



DIVERSITY WORKS!

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BRUSHED UP ON YOUR LANGUAGES, LATELY?

It has been one year since the launch of our first newsletter, Diversity Works! Our subscribers are now located from coast-to-coast, reaching just about every business sector in the London community and in Canada at large. It is exciting to see and hear about how businesses are launching their diversity initiatives all across Canada.



The number of foreign-trained professionals utilizing our elocution services has grown considerably. Many businesses are realizing the human and monetary costs of employees working below their potential.

Diversity @ Work would like to welcome two additional associates, Janice Gray and Cheryl Tremblay. Janice has recently started with Diversity @ Work as an Elocution instructor. She brings considerable experience teaching foreign-trained professionals pronunciation and grammar in the London area. Cheryl Tremblay is our Aboriginal Business Development Advisor. Prior to starting her consulting business, Eagles Nest, Cheryl was

involved in several business development projects with First Nations people. She was instrumental in creating lucrative business partnerships between First Nations people and non-natives. Cheryl's passion for her people makes her a natural teacher of aboriginal culture. We welcome both Janice and Cheryl to our team. For their complete profiles, see our website: www.diversityatworkinlondon.com.

Recently, Evelina has started to write a monthly advice column for Diversity! in the Workplace, an on-line monthly publication which provides national and international perspectives on diversity in the workplace. Check their website out at www.diversityintheworkplace.com

for information about its subscription.

If you are like me, you dabbled with learning modern languages in high school and university, albeit not to the point of full-fledged fluency. Growing up in London, Ontario and studying French in elementary school, high school and one year at university did not make me bilingual! With very little opportunity to practice, and a nearly non-existent Francophone community at the time, it seemed that there were even fewer opportunities for language immersion. Now that I have started up a diversity consulting business, I see the untapped potential that

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“The Chinese market is the largest growing consumer market in the world!”



BRUSHED UP ON YOUR LANGUAGES, LATELY?

(CONT'D FROM PG. 1)

bilingualism can offer my business. I see the real benefits of brushing up on my French and seeking Francophone associates. Foreign language competency in the workplace brings numerous opportunities for businesses to expand their customer base and to improve service delivery.

Spontaneously one day, I decided to drop by Collège Boréal located in London, Ontario, to learn about how I could find the right class for me. The receptionist provided me with a written test and later invited me to take an oral test when I dropped off the first test. So, all I have to do now is to book the time and date for the class and I will be on my way! ...

In this issue, you will discover solid business reasons why you should consider acquiring a second language. However, the most important question you should ask yourself is: if I am going to study a second language, which language should it be and why?

Second language acquisition is a significant diversity issue in the workplace, for many reasons. With increasing globalization and immigration, it makes good sense for businesses to take an inventory of the linguistic skills that their employees' possess. Businesses should also determine where the gaps lie between staff knowledge and customer language needs. However, it is believed that we are approaching a time in history

that will be very difficult to negotiate many aspects of life if we do not have a grasp of a second foreign language.

A British language researcher, David Graddol has stated that: “Monolingual speakers of any variety of English, American or British will be experiencing increasing difficulty in employment and political life, and are likely to become bewildered by many aspects of society and culture around them” (March 1, 2004 cnn.com).

In fact, if you took an inventory of the languages that many of your immigrant employees and clients speak, you would be surprised how many speak more than two languages! Yale linguist Stephen Anderson comments: “multilingualism is more or less the natural state. In most of the world, multilingualism is the normal condition of people” (March 1, 2004, cnn.com). Beyond learning another language to help your business, bilingualism could play a large role in the quality of your life in the future!

Business travellers will tell you that knowledge of a few common words can go a long way in establishing a rapport with foreign business leaders. Making the extra effort shows that you have done some preparatory work on the culture and are interested in establishing a relationship. This is incredibly crucial to conducting business in many high-context cultures. Despite the obvious benefits that are derived through

second language acquisition, such as the ability to speak and write in another language, is the additional bonus of cultural insight. Take, for example, what we learn about a culture by the way they use humour and jokes, their idiomatic expressions --- even their curses!

