

GOOD AFTERNOON EVERYONE

IT IS A GREAT PLEASURE FOR ME TO BE HERE WITH YOU ALL. I AM HERE TO LET YOU KNOW ABOUT BEING AT MCGILL AS A NEWBIE – A CAREER CULTURE CHANGE SO TO SPEAK.

WHEN I WAS ASKED TO PRESENT BACK IN OCTOBER, I WAS HESITANT AT THE BEGINING, BUT I AGREED DUE TO THE ENCOURAGEMENTOF THE PERSON WHO ASKED AND THE FACT THAT IS WAS TRUE TO LIFE TOPIC.

THINGS ABOUT ME

WHILE YOU DO KNOW A LITTLE ABOUT ME, I WILL ADD THREE ADDITIONAL POINTS :

- 1. I AM A MEMBER OF A MASTERS SWIM TEAM – LETS NOT CONFUSE THAT WITH A MASTER IN TERMS OF MOST EXCELLENT BUT RATHER REFERRING TO ADULT WANNABE COMPETITORS**
- 2. AS A YOUNG UNIVERSITY GRADUATE, I ONCE DROVE OFF FROM A FULL SERVICE GAS STATION, HAVING SETTLED MY BILL AND BEING WAIVED OFF BY THE ATTENDANT, WITH THE PUMP STILL IN THE TANK...**
- 3. I HAVE THREE TEENAGE CHILDREN, ONE OF WHOM IS IN REMISSION FROM LEUKEMIA FOR APPROXIMATELY TWO YEARS NOW**

NEEDLESS TO SAY, WHITOUT GETTING PHILOSOPHICAL, THIS LAST PIECE OF INFORMATION ABOUT ME HAS CHANGED MY OUTLOOK ON LIFE, MY RELATIONSHIPS AND MY PRIORITIES.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO TAKE THINGS IN STRIDE INSTEAD OF LETTING THEM GET THE BETTER OF US AND TO ESTABLISH A HEALTHY BALANCE, RECONCILING WORK AND FAMILY. CAN YOU TELL I AM AN ACCOUNTANT, BALANCING AND RECONCILING THINGS ABOVE AND BEYOND WORK! THAT IS ALL THE ACCOUNTING I WILL TALK ABOUT TODAY, SO DONT WORRY.

DECISION TO LEAVE

DECIDING TO LEAVE MY PREVIOUS EMPLOYMENT IS SOMETHING MANY OF YOU CAN SOMEHOW RELATE TO WHEN YOU TAKE ON DEVELOPMENTAL

ASSIGNMENTS. THERE IS AN EMOTIONAL, DOUBTING AND EXCITING ELEMENT TO SUCH A DECISION. IN MY CASE, TIMING WAS A BIG FACTOR – MY DAUGHTER IS GRADUATING FROM HS, AND MY YOUNGEST ENTERING HS THEY WERE NOT SO DEPENDENT ANYMORE. AND I WAS READY FOR A CHANGE

COMING TO MY FIRST OF THREE INTERVIEWS, I ACUTALLY LOCKED MY KEYS IN MY CAR IN FULL VIEW OF EVERYONE WALKING BY ON SHERBROOKE STREET, LEAVING THEM RIGHT ON THE PASSENGER’S SEAT. FORTUNATELY THE CAR WAS STILL THERE WHEN I CAME OUT. PRIOR TO ACCEPTING THE POSITION, I CONSULTED WITH MY FAMILY – THE PROS AND CONS. THE ONLY CONS REALLY WERE THE TRAVELLING AND THE PARKING. I ACCEPTED AND THEN LEARNT ABOUT THE TUITION BENEFIT. THAT WAS ANOTHER GREAT PERK HAVING THREE CHILDREN AND THE LOOMING RISING COST OF EDUCATION.

CHANGE

MOST OF YOU HAVE BEEN TO A FOREIGN PLACE, NOT NECESSARILY GEOGRAPHICALLY FOREIGN. MAY BE UNFAMILIAR WOULD BETTER CHARACTERIZE THE PLACE OR SITUATION. THERE IS SOMEWHAT OF A SURPRISE ELEMENT. WELL, I DON’T HAVE TO TELL YOU THAT THIS HAS BEEN MY LIFE FOR THE PAST SEVEN MONTHS. WHEN I MENTIONED TO SOMEONE WHO WORKS HERE THAT I WAS COMING TO MCGILL, THE RESPONSE I RECEIVED WAS: WELCOME TO PLANET MCGILL. WHAT IS THAT ALL ABOUT I THOUGHT

