



Looking Backwards, Looking Forward

Outcomes of
A Conference for
Internationally Educated Professionals
“Breaking Barriers Building Bridges”

held on
February 20, 2003, Toronto
Centennial College Conference Centre

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Editor: Frank Mclean
Compiled & Edited by: Sabita Ramlal

Quotation: *“The education and skills that immigrants bring to Toronto are absolutely essential for the competitiveness of our economy. It is critical that internationally educated professionals are integrated quickly into the workforce in the areas in which they were trained. In providing immigrants with relevant and timely information on how best to advance their careers in Toronto, this conference makes an important contribution to Toronto's competitive position in the global economy.”*

Brenda Librecz, Executive Director, Economic Development, City of Toronto

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Overview:

The “Overview” on the Conference web site www.iep.ca tells what the Conference was all about:

A Conference for Internationally Educated Professionals

Are you an Internationally Educated Professional (IEP) living in the Toronto region?

Whether you are working in your chosen field or not, the 2003 IEP Conference *Breaking Barriers, Building Bridges: A Conference for Internationally Educated Professionals* is an event specifically designed for you.

Through workshops targeted at five different sectors (engineering, accounting, IT&T, nursing and teaching) you will have the opportunity to talk with people from government, accreditation bodies, professional associations, employers and successful IEPs about how best to move into the Canadian labour market—what works, and how we can work together to make things work even better.

This conference is intended to help you advance your career in Canada. In addition to the sector specific workshops, there will also be variety of useful presentations.

Why This Conference Now?

Internationally Educated Professionals (IEPs) like yourself bring a vast array of education, skills, experience and expertise with you when coming to Canada to live and work. Highly trained and educated professionals hope and expect to be able to work in professional fields here in Canada. However, getting a job that fully uses your previous training and skills is not always easy, and too often IEPs end up in lower-end jobs in order to pay the rent and make ends meet.

And when you try to find out about how to get your educational credentials assessed and recognized you don't know where to go. You find yourself faced with a maze of contradictory and confusing information. Some struggle to wade through the paperwork. Others attempt to upgrade educational qualifications. Still others have trouble getting that key “Canadian experience.” Many simply give up.

At the same time, Canadian employers are reporting that they are having a difficult time finding highly skilled workers—they need highly educated people to make their businesses successful and to stay competitive in the global marketplace but are unable to find appropriately trained workers. With the ageing labour market, labour shortages are forecast across the board in all occupations, yet those with international training and education are not easily accessing these opportunities.

What This Conference is Not

This conference is not a career fair. A learning opportunity for all involved, *Breaking Barriers, Building Bridges: A Conference for Internationally Educated Professionals* is focused on providing:

- Accurate, timely and relevant information about how to more easily access the -labour market
- An opportunity to dialogue with others.
- A place to share experiences and best practices

Why in Toronto?

Internationally Educated Professionals (IEPs) are increasingly critical to the economic health of Canada as a whole and Toronto in particular. The strength of our economy depends, to a significant extent, upon an adequate supply of educated and skilled workers. As Canada's population ages and birth rates decrease, there will continue to be significant skills shortages in the labour market unless Canada takes full advantage of the skills that immigrants bring.

Toronto's competitive advantage in the global marketplace is directly related to its large numbers of highly-skilled, well-educated immigrants. Compared to New York, which is considered by many to be the most cosmopolitan city in the world with 28% of its population born outside the United States, Toronto today boasts over 50% of its population was born outside Canada—a truly astonishing statistic, making Toronto a truly unique place in the world.

By the year 2011, it is estimated that 100 percent of Canada's net labour force growth will come from immigration. Recent studies conducted by the Conference Board of Canada have indicated that between \$4 billion and \$6 billion is lost to the Canadian economy each year as a result of not taking full advantage of skilled immigrants in our labour force, due largely to unrecognized qualifications. Effectively attracting and integrating highly skilled and educated immigrants into Toronto's labour market has taken on new levels of urgency.”

Origins and Acknowledgements:

*By Rhonda Singer
President, Progress Career Planning Institute
Chair, IEP Conference Partners' and Steering Committees*

For the past four years Toronto Community News (TCN) and Progress Career Planning Institute (PCPI) had worked together to achieve very successful and large Career Exposition and Job Fairs. Marg Middleton, General Manager, and Ashling Moore Classified Manager of TCN and I decided to do something fresh and different.

We identified an unmet need for Internationally Educated Professionals (IEPs). This need was not only for training or job vacancies but how to actually deal with “the system” of their particular Profession in Toronto *all in one place and at one time* – It was intended as an enabler for the journey to employment in their field and at their levels of qualification and experience. “The system” needed to include all the stakeholders in the room at one time, i.e., licensing bodies, regulatory agencies, employers, educational institutions, a successful IEP, Etc.

Out of this ferment came the idea of sector Hubs for 5 professions: Engineers, IT and T, Accounting and Finance, Teachers and Nurses which became the backbone to the day. The concept was further applied to develop a Marketplace of Resources in one room and an array of relevant presentations by competent, knowledgeable speakers.

In addition we wanted this to be reflective of a Canadian Experience and so the concept of Conference rather than a career fair was born. Conferences are the epitome of learning and networking- crucial elements to job search. Lastly we wanted this day to be one of possibilities... a day that could realize at the very least a few small steps of change resulting in hope and new thoughts for success.

And so the *Breaking Barriers Building Bridges* conference was born.

My heart felt thanks to Marg, Ashling and Betty Carr, Publisher Toronto Community News for having faith in this dream and letting me lead it. We were guided by several principles:

- 1) Given the many and widely known hurdles, difficulties and frustrations experience by IEPs in becoming employed, and fully employed in their fields, the priority was put on what positive and practical, techniques IEPs can share with each other or get from the Conference that can help them further along their journey - the next day, and the days thereafter. Appreciative Inquiry, a well known theoretical model became the underlying philosophy.
- 2) An abiding respect for the courage, determination, risk-taking, road-blocks and pain as well as joy of the IEPs who have made one of the most complex, basic and risky decisions a person can – to leave one’s home and job behind and immigrate to another country, culture, language and economy – and what this means personally and professionally to immigrants and their lives, as well as to their new country, communities, professions and employers.

Further, we wanted the conference to reflect the quality of excellence that PCPI and TCN always strive to achieve. It was an ambitious plan with a very limited budget, and initially,

virtually no money. Their shared leadership and contribution were immeasurable in accounting for many of the time consuming and costly areas such as marketing and the Directory production. A special thanks to Deb Redmond at TCN for addressing the complexities of registration so well.

Reflecting on whom to thank for helping to put this conference on its legs, they grew to a very large team of some 90 people - too many to thank individually however ...

Mitzi Hunter, MITCOM Communications for starting me on the road and of finding additional partners with her networking referral to Christine Rasis, Department Manager of Research City of Toronto Economic Development. She listened, heard our vision and the City became our third partner. She seconded the very excellent Susan Brown Senior Policy Advisor, Labour Force Development, City of Toronto to assist with the conference whose leadership and writing many of the time consuming templates for many important documents that became the underpinnings for the conference and played an invaluable role on the steering committee.

The City was our first sponsor with monies for a website and event coordinator.

To Asela Dahani, an IEP, who contributed more than his contract outlined as well as heart and expertise.

Thanks to Maureen McKenna, Mentoring with MOmentum, for generously giving us her consulting time in a myriad of ways, including a pre-conference training and coordinating session with facilitators and the Appreciative Inquiry philosophy used for the sector hub sessions and as the overarching tone for the conference.

Susan introduced me to Nowshad Ali, Executive Director and then later Greg Yarrow the new ED of the Toronto Training Board that became the fourth partner. Nowshad and Greg's contributions were many but I particularly want to highlight The Toronto Training Board as the title sponsor without whom we could not have moved forward. The four partners together represented Community, Business, Government and Education typical of the hub and the four pillars that PCPI operates within.

Honda Canada Inc through David Sudbury, Senior Executive - Parts and Don Hutton Manager and Post Secondary Liaison, Certified General Accounting Ontario CGA deserve our sincere appreciation for becoming significant sponsors.

To the Steering committee:

- ❑ Susana Vaz and Owen Mullings, two talented IEPs, who contributed invaluable suggestions that allowed us to better meet the needs of the conference participants.
- ❑ A special thanks to Owen for delivering a strong wrap up message of hope at the Conference's closing Plenary.
- ❑ To Tim Owens, WES, Paulina Muciulius, OCASI and Jane Cullingworth, CASSA for contributing their time and invaluable experience and wisdom
- ❑ To Frank McLean for editing the conference report, designing the conference evaluation form, as well as his insightful comments and photographic expertise.
- ❑ To Tanya Mruck, Toronto Training Board, for her excellent administrative help

For the Hub Sector Champions:

To Ruth Wojciuk Program Manager, Ryerson University (Nursing Sector), Don Hutton, Manager and Post Secondary Liaison, Certified General Accounting Ontario CGA, Bruce McKelvey and Desmond Des Soye, President CDI Education Corporation IT & T Sector, and Nowshad Ali, Executive Director, Toronto Training Board, Teachers Sector for hearing an idea, supporting it by taking on the important role of being a Hub Champion to identify the other key players in their professions

For all the panelists in each of the sector panels, we thank you for generously providing your time and expertise.

To the Facilitators:

Cathy Tait, Tait and Company (IT&T), Fiona Potter, The Workplace Innovators (Teachers), Heather Turnbull, Maritz Canada (Engineers), Jo Ellen Logan, Working Solutions (Accounting and Finance) and Jane Adams, Jane Adams & Associates, and Maureen McKenna, Mentoring with Momentum, Facilitator (Nursing) for bringing and contributing their professional seasoning and experience to the awesome roles of coordinating these sector panels and facilitating with excellence.

For the Presenters:

For each of the presenters who contributed their time especially Lionel Laroche, Francine Volker, Brian Bassett and Michael Hopkins who have been there before and who agreed to an idea before it was formed.

And to the Others Who Volunteered: Especially the Registration and Hosts' teams, thank you for contributing your time and energy to making both participants and the presenters feel well taken care of.

For the PCPC Staff:

Lastly I want to thank the PCPC staff whose wonderful commitment and excellence drives me and who gave of their own time behind the scenes to do the logistical time consuming tasks in the harried last few days prior to the conference.

