



# Employee training is the way to embrace change

It's been said that the only constant in our lives is change. In broadcasting, change is happening at a rapid pace. With the digital revolution, traditional understandings of how the media is used are no longer true, forcing all broadcasters to re-think the business.

Employees, too, have come to realize that they need to constantly update their skills to meet the coming challenges. A clear win-win opportunity exists at TVO, where employees wish to acquire new skills and seek new challenges and the employer needs to maintain the talents and creativity of existing staff. To take advantage of the opportunity, TVO management must be willing to invest in developing the skills of employees.

We can no longer pay lip service to the value of training and professional development. There must be a real partnership with employees, a real financial commitment and a real plan that ensures training, not just for the work performed today but also for the work that will need to be performed tomorrow. The Guild will be seeking such a partnership when we return to the bargaining table this Fall.

We believe that training is, for all intents and purposes, a job security clause. The better trained an employee is, the more valuable she/he is to the employer.

The Guild will be proposing a joint training committee to review training plans and ensure that all employees are given the opportunity to benefit from available courses, mentorship and skills development opportunities.

We will seek training that will allow employees to take full advantage of the introduction of new technologies and platforms into the workplace, as well as opportunities to grow in

their careers. We are prepared to put our energies and good faith into this enterprise. We know employees are prepared to do their part.

Training and professional development also has to be coupled with a strong performance management system that lets employees know where they stand in the organization and what is expected of them. They want direction, leadership and feedback. A positive performance management system that creates an open dialogue is, in our view, the best way to achieve the goals of both employee and employer.

We will also be seeking the creation of an on-line "Skills Inventory" that will allow TVO employees to keep an ongoing record of their skills and training, a sort of live resume. The skills inventory would also allow TVO to see at a glance the tremendous array of skills possessed by existing employees when it is making assignment and job decisions.

In the strategic review document "Reaching Beyond" TVO management says it seeks to, "Build a culture of learning, sharing and collaboration, risk taking and innovation." To achieve that goal, there must be a firm commitment to employee training and professional development. We should expect no less.

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*This is the third in a series of discussion papers designed to encourage discussion among Guild members on key workplace issues. We welcome your thoughts and ideas. Contact Guild senior staff representative Dan Oldfield (dan@cmg.ca) at 416-591-5333 or TVO Branch president Carol Burtin Fripp.*