

## Chatterbox #32 – Working in Canada

### Transcript

Harp: Hello everyone, this is Harp.

Maura: And your pal Maura.

Harp: And we're here at Culips.

Maura: That's C-U-L-I-P-S.com.

Harp: We're bringing you a Chatterbox podcast. This is where we chat and talk about different topics, interesting things that are going on in Montreal or in Canada.

Maura: And different tips or advice about living in North America, like today.

Harp: Exactly. And here's a good tip: make sure you check out the Lipservice, which is a learning guide that comes with each episode and has a full transcript, a detailed explanation, and even a quiz.

Maura: Right, so become a member and check that out, especially if you want some extra help understanding this episode.

Harp: Exactly. So today we're going to talk about working in Canada.

Maura: Yeah, work. Some people love their jobs, some people hate their jobs, but usually you have to work to earn money.

Harp: Exactly. So we're going to break it down into **working conditions** in Canada.

Maura: Mmhmm. And then the second thing we're going to talk about is finding a job, looking for a job. And Harp is especially qualified to give us advice because that's what she does during the day.

Harp: Yeah, I'm a **recruiter** in my day job. And then our last topic is going to be talking about memories of our part-time jobs or our summer jobs in our past.

Maura: Yeah, those are always fun, your first jobs when you're growing up.

Harp: Exactly. So let's get started with **working conditions** in Canada.

Maura: Yes, I think the **working conditions** here are generally pretty good.

- Harp: Yeah, I think they're pretty good. Most people tend to work the **9 to 5** job.
- Maura: Right. There's even that famous song about it.
- Harp: What song?
- Maura: Working 9 to 5, what a way to make a living. Come on, you know that song don't you?
- Harp: Oh my god, Maura, you are awesome! **Who knew** you had a secret talent for singing?
- Maura: Yeah, but you're right, most people who work in an office work from 9 o'clock in the morning until 5 o'clock at night.
- Harp: Yeah, that's one of the basic conditions in Canada.
- Maura: There are some variations, some people start a bit earlier, work a bit later.
- Harp: Yeah, and you can work some **overtime**, but typically you work **9 to 5**, the 40 hours a week.
- Maura: Yeah, that's a lot, I think!
- Harp: Too much.
- Maura: Yeah.
- Harp: I'd be good with 20 hours. No, I'm joking.
- Maura: Yeah.
- Harp: Forty's not too bad.
- Maura: Not too bad. And in that time, most people have an hour lunch in the middle of the day.
- Harp: Exactly and usually a couple of breaks as well.
- Maura: Yeah, I think we're supposed to have two 15-minute breaks, one in the morning, one in the afternoon. Is that right, Harp?
- Harp: Depending on which province you're in, but that's the general rule.

- Maura: Yeah, and most employers are pretty good about letting you have it. It's the law, so everybody should.
- Harp: Exactly.
- Maura: What about **vacation time**?
- Harp: Well, unlike our European listeners, we only get 2 weeks of holidays, as a general rule, in Canada.
- Maura: Right, but that's only when you start.
- Harp: Yes.
- Maura: After a few years, you get another week, and another week, right?
- Harp: Exactly. My parents have a lot more vacation time than I do, because they've been working for a lot longer. I'm still at 2 weeks.
- Maura: Yeah, only 2 weeks. But you also get the other holidays.
- Harp: Yup, exactly. So in Canada, again, depending on what province, you get 8 or 9 **stat holidays**.
- Maura: Right. Those are the ones that probably most of you have heard of, like Christmas and Thanksgiving.
- Harp: Yeah, and Easter.
- Maura: Mmhmm. And then there's also holidays in the summer too, just to let us get outside and enjoy the weather.
- Harp: Exactly. OK, so let's go on to our next topic of finding a job.
- Maura: Yes. Everyone, or most everyone, has been in this position at one time, when they're looking for a job. Maybe it's their first job, maybe it's part time, or maybe it's the first job of their career.
- Harp: Exactly, so the basic thing you always start with is a **résumé** or a **CV**, which talks about your work experience, your education, your skill set, for example if you know specific computer programs.
- Maura: Yeah, and nowadays, it's easy to go on the internet and look at different examples of **résumés**, because there are so many different formats, but you can look at the examples and you can choose one and follow that structure.

