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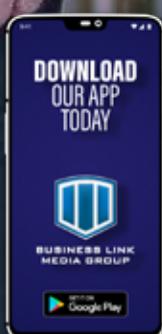
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Supporting Health Care Excellence for Seniors' Month

PROVIDED BY HAMILTON HEALTH SCIENCES FOUNDATION

Seniors link the past to the present as we move into the future, offering a lifetime of wisdom and experience that enriches us all. June is Seniors' Month in Ontario, which is the perfect time to reflect on the importance of health care excellence for seniors in our community.

Hamilton Health Sciences offers care for patients of all ages throughout southcentral Ontario. This includes seniors like Anton Bosnic from Grassie, who required care at two different Hamilton Health Sciences hospitals.

In October 2018, the 79-year-old was reading the newspaper at home when he suddenly lost the use of his left hand.

"I couldn't move it, no matter how hard I tried," recalls Anton. "That's when I started to panic."

When he tried to stand up from his chair, Anton fell over because his left leg was so weak.

"My wife heard me fall and she called 911," he says. "I was rushed to Hamilton General Hospital by ambulance, where they determined I'd suffered a stroke. My blood clot was treated with medication and I was lucky that I didn't require surgery."

After spending five weeks recovering at Hamilton General Hospital, Anton was transferred to the Restorative Care Unit at St. Peter's Hospital.

"I was grateful that my speech was unaffected by the stroke, but I couldn't use my left arm and leg," he says. "It was frustrating because I'd always been a healthy, active and independent person. I was worried that I would need a wheelchair for the rest of my life."

Therapists helped Anton regain some of his independence by strengthening the left side of his body and helping him regain his sense of balance. With hard work and determination, he was soon able to stand up from his wheelchair without assistance and use the washroom on his own.

"The physiotherapists were very kind and knowledgeable," explains Anton. "They helped me use the walking bars and the stairs in the gym, which helped to loosen my left leg and make it stronger every day."

Occupational therapists worked with Anton to help him regain

the use of his left hand so he could do everyday tasks such as opening cartons of milk and making sandwiches. Slowly but surely, his strength was returning and he could see the light at the end of the tunnel.

By January 2019, Anton was able to walk for short distances with a cane.

"Feeling a sense of independence again was wonderful," he says.

Anton was discharged at the end of January and returned home.

"I was very happy when I was out of the hospital and could spend

"Feeling a sense of independence again was wonderful." - Anton

more time with my amazing wife of 52 years," Anton says. "At the same time, I was sad to leave all the

great staff at St. Peter's Hospital who made such a difference in my life. I will never forget them."

Donor support of Hamilton Health Sciences Foundation plays a vital role in ensuring health care excellence for patients like Anton. Gifts from donors like you fund medical equipment and patient amenities, innovative research initiatives, essential redevelopment of clinical care spaces, and the education and training of health care providers. **BL**

This Seniors' Month, make a vital difference in the lives of patients and families throughout the region by making a donation at hamiltonhealth.ca/donate.



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THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS

BY LEANNE STANDRYK AND ALEXANDRA DEL VECCHIO

HIRING THE RIGHT PERSON means finding a candidate with the necessary qualifications and who demonstrates alignment with workplace values and objectives. Recruitment should be systematic for each candidate and comply with the law.

The Job Posting

The posting should be well thought out, thorough and reflect business needs. Identify qualifications and the essential details of the job.

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (the "AODA") and the Human Rights Code (the "HRC") require that you consider accessibility and human rights concerns. An accessibility statement as contemplated by the AODA should be included in your posting similar to the following:

We are an equal opportunity employer. We encourage applications from all qualified individuals and will provide accommodations in line with the AODA and HRC throughout the recruitment and selection process. Should you require accommodation at any stage of the recruitment process please contact [set out company representative]

The HRC prohibits discrimination based on race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, record of offenses, marital status, family status or disability. Job requirements must be neutral and non-discriminatory. The HRC recognizes the concept of "bona fide occupation-al qualification" or a requirement which may constitute a preference for/against a particular characteristic protected by the HRC.

The Interview Process

Résumé evaluation should be neutral and non-discriminatory. Be aware of conscious and unconscious biases that may impact evaluation. For example, preferring a candidate from a certain educational institution because you perceive it as more reputable than others.

The AODA requires accessible interviews. Consider location, accessibility to those using a mobility device, proper lighting, seating arrangements, timing of the interview and alternatives to in person interviews such as skype or via telephone.

Evaluate candidates on merits as against core responsibilities required for the job. Avoid conclusions based on what a person looks like, assumptions of age, gender, etc.

The law presumes that all questions asked during the interview process will be used in the hiring decision. The HRC prohibits employers from asking questions which directly/indirectly indicate qualifications by a prohibited ground. How old are you? Do you have children?

Focus on questions that test knowledge and skill set. Find out what motivates them to put forth their greatest effort? How do they

work under pressure and manage deadlines? Seek specific examples of how they may perform tasks. Ask about a workplace conflict and how they dealt with it. Consider questions that reveal leadership style: What five characteristics best explain an effective leadership style?

Pre-Employment Screening

Once you have determined the most suitable candidate, you may make a conditional offer subject to satisfactory pre-employment background checks. Common types might include education verification, driving record, accreditation, criminal/vulnerable sector check, credit check and professional reference check. Assess the need and limit background checks to necessary information. Obtain the applicant's consent to perform the checks. Remember, the HRC prohibits discrimination on grounds related to a record of offences for which a pardon has been obtained. If the applicant has been convicted and subsequently pardoned, denial of employment would contravene the HRC.

