



**Where's the Work?**  
Helping Career Practitioners  
Explore Their Career Options

Deirdre A. Pickerell  
Roberta A. Neault



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Deirdre A. Pickerell, MEd, MA, CHRP, GCDF-i

Dr. Roberta A. Neault, CCC, CCDP, GCDF-i



Aldergrove, British Columbia, Canada

[www.lifestrategies.ca](http://www.lifestrategies.ca)

[info@lifestrategies.ca](mailto:info@lifestrategies.ca)



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Of course, we can't forget our families – always behind the scenes offering support and patiently waiting for us to find time to play.

*It can be tough. You need to listen more,  
talk less and always have tissues nearby.  
You deal with issues that are often emotionally  
charged and you need to be in the moment  
for each individual client.  
Have a strong network of support for yourself,  
so you can work through your own emotions  
as you work with clients.*

~Anonymous

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*I would love to work in “private practice”  
and work with highly motivated people  
who actually appreciate my  
insights and assistance . . .  
but who is going to pay the price?  
There just isn't a viable market out there  
for most career practitioners.*

~ Posted on BCWorkInfoNet listserv, 2008

## INTRODUCTION

The career management/development sector continues to undergo a professionalization and transformation process in which roles, qualifications, and professional identities are all in flux. Throughout Canada, as well as internationally, many career practitioners have traditionally been employed within government-funded contracts or working directly for government. However, many of these roles are in transition, in part due to recent redesign of services in some regions. As a case example, in BC there was a shift from over 400 service providers to just 73.<sup>1</sup> This means many career practitioners traditionally employed in government-funded contracts, may not be similarly employed in the future – some positions will be redundant, individuals may not have the skill set employers are seeking, and/or some current employees may choose not to work under the new model.

This isn't true just for BC; any jurisdiction in Canada with government-funded employment service agencies (i.e., 39-43% of career practitioners, according to a recent Pan-Canadian Mapping Study) is subject to the stipulations of various funding agreements and policy shifts. This is a significant proportion of the sector that is vulnerable to contracting structure or funding changes. As such, it's imperative for career practitioners to proactively manage their own careers<sup>2</sup> and explore emerging employment opportunities. This will not only provide more potential job opportunities; it may increase the exposure of career management practices to a broader audience, bridging silos between sectors (e.g., education and industry).

Supported by research conducted in early 2012, the objective of this guide and other project materials is to provide career practitioners with a better sense of where work exists for them, both in and beyond government contracts.

In Part 1, we explore the work career practitioners do, first reflecting on the rich history and evolution of the field then considering common career paths, education options, and day-to-day tasks.

In Part 2, we look at the *common roles* that career practitioners fill including intake, needs assessment and referral, coach, case manager, assessment specialist, and program manager. In exploring each role, we provide a general description of the day-to-day work, pros and cons of the role, and where the work is most commonly done. Each role is illustrated through a case study compiled from interviews with career practitioners.

In Part 3, we consider *where* the work is found – “career” is a focus for countless employers across diverse sectors. From government to corporations, insurance providers to prisons, we will explore the various places a career practitioner might be able to find, or create, employment opportunities. Some settings profiled in this section are private insurers, prisons, government, 3rd party-contractors, and corporations.

## **PART 1:**

# **WHAT DOES A CAREER DEVELOPMENT PRACTITIONER DO?**



*When you take men and women  
away from their homes and ship them to a  
foreign country to fight a foreign war, when they  
come back they need to be integrated into our  
society . . . they need job counselling*

~Frank Lawson



## Chapter 1

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# A Review of the History

Canadian Career Development Practitioners (CDPs) are part of a profession with a rich history which, at many times, saw the country lead the world in career development initiatives and resources. Here we share some highlights of that rich history; although we can't possibly document everything, we hope you find this brief glimpse a source of inspiration.

In its earliest days, the work was more commonly known as *vocational guidance* – a term still used today in many countries. CDPs can, perhaps, thank Etta St. John Wileman for the birth of the profession here in Canada. In the early 1900s, she lobbied the Canadian government to establish employment bureaus throughout the country to help facilitate what we now call labour mobility. Taking this further, she also “lobbied for what is today known as career guidance and counselling in schools and for the publication of labour market information.”<sup>3</sup>

The 1940s saw unemployment insurance legislation and the New Employment Service launched, the early years of the Canadian Psychological Association, and the Federal government's commitment to get World War II veterans back to work. Globally, the 1940s, '50s, and '60s also saw the emergence of such influential theorists as Erikson, Holland, Maslow, Rogers, and Super.

Throughout these early years, the Toronto YMCA played a pivotal role in helping men find work and employers find workers; it also became the “hub” of this emerging field. In 1959, Frank Lawson, then Chairman of Toronto YMCA’s Counselling Service, established the Counselling Foundation of Canada which, today, is perhaps best known for the Canadian Education and Research Institute for Counselling (CERIC) and its programs (e.g. Cannexus, Contact Point). In 1965, the Canadian Guidance and Counselling Association (CGCA) was launched; this later became the Canadian Counselling Association (CCA). In 2009, to better align with the professionalization of counselling across Canada, CCA was once again renamed; it is now the Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association (CCPA).

The 1960s also brought Stu Conger into the forefront of guidance policy and programs funded or sponsored by the Federal government and he continued to play a key role in the field for many years. In 1975, Conger initiated the first National Consultation on Employment Counselling Research (NATCON); the first compilation of NATCON research papers was published in 1981. NATCON later became the National Consultation on Career Development and remained an important annual event for those working in the field, every January in Ottawa, until 2006.<sup>4</sup>

The late 1960s and ‘70s also saw the emergence of specific training and education in counselling and guidance. Across the country, educators and researchers were working to establish *career counselling* as a counselling specialization, with courses being developed at universities across the country, in Alberta, British Columbia, Quebec, and Ontario. In 1979, the CGCA board set up the Canadian

Guidance and Counselling Foundation (CGCF) as a registered charity. Over the years, CGCF became more involved in career development initiatives; in 1996, to reflect this evolution, it became the Canadian Career Development Foundation (CCDF), a “charitable Foundation to advance the understanding and practice of career development. Each year, CCDF continues today to award up to \$7,500 to a project/projects which demonstrate potential advancement of career development.”<sup>5 6</sup> This project is one such example.

During this same time period, and into the ‘80s, Phil Jarvis began to work for Stu Conger; CHOICES<sup>7</sup>, the first Canadian comprehensive and computerized career information tool, was born. Job Finding Clubs, based on Nathan Azrin’s model, were offered to Canadians receiving unemployment insurance benefits, and the government began training staff to offer employment counselling; some of this training was coordinated and developed by Lynne Bezanson, CCDF’s current Co-Executive Director.

In order to continue to advance career research and practice, Stu Conger, in the late 1980s, brought together a team that resulted in the Creation and Mobilization of Career Resources for Youth (CAMCRY) project, coordinated by CGCF, with research and development contributions from colleges and universities throughout Canada. Through Human Resource Development Canada (HRDC), close to \$7.5 million of Federal money was matched by almost \$7 million of partner contributions; together this funding resulted in establishing Centres for Excellence and funding 41 innovative projects to support the career development needs of Canada’s youth.

Lynne Bezanson and her Co-Executive Director Sareena Hopkins, who joined CCDF in the early 1990s, have played crucial roles in helping Canada's career development sector grow, develop, and become a leader in the international career development community. Since 1997, CCDF has awarded the *Stu Conger Award for Leadership* in acknowledgement of his contributions to our field.<sup>8</sup>

In 1997, Canada also began to take a more active international role, connecting career development and public policy. A series of pan-Canadian and International Symposia have been held, bringing together countries from around the world to share information and resources, ensure career development is seen as a key economic driver, and connect policy makers with the broad career development community. The first Symposium was held in Ottawa in May 1999.<sup>9</sup>

The 1990s was a decade when several other significant sector initiatives were launched. In 1992, the Canadian Career Information Partnership (CCIP) was launched; this brought together representatives from Provincial, Territorial, and Federal governments, educators, and practitioners to "talk" career. In 1993, the National Occupational Classification (NOC) was introduced and, in 1996, work began on the development of a set of competencies that would guide our practice. After an extensive collaborative process that lasted several years, the Canadian Standards and Guidelines for Career Development Practitioners were introduced at NATCON, in January 2001.<sup>10</sup>

The Canadian Standards and Guidelines for Career Development Practitioners (S&Gs) were developed with

support, and funding, from HRDC. Canadian career development leaders, along with a huge contribution from volunteers, worked with practitioners over a 7 year period (1996-2003) to develop what are today simply referred to as the “S&Gs.” The main focus of this initiative was to develop a framework that described the competencies that career practitioners need in order to deliver quality career services. They have been a foundation for certification initiatives in several provinces and are an invaluable resource for increasing the professionalism within the career development sector. The S&Gs were recently updated and revised and will continue to evolve as professional practice changes.