THE BUSINESS CASE FOR STUDYING MANDARIN

- 2 billion people speak a Chinese language
- Outsourcing to China is growing
- The Chinese market is the largest growing consumer market in the world

THE BUSINESS CASE FOR STUDYING FRENCH

- Canada is a bilingual country and French is a large part of our history
- French speaking Africa represents an area larger than the USA
- France is Europe's foremost investor abroad
- French is one of the key languages of the European Economic Community

THE BUSINESS CASE FOR STUDYING SPANISH

- Increasing immigration from Spanish speaking countries to Canada
- Canada has increased its trade to Latin and South America and there are greater opportunities for conducting business in Spanish

ASK A CONSULTANT

ASK THE DIVERSITY CONSULTANT

Dear Diversity @ Work:

I am a 50 year-old white male who has been with the same company for 20 years. During this time, I have worked myself up to a middle-management position. There have been a lot of changes over the years; somehow they did not scare me as much as the latest one that the company is proposing. The company that I work for is taking on a “diversity and inclusion” initiative. They say that they want to make the company more profitable. In addition, they want to be able to recruit a diverse workforce. I have been hearing a lot about diversity and most of it sounds quite threatening to white males. I feel that with all of this focus on immigrants and people of colour that I am going to be booted out of my job. I was hoping to work here way beyond my retirement years.

Worried in London

Dear Worried:

I am glad that you asked this question, because it allows me to address this common myth about diversity initiatives. It sounds like your company is making diversity a strategic objective. This means that diversity will spill into all aspects of the business, from hiring and recruiting, to training, to budget allocations etc. Because the media tends to focus primarily on cultural and racial diversity, this unfortunately has given rise to the perception that diversity is only about culture and race. Diversity specialists tend to view “diversity” to include such individual characteristics as:

gender, age, sexual orientation, ability, work experience, religion, family status etc. The fact that your company is making diversity and inclusion a priority means that someone like yourself has a very valuable role. Your company would see you as an “experienced worker”, an individual with expert knowledge about the company that could perhaps help to integrate and train new workers. With the current and looming labour shortages, employees like you will become increasingly indispensable to a company. This is especially true if you can demonstrate your ability to be flexible and accommodating to change. The fact that you are planning to stay on after retirement age certainly demonstrates your commitment to the company, a value that many employers these days complain is non-existent. I encourage you to look at the “diversity and inclusion” initiative as another new chapter in the history of the company. If managed well, your concerns about being laid-off will dissipate and you will enjoy a much healthier work environment where all employees’ talents are maximized.

Dear Diversity@ Work:

With all of this emphasis on reaching ethnic markets, it has occurred to me that most of my staff must be unilingual. I can’t exactly fire them and replace them with other people who speak other languages. So, how am I going to reach these emerging markets?

Stumped in Scarborough



Dear Stumped:

First of all, I wouldn’t jump to any conclusions about the language competencies of your staff. I would ask the staff if they have a second language because you want to be able to have a registry of employees and the languages they speak, in the event that a customer may require assistance in another language. You may be surprised to find that there are actually a few employees who do speak a second language.

I would do a demographical analysis or hire a diversity consulting firm that conducts ethnic marketing to determine which ethnic groups could benefit from your services and products. Moreover, they could come up with a plan to have staff trained in these languages.

I would use this as an indicator as to what foreign languages staff should learn. When you are considering hiring in the future, you may consider recruiting employees who have those specific languages. I would also encourage you to look more broadly at how you define languages in addition to your consumer market to include people with disabilities. With the new
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“Because the media tends to focus primarily on cultural and racial diversity, this unfortunately has given rise to the perception that diversity is only about culture and race.”



*Evelina Silveira
Diversity Consultant*

ASK A CONSULTANT, CONT'D FROM PG. 3



"... it makes good business sense to let your current and potential customers know that you can offer them services in a variety of languages and formats - so advertise it."



Leab Straatsma
Elocution Instructor

Ontarians with Disabilities legislation, businesses are required to become more accessible. Consider having one of your staff learn American Sign Language. While you are possibly looking at translating some of your marketing materials, consider having them Brailled as well.

There is a plethora of methods for learning a foreign language these days, from traditional in-class sessions, to DVD's and web-based learning as well as on-site corporate training. You'll need to consider whether these programs will be offered during regular office hours or whether the employees will need to pick this up on their own time.