One of the emerging issues with criminal/vulnerable background checks is the delay in obtaining the information requested. Allowing the employee to work prior to receipt of the reference check contradicts the belief that a clean record is an essential job requirement. Deciding to terminate the employee's employment based on a criminal conviction after employment has started may expose you to liability for wrongful dismissal and potentially human rights damages.

The Offer Letter & Workplace Policies

The employee should receive, acknowledge and agree to your workplace policies prior to their start date.

The hiring phase presents the opportunity to define terms of employment and manage legal liability with the execution of a written employment contract (a.k.a. offer letter, employment agreement). While there is nothing illegal about a verbal contract, terms are significantly more difficult to prove in the event of a dispute.

The agreement should identify key terms such as title, compensation details, duties/responsibilities, hours of work and terms governing the conclusion of employment. Ensure compliance with the Employment Standards Act 2000 (ESA), pay equity legislation etc.

Conclusion

There are several practical elements to conducting a successful recruitment but understanding how the law impacts the process is critical. **BL**

Leanne Standryk and Alexandra Del Vecchio are lawyers in Lancaster Brooks & Welch LLP Labour and Employment Department. Please contact them with any questions about labour and employment law at 905.641.1551.

ALEXANDRA DEL VECCHIO is an associate within the Lancaster Brooks & Welch LLP Labour & Employment Department.

When you need support in a labour or employment matter, it is good to have someone who can navigate the law and represent your interests.



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Get Ready To Unleash Your Inner Geek!

PROVIDED BY NIAGARA FALLS COMIC CON

For more than eight years, Niagara Falls Comic Con has taken over the Scotiabank Convention Centre in Niagara Falls, Canada. The annual event features more than 200,000 square feet of all things pop culture – and draws tens of thousands of people to world-famous Niagara Falls every year.

"There's really no other event like it in the region," said Chris Dabrowski, president and co-founder of the annual fan celebration of all things geek. "From cosplay to celebrities to video games to comic books, Comic Con provides attendees with the opportunity to celebrate anything and everything related to pop culture."

The event has welcomed hundreds of celebrities over the years, and 2019's star-studded line-up features the likes of Christopher Lloyd (Back To The Future), Bruce Campbell (Ash vs. Evil Dead) and WWE Superstar The Undertaker.

"Our team has worked very hard on this year's event, and thankfully, celebrity schedules allowed us to bring in names we've tried to secure for years," adds Dabrowski.

Comic Con isn't all about the celebrity line-up either.

This year's event will also showcase The Merrill Movie Museum (featuring one of the largest collections of screen-used movie props in the world), TV and movie cars such as "Baby" from Supernatural and the DeLorean Time Machine, a cosplay contest, Q&As, exhibitor panels, and themed escape room challenges. All-in-all, the event's show floor will include more than 200 exhibitors, artists, attractions, and interactive exhibits and events. **BL**

Niagara Falls Comic Con is presented by Brock University and takes place on June 7th, 8th and 9th. Tickets are available online at www.nfcomiccon or at the door.





YOUR CENTRE FOR SUCCESS

CERF Niagara's Francophone resource centre provides a complete range of free employment services to French job seekers and employers alike.

BY SCOTT LESLIE

IT DOESN'T MATTER IF you're a new graduate student looking for work, a laid off employee trying to get back into the work force or a small business owner searching for that perfect employee. CERF Niagara can help people from all walks of life.

A Francophone employment and resource centre, CERF Niagara has been providing bilingual services to those who need support with their job search since 2000. Serving the entire Niagara Region, CERF Niagara is funded through Employment Ontario under the Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities and provides all its services free of charge.

CERF Niagara Executive Director Lucie Huot says CERF Niagara has a full range of employment solutions designed to give Francophone job candidates the tools they need to succeed.

"We work with anyone who's French or bilingual," Lucie explains. "We're committed to helping our clients find work as soon as possible and ensure the economic growth of the local Francophone community."

It all starts at CERF Niagara's employment and resource centre located at 300 Lincoln Street East in Welland. Here, job seekers can access computers, printers and scanners, fax machines, phones, photocopiers, and an extensive research library to aid with their job search. CERF Niagara also offers a number of job search workshops free of charge including career exploration, resume and cover letter preparation, and job search techniques.

"We make it a point to develop French and English resumes for all our job candidates," Lucie explains. "Employers really take notice if someone can speak both languages. It's a real asset."

The biggest strength of CERF Niagara is its team of bilingual employment counsellors. By working one-on-one with clients, the CERF Niagara team can provide the support, guidance and motivation they need to perform a successful job search. These include developing a clear action plan, refining their interview skills or applying for financial assistance to upgrade their skills.

CERF Niagara offers a wide range of beneficial employment programs through Employment Ontario that are designed to help unemployed workers get back on their feet. These include the Second Career Program which provides training and financial support to laid off workers applying for jobs in high demand.

Lucie says their employment counsellors work hard to help local employers save time and money – whether it's supplying them with skilled job candidates or funding the cost of training a new employee.

"We often direct our clients to English employers," Lucie says, "but we also work closely with a number of French employers in the edu-

cation, health, construction and transportation sectors."

CERF Niagara works together with employers in several ways. That includes discussing their employment needs, offering online job postings, pre-screening potential job candidates, and providing access to graduates from the Second Career Program. CERF Niagara can also help employers defray the cost of training their employees through subsidies like the Canada-Ontario Job Grant. Available to new and existing employees, this grant is offered through Employment Ontario, and provides government funds to cover an employee's training costs.

