courses like “Geragogy: Educating the Third Age Learner”, “Gender Issues in Adult Learning”, “Learning in Digital Contexts”, “Adult Learning Disabilities” and “Intercultural Communication in Adult Education”, opportunities for professional development and enrichment are not limited to teaching in a classroom.

CAECO graduates apply their degrees in many sectors, including business, industry, health care, government, financial services and manufacturing, where training and development require a solid foundation in the principles and practices of adult education.

Faculty members develop courses in cooperation with subject matter specialists. Course facilitators lead learners through course materials that are continually revised and refined to ensure currency and relevancy.

“CAECO hires facilitators who are specialists in their field, many of whom have remained committed to our program

for many years,” says Abbey. “They encourage active self-directed learning by working closely with learners to set relevant goals and evaluate their progress.”

According to Course Facilitator Andrew Han, who has taught most of the program’s core courses, he is motivated by the drive shown by his students on a regular basis.

“For me, every adult learner is in his or her way courageous,” he said. “Many of them undertake a learning journey despite everything that is usually going on in their lives such as work, family, or sometimes even a crisis. It is always inspiring to witness.”

Even with a long history in adult education, Abbey says there are no signs of slowing down curriculum development and outreach work. Much like its student body, CAECO realizes the need to evolve to match an ever-changing landscape. With a small but dedicated team of staff, facilitators and faculty, the program looks to expand its reach into new markets.

“I find it exciting to consider the endless possibilities CAECO is capable of taking from vision to reality,” says Abbey. “Currently, we are exploring the global market and third-age learning.”

Global Initiatives Coordinator Kathy Rose embraces the challenge to create intercultural and transnational collaboration in this increasingly interactive world.

“The CAECO program delivery model provides diverse classroom, field and work experience opportunities beyond boundaries and borders for adult learners and facilitators,” she says.

“I am extremely proud that CAECO is recognized, by both Brock University and adult education communities across Canada, for its exceptional online undergraduate degree program,” says Abbey. For more information on the Centre for Adult Education and Community Outreach, visit [www.brocku.ca/education/futurestudents/adulted](http://www.brocku.ca/education/futurestudents/adulted)

*Please let us know what you think about this article at [learningcurves@hotmail.com](mailto:learningcurves@hotmail.com)*

# WHERE TO GET CAREER COUNSELING IF YOU WORK FULL-TIME

BY ELIZABETH MERCHANT

Do you feel as if you need a career or job change, but are not sure what sources are available to those working full-time? Fortunately, there are places to turn to. Colleges and universities offer career assistance for current students, as well as alumni, so if you are a graduate of a post-secondary institution, you can book some time with a counselor. However, there are certain criteria you have to meet such as being out of school a certain amount of time and there may be a fee.

At George Brown College, graduates can access career information and get assistance with their job search through a service called “Career Wise,” available through the Alumni Relations office free for up to one year after students graduate; after that there is a fee of \$45.00 for each 55 minute session.

So, what can a client expect during a session with a counselor?

“The Alumni Career Services assists grads with creating a strong resume and cover letter that will get noticed by an employer,” explains Trisha Grace, the Career Services Liaison. “I also offer a mock interview session where the graduate

can practice interviewing skills and learn more about the interviewing process, and the skills for which an employer may be looking. Some alumni may need help with career planning.”

For more information go to [www.georgebrown.ca/alumni/careerservices/](http://www.georgebrown.ca/alumni/careerservices/)

The “GBCareers” link can help you in a number of ways

- Search and apply for jobs online
- Receive email alerts for job postings
- Manage your resumes and cover letters and more.

Trisha Grace can be contacted by calling the Career Centre at the St. James Campus at 416-415-5000 ext2395.

In addition to one-on-one sessions, the Alumni Career Services also offers year-round fun and educational events.

Humber Community Employment Services (CES) is an employment and training service aimed at the community, not just Humber students and alumni. CES representatives go out into the community to bring awareness about their services, some of which are:

- Workshops on job search topics

such as contacting employers and labour market information

- Information and referral to programs and services
- Mentorship opportunities

There are five locations and the extended hours until 7:00 pm once a week is a real plus for full-time workers. Check this link for other available times:

[ces.humber.ca/contact-us/locations.html](http://ces.humber.ca/contact-us/locations.html)

In addition to post-secondary institutions, there are other good sources for career counseling, especially for those who are struggling with indecision over the next steps in their lives. One great example is the YMCA of Greater Toronto’s Career Planning & Development Services located at 2200 Yonge Street, which offers fee-for-service testing, such as the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator®(MBTI®), the Strong Interest Inventory®, Emotional Intelligence (EQ-i®), the Canadian Differential Aptitude Tests®, as well as other personality and interest assessments. A career counselor can sit down with you to interpret your assessment results and help you to understand

your strengths/assets. Through one-on-one counseling, you will develop a sense of direction and purpose so that you can head for the career track that will bring out your full potential.

