

Careering

Canada's Magazine for Career Development Professionals



Cultural Perspectives on Career and Work:

Understanding International Students and New Canadians

Perspectives culturelles sur la carrière et le travail :

Comprendre les étudiants internationaux et les nouveaux Canadiens

+ A Cultural Approach for Career Development Among the Inuit

10 Questions for the Right Honourable Paul Martin

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Careering

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Lucie Morillon

This note comes to you during a period of tension following the US presidential election, a time when newcomers face new anxieties, when doubts persist about the very notion of diversity and when people everywhere are questioning and reassessing their common values.

With the one-year anniversary of the initial wave of Syrian refugees arriving on Canadian soil and as the Canadian government announced in November 2016

a target goal of 300,000 immigrants for 2017, this new issue of *Careering*, focusing on Cultural Perspectives on Work and Career, is very timely. It's also very timely that this is my first issue as your new Editor of *Careering*. I too am a newer arrival to Canada, having recently moved here from France.

As career development professionals, you have probably already experienced a situation where it has been more difficult to help a newly established client in Canada because of additional barriers to career exploration and job search: how to get recognition for skills and diplomas, how to get Canadian work experience, or how to prepare clients for cultural differences in the workplace and society more broadly.

In this issue of *Careering*, we cover the transition of international students – at both high school and post-secondary levels, how to most effectively provide career counselling to refugees, and how to ensure newcomers successfully integrate into Canada. Plus, this issue also features two articles based on recent CERIC-funded research, one looking at career development among the Inuit and the other examining career transitions for older workers.

Canada is a culturally diverse country – Toronto is regularly listed as one of the most multicultural cities in the world – and will continue to evolve over the coming years. It is important to be prepared to welcome those who will participate in the evolution of this country through their contribution to the Canadian economy and labour market.

Cet éditto vous parvient dans un contexte de tension suivant les élections présidentielles des États-Unis, une période durant laquelle les nouveaux arrivants font face à de l'anxiété, des doutes persistent quant à la notion même de diversité et chacun partout remet en question et réévalue ses valeurs communes.

Alors que le temps est venu de faire un premier bilan après l'arrivée de la première vague de réfugiés syriens sur le sol canadien l'année dernière et alors que le gouvernement Canadien a annoncé en novembre 2016 un objectif de 300 000 immigrants pour 2017, ce numéro de *Careering* sur les perspectives culturelles sur le travail et la carrière vient à point nommé. C'est aussi très opportun que ce soit mon premier numéro en tant que nouvelle rédactrice en chef de *Careering* puisque je suis moi aussi une nouvelle venue, ayant récemment quitté ma France natale pour m'installer ici.

En tant que professionnels du développement de carrière vous avez sûrement déjà été dans une situation où il vous a été plus difficile de venir en aide à un client récemment établi au Canada en raison d'obstacles supplémentaires à la recherche de travail et à l'exploration de carrière : comment faire reconnaître ses compétences et ses diplômes, comment obtenir de l'expérience professionnelle canadienne ou encore comment préparer les clients aux différences culturelles et sociales auxquelles ils seront confrontés dans leur nouvel environnement de travail et dans la société de façon plus générale.

Dans ce numéro d'hiver de *Careering*, nous aborderons la transition des étudiants internationaux vers le marché du travail à la fois au niveau secondaire et post-secondaire, les méthodes pour conseiller efficacement les réfugiés et assurer l'intégration des nouveaux venus dans la société canadienne. De plus, ce numéro inclut également deux articles fondés sur des recherches récentes financées par le CERIC, l'un portant sur le développement de carrière chez les Inuit et l'autre sur la transition de carrière chez les travailleurs d'un certain âge.

Le Canada est un pays culturellement diversifié – Toronto arrive régulièrement en tête du classement des villes les plus multiculturelles au monde – qui continuera à évoluer au cours des prochaines années. Il est important de se préparer pour accueillir ceux et celles qui participeront à l'évolution de ce pays à travers leur contribution à l'économie et au marché du travail canadiens.



