

Mazda employees are ambassadors of the brand

On her first day on the job at **Mazda Canada Inc.**, a senior executive stopped to talk to Amanda Goldenberg while she worked at her desk. “He actually knelt down and said, ‘Welcome.’ He said he hoped my first day was going well and that if I had any ideas that might help the company, I should let him know.”

That brief conversation, two years ago, convinced Goldenberg that she’d joined the right company at the right time.

As a Specialist, Curriculum Development, Goldenberg develops and administers online training programs designed for head-office employees and for approximately 5,000 staff members at Mazda’s 165 franchised dealerships across the country. Based in Mazda’s head office in Richmond Hill, Ont., Goldenberg and her four-person team also coordinate face-to-face training programs for as many as 1,200 dealership personnel who learn about and test drive the company’s new vehicles on a closed-circuit track. “We get to drive them too,” she adds.

“I never thought I’d end up in the automotive industry. But I’m so happy to be here. And we get to drive really cool cars.”

– **Amanda Goldenberg**,
Specialist, Curriculum Development

Goldenberg arrived at Mazda after graduating with a Bachelor of Education degree from York University. With thousands of graduates competing for

only a few openings with local school boards, she looked farther afield and accepted a contract position in Mazda Canada’s warranty department.

Since Mazda operates dealerships and a regional office in Quebec, she thought initially that the temporary position would give her a chance to practice her French-language skills. “But the people here were so friendly and helpful, and I always felt so supported,” Goldenberg says, “that by the time my contract ended, I didn’t want to leave.”

Fortunately, just as she started looking for another job, Mazda Canada circulated an internal announcement about an opening in its Brand Engagement department.

“We’ve been growing for the last three years, adding five or six people a year, and we’ve had tremendous success finding great people,” says Brian McDougall, the company’s Senior Director of HR, IT & Administration,

That’s not surprising. New employees at Mazda Canada enjoy three weeks of starting vacation and receive additional paid time off between Christmas and the New Year. They also receive paid personal days. “We all need time off occasionally to manage our lives,” says McDougall, “whether it’s for a sick day or to take care of a child. This allows people to manage their own time.”

Generous vacation schedules and competitive benefits programs, including a defined benefit pension plan, are certainly not the only factors that attract employees to Mazda. “We also have a great product,” says McDougall, a 25-year HR veteran, who came to Mazda almost eight years ago from one of the Big Three North American automakers.

“This is a tough business,” he continues. “We don’t shy away from that. There are days when it’ll be tough to go to work. But we’re here for our employees, and we try to make a difference in our employees’ lives.”



SPECIALIST, CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AMANDA GOLDBERG ATTENDING A TRAINING SESSION

138
full-time staff
in Canada

1,690
job applications
last year

43
years, longest-
serving employee

3
weeks, starting
vacation allowance

Goldenberg noticed that difference from the day she started at Mazda. “I started just after the company launched its customer experience initiative,” she says. “It focuses the culture of the organization on the customer, and that means anyone you’re interacting with, whether it’s a person buying a car or the person next to you in the office. We’re all ambassadors of the brand.”

As she discovered during her first day on the job, Mazda Canada encourages

employees to bring a fresh perspective to the company, “to share ideas, use my skills and learn new things.”

All this came as a revelation to Goldenberg, who had assumed that she would follow a career as a conventional teacher with a public school board. “I never thought I’d end up in the automotive industry,” she says. “But I’m so happy to be here. And we get to drive really cool cars.”

WITH THE RIGHT PEOPLE
BEHIND THE WHEEL,
EVERYTHING IS POSSIBLE.



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