

the employer CHALLENGE

A Human Resources Newsletter from Employer to Employer



Quality of Life
CHALLENGE

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Training helps restaurant staff serve skillfully

My-Chosen Café may be decorated with old-fashioned wagon wheels and quaint hand-painted signs, but when it comes to running an efficient kitchen, employees need modern skills to keep up with the bustle.

At just after 9 on a Thursday morning, the restaurant is spotless and the kitchen nearly prepped and ready for the onslaught of hungry diners. Manager Troy Ashdown is stirring a vat of creamy soup while kitchen assistant Kelly Cahill stocks fridges with fresh food.



Tessa Jackson (left), Kelly Cahill and Troy Ashdown keep My-Chosen Café running smoothly

With so many tasks to complete each day, staff training has been put on the back burner until recently when My-Chosen was offered the chance to participate in SkillsPlus training at no cost. "I thought it sounded like a great opportunity," says general manager Tessa Jackson.

With the help of Helen Thomas, the Victoria READ Society's workplace educator, employees have been working on improving nine Essential Skills, including oral communication and computer skills.

"I didn't have any computer experience so learning some of the shortcuts has made it so much easier. It's been awesome," says Cahill, who spends time during her regular shift working with Thomas right in the restaurant's office.

For Ashdown, who has been serving up the steaks and ribs at My-Chosen for 23 years, his new skills mean he can produce menus and schedules on the computer, rather than by hand. "I learn a lot here, and then go home and try it out."

The management staff also received *Personality Dimensions* training. "Learning about the different personality types helps you to understand how and why you react to different approaches and to



Employer Quote

"We have a large management team so this has been a good opportunity to start getting everyone on the same page."

*Tessa Jackson, General Manager
My-Chosen Café*



For Employers

Who Works in Victoria's
Small Businesses?

[Click here](#) to read the first in a series of four socio-economic reports prepared by SkillsPlus.

Canada to 2058: Projections of Demographic Growth & Change for Canada and its Regions.

[Click here to read report](#)

BC Asset Building Collaborative (BC ABC) supports and encourages low income earners, and others in poverty, to accumulate, develop, and preserve all types of assets through asset building programs delivered through local community service agencies.

[Find out more](#)

[WorkBC](#)

provides information about the labour market for job seekers, employers, education and training providers and organizations delivering employment programs and services.

[HR Toolkit](#)

for the non-profit and
voluntary sector

READ Society's research on
workplace learning is available:

[Bridging Employer and Employee Needs in BC's Capital Region: Phase I Report & Literature Review and Bibliography](#)

[Ten Ways to Keep
and Attract Your Staff](#)

Successful hiring and retention
strategies of 10 employers of choice

know how to approach other personality types," says Thomas, who is a trained facilitator.

Using a workshop format, Thomas got the management team together and put communication at work under the spotlight. "The team found the biggest benefit was spending time together because they all have different schedules and don't often have the chance to interact as a group."

Now that My-Chosen employees have gotten a taste of training, they are hungry for more. Next, they hope to get kitchen staff certified in FoodSafe 2 and continue working on oral communication. "We have a large management team so this has been a good opportunity to start getting everyone on the same page," Jackson says.

Local and international research shows that addressing Essential Skills in the workforce helps both businesses and employees. Training helps manage change, retain promising employees, and improve productivity and safety.

SkillsPlus training is offered by the Victoria READ Society and the Community Council, with funding through the Canada-British Columbia Labour Market Agreement (LMA) for small business in the Capital Region with less than 50 employees. Currently seven businesses in the retail/wholesale/grocery and tourism/hospitality sectors have signed up and others are on a waitlist.

Employers can find more workplace learning tips, tools and resources on READ's website at www.readsociety.bc.ca/workplace.htm and through the Community Council, <http://www.qolchallenge.ca/resources/skillsplus.php>.

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in BC's Capital Region.

For more **HR options** and local business examples, read the [HR Options for Action booklet](#).

[Addiction, Recovery and the Workplace: an employer information guide](#)

A guide to employing individuals in recovery from addictions



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Ten Ways to Keep and Attract Staff - #2

"Hiring people with disabilities through an agency"

Community Support Team provides employment counselling and other services for people with developmental disabilities. People with disabilities can earn up to \$500 per month without losing their disability benefits.

Creating a \$500/month position for a person with disabilities fills a niche in the workforce and helps employers that are understaffed.

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