



10 KEYS TO EFFECTIVE RESEARCH

Coming January 2013

- 1. Get focused.** A comprehensive [literature review](#) and/or environmental scan, citing reliable sources (e.g., peer-reviewed journal articles), will help you determine what's already been done, what's missing, and how your research might fill the gap. [Begin with the end in mind](#) narrowing your general topic into a very specific research question aligned to your research goal.
- 2. Know what you're measuring.** Clearly identify the things you'll be investigating (i.e., your variables) and define each very specifically. For example, if you're investigating experiences of new moms, you'll need to define what "new mom" means. You'll also need to define what type of experiences you want to learn more about.
- 3. Understand research ethics.** A course on research methods and/or ethics will introduce important research policies (e.g., the [Tri-Council Policy Statement](#)). Throughout your study, adhere to ethical research practices (e.g., obtaining informed consent). Know, in advance, if your study needs approval from an ethical review board.
- 4. Select appropriate research method.** Your research question will guide your methodology; however, consider both [qualitative and quantitative methods](#). A mixed-methodology can help provide a fuller picture of your data. Are you thinking about beginning a small research study? Check out [So You Want to Conduct Effective Research? 30 Minute Research Tasks](#) for some helpful tips.
- 5. Choose, or develop, data collection tools.** Arrange permission to use an existing tool or create a new one (e.g., interview protocol, online survey) specifically for your study. It is advisable to pilot new tools with a small group and, if necessary, adjust before using with your larger group. If you're running a focus group, plan ahead – know what information you need to collect from participants, confirm that your focus group process is clear/comprehensive, and ensure all logistics have been taken care of (e.g., space/location, day/time, catering).
- 6. Reach out to participants.** Identify your sample population and reach out to them in a way that fits. Although an email notification/invitation may work for some, perhaps your sample population doesn't have regular access to computers. Consider putting invitations up at community resource centres/libraries or asking colleagues to distribute to potential participants on your behalf.
- 7. Collect your data.** A longer data collection period doesn't necessarily guarantee more responses; sometimes a short survey period prompts a quick response. If possible, avoid times that may be particularly busy or when individuals may be away (e.g., summer vacation). Set yourself a target goal for data collection (e.g., number of participants, regional representation) and monitor responses.
- 8. Organize and analyse data collected.** Transcribing interviews, downloading survey results, and clustering/coding responses is all part of the data analysis process. Use data analysis procedures that support your methodology and fit with your research goals. Consider using software such as [SPSS](#) or [NVIVO](#) to aid in data analysis.
- 9. Interpret findings and communicate results.** Raw data must be interpreted in light of the existing literature and communicated clearly and concisely, keeping your audience in mind.
- 10. Describe next steps.** Remember, one study cannot cover everything; it simply adds to the body of existing research either furthering understanding or challenging current assumptions. In summarizing your research findings, acknowledge limitations and, if appropriate, provide recommendations for future research.



Check out these upcoming courses; just click on the course names below for more information. If you're completing a CMPP certificate, be sure to plan ahead to ensure you make the 2-year completion deadline – contact the [student advisor](#) for assistance. Make sure you read our course [catalogue](#); it's full of important information for students.

Keep in mind that we can arrange special sessions of any course for intact groups, as well as facilitate workshops on a wide-variety of topics. [Contact us](#) to discuss your options.

Starting soon . . .

- [Career Development Foundations, Emerging Theories, and Models – Jan 16](#)
- [Job Developer – Jan 16](#)
- [Start A Private Practice – Jan 16](#)
- [CPE 510: Fundamentals of Psychometric Assessments – Jan 23](#)
- [Facilitating Work-Life Balance – Jan 23](#)
- [Job Club Coach – Jan 30](#)
- [Proposal Writing / Responding to RFPs – Jan 30](#)
- [Researching Workplace Trends, Career Information, and Employment Possibilities – Jan 30](#)

[Click here](#) for our full course schedule

Celebrate the Holiday Season at Work!

Life Strategies would like to wish you a merry Christmas. This holiday season, no matter your background, is a great time for personal reflection, giving back to your community, and connecting (or re-connecting) with family and friends. Get into the holiday spirit at work by being inclusive of other cultures and organizing team events with a holiday theme. Check out our [10 Ways to Celebrate the Holiday Season at Work](#) tip sheet for more ideas.

DID YOU KNOW?



Deirdre Pickerell's doctoral research has begun. If you're a career development practitioner, you may be interested in participating in this career engagement research. [Click here](#) for details.

Life Strategies is collecting World Vision donations. Each Christmas, our employees donate to World Vision in lieu of exchanging gifts. We welcome donations from our colleagues, students, and associates. [Click here](#) to donate.

Canadian Council for Career Development (CCCD) recently participated in "Peak Body Alliance" meeting. In a recent informal meeting with international organizations, CCCD made note of some exciting international updates (e.g., European concept paper on the youth unemployment crisis). If you'd like to receive details, consider signing up for a [membership](#).

Cannexus 2013 prize draw is announced. If you're going to Cannexus in January, consider registering by December 20th to be eligible to win a weekend at the Westin, Ottawa. For details, [click here](#).

NEW RESOURCES



Tips for Motivating Your Team.

This recent [MoneyWatch article](#) highlighted the top 10 ways leaders can challenge, inspire, and motivate employees including being personally accountable, providing feedback, and communicating effectively.

Remote Employment Webinar. On December 5th, check out CERIC's webinar on [Remote Employment 3.0: Legitimate Opportunities to Work from Home](#). Registration includes a free 20-page report on opportunities for remote workers.

Executive Compensation Trends Webinar. On December 13th, join Hay Group associates Rachel Welch O'Connor, senior consultant, and Christopher Chen, member of Executive Reward Global Leadership Team, for this [BCHRMA-sponsored webinar](#) on executive compensation trends.

STUDENT OF THE MONTH



This month, we are happy to feature Michelle Obre, a Case Manager with an employment service provider in BC's Northern Interior, as our Student of the Month. Nominated for her dedication and perseverance, this open-minded student ensures she works hard in furthering her understanding of career development concepts.

From Michelle: My love for helping people is what led me to this profession and a great on-line education program; a program that offers a lot of valuable information and tips for which I will carry forward to better assist people in becoming successfully employed. My main goal in life is to never stop learning new things and being the best role model to my children (2 girls, age 15 and 5) that I can be, which is the hardest job of all.

CONGRATULATIONS



Gail Smith has successfully completed her **Employment Facilitation / Work Search Specialist** certificate.



The following students recently completed their **Job Developer** certificate.

- Kimberly Bertrand
- Gay Bruner
- Esther Jung



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