Shortly afterwards, a parallel initiative – the Blueprint for Life/Work Designs – was also funded by HRDC to identify the types of competencies clients could legitimately expect to receive from providers of career services. Published in 2000, the Blueprint provides a conceptual framework of the “competencies Canadians need to proactively manage their career building process, from kindergarten to adulthood.”<sup>11</sup> Among other contributions, the Blueprint offers users a common career development language.

Since the early 1900s, the Canadian government has invested many millions of dollars in initiatives and programs that have helped shape the career development sector; in many cases these may never have been realized without the government’s generous funding support. In some cases, organizations or projects have been set up to meet specific needs and doors have later closed when goals were achieved or different funding priorities emerged. However, today’s governments still play a key

role in funding innovative projects to address local and national priority needs.

In the following chapter, we'll discuss where the field is today and look to the future. We'll share results from recent surveys of the field and Canada's strengths and challenges, according to the 2011 Canada Paper submitted for the International Symposium on Career Development and Public Policy. We'll also summarize insights from individuals currently working in the sector, who, through survey responses and interviews, shared their likes, dislikes, and reflections on lessons learned throughout their careers.



## Chapter 2

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### Where the Field is Today

In the last few years there have been many surveys of the career development community. Two of these, (1) the Pan-Canadian Mapping Study<sup>12</sup> (2009) and (2) the Survey of Career Service Professionals<sup>13</sup> (2011), provided valuable information about the work of career development practitioners. A third, our 2012 study,<sup>14</sup> had a slightly different focus but collected similar demographic data; we review some of this broad demographic data in the following sections.

#### **The Field**

Approximately 80% of career development practitioners are women, around 50% are 40-45 years old, and at least 1/3 have been in the field for 10 or more years. CDPs are also a fairly well educated group with 38-58% (depending on the study) having Bachelor's degrees and 21-44% with Masters; the Mapping study, however, also found that "half of the practitioners have weak specialized training in formal career development."<sup>15</sup> This may change, however, with three provinces (BC, AB, QC) having a formal certification/qualification in place, and two others (ON, NS) working towards it.

There appear to be some challenges in identifying job labels or titles for CDPs. The Canadian Standards and Guidelines for Career Development Practitioners (S&Gs) offer the label of "Career Development Practitioner" and

our survey indicated that 88% of respondents (61% “definitely” and 27% “somewhat”) identified with that. The Pan-Canadian Mapping study saw different results; 21% of respondents selected the title of Employment Counsellor and 13% Career Counsellor; 66% cited additional titles and CDP didn’t seem to appear in that list. The differences in the survey questions (i.e., ours asked about *label* but the mapping study asked about *job titles*) may certainly impact our ability to correlate the data but it does seem clear that, as noted by the Mapping study, the “frequently heard complaint that the career development sector lacks common language seems to be especially borne out in the range of job titles used.”<sup>16</sup>

At least 2/3 of CDPs are involved in direct service to clients; approximately 1/3 work in agencies or organizations funded by government and only about 5% work within an organization, providing services in-house to employees. Overall, most CDPs earn between \$40,000 and \$50,000 per year, with 82% receiving extended health/dental benefits but only 31% getting employer contributions to their RRSPs.

### **Career Education and Certification**

Today’s CDPs can access a wide variety of professional development – from short courses (e.g., 1-week) to diploma or degree programs (e.g., 2+ years). A comprehensive list of career development training programs offered throughout the country, online, or in a blended format (i.e., a combination of online and face-to-face) is available on the Canadian Council of Career Development Association’s website.<sup>17</sup>

CERIC supported a research project to develop “A Model for the Education and Training of Career Practitioners in Canada.”<sup>18</sup> The model outlines core functions (i.e., career advising, educating, counselling, coaching, and consulting), across 3 levels of education (i.e., certificate through to Masters and PhD); 5 leadership functions (i.e., innovation, education, supervision of practice, management, systemic change) are also identified.

Although CDPs as a group are fairly well educated, studies also indicate that they enter the field from a wide variety of work settings and often as a second or third career choice. This may contribute to the lack of specific career development education or with CDPs being well educated but having qualifications more closely related to other fields.

The career development profession is not regulated (i.e., a license is not required to practice) but there are many voluntary certifications<sup>19</sup>/designations. This means that an external body, usually a professional association, has vetted a practitioner’s education and experience. In addition, specific course work (e.g., theories and ethics) is often required. To maintain the certification, there is often a requirement to commit to ongoing professional development; typically a pre-determined number of continuing education units (CEUs) need to be earned during a specific time period (e.g., 75 hours over 3 years).

In Canada, Alberta, British Columbia, and Quebec currently offer certifications and Ontario and Nova Scotia are looking at the feasibility of instituting a certification. International certifications also exist; two that may be worth further investigation are (1) Global Career

Development Facilitator<sup>20</sup> which is administered by the Centre for Credentialing and Education in the US and (2) Educational and Vocational Guidance Practitioner<sup>21</sup> administered by the International Association of Educational and Vocational Guidance. Each certification specifies requirements for education and relevant work experience.

### **Getting Started in the Career Development Sector**

As noted earlier, many career development practitioners are on their 2nd and 3rd career which seems to indicate that this isn't a profession one is likely to choose right out of high school or university. This is further supported by the average age of CDPs; 58% are 48-65 years old, the majority of whom have been in the field for 10 years, indicating an entry age for many of 38-55.

A clear entry point or first role doesn't really exist; any and all positions are available to anyone with education, experience, and perhaps certification determining who is most qualified for each position. Supervisor and manager positions are also available to individuals outside of the field; specific career development knowledge doesn't seem to be an entry requirement for management roles. In our 2012 survey there were two main routes into the field. The first is through *choice* or a deliberate, planned entry through specific training or education, targeted recruitment, or an identified need in the community that someone wishes to fill. The second relates to *chance* with many respondents falling into their first roles, some indicating they had never previously known the field existed. Other chance occurrences relate to being pushed by circumstance such as a foreign credential not being

recognized or a spouse/partner relocating leaving the one who follows in need of new work.

Although many CDPs found work without specific training or experience, the professionalization of the field, especially through certification, is likely going to make it harder to begin a career without relevant qualifications of some sort. Respondents to our survey noted the importance of specific education prior to entering the field with many wishing they'd had more training related to career development at the start of their careers. Respondents also noted the importance of engaging in ongoing learning and, of course, carefully planning that learning so that it supports their career goals.

Research is also crucial for anyone getting started in this field. Survey respondents, especially those in government-funded programs, wished they'd known more about the sector's political influences, bureaucracy, and compensation realities. They also wished they'd had a better understanding of the richness of the sector, the various roles they could fill, and the settings in which they could work. Parts 2 and 3 of this guide provide some of that requested information.

### **Strengths and Challenges of the Field**

The career development sector is incredibly diverse with a wide range of work roles, settings, and clients. Workers can stay focussed on one area or one client group for their whole careers or choose to make regular shifts, but always staying in the sector. The work is very similar even when client, setting, and in some cases, language, shifts. Given that the work involves helping others find satisfying work, the skills of every CDP will always be in demand.

As a sector, movement to professionalize is another strength. Whether through provincial or international channels, the ability to have skills and education formally acknowledged is a huge benefit. CDPs have access to an internationally recognized competency framework in the Canadian Standards & Guidelines for Career Development Practitioners, tools for establishing a common language framework in the Blueprint for Life/Work Designs<sup>22</sup> and Alberta's Common Language Matrix,<sup>23</sup> and more recently the Canadian Council of Career Development Associations which gives national voice to the sector. Canada is also a leader in the international career development community and is home to some of the world's most influential career professionals.

Of course, the sector is not without its challenges. Some CDPs note more extrinsic factors such as funding and policy constraints as well as, at times, coping with challenging clients. Low wages and lack of professional development support were challenges other CDPs named but this may relate to specific settings and roles. Intrinsic factors included the difficulties (e.g., feelings of failure and guilt) that arise from being unable to meet clients' needs, the challenge of charging for services, and the growing emphasis on managing outcomes (i.e., evidence-based practice). According to the CERIC study, approximately 50% of respondents are planning on leaving the field; of those, 31% cite personal growth and new challenge as the primary reason for leaving.

Looking ahead, the rest of this guide explores the various roles/positions that career development practitioners can fill and the work settings that CDPs work within.

