

Closing the cultural gap between employers & job-seekers

Making Connections
October 5, 2010

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CareerEdge
Canada's Internship Organization

CareerEdge.ca
For Recent Graduates

AbilityEdge.ca
For Graduates with Disabilities

CareerBridge.ca
For Internationally Qualified Professionals



“Culture is the way in which we do things when no one tells us how to do them”

- *Jack Kemp*



Navigating the Canadian workforce



- It's not that they don't have the right skills today; they just don't know how to demonstrate them



Navigating the Canadian workforce

- Socio cultural barriers & solutions:
 - Recent graduates from Canadian Colleges & Universities
 - Graduates with disabilities
 - **Internationally qualified professionals**



Three paid internship programs:



Entry-level positions

Mid-level positions





Pre-employment readiness

- Most employers spend only 30 seconds reviewing a resume before an impression is formed





Pre-employment readiness

- Job-seeker
 - Resume building
 - Interview prep
 - Accreditation of education, skills & experience
 - Language barriers and business jargon
 - Technical vs. Soft Skills
 - Realistic expectations
 - Interpreting feedback
 - Relevant, transferable skills & accomplishments
 - Understanding Canadian labour-market trends; job-search skills
 - Canadian regulations and legislation



Real Career Bridge resume examples: #1

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

System Analyst [May 1998-2007]

- Developed Management Information System (MIS) for Planning & Development using Visual Basic 6.0 as front-end tools and Ms-SQL Server 2005 as back-end. This system enabled the Planning & Development Department to be online and synchronized with all other administrative departments;
- Developed District Database for the whole Province. This facilitated researchers, scholars, stake holders and planners to access data for analysis and preparation of various reports and papers;
- Developed Websites for Government and Private sector.

Computer Programmer [December 1991 – May 1998]

- Developed MIS for Planning & Development Department using FoxPro and;
- Developed and implemented District Data Base, Using MS Front-page, MS Office and HTML.

Program Officer [March 1991 – December 1992]

- Developed and implemented File Management System using dBase IV;
- Developed and implemented Public Sector Development Program Reporting System using dBase IV.



Real Career Bridge resume examples: #2

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

System Administrator 2008 –2009

- Provide expert IT advice and methodology to the organization's directors
- Ensure full-time server availability
- User administration (Windows Server 2003, CentOS Linux, Asterisk Linux)
- Update the organization's website (Lotus Domino)

Achievements:

- Decreased the number of in-house servers from 4 to 2 within six months by analyzing the organization's requirements and outsourcing non-core services. IT staff and maintenance costs associated with the additional servers were reduced and service quality increased.
- Analyzed the Lotus Notes internal CRM system and implemented the migration of the system and servers to the Microsoft Outlook platform within 11 months. Future costs were reduced by migrating to a platform with a lower cost of ownership.

ASP, .NET and SQL Web Developer 2001 –2007

- Develop solutions using Microsoft Visual Studio 2005 (C# and ASP Language) integrated with SQL Server 2000 and 2005 databases
- Design user-friendly and scalable software solutions and databases
- Plan the development so as to deploy partial solutions within extremely limited time constraints
- Manage/coordinate/check/evaluate the work of designers and junior programmers involved in each project (3-5 people)

Achievements:

- Developed a complete ASP+SQL Server internet survey web application: (email invitation, online questionnaires, data-tabulation, online billing system, all manageable through the web interface). 7 years after the development, the client still uses it today.
- Developed a national field survey controlling application. The project had more than 350 surveyors across Brazil thus data input was scattered through several different offices and on-site locations. A data input and internet transfer software was developed in visual basic, and a central website in ASP which managed one single SQL 2000 database with all the 120.000 entries in real-time, analyzing each surveyor's daily performance and quality of work. The software had a paramount participation in achieving the quality goals in the 5 months deadline.



