

INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES

Considering a Move to Quebec

Introduction

We are pleased to welcome you as a potential candidate for a permanent career-building position at our Client in Montreal, Quebec, Canada. The following information will be helpful to you.

Our Client

Details of the job for which you are being interviewed have already been provided to you. This describes the company and its principal products as well as specific position.

We would like to emphasize that these are long-term permanent and technically interesting positions. The entire facility is purpose built for our Client and the Engineering offices are adjacent to the plant where complete aircraft are assembled and flight tested, all within a few feet of your office.

We invite you to visit our Client's home webpage.

Geography

Montreal is the largest city in the Province of Quebec. Our Client's facility at Mirabel is located thirty minutes North of Montreal but also twenty minutes south of the Laurentian Mountains. You therefore have a wide choice of lifestyles, from the bright lights of downtown Montreal to the more relaxed life in the country.

Climate

Quebec has four distinct seasons: Winters produce a lot of snow and temperatures often plummet to below 0 Celsius. Normally you can count on a white Christmas. Around early April, spring takes control as the melting snow swells the rivers and lakes before the hot summer starts late May to early June. Autumn, with its warm days and cold nights, puts on a spectacle of rich and varied colours.

Leisure

Due to the variety of weather conditions throughout the year and the diverse landscape, a wide choice of leisure activities are available to you. There is an abundance of cycling paths, which are converted to cross-country ski trails in winter. Other Winter sports include skiing, skating, tobogganing, snow-shoeing and snow-mobiling.

In summer, sailing, canoeing, motor-boating, tennis, golf, fishing, hunting and windsurfing are all popular sports, enjoyed from April through to November. There are in fact over two hundred lakes within easy reach.

For all these activities including many indoor sports, equipment rental and lessons are normally available.

Montreal has a CFL football team 'The Montreal Alouettes', an NHL ice hockey team, 'The Canadiens' and a soccer team called 'The impact'. It also hosts many spectator sports, including Formula One racing and a tennis open championship.

Language and Culture

Quebec is a predominantly French-speaking province, and much effort has been expended in the last twenty-five years or so to protect the French culture.

Having said this, there is a significant proportion of the population of Quebec whose first language is not French, the majority of these whose first language is English. You don't have to speak French to get by in Quebec, especially in and around Montreal and it is not necessary to speak French to work effectively in the job for which you are being interviewed. However, a knowledge of French will enrich your life in Quebec and you will be encouraged to learn.

It is important to note that most jobs that require dealing with the public necessitate a reasonable level of spoken French.

Films, theatre, shows and concerts are available in a variety of languages. In addition, Montreal hosts world-class performances of opera, ballet and classical music. Montreal also hosts a variety of festivals including film, jazz, fireworks, and a comedy festival called "Just for Laughs".

Newspapers, radio and television are all available in English and French through the cable and satellite TV distribution networks.

The Current Political Climate

In Quebec, politics is a national past-time and with some Quebecers, a pre-occupation when it comes to protection of the French language and culture and negotiating powers with the Federal Government in Ottawa.

The impact on daily life in Quebec of the political debate and related topics is as much as you want it to be. Many Quebecers follow it closely, while others hardly notice that anything is going on at all.

On a day-to-day basis, people of English, French, and all other backgrounds get along side-by-side both at work and at play. Montreal is a very cosmopolitan, fun and safe city.

Schooling

For newcomers to Quebec, the only Provincially-run schooling available is in the French school system, with instruction in French, even though an English school system exists. This is one of the measures that the Government of Quebec has taken to protect the French language.

Welcome classes and special help is available for children who enter the school system when they are over five years old.

You can elect to opt out of the Provincially-run schooling system if you wish, by sending your child or children to private school, but of course you have to pay.

Housing

Compared to the U.K., house prices in Quebec are relatively affordable. Details will be provided to you, but generally speaking, people who have moved to Quebec from the U.K. generally move into bigger homes with more land and more features than the homes they left in the U.K. You can own a three-bedroom detached bungalow for a very reasonable price, depending on location.