So what age of client goes for vocational testing? Lynn Davies, counselor at the YMCA’s Career Planning, says, “We work with any age from 16 years old and up. People come into Career Planning searching for answers. Perhaps they are wondering, “What should I do for the rest of my life? What courses should I take in school? How do I decide which career is for me?” We help a client of any age feel confident in selecting a career that will support their individual well-being and satisfaction.”

To schedule an appointment contact 416-928-3362, ext. 22609

For more information on YMCA’s vocational testing, visit: [www.ymcagta.org/en/get-a-job/career\\_planning/assessment\\_packages/careerplanning.html](http://www.ymcagta.org/en/get-a-job/career_planning/assessment_packages/careerplanning.html)

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## BRIDGING PROGRAM OPENS DOOR TO UNIVERSITY BY THOMAS SOCKNAT

It's never too late to embark on a university education, even if you don't think you have the required background. Just ask Matthew Hitch. By his mid-30s he felt like his life was in a rut and, although wanting to further his education, he felt he had squandered his opportunity for university studies when in high school. Then, through a friend, he discovered the Millie Rotman Shime Academic Bridging Program which provides access to the University of Toronto for those aged 19 and up who have been away from formal education for some time and don't meet the usual university entrance requirements.

Thomas Socknat, Academic Director of the Program, says "a lot of people just don't think they could ever qualify for university studies, especially at the U of T, but that is exactly what the Academic Bridging Program is designed to do—provide the opportunity for "non-traditional" students to explore and pursue post-secondary education."

Students can enroll as either full-time or part-time students. While full-time students take a total of three courses, both the full-time and part-time students take one of three Bridging courses (Contemporary Canada, a Canadian Studies course; Canadian History; or Introduction to Literature) which are specifically designed to help students brush up a variety of academic skills and prepare them to succeed in post-secondary studies. Those who successfully complete the program are admitted to the faculty of arts and science with at least one full credit towards their U of T degree.

And that's what Matt did. With the encouragement of his wife, he enrolled in the Program and, having a passion for history, he chose the Canadian history course. Still, he was somewhat anxious about his ability to do university level work after being away from formal education for so many years. "However, my anxieties were quickly subdued," he says, "as

I engaged in the network of help offered at U of T's Woodsworth College." These include a series of study skills seminars (which cover tips on learning strategies, study methods and essay writing), assistance with writing at the Academic Writing Centre, and personal attention from instructors since all classes are relatively small.

Although a good number of students don't enter university directly from high school for a variety of reasons, a lot of people are still surprised that an access program like the Academic Bridging Program exists, even though it first began in 1967 (originally known as the Pre-University Program) and has been helping thousands of mature students access the University of Toronto ever since. Most students who complete the program hail it, in Matt's words, as a "life-changing experience". "As soon as I entered the program," he says, "I began to take advantage of all the amenities offered to U of T students. I started going to the Athletic Centre to swim every day, I made regular appointments at the Writing Centre to get help with my essays and develop my writing skills, I visited all the beautiful campus libraries, I made appointments at the Career Centre to develop my resume, and became active in some of the numerous events happening all over campus." Life-changing indeed! Matt is currently in his third year pursuing a degree in History and American Studies.

Prospective full-time students must registrar for the fall term but part-time students have the choice of three sessions: the Fall Session (September to April), the accelerated Winter Session (January to June), and an even more intensive Summer Session.

Now is the time to register for the fall 2014 academic term. For more information check out the website: [www.wdw.utoronto.ca/bridging](http://www.wdw.utoronto.ca/bridging).

*Please let us know what you think about this article at [learningcurves@hotmail.com](mailto:learningcurves@hotmail.com)*

# UNIVERSITY IN THE COMMUNITY AT CAMH

JOANNE MACKAY-BENNETT

On April 8th, University in the Community launched a new program at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH).

Held weekly in the client library at the Queen Street location, the 9-week course, aptly titled "Thought for Food," covered everything from the secrets of homemade pasta to the reuse of household items for small container gardening – including a pair of old rubber boots!

Although University in the Community has offered humanities classes in community centres (St. Stephen's Community House and Davenport Perth Neighbourhood and Community Health Centre) and on the St. George campus of the University of Toronto (Woodsworth College and Innis College) for eleven years, "Thought for Food" was the first time that UiC has partnered with CAMH.