*Know yourself. Know your motivation.  
Develop your communication  
and interpersonal skills  
because this job will have you questioning  
and doubting whether you are making an impact  
some days.  
Ask yourself if you've walked your talk,  
are you ready for this?  
Are you open to  
continuously learning and growing?  
We don't rest long on our  
knowledge/accomplishments  
before the next challenge presents itself.  
Can you identify what you need to hold on to  
(values for example)  
while adapting to a wide variety of clients?*

~Laura, Labour Market Information Specialist

*Never stop learning,  
know your field and what is new and growing.  
Clients need you to be the expert,  
don't let them down.  
Make sure you develop strong personal barriers  
because it's easy to take on a client's problems  
and have it weight you down;  
they will take as much as you let them.  
~Jaime Maynard*

## **PART 2:**

# **WHAT ROLES DO CAREER DEVELOPMENT PRACTITIONERS FILL?**



*Career Development Practitioners (CDPs) and their agencies appear to operate within a well-defined scope of practice. There is a clear employment, career and labour market mandate.*

~Bezanson, O'Reilly, & Magnusson, 2009



## Chapter 3

---

# One Career, Many Jobs

Canada's Career Development Practitioners bring a unique set of knowledge, skills, and attributes to the workplace. They can be *generalists* (i.e., understand all aspects of career development and able to easily transition from one role to another) or *specialists* (i.e., focussed on a specific role or skill set). The Canadian Standards and Guidelines provide a clear delineation between the core competencies (which relate to generalists) and areas of specialization (which relate to specialists).

It is important to consider roles, or a defined set of competencies, rather than job titles. As noted in the Pan-Canadian Mapping Study, although there is consistency across many roles, multiple job titles will exist for each – causing confusion and, ultimately, huge challenges when focussing on professional identity. Debate on the broad label, or specific job titles, and how to differentiate between various specializations within the field, continues to be a “hot” topic; the Careers Debate<sup>24</sup> LinkedIn group is engaged in ongoing discussion with some contributors putting out a call to “clean up our language” and work to “set aside our silos” and agree on “2 or 3 distinct titles that link to distinct roles which then link to very clear and compelling positive outcomes.”

Although two or three distinct titles may be a good long-term goal, it doesn't seem very achievable at this moment in history: the Canadian S&Gs identify 6 areas of specialization, CERIC's model for education and training

lists 5 core functions, and BC's career development association lists 17 roles.

In the sections that follow, we will explore the 12 roles that surfaced through our research; for each we will provide a case study that includes a brief description of the role, responsibilities, relevant training and professional designations, salary range, and likes and dislikes. We'll also list key tasks and typical work settings.<sup>25</sup>



### ASSESSMENT SPECIALIST

Matthias is a Career Assessment Specialist working within government, supporting several offices throughout the community. He is responsible for selecting, administering, and interpreting career assessments with clients. Matthias is qualified to use a wide variety of assessments and works with each referring practitioner and client to identify which tools he'll use; this decision is based on the reason for the referral and what information they, collectively, hope to discover. Matthias loves his job – he gets to work with a wide range of clients, using a huge variety of tools. He especially loves the opportunity to continuously learn about new tools and new ways to work with assessments. To try to ensure effective and appropriate use of results, Matthias always writes summary reports, a process he doesn't particularly enjoy. He also dislikes having to constantly remind clients that assessment tools aren't magic answers to career concerns.

Matthias makes \$62,000 per year plus a pretty good compensation package that includes a pension, release time for learning, "wellness" account, extended health, and dental. Although he believes he could earn more base salary in the private sector, he knows it is unlikely he could replicate his overall compensation package.

To be effective, Matthias stresses the importance of commitment to some extensive education and the need to continuously improve skills. He has a Masters in Counselling Psychology with specific courses in tests and measurements. This qualifies him to use "B" level assessment tools but Matthias is still constantly

researching new tools and engaging in learning to ensure he's using tools effectively.

**Key Duties:**

- Select appropriate assessment tools, based on client need
- Administer and score assessments
- Write assessment report summarizing and integrating results
- Debrief assessment results

**Work Settings:**

- Community-based agencies
- Vocational rehabilitation
- Colleges/universities
- Corporations – Human Resources
- Recruitment firms

### CASE MANAGEMENT

Stephen works as a Case Manager for an agency offering a wide range of programs and services. In his role, Stephen works 1-on-1 with clients to co-create employment goals and return-to-work action plans. As he is based in British Columbia, Stephen must also assign each client to the appropriate Tier group based on his/her barriers and needs. Stephen will open, manage, and maintain a case file for each client ensuring he/she has the supports required to be successful which may include referrals to various programs and employment supports available within his agency or in the community. Stephen loves working 1-on-1 with clients, helping them achieve their goals – from an improved resume to a new career and life plan. Although Stephen loves his job, he gets frustrated when he doesn't have enough time to work with multi-barriered clients. He also finds that some clients have a sense of "entitlement" or "being owed" and are angered by the policies and procedures that must be followed.

Stephen earns \$52,000 per year and has access to a basic extended health and dental plan; his employer also matches RRSP contributions to a maximum of \$5,000 per year. Stephen believes other people in similar positions have a similar wage but understands those in vocational rehabilitation settings can make significantly more.

To be effective in this position, Stephen believes that individuals must be able to advocate for clients' needs while, at the same time, ensure they are able to stay within program eligibility requirements; this isn't always easy. Stephen emphasizes the need to have strong interpersonal skills, excellent written and verbal

communication skills, and the ability to function under immense pressure. He believes that specific certification and training in case management is important or, if that isn't possible, a certificate or diploma in career development. He also highly recommends people get experience in other areas of the field before working as a Case Manager.

**Key Tasks/Duties:**

- Help clients understand the services available in the agency and community; refer as necessary
- Co-create return-to-work action plans
- Provide ongoing support and monitor client progress
- Ensure client goals are realistic and achievable
- Assess needs of each client using informal and, at times, formal assessment tools
- Identify client's eligibility for various services, including training

**Work Settings:**

- Many positions are within agencies that offer services to the unemployed
- Colleges/universities and counselling services
- Vocational rehabilitation / insurers

## COACHING

Huan works as a self-employed Career and Life Skills Coach; he is lucky enough to have several part-time contracts which have him working in many agencies throughout the community. Regardless of which agency he is at, Huan works 1-on-1 with clients providing guidance and support as they set and work to achieve their goals. His specific tasks vary depending on the needs of his clients but typically focus on self-assessment, job search strategies, resume development, and interview preparation. From a Life Skills perspective, Huan may also help clients with goal setting, time management, and accessing supports in the community (e.g., settlement workers, food banks, English language training). Huan loves working with individual clients and appreciates that each day brings something new. He also feels proud to know he's helped someone find success; he loves seeing the growth of his client's self-esteem and confidence. Huan is disappointed in how the system seems more like a "numbers game" and wishes there was a way to demonstrate success beyond "employed."

When Huan combines all his part-time work, he earns \$46,000 per year; as a part-time worker he can't access any benefits. Huan has to manage his tax deductions carefully, having each employer remit additional taxes so he isn't penalized when his overall annual earnings are calculated. Based on his research, he earns a similar salary to others working in community-based agencies. However, Huan also knows that executive coaches can earn well over \$70,000 per year.

To be successful, Huan recommends people get specific training in career development and earn a formal coaching credential. Although he has seen some postings which ask for a Masters degree, Huan doesn't see this as necessary. He also recognizes that his approach of juggling multiple contracts isn't for everyone so recommends people try to find one employer, especially if they are just getting started.

**Key Tasks/Duties:**

- Develop goals; co-create action plans that are realistic and achievable for each client
- Monitor client progress
- Write reports that document activities and progress
- Keep active connections with community supports and local employers

**Work Settings:**

- Many positions are within agencies that offer services to the unemployed
- Private coaching practice, often with a specific focus (e.g., life, career, business)

## COUNSELLING

Siobhán is a Canadian Certified Counsellor working part-time for a community agency offering employment supports. Siobhán works 1-on-1 with clients, helping with their career decision-making process while, at the same time, also assisting with a wide range of personal challenges that are negatively impacting clients' lives. Siobhán loves the 1-on-1 time, especially when the work focuses more on personal issues; she knows her work is making a positive contribution to people's lives. Like many of her colleagues, Siobhán gets frustrated with time constraints and the rigidity of the system; she knows there is so much more she could do if it weren't for program mandates.

Siobhán earns \$35,000 per year which may seem like the low end of the range but, as a part-time worker, is in-line with her research. Colleagues in private practice charge \$105.00 per hour, on average, which is far more than her salary would calculate to, but she gets paid even when not meeting with clients and gets vacation pay and statutory holidays off with pay.

