

Representing the Interests of Business for the Growth and Prosperity of Our Members and Communities



COMMUNITY COURIER

Students and Employers Share Views on Student Employment

Since January, YRHS grade 11 student Mary Prybylski, has been spending time at the Chamber office, participating in a number of Chamber activities to gain experience in the business work world. This is the main element of the Career Work Exploration class. One of the tasks given to Mary was to survey high school students and employers of students to learn about their expectations of each other. Below is Mary's compilation.

Five Yorkton businesses, key employers of students, were asked about their student employees, the expectations they have of their students, as well as some key thoughts on what they think students need to know about working at a job.

When asked about how important appearance is:

All employers stated it's very important, emphasizing that neatness and cleanliness were key, and to smile once in awhile. When students are out looking for a job, they need to make a good first impression to the person who will hire them.

When asked about how much time off students should receive:

Employers claimed they usually give students time off for school sports and activities. This is a relief to students knowing they don't have to choose between schooling and their job. For students, the answer that came up the most was 2-3 days off/week so that they had time to do their activities, and said that after school and/or evenings shifts were best for them.

When asked about wages:

Employers believed that all students should start at minimum wage and must work their way up to promotion and better pay. Students claimed they'd like to start \$1.00 above minimum wage. Employers believed that students should be given discounts as an incentive. Students thought a 15%-20% range was fair.

When asked what businesses have to attract students to them:

Many businesses offer scholarships, have transfers in place for students that move to post secondary education, have on-the-job training advancements, discount cards, and some claimed that the things they make and sell are an attention grabber. Students claimed that scholarships, bonuses, holiday time, and professional development training and places with promotions were important.

When asked about what employers value in student employees:

Many employers stressed: that proper etiquette/manners are key; they value students who are punctual; who can be relied on to get their work done; students who are motivated; who take pride in their job; have pleasant personalities, are honest, and ask many questions.



Dean Shyiak being interviewed by Mary Prybylski for her survey of employers of student.

When asked if students choose a job because of pay or personal enjoyment:

Employers believed students chose a job because of pay, but claimed personal enjoyment comes after students gain experience. Students believed: some students pick a job for enjoyment; many indicated that for high school students pay is the most important. The majority of students said that they would prefer to do a variety of tasks compared to doing the same thing over and over, and preferred to work in a team.

When asked about pre-training and customer service:

Some students believe only a few hours of pre-training, maximum 5 hours, are needed. Some thought pre-training isn't needed, others believed pre-training is needed until the employee feels comfortable. Employers claimed that customer service is their #1 priority and use online training courses, and one-on-one training with student employees.

The employers top reasons for firing student employees: missing shifts; are unreliable; have a poor work ethic; go against store policies/procedures; are caught stealing from the business; are caught using a cell phone; are always late; not listening to staff members; use of alcohol and drugs; verbal/physical abuse of fellow employees and customers.

Uniforms seem to be a big issue right now. Students believed that uniforms should still be worn on the job, but EVERY student indicated that the business/employer should pay for them because "they are making students wear them."

When asked how important a résumé is, and what should be on it, all employers stated that a resume must be neat and organized, but as far as content, indicated that work experience isn't as important as references and volunteer work. The worst thing a student can do is to leave an application/résumé blank!!

The Chamber appreciates the cooperation of the business community and the 3 YRHS English classes who participated in this survey. The Chamber also thanks Mary for the excellent job she did in conducting the survey and compiling the results.

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BULK EMAIL: We will email upcoming events for your businesses to our Members. We can't advertise prices/products but we can promote Grand Openings, business anniversaries & charity events.

WEBSITE: Post your poster on our website(www.chamber.yorkton.sk.ca), we also place our members under our website Member Roster.

*These advertising opportunities are at member prices. Non-members sign up today and enjoy all the benefits!
 Check out www.chamber.yorkton.sk.ca/benefits for a list of benefits & online application form.*

YORKTON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
UPCOMING EVENTS

Thursday, May 14th Chamber Luncheon "Saskatchewan Indian & Gaming Authority, CEO, Zane Hansen, The Ramada Hotel 12 Noon

Wednesday, May 20th Dine A Nite "Gala Evening to Celebrate Contribution of Employees" St. Mary's Cultural Centre 5:30 pm

Friday, June 12th Chamber Luncheon "Assistant Chief Economist, RBC Royal Bank" Paul Ferley Gallagher Centre, 12 Noon

For ticket price and information, call the Chamber office at 783-4368.

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Survey Says...

The Chamber recently conducted a brief, on-line survey of its members about a number of topics. More than 10% of the membership responded to the survey and provided some very interesting and useful feedback.

So, what did the respondents have to say?

As to knowing about the Chamber and its business, the respondents were very knowledgeable.

- More than 80% indicated they knew that the Chamber administered the Small Business Loan program and that membership in the Chamber qualified businesses for the Chamber Group Insurance Plan.
- Two thirds of the respondents were aware that membership qualifies business for TD Merchant Services and First Data Preferred Pricing Program for Visa, MasterCard and Interac.