- Harp: Yeah, and just a little bit of advice: as a **recruiter**, I look at lots of **résumés**, and it's really important to make sure there are no mistakes, no grammatical mistakes, no mistakes with even formatting. Try to make it look as pretty as possible.
- Maura: Yup, that's a good point. You really have to be detailed when you're doing your **résumé**.
- Harp: Exactly. And then after you have the **résumé**, a good place to start is by putting it on different websites. In Canada, we typically use **Monster**, or **Workopolis**, or **Jobboom**. And in every province there are different government sites that you can post your **résumé**.
- Maura: OK, and what about when you want to start searching for jobs?
- Harp: Again, those places are great places to look for a job. If you go on to **Monster**, you can search all the different jobs. You can search it by keywords, for example, if you're looking for a job in sales you can look up sales.
- Maura: Yup, I know that I've looked on those websites before. What about if you see a company that you're really interested in working at, but there's no job posting?
- Harp: You know, I think the best way to do it then is to go in person and drop off your **résumé**. Try to talk to someone who's in **HR** (or in **human resources**), or someone specifically who is a **recruiter** in the company. But if all you do is drop off your **résumé** with the receptionist, it's a good start.
- Maura: OK, and what about **cold calling**? Now, **cold calling** is when you call a company and you don't know anyone there, and you're talking to a stranger, and you want to find out information about jobs and hiring.
- Harp: I think it's a really good idea. I think lots of times people are really nervous to do it. So it might **break the ice** if you send your **résumé** and then do a **follow-up** call and say, "Oh, hi, I sent my **résumé**. I was just wondering if you have any job openings." Because, really, it's so often about being in the right place at the right time. If you call that person and they're looking for someone, you could get the job that day.
- Maura: Yeah, I know in my experience I always felt nervous **cold calling**, but like you said, if I already sent a **résumé**, then I have a reason to call, to follow up, and to ask if they actually received it.
- Harp: And most people are nervous, so there aren't that many people who are calling

and who are doing the **cold calls**, so you'll really **stand out** if you do it.

Maura: Good advice Harp! And one thing that I think everyone should keep in mind is to be positive, because when you're looking for jobs, oh, it's so hard and sometimes you don't hear back from people, but you just have to stay positive and keep trying to apply to different places.

Harp: Exactly what Maura said. So if you're positive and super friendly with the receptionist, she'll probably remember you, and if she hears someone talking about a job that's opening up, she might remember you and give your **résumé** on. Now what typically happens though is that you have connections; you know someone who works in a different company and they can maybe pass your **résumé** on. But a good tool that's really starting to come up in Canada is **LinkedIn**.

Maura: What's that?

Harp: It's a website that you can post a profile of yourself and of where you've worked and then you become friends with all your friends. And then it just becomes bigger and bigger that you know all these people and you can join groups that are in your field. For example, if you're a teacher, you can join education groups and it's a really good way to build a network so that when someone's looking for a candidate, they can go on **LinkedIn** and find you.

Maura: So, it sounds like Facebook, except more business and professional.

Harp: That's exactly how I'd describe it. It's social networking to find a job.

Maura: Ah, cool.

Harp: Yeah, I use **LinkedIn** quite a bit when I'm recruiting people. Because there are so many people on there, it's easy to find someone on **LinkedIn**.

Maura: Yeah, and a lot of jobs are found that way, right? My cousin's friend's brother works at a company and he knows they're looking for someone, so if you can get more of a network using computers then there are even more opportunities for you.

Harp: Exactly.

Maura: OK, good advice. Now, we talked about the **working conditions** in Canada, and Harp, you gave some excellent advice on how to find a job. Now let's think back to the past on some of our first jobs.