Siobhán recognizes there is some confusion around *counsellor vs. coach or practitioner*. She believes a "counsellor" is someone with graduate level education and supervision very similar to what would be required to earn the Canadian Certified Counsellor (CCC) or Registered Clinical Counsellor (RCC) credentials. As such, to be effective as a career counsellor, Siobhán believes people need to be good counsellors, first, and then add specific training/knowledge in career development; this also fits with the 2012 revisions to the *Career Counsellor*

*Specialization* within the Canadian Standards and Guidelines for Career Development Practitioners. Counsellors need to be prepared to help people cope with trauma, anxiety, stress, depression, and other mental health issues that can impact careers and employment.

**Key Tasks/Duties:**

- Build and maintain effective working alliance with clients
- Support clients to identify and overcome barriers to employment and life success
- Use psychometric tools to support self-assessment
- Participate in interdisciplinary teams convened to support clients
- Monitor progress

**Work Settings:**

- Community-based settings
- Career centres within colleges/universities
- Vocational rehabilitation / insurer

### CURRICULUM / RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Kathleen is self-employed as a Curriculum Designer / Developer. Based on the specific needs of her clients, Kathleen will design, develop, and update overall program curricula, individual learning modules/workshops, or resources (e.g., handouts). No matter the client or content, Kathleen usually creates a facilitator guide, complete with required supplies, activities, handouts, and speaker notes; a participant guide with room for notes; and PowerPoint to support delivery. Kathleen generally starts with a needs assessment, involving the client, content experts, and trainers as necessary, then evaluating after the first delivery, making required revisions. Kathleen loves the creative side of her work – researching and developing activities to engage the learner. She likes preparing speaker’s notes the least, knowing that some trainers use them more as scripts rather than prompts.

Kathleen makes \$68,000 per year but, as she is self-employed, that is her gross wage from which she needs to remit her own income tax and CPP (both employee and employer portion). Thanks to recent legislative changes Kathleen can also contribute to Employment Insurance but hasn’t set that up yet. In addition, Kathleen must account for statutory holidays, vacation, and sick time – all of which she has to fund herself.

To be successful, individuals must have formal training in adult learning principles and curriculum development and design. They must also have exceptional writing skills and an incredible eye for detail. Patience is also required as some clients aren’t able to clearly communicate their

needs which can result in a draft product that doesn't fit the client's vision. Lastly, knowledge and understanding of intellectual property and copyright legislation is important.

**Key Tasks/Duties:**

- Remain aware of best practices in curriculum development and design and adult learning principles
- Research content, or access content experts, to ensure material is relevant and up-to-date
- Develop curriculum in accordance with client needs and that encourages a positive learning environment
- Evaluate and revise, as necessary

**Work Settings:**

- Large community-based, colleges and universities (public and private); many are contract-based, supporting new programs or major revisions

### EMPLOYEE RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

Thomas is an HR Generalist who focuses on employee recruitment, selection, and development for a manufacturing company. He supports all hiring activities starting from working with the department supervisor/manager to create a job posting. He then adds the posting to the company's website and Facebook page as well as posting it on Monster.ca and Workopolis. Depending on the job, he may also post the job on Craigslist. Thomas will scan applicants then work with department managers to select candidates they believe are worth meeting. He will then set up interviews, administer employee screening assessments, and conduct reference checks for shortlisted candidates. With a history of working in employment/career services, Thomas is confident he brings a unique perspective with his focus on the whole person and his/her fit for the position and organization. He loves almost all aspects of his job; however he can get frustrated with the short-sightedness of some managers who seems to focus only on a candidate's skills rather than whether he/she will be a good overall fit.

Thomas makes \$60,000 per year plus benefits which he knows is at the high end of the range. He does know, however, that some recruiters get a commission so can earn well over \$70,000 per year.

To be effective in his role, Thomas believes people need to understand all aspects of the hiring process – from sourcing candidates to their first day. An understanding of labour relations and employment standards is also important. He also noted that CHRP (Certified Human

Resources Professional) designation is considered an asset for almost all HR jobs so a worthwhile investment for anyone considering this type of work.

**Key Tasks/Duties:**

- Create job posting/description depending on the needs of the department
- Post job to appropriate sites; monitor applications
- Screen applicant resumes; conduct first round of interviews to develop short list
- Conduct pre-screening assessments as required
- Perform reference checks

**Work Settings:**

- Found across all settings, the role may expand or contract depending on the size of the organization
- Specialized recruitment and placement firms

### GROUP FACILITATION / INSTRUCTION

Madeline works as a full-time Facilitator/Instructor delivering workshops on a wide range of topics including career decision-making, resume writing, and interview preparation. As a facilitator, Madeline assesses participants for program suitability; delivers the workshops, always ensuring each client is getting his/her needs met without sacrificing the needs of the whole group; and adjusts curriculum as needed. Madeline loves the action and excitement that comes from teaching groups; she also believes that she is making a bigger difference by being able to work with several clients at once. At times, Madeline gets frustrated when she has clients that don't really want to participate as they can be disruptive which negatively impacts everyone else. She also finds it difficult when a group has big differences in abilities (e.g., language level).

Madeline earns \$55,000 per year and works 35 hours per week. That is her total compensation as an employee – although she gets vacation pay and statutory holidays, she does not have access to extended health or dental. With colleagues in similar settings making less than her, Madeline knows she is at the high end of the range; however, she also has colleagues who teach in universities that make over \$60,000 and have full benefits. Most of those, however, have a Masters degree.

Madeline knows it takes a certain type of person to be a successful facilitator – there is a certain element of showmanship that doesn't fit for everyone. Facilitators must know their content and understand the principles of adult learning and group dynamics. Madeline believes it is

important for people interested in this type of work to have specific training in adult education in addition to their training in career development.

**Key Tasks/Duties:**

- Prepare materials, room, and equipment
- Deliver workshop curriculum using principles of adult learning
- Track participant attendance
- Evaluate workshops
- Revise and update workshop resources as necessary

**Work Settings:**

- Position exists across all settings including corporate (generally larger organizations with internal training department) and self-employment

### INFORMATION / RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Omar works in the resource room at the local employment centre. Omar interacts with everyone who comes into the resource room, helping them find the resources they need. He also helps people navigate the Internet as they research career and labour market information. One of Omar's key responsibilities is ensuring that information on job opportunities and labour market trends is up-to-date; this includes both print and web-based information. Omar loves the research aspect of his job; he's constantly scanning the Internet as well as bookstores and catalogues to ensure the resource centre is well stocked with relevant and current resources. However, the struggle to keep on top of everything is what Omar likes least about his job – information changes so quickly that it can be hard to keep up.

Omar earns \$42,000 per year plus has a generous compensation package which includes extended health, dental, orthodontics, glasses, and access to a wide range of specialists. Although his wage is at the low end of the range compared to his colleagues, when including his full benefit package his overall compensation is at the high end.

Omar recognizes that many similar jobs ask for experience and training in career development and, sometimes, even certification in the field. However, Omar believes it is at least equally, if not more, important to understand classification systems and have exceptional research skills. To be successful, Omar also believes it is important to be able to juggle multiple tasks, requests, and clients all at the same time.

**Key Tasks/Duties:**

- Order and maintain resources; regularly purge and add resources to ensure the centre stays up-to-date
- Support clients in finding the information they need
- Manage resource centre budget

**Work Settings:**

- Community-based settings
- Career centres within colleges/universities

### INTAKE / NEEDS ASSESSMENT

As an Intake Worker, Jasjit conducts program information sessions then meets with clients individually to complete an initial intake assessment. Once the intake assessment is complete, Jasjit will refer clients to a Case Manager, an Employment Consultant, or the self-service centre. Jasjit most enjoys meeting with clients, learning about their lives, and describing how her agency can help. She appreciates the opportunity to do group work, through the information sessions, as well as the opportunity to work 1-on-1 with clients. Jasjit is frustrated, however, with the time constraints (i.e., she can only spend about 20 minutes with each client). Jasjit also finds the record keeping responsibilities, both in terms of case notes and data entry into her agency's client database, a challenge.

Jasjit earns \$38,000 per year; this may seem to be at the low end of the range but she only works 35 hours per week. She also gets extended health, dental, and other benefits (e.g., glasses). Jasjit knows of others, primarily in community based settings, who are earning around \$45,000 and understands people working in colleges and universities may earn over \$50,000 per year.

To be effective in this position, Jasjit recommends people really understand the programs and services available in the community, have exceptional time-management skills, be comfortable with technology, and have good attention to detail. She also strongly recommends people truly understand the difference between Employment Insurance (EI) and Income Assistance (IA) and the guidelines for each program. Recently, Jasjit has noticed that many postings for similar positions have a minimum

education requirement of a diploma or degree in business, human services, or social work.

