

# Public Sector Apprenticeships

How To Change the Culture To Make  
Apprenticeship Work For Unions and Employers



Randy  
Anderson-  
Fennell

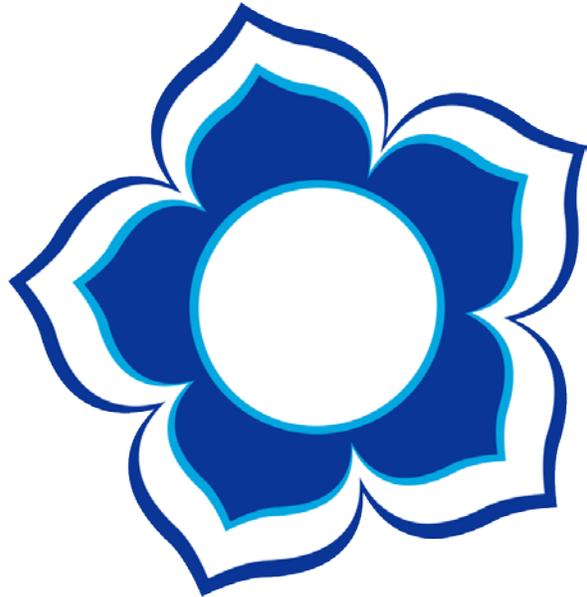
Kirk  
Mercer

# Bios

- ▶ Kirk Mercer-Began as an Apprentice Printer in 1986 and completed his Red Seal Ticket in 1992. He worked for 17 years in the largest private sector unionized print shop on Vancouver Island before joining the University of Victoria Printing services in 2004, when he became a member of the Canadian Union of Public Employees. He has been active with the CUPE BC Skilled Trades Committee for the past 7 years and is now the chairperson. Kirk is currently serving as Vice President for CUPE Local 951 and the CUPE BC Regional Vice President for Vancouver Island.
- ▶ Randy Anderson-Fennell-Started his electrical apprenticeship in January 1990 and has been a working electrician since. Randy has worked in construction and joined the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 213 in 1995. He began working in the Public Sector in 2006 by working for Surrey Schools, B.C.'s largest school district. Randy joined CUPE 728's Executive 8 years ago and serves as co-chair for the CUPE BC Skilled Trades Committee and sits on the BC Federation of Labours Apprenticeship and Skilled Trades Working Group. A long time advocate for apprenticeships, Randy has been working and lobbying for apprenticeships in the Public Sector.

# CUPE BC Skilled Trades Committee

- ▶ The focus of the CUPE BC Skilled Trades Committee is to remove barriers to equity seeking groups pursuing apprenticeships and strengthening Red Seal trades while supporting development of common contract language.
- ▶ 2018 marks a turning point for the Skilled Trades Committee. We remain focused on and committed to promoting Red Seal trades and access to apprenticeships, and playing a larger role in our participation with the Canadian Apprenticeship Forum.



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# The Public Sector and the need to change the Culture

- ▶ Less than 19% of employers hire apprentices. Employers who do not hire apprentices depend on the training investments of others. The Public Sector has a long Culture of freeloading or poaching trained workers to meet their needs and improve their bottom line profitability. This has to change and the CUPE BC Skilled Trades Committee have monitored the loss of jobs through attrition with no commitment to training new apprentices. We have the red seal journeypersons to make this work. It's our time to help our employers take back the responsibility to hire and train apprentices.



# Public Sector Apprenticeship Statistics

- ▶ These are Stats from British Columbia.
- ▶ In 2015-16 Apprenticeship Completion Rate was 40%, just a year before it was low as 33%.
- ▶ As the largest employer in BC, government should play a direct role in providing apprentices with jobs on publicly funded infrastructure projects.
- ▶ Government is uniquely positioned with legislative powers and contractual ability with service providers to bridge the gap between training and apprenticeship placements, mirroring the labour movement's joint training board model. Post-secondary institutions under the purview of the Ministry of Advanced Education are the largest provider of apprenticeship and skills training." Which asks the question why do Unions at these intuitions have a low number of Apprentices?
- ▶ The former government had set an *aspirational* goal of having 25% of the jobs on publicly funded projects set aside specifically for apprentices on projects over \$15 million. Unfortunately they put no policy in place to enforce this or even monitor it.
- ▶ Across Canada rates of employers participation in apprenticeship programs remain at a shockingly low 19% (BC falls below this average).
- ▶ Throughout BC the number of apprentices working for Municipal, Universities, School Districts and Hospitals is 361 (255 from BC's Crown Corporations).
- ▶ Of 20 CUPE locals polled that represent municipalities, universities and school districts, there were 448 tradespersons and only 6 active apprenticeships.

