

CUSTOM CAREER GUIDE

FOR INDIGENOUS,
BLACK & RACIALIZED YOUTH
OF THE WATERLOO REGION
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD



OYAP
ONTARIO YOUTH
APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Build a Dream would like to extend their gratitude to all those who contributed their time, ideas, and resources in assembling this guide, with special thanks to:



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PURPOSE OF THE GUIDE

Thinking about the future can be very exciting, however, it can also be overwhelming and stressful when you can't quite figure out which careers best compliment your interests, goals, values and lifestyle.

Build a Dream recognizes the challenges with career discovery and aims to simplify the process.

Our world is constantly changing and our understanding of education and associated careers continues to evolve. This guide will help parents and students from Indigenous and racialized communities to explore opportunities that are often overlooked due to a lack of awareness, misinformation or misperception. It offers insight on how parents can address careers with their child(ren) and offers pathway information for youth who may be interested in taking the next step. Together with thoughtful discussion, this guide serves as a resource and navigational tool as parents and students plan for the future.

Research suggests starting to discuss career opportunities with children as young as 10 years.

NOTE: Build a Dream wants to be inclusive of diversity across family makeup. Therefore, when we refer to 'parents' in this guide we are also referring to guardians that come in all forms.



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HOW CAN PARENTS HELP NAVIGATE CAREER OPTIONS?

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The children in our life look up to us as role models. What we say and how we act has a huge influence on how they see the world, including how they formulate opinions about occupations. We all have biases... preconceived ideas and stereotypes about the kind of work a person of any gender should do. But how do we become more mindful of the opinions we have towards certain careers? How can we empower our children to discover, explore and test out careers that reflect their skills, abilities, likes, and interests?



START EARLY - THE ELEMENTARY YEARS

Young children develop aspirations and ideas way before they join the labour force by:

- Playing games
- Reading books and stories that relate to careers
- Watching TV and social media influencers
- Watching what their parents and surrounding circle of family and friends do for a living

It is therefore not surprising that students often select the traditional career pathways they observe every day: teacher, doctor, lawyer.

Provide your child with the opportunity to be their best self. As they mature and develop their own identity, here are some tips you can start to include in their early stages of development:

1. Begin talking about careers by showing gratitude and respect for people in all occupations. Specifically, showing that all careers are valuable, have dignity, and deserve our utmost respect.
2. Remind your child that doing a job they love may be a long process of self-discovery and experimenting, but it is attainable. Remind your child that doing a job they love may be a long process of self-discovery and experimenting, but it is attainable.
3. Allow for opportunities to try new activities. Expose your child to nature, the arts, building, cooking, science, museums, animals, travel, people... there are so many opportunities to enjoy together.
4. Start informal conversations about what your child enjoys doing: is it building things, being outdoors or selling things? Ask how comfortable they are with public speaking, working alone or following a routine.

THE HIGH SCHOOL YEARS

The teenage years of secondary school can be a roller-coaster. There will be times where you may not know a lot about what is going on in your child's life or how they are feeling. It is frustrating not just for parents, but also for the child as they try to navigate and overcome challenges.

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How do we bridge those formative years to the teen years and help navigate not only the fluctuations and emotional changes they are going through, but also help them discover who they are, and who they want to become?

Attributes like self esteem, confidence and independence will help determine their own pathway, with guidance and support from you, of course!

1. Identify interests and passions

If your child is passionate about music, encourage them to think of ways they could turn it into a career (i.e. Entertainment Industry Power Technician). Encourage them to explore different career paths and make their own determination if they are interested in a career in music. It is also helpful to ask whether they want to merge their passion with their professional life as some people choose to keep these separate.

2. Brainstorm ideas together

Asking questions about interests and identifying strengths can help develop some ideas to research. Tools for exploration can include getting assistance from a guidance counsellor, and utilizing powerful planning tools that your school might subscribe to (i.e. MyBlueprint.ca or Xello).

3. Help develop independent thought

Foster a sense of independence within your child by giving them space to complete assignments on their own. If they come to you with questions, guide them on how to find the solution instead of giving them the answer. If you raise your child to be independent and self-motivated, they will figure many things out on their own.

4. Foster a sense of “self”

Ask your child about experiences they feel define them at this point. Who do they feel they are? What do they want to work on? Then explore activities and ways to celebrate who they are and plan how to meet goals. Those can then also lead to conversations about vocations that will utilize abilities.