**Key Tasks/Duties:**

- Conduct orientation sessions and preliminary needs assessment
- Refer to appropriate service
- Case conference with agency staff, as necessary
- Provide clear and concise information to clients ensuring they understand their rights, responsibilities, and limits to confidentiality

**Work Settings:**

- Most positions are within agencies that offer services to the unemployed
- Some colleges/universities and counselling services may have someone doing intake at their career centres

### JOB/WORK DEVELOPMENT

Keiko works as a Job Developer for two community-based agencies. The primary focus of her work is to meet 1-on-1 with clients to discover their unique skills, talents, and interests then reach out to employers to identify job placements that are a good fit for those clients. She is an important link between the client looking for work and the employers who are seeking to hire. At times, Keiko will also act as a job coach, helping clients prepare for interviews as well as providing feedback from employers when the client wasn't successful. Keiko loves helping clients find meaningful employment opportunities; there is a lot of variety in her work with different clients and employers. Keiko doesn't like encountering employers who refuse to consider how her clients may be an asset to their organizations.

Keiko earns \$48,000 per year which is in-line with her research. One of her employers does have a benefit plan but Keiko has "opted out" believing it wasn't worth the expense. Keiko knows she's within the average salary range with some Job Developers making more, others making less.

To be effective in this position, Keiko believes that individuals must enjoy cold calling or knocking on doors; Keiko often has to reach out to multiple employers before getting anyone remotely interested in meeting with one of her clients. Successful job developers must also be able, and willing, to understand the needs of employers.

**Key Tasks/Duties:**

- Assess clients to determine suitable employment options
- Be familiar with employer needs and expectations
- Liaise with and market clients to employers and community stakeholders
- Negotiate employment opportunities and conditions
- Serve as on-going consultant to facilitate successful placements

**Work Settings:**

- Community-based settings
- Vocational rehabilitation / insurers

### ORGANIZATIONAL CAREER AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Carmen is a Career and Leadership Development Manager for a large petroleum company. Her role emerged from an employee survey that indicated employees felt the organization wasn't doing enough to support their career development. After 2 years of working with an external expert, Carmen's organization launched a full career development program including an onsite career resource centre loaded with books, resources, and assessment tools. Through the centre Carmen offers a series of workshops (e.g., Career Planning 101, Writing Effective Resumes, Succeeding in Interviews, and Striving for Work-Life Balance), meets 1-on-1 with employees to discuss their career concerns, compiles day-in-the-life videos (i.e., brief videos of various staff talking about their jobs) where her goal is to have one video for every position, and responds to various career and leadership development needs that emerge. Carmen loves most of her job, only really struggling when working with managers and supervisors who don't "buy-in" to this focus on providing career support.

Carmen makes \$80,000 per year plus a pretty generous compensation package. She admits she has no idea what others in similar positions are earning, but also acknowledges that wages are higher than average in her organization, to account for their locale in an isolated community.

To be effective in this position, Carmen really recommends people take specific training in career development. Her background in organizational development and human resources didn't prepare her for

the work she's doing helping employees manage their careers. On the advice of the external consultant, Carmen completed a 12-week Global Career Development Facilitator credential training program that has really helped to fill in the blanks. That program, or something similar, is a "must have" in Carmen's opinion. She also believes people really need to understand the demands of business; many companies have needs and priorities that conflict with the needs of workers.

**Key Duties**

- Manage the career development centre ensuring it is well stocked with up-to-date resources
- Deliver workshops on a set schedule and as needed by workers
- Support career development needs of employees in the context of the organization's goals
- Meet 1-on-1 with employees to discuss career plans and goals, and help them prepare for interviews

**Work Settings:**

- Any type of organization (e.g., corporation, government, non-profit) that is focussing on the career development needs of their employees

### PROGRAM COORDINATION / MANAGEMENT

Armand manages an employment service centre with 25 full-time and 5 part-time employees. He is responsible for the centre's day-to-day operations including overall leadership and management, staff supervision and support, community outreach, and interacting with the centre's funders. When necessary, Armand may also be brought in to consult and support case managers who are dealing with difficult clients or clients with specialized needs. Armand also represents the agency at various public events (e.g., Chamber of Commerce meetings, service provider network). Armand loves the variety of his work and building a team to find unique solutions to the challenges clients are facing. Not having a background in career development, Armand is continually frustrated with the program rules and regulations and the "politicking" that seems to be a part of employment services in this region; this wasn't what he expected when transitioning to this field.

Armand makes \$60,000 plus a generous compensation package that includes extended health, dental, and RRSP contributions. Based on his research, Armand knows his salary is at the lower end of the range but he's hoping a wage increase can be negotiated in his next contract.

To be effective, Armand recommends individuals have extensive experience in business and people management as well as career development. He came to his role without career development experience or an understanding of the sector which presented a steep learning curve. Armand believes that someone with extensive experience as a career development practitioner

but limited understanding of business would also have a steep learning curve. He recognizes, now, that it is this combination of knowledge and skills that contributes to success and allows individuals to move seamlessly into management positions. Although some agencies, including Armand's, have a financial services department responsible for fiscal management it is also important that program managers understand the basics of revenue and expenses and how to manage within a performance-based contract system.

**Key Tasks/Duties:**

- Recruit, hire, train, and supervise team
- Conduct performance reviews in accordance with agency policies
- Represent agency in the community
- Evaluate, maintain, and improve service delivery standards
- Contribute to and/or write funding proposals

**Work Settings:**

- Community-based agencies
- Colleges/universities

Throughout this chapter we've highlighted several roles that career practitioners can fill; there are many other variations. We hope these profiles have stirred your thinking about all the things people with your expertise can do. In the next chapter we will explore the various settings that career practitioners work within.

*If you are not flexible and cannot accept people for who and where they are (while encouraging them to move forward) then this is not for you.*

~Gail M. Finnon

## **PART 3:**

# **WHERE DO CAREER DEVELOPMENT PRACTITIONERS WORK?**



*Embrace new technology (infographics, eportfolios, video resumes, Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Camtasia, Skype, and online learning).*

*Today's younger generation are the hiring managers, employers, employees of the future – their world is already digital and we need to stay current on what is available and what is being used in the marketplace so that we can provide the best information for all of our clients.*

~ Karen Girard, CCDP, CEIP, CPRW, CCC,  
Certified Passion Test Facilitator



## Chapter 4

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# One Career, Many Settings

Career development practitioners traditionally work in government settings (i.e., government employee providing services to clients or employee of a 3rd party contractor funded by government) but, in an era of lifelong guidance, increasingly find work in many other settings. A career development practitioner's skills and knowledge are in demand; regardless of the setting, the required expertise is very similar. Although different terms may be used and success may be measured differently, the overall tasks are the same. In transferring from one setting to another, CDPs must be able to adjust to the new environment, learn to speak the new language, and understand that each setting will have a unique set of guidelines or policies that may seem constraining. Although shifting between settings may sometimes feel like exchanging one set of unreasonable rules for another, it's a similar reality for all types of work.

Each role introduced in the previous chapter may be performed in a wide range of settings; some of those were briefly mentioned in the case examples. In the section that follows, we explore those settings, and others, in greater detail.

**BUSINESS/CORPORATION**

Azan is a Career Development Specialist working for a large manufacturing corporation. His position is based in his company's organizational development unit which is part of the broader human resources department. Azan has a BA in Human Resources Management, is a Certified Human Resources Professional (CHRP), and recently completed a certificate in career development at the local college. This additional certificate wasn't required by his organization, and colleagues working in similar roles haven't done specialized training in career development; however, Azan believed it was an important component to success in his role. He finds there are several key differences between what his organization considers to be career development and what he learned in his certificate program. His program assumed that most "clients" are unemployed, making it easier to consider the whole person. However, in his corporate setting, Azan's focus at all times must be to ensure they have the right people, in the right jobs, at the right time in order to meet business goals and objectives. Sometimes this results in employees not getting the opportunities they really want.

Azan's organization has a mix of union and non-union workers, although he works primarily with non-union staff within HR, IT, and finance. They are located in a relatively large city of just over 180,000 people; parking is at a premium in city lots and, as his organization can't provide parking for all staff, he relies on public transit for his commute. He has access to the onsite fitness centre, wellness programs, and cafeteria – though often finds he is far too busy to make effective use of these resources. Many employees report similar experiences; although

they appreciate what the organization has done to encourage health and wellness, they barely have time to eat lunch let alone find time to work out.