In summary, those who attended the conference were fully engaged from beginning to end. The air literally crackled with cultural, professional and personal excitement and electricity with everyone joining in with their own talents to make this the best day possible for IEPs and their future in Canada.

We have been pioneering, learned much from each other and IEPs along the way and look forward to upgrading the Conference web site and holding an even better conference in the near future.

We welcome your interest in these undertakings. Please contact me if you would like to participate in any way.



Rhonda Singer

IEP Conference Partnership Committee:

- City of Toronto, Economic Development, Culture & Tourism, Toronto
Susan Brown, Senior Policy Advisor (Labour)
- Progress Career Planning Institute Inc., Scarborough
Rhonda Singer, President (Chair)
- Toronto Community News, Scarborough
Marg Middleton, General Manager
Ashling Moore, Classified Manager
- Toronto Training Board, Toronto
Nowshad Ali, Executive Director (out-going)
Greg Yarrow, Executive Director (incoming)

IEP Conference Steering Committee:

Members of the Steering Committee



- Nowshad Ali, Executive Director and Greg Yarrow, Executive Director, Toronto Training Board (TTB) (Partner)
- Susan Brown, Senior Policy Advisor (Labour), City of Toronto, Economic Development, Culture & Tourism, Toronto (Partner)
- Heather Clark, Charity Specialist
- Jane Cullingworth, Coordinator, Council of Agencies Serving South East Asians (CASSA)
- Ashling Moore, Classified Manager, Toronto Community News (TCN) (Partner)
- Pauline Maciulis, Manager, Policy and Programs Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI)
- Marg Middleton, General Manager, Toronto Community News, Toronto (TCN) (Partner)
- Owen Mullings (IEP), Engineer
- Timothy Owen, Director – Canada, World Education Services (WES)
- Rhonda Singer, President (Chair) Progress Career Planning Institute Inc. (PCPI) (Partner)

- ❑ Susana Vaz (IEP), Acting Program Assistant - Sector and Strategic Partnerships; City of Toronto, Economic Development, Culture & Tourism, Toronto (Partner)
- ❑ Tanya Mruck, Committee Secretary, Toronto Training Board (TTB)
- ❑ Asela Dahana (IEP), Event Coordinator
Staff: Conference Logistics Coordinator, Web Site Designer, Conference Data Documentation and Analysis
- ❑ Frank McLean, Mediator & Facilitator
Resource Person: Conference Report Design and Editor, Conference Evaluation Form Design, Photography
- ❑ Jessica Hazen, Media, Fund Development Associate

Context: “Access to Professions and Trades” Issues

by Jane Cullingworth, Coordinator
PROMPT, Policy Roundtable Mobilizing Professions and Trades
at the Council of Agencies Serving South Asians. (CASSA)

Federal Policy and its Impact

Prior to 1967, Canada's immigration policies were based on nationality. In 1967, the discrimination inherent in the old system was removed and a “point system” created to recruit skilled workers based on their compatibility with Canada's economic goals. The change in immigration policy has resulted in profound changes to the demographic profile of skilled immigrants in Canada.

Canada's immigration strategy is increasingly focused on economic objectives. From the mid-1990s the Federal Government has prioritized economic immigrants over humanitarian immigrants (family class and refugees). Since 1996, the annual percentage of immigrants in the economic class has been over 50%; in 2002 the target for economic immigrants was 61%.

The reforms to immigration policy have had a significant effect on the demographic make up of Canada, particularly in the urban centres of Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal. From 1979-2000, 54% of all immigrants were from Asia, compared to only 5% during the period 1956-1967. Immigrants from Europe, including Britain, made up 79% of immigrants during 1956-1967, compared to only 22% of immigrants during 1979-2000. This demographic shift has dramatically changed the makeup of our society. Increasingly immigrants to Canada are skilled, more educated than their Canadian born counterparts, and mainly people of colour.

Barriers faced by Immigrant Professionals and Tradespeople

With the profound change in demographics, immigrants have increasingly faced barriers to their full participation in Canada's economy. These barriers include:

- inadequate recognition of credentials and experience
- gatekeeping by professional associations and regulatory bodies
- absence of accountability requirements for regulatory bodies
- costly licensing fees and examinations
- requirements for unnecessary training and upgrading
- inadequate provision of upgrading opportunities
- insufficient financial support to facilitate upgrading
- lack of a central coordinating agency or clearly accessible information to assist in the process of accessing the 38 regulated professions and 20 mandatory trades and 34 voluntary trades
- gaps in employment support services
- language barriers, particularly in technical areas
- the requirement for Canadian work experience
- concerns about immigrants' unfamiliarity with Canadian culture
- lack of social and professional networks necessary to tap into the hidden job market
- complex jurisdictional issues between federal and provincial levels of responsibility
- lack of government policy coordination both between levels of government and amongst government departments
- underlying many of the above barriers, racism and discrimination

Responses to Barriers

Since the 1980s there have been many responses to the issues of access to professions and trades from a range of stakeholders (government, community, immigrants, researchers, employers, and regulatory bodies). Government initiatives include a Federal Provincial Working Group on Access to Professions and Trades, which organized a Qualification Recognition conference in 1999; in Ontario an Access to Professions and Trades Unit has been created in the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, and has funded initiatives such as the World Education Services (an academic assessment service) and a number of pilot bridging programs. In the community, a range of programs to help immigrant professionals have been developed, some funded by government, others funded by private foundations. Many immigrants have formed their own associations and advocacy groups to lobby for changes in policy.

Increasingly, all levels of government are identifying the recognition of immigrant qualifications and skills as a pressing issue – sparked in part by concerns about skills shortages and Canada's increasing dependence on immigration to maintain our population growth.

Jane Cullingworth
Council of Agencies Serving South Asians (CASSA)
Round Table on Access to Professions and Trades

March 31, 2003
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IEP CONFERENCE PROGRAM SCHEDULE



TIME	PROGRAM												
8:00	Registration, networking and coffee in the marketplace. Marketplace of information: Employers, Regulatory bodies, Educational Institutions, Community groups, Government and Others.												
9:00	Welcome, Opening remarks: Emcee - Betty Carr Publisher Toronto Community News The Honourable Dianne Cunningham Minister of Training, Colleges & Universities and Minister Responsible for Women's Issues Denzil Minnan-Wong – City Councillor Nancy Green - Director of the Lawrence Square Human Resource Centre												
9:30	Keynote Address : Networking Canadian Style : Dr. Lionel Laroche, CPI Hazel & Associates												
10am	Break												
10:30	Participants to break out into each sector (A Panel Hub)												
	CONCURRENT SESSIONS – MORNING SECTOR HUB												
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	Sector hub panels include representation from sector employers, regulatory/credentialing bodies, professional associations, educational institutions, governments and successfully employed IEPs. Themes identified in the morning sector hub sessions will be highlighted in the afternoon wrap up.												
12:30	Lunch in marketplace – Marketplace of Resources to provide information, informal dialogue												
1:30-2:15	CONCURRENT PRESENTATIONS (45 minutes): seating is on a first come, first serve basis.												
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2:15-	Break for refreshments, informal dialogue in marketplace, go to next presentation												
2:45-3:30	CONCURRENT PRESENTATIONS (45 minutes): seating is on a first come, first serve basis.												
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3:45	Wrap Up, Actual Breaking Down the Barriers, Highlights from each Hub sector-: MC Nowshad Ali, Toronto Training Board												
4:15	Make & Live Your Wishes - Owen Mullings, IEP Special Guest												
4:30	Conference ends												

Welcoming Speakers: Introductions and Remarks

Plenary Session, 9:00 a.m.

- Opening remarks were made by Emcee Betty Carr of Toronto Community News.
- Nancy Green, Director of the Lawrence Square Human Resource Centre also delivered some remarks.



Speaking Notes for Dianne Cunningham Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities

Thank you for your kind welcome.

To begin with, I want to thank the steering committee, and all of the partners, that put together today's exciting agenda. You've done excellent work.

Today's conference provides the right balance of practical advice and experience that will benefit everyone.

Today's discussions and speeches will achieve two goals. First, the sessions will help internationally trained professionals better understand how to find work in Ontario.

Second, by listening to you, those of us that provide services will better understand the needs of internationally trained professionals who want to build careers in our province.

Ontario is one of the most fortunate places on earth. Not only do we enjoy a growing economy and an attractive lifestyle, we also attract the best and brightest from around the world who come here to live, work and raise a family. More than sixty per cent of all immigrants to Canada choose Ontario to be their new home. On behalf of the Ontario government, I'm glad you are here to share your skills and enthusiasm for your new country. We are grateful that you have put your faith in our economy and our communities.

Like many Canadians, I recognize and admire the tremendous courage and faith it must take to decide to uproot your families and start new lives in Canada. I also recognize how challenging it can be to look for work in a new country.

You left behind family and friends to pursue fresh opportunities in our cities. You have come from countries where you have a wealth of experience to a place that is different in so many ways.

Since you've come to Canada, you've had to strengthen your English- language skills while at the same time trying to decide where to live, enrolling your children in school, and buy winter boots.

If that wasn't enough, at the same time you're trying to start a new career!

You have accomplished so much already. Given the courage that you have already demonstrated by moving to our country, I know that you have the energy, confidence, instincts and stamina to persevere and succeed.

There are so many different ways to find work: networking, newspaper ads, web pages, and job consultants in community based agencies, to name just a few. Today's conference should help you map a route that is best for you.

Starting a new career in Ontario's highly competitive job market is challenging. However, you're not on your own. Many people and services in our communities – including the provincial government – are ready to lend a hand and to provide advice that will help you achieve your goal.

Ontario is competing in a global economy. To maintain their competitive leadership, our employers are looking for employees with high levels of skills, experience, and education.

Few employers have the resources to understand credentials from other countries. But all understand that they need more highly skilled workers. And many recognize the unique value that can be gained from professionals who have international experience and training.

To meet their need, and the needs of internationally trained professionals, the provincial government established World Education Services Canada to provide credible academic assessments for 150 countries. Representatives of the service are here today to explain how their service can help you.

We must work harder to ensure that the internationally trained have a complete picture of how their profession is practiced in our province before they leave their homeland. We already have fact sheets available on the Internet for 12 professions and five skilled trades, and intend to provide more.

In addition, the provincial government is working with employers, independent regulatory bodies, trainers, and academics to help speed the process to get qualified immigrant workers into the work place. We need experienced professionals in health care, education, engineering and financial services.