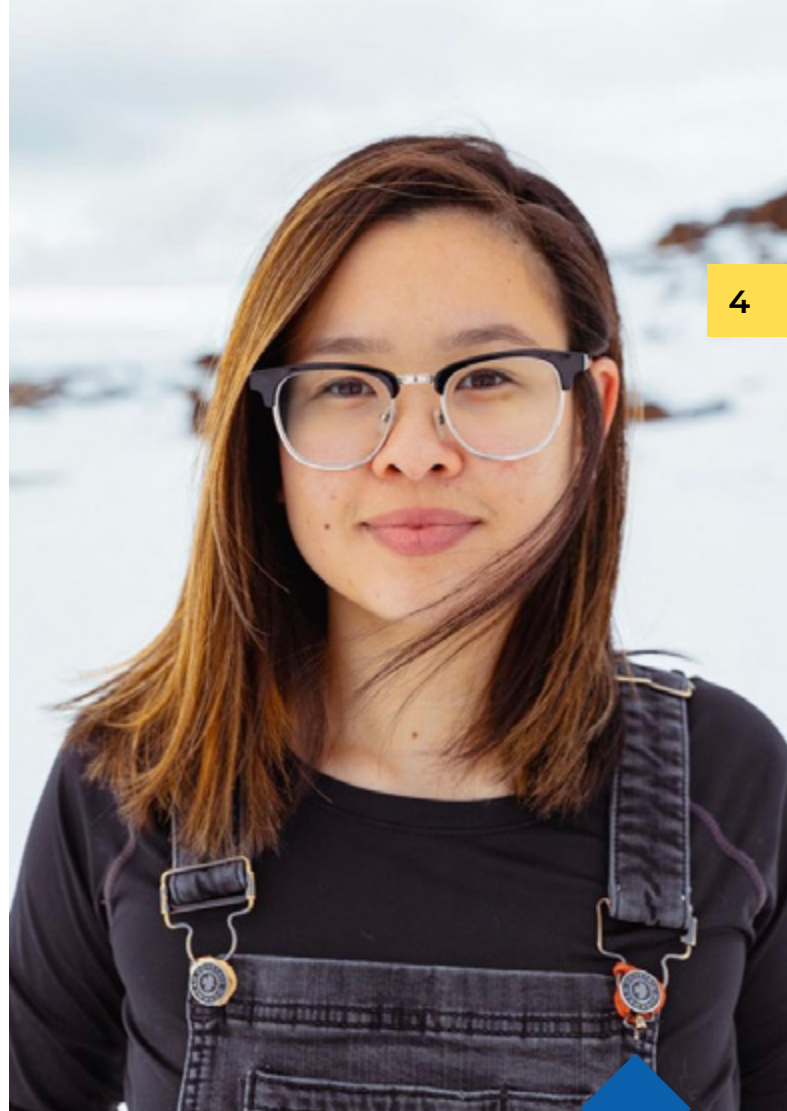
5. The bump in the road

If your child struggles with a subject, encourage them to stick with it. Along with school assistance in person and online, private tutors (including students who excel in that subject) can help. There are also lots of other free resources available on the Internet, as well as third party businesses who offer support.

6. Self-esteem and mental health

The incidence of teen anxiety is the highest it has ever been with studies citing that one in four teens between the ages of 12 and 19 will experience some form of mental health issue. With the significant changes in how we are living our lives as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, that number could very well be on the rise. Check in on your child and ask how they are doing. Encourage them to stay active when possible and stay connected with their friends.

For more information on mental health and well being, click here.



I never thought about being an electrician but after finishing high school, I ended up working at the high school and knew that I wanted to go back to school to do something. At the time, they were only accepting applicants for the trades so I decided to apply to see if I would like it. When I got into the first level of electrical I completely fell in love with the trade. Electricity is like magic. It fascinates me everyday.

Annie Buscemi, Apprentice Electrician – Arctic Electrical Ltd. Iqaluit, Nunavut



7. Getting to know career aspirations

Help your child investigate clubs and activities at school (or outside of school) that might interest them. Look for camps and events that allow them to try something new to see if they enjoy it. If your child has already narrowed down a list of careers, this is also a good way to eliminate some of those choices.

Parents should also take time to understand the multitude of resources available at school for experiential learning.

8. Learning through participation

The opportunity to learn by doing or getting involved not only expands knowledge and skills, but can also connect your child with adults who can share valuable knowledge about the workforce and careers. Encourage them to intern, volunteer, or set up job shadowing opportunities. Groups like the Rotary Club provide excellent opportunities for youth engagement and even international educational experiences.

9. Discussing skills and careers with teenagers can be hard

We do know the common questions to ask:

- Why do you think this is something you want to do?
- What do you plan to do after school?
- What subjects do you enjoy in school and why?
- What is your dream job and what subjects do you need to pursue your dream?

We also know that getting direct answers can be hard at this time, especially if your child does not have answers. When you can, work in related questions to general conversation and see where it leads. Begin to explore answers and help try to link ideas with career goals. A general rule to follow is the 80/20 rule. Allow your child to lead the conversation and be the one talking 80% of the time. You propose the questions and give insight 20% of the time.

“I WANT TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE”

When considering a career, many will say that they want to make an impact with the work they do. It is motivators like this -- along with traditional gender roles and lack of role models -- that lead students to believe that only certain jobs create impact.

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Generation Z wants to make a difference and many list climate change as a top concern.

If this includes your child, when they begin to explore careers, help them to start making connections between different jobs and the impact that they can have on climate change. This is one way to take an interest and connect it to a future career. Using climate change as the example, you could explore careers that go into creating and installing wind turbines, like a designer or industrial electrician.

Perhaps your child wants to work in healthcare? Here's a list of just a few careers that can be tied to healthcare that were put in the spotlight during the pandemic:



Millwrights

These craftspersons modified machines to produce medical-related items, conducted repairs, and ensured production ran smoothly.



Machinists

For plastics and other medical parts, a mold is usually required; machinists were programming and running CNC machines to create the mold.



Carpenters

From building field hospitals to updating Long Term Care homes to finishing housing to keep people safe, carpenters have spent a lot of (well-deserved) time in the spotlight.



Information Technology

IT professionals had to make sure the healthcare industry was connected and that networks used for medical records, providing test results, and data analysis were able to handle the pressure of the world going virtual almost simultaneously.

