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Rotary at Work BC Inaugural Newsletter January 2018

IN THIS ISSUE

How to Find Reliable Employees

I have been in the position of hiring employees for over twelve years, everything from entry level employees to senior managers. As such I have had many experiences, both good and bad, filling empty positions within my business. When it comes to the employees I've hired through Chilliwack Society for Community Living, it has been a very positive experience.

I think that anyone running a business would agree that finding employees with a positive attitude is paramount to your success and I must tell you that all three of these employees have some of the best attitudes in the building. On top of showing up to work with a smile on their face and ready to work they actually do this ON TIME. Punctuality in employees is a constant frustration and with these individuals we have had zero issue.

A big piece of the success of this program is due to the Chilliwack Society for Community Living supported employment team. Having an extra body within your business helping to keep the staff focused on the task at hand, reminding them of the training they have received and encouraging them in their daily activities is invaluable. The support workers fit into the workplace seamlessly and complete the package of hiring one of these job seekers. Having the support of this program is a great way to fill openings and is something we will definitely consider should any other appropriate position open up.

I cannot talk about any challenges that we had to overcome regarding these employees, because the onboarding process was much more streamlined in this situation than had we hired someone off the street to fill the role. As per any employee there is a steep learning curve and we had to adapt the role to fit the candidate but nothing extraordinary compared to any other hire I have made.

We have been able to fill roles within the business that have been somewhat difficult to fill in the past. We get employees that are excited to come to work in the morning and put in a solid day's work. They are adaptable and a positive force. If you run a business and have a need I would strongly encourage you to explore a local Supported Employment Program to see if it would be a good fit.



Celebrating Inclusive Employers

70 inclusive employers recognized in Delta, Langley, and Chilliwack Page 2

Meet a Champion Employer

Find out how hiring inclusively has benefitted Meridian Markets Page 2

What goes into a Perfect Match

A job seeker's family, an employment developer, and a Rotary at Work connection make one man's vocational goal a reality Page 3



Rotary at Work assembles advisory network of business leaders Page 3

Celebrating Inclusive Employers

Together with service agencies, Rotary at Work holds annual inclusive employer recognition events. Recent celebrations were held in Delta, Langley, and Chilliwack. The service agencies work with job seekers to identify their skills, preferences and abilities and partner with local businesses to determine how to best meet their staffing and business needs.

It really proves to be a win-win for the people they support and for the businesses that have partnered with them.

How to address your labour shortage

It's time to be daring, direct and bold.

I challenge every business in town with a "help wanted" sign to change it in part to "we employ workers with disabilities." The labour shortage will evaporate, the business will gain new workers who will have the same if not higher productivity, who will work in a safer manner and who will bring innovation, lower absenteeism and lower employee turnover to the company. There are further knock off benefits such as higher overall employee morale, adaptive adjustments that work for everyone and more. Attract talent that often stays on the job seven times longer than a worker without a disability, attract talent that will lower overall costs and boost the bottom line.

Mark Wafer MSC OMC
Former Tim Horton's Franchisee,
Disability Rights Advocate,
Policy Change Instigator



Delta Community Living Society's Inclusive Employer award recipients

Meridian Markets are Champion Employers

You may not know that this family business started in 1989 with one shop in Port Coquitlam, BC. An authentic old fashion style neighbourhood butcher shop, small in size but big in character. Meridian has grown and they now have Butcher Shops in Port Coquitlam, Langley and White Rock; as well as Farm Markets in Tsawwassen, North Van, and Maple Ridge. They still hold fast and true to the values and principles founded in the company's beginnings. Most recently Meridian expanded on their commitment to the communities



they serve by being intentionally inclusive in their hiring practices. When contacted by Bridge Employment at Ridge Meadows Community Living, Brody, who works in the company's head office in Maple Ridge, indicated that he was very open to having someone with diverse abilities join their local team. Bridge Employment had an ideal candidate with relevant experience; that not only lives close to Meridian but also shops there. Lawrence met Brody for an interview and a

tour; then, with the short-term assistance of a job-coach, joined the Meridian family as a Customer Service Clerk. It has been such a successful fit, that Meridian went on to hire Ethan in their Langley store, and has now provided opportunities for 5 people with diverse abilities to work in their stores, with a 6th 'in the works.' Kudos to Meridian Markets for believing that everyone can work. If you would like to consider hiring someone with diverse abilities, Brody is willing to share his company's experience, and how it has benefited their business.



