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Pride Perseverance Possibilities



# GDI Communicator

*The GDI Communicator is an internal newsletter intended to increase communication between management and staff of the Gabriel Dumont Institute of Native Studies and Applied Research*

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## Tips on How to Be More Effective at Work and in Life

By Jim Edmondson

The first part of this article appeared in the May 2016 *GDI Communicator*. In this second and final instalment, I discuss three key skills that could enable us to be more effective both at the workplace and at our homes.

### Time Management

Probably the most crucial thing that you can do to become more effective at work and in your life is to learn how to manage your time. Without this skill, your days will feel like a frantic race, with every project, email, and phone call competing for your attention.

Start by looking at your daily schedule. Do you know how you spend your time daily? If not, try using an "activity log" to analyze how much time you are devoting to various tasks, like meetings, email, and phone calls. It can be an eye-opening experience to look at this objectively, especially if you discover that you're spending much time on tasks that don't help you meet your goals. Once you know how much time you're devoting to different tasks, try to prioritize the tasks and act on them accordingly.

To keep track of it all, try utilizing an organizing tool like a To-do List, or an Outlook calendar on your computer, to make sure you don't forget vital tasks and commitments.

Being effective at work means you use time to your advantage. Schedule your highest value work for the times of day when you're feeling the most energetic, if possible. This increases the likelihood that you'll resist distractions and enter a state of flow when working.

Goal setting is another important element in working productively. You should have a clear sense of your job description. This will allow you to set short and long-term goals. Such goals act as a roadmap – after all, you'll never get anywhere if you don't know where you're going!

Good organization is also critically important to being productive. If you're disorganized, you can waste time just looking for lost items. Tips for getting yourself organized include learning how to file properly; minimizing clutter on your workspace, and creating an effective schedule.

### Communication Skills

Think about how often we communicate with others every day. We make phone calls, attend meetings, write email, give presentations, talk to clients/students or colleagues, and so on. Good communication skills are, therefore, essential,

especially when your goal is to work more effectively.

Active listening is a key aspect of effective communication. It involves making a concerted effort to really hear and understand what other people are saying. Having a thorough understanding of what has been said will alleviate some of the issues that occur when messages are exchanged. Don't let yourself become distracted by what's going on around you, and don't plan out what you're going to say next, while the other person is talking. Instead, just listen to what they're saying. You may well be surprised at how much miscommunication can be avoided simply by listening actively.

Many of us use written communication quite often. There are various techniques that can enable us to have an effective written communication. For instance, always try to keep to one main topic when writing an email. Including several key topics in one message will sometimes make it difficult for the reader to prioritize and sort the information. Should you wish to include several different points, then number them sequentially, or split them into separate messages, with relevant subject headings.

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Reserve your Campsite!

### Welcome Back to Batoche!

This year's festival runs July 14th - 17th, 2016 at the Batoche Métis Cultural Grounds. More information is available at <http://batochefestival.ca/>

## ABE Level 3 Students Get Food Safe Certificates

By Bonnie Hrycuik

It is our mission at Dumont Technical Institute (DTI) to promote the renewal and development of Métis culture. One way of doing this in our ABE Level 3 class in Saskatoon is by incorporating hands-on Métis cultural activities into our classes.

This month, our students had the opportunity to participate in a Food Safety Course at CHEP Good Food Inc. - a Saskatoon-based organization that works with children, families and communities to improve access to healthy food and promote food security.

All the participants completed the training and received a Food Safe Certificate.

ABE Level 3 Instructor Cindy LaPlante then worked with the students to enable them put their skills to use, creating a menu to prepare meals for internal meetings held at GDI. The students prepared traditional stews and soups, and bannock and fed their fellow students, staff, and loved ones.

For example, Tina made bannock and gave it to her mother-in-law with a sense of pride; while Rachelle shared

the recipes with her mother and was excited to pass on what she learned to her family. The students will leave DTI with these skills and incorporate them into their own dining tables.