PREVIOUSLY I HAD WORKED IN A PRIVATE COMPANY, WHERE EVERYONE KNEW EACH OTHER QUITE WELL AND PRIOR TO THAT IN A LARGE CA FIRM, WHERE I KNEW A LOT OF PEOPLE AND KNEW FEWER QUITE WELL. LARGE IS A RELATIVE TERM WHEN COMING TO MCGILL... THIS WAS QUITE A TRANSITION; HOWEVER AN ENJOYABLE ONE MEETING NEW PEOPLE AND ENCOUNTERING PEOPLE FROM YOUR PAST YOU HAVE NO IDEA ARE AT MCGILL BECAUSE WITH THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE WORKING AT MCGILL, IT IS INEVITABLE THAT YOU KNOW PEOPLE HERE.

BEING A WEST ISLANDER, I AM STILL ATTACHED TO MY CAR. FORTUNATELY, I DRIVE IN QUITE EARLY, AVOIDING TRAFFIC, ALLOWING ME TO SPEND TIME WITH MY BOYS AS I DRIVE THEM TO SCHOOL. I WILL LEAVE OUT EXPLICIT

ABOUT THE DRIVE HOME THOUGH.... AND THEN THERE WAS THE PARKING, BUT I WAS FORTUNATE TO HAVE BEEN TOLD BY A COLLEAGUE ABOUT THE APARTMENT BUILDING NEXT TO OUR DUROCHER BUILDING WHO WOULD GLADLY ACCOMODATE PARKING ONLY TENANTS. ”.

I FELT VERY FORTUNATE TO HAVE RECEIVED THE OFFER OF EMPLOYMENT: DURING MY INTERVEIWS I WAS TOLD THERE WAS VERY LITTLE TURNOVER, THE BENEFITS WERE GREAT AND THAT MCGILL IS A WAY OF LIFE FOR MANY.

TURNOVER & STAFFING

FIRST THE TURNOVER ISSUE: GRANTED THERE MAY BE LITTLE EXTERNAL TURNOVER, I BELIEVE THIS TERM WAS USED A LITTLE LOOSELY. PEOPLE WHO I HAD MET IN FINANCIAL SERVICES ONE WEEK WERE LONG GONE TO ANOTHER UNIT BY WEEK 2. I SOON BECAME AWARE OF THE REVOLVING DOOR AT THE FRONT OF THE DUROCHER BUILDING AND SIGNING NOT ONE BUT SEVERAL EMPLOYMENT LETTERS IS PART OF MY WEEKLY TASKS.

BEING PART OF FINANCIAL SERVICES, I NEVER ANTICIPATED THE AMOUNT OF TIME I WOULD HAVE TO DEVOTE TO STAFFING MATTERS, BE IT FOR DEVELOPMENTAL ASSIGNMENTS, LEAVES, RELOCATIONS, ACCOMODATING WORK FLOWS – AND ALL THE PAPERWORK THAT GOES WITH IT.

MY FIRST WEEK HERE INCLUDED A MEET AND GREET, WHERE I WAS INTRODUCED TO THE 120 OR SO STAFF IN FINANCIAL SERVICES. I REALLY ONLY REMEMBER THE MEN BECAUSE THERE ARE ONLY ON AVERAGE 10 MEN WORKING IN THE UNIT AT ANY GIVEN TIME – THE REMAINDER ARE WOMEN. I THINK THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I THOUGHT WE COULD BE UP FOR A CASE OF REVERSE DISCRIMINATION. BUT I WAS RELIEVED WHEN I NOTICED THIS SAME RATIO IN HR.

I THEN BECAME QUITE CAUTIOUS WHEN SPEAKING TO PEOPLE AND NEVER MENTIONED ANY NAMES IN CONVERSATIONS AS I COULD BE SPEAKING TO THE SPOUSE OF THE SUBJECT OF MY CONVERSATION. I THEN PUT TWO AND TWO TOGETHER LITERALLY – MCGILL IS A WAY OF LIFE FOR MANY COUPLES!

I AM STILL AMAZED AT THE LONG STANDING TENURE OF SOME MCGILLIANS. ADMINISTRATIVE TENURE I AM REFERRING TO. COMING FROM THE CORPORATE WORLD, THESE DAYS, 10 YEARS IS A MILESTONE. HERE AT MCGILL, THIS IS PAR FOR THE COURSE. IN FACT, LIFERS ARE MORE THE NORM. I THINK PEOPLE DO WORK AT MCGILL LONGER THAN THEY STAY MARRIED. AND WITH THIS LOYALTY COMES VACATION TIME – REGULAR ENTITLEMENT OF MOST HOVERS AROUND 25 PLUS DAYS, PLUS CHRISTMAS, PLUS SUMMER FRIDAYS. IT WAS DIFFICULT TO SCHEDULE MEETINGS IN MAY AS MANY ARE ON VACATION TRYING TO USE UP ALL THEIR DAYS PRIOR TO THE END OF THE VACATION YEAR.

