

# Less job search help in Acton

Lack of demand by the unemployed in the Acton-area prompted officials with The Centre, Skills Development and Training to cut service in Acton to one day a week from two. A job search expert is now available for one-on-one training and drop-ins, on Tuesdays at the Acton library branch, from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., according to Tina Pickett, an employment advisor.

"We cut our hours because the demand wasn't there," Pickett said on Friday, adding she was a "bit surprised" with the lack of clients noting they would reassess the hours if the demand grew in the next few months. She said they are not an employment agency, but are funded by the province to offer job search skills training – everything from resume writing to interview skills to job search plans.

With approximately 50 clients so far this year in Acton – all ages, sexes and skill levels – Pickett said they must meet placement criteria to retain their

government contract, which is up in March. Of every 100 clients, 69 per cent must find jobs, 10 per cent must be in training, and the balance of 21 per cent is no longer searching for a job. "We continue to meet the goals, although we haven't exceeded them yet," she said.

Pickett said tailoring a resume to fit each job description is key to a successful job search, and making a good first impression is also important as it provides confidence.

With that in mind, two Acton business owners, Donna Ladouceur, owner of Belladonna's Boutiques and Gifts, and Darlene Saunders, owner of Blue Springs Spa, offered a makeover and job search outfit to a job seeker. "Appearance is important to employers – you must be clean and well put together to be even able to get in the door to tell an employer why you're right for the job," Saunders said.

Ladouceur, who received help from Georgetown's VPI Inc. job search agency when



Brenda Jones before.

she was planning her consignment shop business, said she was "thrilled" to help out someone in the job market. "You make up your mind in the first 30 seconds I've heard – someone is either well put together or not," Ladouceur said, adding looking good does not have to be expensive.

Last Thursday, job seeker Brenda Jones, who received job search help from VPI Inc., in Georgetown, received a makeover – hair and make-up – complements of Acton's Blue Springs Spa. She also received an interview-worthy outfit

from the racks of gently used clothing at Belladonna's.

The former Acton resident, who wants to replace two part-time jobs with one full-time position, said the "challenge is that so many people are out there looking for jobs." On Monday Jones said she was one of 100 applicants for a recent accounting-related job.

Looking good plays an important role in creating a second career Jones said. "You've got to dress for success – thanks to Blue Springs and Belladonna's I will make a better first impression."



**CREATING AN IMPRESSION:** After a makeover at Acton's Blue Springs Spa and a new outfit from Belladonna's Boutiques and Gifts, job seeker Brenda Jones was ready to make a better first impression with prospective employers. – Frances Learment photos



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