

# THE MENTORING SWITCHBOARD



April 2009

## Nick Noorani Speaks at ISS

Naeem "Nick" Noorani began like so many others seeking a better life for his family in Canada. He moved to Canada from Dubai in 1998 and through his passion to help skilled immigrants, he has evolved to become an advocate for immigrant rights. Nick works with the different levels of government with the intention of improving services for immigrants. The other roles that he has undertaken are publisher of Canadian Immigrant Magazine and speaker. He converses with employers about workplace diversity and with immigrants about success and determination.

On Friday, April 17th, Nick kindly spoke to some of ISSofBC's clients and staff about the "Seven Secrets to Success for Canadian Immigrants." He shared the strategies that made him successful in Canada:

*Learn English*  
*Never Give up*  
*Embrace Canada*  
*Have a Plan B*  
*Move Out of Ethnic Silos*  
*Take Risks*  
*Volunteer*  
*Find a Mentor*  
*Network*

Nick states that his message is positivity. He believes that the cornerstone of his success has been his positive outlook and confidence in himself. His advice centres on the principles of staying positive, moving out of your comfort zone, and having big aspirations.

He is an engaging and personable speaker who blends grand and sometimes cavalier statements like, "Success by any means necessary," with sincere stories about his own immigrant experience. It is the balance that Nick achieves with his presentation that makes his advice relevant and worthwhile. He has been there and he knows what he is talking about.

One of the concluding thoughts presented was, "Success is defined by each individual." The definition of success may be determined by the individual, but the desire to succeed is universal. Nick's advice can be generalized to other people, not just immigrants. Even though I may not have been the target audience at the event that day, I still felt that the content resonated with me. I do not think that I was the only one. Nick is effective because he welcomes everyone in the room to be introspective and think about how his advice applies to them personally. The introspection evoked is most important to take away from the event. You have already taken the step forward of entering a



Nick Noorani speaks to guests at ISSofBC's Terminal office.

mentoring program. Now, as Nick advises, is the time to ask yourself these questions: What can I do to succeed? Do I need to take more risks? Where can I volunteer? What are some ways that I can get out there and network? These are some of the questions you ask as you leave Nick's talk. Answering them will be left up to you.

- Jericho Bundac

### Preparing for your mentorship:

It's been a month since you first registered with *Mentoring Connections* and you haven't been matched with a mentor yet. What can you do while the *Mentoring Connections* team finds you a suitable mentor? Read below to find out!

1. **Don't panic!** We mentioned at the beginning that it may take a little while to find a mentor that can provide the information you will find valuable. We are actively approaching companies and individuals and hope to have someone for you shortly.

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### Secrets to Success for Canadian Immigrants

#### Learn English

It is difficult to be successful if one cannot communicate in one of the official languages.

#### Never Give up

Stay positive and surround yourself with positive people.

#### Embrace Canada

Canada is a beautiful country with much to offer. Live the different experiences and grow to love and appreciate the country that has welcomed you.

#### Have a Plan B

Be sure to have a Plan A, but also have a Plan B that focuses on your transferable skills.

#### Move Out of Ethnic Silos

Vancouver is a city that has representatives from around the globe. Get out of your comfort zone and encourage yourself to learn about other cultures.

#### Take Risks

Believe in yourself and do not be afraid to take calculated risks.

#### Volunteer

This is an effective way for you to gain Canadian experience that local employers require.

#### Mentorship

Seek out individuals who have experience and learn from their advice.

#### Networking

Meet other people and build your network. They may come in handy in the future.

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## Preparing For Your Mentorship

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1. **Don't panic!** We mentioned at the beginning that it may take a little while to find a mentor that can provide the information you will find valuable. We are actively approaching companies and individuals and hope to have someone for you shortly.
2. **Attend a job search program.** If you haven't already attended a program like ISSofBC's Career Axis program that covers resumes, cover letters, interview skills and job search strategies, we recommend you find out about it and register for one. If you have attended, then put the information you learned to use; conduct informational interviews and...
3. **Do research.** The more you find out about your field and profession the more you will have to discuss with your mentor. For example, find out about Professional Associations, upgrading courses/programs, and relevant companies/job postings. Check out the Skilled Immigrant InfoCentre - [www.skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca](http://www.skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca)

4. **Give information.** If you find companies or job postings that you feel you are qualified for (not entry level) send them to your mentoring coordinator (Ana-Marie or Romanda). This information can assist in finding you a mentor that will be closely matched with your background and skills.

5. **Plan.** Don't wait to plan for your mentorship. Create an action plan and look at the topics that you would like to discuss with your mentor in more depth. Be ready so when you are matched you can have a productive mentorship!

The *Mentoring Connections* team works hard to ensure that you are provided with a suitable mentor. We thank you for your patience and if at any point you have new information or would like to find out how things are going please feel free to contact us at [mentoring.connections@issbc.org](mailto:mentoring.connections@issbc.org) or 604-637-1307 or your mentoring coordinator.

### Events

#### All Industry Networking Event

Wednesday, May 20, 2009  
6 p.m. to 8 p.m.  
Room 612 ISSofBC  
333 Terminal Ave, Vancouver BC

The *Mentoring Connections* program is pleased to offer this exciting opportunity for you to meet other recent immigrants that are also working towards getting back into their field. Meet individuals and find out about their challenges and success stories while making connections in your field or with other immigrant professionals.

This networking event is open to all mentees in all industries and professions. Admission is free. Space is limited to the first 30 people who register. Register Today!

#### Carnaval do Rio Dinner and Dance Show

Saturday, May 9, 2009  
Our Lady of Fatima Hall  
315 Walker Street, Coquitlam, BC

Come and enjoy an unforgettable evening with an explosion of colours, rhythms and energy. You will enjoy delicious and authentic Brazilian foods, a wonderful show and a lot of dancing! Featuring ACHE BRAZIL Dance Company that will bring the traditions, music and culture of Brazil!

Tickets \$40. To reserve your tickets please call the parish at 604-936-2625 or Janette Carbonel at 604-944-4069.