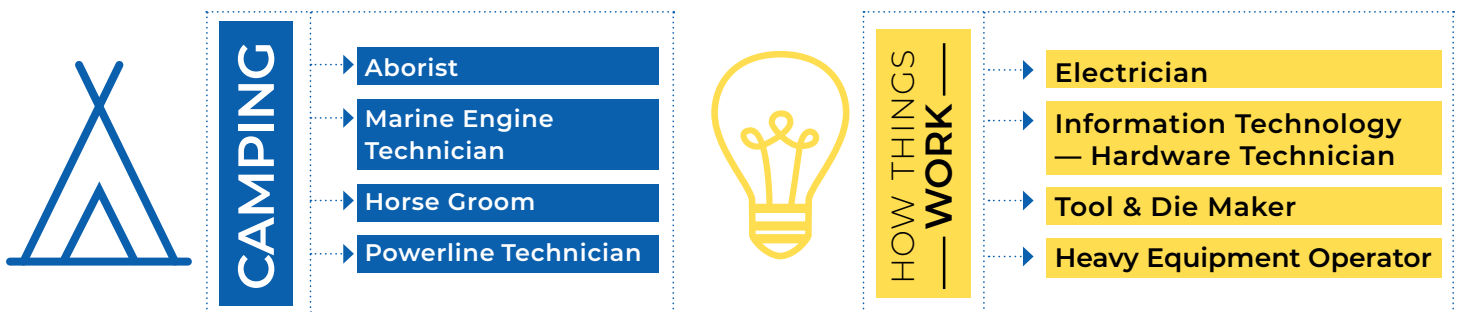
EXPLORING CAREERS

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Don't just research a common job, search for what pathways are related and look for careers you may have never heard of (i.e. Network Cabling Specialist).

Make connections between careers. For example, camping can be a great way to get outside, explore, and learn new skills. If you have an interest in being active, working outdoors, or connecting with nature, discuss this with your family; use the opportunity as a jumping point to determine what careers you could connect this to.

On the other hand, if you are fascinated by how things work and like to take things apart you may be interested in careers that include deconstruction, repairs, rebuilding, and providing solutions. When you have a lot of the information compiled, you can also look to your local workforce board or economic development organization to determine what jobs are available now and what jobs will be in demand in the future.



Keep an open mind to all options and if you know what you like to do, look at job descriptions in that line of work to find out what education and/or training requirements employers are looking for. Sometimes it's hard to identify what careers to go into with just education alone. Try job placements, job shadowing and volunteering to get firsthand experience, to make an informed decision.

– Brandi Jonathan
SPF Program Manager
Niagara Peninsula Aboriginal Area Management Board
(NPAAMB)

THE SKILLED TRADES - WHAT ARE THEY?

In Ontario, there are 144 careers in the skilled trades industry across 4 main sectors:



CONSTRUCTION



INDUSTRIAL



MOTIVE POWER



SERVICE

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The career opportunities range widely across these sectors and are learned through a combination of education and on-the-job learning through apprenticeship.

Apprenticeship is a great way to learn the skills and competencies necessary to perform tasks to an industry standard and to work towards earning the trade certificate and a rewarding career.

WHAT ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF CAREERS IN THE SKILLED TRADES?

CONSTRUCTION

- Brick and Stone Mason
- Carpenter
- Drywall Finisher and Plasterer
- Electrician
- Heavy Equipment Operator
- Iron Worker
- Native Residential Construction Worker
- Painter and Decorator
- Plumber
- Powerline Technician
- Roofer

INDUSTRIAL

- Draftsperson
- Electric Motor System Technician
- Facilities Technician
- General Machinist
- Industrial Electrician
- Locksmith
- Mold Designer or Maker
- Millwright
- Railway Car Technician
- Sheet Metal Worker
- Welder

MOTIVE POWER

- Aircraft Mechanic and Maintenance
- Alignment and Brakes Technician
- Auto Body and Collision Damage Repairer
- Automotive Painter
- Fuel and Electrical Systems Technician
- Heavy Duty Equipment Technician
- Marine Engine Technician
- Power Lift Truck Technician
- Truck-Trailer Service Technician
- Turf Equipment Technician

SERVICE

- Aboriginal Child Development Practitioner
- Agricultural Equipment Technician
- Appliance Service Technician
- Arborist
- Chef
- Child & Youth Worker
- Electronic Service Technician
- Hairstylist / Barber
- IT Network Technician
- Native Clothing and Crafts Artisan

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW THE COMPLETE LIST](#)

6 REASONS TO CONSIDER A CAREER IN THE SKILLED TRADES

1. Respect

Each of these careers play an important role in our daily lives whether that be designing the roads we drive on, building the house we live in, or keeping us safe in the community. Canada is dependent on the work that these industries do.

2. Job Security

There are so many career options to choose from and endless opportunities available. The careers we highlight are in demand and for many (i.e. manufacturing) there are often skills shortages which means higher pay and greater opportunities for growth.

3. Financial Independence

Due to the nature of the work and the high demand, these careers pay very well. By utilizing programs for students, some even provide wages and valuable work experience while in high school.

4. Industry Growth

As new technologies continue to develop, certain industries will grow. For example, 59% of manufacturers anticipate greater labour shortages within the next 5 years. These industries are advancing at an exponential speed but do not have the workforce in place to sustain this growth.

5. Transferable Skills

Not only do you gain valuable technical skills when you are working on a job, you also get to further develop your soft skills. If there is a chance for advancement or a different job, employers don't look at grades, they look for experience and a balance of skills (including teamwork, organizational skills, communication skills).

6. Do What You Love

Why discount a career because you have not seen yourself represented in that field? If something interests you and makes you happy, look for ways to pursue it as a career. Job satisfaction is extremely important, it will help keep you motivated and build your confidence throughout your career.



THE TRUTHS ABOUT THE TRADES!

APPRENTICESHIP:

Is for smart people!

- Tradespeople are highly skilled, highly knowledgeable individuals who utilize skills like math and critical thinking every day. Tradespeople spend years in on-the-job training combined with schooling to become skilled in their area of expertise.

Is a #1 career choice!

- Since tradespeople are required to design, build, and maintain most things we come in contact with on a daily basis, trades are a high-demand, high-paying way to fast-track education and get into a stable career.

Pays!