We thank CHEP for inviting our students to gain the knowledge, skills, and certification to use in their everyday lives, and perhaps, gain future employment. We would also like to extend a huge appreciation to Cindy LaPlante for sharing her family recipes and enthusiasm for Métis Culture with our students. 🌐

## GDI Graduates May Benefit from First Home Program

By James Oloo

As a student, you probably asked yourself, or heard others asking: "How is this stuff relevant, why do we have to learn this? When am I ever going to use this?" The reason being that, many of us do not want to learn just for learning's sake. That is, 'we' expect education to serve an ulterior purpose and be directed toward clear goals.

Often, the goals include getting a well-paying job, being able to buy a house, vehicle, and take care of one's family. The benefits of education are also societal. Saskatchewan benefits when Gabriel Dumont Institute students and clients graduate then stay in the province.

Between 2013 and 2015, 84 Indigenous teachers graduated with bachelor of education degrees from the Saskatchewan Urban Native Teacher Education Program (SUNTEP). Another 428 graduated from Dumont Technical Institute skills

training programs. Hundreds of Gabriel Dumont Institute Training and Employment-sponsored clients across Saskatchewan also successfully completed their training and educational programs.

In 2008, the Government of Saskatchewan introduced a Graduate Retention Program (GRP). The GRP, which is a financial incentive for post-secondary graduates who choose to stay and work in Saskatchewan, provides income tax credits of up to \$20,000. Recently, the government expanded the GRP to allow those who are eligible to use their credit to buy their first home. Under the GRP First Home Program, qualified graduates can use up to \$10,000 of their benefits toward the down payment on the purchase of a first home.

Myra Kirk, a Métis woman in Saskatoon whose son previously received funding from Gabriel Dumont Institute,

noted that as a realtor, she has realized that many Métis graduates who may be eligible for the GRP First Home Program are unaware of the government incentive. Myra is willing to provide a free consultation to help Institute students, clients, and graduates better understand the program and how they may benefit from it. "When you help people to become independent, help build self-esteem and respect, you are making the world a better place. We are all so connected," she says.

Myra is an active member of her community and a recipient of several awards including the 2012 Saskatchewan Sport Dedicated Female Coach of the Year, and 3M Innovative Coaching Award. She is a committee member of the annual living with mental illness conference, and a registered member of Métis Local 165. You may contact Myra directly at [myra@myrakirk.com](mailto:myra@myrakirk.com), by cell (306) 220-7811, or webpage <http://myrakirk.com>. 🌐



Edwin St. Pierre  
Métis Veteran, Canadian Forces  
Photo from GDI Archives.



## Jennifer-Lynn Fiddler: A Success Story

By Wendy Weeks and James Oloo

It is that time of the year when we celebrate the graduation of our students and clients who, after hard work and perseverance, get to cross the stage and receive their diplomas amid cheers and applause from loved ones and well-wishers. While media reports often highlight numbers of students who graduate, beyond the numbers are faces and personal stories of lived experiences.

On June 6, 2016, Jennifer-Lynn Fiddler, a GDI Training and Employment-funded client, graduated with a Business certificate from North West College in North Battleford. When asked why she decided to pursue post-secondary education, Jennifer-Lynn noted that "I wanted to further myself. High school diploma is only for basic careers. I wanted a better future for myself." She continues, "I already knew what I wanted prior to going through GDI Training and Employment for funding. Plus, Wendy Weeks (employment counsellor) clearly explained to me what the program entailed and allowed me to understand what I was getting into."

Jennifer-Lynn's goal is to become a certified accountant. "Working with numbers has always been an interest of mine. With my attention to detail, accounting makes for an excellent career choice." She points out that "I got into the program to have a better future. I am on my way!"

Jennifer-Lynn, who expressed her appreciation to Gabriel Dumont Institute

and Wendy Weeks, was among the top of her class and was chosen to give the student address at the graduation ceremony. Below is an excerpt from her speech.

"What a year it has been, but here we are, ready to graduate. When I decided to go back to school, I never imagined that it would bring me here, speaking to all of you. We worked hard to get to this point, but we didn't do it by ourselves. We owe a huge debt of gratitude to our families, instructors, sponsors, and North West College, for without their support and encouragement we would not have made it this far.