We're investing \$15 million in bridge-training projects to provide the internationally trained with the skills and knowledge they need to practice their occupation, profession or skilled trade in Ontario.

These programs work. My ministry was pleased to partner to help create the CARE program for nurses. Prior to the creation of this bridge-training program, only 30 per cent of internationally trained nurses passed the licensing exam. Today, 71 per cent of internationally trained nurses pass the exam, once they complete the program.

Today, 71 internationally trained nurses are working in our hospitals and doctors' offices, and another 30 pharmacists are using their experience and skills to provide high quality service to the public, thanks to these bridging projects.

We also have projects for internationally trained engineers, teachers, medical laboratory technologists, healthcare technologists including respiratory therapists and medical radiation technologists, health informatics and financial services programmers and midwives.

There are also projects for internationally trained skilled workers such as plumbers, sheet metal workers, carpenters and trades people with precision metal cutting and machining skills.

More projects are on the way.

We are working to give internationally trained professionals the tools to find their own way in our economy, and succeed.

We are proud of how far we have come in the last few years. But we know we have more work to do.

We have more work to do to encourage more employers, more industries, more educators and trainers, and more internationally educated professionals to make use of the academic credential services provided by World Education Service Canada.

We have more work to do to develop more bridge training programs and other pathways that will help the internationally trained build successful careers in Ontario -- with the support and partnership of independent regulatory bodies, employers, educators, and trainers.

Ontario is among the most open economies in the world. You came here because of the promise our communities hold for you, your careers, and your children.

Through conferences such as this -- through our programs and policies -- we are working to build bridges and open doors for the internationally trained.

We are working to ensure that the potential of Ontario is as much in the grasp of the internationally trained as it is within the reach of all people who make a commitment to build a career, a life and a home in our communities.

Thank you.

Welcoming Remarks, Councillor Denzil Minnan-Wong, City of Toronto

Good morning. It's my great pleasure to welcome you on behalf of the City of Toronto to the first-ever "Breaking Barriers, Building Bridges" conference. As chair of the city's Economic Development and Parks Committee, I'm acutely aware of the important role immigrants play in the health of Toronto's economy. Today, fully half of Toronto's population was born outside of Canada—this is an incredibly powerful statistic, especially when you consider the wide diversity of cultures that call Toronto home. Statistics show that newcomers such as yourselves come to this city highly educated, highly skilled, and highly motivated. And the reality is that the expertise and knowledge you bring are much needed by our businesses and our communities.

The City of Toronto's Economic Development Division has just completed a labour force readiness study that forecasts the creation of an additional 400,000 new jobs in the Toronto region over the next ten years. Our research concurs with the research of many others: the impending retirements of an ageing workforce coupled with Canada's low birth rate means that over the next decade Toronto faces very real labour and skills shortages. There is only one way for us to fill those shortages, and that is through employing people like you—courageous people who have taken the initiative to leave their own countries where they were successful professionals and trades people to come to a new land with new opportunities and challenges. Talented people like you who have many valuable skills and a wealth of knowledge to contribute to our economy and our community. Qualified people like you with degrees and diplomas, certificates and licences. Experienced people like you who bring new approaches and fresh outlooks to both the workplace and the community.

It is essential to the social and economic health of this city that internationally educated professionals—like you—are able to move quickly into the labour force in the professional capacities in which you were trained. All stakeholders, be they government, business, unions, professional associations or regulatory bodies, must work together to help smooth the transition of immigrants into the workforce.

It is an odd situation where on one hand we have a growing number of businesses crying out for skilled workers, and on the other hand a growing number of skilled immigrants crying out for suitable employment. As the theme of this conference states, we must work together to break the barriers that keep these two groups apart and change a lose-lose problem into a win-win solution. Toronto is one of the best cities in the world to live, work, visit and do business because of our diversity. Our diversity is one of our greatest competitive advantages. I am committed to ensuring Toronto continues to be the best city in the world by working to ensure that people from all over the world who choose to call Toronto home know that their education and training are recognized, their skills appreciated and their families welcomed. The English poet Philip Larkin once wrote:

*Reaching for the world, as our lives do,
As all lives do, reaching that we may give
The best of what we are and hold as true:
Always it is by bridges that we live.¹*

And so I welcome you to this conference, where you will have the opportunity to meet and network with others, obtain helpful information and provide us with your insights, and move a bit further on your own path to meaningful work—to build bridges wherever it is possible.

Thank you.

¹ Philip Larkin (1922–1986), British poet, "Bridge for the Living."

Plenary Session: Networking Canadian Style – Lionel Laroche, CPI Hazel & Associates

This conference is for Internationally Educated Professionals (IEPs). It is meant to help you. In particular, it is meant to give you an opportunity to network, both with other IEPs and mainstream Canadians. In virtually all countries, including Canada, networking is an essential part of one's professional life. What you know is important; whom you know is essential. This remains true in Canada.

However, every country has its own unwritten rules when it comes to networking effectively, and Canada is no exception. Networking in Canada follows unwritten rules that are often quite different from the unwritten rules in effect in the countries where you were educated. This opening session will explain these unwritten rules and give you an opportunity to practice them: Here are some of the unwritten rules we will discuss:

- Don't wait for people to introduce you. In Canada, you are responsible for introducing yourself.
- Use business cards to give out contact information and a key message about yourself, such as your profession and your area of specialization.
- Do something for others, and you will increase the chances that they will do something for you. When you commit to do something, commit to a delivery date, and meet it – this will give your Canadian counterpart a sense of professionalism.
- Network with people according to profession. For example, Canadian engineers network with other engineers. Within each profession, network with people who have the same area of specialization as you do. For example, if you are an accountant specialized in audits, network with other audit accounting specialists.
- Don't say: "I can do anything". Focus on what you do best. As far as Canadians are concerned, if you can do everything, you can't do anything well – you are considered at that point a "jack of all trades, master of none." You need to decide what your field of expertise is (you may have a couple, but no more) and focus on networking with other experts in the same field.
- Your network is your own; you cannot share it. In particular, you cannot create openings for other people. If you attempt to share your network with others, it will likely backfire. You cannot give people's name and contact information without first asking for their permission.
- Keep track of whom you meet. Use the back of people's cards in order to write down key points about the people you meet, so that it is easier for you to remember the circumstances in which you met, what they might have to offer. Be sure to make a note of what you have committed to provide them and by what date you have committed to send it to them.

Keep in mind that this conference is meant for you to experiment new approaches and behaviors with other IEPs, in an environment where everyone is supportive. Practice networking throughout the day, so that you can network with mainstream Canadians tomorrow the way they expect you to.

To that effect, you have received 10 blank business cards. Some of you may already have their own and will not need them. For those of you who don't have already have business cards, please write your contact information, your profession, and your area of specialization on these blank cards. Like real business cards, these cards are meant to help you network. Ideally, we

would like you to leave this conference having exchanged business cards with at least 10 people.

(Source: Dr Lionel Laroche VP President Cross Cultural And Relocation Services CPI Hazell and Associates)



Participants Networking After the Session



Participant Evaluation: Attendance, Demographics and Conference Ratings

Attendance

There was a constant flow of people throughout the day attending the conference. Some were able to attend for only part of the day as they were unable to get time off from work. Based on room capacity, catering and attendance of people who did not register, it is estimated that **approximately 600 attended** including speakers, resource people, volunteers, steering committee.

Evaluation Form Returns

The figures below are based only on the attendees who filled out and returned the evaluation forms and the majority of conference attendees appeared to be from the Engineering field followed by IT & T.

Table 1: Attendance

SECTOR	
Engineering	151
Finance/Accounting	43
IT & T	73
Nursing	19
Teaching	40
Other	33
TOTAL	359

(Source: Registration Records, Evaluation Forms)

Participant Evaluation Form and Data Analysis

A "Conference Evaluation Form" was included in each Participant's registration envelope. The Chair extended a special invitation at the end of the closing Plenary to Participants to submit their Conference Evaluation Forms as a way to give participants a voice and direction for future IEP Conferences. The Evaluation Sample comprises the 128 Participants who submitted completed Conference Evaluation Forms, a substantial return rate of some 36%.

Data Analysis Note 1: The Conference Coordinator recorded, aggregated and charted the numeric responses from the 128 Conference Evaluation Forms. The tables and charts below represent all responses made to each question by the group of 128 respondents. For ease of analysis, the percent distributions were calculated on a standard base of 128, even though the total responses for some questions may have been 127 or 126 or so, an insignificant difference. As a result, percentages for these questions necessarily do not add to 100%.

Composition of Evaluation Responses by Sector:

Table 2: Occupational Composition of attendees

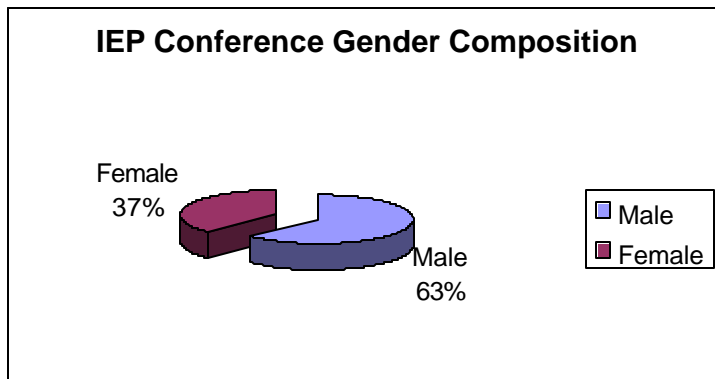
Composition	percentage
Engineer	43%
Finance/Accounting	16%
IT & T	20%
Nursing	2%
Teaching	13%
TOTAL	94%

Gender:

The majority of attendees, 63% were men.

Table 3: Attendees by Gender

Gender	
Male	63%
Female	37%
TOTAL	100%



Age:

The majority of attendees were in their thirties (30's) followed by people in their forties (40's), the core working age people.

