



Canadian Apprenticeship Forum
Forum canadien sur l'apprentissage



Skills/Compétences
Canada

SKILLED TRADES – A CAREER YOU CAN BUILD ON

Promoting Skilled Trades and Apprenticeship is a joint project between the Canadian Apprenticeship Forum – Forum canadien sur l'apprentissage (CAF-FCA) and Skills/Compétences Canada. Human Resource Development Canada (HRDC) has provided the funding. The promotion of careers in skilled trades is a cornerstone priority of both CAF-FCA and SCC.

The issue of skills shortages, and the need for a concerted and effective approach to this issue, is the key driver behind this initiative. Skill shortages are expected to impact virtually every sector of the labour market, in every area of the country.

The project was launched in early 2003 in order to address the issue of skills shortages from two distinct – but equally significant – perspectives. One part of the work will focus on changing the perceptions of careers in skilled trades, in other words, the program will “re-position” skilled trades as a first choice career option in the minds of Canadian youth, their parents and educators. This should encourage more young people to consider careers in skilled trades. The other key focus of the project will be to encourage employers and other groups to accept and retain more apprentices.

Beginning in the spring of 2004, a broad-based media campaign will be launched. The media campaign will have two main objectives: to reach youth with high impact messages to change attitudes towards apprenticeships and skilled trades and also to reach parents, educators and employers in order to provide them with compelling and factual information showing skilled trades in a new and positive way. The cornerstone message will be: **Skilled Trades – A Career You Can Build On**. The campaign aimed at youth will focus on selected television programs, radio, Internet and cinema ads. Parents, educators and employers will be reached with magazine advertising, television and cinema. The ads will run during the spring and fall to capture the audience when career decisions are being made.

The national media campaign will be supported by a variety of tools designed to deliver the message directly to each of the target audiences at the local level. There will be a website with specific landing pages for each audience that will link directly into existing websites for CAF-FCA, SCC and HRDC. These sites already showcase a wide range of information, resources and training programs available to interested candidates. In addition, there will be brochures, posters, information booklets and presentations. Beginning in the spring of 2004, extensive consultations will be held with interested groups across the country to determine what kinds of regional programs are already in place and what complimentary programs might be initiated to improve the visibility of skilled trades and apprenticeship.

In order to encourage employers and other organizations to hire and retain more apprentices, the program will focus on the financial and business benefits of hiring new entrants. The program will seek to encourage those already hiring apprentices to create more opportunities and to convince those employers not yet hiring apprentices to do so. Employers will be encouraged to create sustainable and well-rounded opportunities for apprentices in their workforces.

Tactics to engage employers will include advertising in trade publications, presentations to industry and sector organizations, brochures and the campaign website. In addition, an Apprenticeship Tool Kit will be developed to lay out the benefits, programs available and necessary instructions and documentation to make it simple for employers to get involved.

A skilled trades “Council of Champions” will be formed with a mandate that will include communicating with employers, students, governments and other stakeholders. The Council will bring together – and draw from – key influencers and opinion leaders from business, labour and other stakeholders.

Forming strategic alliances and partnerships will be an essential component of this campaign. The Public Sector Partnership will focus on organizations such as schools, colleges, all levels of government, labour and union organizations and educational organizations. The Private Sector Partnership includes corporations and their industry associations. In both cases, the focus will be on activities that will increase the reach of the advertising and grass roots programs through distribution of materials and preparation of new materials and programs designed to compliment the overall campaign.

The advertising campaign will begin in May of 2004 and is expected to run until the end of 2006. Consultations with regional groups, potential partners, employer and labour organizations will begin in the spring, with a view to rolling out programs as they are needed during the year. This program will include an on-going monitoring process to ensure that the activities are meeting the needs of the various target groups; annual plans will be finalized based on this review.

For further information on the Promoting Skilled Trades and Apprenticeship Project, please contact:

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