

Job Finding Club helps people prepare for a job and then keep it

The last few weeks have been the best weeks Dennis Guillemette has had in two years.

In January, Guillemette, a Penetanguishene resident, became a member of "The Job Finding Club," a support program designed to help people prepare for a job and find it. It is sponsored by the provincially funded Technical Upgrading Program administered by Georgian College in the Midland area.

Guillemette has only worked 11 weeks out of the last 24 months. He has a college education but just hasn't had any luck finding work. Welfare has been his main source of income recently, but with a wife, three children and another on the way to support, the 29-year-old has found it impossible to make ends meet with government benefits. He wants to work.

Since Guillemette became unemployed, he found job opportunities to be few and far between. But all that has changed since he joined the Job Finding Club. Within the first two weeks of signing up he came across 26 job opportunities, had five interviews and was waiting to hear from another 10 companies which had his resume. "I feel confident I'm going to find a job very shortly," he said.

Four of the 12 people who signed up for the program at the same time as Guillemette had jobs within the first two weeks. While the club can't guarantee employment, it does boast an 80 percent success rate in Barrie and Orillia where it has been operating since last summer.

JOB READY

The Job Finding Club involves a three-week program in which members attend a seminar in the mornings and do active job search in the afternoons. The program is open to anyone who is job ready, actively seeking employment and is able to look for a job full-time. Unemployment Insurance and Worker's Compensation recipients can join, but they must contact their Canada Employment Centre counsellor first. If a member doesn't get a job within the first three weeks, he can sign up for the next program.

Bob Davy is the club's instructor in Midland. Last year he was unemployed himself for a few months, so he knows what job search is all about. Often, it's a difficult task.

"It's easy when you are unemployed to become depressed and not go out to do job search," Davy said.

One of the first exercises he does with club participants is try

to improve their outlook by showing them that all the experience they have is valuable. Even women who have been housewives most of their lives have many positive attributes to offer the working world.

"I've always thought that your work history is it, but I never thought that what you took in high school would make difference," Guillemette said.

Another exercise the club does at the beginning of each three-week session is to write a proper resume. This proved particularly helpful to Guillemette.

"The resume I had originally was a piece of garbage compared to what I have now," he said.

SCAN NEWSPAPERS

The Job Finding Club has three resumes typed and photocopied for members at no charge. Paper and envelopes are also provided as is a telephone in the club's seminar room. Each day, newspapers from

Toronto, Midland, Orillia and Barrie are brought in so participants can scan the "help wanted" pages. Other job sources, such as employer lists from the Chamber of Commerce, are also available.

What this means for the members, Davy explained, is that the cost of looking for a job is cut down.

Support and encouragement is provided by Davy, but most comes from the members themselves.

"When one gets a job, it motivates the others," Davy said. The participants offer each other suggestions as to how they might get an interview or how they might improve themselves for the next one. They remind each other that the worse thing a prospective employer can do is say "no."

"You learn from a 'no' that there is something you have to do to get a 'yes' for the next time," Guillemette said.

For more information

about the Job Finding Club in Midland, call 526-9914 or visit the

club's centre at 303 Midland Ave., Suite 204. It is open Monday to

Friday, 9 a.m. to noon and 1 to 3 p.m.

Aiming for 100 per cent

"One hundred percent," may well become the 1986 theme for the activities of Midland's Chamber of Commerce.

Membership Chairman Brian Downer has set a personal goal of 100 percent membership for the Chamber, and has already signed on 15 businesses since Feb. 3.

Members' new window stickers, currently being distributed in the mail, display the words "100 percent - Midland Chamber of Com-

merce," on a new black and white rectangular format, that replaces the traditional coloured maple leaf symbol.

Burkevale pupil best speller

Grade 6 Burkevale School student Tammy Audette, 11, won the annual Knights of Columbus-sponsored regional contest, in Barrie on Sunday.

The Penetanguishene girl was one of 14 contestants. She received \$50, and brings to her

"I want to see a sticker in every window," pledges Downer.

"It shows a commitment to the town."

school the spelling contest plaque, for the first time in that school's history.

Audette won the silver medal and \$20 in local competition before advancing to the regional competition. All elementary schools are eligible to take part.

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