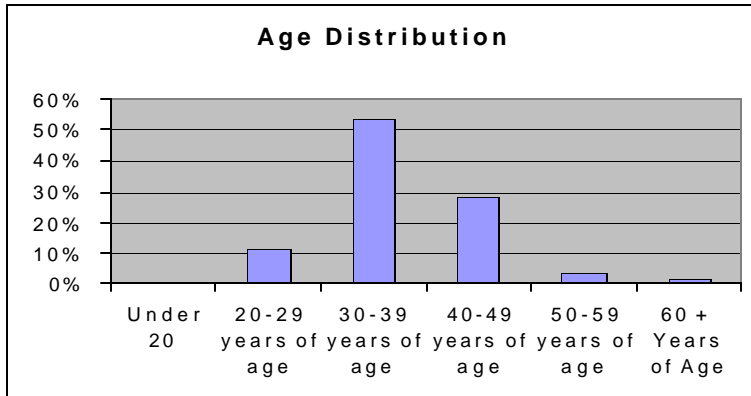


Table 4: Attendees by Age

Age	
Under 20	0%
20-29	12%
30-39	54%
40-49	28%
50-59	4%
60+	2%
TOTAL	100%

Length of Time in Canada:

Seventy-six (76%) percent of attendees had been in Canada two years or less.

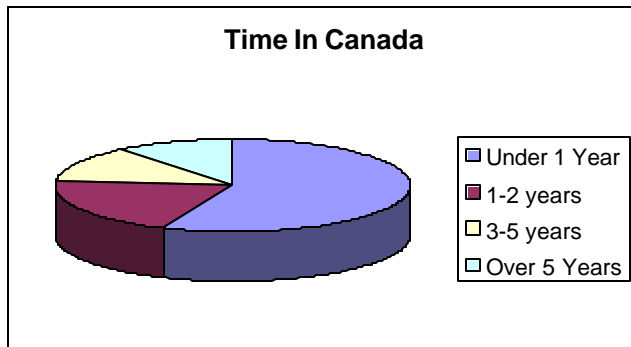


Table 5: Length of Time in Canada

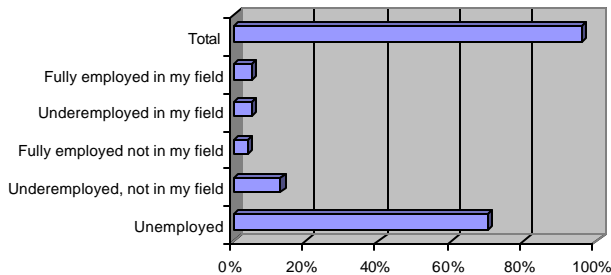
Time In Canada	
Under 1 Year	56%
1-2 years	20%
3-5 years	13%
Over 5 years	11%
TOTAL	100%

Current Employment Status:

Most of the attendees (70%) said they were unemployed.

Table 6: Employment Status

Employment Status



Current Employment Status	
Unemployed	70%
Underemployed, not in my field	13%
Fully employed, not in my field	4%
Underemployed in my field	5%
Fully employed in my field	5%
Total	97%

Usefulness of Conference:

Participants were asked to respond to each of these questions by assigning a rating of 1(low) to 5(high) on a graphic rating scale.

Data Analysis Note 2: Participants were asked to respond to each of the questions with a rating of from 1(low) to 5 (high). The Coordinator translated these scores onto a scale of 0 (low) to 100 (high). He then averaged these translated scores on a standard base of 128 respondents. (See Data Analysis Note #1 above.)

Table 7: Rating of Conference

How do you rate the usefulness of the following?	
The information provided by the hub panel	80%
The discussion that you participated in your hub	80%
The market place	69%
The talks by the presenters	84%
The specific steps that you have identified to take after the conference	77%
The conference for networking with others of value to you	78%
The facilities in which the conference was conducted	86%
The conference overall	84%

IEP Conference Evaluation Comments

Themes:

- Conference was beneficial and appreciated;
- Another conference should be held;
- More Employer participation wanted.
- Professional organizations participation recommended;
- Time was too short for in depth discussion and addressing questions;
- More stories from successful IEPS

Specific comments (sample):

Supporting Comments

- ❑ I was pleasantly surprised with the topics, lectures. This is my first time participating in such an event in Canada. Thank you very much;
- ❑ It was very useful for me. Thanks to you all for the opportunity and this kind of events that you create.
- ❑ Conference was a total success in bringing professionals to a similar platform. We know we are not alone;
- ❑ Excellent, very professional, new Canadians are proud to be a part of it;
- ❑ Everything is excellent;
- ❑ You have done a very good job. Thank you very much;
- ❑ Congratulations on getting together high level panelists in the conference. The topics were well selected. Job well done!!! Thank you!!!
- ❑ The conference was informative but time for presentations was limited. Better facilities (presentation equipment, space etc) would have improved the efforts. Nevertheless, it was very good. Continue.
- ❑ Missed sessions held simultaneously;
- ❑ It was a terrific conference. I got a lot of information and met many new friends. I appreciate your work very much. Continue what you are doing.
- ❑ Congratulations on getting together high level panelists in the conference. The topics were well selected. Job well done!!! Thank you!!!
- ❑ We would like to know about similar events;

CQI Continuous Quality Improvement Suggestions

- ❑ It would have been nice to hear more successful IEPs share their experiences;
- ❑ Participants who have succeeded in their job search should attend the next conference and share their experience of how the conference helped them in their success;
- ❑ More participation from government sector to present on breaking barriers;
- ❑ Bring more employers to the conference next time;
- ❑ In the future all the questions asked particularly in the hubs should be given the opportunity to be addressed.
- ❑ Conference too short. Needs to be two-days to handle the many topics;
- ❑ Sessions too short to accommodate all or most of the questions raised;
- ❑ Conference should be advertised more;
- ❑ The main issue for newcomers is finding a job so a listing of employers could be provided as a starting point to move forward;

- ❑ The conference did not provide more than I had in the employment resource centre. Presenters should be employers to provide information on what they are looking for in hiring somebody;
- ❑ Hints/guidance should be given to participants for the question-period to avoid people asking unanswerable questions;
- ❑ Have professional organizations attend for advice;
- ❑ During lunch break have some panelist or counselor available for confused and frustrated individuals;
- ❑ Volunteering information for IT professionals needed;
- ❑ Provide some professional training information;
- ❑ More specific suggestions could be provided. A few placement agencies could have been present;
- ❑ Introduce a Register or Dynamic online Directory for IEPs to stay in touch and which could be accessed by employers and job seekers;
- ❑ More sector-specific involvement is required;
- ❑ The engineering sector hub needed tighter facilitation. Not enough recognition given to systemic barriers. I liked the small group process of identifying questions;
- ❑ Conference should be more participative, interactive.

Post script From Organizers:

We appreciate the feedback and will aspire to find the financial and resource support to achieve implementations of these suggestions.

Participants' Learnings from Presentations

Participants to asked to indicate on the evaluation form after listening to each speaker, what he/she would do differently in the future to help him/her in his career and job search. Only some participants filled out this section correctly.² Below are comments for each presentation:

Aaron Pun - Managing Effectively Across the Cultural Line

- Good things I had not thought of before;
- Challenge myself and fellow newcomers not to criticize so much;
- Be more enthusiastic in all my endeavors;
- Understand the Canadian culture;
- I will understand people better than I did before.



Michael Hopkins - The Right Thinking at the Right Time

- Think positively always;
- Now I will start thinking in a different direction;
- Start thinking positively and rationally;
- I will think about new ways for my job finding strategy;
- Think more effectively; Shift from blue to green.

² Many participants provided evaluation comments instead of learnings and future action. Language may have been a barrier to understanding the Presenter's evaluation form properly.

Brian Basset - The Job Interview Shouldn't be About You!

- Improve my interview skills;
- Prepare well.

Kevin Kamal/Nancy Millward - Continuity Change in Career Development

- I will get my credentials assessed before applying for licensing;
- Get my assessment as soon as possible;
- Check properly before going for an evaluation.

Lionel Laroche - Cross Cultural Reporting Relationships

- I will try to find more information about unwritten rules;
- Communicate clearly;
- Try to evaluate the expectations of Canadian managers;
- Evaluate cultural differences better.

Steven Ruhinda - Career Mobility for International Professionals

- I will try to join associations

Richard Johnston - Filling the Skills Gap

- I believe I will work in my field.
- My success depends on my capability to sell myself.



Rifky Gold - Financing Available for Skills Upgrade

- I have discovered upgrading which I will probably do;
- Search for OSAP possibilities.

Ian Kennedy - How to Market Yourself as Independent Consultant

- Correct my resume and the way I am doing my job search;
- Be more sociable and speak slower; Be proactive in networking;
- Consulting could be a career option; Utilise HRDC funded resources;
- I should market myself more effectively;
- I have the basic equipment to be a consultant;
- Market my self more efficiently;
- Use various techniques to market myself; Participate in activities relating to my profession;
- Explore hidden opportunities.

Steve Jones - Utilizing staffing agencies to your benefit

- Improve on my resume

Deena Ladd - Questions About Your Rights At Work!

- Information is very encouraging.

Francine Volker - ACCentuate your business pronunciation in 5 minutes

- Speak more clearly;
- Practice pronunciation;
- Practice Canadian English;
- I will look for a course to improve pronunciation.

Evaluation of Presenters

Of the participants attending each of the twelve sessions, some used their presenter assessment form to rate the presenter. This number of raters in the various sessions ranged from: 14-17 in four sessions; 22-24 in five sessions and 35-41 in three sessions.

Participants rated presenters on: **relevancy of the topic, level of interest in the material covered, quality of presenter and an overall evaluation of each presentation**. A rating scale of 1 to 5 was used, where 1 was least satisfied and 5 was most satisfied. The individual presenters' average ratings were in the range of 3.9-5.0 on the scale of 1 to 5. The average rating score for all presenters on all four above-mentioned criteria was 4.6. Participants were therefore very satisfied with the individual presenters and the presentations overall.

Sector Hub Reports:



Participants got a chance to interact and learn from each other's experiences during the sector hub sessions focusing on their particular occupational grouping.

