



## *Mission possible*

Gerry Evans wanted to hone her skills. So she turned to Saint Mary's to keep abreast of changes in her field. "Most of my formal education was back when they used stone tablets," Gerry, an operations analyst with Marine Atlantic in North Sydney, says with a laugh.

Two programs stood out for Gerry. The Certificate in Financial Management and the Certificate in Business Communications. She has now completed both. "I was looking for tips and techniques to make me more efficient in these areas," Gerry notes.

As a business analyst, Gerry is often focused on the organization's budget and prepares comparative analyses looking at five-year trends. "I break down massive amounts of information into a report that is understandable," she explains. "I knew that focusing on

finance and communication would be beneficial."

Gerry wanted that focus to be practical. While theory and conceptual ideas are important and intriguing, her motivation was hands-on. Gerry wanted to transform her learning into practices she could use back in the workplace. "I wanted a solid meat-and-potatoes program that would offer concrete examples and insight. I wanted to dig in and dig deeper into the work I'm doing now and will do in the future."

Two elements of her training were a pleasant surprise, says Gerry. "I felt like I needed to update my skills and my knowledge. I discovered I was quite current."

That discovery, she adds, led to a second revelation. Learning builds confidence. "The training cemented a lot of things I already knew, and that was so reassuring. It gave me such a sense of accomplishment."

Gerry's newfound confidence will continue to grow. The Cape Breton resident is planning to enroll in the Certificate in Project Management for the Project Associate. "I want to understand how to better work as a team and to get buy-in for a collaborative approach. I'm looking forward to building my skills in these areas," she says.

For Gerry, taking a course means being fully engaged in the work. It's an approach she recommends. "Don't be intimidated," she advises. "Don't be afraid to make a few mistakes. You won't learn otherwise."

That learning, she adds, will help you grow as a professional and a person. "This is about your skills and your knowledge. It is not about a piece of paper. The achievement you feel is very empowering."

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