- After high school (and sometimes during!) apprentices are paid for their on-the-job training. With grants and a wage that increases as they learn, apprentices often complete training with little to no debt. In addition, licensed journeypersons often have high starting wages and significant earning potential.

Has endless possibilities!

- After apprenticeship is complete, the opportunities begin! Travel, teach, lead a team, manage a company, start a business, head an organization. Journeyperson status (particularly Red Seal trades) opens up doors to advancement and mobility.

Offers variety!

- Skilled tradespeople work in a very long list of industries and environments and often say that every day is different. Students should choose what they see themselves doing and look for trades that match that vision. Do they want to work outdoors or indoors? Get dirty or stay clean?

Is for everyone!

- While some involve physical labour, trades require skills like creativity, problem-solving, teamwork, and comfort with technology. Remember, there are 144 skilled trades in Ontario alone!

THRIVE IN THE WATERLOO REGION

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According to a 2018 Community Profile report on the Waterloo Region, the top six thriving employment industries include:

- Advanced Manufacturing
- Information Technology
- Aerospace
- Automotive
- Business and Financial Services
- Food Processing

All of which offer career opportunities for skilled trades professionals!

WHY IS WATERLOO A GREAT REGION TO CONSIDER GROWING IN?

1. Real estate is more affordable when compared to the housing market in the Greater Toronto Area
2. Resilient economy
3. Thriving businesses = More opportunities to build a great career!
4. Waterloo Region is one of the fastest growing areas in Ontario

This means that jobs in construction and services will be plentiful over the next few years!

EXAMPLE OF IN-DEMAND CAREERS IN WATERLOO

- Automotive Service Technician
- Motorcycle Technician
- Information Technology — Hardware Technician
- Information Technology — Network Technician
- Brick and Stone Mason
- Cement (Concrete) Finisher
- Electrician — Construction and Maintenance
- Heavy Equipment Operator — Dozer
- Heavy Equipment Operator — Excavator
- Plumber
- Residential Air Conditioning Systems Mechanic
- Powerline Technician
- Process Operator — Food Manufacturing
- Tool and Die Maker

CULTURAL AND GENDER DIVERSITY IN THE SKILLED TRADES

According to the 2016 Canadian Census, only 9.8% of Black women and 11.1% of Black men have *“Apprenticeship or Trades Certificate or Diploma”* listed as their highest form of education. By comparison, in the 2017 Aboriginal Peoples Survey conducted by Statistics Canada, 78% of Indigenous men and 65.4% of Indigenous women between the ages of 25-54 living off reserve indicated *“Apprenticeship or Trades Certificate or Diploma”* as their highest level of education. However, while the statistics pertaining to Indigenous Peoples reflect high numbers, according to data from the same survey, it is apparent Indigenous women were less likely to continue a career in the trades.

With the benefits and opportunities that careers in the skilled trades present, the promising future that is guaranteed, and the active changes employers are doing to attract and retain racialized talent, the industry hopes to see some big changes within the skilled trades. So what is actually being done to promote change?

What are employers doing to specifically engage Indigenous and racialized students into the skilled trades?

Employers like EllisDon have diversity and inclusion committees and recognize that candidates from all walks of life offer unique perspectives and experiences that can only help elevate their organization. In order to help Indigenous, racialized people thrive within the company, EllisDon employees are able to participate in a safe and confidential self-identification process which helps management identify gaps, patterns and trends, to ensure there is equitable access to opportunities throughout their employee experience.



What are employers doing to break down unconscious bias barriers during the application/interview process?

To ensure there is equal opportunity among applicants in the skilled trades, employers are updating their interview practices to support diversity and inclusion during all aspects of the hiring process. This includes but is not limited to:

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- Removing names and identifiers that could potentially be triggered by implicit bias
- Using inclusive language in the job posting
- Having a structured flow of clear and concise questions based on the requirements from the job posting

What are employers doing to specifically attract young women to the skilled trades?

Several employers in the trades are experiencing an aging workforce and because of this, are looking for unique ways to connect with youth. To help create awareness of opportunities and to recruit women into the skilled trades, organizations are providing their female staff with speaking opportunities and are getting involved with their local elementary and high schools to connect with young students.

“YOU CAN’T BE WHAT YOU CAN’T SEE!”

In addition to getting involved with the community, employers are also ensuring their corporate materials possess diverse and inclusive imagery and language. They are also implementing zero-tolerance policies for harassment and inappropriate behaviour to ensure all employees and prospects feel comfortable working in a safe and comfortable environment.

As well, many companies are also recognizing that work-life balance and personal commitments play a huge factor in retaining talent. To work around this, employers are now implementing policies that allow for flexible work schedules.

My favourite part of my job is having the opportunity to travel and getting to work in different locations within Canada. I also enjoy the relationships you develop with people you would have thought you would never be good friends with.

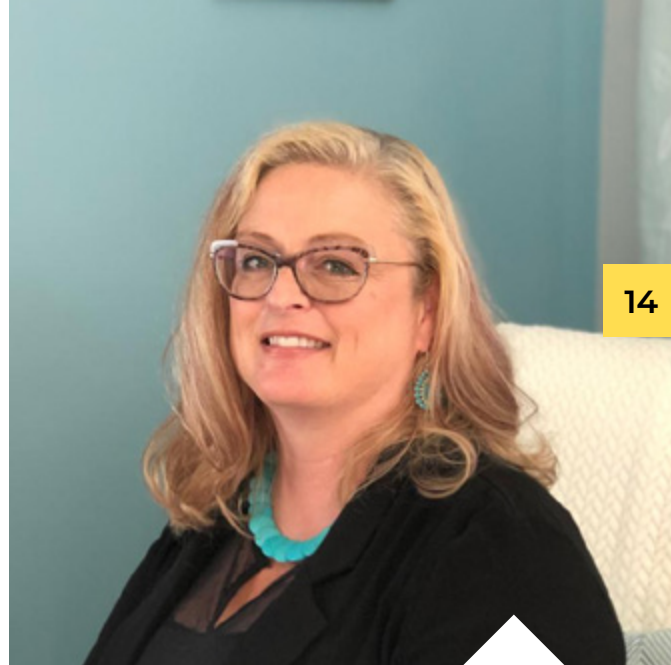
**Shona Bear, Ironworker – Reinforcing,
Ironworkers Union
Calgary, Alberta**



