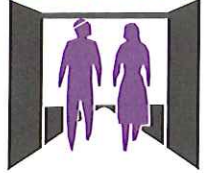


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Katie Vyse: Adapting to a Fast Paced Environment

By L.M. VanEvery



In 2007, Katie Vyse, 22, graduated from Cayuga Secondary School and decided to take a year away from school to experience a working environment. She got a job at a local eatery while she decided what she wanted to do next. Earning a minimum wage, Katie decided to continue with her education.

She enrolled in a one-year Aboriginal general arts and sciences program at Mohawk College. During that year, Katie experienced the vast difference that exists between high school and college. "I learned it's more responsibility when you go to college," she says. "You need to be more independent." Katie completed the course but felt she wasn't ready to continue on with college. She got a job at another local eatery but soon discovered she couldn't adapt to the odd hours she had to work. Willing to gain more

work experience, Katie saw an employment opportunity for a receptionist advertised in the newspaper. She decided to apply.

After an interview with Erin Monture at the Ogwehonweh Skills and Trades Training Centre (OSTTC), Katie began work as the receptionist for the centre in March of this year. "I learn something new on the computer every day," she says. However, there are challenges with her position. Learning time management and meeting deadlines for reports are the most challenging for her. "It's teaching me to be organized," she says.

The best part of working at OSTTC is meeting new people. Being on the front line for the centre, Katie is constantly polishing her people skills. "I'm starting to be more talkative around people," she says. Katie is responsible for the administrative duties for seven classes currently being held at the centre. "I like accomplishing the work that's handed to me," she says. "And I like doing something with my life." Katie admits that her job at OSTTC reminds her of college. Seeing the students every day has inspired her. "It's made me realize I should go back to school too," she says.

At the end of her contract, Katie plans to return to Mohawk College to study travel and tourism. "Ever since I was a little girl, I wanted to travel the world and meet new people," she says. Places she'd like to visit include the Bahamas, Europe and Alaska. She eventually wants to work on cruise ships at either British Columbia or Florida.

Katie admits that taking a year away from her education after high school may not be a beneficial decision for every one. She soon realized her earning potential without a post secondary education. Katie credits the general arts and science program in college with helping her decide what she may want to do for a career. Also, her job at the OSTTC has allowed her to learn more about herself and what kind of work she'd enjoy. "It's better to stay in school because you can learn more every day," she says. "The more educated you are, the more opportunities you'll have."

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