When I was young, I went through a few very tough years where many things happened that had a very negative impact on my outlook at life and learning. It took me a long time to realize and work through the effects these events had on me, but long story short, I became afraid; afraid of the future, afraid of the unknown. To those who know me, it may come as a surprise that I am very shy and insecure, but I learned to shield those fears, doubts and insecurities with a larger than life attitude. I virtually retreated from life, the world, and from reality, and there I stayed safe and secure.

Until a year ago, I was content to remain this way. When I made the decision to join this program, I had no idea of the monumental impact it would have on my life. When I sat in that classroom for the first time, I could feel the passion and drive for learning. My first week, I became driven by that same passion to learn, and I

realized this is a classroom for adults; everyone is equal, and I am in charge of what I do.

Looking back, I can probably pin down the point where my drive to succeed in school started to dwindle. My fears, doubts, and insecurities drove my love for learning into the ground and kept it there for years. I failed Grade 12; and convinced myself that my life was going nowhere. I knew I was stuck in a rut unless I could go back to school and complete high school.

I then returned Wesmor Public High School in Prince Albert and earned my Grade 12. After that, I got a job as a cashier and was content to work there for the rest of my life because I was afraid of trying something different. I doubted my ability to reach out and grab what I wanted for myself. I thought, "Who am I to dare?" I lacked the confidence to see a better future for myself.

But then ... I dared and here I am. Today, I want to let you know that if you don't dare to do better; if you don't strive for your dreams, the future you want will be hard to find. The certificate in business program has not only taught me business, accounting, and economics, but it has also enabled me to become more aware internal strength, perseverance, and confidence. It has given me the courage to expand my horizons. I went into this class lost, purposeless, alone, and afraid. I now appear before you confident, self-assured, and driven for a future I can finally see with both eyes open.

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### The Month of June in History

In June 2011, Finance Director Cory McDougall announces that the amount of scholarships awarded by the Gabriel Dumont Scholarship Foundation to Métis students since its inception in 1986 surpasses \$1 million.

On June 29, 2011, Gabriel Dumont Institute and Human Resources and Skills Development Canada launch the GDI Aboriginal Apprenticeship Initiative under the federal Skills and Partnership Fund at the Saskatoon Indian and Métis Friendship Centre. The Institute and the Saskatoon Health Region also announced the GDI-Saskatoon Health Region Scholarship.

In June 2012, Lorraine Amiotte, Saskatchewan Urban Native Teacher Education Program (SUNTEP) coordinator and the longest serving Gabriel Dumont Institute employee, retires after 29 years with the Institute.





Wendy Weeks, Employment Counselor, GDI Training and Employment, (r) and her client Jennifer-Lynn Fiddler. Photo courtesy of W. Weeks.

## Tips on Being More Effective at Work ... *continued from Page 1*

Other forms of written communication include texts, reports, and presentations. You'll be more effective in your role if you learn how to communicate better across all these media.

### Dealing with Stress

A little bit of pressure can be a good thing. However, too much pressure can affect your health, productivity, and your ability to make rational decisions. Yet, no matter what you do, you'll likely experience stress in any workplace. Being able to manage stress is, therefore, a key factor in becoming more effective at work. Try to get a good night's sleep every night, and do your best to avoid taking work home with you.

If you're not sure what triggers your stress, it may be beneficial to keep a stress diary for a week or two. By writing down the preceding event or what task you were performing just prior to or at the time you experienced stress or perceived stress, will help you to identify the events that cause

## IT Update

By Gareth Griffiths

In May 2016, 48 new Work Orders were received into Track-IT. Of these, 45 are now closed (94% completion rate). Overall, we closed 67 Work Orders in the month. There are currently 40 open Work Orders. Email [support@gdins.org](mailto:support@gdins.org) or call any member of the IT Team if you have an IT-related question.

## Jennifer-Lynn Fiddler ... *continued from Page 2*

I let my fears hold me back for too long and I am finally breaking free from the invisible shackles that held me down. Each and every one of you has the capacity to do the same. Be

you stress, and understand the degree to which you experience it. When you're feeling calm, you can then analyze these triggers and come up with effective strategies for managing them.