# ITA Stats



## About the Industry Training Authority (ITA)

ITA works with employers, employees, industry, labour, training providers and government to issue credentials, manage apprenticeships, set program standards, and increase opportunities in the trades in BC.

## Connect with us:

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# ITA Stats

- ▶ Industry Training Authority guides you through everything you need to know about apprenticeships and industry training in BC on your pathway to a rewarding career.
- ▶ I would like to bring your attention **Canada Job Fund Per Apprenticeship**
- ▶ These entry level (pre-apprenticeship) trades exploration, training and employment services are targeted to eligible individuals who are under-represented in the trades (Indigenous, Women, Immigrants, Youth). This is great to see 484 indigenous worker and 486 women in trades.
- ▶ With a change in government we have seen 4 new appointees to the ITA from Labour. Lisa Langevin IBEW 213, Cindy Oliver former CAF director and member of Federation of Post-Secondary Educators, Laird Cronk International Service rep IBEW and Bob Davis the President of the Kwantlen Polytechnic University's Faculty Association. With this equal representation on the board we are hopeful to work with unions and employers to find solutions to our public-sector apprenticeship issues.

# Now Time To Lobby



# Who To Lobby

- ▶ One of the reasons there has been a lack of apprenticeships in the public sector is the lack of education on the importance of apprenticeships. The easiest way to make change is to have leaders and politicians involved and informed.
- ▶ Municipalities- elected officials will consist of a Mayor and Councilors. Smaller rural areas may have elected directors on regional boards.
- ▶ School Districts have elected Trustees who sit on Boards of Education.
- ▶ Universities and Colleges have appointed Boards of Directors. As do Hospitals and Health Authorities. This also changes from province to province. So check websites to see the structure of the organization is. It is also important to know who sits in these positions and how you can make presentations to these.



# Lobby Tips

- ▶ The best place to start is one on one discussion. Learn who these individuals are, look at their backgrounds, then try to identify potential allies.
- ▶ Decide who to lobby. Be clear on your target.
- ▶ Why are you lobbying? Be clear on the purpose of the initiative, is this to provide information, to enlist information, to influence a decision, problem solve, or to influence policy?
- ▶ What should you know about each person or group? Research is important...assign someone to take on this task. For local politicians look to their campaign commitments, brochures, and by the actions of the local government.
- ▶ Individuals-what is their background? What issues have they supported? Know the role staff have in the organization-it is important to research in order to know that you are contacting the most appropriate person (eg. If this is a budget issue, lobby the official with the budget portfolio).

# What is Effective Lobbying?

- ▶ Develop a strategy.
- ▶ Decide if you want or need allies.
- ▶ Send background information before the meeting.
- ▶ Identify the purpose of the meeting and how much time you are requesting and who you are bringing with you.
- ▶ Research the person you are meeting.
- ▶ Make use of allotted time.
- ▶ Decide who will speak at the meeting.
- ▶ Keep messages small in number, crisp and clear.
- ▶ Send letter after the meeting confirming what was discussed and agreed to, with any timelines.
- ▶ Acknowledge appreciation for meeting and action agreed upon.
- ▶ Be hard on the issues and soft on the people.

# What Doesn't Work!

- ▶ Too many issues.
- ▶ Personalizing the issue.
- ▶ Blind-siding.
- ▶ Painting anyone in a corner.
- ▶ Surprise media participation.
- ▶ Threatening future negative action.

# Role of Public Sectors and How to Have Them On Board

Remember, most public sectors will have workers who follow a Collective Agreement. It is very important to have the local union as an ally. First, check to see what their collective agreement says about apprenticeships. You can usually find this information online as most public sector contracts are available that way.

Find an ally in the union. Check their website. Find out who is the President and make contact. Find out if there are concerns. The President may come from a non-trades job, so maybe ask for another member from their executive to be present, or a shop steward from their trades/maintenance. Some locals may have been lobbying for this as well, and some may have issues over seniority or workers being replaced by apprentices. Listen to their concerns, then try to solve these problems together. There is no issue that can't be solved, but new collective agreement language may be needed to protect their interest. These can only be resolved between employer and union, but if working for the same common purpose, they are easily resolved.

# Making Public Presentations

In the end you may have to make a presentation in front of a municipal or a board meeting. It may be just with a small group or at a larger public meeting. It may even be televised.

Check rules behind making a presentation. Most organizations will have these spelled out. Make all the arrangements well in advance to these meetings.

Make the presentation engaging. Power point is always welcome. Use catchy info graphics. Make your discussion interesting and entertaining. But always keep on topic and keep clear focus.

Know your information inside and out. Have fun with it, it will show and will keep everyone interested and listening.

QUESTIONS?