Rental properties are available in most areas, at affordable prices, for those people who choose not to buy, apartments are available fully furnished, semi-furnished or non-furnished. Semi-furnished properties are the same as non-furnished except they have heavy appliances such as a cooker, a fridge-freezer, washing machine, etc.

Health-care

All newcomers to Quebec are entitled three months after their application, to make use of the Province-run, no charge (for most normal procedures) 'Medicare'. For this interim period, our Client will cover the cost of private medical insurance for all family members. However during this time, family members with a pre-existing condition will have to be assessed on a case-by-case basis, for coverage by a private insurance carrier.

The Medicare system covers all basic health needs, and our Client's group insurance program provides certain upgrades and refunds. (Our Client will provide details, if an offer is made to you).

Taxation

Canada has three levels of government - Federal, Provincial and Municipal, all of whom are empowered to tax your income and expenditures.

The amount of the tax you pay depends heavily on your own personal circumstances and there are a number of legal ways of paying less tax. Ask our Client's Human Resources Representative for an estimate of what your take-home pay might be if an offer is made to you.

Canada doesn't have V.A.T. but it does have a close relative, the G.S.T. - Goods and Services Tax that at present is 5%. In addition, some purchases will be subject to a Quebec Sales Tax of 7.5%.

Relative Costs

Costs of Living versus Quality of Life

Quality of life is hard to compare between the U.K. and Canada, there are many trade-offs and some direct comparisons are impossible. Having said that, most people who come to Canada put down roots and stay, even if their original attitude was to try it out for a number of years. One of the reasons people stay, is that there is generally "lot to do", another reason is that they feel better off, in some cases they have significant disposable income for the first time in their lives.

We have seen that houses are cheaper, so are cars, petrol (gasoline) and a number of other things. Some things are more expensive, heating for example during the cold winters. Clothes, food and drink are not too dissimilar from U.K. prices, but again generally speaking you will feel better off in Canada.

Relocation Assistance

Our Client will assist you with your move to Canada. In addition to paying for you, your family and your possessions to get there, they will also help you dispose of your home in the U.K. and will help you to settle in once you arrive. You won't be the first to have done this, so they know what to do and where you will need help, especially in the first few days and even more so if you are bringing a family with you. (For regular full time offers only). They are familiar with the school officials in the region and will offer assistance in registering your children in school.

The package is very comprehensive and will be explained in detail to you at your interview with the our Client team. If you leave your employment with our Client within the first thirty months of your employment, you will have to pay back a proportion of your relocation package.

Immigration Procedure

To enable you to work in Canada, you will require a Temporary Work Permit. Our Client will guide you through this process.

The Temporary Work Permit normally allows only the permit holder to work. This means your children will not be legally entitled to work in Canada, However, being considered as a Strategic Worker, a new program allows your spouse to work as well. Our Client will provide such information to your spouse during your interview.

For candidates who have accepted a regular full time position, Our Client will help you and your family to apply for "Landed Immigrant" status, after your arrival in Canada.

Landed Immigrant Status gives you and your family all the rights and privileges enjoyed by Canadians, except for the right to vote. Note that, to become a Canadian citizen can take up to five years from receipt of your Landed Immigrant status.

Drug Testing Policy

Our Client has a mandatory drug-testing policy for all new employees. Any offer made to you will be conditional upon your passing a medical, which will include a drug test. If you have any questions concerning your medical eligibility, please direct them to the our Client Human Resources staff who will in turn contact their medical department if need be.

Timing

The position for which you are being interviewed is open now. Therefore, if you accept an offer, you may expect things to happen quickly. We want to have you working in Canada within two to three months of accepting your offer.

Questions

List out your questions and ask them at your interview with our Client's team. The better informed you are, the better the quality of your ultimate decision. We are looking for keen, dynamic, dedicated individuals who are ready to accept the challenge of these unique opportunities.

We wish you the best of luck with the remainder of this process and look forward to welcoming you to a new life in Canada.

Alan Davis & Associates Inc.