



Chalk Talk

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Letter from the Editor

Dear Educators,



Last season, CBC's hit series about an elementary school teacher, 'Mr. D', played by comedian Gerry Dee, featured an episode on

Career Day. Competitive in nature, Mr. D can't resist trying to 'beat' one of his fellow educators who has booked a former student at the school who has since become a famous NHL player to speak at the school. Though Mr. D is a procrastinator, he is resourceful and manages to secure a banking specialist. When that individual must cancel at the last minute, Mr. D turns to his best friend, a bartender, to save him with a presentation to his senior elementary class. Hilarity and disaster ensue when the school Vice-Principal arrives just in time to see Mr. D's bartender friend teaching the students how to mix a gin and tonic. This episode is a good example of how not to conduct a Career Day.

One of the hardest things to imagine when you are young is how you intend to make a living. When I was a kid, it was common for Career Day to consist of presentations made by students' parents. Often it seemed abstract and a long time away. By high school, Job Fairs became more popular. Teachers and guidance counselors became key to identifying careers that you were interested in and suited for, and to learning about the curriculum requirements you would need in order to pursue a certain career path. It becomes clear to an enthusiastic 15 year old that in order to be an astrophysicist, it will be necessary to excel at Physics and Calculus, or that an aspiring journalist needs to acquire excellent communications skills and to gain broad-based knowledge. Making career choices and preparing for the future are arguably the most crucial tasks for any student but also the most difficult. It is useful for young people to hear first-hand from adults who are already working in a variety of fields in order to learn what it's like and to explore the potential of different industries to provide a fulfilling career.

This week's issue features a new resource that will spark discussion in the classroom about choosing a career path and in-class presentations that can be useful. CoEd Communications is dedicated to supporting the important work of teachers by providing classroom resources on a range of topics. Please visit www.4edu.ca to view the many free resources available.

[Your feedback is welcome!](#)

Mary Kovack

Students can make the right Career Decisions

Insurance affects virtually everything we do in life and in business and because it is all around us, the industry has a wide variety of careers to match the ambitions and interests of just about any student with the flexibility to change directions along the way.

The Insurance Institute's **Career Connections** program makes it as easy as possible for teachers to bring the real world into the classroom and to help students find their place in the insurance sector. The Insurance Institute works on behalf of the property and casualty insurance industry representing those who help manage home, auto and business risks. As one educator to another, its aim is to build a better understanding of insurance among tomorrow's consumers and to promote career opportunities in this little-known industry – as there are many opportunities currently and forecasted, given the changing demographics of those employed in the industry. It's relevant and timely to introduce insurance concepts and careers to high school students just as they are about to earn their driver's license, or leave home, or start a business or do some career exploration.

Educators are invited to visit the **Career Connections Web site** at www.career-connections.info to review a variety of career development tools available on-line. Simply go to the **'Teachers'** section to view an 8-minute career video, read on-line career profiles and watch the short video clips for the 9 roles in insurance that are identified. You can **order a FREE 'Careers in Insurance' teachers' kit (shown, right)** to lead the lesson, show the career video, and hand-out career information to your students.



Career Talks by Industry Professionals

Request a classroom presentation provided by an industry professional, 'ambassadors', who can present the career video and their education and career journeys to your students. (Please note that though there are a number of Ambassadors throughout the country, it is possible there may not be an Ambassador in your region.) For more information and to book an Ambassador, visit www.career-connections.info.

Recently, the Career Connections team sat down with one of its many invaluable Ambassadors who is putting a face to this vital and stable sector, Alan Mote, CIP, CIB, CRM, and posed a few questions to him about what the Ambassador Program means to him and how a classroom presentation can be very beneficial to students across Canada.



Insurance Institute [Read full interview, below.]



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Alan is a 45 year veteran of the property and casualty insurance industry who understands how important it is to speak directly to high school students as they explore career paths. Having been involved in several roles within the industry, including Underwriting, Brokering, Marketing, Risk Inspection, Business Production, Client Servicing and Management, he is well-qualified to be an “Ambassador” for the industry. He has volunteered with the Insurance Institute’s Career Connections program for 3 years now and participates in its Insurance Panels & Career Fairs (university level), and presents to a high number of Grade 10 Career Studies classes throughout the GTA.

In addition, he has been an instructor with the Insurance Institute and the Insurance Brokers Association of Ontario. Alan looks forward to continuing his work with Career Connections after his upcoming official retirement. Alan answers our questions:

1. The Career Connections Ambassador program involves 350 industry professionals taking part in career events and presenting in classrooms across the country. Why do you think learning about insurance and career options within the insurance industry is important?

The opportunities for great careers in insurance has been a well-kept secret in Canada. Most people, if they think of it at all, might think of insurance careers as a “Sales” job. Greater public awareness, is long overdue, and relevant now, “because our industry is in dire need of intelligent, interested, educated people, and these same people are in dire need of career options.”

