Meet Dawn MacInnis!

President and Principle Consultant, C Dawn MacInnis Consulting Inc.

A Maritimer originally from Prince Edward Island, Dawn MacInnis is a self-driven person who had two options for her future – medicine or IT – she chose IT and she loves it. Now, Dawn is a Principal Consultant at C Dawn MacInnis Consulting Inc., but her career in IT has taken her all over the world.
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Our interests and choices in high school definitely influence our choices in life. In high school I remember gravitating toward English courses specifically Shakespeare, but really, science was my favourite. My high school chemistry teacher, Mrs. Cannon was so passionate about science, it was impossible not to share that same passion. We all loved her as a teacher, so after that I thought decision made, I'll enroll in the BSc. Program in university and focus on chemistry.

Now, if Mrs. Cannon had been my Professor at university, I would have stayed in chemistry for sure. So, after completing my first year of science, I decided that science wasn't for me and switched into the business program. Turns out, I

really enjoyed business and had a natural aptitude for it!

Three years later with my business degree in hand, I had to decide what was next for me – that's when I discovered the Information Technology Institute (ITI). In 2000, IT was in high demand and ITI offered a really unique model – a hands-on, fully immersed, nine-month IT program where you walked out ready to start your career in tech. I'd never coded before in my life and there I was, coding a website from scratch. During the day, we would learn, code, etc. and in the evening, we would work on IT projects for fictitious clients. My first job after that was as a Junior Programmer Analyst with xwave – which was one of the larger IT companies in Canada at the time and was owned by Bell Aliant.

As I continued with my career, I worked with many great companies like BlackBerry, Ambir Solutions, EY (Ernst & Young) and most recently, Sierra Systems, an NTT DATA Company. Actually, when I worked for xwave, I had the opportunity to relocate to our office in Dublin, Ireland. While in

Europe, I explored other cities over the bank holiday weekends. Paris was amazing and Edinburgh felt like home. So, if you're interested in travel, I highly recommend a career in the tech sector.

For me, getting into tech was something that happened after university, but today, kids grow up with technology all around them. Our younger generation are early adopters of any new technology, so they have a big advantage in the tech sector. If you're a high school student who really loves problem solving, and has an interest in designing apps and websites you should absolutely consider a career in IT. I've given presentations at a few high schools and I always ask them as they are using Instagram or Facebook, do they ever wish it could do something else? Because that's exactly what a career in this field offers, if you get into technology, you can influence that and make things happen.

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In the Atlantic region, we have a great pool of resources supporting the tech sector. We have excellent universities and colleges, and in Halifax, we have an international airport – it's the perfect starting point for any IT company. And even as we're sitting here at the Digital Nova Scotia office, all you need to do is look out to see all the new buildings being developed around us!

This project, the Opening Doors project is actually what high schools need – connections with people in IT. Explore events, check out the Professional Development Summit, Tech Lounge with Third Wednesdays and Digital Nova Scotia, etc. Get involved and ask people what they do, and how they got started in their career - and don't forget to create a good portfolio if possible.

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