Azan's organization also has a small training department and he is working with them to get specific career development workshops incorporated within the calendar. To do this, he must submit a proposal to his manager outlining the proposed topics, learning objectives, and potential for return on investment. In broader terms, his organization measures the success of his work through the annual employee survey which explores questions specific to career development opportunities.

**CORPORATE RELOCATION / INTERNATIONAL CAREER FIRM**

Hamish is a Relocation Consultant focusing on supporting international/global careerists. He works in a small subsidiary office in Canada; the head office is located in Hong Kong. As Hamish often needs to connect with both local and international clients and service providers, he can be somewhat of a shift worker. Generally he starts his day at 6:00am Pacific time and it's not unusual for him to be making calls or answering emails just before he heads off to bed at 10:00pm. Most weeks his actual office hours are limited to scheduled meetings; with mobile technology he is able to work anywhere he can pick up Internet access. Because so many of his calls need to be at unusual times, and also because of his frequent trips abroad, Hamish needs access to information 24/7. Secure access to the corporate Intranet, and passwords on all of his mobile devices, helps to ensure client confidentiality.

The clients Hamish works with tend to be people actively seeking international experience; most are emigrating to pursue a better future, leaving home during times of turmoil, relocating as a "trailing spouse," or travelling internationally for work. In the latter two cases, he tends to serve two clients – the individual or family who is actually relocating and also the organization hiring or transferring that individual; typically it's the individual client's employer that covers Hamish's fees and expenses. Hamish serves as a liaison between the individuals and families he supports and the resources in the new location that will meet their immediate needs (e.g., language training, information about credential recognition and Visas, international schools, realtors or rental agencies, relevant professional and community associations,

recreation, transportation, banking, local culture, and shopping). Where his work overlaps with career services is most commonly to support a “trailing spouse” (i.e., a partner relocating with someone who has been transferred abroad or hired for an international position). As a retention strategy, some of his corporate clients ask him to provide career planning support to their international workers. Also, repatriation can be a challenging time for people with international careers; Hamish is sometimes asked to help people prepare for repatriation so that their transition goes more smoothly.

**GOVERNMENT – POLICY/PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT**

Richard works in a Strategic Policy branch of a Federal government department; this, of course, makes him a member of Canada's public service. As an employee of the Federal government, Richard has access to a large range of benefits (e.g., medical, dental, and pension benefits; vacation and various leave opportunities) and amazing career opportunities both within his department and/or in one of the government's 75+ diverse organizations. He also finds that the government strives to accommodate work-life balance through flexible work hours, compressed work weeks, and tele-work; as a result, Richard works from home 2 days per week. Richard is fluent in both English and French and this has been to his benefit working within the government sector. Of course, as with many other roles within the public service, it is also a requirement for his particular job.

Richard's focus is on career and employment services though, in his role, he doesn't work directly with clients. Instead, he conducts research related to the development of evidence-based practices and manages innovative research programs that can eventually end up as promising practices. He liaises with the academic and career development communities across the country; this can result in the need to present at various conferences in career development, and travel nationally and, at times, internationally. The work is challenging, and gives him the opportunity to recommend policy direction concerning the government's approach to career and employment services and to demonstrate the contribution of career development services to various broad governmental strategies such as lifelong learning and labour market

integration. The work is interesting but, as is typical with large organizations, shifts of priorities are often occurring which can mean Richard sometimes doesn't get to see projects through to completion. Working in such an environment requires adaptation, mediating, partnership building, and intrapreneurship skills (i.e., being an entrepreneur within a large organization), as well as a strong ability to tolerate bureaucracy.

### GOVERNMENT SERVICES

Alexandra is an employment consultant (EC) working for the provincial government. As an EC, she mainly works 1-on-1 with clients through a full career planning process – from self assessment and identification of a job goal to resume and interview preparation. Alexandra must also work in the employment resource centre, helping drop-in clients, two mornings per week.

As an employee of the government, Alexandra is a member of the union and has access to full health benefits and a pension; she is also subject to a complex range of policies, guidelines and regulations. Within the government, service delivery can change often in order to respond to the changing needs of citizens, new and emerging technologies, and the introduction of new programs and initiatives; staff can also change as government provides diverse opportunities for employees within their department or across government. This movement results in a learning curve for new staff as they become acquainted with different systems and processes. To assist with ‘on boarding’ people to their role, Alexandria sometimes mentors new employees on aspects of their position such as client assessment, program eligibility and using associated systems. Alexandra has a BA in psychology and has completed several training courses at her worksite. She hasn’t taken the time to investigate any of the credentials she understands are available (e.g., Global Career Development Facilitator) because reimbursement is sometimes not issued until after the course is complete and is dependent on submitting a passing grade or certificate to her manager.

As her office is mandated to serve all local residents, Alexandra works with a wide variety of clients. Within her region there are a lot of resource-based industries (e.g., mining, forestry) with limited opportunities for clients to find employment outside of these sectors. The office also provides the full range of services to unemployed citizens so Alexandra is often responding to questions regarding employment records, income support, housing, and other provincial services. For many questions outside of her area of expertise, Alexandra needs to refer the individual to a different government department, which can be frustrating for some clients on occasion.

Working for the government, Alexandra is limited to using only approved tools and resources. Although government resources are quite extensive, well written, and have been successfully used with a wide-range of clients, Alexandra is aware of other tools that could also work for her clients, doesn't have access to them as options at this time. Overall, the goal is to get job ready clients back to work as soon as possible, leaving time to work with the more multi-barriered clients. While there are funding supports available for training her unemployed clients, there is a comprehensive assessment and application process that some of Alexandra's clients may find challenging to complete.

### K-12 EDUCATION

Corinna is a Canadian Certified Counsellor (CCC) through the Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association (CCPA); she works in a local high school. One of the things Corinna really appreciates about her membership in CCPA is the number of different specialty “chapters” she can belong to. She’s already a member of the BC Chapter, the School Counsellor’s Chapter, and also the Career Development Chapter and finds them all relevant for her work. Corinna is very interested in taking a more arts-based approach to her career counselling, so is also considering joining the Creative Arts in Counselling Chapter next time she renews her membership. She’s transferring to a new school in the fall and many of her students will be from the local First Nations Community; for that reason, she’s also planning to join the Aboriginal Circle Chapter.

Corinna started her career as a teacher and, in order to work in the K-12 system, must keep her professional standing as a BC teacher up-to-date through the Ministry of Education Teacher Regulation Branch as well as her membership in the BC Teacher’s Federation. Her salary is linked to her years of education as well as years of service; her Teacher Qualification Service (TQS) category went up after she completed her Masters in Counselling degree.

In Corinna’s current role, her time is split between counselling, teaching, and coordinating the “career” components within the school. Corinna teaches some career courses / modules throughout the year to students in Grades 9 – 12, with a focus on helping them begin to prepare now for their post high school transition. Corinna

also works very closely with the staff of the school's Career Education Centre and contributes some of the content to the Centre's website. Her counselling hours tend to be spent more on helping students select universities and supporting them to prepare their applications; she wishes that more of the non-university track students would come to her for help with career planning.

Corinna finds it a bit frustrating that many school administrators and teaching colleagues don't seem to recognize the importance of ensuring students are prepared for life beyond school – sometimes she believes that it's her and the Career Education Centre staff that are the lone voices in the wilderness and wishes that it could be more of a whole school effort to help students plan for their future careers.

Like any high school, the environment can be very chaotic with hundreds of kids coming and going and a pretty high noise level during any of the breaks. As a teacher and school counsellor, Corinna is expected to participate in all staff meetings and to support extra-curricular activities; this year she is moving a bit out of her comfort zone to coach the girls' volleyball team.

Although Corinna doesn't have any formal success measures such as a minimum number of students to work with, she is expected to mark assignments for her courses and submit grades in time for report cards. She must also make time for parent-teacher interviews and enjoys conversations with parents about how they can help their children prepare for their future careers.

## PENITENTIARY

Sundee works in the medium-security penitentiary in a neighbouring community. She loves working in this environment but knows it isn't for everyone. First and foremost, career practitioners working in prisons must have a criminal record check and be willing to work with incarcerated persons who, at least in her workplace, may be "in" for extended periods of time having committed relatively serious crimes. Sundee works in a men's prison so she needs to remain aware of attire, ensuring she is always professional and appropriately dressed. She must also submit all her belongings to searches each time she arrives at work. Many of the workers are part of a labour union but, as Sundee's position is within the human resources unit, her position is exempt. As Sundee is a counsellor, although her focus is career support for inmates expecting to be released soon, a wide range of barriers may be present and she must be prepared to deal with those as they emerge. Sundee is a Registered Clinical Counsellor (RCC) through the BC Association of Clinical Counsellors. She also had to participate in specific training offered by the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC); this training is required by anyone interested in working within the penitentiary system.