### Career Development

No matter what your field is, it's important that you keep learning and developing your skills. Begin by conducting a personal SWOT analysis to identify the areas that you need to work on. A SWOT is a tool that helps you identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. For more information, please click <http://www.forbes.com/sites/lisaquast/2013/04/15/how-to-conduct-a-personal-s-w-o-t-analysis/#4581448b6047>

In addition to the technical skills required to do your job, you also need to focus on soft skills. These include leadership skills, problem solving techniques, emotional intelligence, and creative thinking. Anything you can do to enhance these skills will pay off in the workplace.

A new worrying trend in the world of viruses has recently been experienced. This is ransomware; a type of malware (malicious software) that can be covertly installed on a computer without knowledge or intention of the user. Ransomware restricts access to the infected computer and demands

Also, consider if there are any qualifications that you don't have that a reasonable person would consider appropriate for your field. If so, could this be holding you back from an advancement or promotion? Are you lacking any specific skills? In some roles, keeping up-to-date with developments in your industry helps you stay relevant.

### Final Points

When we are 'truly' effective at work, we manage our time well, we communicate clearly, and we have a good attitude. Effective workers are often the most productive in their workplaces. Start by doing a job analysis to discover what your role is really about. Next, learn how to better manage your time, communicate more effectively, and control any stress as much as possible. Consider further learning and career development. You never know how or when those new skills will pay off!



that a ransom be paid before the restriction is removed. Recently, University of Calgary announced that it paid a ransom after being hit by ransomware. Gabriel Dumont Institute has procedures in place to combat such an attack.

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Congratulations Jennifer-Lynn! Best wishes as you prepare to return to school in the fall for further studies towards your diploma in business. 🌐



Apprenticeship Stats, June:  
281 employer contracts signed with 158 unique employers in 24 different trades.

264 apprenticeship jobs filled.  
94 clients indentured.  
67 indentured clients have completed technical training  
- We are on track towards meeting and/ or surpassing all the targets



# IT Update ... Continued from Page 4

A common method of malware attack is via email. We urge all employees to be vigilant. If you receive emails with attachments that look suspicious, please inform IT immediately and don't open the attachment or click on a link.

## Backups

The rolling out of the Institute's new backup strategy is ongoing. The strategy incorporates backup devices from a company called Datto. These devices backup automatically onsite first, then synchronize to an offsite data location in Canada (to the cloud, as they say). There are some neat benefits to these. For example, in the event of a

server failure, the backed up image can be run virtually from the device itself, meaning minimal disruption to server processes. If running from the local device is not possible, the offsite image can be loaded remotely, or exported to virtual files to be loaded on a VMWare Server in another location. The system may also be restored using a USB disk.

Please note that backups are important in ensuring that no data is lost. Any data stored outside of the shared drives (H:, S:, P:, etc.) is at risk of not being backed up. Please talk to IT regarding your backup options and what we can do to help you.

## Website

Overall, there were 27,197 page views over 8,040 sessions (62% of there were new visitors) in May 2016. The website homepage saw 4,813 page views (3,933 unique page views). Some highlights of activity include: 18% of visitors to the home page, 29% clicked on What We Offer, 12% searched for information, and 12% scrolled through the News and Events sections.

## Social Media Summary

The following is a summary of statistics from the Institute social media channels in May 2016.

Facebook: Total number of people liking the page grew by 31 to 1,425. The total

engagements (that is, the number of links clicked, likes, or comments) was 1,687. Total reach of posts (number of people that saw a post in their feed) was 23,990 with 45,823 impressions (number of times a GDI page appeared in others' news feeds). The most popular post was the Security Officer Program ad for Buffalo Narrows, reaching 5,489 people with 683 post clicks, and 165 Likes, comments and shares.

Twitter: 42 tweets earned 28,500 impressions. We had 31 new followers, 41 mentions, and 928 profile visits. We currently have 720 followers.

## Closing Thought

There's a band called 1023MB. They don't have any gigs yet.