RESUME TIPS & TRICKS

5 QUALITIES EMPLOYERS LOOK FOR IN AN APPRENTICESHIP APPLICANT

1. Willingness to learn
2. A positive attitude
3. Motivation and drive
4. Good communication skills
5. Commitment



RESUME AND APPLICATION TIPS

- Keep your resume layout simple - don't add images and a fancy design because it will likely get distorted in an application tracking system
- Employers understand that you may not have work experience. On your resume, provide applicable personal experiences and interests that relate to the work you would be doing during the apprenticeship
- List any relevant classes you have taken (Woodshop, Autoshop, etc)
- Add specific class projects that relate to the trade
- List any tools you know how to use and technical skills
- Include soft skills such as communication or teamwork

An employer wants to choose the best person to invest in. Show the employer your dedication to learning, adapting and commitment to their training and time. That is key to being successful in starting out in a skilled trade apprenticeship.

- Amy Jessop,
Employment Consultant,
Lutherwood



A lot of kids will not have the experience that the job description is asking for. What you can do is write things on your resume that demonstrate your abilities. For example, if an employer is looking for leadership skills and you haven't had a managerial job BUT are the Captain of a school team, you can add that to highlight your leadership experience.

- Maki Moriss,
Recruiter, Red Seal Recruiting



HOW TO PROPERLY PREPARE FOR AN INTERVIEW

1. Do Your Research

It is important to know about the company before going into the interview, this way you'll have an understanding of the work they do and can demonstrate how you would be a good fit.

2. Come with Questions

This shows that you're interested in the position!

3. Know Your Strengths & Skills

Employers want to know why they should choose you instead of other applicants. During the interview, be confident when asking questions and have a few examples in mind if they ask about experiences mentioned in your resume.



Do your research. Asking a minimum of three questions can show that you prepared for the interview and that you took the time to figure out why you're interested in the job.

- Alex Bonne,
Employment Advisor, Lutherwood

REAL STORIES, REAL PEOPLE

CONSTRUCTION

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SHELDON WILLIAMS

Powerline Technician - Hydro One Ltd.

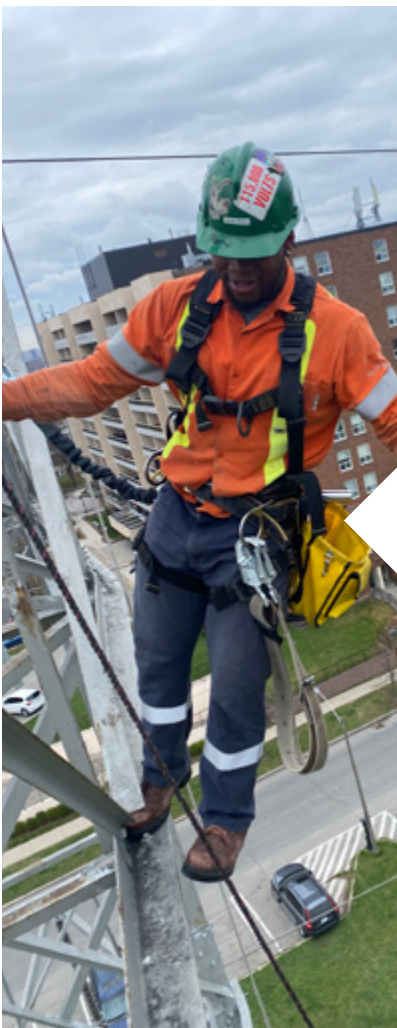
Toronto, ON

"The trades is my passion, my joy, my everything."

For Sheldon, there is a larger context to his love of the skilled trades. For one, the job of a powerline technician is crucial to keeping the lights on in important places, *"I'm a deep thinker, the machines that keep people alive need to stay on."*

Sheldon equally loves the daily challenge that the job offers him here in Canada, *"I'm working on bigger voltages. It's more exciting, the lines are a lot more interesting...I soar to new heights when I'm climbing."*

READ SHELDON'S JOURNEY



DAVID SIMON

Apprentice Powerline Technician - Hydro One Ltd.

Oshawa, ON

"Dave discovered a love for hands-on activity while in high school taking woodwork and auto class. Although he enjoyed the work, Dave was drawn to the more technical side of the trade and decided he would become an electrician. 'I thought that was cool but electricity was way cooler to deal with.'"

Dave's journey in the skilled trades started at Durham College, where he studied to be an electrical engineering technician. At Durham, he learned the electric basics like theory, knowledge and understanding of electric motors, and wiring.

After completing his course at Durham College, Dave joined the Canadian Union of Skilled Workers. The CUSW encouraged him to consider a position as a powerline technician and after interviewing for both positions, Dave got into both but chose the offer that came first. Now, Dave is in the third year of his apprenticeship with only 2,000 more hours and a Red Seal exam before he graduates as a Journeyman Powerline Technician.