Our 'green' topic was based on its widespread appeal and on its proactive applicability. Aiming for subject matter that neither segregated nor pathologized course participants, approximately half of the class of twenty-five students was composed of adults who were (or had been) CAMH clients while the other half had had no prior association. For several students, attending the course was the first time that they had ventured onto the facility's grounds.

Through informal and lively conversations with an eclectic group of presenters, participants expressed their common interest in making healthy choices about what we plant, what we eat, how we cook and how we live. Taste tests were plenty, along with hands-on activities and group excursions.

Toronto Star columnist, Joe Fiorito,

showed us that making homemade pasta (on a desk top!) takes as much time as it does to boil a pot of water. Heaping plates of kale salad with lemon- garlic-dill tahini dressing, demonstrated by vegan chef Doug McNish, were happily devoured and Canada's economic history was put to the taste test when Campbell House curator Liz Driver spoke about the historical context of 19th century pancake recipes. Writer Stephen Humphrey introduced us to the bio-diversity of pollinators in Toronto (purple flowers work best) and Liz Kirk, coordinator of Foodshare's Sunshine Garden, and Claire Trepanier, of Toronto Master Gardeners, offered expert guidance on the tangible and intangible pleasures of gardening.

Community food educators Sharon Booy and Erika del Carmen Fuchs encouraged us to see that, at its root, making healthy food choices is all about respect: for ourselves, our community and our planet. Thank you to CAMH Volunteer Resource Co-ordinator Andrea Reynolds, to the expert facilitators and, most of all, to the spirited participation of the students who made "Thought for Food" such a fruitful collaboration!

Thanks to CAMH volunteer coordinator, Andrea Reynolds, Joe Fiorito, Liz Driver and the Campbell House staff, Community Food educators Sharon Booy and Erika del Carmen Fuchs, vegan chef Doug McNish and his assistant Taylor, Sunshine Garden coordinator, Liz Kirk, expert, Stephen Humphrey, Master Gardener Claire Trepanier.

As Thought for Food taught us, human connection tearing down the walls that separate us is. We all live on this planet together and it's time to join forces!



*Campbell House curator Liz Driver spoke about the historical context of 19th century pancake recipes.*



# NETFLIX-ING YOUR JOB SEARCH

BY LISA TRUDEL

**A**re you a Netflix watcher? Are you part of the new breed of television watchers who likes to binge on three episodes a night of your favorite show? If you are, and you are job searching, it might be time to Netflix, or customize, your resume.

Netflix started a whole new era of television. Whether you watch *Orange is the New Black* or *Lilyhammer*, or *House of Cards*, Netflix-only programming has shifted the way millions of people watch original shows. Viewers demanded the customization of shows and high-quality offerings, and the success of Netflix and its innovative and unique television series and programming continues to grow.

This phenomenon is similar to the job searching shift to customizing resumes and the need to get your applications past computer screening devices when you want to secure a job interview. If your goal is to have a potential employer binge on your cover letter and resume and enjoy them so much that he or she is willing to email you to set up an interview, you need to know as much as possible about how companies sort resumes.

Today, most large to medium-sized companies sort applications by using tracking systems that scan resumes for keywords and expressions before considering a candidate as qualified and therefore worth an interview. Why companies use resume scanners include statistics, disclosed by Amiee Groth, in a 2012 article for the Business Insider.

She reported that 50% of job applicants are not qualified for the jobs they are applying for; as a result of that information about 90% of companies now use scanners.

In Paul Hill's book *The Panic Free Job Search*, he called it "direct marketing". According to Hill "You are the hunter. You take control of your outcomes. You do not sit back and wait; you strategize and take action." Taking action can start with the following five tips that can help you pass resume scanners and screeners:

**1) Use exact key words and expressions from the job posting.** Scanners want you to mimic keywords from the job description as much as possible. For example, if the job posting states "must have 3 years experience" and your resume states "over 5 years experience", change the digit 5 to the digit 3. Speak the language of the reader and remember that initially the reader is a scanner not a human being.

**2) Research the company website.** Before applying to a job posting, try to research the company by reading its website to get a sense of the company culture. For example, are certain words used to describe the company's values? If a company has stated an interest in environmental sustainability, include relevant volunteer work on your resume. The company might have programmed related keywords into the scanner but not the job posting, so if you mention shared values, you might get one step ahead of other applicants.

**3) Remember KISS: keep it simple and streamlined.** The formatting of your resume and cover letter should be all in the same size font, preferably size 12, and in the same font style, preferably Times New Roman or Arial. Many scanners don't accept BLOCK letters, so instead use bold and underlining for your section titles. The best approach is to not perplex the scanner software. Keep your resume simple and streamlined.

