



THE Voice

OPSEU Local 365, Trent University

November 2010

The 'Best Employers' Difference

Based on material from AON Hewitt, which conducts an annual review of the Best Employers In Canada.

<http://was2.hewitt.com/bestemployers/canada/pages/index.htm>

Written by Robert Loney

The benefits of being a good employer are well documented (e.g., improved retention, lower turnover, less absenteeism, and higher customer satisfaction).

How do organizations become a better employer? How do they achieve long-term sustainability, and focus their resources (including people) most effectively to drive success? AON Hewitt's research from their annual Best Employers in Canada award indicates that better employers share one characteristic: higher engagement. Employees are engaged when they:

- Speak positively about the organization to co-workers, potential employees and customers,
- Have an intense desire to be a member of the organization, and
- Exert extra effort and are dedicated to doing the very best job possible to contribute to the organization's business success.

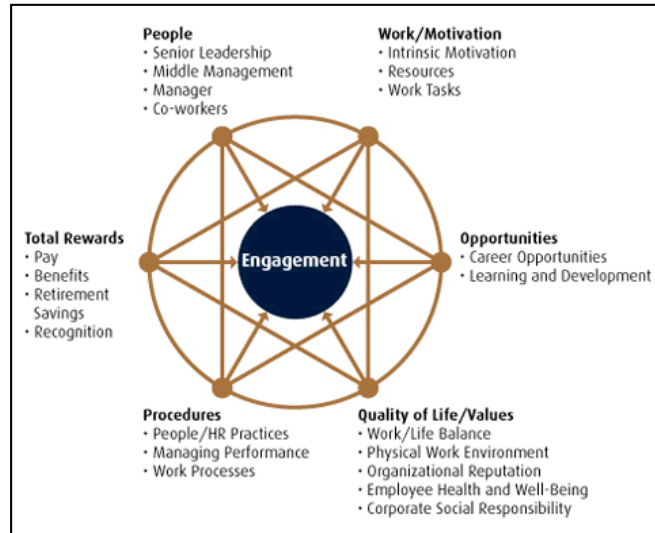
Based on this research, AON Hewitt have created an engagement model (top right).

My question to you, as an OPSEU member and Trent University employee, is how is Trent doing on these six factors? I have created a web survey where you can rate Trent University on each of the six criteria:

- People
- Work/Motivation
- Opportunities
- Quality of Life/Values
- Procedures
- Total Rewards

Please visit the web site below to complete this survey (available until Wed. December 15 at 2 p.m.). The survey should only take you a few minutes to complete. The results will be reviewed in a future The Voice issue.

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/7XT77GD>



Contents

The 'Best Employers' Difference	1
Letter to Don O'Leary (Excerpts).....	2
Shift Work Linked to Higher Risk of Work Injury, Canadian Study Finds	3
Beware Navitas	3
Save Your Bucks.....	4
OPSEU Local 365 Executive, Committees, and Stewards	5
Agreement ratified, picket lines come down at Laurentian	6
About THE VOICE and Submissions	6

NOTE: if clicking on a web link doesn't work, try copying the link and pasting into your web browser.

Letter to Don O'Leary (Excerpts)

By Jeannine Crowe

Department Secretary, Canadian Studies

One day last fall I started thinking about the state of morale at the college, and at Trent in general – after I myself burst into tears when a vending machine stole my \$1.50. I went to a co-worker for sympathy about the injustice of the chip machine, and her mental state was as fragile as mine as she was in the midst of departmental crises that seem to increase in frequency these days.

Thinking about my absurd reaction to the breakdown in the vending machine, I started to notice the cracks in the institutional machine, the decline in morale among my immediate co-workers and about the increasing work demands on our limited time, our health and our abilities. In the past few years, notably since restructuring began, there has been an increase in stress, and a decrease in collegiality. It is

as if many are working on a razor's edge, every day. It sounds reactionary, but I see the signs of post-traumatic stress disorder daily among other staff at

Trent, even this long after the restructuring. There is still a great amount of fear, guilt, anxiety, and stress among many of the staff, and I might even note increased aggression, and anecdotal accounts of insomnia, as well as difficulty concentrating or finishing tasks. All of these are symptoms of PTSD.