- Harp: OK, what was your first job Maura?
- Maura: My first job was working at a grocery store and I actually got that job because my stepfather worked for the company. So I got that job because of a connection.
- Harp: Interesting. And what were you doing in the grocery store?
- Maura: I was a cashier, so I **rang through people's groceries** and put it in bags for them.
- Harp: Oh, did you have fun?
- Maura: Sometimes I loved it. Sometimes I didn't like it as much. I really liked the people that I worked with. And I actually worked there for about 6 years.
- Harp: Oh, wow!
- Maura: It's actually the longest time I've ever worked at one place.
- Harp: OK, so you did like it a bit.
- Maura: Yeah, I was able to take time off when I went away to school and work in the summers, so it was really flexible.
- Harp: Yeah, my first job was like that too. I started at McDonald's, and I started as a cashier, and I actually learned pretty much every station they had. I knew how to make the burgers, I knew how to do **drive-thru**, and I stayed there for 3 and a half/4 years. Yeah, during a lot of the time that I was in school, I was able to work part time, so that I still had some money but I could focus on school.
- Maura: Oh, cool. So what did you like best about working at McDonald's?
- Harp: Hmm, well, it's really a fun place to work, because everyone's kind of young, so you make lots of friends and they have lots of activities, like we would go bowling as a group from McDonald's and you also got a really good discount on food.
- Maura: Nice. Yeah, a couple summers I worked in the Canadian Rockies, in the mountains in Canada. And both summers I worked in restaurants, so I understand how great it is to get cheap food.
- Harp: Or even free food sometimes.

- Maura: Yeah, already made for you, you don't have to worry about cooking. It's pretty nice.
- Harp: Yeah, it's perfect.
- Maura: But after a while, you definitely **get sick of** the food, not physically sick, but you **get tired of** the food because you've had it so many times.
- Harp: Exactly, you're eating it all the time so sometimes you crave other types of food.
- Maura: Yeah, yeah. I think that was probably one of my most favourite summer jobs because the location was great. I was in the mountains and I lived in staff housing with the people I worked with, so we were always having fun at work or after work and it was really a great job.
- Harp: Yeah, I really liked working at McDonald's. I think it was a good training ground. They were really about their procedures and you learned a lot and they had great training programs. It was a good experience for me.
- Maura: OK, good. So we hope this episode helped you learn a little bit about working in Canada, and maybe if you're thinking about coming over here to work, you have a better idea of what it's like.
- Harp: Exactly. So today we talked about **working conditions** in Canada.
- Maura: And how to find a job once you get here.
- Harp: Exactly, and also we shared a couple of our memories from our past jobs.
- Maura: They were fun, weren't they?
- Harp: They were.
- Maura: OK, thanks for listening. Don't forget to go to our website, Culips.com, and become a member.
- Harp: Yeah, 'cause then you get access to the learning guide, the Lipservice.
- Maura: Thanks for listening and we'll talk to you later.
- Harp: Bye everyone!
- Maura: Bye!

## Detailed Explanation

### Working conditions

The **working conditions** are the different qualities of a job. In this episode we speak about the **working conditions** in Canada, but every job is different, so some have better **conditions** than others.

**Working conditions** generally include the following:

- the regular hours you work and overtime
- the pay you get for the work
- vacation time
- sick days
- parental and other leaves from work

### A recruiter

Harp is a **recruiter**. A **recruiter** is someone who finds people to fill open job positions. Companies hire **recruiters** to find people to work for them. This may be because the people at the company are too busy to look for new employees, or because **recruiters** are especially qualified to find good people for the job.

*To recruit* is to find new people to be part of something. You can recruit people to join a club. You can also recruit people to join the military. You can recruit people to join any team or group of people.

### 9 to 5

Harp says, "Most people tend to work the **9 to 5** job." She uses the expression **9 to 5** to describe the kind of job. When a job is **9 to 5**, that means it's a full-time job from Monday to Friday, and the working hours are from 9 o'clock in the morning until 5 o'clock in the evening. A **9 to 5** job also usually means that it's a job in an office or business, because they are usually open during these hours.

**9 to 5** is also the name of a song by Dolly Parton, which Maura sings a small part of in this episode. This song was written for a film, also called **Nine to Five**, about women working in an office with a bad boss.

### Who knew?

After Maura sings a small part from the song *9 to 5*, Harp says, "**Who knew** you had a secret talent for singing?" This is not a serious question, and Harp does not really want to know who knew that Maura had a talent for singing. The expression **who knew?** is used to express surprise. It's actually like saying that no one knew, because it's such a surprise.



This expression can be used in a full question, like Harp asked. It can also be used alone with the same effect. Here are a couple of examples with the expression **who knew?**:

Donna: Your dessert is delicious! **Who knew** you were such an excellent baker?