Real Career Bridge interviews

- As part of the application for an internship as a Software Engineer, the hiring manager required the applicants to submit answers to the following questions:
- *Based on the answers, who would you invite for an interview?*



Describe top two phases or elements of software engineering that interest you the most, and considering your personal learning objectives, describe how and where you wish to contribute to our project portfolio:

#1

Requirement gathering and modelling.
TEsting and Quality Assurance

#2

1. Requirement Analysis, Preparing Scope Statement
2. Database Design, Database Development

I have worked in all phases of SDLC. Yet, I am more passionate about designing databases, managing data, extracting reports, and developing databases.

#3

The top two phases that interest me the most are Implementation and Verification. The reasons are:

- Though I did not play a software development role before, I am good at C++ and had three years experiences of writing test cases using Java. I believe I possess the coding skill and would like to take this internship opportunity to get familiar with development job.
- I have over 6 years experience in Software testing and product verification and 4 years experience in system maintenance, e.g. system installation, backup&restore, upgrade and patch. I believe that my over 6 years' professional experience will contribute to the project portfolio in software testing, system deployment and maintenance.



Considering various software development methodologies, and your past industry experience, what has been the most challenging technical work you did to date? Describe top two challenges & how did you overcome those challenges.

#1

I have got good experience in Business Analysis and testing and QA. I am good at testing and porting the software application. Achieving a Good quality software product is the major challenge I faced. And good quality software can be achieved by Rapid developing and testing

#2

An application (Material Testing System) which I designed and developed for Material Engineering Directorate, Ministry of Works was one of the most challenging project which I did. The challenge was in designing-developing a lightweight product which had to be dynamic in nature.

This system had many materials, each material had many tests, each tests had many attributes, each attributes had specifications. To top it there was no uniformity in the results nor in the count. Each test had a different formula to derive the result. A simple solution would have been to develop forms for each test. This would have meant all the time developing forms as new materials were introduced or as new tests were introduced.

Since the focus was on developing a dynamic application, I ended up designing an XL like framework which allowed N number of rows or columns with formula option built into the cells. The formulas were executed as database objects through Oracle functions. The other challenge was to send printed outputs of the results as PDF file to the contractors. This was also accomplished by activating the SMTP protocol and using the Oracle email feature to send emails to clients.

#3

One top challenge in my past industry experience is: when I took over the ownership of Customer Support for Security Management System from co-worker in Ottawa, I got three weeks on-site training and the mentor went back to Ottawa. As I did not have much experience when I started to work on my own and the deadline to deliver the patch fix to customer was tight, I always worked till late my night time due to the time difference between Beijing and Ottawa to get support from Mentor and discuss with designers. This situation had been kept for few months and all patches had been delivered to customer site on time with high quality. No one had been delayed.

Another top challenge is: when I just joined Nortel as a product verification engineer, I needed to write test cases in Java. As I did not have Java experience before, I studied Java myself and got familiar with existing test cases quickly. Finally, I completed all my assignment and met all deadlines.



Where do you see yourself to be after successfully completing this internship? What are your expectations from us considering our projects, opportunities and challenges?

#1

I want to be a part of your Organisation. Please give me a chance to work with you. Please recruit me.

#2

My past experience has been a testimony that the government sector provides a good learning curve.

My main objective in joining the internship is to learn the work culture, gain experience and at the same time contribute my experience and skills to the IT cluster.

Though having good background and experience, the Canadian experience will surely help me to position myself as a database analyst.

I look forward to learn from the opportunities and face the challenges to derive the best results.