Finally, it makes good business sense to let your current and potential customers know that you can offer them services in a variety of languages and formats –so advertise it.

ASK THE ELOCUTION INSTRUCTOR

Dear Elocution Instructor,

Our company is interested in having some of our employers obtain additional skills in terms of their language learning. We think it's important for them to develop their English speaking skills to enhance their overall performance, thereby enhancing our company's performance. Various institutions suggest they have an assessment: in

your opinion, do you think this is a necessary cost? Thank you for your insight,

A Curious Employer

Dear Curious Employer,

While some learning institutions offer assessment options, it is true that some do not. The reason for this lies within the particular institutions' goals themselves. Some institutions offer classes that are geared towards specific levels offered by the government or by themselves.

Assessments often include listening, reading, writing and speaking components. This is usually done by having students complete a series of tests that determine an appropriate level that mirrors their language capabilities. There are many tests available and most schools use tests that are government regulated unless the student acquires assessment through a private institution.

These tests ask students to read and respond, listen and respond (usually through writing), speak and respond and often there are multiple-choice questions available as well. Each test varies and some tests have more options than others. Some schools have limited assessments and therefore you should do some research to see what tests they have available.

Assessment is helpful when there are a large number of students at specific language schools so as not to overload

teachers and students. If there are too many levels and too many students in a particular classroom, the teacher may not be able to meet the specific needs of all students. In addition, students may not receive the attention and level that suits their demands.

However, smaller institutions can offer wonderful group programs that have a basic and attainable level for all employees. Teachers that develop lessons and teach for these smaller institutions or schools often provide materials that meet the needs of all students.

While assessment can be wonderful for specific levels and goals in larger-scaled schools, it is not always necessary.

Businesses can profit immensely from assessment as it allows employers a broader view and scope into their employees' capabilities. This in turn can encourage companies to have their employees trained to maximize productivity through extra training and support.

CHILDREACH SEEKS BOARD MEMBERS

Childreach is seeking individuals with expertise in one of the following areas: Finance, Human Resources, Fundraising and Diversity to join their Board of Directors in June 2008. The Board is responsible to oversee the operations of the organization including establishing policies, guidelines and limits for agency operations and ensuring transparency and financial accountability. Board Positions are available for keen individuals

who enjoy working as a team, enjoy leadership opportunities and supporting the vision and mission of a busy community resource.

Briefly stated, the Board's role is to ensure that Childreach establishes and maintains the trust of the community by being clear in its mission, prudent and ethical in its activities, and accountable for its actions. Meetings focus on planning, policy-making, and assessing our progress in achieving

our Strategic Plan goals. They are guided in our actions by our fundamental belief in the service value of commitment to families, excellence, and partnership.

If interested in this leadership opportunity, please contact: Nadine Reeves, Administrative Assistant, at 519-434-3644 Ext. 43 for more information.



Nokee Kwe Occupational Skill Development Inc.

NoKee Kwe seeks Corporate Sponsors for Upcoming Conference on Aboriginal Employment. For further information, please contact Darlene Bellerose, Manager at (519) 667-7088.



FOREIGN BUSINESS ADVISORS

NEEDED (4 CASUAL POSITIONS ARE AVAILABLE: MIDDLE EASTERN, LATIN AMERICAN, INDO-PAKISTANI AND CHINESE)

Four positions are available for Business Development Advisors who have worked and lived in either the Middle East, Latin America, India, Pakistan or China. This is an excellent and exciting opportunity for a foreign professional with a background and education in one of the following areas: corporate business, trade, banking, diplomacy, foreign relations, marketing and communications, education or law. The successful candidate would be bilingual in English and one of the following languages: Mandarin, Arabic,

Urdu, Punjab, Hindi, or Spanish. The position would entail conducting public presentations to large English speaking audiences, on the topics of: foreign business etiquette; ethnic marketing, and social customs related to the respective region. Furthermore, the Foreign Business Development Advisor would work closely with the manager on various consulting contracts on an as need basis. Required skills include: excellent communication skills (verbal and written, interpersonal), comfort with public speaking, understanding of adult learning

principles, computer skills (PowerPoint, Word, E-mail, Internet), and the ability to work independently. Personal attributes required for this position include flexibility, integrity, and creativity. Diversity @ Work in London is an equal opportunity employer that is dedicated to creating an inclusive workplace that maximizes the talents of all its employees. If you have the above skills and qualifications and share our vision, please contact Evelina Silveira at 519-659-4777 for a full description.