Ben: Thanks! I like to try new recipes.

Jen: I think I fixed your computer problem for you.

Isla: Yes! It works. You're so great with computers! **Who knew?**

### Overtime

When you work **overtime**, you work more than your regular hours. Some people get paid for the **overtime** they worked, and other people do not. It depends on your working conditions.

### Stat holidays

**Stat holidays** are special days when most offices, schools, and local businesses close, and so not many people work. The full name is **statutory holidays**. Most people will be paid for **stat holidays** even though they do not actually work on those days.

In Canada there are many **stat holidays** across the country, and there are some that are different between provinces. Here's a list of the **stat holidays** that people across Canada get to enjoy:

New Year's Day – January 1

Good Friday (Easter) – The Friday before Easter Monday in March or April

Victoria Day – The Monday on or before May 24

Canada Day – July 1

Labour Day – The First Monday in September

Thanksgiving – The Second Monday in October

Christmas Day – December 25

These kinds of holidays may also be called national holidays or public holidays. In the UK, these holidays are called bank holidays.

### A résumé or a CV

These words are usually used interchangeably to mean the same thing. A **résumé** or a **CV** is a written summary of a person's work experience and education. People also include other qualifications and interests that show they have the ability to do a job well in their **résumés** or **CVs**. Making a **résumé** and then giving it to an employer that you are interested in working for is one of the first steps in applying for a job.

The word **résumé** comes from the French language, so it's correct to use accents. When many native English speakers write this word they don't use the accents, because we don't normally use accents in English words. Typing the word as **resume** is very common, because there are no accents on a standard English keyboard.

**CV** means **curriculum vitae**, which is Latin in origin. In Canada, we use **résumé** more often than **CV**. In this episode, we say **CV** once, but we say **résumé** 13 times!

### Monster, Workopolis, Jobboom

These websites are mentioned in our episode as good resources for jobs. On these websites, you can search for jobs and you can post your résumé for employers to see.

If you're looking for a job in Canada, this is another website for jobs: <http://www.jobbank.gc.ca/>. It's a site hosted by the Canadian government.

### HR/human resources

Harp is a recruiter and works in **human resources** or **HR**. **HR** simply means **human resources**. The **human resources** department of a company is made up of the people who are responsible for the other people who work at a company. For example, the **human resources** department is usually responsible for hiring and firing employees. The people who work in **HR** are also responsible for many other issues concerning employees, like their pay, vacation time, etc.

### Cold calling

**Cold calling** means calling employers or customers that you do not know, who are not expecting your call. So if Mike is interested in a job and calls the company directly to get more information about the job, then this is a **cold call**. It's a **cold call** because Mike doesn't know anyone at the company he is calling.

It's also considered a **cold call** when someone calls a person they do not know to sell something.

### To break the ice

**To break the ice** is to meet someone and create a comfortable situation, and "break" the shyness or awkwardness. Often at the beginning of classes—especially classes where students are learning English as a Second Language—teachers and students play games **to break the ice**, called **ice breakers**. These games are played so that everyone in the class gets to know each other and people become more comfortable speaking in the class.

Harp says that when making a cold call, it can help to **break the ice** if you are calling about your résumé that you sent earlier. By asking about your résumé, you make it less awkward for you to call, because you have a reason.

Here are a couple more examples with **to break the ice**:

Ken: How was your date?

Luke: It started off a little awkward, but it really **broke the ice** when we started talking about how much we both love biking.

Amanda: I still don't really know anyone at my new job. It's hard.

Yannick: Don't worry. You just need to **break the ice** with people. Showing an interest in them always helps.

### A follow-up call

A **follow-up call** is a call that you make to find out more information about something that has already happened. In this episode, the **follow-up call** is about a résumé that was sent.

**To follow up** can also be a verb, and you can **follow up** on anything! For example, you can **follow up** on a business meeting, meaning that you can talk to the people who were at the meeting after to see if they have started the actions discussed at the meeting. You could also have a **follow-up** appointment with a doctor to discuss the results from your previous appointment.

Here are a couple of examples:

Doug: Did you hear about the job you had the interview for last week?

