

# I n s i d e

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## Information: A key ingredient

Information is a very important aspect of everyday living. It is delivered by various forms of media to many individuals in our society. It is the substance of news broadcasts, magazines, flyers, books and many pamphlets. It is used by people to make decisions about a variety of issues. Bankers, entrepreneurs, consumers, retailers and others use information in their workplace daily. In fact there are many jobs today which help to provide this information by gathering, storing or retrieving it.

Not only is information useful in the workplace, it is important in career decision-making. Career decision-making is a process that is initiated early and continues throughout life. Information plays a central role in this process. Individuals need information about how their interests, aptitudes and values relate to occupations; about work environments and job information, about training programs and sources of funding; about writing resumes and doing interviews, about future trends and job availability.

The articles in this publication are designed to provide information to a wide variety of people, including high school youth who are preparing to enter the job market; people later in life who are in transition from one job to another and those seeking to re-enter the workforce. It is hoped that this publication will be read, pondered and kept as a future source of information by the various groups.

Obviously, it is not possible to cover all the information needed by all groups. However, it is hoped the publication will provide useful information to some, stimulate others to think about their career options, and offer some useful tips to all.

John Stewart  
 Editor

## Education: The key

In the midst of upheaval in the work world and international market places, there is only one constant: education is still the most critical element for success.

In Canada, governments, schools and businesses are pleading with young people to stay in school and with adults to make learning part of their life. The nation depends on it.

The undeniable fact is, however, that the country can only provide the tools for learning. The decision to stay in school, to learn and to change with the times is up to you, whether you are 16 or 56.

This newspaper has been created because somebody cares, cares that you are given important job information, cares that you get the hard facts and cares that Canada can only prosper through having skilled and effective workers. In collecting information and selecting the articles, the editors attempted to answer questions for a wide range of readers, from students to parents and older workers. Contributions were made by most provincial governments and a host of states in the United States. We acknowledge with thanks their help; their co-operation helped provide extensive information and kept costs to a minimum.

A few pages, however, cannot provide all the information you need about the job market now and in the future. Nor can they tell you how to equip yourself to find a job or even where to look. At best, we hope the newspaper will give some tips, cause some serious thoughts and offer sources for more information.

After you read it, either keep it for reference or pass it on to someone else.

Good luck.  
 Allen Sackmann

Canadian Career Information Partnership

## It's a long road but you can get there from here

By James Downey

There's a story about a tourist in Ireland who is wandering about looking for a certain stately home. Almost exhausted, he asks a local farmer for help. The farmer takes him to a road at the far end of which, barely visible, stands the famous home.

"Ah me," says the tourist, "it's still a long road." To which the farmer replies: "Sure then, 'tis a long road, but if it were any shorter it wouldn't reach the house."

The road to a good education system, like the road to a good education, is long, one that twists and turns toward a goal that always seems a long way off. There are, however, places along the way where we can pause, look at how far we've come, check our directions and make choices about where we go from here.

This is what New Brunswick has been doing during the last year, thinking about appropriate goals for an education system as a new century approaches, and what roads might best get us there. A similar process has been taking place in other Canadian provinces, in the United States, in Europe and even in Japan. Methods of assessment differ but the goal is the same: to ensure that education equips people with the skills, knowledge and attitudes required to lead useful, productive and satisfying lives in a fast-forward world. The Commission on Excel-

lence in Education heard from New Brunswickers who often spoke of better roads, better access to education and ways to achieve progress. The report of the commission, Schools for a New Century, now under review for action by the government, carries several of these messages.

The first is that the destination should be more clearly identified and a better map drawn. There's an old expression that "if you don't know where you're going, any old road will do." Many in New Brunswick feel we may need some new roads, that the school system goals are too broad and there has been too little emphasis on academic achievement.

The commission responded to this concern, not by removing social responsibilities from the schools but by linking and combining resources from other government and community agencies in support of teachers and school boards. At the same time, the commission called for a strengthening of the core curriculum, especially in language, science and mathematics.

The commission sought to provide guidance on a second, related theme: just as it is essential to know which road we are on, so it is important to be able to measure the distance travelled.

In Canada, we have shied away from tests both in our social programs and in our schools. There are, of course, abilities and knowledge which cannot be effectively tested and we

should be content to cultivate those as best as we can.

There are others, however, where evaluation is essential. It is the only way we can learn how far we have come and how far we still have to go. For these areas of skill development, the commission recommended that New Brunswick devote more energy to create and use good testing tools.

Third, the commission believes that main educational roads should be interconnected so people can change career directions without going back to the beginning.

It used to be that education was something people did in the first third of their lives, then they worked and finally retired. Increasingly, learning and work and leisure are intertwined throughout life. Easy transfer of appropriate knowledge and experience should be a standard feature of a modern education system: between universities and colleges, between formal and non-formal ways of learning and between various training and apprenticeship programs.

It is said there are two ways of being lost: one is not to know where you're going, the other is not to know where you are. Education systems, like the individuals who depend on them, need to know both where they are and where they are going.

Change for the sake of change is mindless; change based on a search for a more humane and prosperous society puts us on the right road, even if our ultimate destination is a long way off.