



Directions for Immigrants in  
Trades and Professional Careers

# Directions Headlines

Issue 9

March 2010

## Study Groups Start Dates

Canadian Society for  
Medical Laboratory  
Science (CSMLS)  
Certification Exam  
**March 13**

Clear Communication  
for Business  
**April 1**

Clear Communication  
for Health Professionals  
**April 12**

APEGGA National  
Professional Practice  
Exam **April 23 and 24**

Pharmacy Examining  
Board of Canada  
(PEBC) MCQ Part I  
**May 29**

Pharmacy Examining  
Board of Canada  
(PEBC) MCQ Part II  
(OSCE) **May 29**

Canadian Registered  
Nurses Exam (CRNE)  
**June 29 and July 2**

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coworker Barbara  
Alexander

## NPPE Study Groups: A valuable resource for immigrant engineers seeking licensure

More than 150 internationally educated engineers have benefited from Directions for Immigrants' National Professional Practice Examination (NPPE) study groups.

Engineering is a regulated profession in Alberta which means no one can call himself/herself an engineer without a license. Immigrant engineers and geoscientists will have more opportunities to practice in their field if they complete the licensing application process with the *Association of Professional Engineers, Geologists and Geophysicists of Alberta (APEGGA)*. An important starting point of licensure is passing the NPPE, a two-hour, 100 question, multiple choice examination based on professionalism, law, and ethics.

From January 2007 to October 2009, Directions for Immigrants completed 17

*"Mock exams provide an avenue for discussion and debate - a quicker way to learn"*  
Wilfredo de Vera  
Electronics and  
Communications engineer  
Philippines

NPPE study groups of which 80 per cent of participants passed the exam.

Patrick Cotter, career coach and facilitator of the NPPE study group, explains this success: "Our study groups provide participants with study materials, tips on how to summarize content, and the opportunity to discuss Canadian business culture within the engineering field." Patrick adds that the goal of the study group is not to memorize the information but to understand the material through discussion, weekly quizzes, and mock exams, and then apply this knowledge to the NPPE exam.

Oswaldo Ponce, an internationally trained civil engineer from Venezuela, passed the NPPE last year after having completed Directions' NPPE study group. Ponce stresses the importance of completing mock exams. "Weekly quizzes ensured that key engineering concepts that are part of the NPPE were covered", he said.

Wilfredo de Vera, electronics Communications engineer from the Philippines,



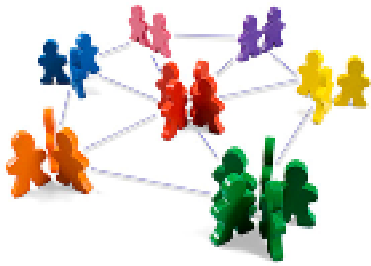
is planning to write this April.

About the study group methodology he said: "It somehow 'forces' and disciplines me to study. Reading an average of five chapters a week and being able to present assigned chapters is like doing workouts at the gym."

The NPPE study groups are facilitated by career coaches who utilize APEGGA resources, have experience in adult education, and a general understanding of the subject matter. A co-facilitator, who is working in the field of engineering, supports the study group by discussing and clarifying more technical concepts.

The 12 week NPPE study group sessions are offered four times a year. The next NPPE study groups will start on April 23 (Fridays) and April 24 (Saturdays).

## March 25th: Peer networking event



Be sure to mark this down on your personal daily planner: March 25, 5:00 pm at Directions for Immigrants (700—4 Avenue SW, 2nd floor, Room 260).

Why? We will be having a peer networking event. It

will be a great opportunity to meet with former clients of Directions, from various professions and backgrounds who are now working in their professional field.

Connect with peers who conducted their job search

in a very proactive way and got the results they dreamed of: their first Canadian professional job.

Participants will have the chance to get tips in job interviews, networking, and researching potential employers. Some of the speakers will be sharing their experiences in preparing for and writing licensing exams and others will be addressing how communication skills and awareness of the workplace culture have been crucial to succeed in their jobs.

You will make new connections and recharge your batteries for job searching. After all, you are not alone. Remember, people like you have faced or are still facing similar challenges. So, bring your business cards, a positive attitude, and a big smile!



If you are interested in attending this peer networking event please RSVP at [directions@bowvalleycollege.ca](mailto:directions@bowvalleycollege.ca) A promotional flyer with all the details is coming soon!

## Networking and Job Leads Workshop: Personalized extra support for job search

Clients of Directions for Immigrants have the opportunity to obtain practical tactics for their job search through our recently re-launched *Networking and Job Leads* workshops.