2: Being an Ambassador, what would you say is most rewarding about talking to students about the breadth and variety of career opportunities available in the industry?

Definitely the most rewarding moment in every 70 minute Gr. 10 class is that moment when I can see and feel attitude to the entire subject of my session change from initial indifference to genuine interest and participation. (the GOT ‘EM moment!). It generally takes me less than 10 minutes to generate greater interest where there may have little.

3: What are some of the “ah ha” moments you have experienced in the classroom and how has this shaped the way you approach talking about insurance and careers to students?

I have had a lot of “ah ha” moments in the classroom, that is what keeps me encouraged and confident that giving these presentations is helping even if in small ways. I can tell I’ve engaged the students when:

- I sense the “GOT ‘EM” moment referred to above;
- One or two students engage me about a specific issue, or express some doubt;
- I get a particularly relevant and insightful question, sometimes I will bring that student to the front with me to discuss, debate or even argue the point. Insurance is NOT a finite subject; it is constantly evolving, and will continue to evolve as new risks are identified;
- Student(s) want to continue a dialogue after the class ends;
- Students are interested in some general “job-hunting” tips; and
- I receive a proper handshake as well as their given name from each at the end of the class.

4: In a typical classroom presentation, concepts such as risk, loss, ethics, decision making and social responsibility are explored in interactive ways that speak directly to students at their level. What would you say are some of your favourite activities that you facilitate with students during your presentation? Why are these effective tools?

Again, my read of the class in the first 10 minutes will determine how specific I get regarding actual and/or more specific insurance concepts. There are classes that need more specific information to get a grasp on how insurance works and careers within the industry, and there are other classes that may be well suited to more of an informational session giving the basics and the variety of roles. Sometimes I use photos and the Career Connections DVD to communicate visually, and sometimes I can draw from my own experiences, to communicate verbally.

5: Insurance is something we all need, but at times, it is difficult for students to understand how it relates to them. How do you think the Career Connections program and classroom presentations benefits students in demonstrating how insurance works, its role in society and how it impacts virtually everything we do in life and in business?

Awareness is everything, and through the sessions we give and the use of real life examples, plus my own personal experiences, the majority of students pick up the concept of insurance and how it works pretty quick. To me, the important part is to be cognizant, and let them run with it, and to take the conversation where their interests want them to go, to a certain degree. Insurance affects everything in life, so I usually have plenty of reference points, no matter where the conversation leads.

6. What do you love most about working in the Insurance Industry?

Over 45 years, my insurance career has been many things over different periods - too many to elaborate on. In general, it’s been a good run with respectable salary levels for the different jobs I have had, lots of variety, keeping up with changes, learning hundreds of new subject / issues, and with greater experience, evolving into trusted advisor / mentor status.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS — Fall 2012 Conferences & Workshops

The **Insurance Institute of Canada and Career Connections** will be attending a number of teacher conferences across Canada this Fall. Educators are invited to stop by the Career Connections/Curriculum Connections booth display to pick up free teacher resources and find out how the lessons fit into the provincial curricula. At some conferences, Career Connections will also be presenting workshops to demonstrate how these resources help explain the important role insurance plays in our everyday lives and the relevance of how learning about insurance can inform students' future career and life decisions. Here are some of the conferences where you can meet **Career Connections** representatives:

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| • Ontario School Counselors Association (OSCA) | Nov. 4-6 | Doubletree Hotel, Toronto, ON |
| • Science Teachers Association of Ontario (STAO)
<i>Workshop: Forced to Think about Nature</i> | Nov. 15, 16, 17
Nov. 17 | Doubletree Hotel, Toronto, ON |
| • Career Education Society (CES)
<i>Workshop: Careers in Insurance!</i> | Nov. 22 & 23
Nov. 22-23 | Four Seasons, Vancouver, BC |

Visit the Career Connections booth. To check out future conferences, go [on-line](#).

Website of the week

Bring the real world into your classroom

The Insurance Institute's website provides a gateway to many other **free classroom-ready resources** that comprise the Curriculum Connections Program aimed at helping teachers and students build a better understanding of general insurance. Depending on your provincial curriculum, you may also have responsibilities for teaching about character development; making better decisions; personal, social and corporate responsibility; as well as personal and professional ethics.



The Curriculum Connections program offers a number of teachers' resources, for order or download, to help you bring real world examples into the classroom and fulfill your curriculum objectives -- Career Studies, Business, Law, Guidance/Cooperative Education, Family Studies, Health and Physical Education, Life Skills/Management, Geography, Science, Math, Entrepreneurship, and more ...

Please visit the 'Teachers' section at www.career-connections.info for rubrics by subject and province that will demonstrate how these resources can fit with your curriculum.

To order any of these free resources, visit www.career-connections.info.



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