After placing a new employee, CERF Niagara even provides monitoring support to ensure the candidate has been successfully matched.

"Monitoring is a big part of what we do," Lucie says. "We follow up with our candidates depending on the program so we can make sure each employee is a perfect fit with their respective employer."

In today's competitive job market, it's important for Francophones to get ahead of the curve when they're looking for work. And there's no better advantage than to have the dedicated employment experts at CERF Niagara in your corner. **BL**

CERF Niagara is located at 300 Lincoln Street East, Unit 20 in Welland. For more information, please call 905.714.1480, email info@cerfniagara.com or go to www.cerfniagara.com.



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THE BUSINESS GROWTH COACH

"Shoulda Coulda Woulda"

By Dennis O'Neill

Get over it. Fact is, you decided something else. So, "coulda coulda woulda" just wastes your priceless time and energy. And it has you carrying around a garbage bag of regrets.

The world is covered knee deep in missed opportunities and regrets. Better to focus on "What could I do best now?" We all want to win. Sometimes we lose. A lost opportunity feels like losing. Time for a reframe. The opposite of winning is not losing, but learning.

Reframe your "shoulda coulda woulda's" as learning. Now let's see the smarter, better you knock the world out. **BL**

Dennis O'Neill, *The Business Growth Coach* is located in Niagara-on-the-Lake. For more information on how to grow your business, please call 905.641.8777, email dennis@dennisonneillcoach.com or visit www.dennisonneillcoach.com.



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Essentials of Inventory Management

By Max Muller

Published by HarperCollins Leadership

THE BAR IS SET high for inventory control professionals – and well-ordered stock rooms and records are just the beginning. Beyond core tasks such as locating items, you've got to project future business needs, hold down costs, and fix supply chain problems. You need strategic and financial knowledge, and the skills to manage many moving parts.

Max Muller's *Essentials of Inventory Management* is the book that practitioners and students rely on. It breaks down the job into easy concepts and concrete steps. There are also several examples, charts, review questions, formulas, and clear explanations. With these tools, Muller can help you track inventory costs, read balance sheets and calculate gross profit. You can even set up a locator system, weigh pros and cons of barcodes, pinpoint system dysfunctions, and mitigate risks in the supply chain.

Now in its third edition, *Essentials of Inventory Management* explains how to purchase inventory, pick the best location for a distribution centre, and establish safety precautions for handling inventory. Maintaining physical spaces and databases are only part of your responsibilities. From forecasting to troubleshooting to the fundamentals of finance, Muller's new edition gives you the tools to optimize your efficiency and drive profits. **BL**

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STATUTORY HOLIDAY PAY IN ONTARIO

BY LAURA TOLHOEK

AS THE WEATHER INCHES warmer by the week, we all start to crave the promise of sunshine and summer vacation. With the summer holidays brings the need to understand and calculate statutory holiday pay. If you find this confusing, you're not alone. In the last two years, the calculation of Statutory Holiday Pay in Ontario has changed twice. Before the best of the season's holidays are upon us, let's look at what you need to know.

In Ontario, there are nine statutory public holidays set out by the provincial government:

- | | |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| 1. New Year's Day | 6. Labour Day |
| 2. Family Day | 7. Thanksgiving Day |
| 3. Good Friday | 8. Christmas Day |
| 4. Victoria Day | 9. Boxing Day |
| 5. Canada Day | |

What is Public Holiday Pay?

Public Holiday Pay is calculated by taking the regular wages earned (including any vacation time taken) by the employee in the four weeks before the work week with the public holiday. Next divide that dollar amount by 20. (You can visit www.ontario.ca/page/public-holiday-pay-calculator to use the Ministry of Labour's public holiday pay calculator.)

Despite whether a worker is considered full-time, part-time, casual, student or temporary, they are eligible to receive Public Holiday Pay.

There is a caveat to this and it is called the "Last and First Rule." To receive holiday pay, an employee must work their last scheduled work day before the holiday. The employee must also work their first scheduled work day after the holiday – unless you were unable to work for a reason that was beyond your control.

For example, Kevin's manager scheduled him on Saturday, June 29th and Tuesday, July 2nd. For Kevin to be paid Holiday Pay on Canada Day (Monday, July 1st), he must work the shifts he's scheduled. If he doesn't work those two shifts and doesn't have a valid reason as to why, he will forfeit his Holiday Pay.

If an employee schedules vacation prior to or after the statutory holiday, they would need to work their first and last scheduled shift before and after that vacation.

When do I pay Premium Pay?

Premium pay is 1.5 multiplied by the employee's hourly wage. According to Ontario.ca, if an employee agrees electronically or in writing to work on the public holiday, there are two options:

- The employee is entitled to receive regular wages for all hours worked on the public holiday, plus a substitute day off work with public holiday pay.
- If the employee agrees electronically or in writing, they are entitled to public holiday pay for the public holiday. That's plus premium pay for all the hours worked on the public holiday. In this case, the employee will not be given a substitute day off.

Are there exceptions?

Some of the businesses that are excluded from these provisions are outlined in the Retail Sales Act and include businesses that:

- sell prepared meals (e.g. restaurants, cafeterias, cafés).
- rent living accommodations (e.g. hotels, tourist resorts, camps, inns).

- provide educational, recreational or amusement services to the public (e.g. museums, art galleries, sports stadiums, theatres, bars, nightclubs).
- sell goods and services that are secondary to the businesses described above and are located on the same premises (e.g. museum gift shops, souvenir shops in sports stadiums).