A Perfect Match

by Tyler Vittie, Employment Developer - Community Living Society



Matthew finished his intake with me, his newly acquainted employment developer. Matt was surrounded by family, it was a lively discussion with many ideas bandied about. It was a Monday night. Matthew has many great skills but is under-employed working one three hour shift a week at the local Canadian Tire. Though they appreciated his work dearly, the opportunity for additional hours was limited.

It is always exciting finishing an intake. The fresh energy is inspiring and the potential seemingly limitless. The next stage in customized employment development is discovery and can take 6 weeks just to get to know each other. Matt clearly has many skills that employers covet (honesty, integrity, loyalty, physically fit, attention to detail, dependable).

Tuesday started like any other. I received a call from Phil Skillman at Canuel Caterers. We had met at a Rotary at Work Business Leadership Network dinner for champion inclusive employers the month before. After the dinner, I had an

opportunity to tour Canuel Caterers' new production facility and it became clear how, under the leadership of Glenn Canuel, inclusive employment fit into their overall progressive Human Resources model.

On the phone, Phil said that he had a need to hire someone at one of their Port Coquitlam locations and asked if I knew of anybody that might be a fit. I immediately thought of Matt but wondered how working in a kitchen would fit for him. Phil gave me the contact for their District Manager and we arranged an interview for later that day. Matt was excited about the idea and amazed how this could happen so quickly. So was I.

Matt and I met with their management at the school cafeteria. It was coincidentally the same school that Matt had attended and graduated from not many years before. Matt proudly talked of the experience that he had gained through Douglas College and his professional and volunteer activities. They were very impressed and asked if he could start right away.

Rotary at Work is the reason that Matt now works for Canuel Caterers. In a way, we were very lucky that all fell into place to create such a perfect fit environment for Matt and Canuel Caterers. They have now completed six weeks together and are now working exclusively with each other. Canuel Caterers has the culture, people and structure in place for Matt to so quickly integrate into their team and it all would not have been possible without the work we have invested into growing Rotary at Work in the region.

Business Leadership Network

This past fall we hosted our first Business Leadership Network meeting of inclusive employers and people who were interested in finding out more about Rotary at Work BC. With more than 30 participants, the evening was electric with the energy of employers who told their personal stories of inclusive hiring and the impact the employees have in their workplace. One of the recommendations to come out of the meeting was this newsletter.

The next Business Leadership Network meeting will be on February 22nd. A videographer will be there to record the action. Stay tuned to our YouTube channel and Facebook for upcoming video(s).



FAST FACTS

86%

of workers who have a disability have average or above average attendance records

97%

of workers who have a disability rate average or above average in safety on the job

67%

of workplace modifications cost less than \$500

51%

of adults in Canada who have disability are unemployed

22%

of adults in Canada who have a developmental disability are employed, which is the lowest employment rate of any disability type



ROTARY
at

WORK
British Columbia

About Us

Rotary at Work BC addresses the staggering unemployment rate for people who have a disability, while educating business owners/operators about the benefits of becoming an inclusive employer and tapping into this demographic.

We connect employers to employment services in their community that can assist them with:

- Locating potential candidates who have a disability
- Pre-screening the candidates
- Providing on-the-job training and orientation support
- Assisting with workplace accommodations
- Providing on-going support, information and other resources that will help make recruitment and retention smooth and easy.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

We do presentations!

Contact annette.williams@rotaryatworkbc.com to find out more and to book yours.

www.rotaryatworkbc.com

<https://www.facebook.com/RotaryatWorkinBC/>

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCA5miKwGI-Lhpi3lABFQikg>

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