**4) Give value to all your education.** Sometimes people start studying toward a university degree and then because life happens, have to drop out before completion. If this happened to you, value can still be added to your professional development without lying and stating that you have a degree. For example, if you studied one year in the commerce program at Ryerson University and had to drop out before achieving your degree, your resume can state "Ryerson University, one year coursework in Accounting and Finance, toward Bachelor of Commerce Degree".

It is also important to note that many screening systems assign higher scores to certain elite universities and community colleges. If you did not get your degree from a top Canadian university but you attended a continuing education evening class or a Saturday seminar at one, include this type of qualification on your resume.

**5) Make it clear that you are qualified.**

Your customized resume might be read at first by a scanner system, but eventually you want a person to finally review your application. Statistics show that the average human resources professional spends seven seconds glancing at each application to see if the candidate is qualified. If it is not obvious that you are qualified, your application will be tossed in the shredder and not in the "to be considered" file.

If your resume does not connect the dots between job requirements and your qualifications, your application will not move forward, so be clear and concise, and demonstrate genuine interest in the position by making sure your qualifications are highlighted.

These are only five ways to customize your resume. If you want to learn more about how to target your applications, consider contacting the Centre for Education & Training ([www.tcet.com](http://www.tcet.com)) to see if you qualify to have a Career Specialist assist you.

Recruiters, Career Counselors and Job Coaches might tell you different things about how to write, or fix your resume; yet one thing most will agree on is the importance of customizing your application. Just like Netflix watchers, employers demand customization if they are going to binge on your application!

*Lisa Trudel is a Career Specialist with the Centre for Education & Training. [ltrudel@tcet.com](mailto:ltrudel@tcet.com)*  
Please let us know what you think about this article at [learningcurves@hotmail.com](mailto:learningcurves@hotmail.com)

# ACCESS BUSINESS COLLEGE TAKES THE SUCCESS OF ITS GRADUATES TO HEART!

BY JOANNE MACKAY-BENNETT

**C**hoosing the right business college takes time. On top of researching the courses of study, the experience of faculty and the number of graduates who obtain work after graduation, students should also consider the college's commitment to foster a mutually supportive milieu.

Access Business College takes that commitment to heart. Sonia, the Director of Access has worked in the college sector for 32 years. She knows how alienating it can be when you suddenly lose a job or undergo a change in personal circumstances. For Sonia, students are more than numbers. They are human beings with unique talents who with hard work and personal support will find fulfillment in the workplace.

Some of the students at Access Business College come to the school via the Ontario government's Second Career program. Having experienced the harsh realities of starting over, they are encouraged by Sonia, her staff and fellow students to persevere. "Nothing comes easy, nothing comes free," she counsels her students, but with discipline, a strong survival instinct and the support of a community of friends, she assures them that their efforts will pay off and that the best is yet to come.

A case in point: Steven, a former Access student, lost his job as a government employee.

About the same time, another student, Aziz, serendipitously saw an advertisement for Access Business College. Both enrolled in Access' Property Administration program on the same day. They became good friends. When Steven was offered a full-time job soon after he graduated, he grabbed it. Then, when a second, more suitable position was offered, Steven recommended his friend Aziz for the job he was leaving. His employer was delighted.

Another case in point: At a graduation ceremony that took place at Access on May 23rd, I had the pleasure of meeting new graduates, Carlo and Erica. Laid off after 30 years of working in the trades, Carlo had had virtually no computer experience. He balked at the idea of having to sit at a desk all day. But Sonia persisted. She knew that the opportunity to enroll in the Second Career Property Administrators' program was too good for Carlo to pass up. As luck would have it, Erica, a fellow Access student, who just happens to be computer savvy, sat beside Carlo in computer class. Erica, Carlo gratefully admits, became a 'second teacher.' Now that they have graduated, Carlo and Erica will go their separate ways but they remain fortified by the collegial atmosphere that flourishes at Access.

Like most graduation ceremonies,

Access graduations celebrate their laureates for their academic success. But they also recognize their unique contributions as people, as future employees and as citizens of a world where human connection matters.

Many thanks and best of luck to the newest cohort of Access graduates: Anthony, Carlo, Erica, Marie, Onur and Serghei.

*Access Business College 416-510-2739*



*Sonia with a group of students and graduates*

# LEARNING THAT MAKES A DIFFERENCE

Meet Laurie, David, Elaine, Leanne, Shuqing and Dawn – just a few of the people who have achieved inspiring success with the help of our Continuing Education courses. The skills, connections and confidence they gained made it possible for them to achieve their goals. Read their stories on our website, and see the difference you can make in your own life with George Brown College.