Patrick: Yeah, I'm having a **follow-up** interview next week. It's the last step!

Henry: Have you heard how the design project is going?

Mel: No, I need to **follow up** with them.

### To stand out

**To stand out** is to be different and to get noticed. When you are applying for a job you want to **stand out** in a good way, because then the employer will remember you. Harp says that calling a possible employer is a good way to **stand out**, because not many people cold call.

**Standing out** can also be bad. You can be different and get noticed for doing something wrong or behaving badly. For example, Kristy **stands out** because everyone at her school wears the required school uniform except her.

Here are a couple of examples with **to stand out**:

Bruce: The drummer really **stood out** at the concert last week.

Paul: I know. He really needs to improve.

Becky: Compared to the other students, your work really **stands out**. Great job!

Jon: Thanks! I try my best.

### LinkedIn

Just as we say in this episode, **LinkedIn** is a social networking website for jobs. It is a place to make contact with people in areas where you might like to work. If you are an employer you might also make contact with people who you would like to hire. On LinkedIn you can get connected to people you already know and make new contacts with people you have never met.

### To ring through groceries

**To ring through groceries** is an expression for entering groceries into a cash register to add up your total. It's not just groceries that can be **rung through**. **To ring through** can be used any time when someone enters the items you would like to purchase into a cash register. This expression might have started because some cash registers make a sound like a **ring** as each item is entered. Older cash registers also make a **ring** sound when the person has paid.

### A drive-thru

A **drive-thru** is offered at many fast food restaurants in North America. To use a **drive-thru** you do not get out of your car, but drive to a window and get your food. In most places you first order your food through a speaker, and then drive up to the window to pay and get your food.

The word **thru** is actually not a real word, but is a short version of the word *through*. You may also see it written with the real word, like **drive-through**, but it is most often written as **drive-thru**.

To get sick of/tired of something

You can **get sick of something**, you can **get tired of something**, and you can **get sick and tired of something**. All these expressions mean that you have had too much of something, and don't want more. It could be something you see, or hear, or eat. It does not mean that you are actually tired or sick, it just means that you don't want more of it.

Here are some examples with ***to get or to be sick and tired of something***:

Hilary: I **am so sick of** hearing Jasmine complain all the time!

Pete: Yeah, me too!

Kevin: How's it going with your roommate?

Lily: To be honest, **I'm really getting tired of** his messiness.

Vicky: I think I might quit my job.

Alex: Why?

Vicky: **I'm just so sick and tired of** my rude boss. I can't take it anymore!

**Quiz**

**1. What is not included in working conditions?**

- a) pay
- b) hours
- c) sick days
- d) beaches

**2. What are the most typical hours for an office to be open?**

- a) 8 to 4
- b) 8:30 to 4:30
- c) 9 to 5
- d) 10 to 6

**3. Nate: You're such a great volleyball player. \_\_\_\_\_ ?  
Bonnie: Thanks! I've actually been playing for a while.**

**Please fill in the blank.**

- a) Who knew
- b) You knew
- c) They know
- d) Who knows

**4. Colin worked overtime this week. What does that mean?**

- a) He worked fewer than his usual hours.
- b) He worked more than his usual hours.
- c) He worked someone else's shift.
- d) He didn't work hard.

**5. Which of the following is NOT a stat holiday in Canada?**

- a) your birthday
- b) Christmas
- c) New Year's Day
- d) Labour Day

6. Sylvia called a company where she sent her résumé, and asked about getting hired there. She didn't know anyone at the company before she called. What kind of call is this?

- a) a hot call
- b) a warm call
- c) a cold call
- d) a freezing call

7. George: I saw the doctor last week, and this week I have a \_\_\_\_\_ appointment.

Please fill in the blank.

- a) follower
- b) follow-up
- c) following
- d) follow-in

8. Holly stood out in her new class as a great artist. What does this mean?

- a) Holly was noticed as a great artist in her class.
- b) Holly was noticed as a poor artist in her class.
- c) Holly always stood when she painted or drew.
- d) Holly was the teacher.

9. In drive-thru, the word *thru* is comes from which word?

- a) threw
- b) through
- c) thought
- d) thrust

**Answers:** 1.d 2.c 3.a 4.b 5.a 6.c 7.b 8.a 9.b