

Making the most

of opportunities at Canada's largest Job-Fair



By Sharon Aschale

Canada's largest assortment under one roof of opportunities for employment, job training and post-secondary education will be on offer at The National Job Fair & Training Expo. Taking place Sept. 22 and 23 at Exhibition Hall C in the North Building of the Metro Toronto Convention Centre, the 15th edition of this mega career building and training event will feature more than 150 employers, school and career services exhibitors from across the province and the country.

"The fair provides visitors with direct access to thousands of jobs with a variety of companies and even governments, as well as self-employment opportunities," says Daniel Levesque, president and show manager. "The show reaches many demographics of the general public, including new grads, retired people, and other adults seeking work." The fair is expected to attract up to 14,000 people who, for \$3.95, will get to check out the bounty of employment opportunities available in more than 80 different sectors.

The Employment Pavilion will feature employers and employment agencies promoting a wide range of full-time, part-time, temporary, seasonal and casual positions. Specialty areas within this pavilion will focus on career opportunities in the provinces of Ontario, Saskatchewan, Alberta and Quebec, with federal government, in retail, and for those seeking to relocate.

The Training & Education Pavilion will consist of colleges, universities, institutes, continuing-education centres, professional associations and government services that provide training and educational programs to help job seekers build their future.

At the BizLaunch Entrepreneurship Pavilion, participants will discover

organizations offering information, resources, assistance, programs and career transition support for pursuing self-employment. Finally, the Employment & Career Services Pavilion will feature employment services organizations, career centres, professional career counsellors, professional résumé writers, job developers, services for internationally trained individuals and non-for-profit organizations dedicated to helping people with their job searches and career development.

Among the employers taking part at the fair will be My ERP Partners, a technology staffing company with offices in Canada, the U.S. and India that offers a wide range of software services to clients worldwide, particularly personnel with expertise in the area of business processes manager SAP. At the fair, the company will be looking to hire individuals with experience in SAP software to work as consultants for its clients, which include companies such as Walmart, Tim Hortons, the Toronto District School Board and Home Depot. "We are looking for people who have some background and experience in SAP who have used the software at work or as a consultant—they could be an accountant, sales associate or supply chain professional," says Munish Sharma, owner of the Toronto office. "We also want individuals with good people and communication skills who can work well in teams."

Those hired receive training from My ERP Partners on SAP software—a skill set that Sharma says is still in demand, even during the current global recession. Given the specialized knowledge required to use the complex software, he adds, those hired are well positioned to build lucrative careers in roles such as IT members of large companies or as independent consultants. "Someone who is relatively

new to the field would make about \$40 to \$60 an hour, but once you get good and work in the field for three to five years, you can make \$70 to \$80 an hour. Top professionals in the field make as high as \$500 an hour," Sharma says.

Opportunities for self employment in a growing field, meanwhile, will be offered by USC Education Savings Plans Inc., a leading Canadian provider of RESPs. "The RESP business has been growing leaps and bounds over the last 20 years, as more and more Canadians become focused on the high cost of saving for their kids' education, and as they become aware of federal and provincial incentives to encourage parents to save," says Ian Thompson, vice-president of sales and distribution at USC, on the rich employment opportunities in the field. Based in Mississauga and with agencies across the country, the 40-year-old company employs more than 500 people, and will be seeking to recruit individuals to work as independent salespeople.

USC helps its reps establish and grow their RESP sales businesses by helping them find their own market, arrange interviews with prospects, and explain the features and benefits of RESP programs. Thompson says the company will be searching for candidates who are interested in working independently and who have high levels of drive, determination and desire to serve their community. "Our reps enjoy more control over their careers, and the satisfaction of knowing that they are selling products that people need and appreciate. Also, their income is limited only by the amount of effort they put in," says Thompson, adding that some USC reps make more than \$100,000 per year.

Other highlights of the fair will include a Career Posting Zone, a section presented in partnership with Employment News

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