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PROVINCE TO SUPPLY ADDITIONAL ONTARIO-MADE MASKS

SCARBOROUGH — The Ontario government is continuing to take steps to create a reliable, high-quality supply of locally made surgical masks to help protect workers in the public sector from the risk of COVID-19 and other illnesses. The province recently signed contracts with Viva Healthcare Packaging and Canada Masq to supply 500 million made-in-Ontario level 1 and level 2 surgical/protective masks over the next five years.

Following a competitive process, the two companies are producing approximately 50 million masks per year over the next five years:

Viva Healthcare Packaging Canada, operating in Scarborough, used a grant from the Ontario Together Fund to retool their operations to increase their mask-making capacity. Becoming one of Canada's largest manufacturers of medical-grade masks has led to the creation of 115 new jobs in the local community.

Canada Masq, based in Richmond Hill, answered the government's call in the early days of the pandemic for entrepreneurs to create locally-made masks. Early planning of their business started in April 2020, and mass production of masks began in December, adding 58 full-time jobs for the community.

"Ontario manufacturers have a central role to play in our self-sufficiency as a province, not only as we continue to fight COVID-19, but over the years that follow," said Ross Romano, Minister of Government and Consumer Services. "By bringing more Ontario suppliers on board and centralizing procurement, we will ensure healthcare workers always have a steady supply of PPE and that we will never need to rely on another jurisdiction again to keep Ontarians safe."

The government's contracts with Viva Healthcare and Canada Masq are in addition to those previously announced with 3M Canada and PRIMED. These contracts and more will be overseen centrally by Supply Ontario in the future as the agency continues to be stood up.

Quick Facts

The masks have been tested to meet the standards of the American Society for Testing Materials (ASTM).

Viva Healthcare Packaging Canada makes nearly 1 million masks per day

Canada Masq makes up to 600,000 masks per day

Procurement of PPE will be one of the first responsibilities to be transferred from the ministry to Supply Ontario, the government's new centralized procurement agency.

"Ontario is the economic engine of Canada, and our skilled workforce and world-class manufacturing sector can make the emergency supplies right here at home while creating good jobs and contributing to our economic recovery. Because of innovative companies like Viva Healthcare and Canada Masq, our province will be well-equipped with a reliable domestic supply of PPE and other critical supplies to get us through this pandemic and ensure our preparedness for any future challenges." Vic Fedeli

Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade

"I'm thrilled that Viva Healthcare Packaging will be providing masks to help protect the people of Ontario from COVID-19, meeting the needs of the healthcare and public sector workers. This initiative is another step in making the province self-sufficient through a reliable, high-quality domestic supply of surgical masks." Raymond Cho MPP Scarborough North

"Our government wants to ensure that health care professionals and frontline workers have the PPE they need to stay safe while doing their critical work. This is an Ontario-made solution that will make sure that we are no longer dependant on unreliable global supply chains while creating good jobs and protecting people across the province." Daisy Wai MPP for Richmond Hill



THE JOB OF YOUR COVER LETTER'S SECOND PARAGRAPH IS TO PERSUADE

By Nick Kossovan

Job hunting is a selling process. Those who embrace this job search truism shorten their job search.

There are two basic selling processes:

- Transactional
- Solution-based

In transactional selling, the salesperson has limited options. Basically, they're offering an inventory of products from a catalogue and negotiating a price (usually based on volume), payment, and delivery. Solution-based selling is more complicated. In a solution-based selling scenario the seller focuses on a specific issue or problem the customer faces and suggests corresponding services or products to solve that issue and customizes their offering accordingly.

Applying to a job posting, or a job opportunity you uncovered through networking, is comparable to solution-based selling. Keep this in mind as you write the second paragraph of your cover letter.

After telling the reader, in the opening paragraph of your cover letter, you're the ideal candidate for the job, you must prove it; otherwise, your first paragraph was just your opinion. As I've mentioned in an earlier column, employers don't hire opinions; they hire results.

The second paragraph is your sales pitch. Here's where you show the hiring manager you're a good fit for the position. This is done by choosing 3 - 6 experiences/skills/traits that connect your accomplishments with the job posting's job requirements. Remember, numbers and metrics are essential to making your "sales pitch" persuasive.

Here's an example:

For the past 8 years, I've managed Bravo Pizza's Western Canada sales territory. I increased sales by 260% during that time, averaging \$48,000 in sales every day, translating into approximately 12,000 pizzas/daily. This achievement required my making daily cold calls to sign on over 345 new grocery stores to carry Bravo Pizza's line of frozen pizzas. I also implemented retargeting sales campaigns using Facebook Pixel and other data tracking technologies. As well, I created 10+ cold email templates that were adopted as a company standard. The bottom line is this: I'm able to hit the ground running and becoming a part of increasing Pumpkin Desserts' revenue.

While this paragraph will do the job personally, I prefer bullet points. Using bullet points would redesign the above example to read as follows:

In reference to your requirements outlined in the Marketing Analyst job ad description, I can offer Pumpkin Desserts:

- Over 8 years of sales territory management for Bravo Pizza, a nationwide frozen food company.
- Increased sales from \$6.8 million annually to \$17.8, a 260% increase. (\$48,000 in daily sales, which is approx. 12,000 pizzas)
- Implemented retargeting sales campaigns using Facebook Pixel and other data tracking technologies.
- Created 10+ cold email templates that are now used company wide.

The bottom line is this: I'm able to hit the ground running and become a part of increasing Pumpkin Desserts' revenue.

Which example is more readable (skimmable)? Bullets direct the reader to important information, information that can persuade them to read your resume, and that you might be worth their time to interview.

Don't restate everything that's on your resume. Cherry-pick experiences that make you a good fit for the position - make connections between what the employer is looking for and what you have to offer.

Last week, I suggested you create a list of 5 - 6 quantified reasons (the more, the better) why an employer should hire you. Such a list will make it easy to fill in the bullet points to customize your cover letter. Hence, your achievements will be relevant to the position.

What makes me especially fond of using bullet points is its flexibility to add additional experiences/skills/traits without creating an overly enormous awkward paragraph. Appropriate additions will further increase your odds of your resume being read and receiving a call for an interview.

For example, could add one of the following:

- McMaster University (DeGroote School of Business) - Bachelor of Commerce (2008).
- Sit on the Canada Food Council Advisory board since 2016.
- Fluently bilingual. (English, French)
- Local Toastmasters (The North Toastmasters, Toronto, ON) club officer since 2013.
- University of Waterloo - Sales and Marketing Fundamentals Certificate (2015).

To keep your cover letter concise, don't exceed 6 bullet points.

Next week's column will discuss writing the third paragraph of your cover letter, a call to action. A call to action is an intricate part of the selling process.

Nick Kossovan, a well-seasoned veteran of the corporate landscape, offers advice on searching for a job. You can send him your questions at artoffindingwork@gmail.com.

Remember, the reader will not be re-qualified, why an employer should hire you. Nick Kossovan, a well-seasoned veteran of the corporate landscape, offers advice on searching for a job. You can send him your questions at artoffindingwork@gmail.com

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