

## LogoTex, An Employment Success Story

LogoTex is an integral member of the Social Purchasing Portal (SPP) through Fast Track to Employment (FTE). LogoTex creates promotional products that help companies establish their corporate identities and branding; for example, they create logos on pens, cups, shirts, and other many items. LogoTex is a key business supplier. They have been in business for twenty years. Anne Carroll considers it a real family environment and that is why it was really important to her to hire the right person, it took quite a few interviews with many candidates but Anne was persistent and she insisted on second interviews just to make sure. FTE was right there with her, helping her and insisting that she could take the time she needed to feel "right."



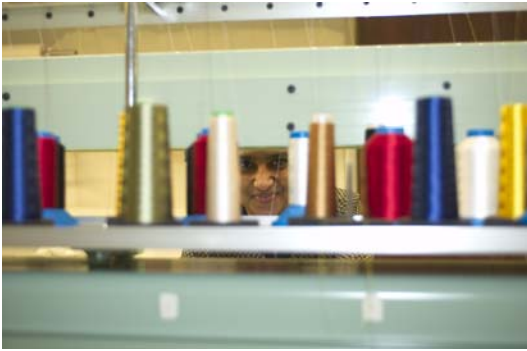
By marketing local goods and services to socially responsible businesses that place a high value in their purchasing policies through the FTE network, a very important social value is created. Through this network, business and employment opportunities increase, thereby creating employment opportunities for people who might otherwise be overlooked. The social value of these opportunities is the promise of the companies to consider resumes from people who reside in the Downtown Eastside. Traditionally speaking, these residents have had barriers affecting their ability to maintain and sustain meaningful employment that often screens them out of the hiring process.

FTE has valuable relationships with a suite of trainers in what is the FTE membership continuum, they help and train people who are looking for work, who in turn are considered by FTE when they are looking to staff a position. An example of this is LogoTex, a Supplier Partner of FTE who needed to staff a position. Rather than going through the time consuming process of placing an ad in the paper and screening tens of applicants, they were able to contact FTE where a profile of the candidate was identified and FTE's Employment Development expert posted the job among its member organizations. This is beneficial in a number of ways: it creates a single point of contact between the applicant and the screening process; it keeps the employer from being deluged with applications; the employer tells FTE specifically what qualities they are looking for in a prospective candidate and the staff is then able to screen the resumes that come through and be aware of those applicants who match the criteria as set out by the employer. It is an advantageous network that creates the best match of prospective applicants to the available job posting. FTE can later contact the employer and employee and find out how things are working, potentially identify trouble spots that can be rectified with the least amount of disruption between the employer and the employee. There is support for both parties and a desire of FTE to make the relationship work. That is what FTE is about: create and maintain relationships among and with all parties within this continuum.

A recent hire through the Social Purchasing Portal of FTE is Marion, "Being out of the labour market for over ten years while raising my children made the challenge of finding work daunting, if not downright frightening. Having FTE in the community is a marvellous support network for anyone who hasn't worked in a long time." She had been working in the clerical sector before becoming a mother and while that is definitely work it is not part of the paid labour market. Marion's experience is not unique "...not having that income made

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providing for my family difficult if not impossible at times. The staff person at FTE was really friendly, supportive, helpful, and non-judgemental. I felt very supported.” Prior to being hired, Marion had been a student at jobSTART a program to help people with barriers to employment. Hendrik Hoekema, the founder of jobSTART, says, “Marion was the first person that we put through the FTE process and she came out with a job. We are very pleased. All the parties involved deserve credit: FTE and their staff for pre-screening applicants, LogoTex for being a member of the network and ultimately to Marion herself.”



The work that Marion does is challenging and rewarding and she works in a team environment where she does product sourcing, has contact with suppliers, and does administrative functions. Marion's boss, and owner of LogoTex, Anne Carroll says of her: "Everything is going well; she takes initiative and is fitting in really well." Marion simply says, "I like the work."

Now, more than ever, residents have unlimited potential when it comes to what they can achieve. All it takes is the right attitude, the right plan, the right opportunities and the right tools. FTE can provide that and more...