READ DAVID'S JOURNEY

CONSTRUCTION



AGYEI PEPRAH-ASIASE

General Contractor, President - Paradise Construction
Brampton, ON

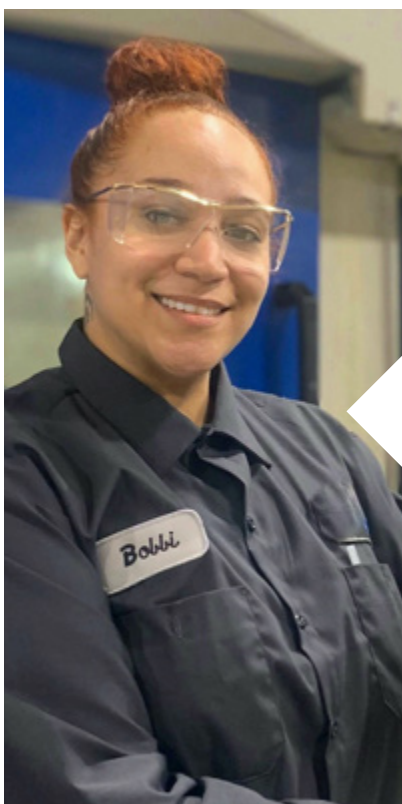
Agyei always loved to work with his hands and always had a passion for woodworking, construction and figuring out how things work and fit together. In high school, he was one of three students selected to travel to various countries in Africa and teach skilled trades work. Agyei continued his journey at Conestoga College where he studied Woodworking Technology.

After graduating, he went to work and encountered various obstacles related to his age and race. *“At that time apprenticeship was much more difficult to obtain. When I finally got the opportunity in a company, I had to work twice as hard just to prove my worth.”*

After gaining years of experience, Agyei decided it was time to venture out on his own and started Paradise Construction Ltd. He sees his company as an opportunity to diversify the industry and *“give young men and women of colour the opportunity to also learn the skilled trades.”*

[READ AGYEI'S JOURNEY](#)

INDUSTRIAL



BOBBI DAY

General Machinist
Windsor, ON

Bobbi Day started her career in customer service. Bobbi worked at McDonalds in highschool and after graduating, Bobbi worked as a waitress for five years. This was when a unique opportunity presented itself to her. *“One day I came across a flyer about a Pre-Apprenticeship for CNC (Computer Numerical Control)/Industrial Mechanic Millwright.”* The flyer was an inquiry for women interested in hands-on work, complete training, support system and free schooling!

Bobbi's favorite part of the skilled trades is how empowering it has been for her as a member of a marginalized group. But even more so the life long skill she has achieved, and the things she is able to contribute and create with the skill. *“It just kind of blows your mind.”*

[READ BOBBI'S JOURNEY](#)

INDUSTRIAL



TERRI-LYNN WOODS

Manager - Indigenous Engagement and Special Projects Organization of Canadian Nuclear Industries

Port Elgin, ON

As a Métis woman, Terri-Lynn knew that she wanted to build a life that increased her connection to the Indigenous communities around her. She went to university to fulfill the requirements to become an elementary school teacher, however, upon graduation, found herself in a substantial amount of student debt with no job prospects.

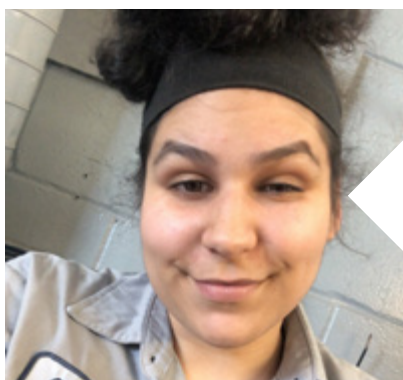
She knew that she wanted to build a life in the community she grew up in and support the Indigenous community. She decided to look into other career options and discovered the skilled trades offered financial stability and career growth.

Terri-Lynn is now the Manager of Indigenous Engagement and Special Projects at OCNI. Here, she focuses on creating opportunities for Indigenous youth that help them gain experience to qualify for skilled trades positions.

Her advice to students is to *"learn about all of the skilled trades available and try out as many as you can. There are several free programs and workshops available to help you get exposure, and over time, you will be able to figure out which trade is the best fit for you."*

MOTIVE POWER

[READ TERRI-LYNN'S JOURNEY](#)



CHRISTEL NELSON

Licensed Automotive Service Technician - Finch Hyundai

London, ON

Christel's journey to the skilled trades began in high school when she took an automotive class, *"I just decided to jump into this and I ended up loving it."* Noticing that she excelled more with hands-on activities Christel committed to finding a career that best aligned with her skills.

Christel's biggest challenge in her career came in the form of a lack of support. Oftentimes people tried to dissuade her from choosing the career and even ultimately writing her Red Seal exam. However Christel was determined to prove them wrong and offered advice for young students faced with the same predicament, *"You just gotta tune out the noise. If you're interested in something just trust your gut."*

For Christel the best part about working in the trades is the variety in her daily tasks, *"Every day, I learn something new, I'm committed to continuous learning... Cars are changing every single day so I'll never know everything that there needs to know, and I love that."*

[READ CHRISTEL'S JOURNEY](#)



DARREN JANSEN

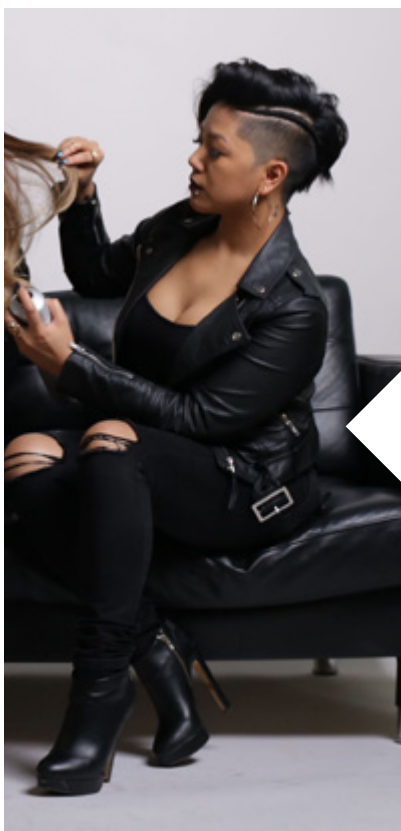
Hair Stylist and Entrepreneur - Nice People

Mississauga, ON

Darren's journey to the skilled trades started with a gift. Darren was in his second year at Western University studying Business when his brother gifted him a set of hair styling scissors. At the time he had decided to cut hair to make money on the weekend, but instead found his passion.