They also include:

- hospitals and nursing homes.
- continuous operations.
- nurseries/gardening centres.
- gas stations.
- tourist areas, as specified in municipal by-laws.

An employee who works in any of these businesses can be required to work on a public holiday without his or her agreement. But only if the holiday falls on a day that the employee would normally work and the employee is not on vacation.

An internet search will provide many examples of different circumstances surrounding Holiday Pay on the provincial website as well as in the Employment Standards Act. Until then, work hard until your birthday becomes a public holiday! **BL**

Laura Tolhoek is the proprietor of Essential HR. She offers hands-on HR services to businesses in Niagara. Her passion is being able to help owners and managers in a way that lets them focus on their strengths and the core of their business.



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It's an innovative business model that's helped the ITEX team process over \$85-million dollars in barter transactions for its member businesses over the past five years.

Photo: Ian Charnock

Cover Photo: Ian Charnock and Michael Muzzin

TRADING IT FORWARD

ITEX Barter Canada is the barter exchange of choice for any business – large or small.

By Scott Leslie

Back in 1997, Ian Charnock was making a decent living selling satellite dishes for a small firm in St. Catharines when a salesperson from a local barter company came knocking.

With the bartering system, you can trade your products and services with other members – rather than using cash. Ian tried the system out – and quickly became a believer.

It was a transitional moment in his life.

"I realized it was a powerful tool," Ian says of his first experience with bartering. "You can trade for new carpets for your office or windows in your house."

Six months later, Ian was so taken that he decided to become a

sales executive with the same barter firm. That same year, he moved up the ranks and became a sales manager of all of Canada at the corporate level, eventually reaching the position of vice-president. After 20 years as a successful executive in the barter industry, however, Ian decided to leave the firm in 2007 to pursue some new business ventures.

It wasn't until 2018 that Ian had a chance meeting with a former client who convinced him to get back in the bartering game.

"We had a good conversation," he recalls. "She reminded me how much I'd missed the business. The light bulb went back on."

Last fall, Ian began doing some research and met with a few other barter companies in Toronto about potential job opportunities. By October, he'd joined ITEX – one of the largest marketplaces for cashless transactions in Canada and the U.S.

Originally established in 1982, ITEX stands for "International Trade Exchange" and has helped thousands of businesses to generate new sales, conserve cash flow and increase their profits. Every month, ITEX processed millions of dollars in sales by its member businesses.

ITEX members can accumulate ITEX dollars by selling their products and services to other members. With this digital barter credit, ITEX members can make purchases locally or right across North America.

Ian was impressed with ITEX for several reasons.

"ITEX is a publicly traded company," he says, "and that brings a lot

of credibility and consistency to the table. They're very regulated and I really like that."

ITEX has an online marketplace and a dedicated mobile app so members can make transactions quickly and easily, anywhere or anytime. Right now, ITEX also has a booming business when it comes to travel. Each month, ITEX members spend an average of \$30,000 per month on travel to destinations like Las Vegas, Mexico and California.

Working for ITEX Barter Canada, Ian is now the regional owner for the Niagara and Hamilton areas – and has an office located in the newly developed Lincoln Theatre space on 386 St. Paul Street in downtown St. Catharines.

ITEX Barter Canada President Michael Muzzin says there are big things ahead for ITEX in the area now that Ian is at the helm.

"Ian's an award-winning sales and business professional," he says. "When it comes to barter, he has the strongest background and the most proven track record in the Niagara to Hamilton region. With Ian's ownership of the region, local businesses can expect consistent growth, performance and a great ITEX experience."

Ian has been a driven and conscientious entrepreneur ever since he started up his own carpet cleaning business when he was just 19-years-old, dealing with customers of nearly every age and nationality. He takes particular pride in his ability to facilitate barter as a tool and develop new business opportunities for his ITEX clients.

"I'm very involved with the trade," Ian says of his success. "I always try to put myself in people's shoes. I believe that empathy plus credibility equals trust."

Ian often goes out of his way to help his clients, even if they don't have any obvious compatible trade options.

Ian fondly recalls how he was able to help a Niagara Falls hotel eliminate a large cash debt. For over 18 months, the hotel had an outstanding bill with a flat roofer for \$50,000. In order to alleviate the situation, Ian arranged for the hotel to pay the roofer back in trade with the hotel group's certificates. As a result, Ian mended their business relationship with the roofer and avoided the possibility of both sides going to court.

Ian says nearly any kind of business – large or small – can benefit from using ITEX – whether it's for advertising, printing, cleaning, signage, travel, office maintenance or residential goods and services.

Some business owners are reluctant to make bartering transactions with firms like ITEX, believing it's just not affordable with their high operating costs.

That's where they're wrong, Ian says.

For instance, an ITEX restaurant owner wants to spend \$100 on window repairs by using his trade account. He immediately realizes 70% savings from the said purchase. The industry terminology is when you purchase through trade, your profit margin becomes your discount based on your incremental cost of goods sold. ITEX charges a small percentage on the purchase and the sale for facilitating the trade.

It's an innovative business model that's helped the ITEX team process over \$85-million dollars in barter transactions for its member businesses over the past five years.

"The buyer and the seller in any specific trade transaction have to agree with the terms," Ian says. "Once the dollars and cents are in place, it's a win-win-win. Simply, the math never lies." **BL**

ITEX Barter Canada is located at 386 St. Paul Street in St. Catharines. For more information, please call Ian Charnock at 905.984.1219 or email ian.charnock@itexcanada.net.