Not only has the restructuring affected the personal wellbeing of the workforce, but has also detrimentally strained relations between OPSEU staff themselves. The pressure to complete work in a timely manner is elevated when the other staff you rely on for supporting information and assistance are on reduced hours or working in similarly pressured situations. This not only leads to delays and frustration for both staff and students, but tensions among staff. I'm often 'teasingly' asked how I manage to 'swing such short hours' and have to defend myself with the reminder that I am half-time --- for half pay. Other members have noted that they longer feel "safe" making personal connections with others in their immediate work environment. It has been observed by some that management is in some cases using OPSEU members to 'monitor' other members; also there is an emotional danger in becoming close to individuals that, should another round of restructuring occur, you could bump, or could bump you.

You cannot cut a workforce, download services from cut departments onto other staff and still demand

"customer satisfaction" for students. Many members felt greatly insulted by the way customer service training was forced upon OPSEU staff under the guise of AODA training. Lack of OPSEU staff customer service is NOT the reason Trent has enrolment or fiscal problems. Offering yoga, relaxation, and estate planning workshops doesn't quite fill the gap in rebuilding the trust and enthusiasm of your staff. Other workers have mentioned an interest in professional development courses such as computer upgrading, or workshops on working with departmental account statements. These things would make our jobs easier, and allow for skill advancement and the pride of achievement that comes with that. We are a university, and should be an example to the community of an innovative workplace that prides itself in employee support and development.

Additionally, the current fiscal practice of staffing teaching positions through primarily CUPE hires has a

profound effect upon the workplace, and the quality of service to students. While I enjoy the freshness and enthusiasm CUPE instructors bring to our learning community, the

transience of their job status increases the work demands of secretarial, IT, human resources, Registrar office, DSO, other support staff and the Dean's Office. A decline in TUFA replacement faculty increases the committee and mentorship demands on tenured faculty, which again, trickles down to increased demands on our OPSEU workers, who are already under pressure from various cutbacks. You cannot rebuild a world class reputation with stop gap hiring practices in any bargaining unit.

This accumulated stress has a significant financial cost for the university. I would be very interested to see the statistics on LTD leaves and sick days over the past five years, as well as a costing of the loss of productivity and increased employee / employer costs associated with increased LTD demand. From my own observations, I would assume there has been a significant increase in these costs since restructuring began, directly attributable to increased stress and worker burnout.

Trent has the potential to be a wonderful place to work. That's why I chose to study here and later work here – it was a wonderful community. There are many things that money cannot buy; a workplace that offers stability, dignity and respect to its workers goes a long way to providing some of them.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeannine Crowe



Shift Work Linked to Higher Risk of Work Injury, Canadian Study Finds

Reprinted from ScienceDaily Nov. 3, 2010

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2010/11/101102131001.htm>

Canadians who work night and rotating shifts are almost twice as likely to be injured on the job than those working regular day shifts, according to a study by researchers at the University of British Columbia.

The study, published in the current issue of the *Scandinavian Journal of Work, Environment and Health*, examined data on more than 30,000 Canadians collected as part of Statistics Canada's Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics and compared results between workers involved in different types of shift work from 1996-2006. It shows that while the overall rate of work injuries in Canada decreased during this time, the rate of injuries did not decline for night shift workers.

The study also found that the risk of work injury associated with shift work was more pronounced for women, especially if they work rotating shifts.

"The disruption of normal sleep patterns due to shift work can cause drowsiness or fatigue, which can lead to workplace injuries," says Imelda Wong, a PhD Candidate at UBC's School of Environmental Health and the study's lead author. "Our research shows that people working rotating and night shifts are more likely to experience an injury than those who work regular day hours."

The researchers suggest that because women are more likely to be responsible for childcare and household work, they may have more difficulties adjusting to shift work and maintaining regular sleep schedules.

The number of Canadians working non-standard hours has increased dramatically in recent decades. The number of women in rotating and night shift work increased by 95 per cent during the study period, primarily in the health care sector. For men, the increase was 50 per cent, mostly in manufacturing and trades.