1. Teaching Hub Notes

Coordinator: Ruth Bauman

Facilitator: Fiona Potter

Scribe: Damindra Dias, Director, CAPI

Plenary Session Reporter: Damindra Dias

Panel Members:

- Lindy Amato, Ontario Teachers' Federation. Lindy was born in Zimbabwe and came to Canada as an adult where she pursued her teacher training at York University in Toronto. She holds a Masters in Educational Technology and is currently a senior member of the Executive staff at the OFT. Her main areas of responsibility there include teacher education, student assessment, support for beginning teachers and international assistance.
- Linda Genesi-Williams, Ontario College of Teachers. Linda has been the Manager of the Evaluation Services Unit at the Ontario College of Teachers for the last four years. This unit is responsible for the evaluation of teachers certified outside the province who have applied for Ontario certification. Over 3,000 applications of this nature are received annually which has enabled College evaluators to develop expertise in assessing qualifications and credentials from over 100 countries.
- Andrea Strachan, Access to Professions and Trades Unit, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. Andrea is the Senior Program and Policy Consultant in the Access to Professions and Trades Unit, Workplace Preparation Branch of the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. She has worked in immigrant settlement and second language

training for 15 years and is currently responsible for policy research and analysis relating to second language training and program support for bridging projects.

- Monica Scorza, Toronto District School Board. Monica is a staffing officer in the secondary teaching office of the Toronto District School Board, the largest school board in Canada and one of the biggest in North America, servicing approximately 300,000 students in 560 schools. The Toronto District Board employs 18,000 elementary and secondary school teachers.
- Nowshad Ali, former Executive Director on the Toronto Training Board and CEO, On Purpose Leadership, a training and facilitation company in Toronto
- **Highlights for Closing Plenary Summary : Damindra Dias**

“Questions Raised” (Six overheads)

1. What is the teacher training required if you do not have credentials from another country?
 2. What are the steps to take to become a teacher in Ontario?
 3. Where to get information to become a Mandarin Teacher?
 4. Is there a way to by-pass TOEFL and TSE?
 5. How do you get your credentials assessed and the equivalency of your degree in Ontario?
 6. What is the teaching certification for TESL?
 7. How do you become a teaching Assistant?
 8. What courses are available to help you while you are waiting for the process to become a teacher?
 9. How can we make the process of becoming a teacher easier for new comer teachers?
 10. How to create practical solutions to speed up the process?
 11. Do you have to be in the union?
 12. What aspects of education have to be done in class?
 13. Length of accreditation?
 14. Where do you get transcripts?
 15. Could working as a volunteer help foreign trained professionals?
 16. What are the expectations of the Canadian Educational System from foreign trained teachers?
 17. 9 month teaching program available at Queen’s University:
 - a. elementary school teachers only
 - b. pilot program
 - c. \$4000
 - d. website: <http://educ.queensu.ca/~ataptie/pages/directory.html>
 - e. orientation session for next 12 months
- Distance Education/Professional Development programs just started being evaluated.
 - Programs outside Ontario are difficult to evaluate and consider (distance education programs)
 - Criminal record (check) needed to become a volunteer in the school system in Canada
 - Supply Teachers: (Note: confirm date and application process before applying)
 - Deadline to become a supply teacher February 28
 - First Step: Submit your application online

- Second Step: Send your application
- Websites: Federal, Provincial. See also info re: teaching positions, including supply teacher openings.
- www.edu.gov.on.ca Ministry of Education Web site
- www.teslontario.org For teaching English as a second language
- www.settlement.org

“Themes - Highlights”: (3 pages of easel paper)

1. Accreditation process lengthy (TOEFL/TSE requirements). What to do in the interim?). Take advantage of time and keep busy in your field- volunteer/courses to help.
2. Expectations for newcomers should be clarified.
3. Distance Education not approved for certification (Impossible to monitor)
4. Must have formal training (no short cuts!)
5. Re: 4. Panel members are available to help direct efforts – use these experts to help focus one’s efforts.
6. Teaching Assistants don’t need B.A. (Downsizing, means fewer jobs though, so the market is more competitive.)
7. Volunteering/occasional teaching good way to learn about the school system (supply teaching)
8. Web sites approved by Ministry to advertise jobs (you can post your resume)
9. Websites are approved by ministry to advertise jobs. (You can post your resume.)
10. How to get into the field to start with? (before certification). Need more help? examples of breaking barriers (Help + Help Yourself)
 - Understand legislated official documentation
 - Try to give help personally.
 - Meet with embassies.
 - Define clear contacts
 - Expand courses in colleges
 - Be realistic.
 - Do your homework, e.g. <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/>

Closing Plenary Summary: (2 handwritten 8 ½ x 11” sheets)

General:

- 60 participants interested in teaching representing countries from around the world
- Very lively discussion – teachers are passionate people!
- Really appreciated the comments and suggestions offered by the expert panel

Frustration:

- Lack of “know how “– Process, contacts?
- Why do I have to go through rigid process? Frustration is compounded by professional pride, lack of finances to see the process through (hence, need for a survival job) and what was considered a lengthy process from the perspective of time

Opportunities:

- The group discussed the importance of understanding the process and requirements.
- Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) – Strict guidelines apply – learn then and work within the process
- Early childhood education - Strict guidelines apply -- understand what is necessary going in
- English as second language – TOEFL still required
- Teaching Assistant – Talk to different Boards. Security still an issue
- Volunteerism – Great way to network and get an understanding of the process and get your foot in the door -- Security still an issue.
- Example of Government program - ATTAPTIE program at Queens University. Established to help teachers with teaching experience (2+years). Needs Ontario Teacher Certification

Key message:

Formal training required – there are no short cuts. The rules and processes are in place for everyone. It is important to do homework in advance to better understand the process and target efforts accordingly.

2. IT & T Hub Notes

Facilitator: Cathy Tait

Scribe: Susan Brown, Guther Matysiak

Panel Members:

Desmond Des Soye

CDI Education Corporation

Raksha Desai

Institute for computer studies

Instructor

Susan Galea, Access to Trades & Professions

Ministry of Training, Colleges & Universities

Maisie Hathaway

Mt. Sinai Hospital

John O'Grady

Prism Economics & Analysis

Stephen Scanlon , Deloitte & Touche

Himanshu Shah

Denise Woods

Questions raised:

- How to gain trust with employers?
- Which organizations growing?
- Any other assistance to gaining trust?
- How do I gain “Canadian experience”?
- Recommended approach?
- How do we get the accreditation from back home?
- How access hidden job market?
- How independent consultant?
- How get experience before getting a job?
- How do you see the problem of immigrants and how do we get consensus?
- What are the top skills employers are looking for? Data? Web sites?
- How does Canadian experience differ from UK, India, etc. (especially in IT certified Microsoft)?
- How to cold call IT manager?
- How do I get the right employer regarding specialization?
- How do I get an interview without any experience?
- Is the interview enough?
- With a masters in Canada or the States, can that be seen as experience?
- Why do employers exaggerate their requirements (Oracle, Peoplesoft)?
- Why do employers focus on certification when technology is always changing?
- How many associations are they in IT in Toronto?
- How do you find associations and network with them?
- How do you upgrade skills inexpensively?
- Where are the volunteer jobs in IT?
- What does Canadian experience really mean?
- How do you apply? In person or via the internet?
- How can you get a follow up after submitting an application?
- How do you access the hidden job market – it is too well hidden.
- What is more important, experience or certification?
- How do you answer the question of the Canadian experience, diploma, etc. when asked?
- Is there an IT market for jobs? What are the statistics today?
- Is there any government program or budget to help people get employment?
- What is an effective resume to get an interview?
- How to volunteer in IT market?
- Is changing career from business administration into IT?
- Certification – barrier or advantage?
- What should be done so public sector and government recognize as existing before coming to Canada?
- Clear cut definition of Canadian experience? Should we just “take anything”?
- Is there a sufficient job market in IT in Canada?
- What is the difference between Canadian, US and other countries in experience?
- What is the employer preference – skills versus “Canadian experience”?
- How can we find faster potential employers?
- Is there a centralized organization that addresses education and employment?

- This conference is about breaking barriers and building bridges—is there anything we can do to erase the problem of “Canadian experience”: petition, web site?
- Is there advocacy centre for IT sector (one is closing down)?
- If we turn attention to employer, what is the employer doing to recognize cultural richness of IEPs? What value added are IEPs bringing?
- Is it true that employers are hesitant to employ immigrants?
- Regarding training, what is a short, high impact training course that will guarantee a job?

Answers

What is Canadian experience?

- Hiring decisions are like buying a house – economic and emotional parts. Logic—what are your skills and certification, and tons of people out there. Emotional part is—would I like to work with this person? Would I like to have dinner with this person? If I put this person in front of a superior, would s/he make me look good? Will this person fit? Important to project a positive face. When we look at someone, we don’t get fussed about “Canadian experience”.



We’ve hired over 90% as IEPs. We are handling the challenge quite well. Canadian experience isn’t as important as the technical skills. There is a huge pool of labour, so you need to understand supply and demand, and right now there is a huge supply. “Canadian experience” is a hand expression rather than “you are going to fit in.” Be prepared in the first meeting (networking, research, etc.). North American experience is important, perhaps.

- When employers talk about Canadian experience, what they mean is familiarity with your background, maybe concerned because they don’t know your schools or companies. Concern that you may not be comfortable in the work culture. It is easier to hire someone who has experience in Canada since that person will have worked on systems and in work environments that are similar. What you can do to address—learn to talk about your experience in Canadian terms. Talk to employers and learn the context. Importance of soft skills—communications, teamwork, not tangible skills, how you will fit in. Take programs offered at community agencies to learn what is in demand. MTCU—recognize that Canadian experience is a barrier, so MTCU is working on programs with work experience components (have employers on their advisory committees).
- Tough problem – took six months before someone took the risk to hire. Employers are interested in good communications. Different terms here in Canada. As an accountant I used terms that weren’t used here in Canada.
- I can’t change my lack of Canadian experience; the barrier will continue. Go out there and talk about what we know. Soft skills are very important. What did I have that Canadian employers/government want? Now it is up to us as well, I can’t expect the government to do everything for me. Everyone has something to bring to the table, and we have been welcomed here. Where am I lacking? Say, a team environment, so I

volunteer to get the team experience. Take stock every day. If language is an issue? Ask someone, what exactly is Canadian experience? What would you recommend?

- Summary—logical people in IT. Canadian experience is working with other people on a job. Volunteer work. When you run into the Canadian experience barrier, it is probably something else.
- Practical strategies—redefine goal in term of shorter term. Sign up with an agency and get a two or three month job that will get you some experience. Not-for-profits are struggling to keep up to date in technology, and you can volunteer to help them out. Verbal skills—if people can't understand you, get your story down pat. Behavioural interviews—have some examples prepared. Get some training for language through government programs.

Are there really jobs in IT? Where are the jobs? Do they exist?