MEETINGS & ACRONYMS

THE NOTION OF MEETINGS HAS TAKEN ON A WHOLE NEW MEANING FOR ME. MY FIRST TASKS WAS TO FIGURE OUT WHAT THE TOPIC OF THE MEETING I WAS ATTENDING WOULD BE, BECAUSE AT THE EARLY STAGES, I WAS NOT ACCUSTOMED TO ALL THE ACRONYMS. I SOON LEARNT THAT ACRONYMS ARE THE LANGUAGE AT MCGILL. FURTERMORE, SOME OF THESE ACRONYMS ARE CONVERTED TO VERBS WITHIN A SENTENCE: FOAPALIZE YOUR PRUCHASES. THIS BRINGS ME TO BANNER....I AM CERTAINLY NOT A BANNER BABY. NAVIGATING AROUND THIS SYSTEM IS MORE DIFFICULT THAN MAKING YOUR WAY AROUND CHINA. HERE AGAIN THE ACRONYMS KICK IN –TBRDETL, FTMFUND, BAVL, TO NAME BUT A FEW. IN REALITY, YOU WOULD NEED ABOUT A MONTH, LOCKED UP IN A ROOM, TO BECOME FULLY BANNERIZED.

BUT THAT WILL NEVER HAPPEN, BECAUSE THE DAYS ARE FILLED WITH COMMITTEE MEETINGS. NOBODY EVER WARNED ME ABOUT THE CROSS CAMPUS MEETINGS. IVE GONE THROUGH A FEW PAIRS OF SHOES ALREADY...AND THEN THERE IS THE WAIT AT THE ELEVATOR AT 688 IF YOU GET THERE AT THE WRONG TIME. THESE MEETINGS ARE WELL DESERVING FOR THE PURPOSE THEY ARE PURSUING, BUT THERE ARE SO MANY IT GETS DIFFICULT TO SQUEEZE MY JOB IN BETWEEN THE MEETINGS.

WITH ALL THE MEETINGS AND ALL THE ACRONYMS GOING BACK AND FORTH, I THOUGHT I HAD FINALLY FIGURED OUT THE REFERENCES TO RIAL – THE ROYAL INSTITUTION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF LEARNING – ONLY TO FIND OUT

THERE WAS ACTUALLY A PERSON CALLED REAL THAT WE WERE GOING TO MEET.

I WONT BORE YOU WITH THE STREAM OF EMAILS I RECEIVE – WELCOME TO MCGILL I AM TOLD. ITS A DAILY RACE AGAINST YOUR INBOX.

SUMMER

THEN THE SUMMER ARRIVES – THERE IS A NOTICEABLE AND EXPECTED SLOW DOWN IN ACTIVITY ON ALL FRONTS, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF FINANCIAL SERVICES GOING INTO OVERDRIVE DUE TO YEAR END. TRYING TO GET AHEAD IS CHALLENGING AS MANY ARE ON HOLIDAYS FOR AN EXTENDED PERIOD OF TIME. I AM TOLD THROUGHOUT – ENJOY IT WHILE IT LASTS. I CAN NOW RELATE....IT IS LIKE A SEASONAL BUSINESS AND SUMMER IS THE SO CALLED DOWN TIME.

CONCLUSION

I WILL CONCLUDE BY LEAVING YOU WITH THE TEN COMMANDEMENTS A MCGILL NEWBIE SHOULD ABIDE BY:

- 1. THOU SHALL SPEAK USING ACRONYMS**
- 2. THOU SHALL ARRANGE AT LEAST TWO DAILY MEETINGS**
- 3. THOU SHALL JOIN SEVERAL COMMITTEES**
- 4. THOU SHALL TAKE VACATION REGULARLY**
- 5. THOU SHALL EMAIL WHEN UNCERTAIN**
- 6. THOU SHALL BECOME BANNERIZED**
- 7. THOU SHALL TAKE ON DEVELOPMENTAL ASSIGNMENTS**
- 8. THOU SHALL LIVE NO FURTHER THAN MONTREAL WEST**
- 9. THOU SHALL REMEMBER THY MOPS AND POPS**
- 10. THOU SHALL ENCOURAGE MY SIGNIFICANT OTHER TO WORK AT MCGILL**