In 2006, 307,000 work-related injury claims associated with shift work represented more than \$50.5 million in costs to Canada's workers' compensation system.

"As more and more workers become involved in non-daytime shift work, we may see an increase in injuries, especially among women," says co-author Chris McLeod, a research associate at UBC's Centre for Health Services and Policy Research (CHSPR). "Regulatory agencies and employers need to consider policies and programs to help reduce the risk of injuries among shift workers."

The study was funded by the WorkSafeBC-CHSPR Research Partnership. WorkSafeBC is British Columbia's workers' compensation board. The third co-author of the study is Paul Demers, director of the Occupational Cancer Research Centre in Toronto and clinical faculty member at the UBC School of Population and Public Health.



Beware Navitas

By George Fogarasi

Navitas is an Australia based multinational corporation that offers English language training in eight countries. They latch onto public universities and exploit them for profit, hiring casual staff to teach for-profit English classes. They are Australia's biggest private college and only education provider listed on the stock exchange. The firm has been in Canada since 2006, starting in Simon Fraser University and adding the University of Manitoba to its roster two years later as a "partner" for the creation of private for-profit programs on these campuses. It is pursuing similar deals with Dalhousie, McMaster, the University of Windsor and Carleton.

In April, there was an external review of Simon Fraser's contract with Navitas and, surprise, it noted that "there is no provision for collective representation through an association or union." At the University of Manitoba, Navitas has been severely criticized by students, faculty and even members of the board of governors and senate because the administration negotiated a deal to create what is in effect a private campus without informing the university community.

Navitas' CEO states that "In the U.K. we have had 180 per cent growth in (student) numbers in the past 12 months. There's an element of students focusing on other jurisdictions, especially the U.K. and Canada. So what we lose on the roundabout we will pick up on the swings."

Not if we can help it. OPSEU members work hard in the International Program and OPSEU and CUPE members teach in Trent's growing and successful ESL program which sees more and more students every year, yet admin refuses to translate ever more CUPE casual positions into full-time OPSEU positions. Could the bean counters at Trent be looking at Navitas, or is our growing program going to be tempting pickings for this parasitical corporation? Keep your eyes peeled for anything with "Navitas" on it. Copy the document and send it to your Executive.

Save Your Bucks

By Robert Loney



Christmas is coming... this is ALL too evident when you go to any retailer. We all have our own ways of enjoying the spirit of the Christmas holiday season. I would like to explore some ways that can make your Christmas less expensive, and perhaps more meaningful. Also we should be aware of the tricks that retailers try to get us to spend more, especially at this time of year.

Some retailers were putting out Christmas displays and playing Christmas music before Halloween! Why? Because the retailers want you to spend, spend... they LOVE impulse buying. Business is introducing the Christmas theme earlier and earlier into stores, because it makes them more money. If we as consumers are aware of this trick, it will be less likely to influence us.

If Christmas shows up in stores earlier, a couple of things happen. First, people start thinking about their Christmas gifts earlier. They may even get out shopping earlier, looking for gifts. And every time a customer enters a store, there is a chance they will buy something else they would normally not have bought. The other thing that happens is people may buy their gifts early, and then later see something that makes them think "That's neat/cute/perfect, I'll buy that as an additional gift", which results in an impulse buy. The end result... the person spends more than they would have originally on gifts. But there are ways to combat this effect of the extended Christmas retail season.

Make a plan and stick to it. Ask what people want for Christmas. It works not just for kids; it works for everyone. Figure out your gift giving choices (both who and what), make a list, research the best price(s), and then go and buy the gifts. It sounds mundane, I know, but it works. And it doesn't take the fun out of Christmas. In fact, it makes it better.

First, if you get someone a gift they want, they are happy and you are happy. As opposed to guessing what someone might like (especially for those you don't know as well), where they may or may not use/like the gift. This reduces the effort of returns/exchanges, and waste/garbage. And the recipient is more likely to be happy with the gift! There is nothing wrong with the occasional surprise, but you are more likely to get something someone wants if you ask. Have you made your list yet?