- John O'Grady: divide IT labour market into a couple of segments. Companies not in IT but have IT requirements (largest group is financial services). These companies absolutely insist on Canadian experience. They will pay a premium to get Canadian experience. Another segment, more oriented to development (software developers). Many are small companies, many don't survive their development period. These employers emphasize technical skills—software, technical, etc. These IEP employees are 30% cheaper. The place to start is in the smaller development IT companies (they only last two years or less). Then structure your resume in developer field are not credential oriented (the foreignness). Structure by the problems or processes that you have solved and have technical expertise in (and deemphasize where you got the experience). Towards the bottom you put your credentials. The person who does hiring in small company, the techie hires. In large companies it is the HR people.
- Denise: certification. There are jobs out there. Many jobs in hidden market. May have to take a contract job to get your foot in the door. Not just IT world, you have real estate offices, lawyers offices, etc. Get with a good firm that does outplacement. Certification only differentiates candidates in “showing knowledge”. Find a short six month program for soft skills, etc. Network. A bunch of web sites out there—some job banks get closed down. If you identify a company, do your homework on the company (use the internet, sometimes the companies are not even head officed here). Google.ca – IT associations.
- Des – really tough out there right now. Graduate 3,000 people per year, only 2,400 have jobs. Networking is now like an accountant. Everyone needs one. Programming is really tough out there right now. We can't deny that IT jobs are tough. It is a hard slog.
- Denise: tcc.comptia.org – a technical web site that will show what you need to get through your path.
- Des: how do get to the IT manager? Hidden job market? Get the interview?
 - “Specialist in”—a laundry list of everything is not appropriate. Focus on the company that you are applying to.
 - Networking
 - Speak to HR, “based on my skills set is there someone else I can speak to somewhere else?”
 - Use same structural thinking you have mastered in all the other skills you possess.
 - If you get in process, follow the rules of the interview process. Away around the process in the beginning, network.
 - Networking: I need 15 minutes of your time to find out about what you do.

- Don't say "I'm looking for a job." Rather "Can you advise me on who I can speak to who might be looking for my skills."
 - Keep short resume (two pages), bullet points.
 - 10 cold calls a day (write down your script).
 - Customize your resume for each job you are applying for which will get you over the hurdle.
 - Take the time to get some language training. Communications and language skills are very important in a job interview.
 - Secret—your own personal advertisement. Work on your personal message. You have only a one-minute factor to make an impression, and practice it on your friends and family.
 - I continue to network every single day of my life. It is exponential. That is where the hidden.
- Last questions?
 - Is there going to be a shortage of IT workers, given that people in the industry are so young?
 - Do employers think that "everyone over 40 is useless"? (Less and less that is going to be a problem).
 - What actions are being taken to hire persons with disabilities? And other equity groups?
 - Discrimination? Employers making negative comments about people from certain countries?
 - What is the government doing getting immigrants to come and then there are barriers. The government should be pushing recognition. Government/industry links need to be made.
 - What specific IT organizations exist?
 - Don't put your birth year or graduation on your resume. Frame your resume so you look 32. Jobs in IT in market landscape. Lots of pent-up demand, but not in traditional role. Disabilities—Braxton is launching employment equity policies. What is government doing? Fed government has money this budget for integration of immigrants. We are (Ontario government) MTCU \$15 million for bridging programs to bridge gaps to get employed. Sector-specific. One in IT. Web site: www.equalopportunity.on.ca – internationally trained workers. Australian experience with government training newcomers.

Summary – Azim Lila:

General

- 100 participants from around the world. Standing room only
- Whole panel said they would come back

Canadian Experience in IT

- Volunteering in Non Profits who need IT support
- Canadian Experience is an excuse for core issue. Communication skills

Demand for IT Jobs

- Entry point may be contract

- Small companies like software development may offer more opportunities
- Outsourcing jobs
- We are currently at a low cycle for IT in the economy but this will change
- Technology will always will be growth industry

Getting the IT Job

- Customize your resume
- Tie your own experience and value to deliver skills on your resume
- Create + Use your network
- Certification not part of IT environment
- Resources – Canadian newswire; Jobboom.com; Montreal; Waterloo – Career Web; Banks – Research Section; Toronto Public Library; CD-ROM

IT Tips February 25, 2003 Put together by the PCPC Scribe – Gunther Matysiak

1. The financial sector hires the most IT and they require excellent English (soft skills) and the complete understanding of the Canadian employment culture
2. Software development companies hire based on technical skills and do not require excellent English, new Canadians get paid less but, can obtain Canadian experience
3. Resume tip; employers are looking for problems solved and processes taken to do so as a priority over education and certifications (Put Education and Certifications on last page)
4. Resumes are reviewed by IT managers in small companies and by HR in large companies
5. Take short contract jobs to establish Canadian experience; agencies are ideal for these jobs
6. When you state your certifications also illustrate your core competencies and research company needs before contacting
7. The IT jobs that are stable and growing are networking positions
8. Programmers are becoming more specialized
9. Make use of informational interviews and be honest about them (don't turn an informational interview into a job interview)
10. Keep your resume in point form and customize your resume for each job applied
11. These are the 3 agencies Deloitte uses to hire IT professionals: Ajilon, Eagle & Procom

3. Nursing Hub Notes:

Facilitator: Maureen McKenna
Scribe: Isma Javed

Panelists:
Tessa Armstrong
Access to Trades & Professions

Divina Jalea
Diverscare

Brenda Lewis
Internationally Educated Nurse

Ontario Nurses' Association

Joseph Rudyk
Chair, Nursing, Arts Science & Communications
George Brown College

Ruth Wojtiuk
Ryerson University
Program Manager – Nursing

Easel Sheet #1: Welcome & Sheet #2

- www.maytreefoundation.com (Loans & Grants)
- World Educational Services www.wes.org
- College of Nurses www.cno.org
- Access to Professions + Trades www.equalopportunity.on.ca (Nurses + other professionals)
- March 1st for applications: Funding OSAP
- Ontario Hospital Association
- Doctor > Nurse: Mohawk College, Hamilton
- Refresher Nursing Program, George Brown College www.gbrown.on.ca
Joanne Quatto (Assistant) jquatto@gbrown.on.ca; intake: 3/year.
- Co-op Programs – Long Term Care: Ontario Long Term Assoc. to arrange a site visit or be a volunteer or get a “non-nursing” job to experience environment
- The Registered Nurses of Ontario: mentoring + support
- PSW > RPN > RN (easier transition)

Easel Sheet #3

- Requirement/Validation of credentials
- Costs
- English Testing needs
- Funding
- PLAR
- How to start nursing program
- Advance standing
- Refresher nursing costs
- MD>RN – Mohawk College, Hamilton
- Transfer credits
- How can employers assist
- Co-op placements

Easel Sheet #4: Comments/Questions to Governing Bodies

- CARE – market program

- OSAP access to part time students
- Share success stories
- Funding to be continued for CARE
- CARE – have more geographical access
- Provide immigrants with up to date information
- Accreditation in Canada seems harder than the US; needs to be addressed
- Nursing apprenticeship
- Improve image/market nursing
- Look at retention, workload, on job injuries
- Government have more programs to employ IEP
- Lessen barriers; more info before immigration
- Provide (Immigration) up to date info
- Showcase

(Notes for Comments to Closing Plenary Session, 2 pages)

- Background: 15 people at the session – most were not currently nurses, wanted to get into nursing – lab technicians, doctors
- Key Message:
 - Reinforced the high demand for nurses now & into the future
 - Hearing about the existing programs available:
 - CARE bridging program
 - Continued Education
 - Recognizing out of country education
 - Web Sites
 - Look for jobs in health care (Long Term Care) that are not “nurses” – while you are getting your designation
- Messages to Government Bodies:
 - Continue to fund and market CARE program
 - OSAP funding for part-time students
 - Share success stories
 - Help new immigrants by giving them gain more knowledge before they come to Canada
 - Look at Nursing Retention programs

4. Accounting/Finance Hub Notes:

Facilitator Jo Ellen Logan
Scribe: Scott Wilkinson
Verbatim From Session Easel Sheets
Panellists:

Peter Cheuk-kin Lai, MBA, CGA
Aluma Enterprises Inc.
Senior Operational Accountant

Brendon Francis D'Mello
Fidelity Investments Canada Ltd.
Client Representative - Retail & Retirement
Services Fidelity Retirement

Don Hutton
Certified General Accountants of Ontario (CGA)

Nat Vora, CGA, CPA (US), CA (Ind)
Director - Finance, Administration
toronto.com



Easel Sheets #1-4: Questions

1. How to deal with a lack of Canadian experience?
2. What qualifications are needed for public accounting in Canada?
3. What are employers looking for?
4. How important are credentials?
5. How to evaluate out-of country credentials?
6. How to find a job in accounting without a designation?
7. How to attain an entry-level accounting position?
8. How does one find training programs if one is not EI eligible?
9. How employers view experience that is not accounting?
10. Is there a way of deferring payment for exams?
11. Are student loans available?

Easel Sheet #5, Question 1: How to deal with a lack of Canadian experience?

1. Get volunteer experience.
2. Look for placement opportunities in a voluntary role.
3. Look for non-traditional positions, e.g. do books for your religious organization, a community group, do taxes of friends, start a business with friends - shows knowledge of Canadian tax, shows initiative.
4. Learn basic accounting packages for Canada/Ontario.
5. Have a positive attitude.

Easel Sheets #6-7, Question 2: What qualifications are needed for public accounting in Canada?

1. CGA, CMA, CA designations
2. Additional experience may not be needed under new legislation.
3. Obtain equivalent designation in Canada.
4. Determine area in which skill set is.
5. C.S.C. may be needed depending on the industry.
6. Find company; start at entry level & employer pays education.
7. Company may be able to fund CGA studies.
8. Find 5 people and meet to divide responsibilities to research what is needed “Many hands make light work”.

Easel Sheet #7, Question 3: What are employers looking for?

1. Not just technical skills
2. Positive attitude
3. Work experience – define what Canadian experience means
4. Credentials
5. Knowledge of Canadian workplace
6. Presentation skills
7. Language, people skills
8. Cultural expectations
9. Initiative to adapt self to Canadian marketplace, i.e. take a part-time course
10. Effective resume, 2 pages

Easel Sheet #8, Question 4: How important are credentials?; Question 5: How to evaluate out-of-country credentials?