Diversity@Work
in London

Experienced Worker Seeks Career as an Executive Assistant

An Executive Assistant with a strong work ethic and technical support skills. Utilizes time management and organizational skills to exceed organizational objectives. Requires minimal or no supervision, takes initiative and results oriented. Over 9.5 years as an Executive Assistant. Seeks employment in London, Ontario; Calgary, Banff, or Canmore, Alberta or in the Oakville/Burlington region. For a complete resume, please contact Ursula Carr directly at ursula2729@hotmail.com.



COLLÈGE BORÉAL - A NEW CHOICE IN ADULT EDUCATION

WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE NUMBER ONE REASON WHY WE SHOULD BE STUDYING FRENCH?

Many of our students are seeking professional advancement and are therefore looking to perfect their bilingual skills. There are however many important reasons to be taking French classes, such as helping your children enrolled in French Immersion schools, wanting to communicate with new family members, improving existing French vocabulary for trips, and increasing your knowledge of Canada's second official language.

WHAT KIND OF FRENCH IS TAUGHT AT COLLEGE BOREAL. IS IT FRENCH CANADIAN, AFRICAN FRENCH, PARISIAN FRENCH ETC.

The French taught is correct French. We never question whether we are teaching Canadian English, British English or Australian English. The accent may be different, but the correct way to speak and write is the same everywhere for the English Language, as it is for the French Language. We ensure that the learner is taught the correct way to speak and write in French. Discussing regional differences is of course an interesting aspect of the classes.

WHAT WOULD YOU RECOMMEND TO A PERSON WHO STUDIED FRENCH SOME TIME AGO AND IS A LITTLE NERVOUS ABOUT LEARNING IT AGAIN?

I would suggest that they come to see us at the office to learn more about our learning environment, our teachers as well as our philosophy. We offer a French-speaking environment with a wonderful staff willing to take the time to get to know our students. Once the person is comfortable with who and what Collège Boréal is, we would give them a free placement test so that they would be aware of their present skill level, and encourage them to try one semester with us.

CAN YOU EXPLAIN HOW DO YOU ASSESS WHAT LEVEL A POTENTIAL STUDENT IS AT?

We encourage all students to take our free placement test, which encompasses a written test and an oral interview. Only those insisting entering absolutely at the beginner's level are exempt. We offer a 10-course program and find that students are usually placed in the right class. If for some reason, they would prefer a more or less advanced class, we certainly accommodate where possible.

DO YOU HAVE SPECIAL CLASSES THAT ARE GEARED TOWARD BUSINESS PEOPLE? DO YOU OFFER CORPORATE TRAINING PACKAGES?

Yes, corporate training is an important part of the services offered by Collège Boréal. We work with any corporation, business and/or organisation to find the most efficient way of increasing their staff's French-language skills and workplace productivity. We offer on-site training at any time of the day, as well as special classes in our own classrooms.

DO YOU ONLY PROVIDE CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION IN FRENCH? IF SO, WHAT DO YOU FEEL ARE THE ADVANTAGES OF THIS OVER MORE MODERN VERSIONS OF WEB-BASED LEARNING?

We offer both classroom and web-based training, realizing that different people, different situations and different lifestyles require different training opportunities.

...

QUELLE EST LA RAISON PRIMAIRE POUR LAQUELLE NOUS DEVRIONS ÉTUDIER LE FRANÇAIS?

Plusieurs de nos étudiants sont à la recherche de perfectionnement professionnel et les cours de français leur permettent d'augmenter leurs compétences linguistiques et d'accéder à des postes recherchés. Il y a une gamme de raisons pour lesquelles les gens prennent des cours de langue :



Diane Dubois
Director of Community and
Business Services /
Directrice, Services à la
collectivité et aux entreprises
du Centre Sud-Ouest
Collège Boréal

COLLÈGE BORÉAL - UN NOUVEAU CHOIX EN ÉDUCATION DES ADULTES

appuyer leurs enfants inscrits dans des écoles d'immersion, vouloir mieux communiquer avec e nouveaux membres de la famille, améliorer son vocabulaire pour un voyage, accroître ses connaissances de la deuxième langue officielle du Canada.

