

▶ Second careers are becoming more common ▶ If you've been out of school for some time, the prospect of a second career can seem daunting ▶ There are a number of federal and provincial programs to help you make the leap



# A case for continuing education

## Paying your way

- ▶ The Lifelong Learning Plan (LLP) is provided by the Canada Revenue Agency and allows you to draw funds from your RRSP to finance training or education. Visit the CRA site at [cra.gc.ca](http://cra.gc.ca).
- ▶ For federal apprenticeship incentive and completion grants, applications are online at [service-canada.gc.ca](http://service-canada.gc.ca), or call toll-free 1-866-742-3644.
- ▶ Employment Ontario provides information on help to pay for school, training for trades, and advice for older workers. Visit [tcu.gov.on.ca](http://tcu.gov.on.ca) or call toll-free 1-800-387-5514.
- ▶ To find Continuing Education Classes in Ontario start by contacting the post-secondary education institution of your choice.
- ▶ For a list of all Ontario universities and colleges that offer continuing education courses, visit [canadianuniversities.net](http://canadianuniversities.net) and type Continuing Education Ontario in to the search engine.
- ▶ You can also contact the Toronto District School Board's Continuing Education Dept. at 416-338-4000.

that," says Fleet.

The reality of Canada's "great recession" is that for two years a million and a half Canadians have been unemployed and many are working in poorly-paid, part-time jobs.

As a result, laid-off workers are seeking new ways to improve their skills or retrain for a completely different career.

At the same time, not everyone retrain because of job loss.

Career-oriented employees are constantly upgrading, looking to advance their careers and stay current with the lat-

est practices in their fields. Some are just looking for a fresh start; it's not uncommon to switch careers these days.

There are a variety of options to upgrade your skills, ranging from on-the-job training, courses and apprenticeship programs, to starting your own business.

As part of Canada's Economic Action Plan in 2009, an additional \$1 billion was invested over two fiscal years to respond to increased demand for training programs because of higher unemployment resulting from the economy.

Government training programs are a great place to start. Depending on your province, Employment Insurance (EI) programs and training may be administered by the federal government, provincial government or a combination of both.

For example, the federal apprenticeship incentive grants are designed to attract and encourage apprentices to complete their training.

Eligible apprentices could receive up to \$4,000, which can be used to pay for tuition, travel, tools and other expenses.

The B.C. Job Opportuni-

ties Program is one of three community development trust programs formed to create job opportunities for unemployed resource workers.

According to their website, "The Job Opportunities Program is making a difference in the lives of resource workers, their families and their communities in many parts of British Columbia."

In 2008, the Second Career program was launched by the Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities.

It would provide up to \$28,000 to eligible, laid-off workers to cover tu-

ition and living expenses as they retrain for new jobs.

Unfortunately, a number of these government training programs' funds are drying up this year. The B.C. Job Opportunities and Transitional Assistance programs are closing at the end of the month, as well as Ontario's Second Career program.

However, there are still numerous alternative funding schemes available to individuals, companies and unions to deal with the costs associated with training, retraining and education.

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When Janet Fleet lost her job as a receptionist and was unable to find employment, she decided to go back to school for a new set of skills.

She completed the Continuing Care Assistant program and is now gainfully employed in the field.

"I am very satisfied with the career choice I decided to take. It's very rewarding and I would recommend people who are looking for a career to go into something like