

APPRENTICESHIP
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Brad Avery



Becoming an Apprentice

After high school, I started in the construction industry doing concrete work. As I learned more, I decided that I wanted to go into a registered trade and work in the construction industry. Newfoundland and Labrador, as a province, is really well off now and I saw a bright future for myself by getting into this expanding field. I decided on carpentry and went back to school. I was surprised when I went back to school how much math was involved. If you don't get your head around the math, it could be a very difficult job. I now do a lot of math and I know how to work out problems. My education definitely gave me the tools I needed to succeed in the trade.

Some of the Challenges

Getting employment insurance for my time off work at school was challenging as navigating the bureaucracy was something new to me. Understanding the rules and wait times proved frustrating. I was persistent however, and got the information and paperwork required to secure the resources I needed to continue learning and further my career as an apprentice.

Finding an Employer

I found an employer through my union office. I got a list of employers to call who were looking for work[ers]. I started calling on a Friday and by Monday I was on a job site starting work. The job situation is really great now as they can't seem to get enough people.

Working with a journeyman helps a lot since you learn so much from them. A positive and open attitude is important. You have to be willing to learn and never think you are too good to learn something new or have someone show you the ropes. The whole construction business is a learning process and you learn something new every day. My employer has been very supportive in helping me master the skills I need to complete my apprenticeship.

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What Worked and What Didn't

Building a good relationship with your employer is crucial. Don't yell or cause problems for them. Trust is a big issue and if your employer has confidence in you and treats you well, it can be a great experience. Money isn't everything.

It's important to find an employer that has qualified and registered journeyman on site because they need to check your work and log your hours. There are lots of apprentices who can't complete their training because they don't have the necessary hours logged.

Safety is also a huge issue. Take your time while you work to do it properly and safely and make sure to take all the safety courses that are offered. More safety courses help in the long run as you will be healthier and more productive by sticking to the rules.

Trade: Carpentry. Location: Paradise, Newfoundland. Year of Apprenticeship: 3rd year