The prison is run with a military-like precision – there are very clear rules and regulations and strict schedules; security needs always take priority over programming needs or activities. Sundee must participate in various safety drills including fire and earthquake preparedness as well as riot and lockdown drills. In addition, Sundee must always take into consideration that the prison system is a huge multi-levelled bureaucracy so decisions can take a

long time, move slowly, and get bogged down. To function in this environment she needs to be an excellent communicator and work hard to build trust and develop strong relationships.

Due to the nature of the environment, sessions with inmates aren't private – all meetings are recorded. Sundeep doesn't have any formal success measures she must meet (e.g., # of clients served) but, informally, tracks attendance and apparent motivation or level of effort for each inmate she works with. Although she personally strives to ensure each individual has a clear job objective, fairly targeted resume, and has done some interview practice focussing on how to handle questions regarding work history that would have been interrupted due to the incarceration, sometimes the inmates don't recognize the value of this type of preparation; she also knows she can only help those who are ready and want to change their lives. As a result, not everyone she sees leaves as prepared as she would prefer. Once her work with each inmate is complete, Sundeep writes a very brief summary report, copies any documentation (e.g., resume), and, if requested and supported by a signed "release of information" document, sends this information to the service provider (e.g., transition house) that will be working with the inmate upon his release.

### POST-SECONDARY CAREER CENTRE

José manages the career centre for a university serving approximately 5,200 students and offering a range of certificate, diploma, and Bachelor degree programs, as well as a few Master's programs. Although the university is relatively small, the centre does focus solely on the career needs of its students; there is a separate counselling centre available for students needing support in other areas (e.g., transition, depression, substance use).

The career centre offers a wide range of services to students in all programs as well as alumni and employers. With this last group, the goal is to provide employers looking for part-time, short-term, or permanent employees with access to university students. As manager of the centre, José is often out in the community meeting with employers ensuring they are aware of how the career centre can support their recruitment needs.

José also works at ensuring that the role of his centre is understood and appreciated by members of the university community. This requires that he has excellent relationships with the senior administrator within student services/affairs and with key members on the academic side of the institution. It further requires that he understands the institution's goals and how the work of the centre contributes to those goals. Understanding trends and issues impacting universities (e.g., internationalization, student retention and engagement, renewed emphasis on learning outcomes) is also important.

Although José is a trained counsellor with years of experience working with students, he doesn't have an active case load. Instead, he focuses on centre operations ensuring the programs and services are meeting the needs of those using the centre; he also supervises a team of three counsellors and one support person and manages the centre's budget. Lastly, José manages a vibrant website and online presence, with increased use of social media as a way to connect with students.

The centre remains fairly busy throughout the day with students coming to access the self-serve resource centre, meet with staff, or make appointments. Within recent years, though, José has noticed that students are less likely to drop by just to get information – they prefer to be able to access that kind of support online. When they come in to the centre, it's usually specifically to meet with a counsellor or employer.

### PRIVATE INSURER

Martin works for a private insurance company supporting clients in their return-to-work action plan; approximately 95% of Martin's clients have had an accident<sup>26</sup> or illness that has left them unable to return to their previous work role. Clients are often still dealing with many barriers including chronic pain, physical limitations, anxiety, and depression; however, they have been deemed "job ready." This means that, in order to maintain benefits, they must begin the process of returning to work which may include attending programs, counselling, education/training, or securing new employment.

Martin's employer is a large unionized corporation. In this setting, Martin ends up serving multiple "clients" for every case – the injured worker, the insurer (his employer) who is paying for services (often via premiums paid), and the client's employer who remains involved in the process of making the accommodations that are necessary to return their employee to work. In his work with all clients, Martin follows the five phases of vocational rehabilitation (i.e., Phase 1: Same Job, Same Employer; Phase 2A: Modified Job, Same Employer; Phase 2B: Different Job, Same Employer; Phase 3, New Job, New Employer, Same Industry; Phase 4: New Job, New Employer, Different Industry; Phase 5: New Job, New Employer, New Skills).<sup>27</sup> These steps are moved through sequentially with a wide-variety of training available at each stage.

As his organization is a large corporation located in a major metropolitan area, Martin is expected to dress in business attire (i.e., suit and tie) when meeting with most employers; however, business casual is fine on a day-to-

day basis. Martin tries to balance those expectations with the needs of his clients – the goal is to ensure he doesn't make his clients feel unwelcome because they don't "fit" in his environment. As, at times, Martin needs to visit worksites he also ensures he has jeans, a hard hat, and steel-toed boots to change into.

Martin is expected to juggle a fairly large case load of clients and work with a large contingent of specialists (e.g., occupational therapists, psychologists, psychiatrists, doctors). As a result he often finds himself reading lengthy reports, many of them with dissenting opinions regarding the client's options. Many workers in his role are expected to either qualify for or hold the Registered Rehabilitation Professional (RRP) or Registered Vocational Professional (RVP) designation through the Vocational Rehabilitation Association of Canada (VRAC), though his employer does not cover any of the associated costs.

Martin has several success measures he must meet with the key target of returning clients to work, with the same compensation or as close to the pre-accident salary as possible, in the shortest amount of time. Returning to school is also an acceptable outcome, but the goal is that the investment in training will support the client's ability to achieve pre-accident wages.

### PRIVATE PRACTICE

Nancy is a self-employed Counsellor working in private practice. She works 2 days per week in one location and 2 days per week in a second location. Nancy finds this approach helps maximize the number of clients who can access her services. In both instances, Nancy rents space through an office centre which gives her access to a private counselling room, answering service, and waiting room. To maximize her potential for labour mobility, Nancy maintains her Canadian Certified Counsellor (CCC) credential which is recognized throughout the country; she also recently joined both the Career Development Chapter and the Private Practitioner's Chapter of the Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association (CCPA). Her CCC status makes her eligible to purchase professional liability insurance, an important precaution when she is self-employed. Not only does Nancy believe it is very important to be active in her professional association but, as her work environment is somewhat isolating, she values the opportunity to connect with colleagues.

Nancy's work in private practice allows her to set her own schedule, make decisions independently, customize her approaches, and utilize whatever tools she deems appropriate. For the most part, she loves being her own boss and the flexibility and autonomy that self-employment provides. However, it is sometimes frustrating to deal with the lack of guaranteed income, no benefits (e.g., health, dental, vacation), and lack of administrative and bookkeeping support; she often finds herself paying bills, printing invoices for the next day, and

doing month end reconciliations in the evenings or on weekends.

Although Nancy loves working with clients who are exploring career options or, perhaps, experiencing a career transition, she knows her practice must have a broader focus in order to have enough clients to earn a realistic salary. As such, Nancy also works with couples and individual clients coping with depression, anxiety, relationships, and grief/loss. She tends to avoid working with accident victims (e.g., car, workplace) as she doesn't want to get involved in medical-legal reports or attending court. Never wanting money to be the reason someone can't access counselling, Nancy has a sliding scale of fees ranging from \$85 to \$125 per hour plus relevant taxes. She also volunteers at a women's shelter 1 day every other week.

### RECRUITING FIRM

Gabriela works for a large recruitment firm located in a major metropolitan centre. She works full-time (i.e., M-F, 9-5) but is often expected to put in extended hours on evenings and weekends. Her particular firm pays a lower base salary, above minimum wage but still nothing she could live on, plus commission. Gabriela recruits for both union and non-unionized companies, for everything from entry level labourer and administrative roles to management positions. She is expected to juggle 3-5 positions at any one time; generally all of these will be in various stages of the process (e.g., some new files; others waiting for feedback on resumes sent to various employers). Gabriela's office is piled high with the "tools of her trade" including her laptop, Blackberry, tablet computer, journal, binder full of current candidate resumes, and a large dry erase board crammed full of data. When she arrives to work each day, she knows her email inbox will be overflowing with mail from candidates, managers, HR professionals, and calendar reminders.

As her company is recruiting for a large number of employers, with urgent positions to fill, the environment is fast-paced and very demanding. Her recruitment firm receives over 400 applications a day so a lot of Gabriela's time is spent in reviewing resumes. Unfortunately the majority of candidates are not qualified for the position they have applied for; some, however, are potentially qualified for another opportunity the company is fielding, so they are rerouted. It's not uncommon that, out of 150 candidates, only 10 will meet the minimum threshold for consideration.

Gabriela fills positions in two ways – through applications received into her organization that she must vet and through “headhunting” which involves identifying qualified candidates, usually who are already working, then convincing them to consider the position she is filling. This part of her job requires patience and tenacity . . . it can take many calls to get to the person she is trying to reach; she rarely reaches someone on the first try and generally doesn’t leave a message – in her experience people don’t call her back. She also uses social media, looking at sites such as Career Builder and LinkedIn for potential candidates.