Second, you end up spending less time shopping. Fighting crowds. Dealing with traffic and finding a parking spot. Waiting in line. Working your way

through crowded stores. Being deluged by advertising, store musak and crowd noise. Are we in the Christmas spirit yet?

If you make a list of what to buy and stick to it, instead of spending a lot of time window shopping/browsing, you end up with more time to spend with those you love. Or relax (Christmas is one of the most stressful times of the year). This is one of the best gifts of the Christmas season. We all have busy lives throughout the year, and Christmas is a time to spend with people, not out shopping.

Third, you get to research and find the best prices on the gifts you buy, saving money. For instance, you go window-shopping, and find an item that would make a good gift. What if that item was at a store just down the road for 20% less? A little research and patience can net you good deals on the gifts you want to give.

Finally, watch for some tricks retailers will play on you, trying to get you to spend more.

- *Have a big cart, have to fill it...*

Large shopping carts invite consumers to fill it as they wander the store. Stick to your list!

- *Buy in bulk and save...*

A great idea if you really need the extra. But will you really use that gallon of mayonnaise before it goes bad? And do the math. \$10.49 for 48 ounces is not the same deal as \$4.99 for 24 ounces.

- *Look at this display / these products along the way...*

Big displays slow you down and get you to look at things you didn't come to buy. And weaving store layouts do the same. Retailers are trying to show you that you need stuff you didn't know you need! But do you really need it? Stay focused!

- *Save more with our charge card...*

Watch those store brand charge cards' interest rates! It may look like a good deal, but not if you can't pay it off before it starts accumulating interest.

- *Shop 'till you drop (or starve)...*

Bad decisions can come from feeling hungry or tired.

- *Check out items above and below eye level...*

Studies show people are more likely to buy items straight in front of them at eye level. Check out those higher discounted items on higher and lower shelves.

- *Comparison shop online as well as in flyers...*

Many items can be had at great prices on the web. Buying from reputable online retailers is safe, and shipping costs are often negligible at this time of year.

Send in YOUR suggestions for topics or money saving tips!

OPSEU Local 365 Executive, Committees, and Stewards

Names, Trent U. Email Addresses, and Work Units (keep for reference)

OPSEU Local 365 Executive:

President: Rose Dunford (rdunford; Physical Resources)
Vice President: Gerry Mason (gmason; Physical Resources)
Chief Steward: Doug Brown (dbrown, Athletics & Recreation)
Secretary: George Fogarasi (georgefogarasi; Academic Skills Centre)

Local Committees:

Action Committee:	Elizabeth Wilson (ewilson; Bata Library) Inge Lovell (ilovell; Bata Library)	Julie Crook (jcrook; Physical Resources)
Bylaw Committee:	Craig Kelly (cwkelly; Physical Resources) Bruce Shearer (bshearer; Physical Resources)	Rob Ferguson (robferguson; Physical Resources)
Communications Committee:	George Fogarasi (georgefogarasi; Academic Skills) Dana Capell (danacapell; Academic Skills)	Robert Loney (rloney; Environmental and Resource Studies)
Grievance Committee:	Tammy Mulley (tammymulley; Julian Blackburn College)	Jean Kirk (jkirk; Bata Library)
Health & Safety Committee:	John Breukelaar (jbreukelaar; Physics Department) Adele Devlin (adeledevlin; Physical Resources)	Debbie Lietz (dlietz; Biology) Catherine Leahy (cleahy; Financial Services)
Nominating Committee:	Elizabeth Wilson (ewilson; Bata Library) Betty Clark (bclark; Physical Resources)	Nancy Elliott (nancyelliott; Physical Resources)

University Committees:

Joint Job Evaluation Committee (JJEC) (2 year term): Angela Sikma (angelasikma; Associate Dean of Science)
 Ron Fox (rfox; Associate Dean of Science)
 Deborah Earle (deborahhearle; Concurrent Education)

Trent Univ. Senate Representative Trustees: George Fogarasi (georgefogarasi; Academic Skills)
 Mary Louise Brooks (mbrooks; Financial Services)
 Angela Sikma (angelasikma; Associate Dean of Science)