Once he decided to pursue a career in the trades, Darren attended the Aveda Institute in Toronto and participated in their ten month program, with a specialization course in colouring and cutting. Darren was hired on as an apprentice where he worked to gain his hours towards his license as a hair technician. For Darren the experience was rewarding, *"My fundamentals really happened in hair school but getting to know who you are as a stylist happens in the apprenticeship."*

Darren later co-founded Nice People. Becoming an entrepreneur was his way of resolving the challenges that came with creating a flexible schedule, and today, thanks to the trades he enjoys a comfortable and exciting work and home life balance.

[READ DARREN'S JOURNEY](#)

ANDREA BIADO

Barber and Entrepreneur - Bloc East

Toronto, ON

Andrea's first job in the skilled trades was in the culinary industry. Having worked in a restaurant in high school, she made the decision to attend George Brown College for a one-year culinary course. Many years later Andrea decided to make the transition into the beauty industry after finding her passion in barbering.

Throughout her career journey, she often faced criticism from those around her, *"They would tell me 'you're never gonna make money doing men's hair' because I was a woman in a male-dominated industry."* But she didn't let the negativity get to her, and after many years in practice co-founded her own studio, Bloc East, in the heart of downtown Toronto. Andrea's advice to students is, *"If you love what you're doing you'll find a way to be successful at that."*

[READ ANDREA'S JOURNEY](#)



SKILLED TRADES CAREER PATHWAYS



YOUR FUTURE, YOUR CHOICE

APPRENTICESHIP

EARN WHILE YOU LEARN • STARTING SALARY \$30K-60K • DEPENDING ON CERTIFICATION

100%

Have jobs in related field after graduating.
Employed while training!



RED SEAL

Certificate of Apprenticeship.
Certificate of Qualifications.

2-5
YEARS

Get Hired by Employer!
Employer Incentive Grants.

www.tcu.gov.on.ca

www.oyap.com

AVAILABLE GRANTS PER YEAR

\$4000

For completing Red Seal Trade

\$2000

For completing Main-Red Seal Trade

\$1500

For in-school training

\$800

Loans for schools

AVERAGE COST/YEAR \$400-600

85%
TUITION
PAID

COURSE REQUIREMENT
E, C, M, or U courses,
Math Skills
OYAP Level 1
Dual Credit

AVERAGE STUDENT DEBT

\$0

80% On the job training
20% In classroom
Student/Mentor Ratio

1:1



COLLEGE

83%

Have jobs in related field after graduating.



COLLEGE DIPLOMA

1-3
YEARS

www.ontariocolleges.ca

AVAILABLE GRANTS PER YEAR

\$6500

Average OSAP loan

Scholarships

Bursaries

AVERAGE COST/YEAR \$4500

COURSE REQUIREMENT
C, M, or U courses,
Dual Credit

AVERAGE STUDENT DEBT

-\$25,000

70% In classroom
30% In Co-op
Student/Faculty Ratio

40:1



UNIVERSITY

72%

Have jobs in related field after graduating. May require post-graduate studies.



UNDERGRADUATE
DEGREE

3-5
YEARS

www.ouac.ca

www.electronicinto.ca

AVAILABLE GRANTS PER YEAR

\$5500

Average OSAP loan

Scholarships

Bursaries

AVERAGE COST/YEAR \$7500

COURSE REQUIREMENT
M or U courses

AVERAGE STUDENT DEBT

-\$37,000

100% In classroom
Student/Faculty Ratio

85:1





PRE-APPRENTICESHIP (OPTIONAL)

If you can, access pre-apprenticeship programs in high school that cover Year 1 of apprenticeship while you work towards your diploma. This gives students an edge when seeking a sponsor.

JOURNEYPERSON

With training hours signed off and the successful completion of technical classes, you get a Certificate of Apprenticeship. Some trades require an exam schedule and pass the provincial exam to receive a Certificate of Qualification (CofQ) that is recognized within your province.

APPRENTICESHIP (2-5 YEARS)

Find an employer to sponsor you as an apprentice and sign a training agreement. The company must have a certified journeyman who can oversee the training. Along with training hours, you will need to enroll in relevant technical classes (usually completed in night school, or taken in a block during a voluntary layoff).

RED SEAL (OPTIONAL)

A journeyman may challenge the Inter-provincial Standards Red Seal Examination to have their qualifications recognized across Canada. There are 50 Red Seal trades including cabinetmaker, automotive service technician, tool & die maker, and industrial electrician.

Need help? Guidance counsellors, college career centres, local employment offices, union halls, trade associations (like the Carpenters' District Council of Ontario or the Canadian Union of Skilled Workers), and people in your network should all be able to help connect you to a potential sponsor.

APPRENTICESHIP STEPS

1

EXPLORE THE TRADES & CHOOSE A CAREER

Take time to look at different trades to see what appeals to you the most.

There are 144 skilled trades in Ontario across 4 sectors: Construction, Industrial, Motive Power, Service.