90% of the respondents indicated that Yorkton would benefit from regularly scheduled flights to and from Yorkton.

Over 40% of the businesses indicated that the "Time Management" Workshop offered by the Parkland College is the one they most likely would attend followed closely by the "Effective Communications" Workshop.

41% of the respondents indicated there are no barriers to business opportunities in Yorkton while 59% believed that there were. Some of the comments received were:

- Cost of land is skyrocketing. Add that with taxes and there are large barriers to new businesses being developed.
- Yorkton continues to be very upbeat.
- Downtown core is difficult to maneuver with one way traffic on 3rd Avenue - especially during peak traffic periods such as noon and 5:00pm.
- Parking can be a problem between 2nd and 3rd Avenue. Perhaps a parking lot or parkade south of Broadway would alleviate that problem.
- Finding available downtown retail space is a challenge.

The Chamber will be reviewing some of the other comments and the committees will decide on the appropriate course of action.

The Board thanks all the members who participated in the Survey. Your comments are very useful.



If you are interested in becoming a Yorkton Chamber of Commerce Member, call our office at 783-4368

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Solid Waste Management - It Affects Business

Juanita Polegi, PAg - Executive Director

The Business Development Committee of the Chamber has a seat on the City's Solid Waste Management Committee. The Business Community should take note of a couple of items:

- 1) Beginning at the end of March, businesses with a blue, recycle bin will see that on their Ottenbreit Sanitation bill, a new fee of \$2/cubic yard has been levied on all recycled material. The fee is then forwarded by Ottenbriet's to the Kinsmen Recycling Centre. This new fee is a result of the current

low commodity prices for recycled material. Since most of the city's recycle waste is generated by business (about 75%), the fee will be levied only on commercial properties. The fee will gradually be increased over the next 3 years but the maximum levy has yet to be determined. Residential properties have been paying \$4 per month on their water bills for some time.

Businesses that do not have a blue recycle bin will not be assessed this fee, however, if a business is found to be throwing recyclable

materials in their normal garbage bin, they will likely be charged a fee/penalty of \$7.50/cubic yard.

- 2) Prospective new business owners need to know that garbage removal from a business property is the responsibility of the business. No portion of city taxes levied against a business is assigned to garbage removal.

The Chamber will continue to update the business community on the issues and concerns facing the Solid Waste Management Committee.

Why Be A Chamber Member?

As Sherry and I have worked to finalize the 2009 membership list, we've been asked on occasion, "Why should my business be a member of the Chamber of Commerce?"

That's really a very easy question to answer because there are numerous benefits to membership, both tangible and intangible.

First let's review the tangible benefits:

- Profile on the Chamber's Website
- Listed in the Member First Referral Directory
- Recipient of 2 - 3 emails per week from the Chamber Office with information about upcoming events, news around Yorkton and special announcements from other businesses
- Opportunity to participate in member surveys
- Networking opportunities at Business After Hours
- Advertising opportunities through the Chamber's newsletter the Courier, table hosting at the monthly Business Lunches and purchase of a sign for the Community Sign Board
- Eligibility for enrollment in the Chambers of Commerce Group Insurance Plan designed for businesses with 1 - 50 employees
- Eligibility for enrollment in the TD Merchant Services and First Data Preferred Pricing Program for Visa, MasterCard and Interac

And now a look at some of the intangible benefits:

- The Chamber bills itself as "the voice of business in Yorkton". As such, the Chamber has tackled a number of issues on behalf of the business community:
 - Shortage of Police Officers - the Chamber brought together the RCMP, City Council and the Ministry of Corrections to address this issue. It's expected that by the end of 2009, 4 new officers will be added to the City's force
 - City Beautification Bylaws - while the bylaws were instigated with the best of intentions, many of the conditions were highly restrictive to business growth and very costly. The Chamber voiced its concerns to the City and was instrumental in the development of a set of bylaws that are much more business-friendly
 - Tax issues - in 2007, when the City proposed a large tax hike, the Chamber surveyed its members about the impact such an increase would have on the business community. The responses indicated very clearly that this would be detrimental to business in the city. The Chamber expressed these concerns to the City and as a result, the increase was reduced
 - Currently, the Chamber is working on a number of initiatives to enhance the educational opportunities in Yorkton, improve housing, serve as a

resource to the city's Economic Development/Marketing Coordinator and support the Yorkton Airport Authority

- The Yorkton Chamber holds membership in both the Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce and the Canadian Chamber of Commerce
 - For over 75 years, the Canadian Chamber has served as the largest business association in Canada. Through consultation and research, in collaboration with its members, the Canadian Chamber speaks for thousands of Canadian business people. Because of the Canadian Chamber's longstanding track record and who it represents, it is seen as the authoritative voice on all business matters
 - The job of the Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce is to make the province an attractive and competitive place to do business. It advocates policy changes that have been developed by business people presenting these recommendations in a manner appealing to government.

While it's good business practice to keep expenses at a minimum, can your business afford NOT to be a member of the Chamber?

If you wish to renew your membership or apply for membership in the Chamber, just give the Chamber Office a call (783-4368) and Sherry or I will be happy to help you.



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