

## **Laid off**

**Dear Ana**

**I've worked in general labour with many years of experience in welding, and I just lost my job in the new year. I thought that I would be able to get a job really fast. However, that has not been the case because now I need to be certified as a welder. Everywhere I go employers are asking for certification, which I don't have. I have been talking to friends who have told me that while I am on Employment Insurance I can get training and update my skills. I would like to talk to someone, who can give me some direction as to how I could get my welding certificates.**

**Thank you.**

**Tom A.**

**Hi Tom,**

**Thank you for your question. In the world of work, credentials such as certificates, licences, diplomas etc. are important, because the world of work is very competitive and employers want to be sure that their employees are up to date on their skills, and as you have found out, not having those credential does make a difference. Mind you there are always some exceptions.**

**You have indicated that you would like to get your welding certificate. While you are on EI (Employment Insurance), you are eligible to apply for training (Skills Development), but you have to meet certain criteria; therefore, you need to see an employment counsellor at any of the Assessment Centres across the city. You will be given an appointment to meet with an employment counsellor and the counsellor will begin a process that is called The Common Assessment.**

**During the Common Assessment, you will discuss your situation with the counsellor, particularly your work history, your employment goal, your training goal, your current skills set, any barriers to employment you may have, your career goals, job search strategies and the best course of action for you to take to get back into the work force.**

**The counsellor will explain the Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) guidelines and process. Financial issues will be addressed as well. Options will be discussed and presented to you, based on the Assessment. You and the counsellor will develop an Employment Action Plan which will include the necessary steps and options to assist you to get back into the work force. You will find a list of Assessment Centres in the Blue Pages of the telephone book.**

**Remember that while you are receiving Employment Insurance (EI), you cannot attend full time courses or school programs unless approved by HRDC; otherwise, your EI claim will be terminated. If you are seriously considering taking a course or training, I recommend that you start this process as soon as possible by making an appointment with an employment counsellor. I hope that the information has been helpful.**

**All the best to you.**

**Ana.**

**February 2003**