# Payroll Cutoff Calendar, July 2016

By Carmala Thiessen and Veronica Verzonowski

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2
					Canada Day Stat Holiday	
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
		Cutoff @ 3:00 for Stop Payments on Student July 8 Direct Deposits		Accounts Payable Cheque Run	Student Payday Cutoff @ 4:30 for A/c Payable Invoices	
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
	Cutoff @ 4:30 for TMS & Payroll Revisions for July 15 Payday Cutoff @ 4:30 for July 22 Student Payroll			Accounts Payable Cheque Run	Staff Payday Cutoff @ 4:30 for A/c Payable Invoices	
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
		Cutoff @ 3:00 for Stop Payments on Student July 22 Direct Deposits		Accounts Payable Cheque Run	Student Payday Cutoff @ 4:30 for A/c Payable Invoices	
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
	Cutoff @ 4:30 for TMS & Payroll Revisions for July 29 Payday Cutoff @ 4:30 for Aug 5 Student Payroll			Accounts Payable Cheque Run	Staff Payday Cutoff @ 4:30 for A/c Payable Invoices	
31						

MRTS due by the 15th of every month, and Employee contracts are due prior to payroll cutoff date.



## Gabriel Dumont Institute/Dumont Technical Institute

917 22<sup>nd</sup> Street West  
Saskatoon, SK  
S7M 0R9

PHONE:  
(306) 242-6070

FAX:  
(306) 242-0002

E-MAIL:  
[general@gdi.gdins.org](mailto:general@gdi.gdins.org)

Visit us at  
[www.gdins.org](http://www.gdins.org)

Back issues of this newsletter  
can be obtained at:

[www.metismuseum.ca/browse/  
index.php/833](http://www.metismuseum.ca/browse/index.php/833)

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@gdins\_org



**GABRIEL DUMONT INSTITUTE**  
of Native Studies and Applied Research

## GDI Locations

### GDI Central Office Saskatoon

917 22nd Street West  
Saskatoon, SK S7M 0R9  
Phone: (306) 242-6070  
Fax: (306) 242-0002

### GDI Publishing Saskatoon

2—604 22nd Street West  
Saskatoon SK S7M 5W1  
Phone: (306) 934-4941  
Fax: (306) 244-0252

### GDI Finance and Operations

917 22nd Street West  
Saskatoon, SK S7M 0R9  
Phone: (306) 242-6070  
Fax: (306) 975-0903

### DTI Central Office Saskatoon

917 22nd Street West  
Saskatoon, SK S7M 0R9  
Phone: (306) 242-6070  
Fax: (306) 242-0002

Toll Free (DTI):  
1-877-488-6888

### SUNTEP Prince Albert

48 12th Street East  
Prince Albert, SK  
S6V 1B2  
Phone: (306) 764-1797  
Fax: (306) 764-3995

### SUNTEP Saskatoon

Room 7 McLean Hall  
University of  
Saskatchewan  
106 Wiggins Road  
Saskatoon, SK S7N 5E6  
Phone: (306) 975-7095  
Fax: (306) 975-1108

### SUNTEP Regina

Room 227 College West  
University of Regina  
3737 Wascana Parkway  
Regina, S4S 0A2  
Phone: (306) 347-4110

### GDI Training and Employment Central Office

917 22nd Street West  
Saskatoon, SK S7M 0R9  
Phone: (306) 242-6070  
Fax: (306) 683-3508

Toll Free (T&E):  
1-877-488-6888  
Fax: (306) 347-4119

### GDI Library Regina

Room 218 College West  
University of Regina  
3737 Wascana Parkway  
Regina, S4S 0A2  
Phone: (306) 347-4124  
Fax: (306) 565-0809

<http://gdi.voyager.uregina.ca/>

### GDI Library Prince Albert

48 12th Street East  
Prince Albert, SK  
S6V 1B2  
Phone: (306) 922-6466  
Fax: (306) 763-4834



#### GDI Mission:

*To promote the renewal and the development of Métis culture through research, materials development, collection and the distribution of those materials and the development and delivery of Métis-specific educational programs and services.*



**GABRIEL DUMONT INSTITUTE**  
of Native Studies and Applied Research