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TAPPING INTO STRENGTHS REDUCES “HEAVY” LIFTING

BY JESSICA POTTS

“Do more of the things that make you feel lighter, not heavier.”

They’re elegantly simple words from one of my wisest and most balanced friends that stuck with me. He’d recently taken some time to reflect and recalibrate after successfully exiting a business. Success here is relative though, and it came with a price tag. The lengthy, complicated legal process left him deeply drained to the point of exhaustion.

But he had had a vision that kept him focused until the finish line. This was the culmination of his career and the start of a new family-focused chapter, and that purpose carried him through the “heavy” trials of the transition.

While our own circumstances may be different, we can all relate to his wisdom: Do more of what makes you feel lighter. We can all relate to that heavy feeling you get from grinding away at something that drains your energy. Minutes drag by like hours. You struggle to maintain focus, let alone feel like you’ve accomplished anything productive. Yuck.

Too much of that heavy feeling can bring stress, discontent and long-term consequences. It affects your mood, relationships, work, and health.

I was so captivated by the “lighter/heavier” concept that I deepened my study of self-awareness, personal development, and ways to take charge of your own behaviours and outcomes.

What I found was a branch of positive psychology called strengths-based development. While perhaps best known for their opinion polls, Gallup has the most robust body of evidence-based research around strengths-based development.

Here are three key truths from Gallup’s findings:

1. There is a strong connection between who people are and what they do best.
2. There is a strong connection between what people do best and how people feel.
3. There is a strong connection between how people feel and how people perform.

The basis for these findings is rooted in our own uniqueness. Gallup has identified that we all have talent – innate ways of thinking, feeling, and doing. And that there’s a connection between those talents and our performance.

What’s often left out of conversations around productivity is that how people feel can affect performance. We don’t want to acknowledge “feelings” in business, and that’s a major problem since humans – with feelings – are the ones we count on to execute and produce results.

We live in a culture fixated on fixing weaknesses instead of ac-

celerating strengths. The constant focus on our shortcomings often makes us feel “heavy” and lacking. Strengths-based development instead focuses the notion that we can learn more from our successes than we do from our failures.

So imagine what would happen if we focused on what’s right with people, instead of what’s wrong with them. Maybe people would find a faster path to connecting to their own deeper purpose. And finding meaning in the work we do gives us higher levels of energy and vitality.

Similar to my friend’s clear vision of his purpose for exiting his business, this strengths-based approach provides something of an action plan or road map to maintain that “lighter vs. heavier” feeling.

When we take the time to examine our successes – to really dig deep into what made that experience successful – we can find the root of our talent, our motivations, and our superpowers.

The simple act of tuning in to our innate talents and applying them more consistently provides breakthrough opportunities to intentionally harness our talent and achieve that “light” feeling that leads to the most positive and sustainable results. **BL**

Jessica Potts is the president of Inspired Strategy Group Inc. and a Gallup Certified Strengths Coach, working with clients to develop leaders, build high-performing teams, sustain stakeholder and employee engagement, and realize their goals. Her approach is rooted in a strengths-based philosophy that maximizing potential happens when we encourage people to become great at what they’re naturally good at. For more information, visit www.inspiredstrategy.ca or search “Inspired Strategy” on your favorite social media platform.

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Jobs Niagara

ODSP approved service provider helps individuals with disabilities find and maintain employment – at no cost to them or the employer.

BY SCOTT LESLIE

According to recent polls, only half of Canadians with a disability have a full or part-time job. It's a bleak situation that many disabled workers in Niagara face every single day.

Fortunately, the Jobs Niagara team is working to change that in Niagara.

Jobs Niagara is a non-profit agency helping people with disabilities find and maintain employment at no cost to them or the employer. An approved service provider of the Ministry of Community and Social Services Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP), Jobs Niagara serves the entire Niagara Region with offices in Port Colborne and St. Catharines.

Each year, the organization helps up to 180 individuals with their job search, using its partnerships with over 50 firms in Niagara. These partnerships are growing every month.

Celine Hardy-Johnson, manager at Jobs Niagara, says employers with no prior experience in hiring a person with a disability may view these workers as expensive and time-consuming to train and maintain.

"I'm happy to say more and more employers are realizing that workers with a disability bring a lot of valuable skills to the table," Celine explains.

Since 2006, Jobs Niagara has helped thousands of disabled individuals (i.e. deaf, wheelchair bound or dealing with a developmental condition) to find work that appeals to them.

To start, Jobs Niagara's consultants meet with one person at a time in their community. Jobs Niagara helps develop an action plan which can entail various supports required by the candidate such as job training, resume writing, job search skills and interview skills. Job Niagara accompanies candidates on their job searches and to their job interviews as required.

Celine says it's important to focus on the individual's strengths, interests and abilities.

"We ask what they want to do and work to find a good fit," she says. "We don't want anyone in a job they dislike or are unsuited for."

As for the employer side of the equation, Jobs Niagara works with various companies to find qualified employees and create an understanding work environment. It can help with the initial training costs by subsidizing candidates wages up to 250 working hours. Jobs Niagara can find or create adaptive tools to ensure the candidate is competitive. The program is available to both employer and worker up to three years from the original hire.

Celine says her team takes great pride in their flexible hours and the fact they don't have waiting lists.

"There's a big need in the community for a service like ours," she says of Jobs Niagara. "Our personalized and caring approach is making a big difference in a lot of people's lives." **BL**

Jobs Niagara has locations in St. Catharines and Port Colborne. For more information, please call 905.835.8941, email celineh@clpcw.com or go to www.jobsniagara.org.