1. Don't expect Canadian employers to assess your credentials
2. Attain an accepted Canadian standard, e.g., CA, CMA, CGA
3. Go to professional association, CGA, e.g. World Education Services will determine Canadian equivalency.
4. Bring Assessment letter from WES to employer or attaché to resume
5. Those in CGA program – does recognize WES assessment
6. Go to Canadian professional accounting association

Easel Sheet #9, Question 6: How to find a job in accounting without a designation?, Question 7: How to attain an entry-level accounting position?

1. Attitude is important.
2. Take opportunities available to you. Initiative is quality employers look for.
3. Employers may look favourably on experience, though not directly related.
4. Many employers will fund courses for professional development.
5. Join and association, attend trade shows.
6. Be proud with y our experience. Don't have a defeated attitude.
7. Easier to find a job when you have a job.
8. Determine where you want to go and find a way to get there.

Easel Sheet #10 & Summary

1. Revenue Canada Workshops (416) 529-9702
2. SCAS: Scarborough Centre for Alt. Studies at Centennial, Scarborough: assess English, accounting.
3. www.creditinstitute.org (to get help to fund your education)
4. Learn & Save (416) 780-0673
5. SAMY (416) 760-2183
6. COSTI: (Community Group) Helps immigrant accountants (416) 789-7925; (905) 669-5627.

Notes for Comments to Closing Plenary Session, 2 pages

1. Show employers that you take initiative
 - a. Willing to work hard
 - b. Actually learning about Canadian practices & culture
2. Do your homework & research
 - a. Take personal responsibility
 - b. Share homework and research tasks with others
3. Biggest question was how to get Canadian experience
 - a. Network beyond your field: in your community, Chambers of Commerce, Trade Shows & associations
 - b. Become an affiliate member of a professional institute in your field
 - c. Cultural program of your country
4. Take advantage of many resources available
 - a. HRDC resource centres, COSTI, Skills for Change
 - b. Access for funding: Learn & Save Program
5. Ways to get Canadian experience
 - a. Start at entry level

5. Engineering Hub Notes:

Facilitator: Heather Turnbull
Engineering Scribe: Donna Wurster

Panelists:

Chuck Lounia, M.Sc. (Eng.)
Senior Account Executive
Future Executive Personnel Ltd.

Gerry Meade
Professional Engineers of Ontario
Manager - Engineer Internship Program

Jose Pereira
Employment and Career Consultant

Anthony R. Warner, P.Eng.
President
Virtual Engineers - VE Collective Inc.

Rifky Gold
Access To Professions and Trades Unit, MTCU

Saeed Ziaee, P. Eng., M. Sc.
Intelligent Engineering Solutions Inc.
Product Development Manager

Verbatim From Session Overheads

Overhead "i"

Welcome Engineers!

1. Network
2. Gather & Share ideas!
3. Action Plan

Overhead "ii"

- Introduce
- What's Working
- Key question
- Strength

Overhead "iii"

Group

Discuss + Decide > * One Question for Panel

Overhead #1

- > PEO - join association chapters - Networking
- > Right timing = plays a factor
- > Share success stories (past experience)
- > Be positive
- > Need to focus on what you can do
- > Barriers - employees' English needs to be improved
- > Job Seeker > need to present what you have done well (specific)
- > Need a voice - feedback to the government - need an organization to do this.

Overhead # 2

> Focused on what best you can do - not waste time (strengths heard)

Anthony Warner - Virtual Engineering

1. timing
 2. do project work (one month/2 week) (volunteer)
 3. Volunteer Program 3 weeks > month
- >Canadian experience only required for licence not job

Overhead #3

- Need to define problem accurately

- (60% of trained engineers doing something else 6 years later (not require professional designation))
- Problem - How well prepared you are and the market

Overhead #4

Action Plan

- what is you do differently
- commitment to self
- engaging opportunities
- do what I do best, focus on my strengths
- to be more positive
- get my best leveraging, best experiences
- conversation: helpful & hopeful

Overhead "#5"

- www.strategies.gc.ca
- Canadian companies capability
- Detailed Search
 - SIC Code
 - Key word: Employers hiring in 2003
- Scott's Directory
- Directory of Recruiters

Overhead "#6"

"Extraordinary conversations"

- * Hopeful
- * Helpful
- * Engaging

Overhead "7"

Bring to End of Day

What do you want to communicate to the larger group?

- Have a united voice of engineers...
- What opportunities we capitalize on
- What tools can be made more available to help
- Proposal: include people at all levels of government

Questions

Overhead #1

- How can we individually help get information from employers...search for job in field?
- How govt. + PEO, OSPE can help us – getting a relevant job in a relevant field
- PEO/Pathway – what-who-why... How engineering programs work together
- How...Why we are facing the barriers?

Overhead #2

- Experience issue – How do we sort it out?
- How Does PEO educate the Canadian Workplace?

- Where can we get the one year experience?
- Can we have the equivalency codes spelled out to us? (specific)
- What is the greatest obstacle from the employers point of view that needs to be overcome?
- Is any job guaranteed after going through certification

Overhead #3

- Why gov't not take active action instead take a passive action to help people get jobs?
- How can we develop a law to fast track the licensing process?
- Can these engineering organizations break down the barriers?

Marketplace

Community organizations, government agencies and private firms serving IEPs were approached to subscribe to a booth and advertisement in the Directory for a fee. This was based on the Conference's interest in putting useful tools and information in the hands of participants to use in their search for appropriate employment. Also, the conference sought to generate revenue to help balance its budget as there was no cost to participants to attend the conference.

The Marketplace was a dynamic gathering place throughout the conference.



Conversations began with early arrivals in the morning and continued at conference breaks and lunchtime during the day. Networking, a major focus of the day, was ongoing.



Participants speak to exhibitors in the Marketplace

Marketplace Exhibitors

- Progress Career Planning Institute
- World Education Services
- Centennial College
- Primerica Financial
- People Bank
- Vocational Pathways
- City of Toronto
- Inter-connections Canada
- Ontario College of Teachers
- Ontario Coalition of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI)
- Council of Agencies Serving South Asians (CASSA)
- Scarborough North Job Finding Club/Goodwill Employment Centre
- Industry Canada
- Skills for Change
- Possibilities Virtual Employment Resource Centre
- Toronto Community News
- Seneca College
- Executive Advancement (EARN)
- National Association of Asian American Professionals (N.A.A.A.P.)
- Ombudsman Ontario
- Sheridan College
- Right Axsmith
- Accessible Community Counselling and Employment Services (ACCES)
- Centre for Language Training
- My Urban Profile Inc.
- Multicultural Business Solutions Book Table

Directory

“Breaking Barriers Building Bridges, A Directory for Internationally Educated Professionals (IEPs), 16 pp. This directory of resources for IEP’s is another tool for a participant to use along her or his journey toward qualifications, experience and appropriate employment. It includes information on Engineers, Accountants, IT&T, Nurses, Teachers and more.

It’s press run was 30,000 copies. Like Marketplace, the Directory raises revenue to help fund the Conference budget.

In addition to being included in the participants’ registration package, over 29,500 will be available over the next year at Job Fairs, employment resource centres, the next conference and other key locations. It was designed to last one year and then will be updated to mesh with the 2004 sector hubs and reprinted.

For a copy of the 2003 Directory, you can go to the Conference website www.iep.ca to download a copy.

Quality Improvement Manual

A Quality Improvement Manual for Successful Conference Planning was compiled based on the learnings of the conference for use by the Partners of the Conference.

Web Site: <http://www.iep.ca>

The web site has played a key role in promoting the first conference. Looking ahead and with appropriate design and funding, it has the potential to play a significant role in providing ongoing support to the IEP community, including support for future activities of the IEP Partnership. We thank the Minister of Training Colleges and Universities for a grant to refine the website and post this document in preparation for the February 2004 Conference

Initially, these conference “Notes” will be published on the site along with photographs taken the day of the conference. Potentially, in the future this includes opportunities for sharing information tips and advice, online chat and discussion threads and other functions deemed needed and useful by the IEP Community which depends on sponsorship and funding.

Closing Plenary, Speakers' Remarks

Wrap-Up, Actual Breaking Down the Barriers

MC Nowshad Ali, at the time the outgoing Executive Director of the Toronto Training Board did a wrap up of the day and invited a representative from each sector hub to deliver highlights from their Hub sector discussion.

Make and Live your Wishes - Owen Mullings, IEP Special Guest

Taking it Home

Thanks to all involved:

- It was a pleasure and privilege to have worked with the planning committee on conference
- Taking this opportunity to say thanks: - Thanks to the members of the planning committee, our facilitators, sponsors and speakers and other invited guests, for the valuable time, effort and money they put in over the past several months.
- Many thanks also to my fellow IEP's for coming and making this conference a **resounding** success.

Taking it home and follow-through:

- What can we (IEP's) do, to follow-through on this success
- Suggestion to share: -
 - a. Suggest that each individual put together a plan of action and a **method** of following through with this plan;
 - b. Why a method to go with the plan – It is very difficult to carry out a plan in difficult times – a method or mechanism will help.
 - In addition, it is said that there is one thing that successful people, have in common
They have a **method or a mechanism** to get things done.
 - Not higher education, not skills, knowledge, wisdom, experience
They have a **method**, a system, a **mechanism** for getting things done.

Allow me to share 3 such mechanisms with you

Action: **First Mechanism – Recapture your hopes and dreams:**

- i. Those hopes and dreams you had when you were coming to Canada
- ii. Somewhere along the way - you were excited, had those sparkles in your eyes you had hope, you had dreams for better things to come

Other Immigrants before us have recaptured their dreams and succeeded, and became very successful

- a. **One humble accountant**, now the 5th richest person in Canada, went back to his country of origin and bought the national bank
- b. **The Owner of Hakim Optical** pay between \$6-10M tax each year – he did not have enough to pay for his ticket when he was coming to Canada

--- So recapture your hopes and dreams to success ---

Second Mechanism - Learn the system and use it, don't fight the system:

- Two swimmers swimming together in a pool - one a beginner the other a professional swimmer
- The professional swimmer moves effortlessly and swiftly through the water ; in the same pool and same water the beginner fights and struggles but does not move
- What's the difference between the two swimmers - One knows how to use the water. Knows how the system works and uses it well.

