

Connect with employers to find a job in tourism

by Heidi Riley

At the eighth annual **Tourism Employment Showcase**, held in Charlottetown in February, over 20 employers welcomed potential employees to talk about employment opportunities.

“Over 16,000 Islanders work in full-time, part-time, seasonal or year-round tourism jobs,” says **Wendy McIntyre**, HR Advisor for the **Tourism Human Resource Sector Council**.

Tourism jobs include

- accommodations
- transportation
- travel services
- food and beverage
- recreation and entertainment.

Who is working in tourism?

“The image of the traditional tourism worker is changing,” says **Rod Clark**, from the **Tourism Industry Association of PEI**. “Employers have broadened their search to include people of all age groups, from high school students to seniors. They are also looking to hire newcomers to PEI, and people with disabilities.”

Many work year-round

The traditional timing of the tourist season is changing too. PEI is attracting more visitors during the fall, and now winter events such as the Jack Frost Festival and the Spud Hockey Tournament mean that tourism requires workers year-round.”

What does it take to work in tourism?

“Tourism workers are ambassadors for the province,” says **Joy Gallant**, from the **Confederation Centre of the Arts**. “They need to sell the complete experience of visiting PEI.”

“I have heard it said that your boss is the customer,” says **Dianne Griffin**, HR Manager with **D.P. Murphy Inc.** “That is the attitude we are looking for.”

“We look for exceptional guest service skills, the wow factor, and the ability to resolve issues on the spot,” says **Deborah Fraser**, People Resources Coordinator with the **Delta Prince Edward Hotel**.

Most employers say they do not necessarily look for prior experience for most positions, but they are looking for a positive attitude, willingness to learn, and a friendly and outgoing personality. “We need people who are friendly, outgoing, patient, and truly enjoy working with the public,” says **Sandra MacKenzie**, Manager of Human Resources for **Best Western Charlottetown**. “These things just come naturally to successful people who work in tourism.”

Best ways to apply

Most employers prefer to receive applications through e-mail, although a few want to meet an applicant face to face first. “All résumés tend to look alike,” says **Jennifer Ridgway**, owner of **Moonsnail Soapworks** and **Luna Crafts & Gifts**. “People who visit the store in person with their résumé and introduce themselves to us will give us a good idea of their enthusiasm and interest in the business.”

“Before they come into the store, applicants should do a bit of research first and get an idea of what we sell. It’s also good to make a follow-up phone call or visit telling us why they want to work for us.”



For more information about PEI jobs in tourism, visit www.choosetourism.ca

Check out the national site at www.discovertourism.ca

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Careers in tourism on PEI



Barry Nicholson has worked at **New Glasgow Lobster Suppers** for the past 28 years. “I’ve done almost every job in the restaurant,” says Barry. “I started out washing dishes, and I’ve cut lobster, bartended, hosted, been a cashier, and worked in the kitchen. Now I’m the Vice President of Operations for the restaurant.”



Cruise Manada is in its 24th year of operation. **Amanda Purchase** and her husband bought the business from her father and mother five years ago. Amanda is a graduate of the Travel and Tourism program. She is also a home-based Outside Leisure Travel Agent with CWT Harvey’s Travel. She has expanded her tourism business to include a gift shop and bicycle rentals on the Montague waterfront. “I love working in tourism,” says Amanda. “I love the people, and the job is different every day and with every cruise.”