2

FIND OPPORTUNITIES THAT ALLOW YOU TO FOLLOW THAT PATH

Speak to a guidance counsellor, co-op teacher, or your school board Ontario Youth Apprenticeship (OYAP) Coordinator to determine what your school offers and how you can explore your chosen skilled trades career.

This can include technological studies courses, Specialist High Skills Major, Dual Credit, Co-op, and OYAP.

3

FIND A SPONSOR

You will need to have 14 credits completed and be at least 15 years of age to participate in an OYAP skilled trades co-op placement. Your sponsor can be a company/employer or a union.

Your co-op teacher will help you find a sponsor but be prepared to do some of the initial research and contact.

4

APPLY/REGISTER FOR AN APPRENTICESHIP

You will have to submit an application that is signed by you and your employer to apply for apprenticeship. Once approved, you and your sponsor will be asked to sign a training agreement.

Your parents must sign if you are under 18. Your training agreement is automatically shared with your local training provider.

5

EARN WHILE YOU LEARN: COMPLETE THE REQUIRED HOURS & SCHOOLING

Each trade has a different set of training requirements and hours with 80-90% completed on the job, and the balance completed at a training facility. Apprenticeships range from 2-5 years.

While enrolled in OYAP, you can graduate with your diploma AND Year 1 of your apprenticeship complete!

6

GET YOUR CERTIFICATE OF APPRENTICESHIP

After completing all of the requirements laid out for your trade, you can submit your final paperwork to receive your certificate.

This arrives approximately 6 weeks after submission.

7

APPLY FOR YOUR CERTIFICATE OF QUALIFICATION

Depending on your trade, you either apply for your CofQ, or are required to write an exam.

Many employers will be satisfied that you have completed your training so taking this next step is up to you!

NOTES:

- You must be at least 15 years of age for OYAP but there may be a minimum age requirement for on-site work.
- There is currently an additional step of registering with the Ontario College of Trades (post-OYAP) but that organization is being phased out; new information is not currently available.
- For some trades (i.e. hairstylist) you also must maintain an annual membership to perform your duties.
- Schooling is delivered via approved training providers (college or union training facility). Your employer or union will determine how you take your training: at night school while you work during the day, or in 8-12 week blocks while you are on leave (you can apply for EI or a government grant for these blocks).



COMMON QUESTIONS

Can I change sponsors?

YES! While your employer has made a significant investment in your training, sometimes it might not be the right fit. You can transfer your apprenticeship if you need to.

Are there financial incentives?

YES! Along with getting paid to learn, your sponsor or training provider can help you access funding like the grants for tools and completing your training, as well as recent bonuses like the Apprenticeship Incentive Grant for Women. Your sponsor might also offer to cover/reimburse things like textbooks and tuition.

Do I really get paid to learn?

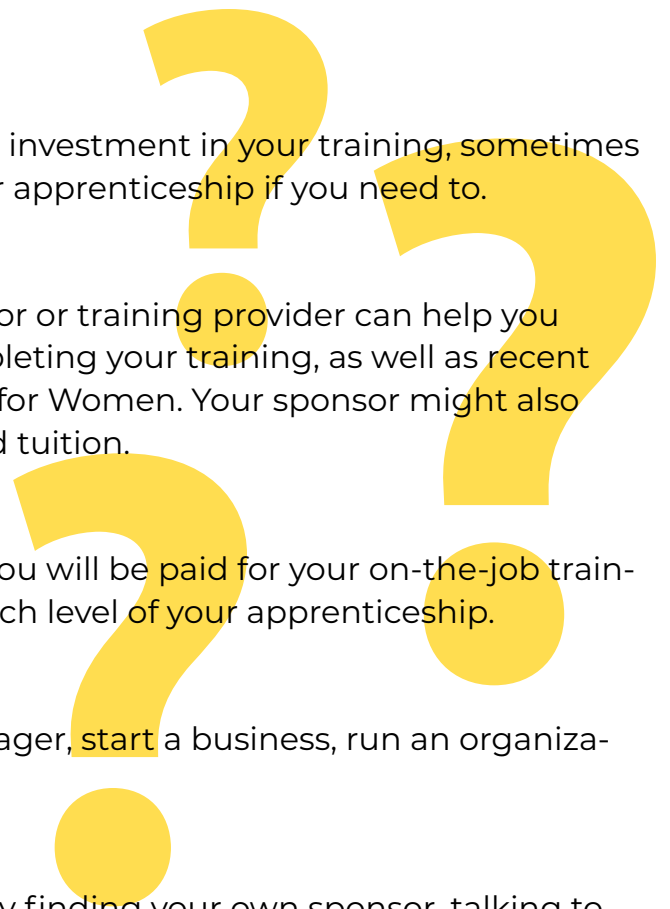
YES! After high school (and sometimes during!) you will be paid for your on-the-job training. Your wage also increases as you complete each level of your apprenticeship.

What happens after apprenticeship?

Anything you want! Lead a team, become a manager, start a business, run an organization, travel. Your ticket can take you places.

I'm graduating... is it too late?

NO! You can also prepare for an apprenticeship by finding your own sponsor, talking to a union representative, speaking with a recruiter at the Canadian Armed Forces, seeking pre-apprenticeship programs near you, or taking college courses that offer skill-building and possible work placements.



WANT TO LEARN MORE?

If you have any questions, please contact David Pope or Phyllis Peprah.

David Pope

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Waterloo Region District School Board
david_pope@wrdsb.ca

Phyllis Peprah

System Navigator - Anti-Black Racism Focus
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**TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE SKILLED TRADES,
CLICK HERE FOR A LIBRARY OF HELPFUL RESOURCES.**