Help, I gotta get a job

A graduating student reviews two career guidance books

From Learning to Earning: A Student's Guide to Landing the Right Job.
Larry Easto and Reg Pirie
Doubleday Canada Limited

As I will (thankfully) be leaving these hallowed halls for good in a matter of months, the topic of what in the devil I am going to do with myself after April is one that plagues me incessantly. So when the opportunity arose to review these two books, I jumped at the chance. I had read a number of these career guidance books before but, hey, you never know when you will learn something new. I was particularly impressed by the fact that these books were Canadian, since that meant that I might actually be able to use some of the resources/addresses that were listed inside.

The first book, *From Learning to Earning*, is targeted at graduating students. The authors wrote it because they felt there were no complete, current and Canadian books available to help students with their job search. The book addresses topics such as trends and factors that affect work, self-assessment, and effective career development and job search strategies. Overall, I would say this book is quite thorough in its approach, and contains good information and advice. If you were to actu-

ally sit down, do all the exercises and many other things they say to do, you would have a good chance of landing a suitable job.

I especially liked the chapter "The Perfect Job", in which the authors describe four people's jobs and the reader is supposed to guess exactly what their job title is and for what company they work. This was a good way to demonstrate that good jobs can be found in the most unlikely places.

In the section on networking (the heinous concept that always comes up in these job search books) the authors go a bit too far. If you were to be as pushy with complete strangers as they advise, you would probably end up getting arrested for harassment. I mean, sure, being keen is good, especially when you are looking for a job, but there have to be some limits.
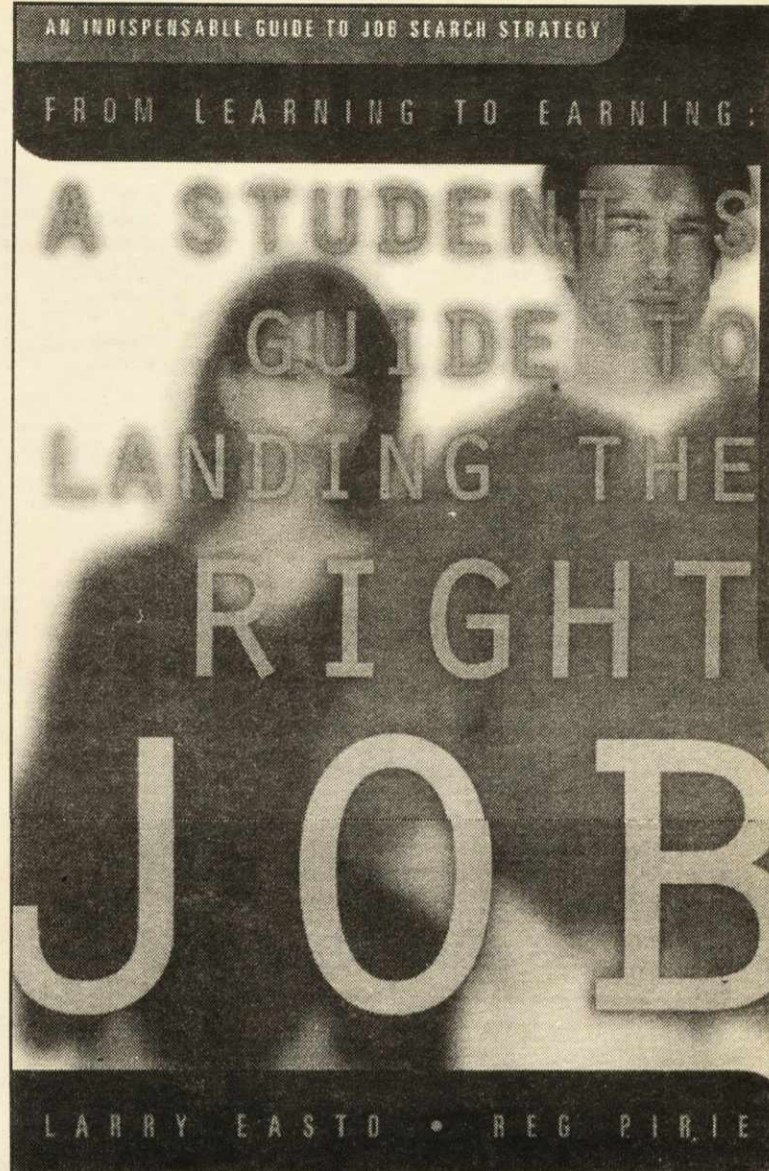
There is also an entire chapter on how submitting a detailed proposal to an organization explaining their problems and how you can solve them is a great way to get a job. Uh...yeah, right. Who is actually going to do that?

The second book, *The Career Directory*, was one that I was particularly keen to get my hands on. I had seen it before in bookstores and was impressed. It contains an alphabetical list of employers

The Career Directory, 1997 Edition.
Richard W. Yerema (Ed)
Edcore Publishing Corporation

across Canada, which is then indexed by type of degree, industry group, and also by whether or not they hire summer students. So, if you are graduating with, say, a BA in English, you can look that up and the index will list all of the companies in the book that hire your degree. For each company, there is a blurb giving the company's address and the name of the human resource people to contact, general information about the company, how many people they hire, which degrees they hire and for what positions they will hire them.

Sounds good. But once I got the book home and gave it a more thorough examination, I was less impressed. A lot of companies that I was curious about were not there. It only lists 660 companies. I know it would be impossible to list every company in Canada, but there were a lot of big companies that were omitted. Unfortunately, I couldn't find an explanation anywhere of how the companies that were included were selected. Other than that, I think it is still a useful resource, if only to get a better idea of who will hire people with your degree or with a degree you are considering get-

ting. The information that *was* included was good, I just wish there were more of it.

Having said that, in *From Learning to Earning*, the authors advise that just sending out applications blindly to a bunch of companies is like entering a job

search lottery. But, combine the information in *The Career Directory* with the networking techniques and other job search tips in *From Learning to Earning*, and presto, you might just find yourself a cool job.

SOPHIA MAXWELL

AN INDISPENSABLE GUIDE TO JOB SEARCH STRATEGY
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