QUEL FRANÇAIS EST ENSEIGNÉ AU COLLÈGE BORÉAL? EST-CE UN FRANÇAIS CANADIEN, AFRICAIN, PARISIEN, ETC?

Le français enseigné au Collège Boréal est le français correct. Nous ne questionnons jamais si l'anglais enseigné est l'anglais canadien, britannique ou australien. L'accent peut être différent, mais la façon correcte de s'exprimer et d'écrire est la même partout en anglais, comme est l'est en français. Nous assurons que l'étudiant apprend la bonne façon de parler et d'écrire. Il est toujours intéressant de discuter des disparités régionales dans la salle de classe.

QUE POUVEZ-VOUS RECOMMANDER À UNE PERSONNE QUI A ÉTUDIÉ LE FRANÇAIS IL Y A LONGTEMPS ET QUI A DES APPRÉHENSIONS DE REPRENDRE DES COURS?

Je suggérerais à la personne de venir au bureau afin de voir notre environnement d'apprentissage, rencontrer nos professeurs et comprendre notre vision. Nous offrons un

environnement francophone avec un excellent personnel qui prend le temps de connaître nos clients et nos étudiants. Une fois la personne à l'aise, nous lui offrons un test de placement gratuit pour mieux connaître son niveau de compétence langagière et nous l'encourageons à s'inscrire à un cours.

COMMENT ÉVALUEZ-VOUS LE NIVEAU DE COMPÉTENCE D'UN ÉTUDIANT POTENTIEL?

Nous encourageons tous les étudiants et étudiantes à prendre notre test de placement, qui comprend un test écrit ainsi qu'une entrevue orale. Seuls les étudiants se croyant très débutants ne subissent pas le test. Nous offrons un programme de 10 cours et trouvons que les étudiants et étudiantes sont normalement placés dans le bon niveau. Par contre, si on demandait de changer de niveau pour quelque raison que ce soit, nous ferions notre possible pour satisfaire le client.

AVEZ-VOUS DES COURS SPÉCIAUX AXÉS VERS L'ENTREPRISE? FAITES-VOUS DE LA FORMATION SUR MESURE?

La formation sur mesure est un service important du Collège Boréal. Nous travaillons avec les groupes, corporations ou entreprises afin d'identifier la façon la plus efficace d'augmenter les

compétences langagières en français de leur personnel. Nous offrons cette formation à leur lieu de travail, à l'heure et la journée qui convient le mieux, ou encore dans des classes exclusives dans nos locaux s'ils le désirent.

OFFREZ-VOUS SEULEMENT DE LA FORMATION EN FACE À FACE? SI OUI, QUELS SONT LES AVANTAGES DE CETTE FORMATION PAR RAPPORT À LA FORMATION EN LIGNE?

Nous offrons une formation en face à face, mais aussi en ligne, car nous croyons qu'il est important d'offrir un choix aux clients qui vivent des situations très différentes et qui recherchent la meilleure façon d'apprendre à un moment donné de leur vie.



"We work with any corporation, business and/or organisation to find the most efficient way of increasing their staff's French-language skills and workplace productivity."



RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL DATES IN 2008

(Please contact us if you have any special dates you would like included)

This calendar includes only significant dates that fall during the week and that require schedule changes in work.

March 2008			
8	International Women's Day	23	Good Friday (Christian)
21	Now Ruz (New Year) Bahai, Islam, Ismaili, Zoroastrian, Afganistan and Iran		
April 2008			
13	Songkron/New Year (Cambodia, Mayanmar, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Baisakhi, Bangladesh, Hindi, Sikh	25	Holy Friday (Coptic and Eastern Orthodox Christian)
18	Mahavira Jayanti (Jain)	27	Pascha / Easter (Coptic and Eastern Orthodox Christian)
21	Feast of Ridvan (through May 2) Bahai		
May 2008			
19	Victoria Day - Canada	22	Day of Patriots - Quebec
20	Wesak (Buddhist)	25	Aboriginal Awareness Week



Subscribe to the monthly news source on diversity in the workplace at: <http://www.diversityintheworkplace.ca>



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