Lending A Helping Hand

St. Catharines day care centre is a firm believer in Jobs Niagara's employment services.

BY SCOTT LESLIE

Finding just the right person for the job can be a difficult task – especially when you're a licensed childcare agency like St. Thomas' Children's Day Care Centre in St. Catharines.

Since 1981, St. Thomas' Children's Day Care Centre has been providing quality care for children ranging from 18 months to five-years-old. In 2017, however, the day care was approached by Jobs Niagara to help place a young woman with a disability who was looking for work experience in a childcare environment.

Janet Saunders, executive director of St. Thomas' Children's Day Care Centre, says she was happy to help out. Over the next several weeks, Janet would work closely with Celine Hardy-Johnson, manager at Jobs Niagara to get the young woman all settled. In addition to accompanying the woman to her job interview, Celine would make various helpful suggestions and provide support as needed. Jobs Niagara also subsidized the worker for a period of time.

"The Jobs Niagara team is great." Janet says. "They are so kind and eager to help. We've had the opportunity to get to know them, and they've been able to get a better understanding of our needs."

In the past two years, Jobs Niagara has placed a total of three disabled individuals with Janet. Since St. Thomas' Children's Day Care Centre is regulated through the Ministry of Education and the work is highly specialized, the environment isn't for everyone. But the day care has been able to place one of Jobs Niagara's job candidates in their kitchen long term.

"It's sort of a contract," Janet explains. "Sometimes things don't quite work out – but that has nothing to do with the person's disability. Like anyone, they need to be comfortable with what they're doing."

Janet says she wouldn't hesitate to recommend Jobs Niagara to other employers looking to give disabled workers an opportunity and help them get ahead in life. **BL**

St. Thomas' Children's Day Care Centre is located at the St. Thomas Parish Hall on 99 Ontario Street in St. Catharines. For more information, call 905.688.3191, email daycare.centre@stthomaschurch.ca or go to www.stthomasdaycare.ca.

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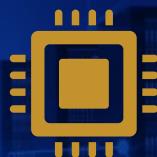
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The FUTURE of STEM

How to get today's children interested in STEM.

BY VARSHA JAYASANKAR

THROUGHOUT MIDDLE AND HIGH school, I competed at science fairs at the regional, national and international level. Since graduating from high school, I have been involved in science fairs as a judge and mentor. One question I always get asked by parents is, "How do I get my kid interested in STEM?" For the uninitiated, STEM is a curriculum based on four specific areas – namely science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

Through my experiences over the last decade, I realized there were three key factors in my upbringing, provided by not only my parents, but by teachers, mentors and other influential adults in my life.

1) Engage a child's Innate Scientist

Neil deGrasse Tyson once said, "When you are a kid, you are born a scientist." A scientist asks questions about the world around them and investigates those phenomena until they find an answer to that question. This is exactly what kids do with their environment. Something piques their curiosity and they poke and prod at it until they find an answer.

To get more children involved in STEM, we need to engage and cultivate this innate scientist in them. When they ask a question, rather than providing a simple answer, we should discuss the topic, allowing children to develop their own answer. Discussions can also be supplemented with media such as books and videos. This allows children to be more involved in the process of inquiry, cultivating their interest in STEM.

2) Participate in Inquiry-Based Learning

The word inquiry is defined as "the act of asking for information." Inquiry-based learning, therefore, is learning through the use of questions, problems or scenarios. Traditional learning is a linear process, where a stream of information is expected to be absorbed by

the student. In inquiry-based methods, the process is iterative, where a question leads to answer, which leads to another question and answer and so on. Simultaneously, this process is producing knowledge, which has proven to boost learning.

3) Expose children to STEM

When I was a kid, which was in the early 2000s, STEM toys and activities were limited to LEGO and a plastic microscope. Nowadays, STEM is an entire wall of a toy store, consisting of variety of LEGO, activity kits, books, simplified circuitry, and more! Any of these items promote exposure, which is a key element to getting children interested and involved in STEM.

STEM is also available in the community. STEM camps as well as science and technology museums provide children with interactive and guided experiences in STEM, allowing for more structured exposure.

Exposure to youth STEM initiatives is also an important element in getting children interested in STEM. Regional and national science fairs have public viewings where students as young as nine present their projects to the community. By observing youth not much older than them, children see STEM as more of a current reality rather than a distant dream or future objective. **BL**

Varsha Jayasankar is a master's student at the University of Guelph pursuing cancer research. In her school years, Varsha competed at over 30 regional, national and international science fairs, winning numerous accolades including being named one of Canada's Future Leaders by MacLean's Magazine. Since graduating from high school, Varsha has been involved in science fairs as a mentor and judge with the goal of getting more youth interested and involved in STEM. Twitter: @MangoGingerGirl LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/in/varshajayasankar/ Website: varshaj.ca



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Ryan Smith

President

Chia Global Electronics Supply Inc. (CGE-LED)

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CGE-LED is located on 76 Geneva Street, Suite 2 in St. Catharines. For more information please call Ryan at 905.531.0547, email ryan.smith@cge-led.ca or go to cge-led.ca.



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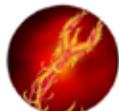
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REACH YOUR OWN PEAK

BY BRETT MEADOWS

Every time I find myself needing a boost of motivation, I make sure I find the time to watch the movie *The Summit*. It's a documentary about climbing K2, showing the struggles that normal people face in their attempt to climb the second highest point on Planet Earth and the most deadliest.

I love this movie. It's a solid reminder that some individuals in this world are willing to risk death to reach their goals and dreams. However, so many of us aren't willing to get off the couch to reach theirs.