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CAREER BRIEFS

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Playbook helps small businesses retain and develop employees

CERIC is publishing a new resource entitled *Retain and Gain: Career Management for Small Business*. The concise Playbook is intended for owners and managers of small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to use as a practical career management tool with their employees. With SMEs employing just over 90% of Canada's private sector labour force, it represents a significant opportunity to enhance the career development of Canadians.

Written by career management expert and small business owner Lisa Taylor, President of Challenge Factory, it includes collaboration with the Canadian Chamber of Commerce. It is also being made possible with the support of Knowledge Champions.

CERIC's Environics survey released in 2014 showed that 71% of organizations say they have responsibilities for career development, but only 29% of them say they are doing anything about it. Further research confirmed that SMEs are missing an opportunity to leverage good career management practices to grow their businesses.

Presented in an innovative "travel guide" format with easy-to-implement activities, the Playbook offers a focus on developing skills, knowledge and abilities of employees to retain talent and contribute more to the business, as well as provides an exploration of top career management issues based on best practices research and interviews with SMEs across Canada.

Available in English and French, and in print, ebook and free pdf formats, the Playbook is being launched at the Cannexus17 National Career Development Conference.



To access the Playbook, visit ceric.ca/sme.

CERIC releases its Guiding Principles of Career Development

With a goal of bringing greater clarity and consistency to our national conversations around careers, CERIC has developed a set of "Guiding Principles of Career Development."

Released in November 2016, during the inaugural Canada Career Month organized by the Canadian Council for Career Development (3CD), these Guiding Principles reflect multiple voices at CERIC and underpin its vision to increase the economic and social well-being of Canadians through career counselling and career education. They are intended as

a starting point to inform discussions with clients, employers, funders, policy-makers and families.

Presented as an engaging infographic, they include an exploration of the word "career," using the metaphor of a canoe. They also outline the many benefits of career development and why it matters more than ever against the backdrop of a rapidly shifting world of work. Career professionals are encouraged to use and share this document widely.

The Guiding Principles of Career Development are available in English and French.



Visit ceric.ca/principles for more details.

"Job churn" the new reality, says Canada's Finance Minister

Finance Minister Bill Morneau says Canadians should get used to "job churn" – short-term employment and multiple career changes. Morneau made the comment at a meeting in October.

According to published reports, when asked about precarious employment the Finance Minister responded that high employee turnover and contract work will continue in young people's lives, and the government has to focus on preparing for it.

"We also need to think about, 'How do we train and retrain people as they move from job to job to job?' Because it's going to happen. We have to accept that," Morneau said.

Morneau noted that some people such as truck drivers and receptionists will see their jobs disappear in the coming years.

"Recognizing that we need a way to help people through their career is something that will soften that blow as they think about the long term."



See the October 25, 2016 edition of CBC's *The Current* for a discussion on "Are short-term jobs the new normal?" at cbc.ca/radio/thecurrent.

The future of work: What skills for tomorrow's digital world?

In an increasingly digital world where the skill needs of employers are continuously evolving, policy-makers need to make sure that everyone can participate and learn new skills. Recent technological change has shifted skill demands predominantly towards high-skill levels.

A new OECD report identifies the skill gap and the challenges workers will face. The report argues that it is essential to ensure that workers possess the right skills for an increasingly digital and globalized world in order to promote inclusive labour markets and to spur innovation, productivity and growth.

While no sizeable gender gap was noticed in the share of people possessing good information and communications technology (ICT)

generic skills, the data does show that younger people are better prepared for the digital working environment than older people with some 42% of adults aged 25 to 34 being able to complete tasks involving multiple steps and requiring the use of specific technology applications but in the age group 55-65, only one in 10 can do so.

The report proposes four key priorities for skills policies to meet the challenges of a digital world such as better preparing students by equipping them with basic ICT skills during education and implementing regular training for workers to keep up with new skill requirements.



Learn more at oecd.org/employment/emp/Skills-for-a-Digital-World.pdf.

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2017 marks ContactPoint's 20th anniversary

ContactPoint was launched in January 1997 at NATCON (National Consultation on Career Development) as the first website of its kind to offer a unique online space for interaction and networking among career practitioners across Canada, as well as provide relevant information, professional development opportunities and resources.