#3

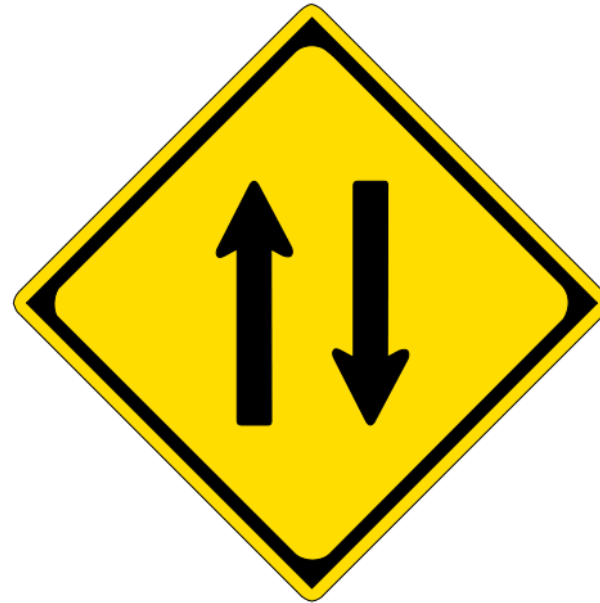
After successfully completing the internship, I believe I will get familiar with Canadian work-style, organizational culture and be strongly confident in Software Engineer job as I involve in all phases of software engineering.

My expectations are to learn new knowledge and technology, to improve skills by taking more challenge jobs, and to contribute my knowledge, skill and professional experience to this project.



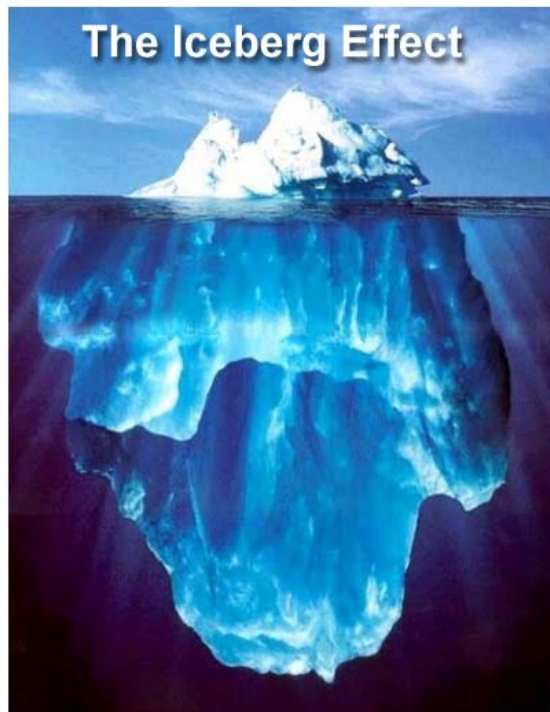
But...

- Addressing cultural differences are a two-way street.





Understanding cultural differences in recruitment & retention



The Iceberg Effect

10%

Dress Code
Organization Chart
Office Layout
Presentations

90%

Concept of time
Time management
Relationships between male and female employees
Communication - Formal vs. informal
Career Goals
Attitude towards management etc.



Employer readiness

- Subjectivity and standardization in the recruitment process
- Cultural difference being perceived as a barrier to *fit* rather than as an enabler
- Interpreting and acknowledging the relevancy of international skills, training and education
- Managing expectations, onboarding, feedback and integration

Success Story: Richard Ballesteros, St. Michael's Hospital

- Winner of the “Intern of the Year Award – Career Bridge” at the 2009/2010 (nomination submitted by St. Michael's Hospital)
- Richard leveraged his project management skills and healthcare background into an engineering role within the healthcare sector





Employer Success Story: St. Michael's Hospital

- SMH has absorbed Career Bridge into its policies and practices by creating, adapting and customizing tools and processes that are designed around the goal of integrating IQPs, from sourcing to inclusion
- The coaches and managers also attend mandatory orientation sessions to guide them through the process, addressing issues (i.e. performance review and “understanding the intern’s perspective”)
- On-boarding: A Career Bridge Intern Orientation package was developed including a welcome letter, a first-day checklist, and Intern Orientation Guide, “Welcome on Board” booklets and a tour of the hospital



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