Human Rights: Dana Capell (danacapell; Academic Skills)

Pension Committee: Robert Loney (rloney; Environmental and Resource Studies)
 Craig Kelly (cwkelly; Physical Resources)
 Catherine Leahy (cleahy; Financial Services)
Shadow Member: Brown, Doug (dbrown, Athletics & Recreation)

OPSEU Local 365 Stewards (alphabetical by last name)

Barrett, Marty (martybarrett; Physical Resources)	Earle, Deborah (deborahhearle; Concurrent Education)
Breukelaar, John (jbreukelaar; Physics Department)	Elliott, Nancy (nancyelliott; Physical Resources)
Brown, Doug (dbrown, Athletics & Recreation)	Fogarasi, George (georgefogarasi; Academic Skills)
Clark, Betty (bclark; Physical Resources)	Fox, Ronald (rfox; Associate Dean of Science)
Crowe, Jeannine (jeanninecrowe; Canadian Studies)	Kirk, Jean (jkirk; Bata Library)
Dack, Robert (rdack; Information Technology)	Martindale, Jeff (jmartindale; Information Technology)
Daniels, Sean (sdaniels; Information Technology)	Mason, Gerry (gmason; Physical Resources)
Devlin, Adele (adeledevlin; Physical Resources)	McKay, Dale (dalemckay; Biology)
Dunford, Rosemary (rdunford; Physical Resources)	Wilson, Elizabeth (ewilson; Bata Library)

Agreement ratified, picket lines come down at Laurentian

Reprinted from *The Sudbury Star* Nov. 9, 2010
<http://www.thesudburystar.com/ArticleDisplay.aspx?e=2837451>

Picket lines have come down at Laurentian University now that the board of directors for the Northern Ontario School of Medicine and its 150 office, clerical, administrative, technical and service employees have ratified a first collective agreement.

Monday, the board approved the tentative deal struck last week by bargaining teams for the medical school and Local 677 of the Ontario Public Service Employees Union.

About 85% of the local's members voted 78.2% Friday in favour of the deal. Local 677 members, who work in Sudbury and in Thunder Bay at the med school's west campus at Lakehead University, went on strike Aug. 16.

School officials say the first contract, which will remain in effect until April 30, 2012, gives Local 677 members a retroactive 3.25% increase for 2009/10, with a wage freeze in the second and third years of the contract.

The medical school has consistently said it had to abide by an informal wage freeze implemented by the provincial government of Premier Dalton McGuinty.

OPSEU Local 677 members will receive a signing bonus of \$2,000 retroactive to 2009. The school said it is being paid to compensate for transitional issues affecting members, such as hours of work, scheduling and the introduction of shift provisions to meet operational needs.

In its news release, the medical school said the wage increase and payment that were struck as part of the deal to comply with the Ontario government's policy statements that specify "new collective agreements will be of at least two years duration and provide no net increase in compensation for at least two years."

A return-to-work protocol is being worked out between the school and the unit.

OPSEU Local 677 also represents teaching faculty at the medical school, but they belong to a different unit.



When you give your work away for free...

About THE VOICE and Submissions

The Voice is created and distributed by the Communication Committee of OPSEU Local 365.

Contributions about issues that allow us to come together and move forward are especially welcome. Members, this is your forum. Please send your submissions for The VOICE newsletter by mail to Robert Loney (ERS Program) or (preferably) by email to: rloney "at" trentu.ca. All submissions are subject to editing for grammar, spelling, and/or space. As guidance, a one-page article typically has 500-600 words (we'll accept any size article).

This is a forum for information, discussion and debate. Opinions expressed in The Voice are those of individual members and not necessarily those of the Communication Committee, OPSEU Local 365, or OPSEU unless signed by the Executive.

Contributor to this issue: Jeannine Crowe

And the Communications Committee:

George Fogarasi
 Dana Capell
 Robert Loney

Some graphics from Canadian Association of Labour Media (C.A.L.M.; <http://www.calm.ca/>).

Visit our OPSEU Local 365 web site at
<http://www.opseulocal365.com/>