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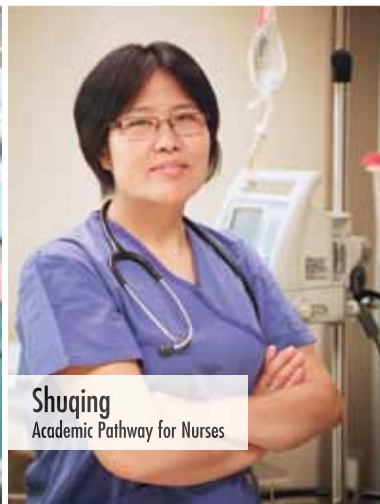
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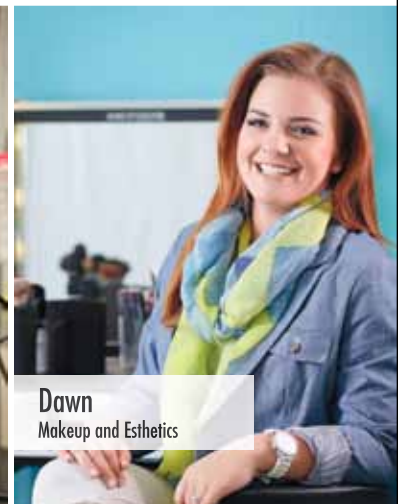
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ONE STUDENT AT A TIME

# DEAR ELCEE



Dear Elcee is a feature in every  
issue of Learning Curves.  
Send your questions about  
education, training, careers, jobs to:  
**Elcee – The WEA of Canada**  
157 Carlton Street, Suite 205  
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*Dear Elcee*

*I am considering going back to school and am confused with the number of choices I have. The program I want to take (Business Administration) seems to be offered by many colleges right here in Toronto. Everyone I speak to has an opinion on which school I should attend (which is usually the one that they attended). How do I make the right decision for me? Confused on Carlaw*

Well, Confused, you have already made the hardest decision. Going back to school will be one of the most important steps you will take. Living in the GTA presents a wider variety of educational options than anywhere else in Canada. Although I would not presume to tell you which college you should choose, I can provide some tips to help you decide.

**Watch your Speed!** Many private schools may offer a program in six months and that may be a good option for upgrading, or refreshing a skill; however, a six month diploma program won't compete with a College Diploma or a University Degree. Look into the program closely. As a general rule of thumb I have found that hard skills such as technical and administrative work well within the private school domain whereas soft skills (social services, human resources) may be better served in a college setting. Look into such add-ons as placements, internships and apprenticeship options. If you are studying a technical skill, ensure that the school's equipment is state of the art.

**Beware the "Heavy Sales" approach.** Community colleges and Universities may advertise but they will rarely sell you on a program you may not be suited for. If a school is trying to talk you into a program or attempting to get you to "sign on the dotted line" ... don't. Also, beware of any school that is willing to make compromises on the course of study. (for example, allowing you to not have to do a placement or willing to shorten the program for you). **Beware Statistics!** Most schools will present you with statistics stating such claims as 97% employment rate! You will want to ask them such questions as "where" did their students get employed and in what period of time did they get employed?

**Question the Labour Market Statistics.**

Labour market stats can be easily manipulated. If I told you that there was a 100% increase in the employment of blacksmiths in the past year that could simply mean that last year there was one and this year there are two. Consider the source of the information and the agenda behind the information. The best source of labour market information I can recommend is [www.workingincanada.gc.ca](http://www.workingincanada.gc.ca). Government websites, although at times wordy and hard to read, are the most trustworthy source of information.

**Where did your future co-workers study?** When choosing a program ask people working in the field where they studied. Too shy to ask? Go onto some of the website forums and ask online or contact the industry associations. You will get the advice you will need on which schools have a good reputation for your field.

**Visit the School!** Once you have narrowed down your choices, why not visit the schools in person? Is the school an easy commute? Walk around the campus and get the feel of the place. Can you see yourself there? Do they offer supports to the student such as tutoring and a career centre? Visit the student centre and ask questions.

**Can you get this training for free?** There are great adult learning centres throughout the GTA which offers courses in Hairdressing, Business Classes, Early Childhood Assistant, Personal Support Worker and many, many more. Computer classes can be taken through continuing education and are as good as anything you may take at a far more expensive class.

Good luck.

We value your opinion. Please let us know what you think about this column. Let us know at [learningcurves@hotmail.com](mailto:learningcurves@hotmail.com).



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