

LEARNING TO WORK

WORKING TO LEARN



Chantal Boucher parlayed her passion for learning into a fulfilling career. Following a stint with the Canadian Forces, where she became a certified aircraft metal technician, Boucher went on to work for several leading manufacturers, including Bombardier and Bell Helicopters. She welcomed the challenges and learning opportunities that came with each new job.

Employers recognized that Boucher's exceptional patience, love of learning and attention to detail would make her an excellent teacher, and asked her to help train new employees.

"I never knew if I had it in me to be a teacher," Boucher says. "But I thoroughly enjoyed it, in part because it helped me to acquire an even deeper understanding of the subject matter."

COMBINING EXPERTISE AND KNOWLEDGE

In 2002, Boucher landed a job that enabled her to utilize both her technical knowledge and training expertise—she became a teacher and project manager with l'École nationale d'aérotechnique, a technical college in Saint-Hubert, Quebec that is a national leader in aviation and avionics training.

Boucher's job involves not only teaching, but also designing and delivering learning programs for private companies— including some of her former employers. In many cases, Boucher works closely with a client firm to create a course that meets the particular learning needs of its employees. Courses can include a wide range of technical and managerial topics, from structural repair and geometric tolerancing to the development of quality-control systems, methodologies and procedures. Boucher loves every minute of it.

"This job is perfect for me because aviation is such a dynamic industry," Boucher says. "In recent years, composite materials have become increasingly popular in aircraft, for example, because they are strong, lightweight and efficient. Ongoing training is required to understand the properties and advantages of each new composite."

REACHING FOR THE NEXT LEVEL

Boucher's personal journey of learning will continue at Montreal's Concordia University, where she will pursue a special Master's degree in business administration designed for the avionics industry.

"My motivation to earn an MBA is mostly personal: I want to improve my management skills," Boucher says. "At this stage, I'm not interested in becoming an executive, but I can't say what the future holds for me."

For more information about careers in the fields of technology and aviation, visit the Website of the Canadian Technology Human Resources Board (www.cthrb.ca) and the Websites of the Canadian Aviation Maintenance Council (www.camc.ca) and the Canadian Council of Technicians and Technologists (www.cctt.ca).

Continuous learning is an essential skill that can open many doors along the career journey.