Joan Matsusaki, career coach and facilitator, says that this workshop series helps clients move forward with their job search. She adds: "Clients are given practical assignments such as find a networking group

to attend, obtain ten employers contact names, develop a telephone script to contact people, and practice telephone calls".

Matsusaki says that immediate feedback on job search activities is provided and some participants' successes motivate others to try the techniques themselves.

One of the participants, Yu-Chen Hsiao, an internationally educated nurse from Taiwan, believes this workshop provides participants with the opportunity to share successful job search tactics and experiences. Yu-Chen says: "A key benefit was learning how to properly contact people and approach them in a professional way to obtain the information I need."

Vijay Panchmatia, a supply chain logistics professional from India, says that through this workshop,

he realized the importance of developing interview skills. Vijay points out: "In past interviews I answered questions enumerating my abilities. In this workshop I learned to prepare and deliver my answers from the perspective of the employer and highlight my qualifications in a way that does not sound arrogant."

Panchmatia adds that after making changes to his resume following the facilitator's advice, three employers called him for phone interviews. Finally, Vijay Panchmatia mentions the networking assignments allowed him to learn the best and most effective practices of networking.

*"I practiced job interviews a lot. While attending this workshop, I was called for a job interview. I was surprised how confident I was."*

Maki McAreavy, internationally educated nurse from Japan





Directions for Immigrants in  
Trades and Professional Careers

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**Helping Immigrant Professionals  
restart their careers in Alberta**

Directions for Immigrants in Trades and Professional Careers support internationally trained and experienced professionals towards securing employment in their profession and gaining accreditation.

- Career Coaching
- Study Groups for licensing exams
- Workplace Communication
- Industry Networking Sessions

[www.directionsforimmigrants.ca](http://www.directionsforimmigrants.ca)

Directions for Immigrants is operated by Bow Valley College. This Service has been funded by the Government of Alberta and the Government of Canada.

## Directions' administrative assistant: Barbara Alexander Genuine smile, empathy, and willingness to help

The first face new clients of Directions see when they come to our centre is Barbara Alexander's. And they will not only get a big and honest smile, but also a willingness to provide the information they need about what kind of services and resources Directions offers that will make a difference with their job search and/or licensure in their fields.

Barbara is the kind of person we feel knows everything. As Directions' Administrative Assistant for more than five

years, she has been taking care of managing our client data base, generating monthly reports for the Government, assisting clients and potential clients with any kind of enquiries made face to face, by phone, or e-mail, scheduling clients appointments, workshops, and study groups, and looking after office equipment.

Karen Jenkins, Directions' team lead says: "Barbara has an excellent welcoming approach towards our clientele. They feel very comfortable with the way she assists them." Joumana Tasse, career coach, expresses: "Barbara shows a very proactive, open, and patient attitude. She takes the time to clarify and confirm information with clients, especially

when language is an issue." Barbara keeps on top of everything, as career coach Melanie Fox-Smith states: "she contributes a lot to keep us organized as a team."

Barbara has shown initiative to understand deeply the occupational licensing requirements in Alberta and strongly supports career coaches' efforts in providing clear and accurate direction on registration issues.

When asked what the most rewarding part of her job is, Barbara replied: "When clients come to us to share their happiness because they got their dream jobs or completed accreditation in their fields, it feels really great. We love to see how our clients succeed in their career goals."



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### March 15 Career Choices workshop at Village Square Library

How can I engage in an effective job search? How can accurate information help me in preparing a career action plan? Which communication issues frequently emerge in the workplace? – are some of the questions that will be answered during the "Realizing your career dream: steps to take you there" workshop which will take place at the Village Square Library (2623 - 56th Street NE). Nabeela Azeem and Berta Gomez from Directions will be co-facilitating this workshop this Monday, March 15, from 6:00 to 8:00 PM. See you there!

### Extended Resource Centre hours

For those clients who are not able to make an appointment or attend Directions' workshops during the daytime, Directions for Immigrants is offering extended resource centre hours from 8:30 am to 8:00 pm on the following evenings:

(Tuesdays) March 23,  
April 6, 20

### Nurses Study Group started in Red Deer

In an effort to progressively put in place resources and services for internationally educated health professionals in Southern Alberta, Directions for Immigrants started a *Canadian Registered Nurses Exam (CRNE)* study group in Red Deer on February 24th. A total of 6 participants from the Philippines and England are attending weekly classes at the Red Deer Regional Hospital Centre to review nursing materials and develop test taking skills that will help them succeed in the June 2010 CRNE exam.