

# Innovative & Effective Networking Opportunity

## ACCES Employment's Speed Mentoring® Proudly Sponsored by BMO Financial Group



***On November 30, 2010 ACCES Employment held a large-scale Speed Mentoring® event at the Toronto Board of Trade. Over 120 mentors from 65 different companies met more than 120 new Canadian mentees. The evening was inspirational and empowering as mentors and mentees made valuable connections.***

The event was sponsored by BMO Financial Group, which has a long and proud history of serving the financial needs of new Canadians. Lynn Roger, Senior Vice President of Talent Strategies and Executive Resourcing provided an overview of BMO's commitment to diversity. "BMO is a leader among the large Canadian banks in the representation of visible minorities," said Lynn, who

participated in the event as a mentor. "Our goal is to better understand and serve our diverse customer base through an equally diverse workforce."



**Allison Pond**, Executive Director, ACCES Employment

In her opening address, Allison Pond, Executive Director of ACCES Employment, spoke about ACCES' success in supporting new Canadians and connecting them to employers. "As Canadian industries face growing skills shortages, many look to new Canadians as a key source of talent," said Allison. ACCES is working at bridging the gap



**Lynn Roger**, Senior Vice President of Talent Strategies and Executive Resourcing, BMO Financial Group

between immigrants and Canadian employers. To do this, Allison said, "innovative solutions are critical and Speed Mentoring is one such solution."

Mentors included Angie Seth, lead news anchor for OMNI News South Asian Edition, who also was the event's enthusiastic emcee, and MPP Khalil Ramal, parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration. Originally from

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**MPP Khalil Ramal**

“We are a nation of immigrants,” said Khalil, adding that of the thousands of new immigrants coming to the country each year, most of those settle in Toronto. “Immigrants inject new life and new skills,” he said, but it’s important to learn the language, to accredit your education, and to find a fulfilling job. “When you find the right job, you feel more integrated” he said.

Manjeet Dhiman explained how Speed Mentoring works. There would be 10-minute rotations with five different mentors. “This dynamic format provides an innovative opportunity for concentrated networking for both mentors and mentees,” she said.

Once the sessions were in progress, there was great energy in the air as participants engaged in impactful conversations. Mentees explained their qualifications and interests, while mentors gave reality-based advice on specific opportunities and how to overcome roadblocks to success.

When the fast-paced Speed Mentoring came to a close, participants were invited to attend a networking reception where they shared positive feedback.



**Mohammed Khalesi,  
Mechanical Engineer**

Mohammed Khalesi was one of the mentees participating in the Engineering sector room. “It was a valuable opportunity to plant seeds that will now grow in the industry,” said Mohammed, a mechanical engineer from India.



**Ljupco Markovski,  
Electrical Engineer**

Mentor Ljupco Markovski, an electrical engineer with Bombardier, said he was excited to “mentor fellow engineers and help them learn specific ways to job search in Canada.” Ljupco is from Macedonia and knows firsthand the obstacles involved in establishing a fulfilling career in a new country.

In the Information Technology sector room, Philip Hur, who works in technology and strategy development for TELUS, said he was impressed with the talent pool he encountered, and with the way ACCES organized the event.



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Conan Hung, IT

“It was awesome,” said IT mentee Conan Hung, who’s from Singapore and recently completed his master’s degree in computer sciences from Concordia. “I met with seven mentors and got two invitations to send my resumé.”



Maria Abad, Medical Marketing

In the Sales and Marketing sector room, mentee Maria Abad said she was looking for an opportunity in the pharmaceutical or medical supplies industries. She explained how her nursing background from the Philippines makes her an ideal candidate for a position in the medical marketing field.



Maxine Hersch,  
Delivery Programs  
Lead, Accenture

Maxine Hersch, a delivery programs lead at Accenture, participated as a mentor in the Sales and Marketing sector room. “What a concept,” said Maxine. “The ACCES Speed Mentoring is well aligned with our philosophy for encouraging corporate citizenship and providing a variety of people with the skills to succeed.”

Accenture has hosted ACCES Speed Mentoring events in the past, but Maxine said that the mentees she met with at this event exhibited some specialized skills that she didn’t expect. “I’m going to recommend we host another event,” she said.

For mentees, the Speed Mentoring event was a valuable opportunity to gain access to prospective employers, acquire expert insight and make industry connections. For mentors, this experience highlighted the high level of qualifications and professionalism that new Canadians have to offer.

The Speed Mentoring strategy and best practise is gaining momentum and more and more companies are getting involved.

To find out how you can get involved, please contact:

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