We have to remember that in life, business, relationships and health, it's not about climbing K2 itself but finding and conquering your personal highest peak.

Life is about finding your own K2 and

then reaching its summit.

What's your most important dream? Travelling around the world? Building a successful company? Finding the perfect partner? Maybe it's owning a cottage on a private island, a Porsche and a mansion? Whatever your own K2 might be, remember K2 is a mountain that can't be climbed in a day. There will be days that you'll doubt your abilities and want to quit. But remember it takes every successful person months – maybe even years – to reach their summit. No one has rushed to the peak of K2 without the proper preparation because rushing will ultimately lead to failure.

K2 is climbed one step at a time.

Keeping that in mind, K2 is the perfect metaphor for life itself. Nothing is harder than reaching your goals in life. It takes

time, practice and patience. It involves a lot of pain, struggle and dedication. But when you reach the summit – standing there and actually having the whole world at your feet – that's when you realize all of the hard times were worth it. That's when you can actually breathe, even if your bottled oxygen is out long before the big moment.

Have you found your own K2? What will you do today to get a step closer to it? **BL**

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The Cutting Edge



BY SCOTT LESLIE

That wasn't an episode of HBO's Game of Thrones they were filming on opening day at the Munhak Baseball Stadium in Incheon, South Korea recently.

But it was something just as spectacular.

On Saturday, March 23rd, the SK Wyverns, the Korea Baseball Organization's reigning 2018 champs, unleashed an augmented reality (AR) creature which tore around the stadium with its giant wings. The golden wyvern landed on the middle of the baseball diamond and roared its displeasure from a rocky pedestal before vanishing into the SK Wyverns locker room. To top it all off, the home team rushed out onto the field in response, ready to play.

New AR Dragon a Grand Slam at South Korean Ballpark

The sold-out SK Wyverns crowd had the opportunity to watch the entire AR spectacle on the stadium's massive LED scoreboard. The video was also broadcast live on various sports channels so baseball fans could follow it on TV or on their personal smartphones.

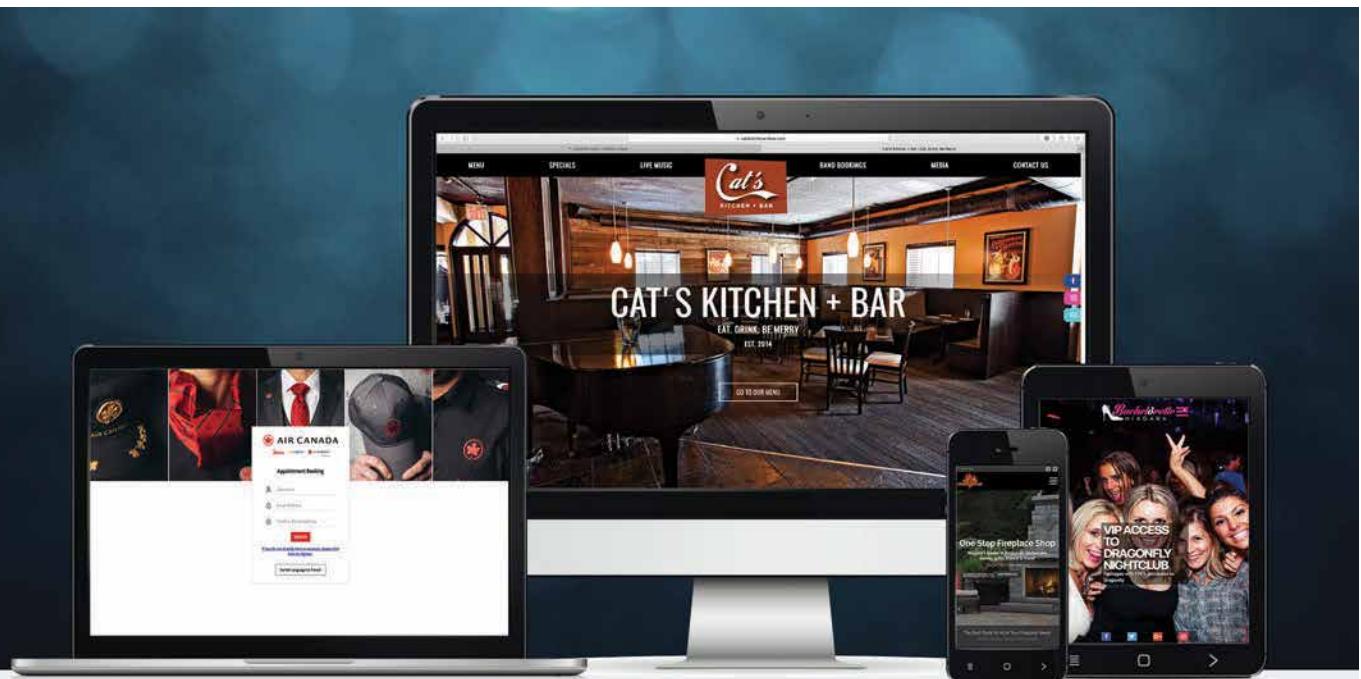
The choice of a wyvern was no big surprise considering the SK Wyverns take their name from the mythical two-legged dragon. But the AR demonstration itself was all the brainchild of SK Telecom – South Korea's largest wireless telecommunications firm which has nearly 50% of the current market.