## About the Authors

**Deirdre Pickerell**, MEd, MA, CHRP, GCDF-i is Life Strategies' Senior Consultant with over 20 years experience as a business leader and manager, career practitioner, and certified human resource professional. She has made significant human resource management contributions – locally, nationally, and internationally – through innovative program design, leading-edge education, and inspiring facilitation. In recognition of her work, Deirdre was honoured with a 2006 Award of Excellence; presented by the BC Human Resources Management Association.

**Dr. Roberta Neault**, CCC, CCDP, GCDF-i, is President of Life Strategies Ltd., a small consulting firm with international scope. She is a counsellor, educator, keynote speaker, and author of numerous articles and resources on topics related to individual and organizational success. Roberta was recipient of the 2002 Stu Conger Award for Leadership in Career Development and Career Counselling in Canada and the 2010 Professional Development Award from the US-based National Employment Counseling Association. In 2011, she received the Gold Medal and Diamond Pin Award for Leadership in Career Development.

Throughout their careers, Deirdre and Roberta have encouraged career development practitioners to explore beyond their traditional roles and settings to the wide range of opportunities requiring career development expertise. This guide, and supporting webinars, were developed to support and inspire Canadian CDPs in that exploration.

## Other Books by These Authors

Beyond the Basics: Real World Skills for Career Practitioners (Neault)

Career Strategies for a Lifetime of Success<sup>1</sup> (Neault)

- Time to Reflect: Understanding Yourself
- Time to Explore: Understanding the Workplace
- Time to Choose: Identifying Career Possibilities
- Time to Prepare: Developing Portfolios, Resumes, and Interview Skills
- Time for Action: Successful Marketing Strategies
- Time to Look Ahead: Proactive Career Management

Leadership Lessons for Transformational Times (Pickerell & Neault)

Look Before You Leap: Self-Employment Survival Strategies (Neault & Pickerell)

Personality Dimensions Toolkits for Trainers (Neault & Pickerell)

That Elusive Work-Life Balance (Neault)

## Webinars

What Does a Career Development Practitioner Do?

So You Want to Be A Career Assessment Specialist?

Where's the Work? Career Development in Organizations

Leadership Lessons for Transformational Times

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<sup>1</sup> Available as full print or e-book or 6 individual e-books

## End Notes

<sup>1</sup>Page 20;

[www.employmentcounsellor.ca/PerspectivesSeptember2011.pdf](http://www.employmentcounsellor.ca/PerspectivesSeptember2011.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <http://lifestrategies.ca/docs/10-Tips-for-Career-Management-for-Career-Practitioners.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Page 15; Counselling Foundation of Canada. (2002). A coming of age: Counselling Canadians for work in the twentieth century. Toronto, ON: Counselling Foundation of Canada.

<sup>4</sup> In 2007, NATCON moved to Toronto under the management of the Conference Board of Canada where it continued through 2011; in April 2012 it will be re-launched as Workforce One-Stop 2012

<sup>5</sup> Page 110; Counselling Foundation of Canada. (2002). A coming of age: Counselling Canadians for work in the twentieth century. Toronto, ON: Counselling Foundation of Canada.

<sup>6</sup> This project was possible, in part, due to CCDF's bursary and ongoing commitment to advancing career development practice

<sup>7</sup> The Canadian Heuristic Occupational Information and Career Education System (CHOICES)

<sup>8</sup> See [www.ccdf.ca/ccdf/index.php/awards-and-funding/stu-conger-award-for-leadership](http://www.ccdf.ca/ccdf/index.php/awards-and-funding/stu-conger-award-for-leadership) for recipients

<sup>9</sup> See <http://www.crccanada.org/crc/symposium2/nav.cfm?l=e> for more information

<sup>10</sup> For more on the history of this initiative see [http://career-dev-guidelines.org/career\\_dev/wp-content/uploads/2011/11/Doc-16-HISTORY1.pdf](http://career-dev-guidelines.org/career_dev/wp-content/uploads/2011/11/Doc-16-HISTORY1.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> See <http://206.191.51.163/blueprint/whatis.cfm>

<sup>12</sup> Pan-Canadian Mapping Study (2009). Available at: [www.ccdf.ca/ccdf/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/PAN-CANADIAN-MAPPING-STUDY-OF-THE-CAREER-DEVELOPMENT-SECTOR.pdf](http://www.ccdf.ca/ccdf/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/PAN-CANADIAN-MAPPING-STUDY-OF-THE-CAREER-DEVELOPMENT-SECTOR.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> Survey of Career Service Professionals. Available at: <http://ceric.ca/files/survey/SURVEY%20OF%20CAREER%20SERVICE%20PROFESSIONALS%20HIGHLIGHTS%20REPORT.pdf>

<sup>14</sup> See [www.lifestrategies.ca/docs/Wheres-the-Work-Research-Preliminary-Report.pdf](http://www.lifestrategies.ca/docs/Wheres-the-Work-Research-Preliminary-Report.pdf) for preliminary report

<sup>15</sup> Page 24; Pan-Canadian Mapping Study (2009). Available at: [www.ccdf.ca/ccdf/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/PAN-CANADIAN-MAPPING-STUDY-OF-THE-CAREER-DEVELOPMENT-SECTOR.pdf](http://www.ccdf.ca/ccdf/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/PAN-CANADIAN-MAPPING-STUDY-OF-THE-CAREER-DEVELOPMENT-SECTOR.pdf)

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<sup>16</sup> Page 20; Pan-Canadian Mapping Study (2009). Available at: [www.ccdf.ca/ccdf/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/PAN-CANADIAN-MAPPING-STUDY-OF-THE-CAREER-DEVELOPMENT-SECTOR.pdf](http://www.ccdf.ca/ccdf/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/PAN-CANADIAN-MAPPING-STUDY-OF-THE-CAREER-DEVELOPMENT-SECTOR.pdf)

<sup>17</sup> Available at: [http://cccda.org/cccda/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/CD\\_InventoryofCDTrainingPrograms01-12.pdf](http://cccda.org/cccda/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/CD_InventoryofCDTrainingPrograms01-12.pdf)

<sup>18</sup> [http://ceric.ca/files/PDFs/Web\\_framework.pdf](http://ceric.ca/files/PDFs/Web_framework.pdf)

<sup>19</sup> A professional certification (also known as a qualification or designation) is not the same as a certificate earned from successful completion of an education program.

<sup>20</sup> [www.cce-global.org/GCDF](http://www.cce-global.org/GCDF) Although administered by CCE, GCDF is a country specific certification. GCDF-Canada is managed by Life Strategies Ltd.

<sup>21</sup> [www.iaevg.org/iaevg/nav.cfm?lang=2&menu=1&submenu=6](http://www.iaevg.org/iaevg/nav.cfm?lang=2&menu=1&submenu=6)

<sup>22</sup> [www.blueprint4life.ca/blueprint/home.cfm/lang/1](http://www.blueprint4life.ca/blueprint/home.cfm/lang/1)

<sup>23</sup> [www.careerdevelopment.ab.ca/matrix/](http://www.careerdevelopment.ab.ca/matrix/)

<sup>24</sup> [www.linkedin.com/groups/Careers-Debate-3933561?home=&gid=3933561&trk=anet\\_ug\\_hm](http://www.linkedin.com/groups/Careers-Debate-3933561?home=&gid=3933561&trk=anet_ug_hm)

<sup>25</sup> The Wordle on the following page was constructed from the top job titles from the Pan-Canadian Mapping Study weighted according to the number of times a job title was selected by respondents.

<sup>26</sup> A provincial worker's compensation board (e.g., WorkSafe BC) would have jurisdiction over workplace accidents; the work setting and duties would, however, be similar

<sup>27</sup> The following descriptions of the 5 phases have been generously contributed by Audrey Pons, Founding President of ENET, a professional association in BC, which merged to become the BCCDA. Phase I: All efforts will be made to help the worker return to the same job with the same employer. Phase II: If the worker is unable to return to the same job, his/her employer will be encouraged to offer job modification or an alternate job. Phase III: If the employer is unable to accommodate the worker, other suitable job options in the same or a related industry will be explored, taking into consideration the worker's transferable skills. Phase IV: If the worker is unable to return to alternate employment in the same or a related industry, suitable options in all industries will be explored, taking into consideration the worker's transferable skills, aptitudes, and interests. Phase V: If the worker doesn't have the skills to obtain suitable employment, assistance may be provided to help the worker develop new occupational skills.