

# Employer Quarterly news & updates

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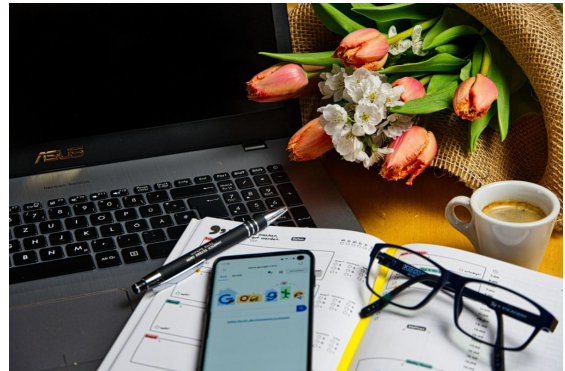
May, 2020 | Issue 3

## Free Job Posting Service

If you are looking for staff, don't forget to access our free job posting service!

Whether you are in the office or working from home, it is easy to post your available positions on our website.

[Post a Job](#)



## WORKBC WAGE SUBSIDY PROGRAM VS CANADA EMERGENCY WAGE SUBSIDY

### WorkBC Wage Subsidy Program

As a WorkBC Centre, the Career Centre is able to provide financial support to employers as an incentive to hire and provide work experience and skills enhancement to eligible job seekers. For eligible employers, the WorkBC Wage Subsidy will reimburse a portion of a new employee's wages.

*"My real estate business needs to have an effective administrative team in place at all times. The Career Centre, with support of the Wage Subsidy program, has allowed me to train and upgrade new employees in a supportive, easy paper/cash flow process. The Career Centre staff care about both the employee and the employer. I strongly recommend contacting them to see what they can do for you and your business in these changing times!"* Ian Lindsay, FRI RI (BC) Personal Real Estate Corporation

[Learn More](#)

### Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy

Canadian employers whose businesses have been affected by COVID-19, may be eligible for a subsidy of 75% of employee wages for up to 12 weeks, retroactive from March 15, 2020, to June 6, 2020. This wage subsidy will enable employers to re-hire workers previously laid off as a result of COVID-19, help prevent further job losses, and better position businesses to resume normal operations following the crisis.

[Learn More](#)

## Q&A WITH OUR FEATURED EMPLOYER - FIRESIDE BOOKS



## Q. HOW DID YOU PIVOT YOUR SMALL BUSINESS TO ADAPT DURING COVID-19?

Our store is primarily a used bookstore, with over 100,000 books in stock, but we also sell new books, Cobble Hill puzzles and games. Prior to Covid-19 we were open seven days a week 9:30am to 5:30pm. Our staff included 1-2 full time and 1-2 part time staff, depending on the time of year. Our sales came through a strong base of local customers and seasonal tourists. We had a good social media presence and an informative website, but were not set up to do any sales online, which was going to be our next project.

Then Covid-19 hit! Business as we knew it was suspended. For how long we didn't know, but we had to react if we were going to be in business when things returned to normal (or whatever the new normal was going to be).

Although unsure of our revenue, our operating expenses were certain, so it was necessary to be strategic about making reductions. Unfortunately this involved laying off our staff, which of all the things we had to do, was the hardest. We looked at rent modification with our landlord and we started going over the Federal relief programs daily.

Secondly, we had to consider how we could safely continue to do business during this pandemic. For the first week we reduced our days and hours and tried to do some business virtually via phone and Facebook Messenger. Shortly thereafter we came up with a plan to give customers the opportunity to book half hour private browsing appointments. This allowed us to maintain the social distancing guidelines and provided our customers with a comfortable environment to look around.

Our next step was to layer in free delivery and contactless pick up for those not able to come into the store, and provided shipping as required. As well, we posted hundreds of pictures of current inventory on our website and Facebook page.

It is now the beginning of May with no definite end in site, and we are continuing on with this model. It is a different way of doing business, but our customers are catching on, have been very understanding and appreciate we can accommodate their needs. We are

extremely grateful they continue to shop with us.

Lastly, as Federal help starts to kick in, we are gearing up to implement our online shopping project. We've brought back one staff member and will hopefully have everybody back by the middle of May to complete this project. The end result will see us with over 100,000 books, puzzles and games available to purchase online, giving our customers an additional option.

## Q: ANY ADVICE TO OTHER SMALL BUSINESSES DURING THIS TIME?

- Remain calm, take a deep breath, you got this!
- Think outside of the box.
- Inform yourself, don't wait for someone to come to the rescue. Be aware of the Federal, Provincial and Municipal programs; Covid or otherwise. If it's there and you qualify, then use it. Qualifying rules seem to change daily, so stay on top of it as information comes available.
- Reduce expenses, which involves tough conversations with multiple people. Do not give up, stand your ground. Remember, everyone is in this leaky boat together, so always be respectful in your conversations and do not burn any bridges.
- The big question to ask yourself - how can I take care of my customers so they in turn can take care of me while the most restrictive rules are in place; when the rules start relaxing; when the rules go back to normal; and if things don't go back as they were, how to operate in the new normal (which may need to be a long term plan).
- **Make sure your community knows you are still there. Don't hide away.** Out of sight, out of mind is a dangerous place to be. Use your social media and community contacts to keep reminding everyone that you are there.

*Many thanks to Brian Webber, for sharing your compelling story!*

### Fireside Books

[www.firesidebooksparksville.com](http://www.firesidebooksparksville.com)

250.248.1234

## THANK YOU TO OUR EMPLOYERS WHO ARE FRONT LINE WORKERS



## CONTACT US

**Remember, we are just a phone call away and ready to assist you with your hiring needs!**

**Career Centre Resources for Employers**



**CAREER CENTRE**

[www.careercentre.org](http://www.careercentre.org)  
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