Strive to be that professional swimmer - **Learn the system and use it, don't fight the system**

Third and Last - Get out of your bed get out of your house and go to work

Every day – start early - at 7-o'clock – work late till after 5-pm

- A friend of mine, a fellow IEP called me one Saturday night raising hell about Canada. Quite rightly so too
- He spent all his life savings, his wife left and went back home
- He said he was going back home because Canada was the worst place on the face of the earth, he had many 4-letter words to describe Canada

Very concerned I suggested that until he decided to leave he should

- continue with his job search
- but most importantly he should get out of his house and go to work every day

We spoke the Saturday night, he called me again on Monday night a completely changed person,

- He said he found a job, His wife is coming back and he was happy
- He got the job on his first try on the Monday
- He got out of bed, out of his house and went to work, research some Italian companies, with resume in hand he was successful on his first try

Was this chance, I think not, Was it luck, I think he made his own luck by - **getting out of his bed out of his house and went to work.**

Ladies and gentlemen, fellow IEP's:

**Remember: Get a Genie make a wish to recapture your dreams; learn the system well and use it; Get out of your bed, out of your house and go.
Thank you all for listening.**

Summary: Get your self a Genie; ask your Genie for a wish and believe; next learn the system and use it; Get out of your bed, get out of your house and go to work every morning

Action:

1. Each individual must decide what they want
 - a. Setup your priority system and select
 - b. Select what information can help

- c. Use up the contacts you have met to help find the other information you need.
- 2. Take time every day to build your network - go face to face
 - a. Most of us took our support network for granted (especially professionals)
 - b. I applied for a job once in my life before coming to Canada – (I had a support network that referred me or told me about my next job)
 - c. Best support network for me is the ones with
 - i. common interest
 - ii. can share what I have to offer

Vision:

- 1. Be like a lighthouse that shines out to sea - with one never-ending purpose in mind
- 2. To provide a light to those who need it – whether it storms, arms, fog, light or dark.

Directory of Contact Information for Presenters/ Panelists/Committees/Volunteers

Presenters

Rifky Gold
Access To Professions and Trades Unit, MTCU
Rifky.gold@edu.gov.on.ca

Brian Bassett
Bassett Communication Clinics
Director
bccoach@pathcom.com
Toronto, Ontario M5E 1W7

Geoff Dillon
People Bank
Marketing Manager
gdillon@thepeoplebank.com
Toronto, Ontario M5B 2H1 Canada

Michael Hopkins
mike@connectiveintelligence.com
Toronto, Ontario M5N 2P3

Richard Johnston
Centennial College
President
Scarborough, Ontario M1K 5E9

Kevin Kamal
World Education Services
kkamal@wes.org
Toronto, Ontario M4Y 1S2 Canada

Ian Kennedy
Essential Communications Ltd.
Director
ian@essentialcommunications.ca
Toronto, Ontario M4M2Z1 Canada

Deena Ladd
Toronto Organization For Fair Employment
Coordinator
deena@toffeonline.org
Toronto, Ontario M6H 4B5 Canada

Lionel Laroche
CPI Hazell & Associates, VP
llaroche@hazell.com
Toronto, Ontario M4T 1W1 Canada

Nancy Millward
World Education Services
nmillwar@wes.org
Toronto, Ontario M4Y 1S2 Canada

Dr. Aaron Pun
aaron.pun@utoronto.ca

Francine Volker
francine@ACCENTuateBusiness.com

Steve Ruhinda
Counselor
Centennial College Progress Campus
Scarborough, Ontario
Canada M1K 5E9
416-289-5000 (Ex 2498)
sruhinda@centennialcollege.ca

Steve Jones
President
People Bank
Toronto, Ontario Canada
sjones@thepeoplebank.com

Engineering Panel

Chuck Lounia, M.Sc. (Eng.)
Senior Account Executive
CHUCK@FUTUREEXEC.COM
Future Executive Personnel Ltd.
International Headquarters:
Toronto, On CANADA

Gerry Meade
Professional Engineers of Ontario
Manager - Engineer Internship Program
gmeade@peo.on.ca
Toronto, Ontario Canada

Jose Pereira
Employment and Career Consultant
jspereira@rogers.com

Anthony R Warner, P.Eng.
President
Virtual Engineers - VE Collective Inc.
rawarner@vecollective.com
Markham, Ontario Canada

Saeed Ziaee, P. Eng., M. Sc.
Intelligent Engineering Solutions Inc.
Product Development Manager
ziaee@iespd.com
Toronto, Ontario Canada

Rifky Gold
Access To Professions and Trades Unit, MTCU
Rifky.gold@edu.gov.on.ca

Finance/Accounting Panel

Peter Cheuk-kin Lai, MBA, CGA
Aluma Enterprises Inc.
Senior Operational Accountant
plai@aluma.com

Brendon Francis D'Mello
Fidelity Investments Canada Ltd.
Client Representative - Retail & Retirement
Services Fidelity Retirement
brendan.d'mello@fidelity.com
Toronto, Ontario Canada

Don Hutton
Certified General Accountants of Ontario (CGA)
Manager - Admissions & Post Secondary
Liaison
dhutton@cga-ontario.org
Toronto, Ontario Canada

Nat Vora, CGA, CPA (US), CA (Ind)
Director - Finance, Administration
toronto.com
nvora@toronto.com
Toronto, Ontario Canada

Teaching Panel

Lindy Amato
Executive Assistant
Ontario Teachers' Federation
lindy.amato@otffeo.on.ca

Linda Genesi-Williams
Ontario College of Teachers
Manager, Evaluation Services

Ruth Baumann
Ontario Teachers Federation
Executive Assistant
ruth.baumann@otffeo.on.ca
Toronto, Ontario

Monica Scorza
Toronto District School Board
155 College Street, Toronto Training Board M5T
1P6

Andrea Strachcan
Access to Trades & Professions
Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities
Andrea.strachcan@edu.gov.on.ca

Nursing

Tessa Armstrong
Access to Trades & Professions
Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities
Tessa.Armstrong@edu.gov.on.ca

Divina Jalea
Diverscare

Brenda Lewis
Internationally Educated Nurse
Ontario Nurses' Association

Joseph Rudyk
Chair, Nursing, Arts Science &
Communications, George Brown College
jrudyk@gbrownc.on.ca

Ruth Wojtiuk
Ryerson University
Program Manager – Nursing
Toronto, Ontario
rwojtiuk@ryerson.ca

IT Panel

Desmond Soye
President, Post-secondary Division
CDI Education Corporation
des.soye@cdi.ca
Toronto, Ontario Canada

Raksha Desai
Institute for computer studies
Instructor

Susan Galea
Access to Trades & Professions
Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities
Susan.galea@edu.gov.on.ca

Maisie Hathaway
Mt. Sinai Hospital

Denise Woods

Steve Scanlon, HR Director,
National Office Deloitte
Toronto Ontario M5C 3G7
CANADA
E-mail: scanlon@deloitte.ca

Himanshu Shah

John O'Grady
Prism Economics & Analysis
ogrady@prismeconomics.com
Toronto, Ontario Canada

Facilitators

Cathy Tait
Tait & company
Principal
citait@sympatico.ca
Toronto, Ontario Canada

Fiona Potter
The Workplace Innovators
Principal Consultant
fpotter@istar.ca
Aurora, Ontario Canada

Heather Turnbull
Maritz
heather.turnbull@maritz.com
Mississauga, ON

Jo Ellen Logan
Working Solutions
loganjo@aol.com
Toronto, ON

Registration Team

Damindra Dias
Canadian Association of Professional
Immigrants
Director
damindra@capimm.com
Mississauga, Ontario Canada

Larry Rooney
Executive Director
PCWF – Phoenix Community Works Foundation
Toronto, On
lrooney@total.net

Bob Fanous
bfanous@goodwill.on.ca

Jing Tu
jingtu@hotmail.com

Scott Wilkinson
wilkinson@careerplan.net
Derrick McKay
dmckay@goodwill.on.ca

Sabita Ramlal
Labour Market Specialist
Toronto Training Board
ramlal@ttb.on.ca
Toronto, Ontario
www.ttb.on.ca

General (Other) Volunteers

Debbie Redmond (IEP Registration & name tag
development)
Toronto Community News
dredmond@torontocommunitynews.com

Maureen McKenna (AI Training)
Mentoring with MOMentum
maureenmckenna@sympatico.ca
Toronto, ON,

Jane Cullingworth (Steering committee)
Council of Agencies Serving South Asians
Project Coordinator
janecullingworth@cassa.on.ca
Toronto, Ontario

Tanya Mruck (Presenter organisation)
Toronto Training Board
Administrative & Communications Officer
admin@ttb.on.ca

Carrie Davis-sydor (Assistant to Desmond De
Soye – IT Panel)
CDI
carrie.davis-sydor@cdi.ca

Karina Patterson (Press Release)
EDCT Promotion & Communications
kpatter@toronto.ca

Jessica Hazen (Press/Co-author)
Osteoporosis Society of Canada
Fund Development Associate
jhazen@osteoporosis.ca
Toronto, Ontario Canada

Donna Wurster
Consultant JSW Program
Costi Immigrant Services
Toronto, Ontario
wurster@costi.org

Gunter Matysiak
Career Consultant
Progress Career Planning Centre
a division of Progress Career Planning Institute
Scarborough, Ontario
Matysiak@careerplan.net

Isma Javed
Career Consultant
Progress Career Planning Centre
a division of PCPI
Scarborough, Ontario
javed@careerplan.net

Pinar Celebi
Career Consultant
Progress Career Planning Centre
a division of PCPI
Scarborough, Ontario
celebi@careerplan.net

Silma Hudson Roddau
Operations Manager
Progress Career Planning Centre
a division of PCPI
Scarborough, Ontario
roddau@careerplan.net

Scott Wilkinson
Career Consultant
Progress Career Planning Centre
a division of PCPI
Scarborough, Ontario
winkinson@careerplan.net

Shantell Mable
Career Consultant
Progress Career Planning Centre
a division of PCPI
Scarborough, Ontario
mable@careerplan.net

Wendy Harness
Career Consultant
Progress Career Planning Centre
a division of Progress Career Planning Institute
Scarborough, Ontario
harness@careerplan.net

Patrick Chartrand
Community & Labour Market Manager
Social Services
Scarborough West Social Services
Toronto, Ontario
pchartr@city.toronto.on.ca

Wanda Timmins
Community volunteer