

STAY RELEVANT

CLASSIFIED JOBS **spring**

Here's how you can upgrade your skills and improve your prospects at work TEXT Elisabeth Lee

The past few decades have seen sweeping technological changes that are impacting the way we live, play, and most importantly, work. One of the results of this revolution is that workers are now increasingly dependent on the ebb and flow of the global economy.

Whether you are employed or looking for work, it is vital that you remain competitive, and the best way to do this is to upgrade your skills to become more marketable. Upgrading will help you to adapt to an ever-changing work environment by giving you additional skills and enabling you to take on a wider variety of jobs. The broader your skills set, the more valuable you will become to your employer.

▶ THREE STEPS TO GIVE YOUR SKILLS A BOOST

1 Assess your current skill set and qualifications.

Take a moment to list what skills you already have – this includes workplace skills (such as cash handling or working with people) that are generally transferable, job-specific skills (such as a heavy equipment handling, for example), and employer-specific skills (knowledge of a proprietary software package, for example), as well as paper qualifications and other certifications you have earned on the job.

2 **Locate your skills gap.** Once you have identified the skills you currently have, the next step is to find out what skills you should be adding to the list. Check the skill requirements in occupational profiles such as those listed on Career Compass (www.careercompass.gov.sg) and review current job openings in your industry – can you identify any trends? The Ministry of Manpower (www.mom.gov.sg) also publishes a Strategic and Skills-in-Demand List, as well as an annual labour market guide, so you can see what skills are most

wanted. Other resources include job fairs at your CDC and industry publications or events.

3 **Create an action plan.** Now that you have identified what new skills you want to acquire, it's time to find out how. Upgrading your skills can be as easy as asking a co-worker to show you how to do something new, or as intensive as getting a post-graduate degree!

Whether you're just starting out or you are a PMET with an established career, you can find out more about continuing education and training programmes at the Workforce Development Agency (www.wda.gov.sg). The agency works with employers, industry associations, unions and training organisations to develop the Workforce Skills Qualifications (WSQ) system to provide relevant skills-based training that is accessible to all. 🍀

HELP IS CLOSE AT HAND

The Institute for Adult Learning provides training programmes and more. Find out more at its next course preview session on 9 Jan, 2013. The course previews are held every first Wednesday evening on every alternate month and through these discussions of course structures and requirements can be arranged individually or for groups. www.ial.edu.sg

The Employment and Employability Institute has career coaches on hand to help you find out more about skills-upgrading and training opportunities. Funding is also available for union members under the Union Training Assistance Programme. www.e2i.com.sg

Some ethnic self-help groups might provide advice, training, financial assistance and more. You might want to check out the following and ask if they have such programmes.

Chinese Development Assistance Council

www.cdac.org.sg/

Mendaki www.mendaki-sense.com.sg

Singapore Indian Development Association

www.sinda.org.sg/

The Eurasian Association Singapore

www.eurasians.org.sg/