

Engineer from the Philippines Achieves Fulfilling Computer-Aided Design Career

Ednill Meneses was a newlywed when he first arrived in Canada in November, 2014. He had married his sweetheart two months earlier.

Welcome to Canada!

Optimistic and energetic, he left the sunny Philippines to arrive in rainy Vancouver and his new country.

But this mechanical engineer was not new to the skill of “structural steel detailing”: the creation of plans, drawings and models of steel beams and other building “puzzle pieces” used in construction of large buildings. Meneses had been doing this job since earning a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering in 2005 and joining the Philippine Society of Mechanical Engineers.



Ednill Meneses stops for a photo after meeting for an interview in January of 2015.

When he started working in this high tech field that blends engineering, architecture and information technology, the area was new. He learned on the job. When he got to Canada and started investigating the labour market through job advertisements, he felt inadequate. Companies were advertising for structural steel detailers, but they wanted an educational credential. His training had preceded all of that. He landed in Vancouver without any certification.

“I searched online for detailing companies. I found a lot of companies, but when I saw the requirements, uh oh, [I realized] I’m not qualified,” he recalled.

Seeking Certification

Meneses began to look into ways to get some help. He contacted a local community college and learned that a certification course was available, but he was too late to enrol until the next fall.

Next, the newcomer on a search talked to a friend from his university with a similar engineering degree. From his friend who had already applied to Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of

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British Columbia (APEGBC), he learned that he would likely need several more engineering classes before he could receive a Professional Engineering designation (P.Eng.)

Talking to people about courses, he heard about a company that might be offering what he needed. He found a phone number, called and tried to leave a message. But there was no voicemail. Frustrated, he decided to search elsewhere. Meneses had already joined an employment program at ISSofBC, so he knew he had to keep trying despite disappointments.

Getting Job Search Help

The next day, he got a call the company he'd called the night before. On the phone was a sales and marketing manager, who spoke with a familiar Philippine accent. No training courses were planned for the near future. But Meneses also learned the company was in need of detailers with skills just like the ones he had. "You should apply," the friendly voice on the phone told him. "Send me a resume and I'll give it to the manager."

It wasn't long before the manager called and arranged an interview. Meneses was ready with work samples.

"Did you do this?" the manager asked while looking at the drawings.

"Yes," Meneses said.

"You're hired!" the manager told him.

And that was how the Structural Steel Detailer found his current, unregulated job.

At the first opportunity after the interview, Meneses called his wife, repeating what he'd heard. "I'm hired!" he told her, surprised that it wasn't as hard as he thought and surprised that the pay was better than he expected.

The Future

The journey from arrival to hiring was three months. This newcomer feels "content" and remains surprised at his own success. His advice to other newcomers?

"Keep dreaming," he says. Interviewing and asking for the job he wanted has encouraged him to encourage others to avoid too much humility and instead, show their work and their capabilities to future employers.

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