SK Telecom used two in-house AR and virtual reality (VR) technologies to bring the large-scale wyvern to life. These include eSpace, a platform meant for recreating the

reality in cyberspace – and T real Platform, a program which allows AR content to be shared. Using these technologies, SK Telecom was able to replicate the entire Munhak Baseball Stadium in a 3D digital format so the AR wyvern's movements were correctly aligned with the stadium itself.

But the opening day AR performance was hardly a one-time event. In the past several months, SK Telecom has been hard at work developing various AR and VR presentations designed to take the customer experience to another level. And later this year, SK Telecom has plans to take its AR shows to various stadiums and concert venues around the world.

No word yet if SK Telecom has got any copyright infringement notices from HBO.



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Spanning The Future

Recent one-day event explored ways to improve Canada-U.S. cross-border trade relationships.

BY SCOTT LESLIE

TRADE IS THE LIFELOOD of the North American economy. And this past month, binational politicians, business professionals and economic experts gathered in Niagara-on-the-Lake to trade ideas on this very same topic.

Entitled "Canada-U.S. Cross-Border Innovation Corridors – A Dialogue," this day-long seminar took place on Thursday, May 16th at Niagara College's Niagara-on-the-Lake campus.

Designed to explore ways to improve Canada-U.S. trade, the event began with a keynote address by Bill Anderson, director of the Cross-Border Institute at the University of Windsor on "The Binational Advantage: What Does it Mean to be a Cross-Border Regions in a Globalized World?" Other features included a Public Officials and Economic Development Roundtable, a

discussion on "What Does It Take to Create Cross-Border Innovation Ecosystems in a Globalized World?" and panels that spoke to the Detroit-Windsor, Buffalo Niagara-Southern Ontario, and Cascadia corridors.

The prestigious event featured representatives from across the public, private, non-profit and academic spectrum. The long list of panelists and guest speakers included Managing Director of the Bush Institute Matthew Rooney, Senior Automotive Advisor to the State of Michigan Kevin Kerrigan, Corporate Affairs Director of Microsoft Hana Doubrava, General Manager of the Peace Bridge Authority Ron Rienas, President and CEO of the Greater Niagara Region Chamber of Commerce Mishka Balsom, Flamborough-Glanbrook MPP Donna Skelly, Minister Counselor for Economic Affairs at the U.S. Embassy in Ottawa Stuart Dwyer, Niagara Falls (N.Y.) Mayor Paul Dyster, and Lord Mayor of Niagara-on-the-Lake Betty Disero.

The "Canada-U.S. Cross-Border Innovation Corridors – A Dialogue" was a perfect opportunity for attendees to discuss best practises, promote greater collaboration, and gain new perspectives to take back to their respective regions and businesses.

And the topic couldn't be more timely.

Canada and the U.S. have a long history together based on mutual values and common trade interests. Over the years, that

bond has grown into a multi-billion-dollar relationship. On average, over 300,000 people and \$2-billion in goods and services cross the international border every single day. But unfortunately, that strong bilateral trade partnership has been sorely tested over the past decade and Canada has steadily lost its market share in the U.S.

Several trade barriers and protectionist measures in particular have emerged that continue to restrict trade and harm the economies of both countries. These include issues like border inefficiencies, regulatory differences, and the resurgence of "Buy America" rules. To make matters worse, both countries have failed to reach a consensus in several crucial areas like energy, trade and the environment.

The lower Canadian dollar and a recent surge in U.S. economy have helped to improve matters somewhat. But there are still numerous steps that need to be taken by the Canadian and U.S. federal governments in order to better facilitate trade and revitalize their economic relationship.

Organizers hope the seminar will help instill a broader discussion of Canada-U.S. policy in the days and months to come. And one thing is certain. "Canada-U.S. Cross-Border Innovation Corridors – A Dialogue" was a great place to start. **BL**

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Business Link celebrates Niagara's New Leaders at 16th anniversary 40 Under Forty Gala

MAY 24TH, 2019 – On Thursday night, Business Link Media Group proudly recognized 40 of Niagara's finest at the 2019 40 Under Forty Business Achievement Awards. Over 350 young people, 40 Under Forty alumni and special guests attended the 16th anniversary gala event which took place at the Holiday Inn & Suites Parkway Conference Centre in St. Catharines.

Jack Peets of 102.9 K-LITE FM's Midday Show was master of ceremonies and introduced the 40 award recipients which included local entrepreneurs, business professionals and members of the non-profit sector. A varied range of local politicians, dignitaries and past award-winners including Niagara Falls Mayor Jim Diodati and St. Catharines Mayor Walter Sendzik were also on hand to offer their encouragement to the 2019 slate of winners.

Business Link Media Group would like to congratulate this year's winners and thank everyone who took the time to nominate these individuals. The Business Link team would also like to thank its many sponsors and patrons for their ongoing support. These annual awards wouldn't be possible without the generosity of its many businesses and volunteers.

Since 2003, Business Link Media Group has proudly sponsored the 40 Under Forty Business Achievement Awards which recognize 40 business people under the age of 40 for their business success and contributions to the Niagara community. In the past 16 years, Business Link Media Group's 40 Under Forty Business Achievement Awards have recognized over 600 of Niagara's next generation of business leaders.

Serving the Golden Horseshoe since 2003, Business Link Media Group provides a unique combination of direct mail B2B publications, magazines, specialty custom publications, event programs, social media and on-line platforms. The firm has also expanded its reach substantially by addressing the growing needs of the global marketplace.

In order to nominate an individual for the 2020 40 Under Forty Business Achievement Awards, please call Julie Van Ruyven at 905.646.9366, email juliev@businesslinkmedia.com or go to www.businesslinkniagara.com/40-under-forty.

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