Funded by The Counselling Foundation of Canada and later brought under the CERIC umbrella, ContactPoint remains an integral part of the career counselling landscape in Canada 20 years on. 2017 will be a year to celebrate ContactPoint's evolution. (ContactPoint's French sister site, OrientAction was launched in 2002.)

Over time, new sections have been added to better meet the needs of the career development community. ContactPoint regularly posts new job openings as well as key events and now includes more than 3,300 resources such as Educational Programs, Certifications, Career Exploration and Assessment Tools, Webinar Recordings and more.

ContactPoint also publishes the popular weekly *CareerWise* content curation newsletter and is home to CERIC's *Careering* magazine. Watch ContactPoint throughout the year for special anniversary features.



Visit contactpoint.ca.

New report sheds light on income and mobility of immigrants

A new report released in December looks at the increasing employment income of immigrants over time since landing in Canada. One year after immigration, the median employment income of immigrant taxfilers who landed in Canada in 2013 was \$22,000. In comparison, the median income for those who landed in 2011 or 2012 was \$21,000 one year after landing in Canada.

The employment income of immigrant taxfilers by admission category shows that employment incomes vary by the category through which immigrants were admitted and gives an overview of the salaries earned

by newcomers from different categories: family class, skilled workers, provincial/territorial nominees, live-in caregivers, Canadian experience class, Government-assisted refugees, privately-sponsored refugees, and refugees landed in Canada. The category earning the highest income is the immigrants with previous Canadian experience.

Finally, immigrants are more likely to remain in Alberta and Ontario, with retention rates at 92% and 91% respectively, but leave the Atlantic provinces. ■



To access the report, visit statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/161212/dq161212b-eng.pdf.



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Career Counselling for International Students in High Schools



Orientation professionnelle pour les étudiants étrangers au secondaire

Guiding students through the journey
to post-secondary education in Canada
and the Canadian labour market

Guider les étudiants vers des études
postsecondaires et le marché du
travail au Canada

By/Par Julie Doucette



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To a 16-year-old student, moving to Canada can be overwhelming. Without parents, friends or family and often immersed in a new language and culture, the journey can be daunting. However, each year, many students make the trek from their home country to Canada to become international students in high school.

After overcoming language barriers, climate change and cultural diversity, many fall in love with Canada. What are their goals after this? Some want to attend a Canadian post-secondary institution. Others wish to go back to their home countries to complete their formal education, and then return to Canada.

As school counsellors, how can we best guide them and support their goals?

Déménager au Canada peut s'avérer un énorme changement pour un élève de 16 ans. Sans ses parents, ses amis ou des proches, et souvent plongé dans un milieu où la langue et la culture lui sont étrangères, il peut trouver l'expérience redoutable. Or, chaque année, de nombreux étudiants étrangers quittent leur pays d'origine pour venir étudier au secondaire au Canada. Après avoir surmonté la barrière de la langue, et s'être adaptés au changement de climat et à la diversité culturelle, bon nombre d'entre eux tombent amoureux du Canada. Quels sont ensuite leurs objectifs? Certains d'entre eux veulent s'inscrire dans un établissement postsecondaire au Canada. D'autres souhaitent retourner dans leur pays d'origine pour achever leurs études, puis revenir au Canada. En tant que conseillers scolaires, comment pouvons-nous être les meilleurs guides pour eux et les aider à réaliser leurs objectifs?



Staying in Canada

When students tell me they want to complete their high school education in Canada and go to a Canadian post-secondary institution, the first thing I do is verify their graduation requirements. We need to review their grade 11 and 12 credits to assure us they meet provincially determined New Brunswick graduation requirements and ensure they have the required credit courses to be accepted to the post-secondary institution of their choice.

After we have verified key graduation requirements, we begin to search for the optimal post-secondary institution. Certain criteria must be researched. What do they want to study? Do they want to live in an urban or rural area? What are the specific requirements for international students? What English language testing must they complete? If they are required to do English testing, it usually must be done at the beginning of grade 12 so results will be available for admissions counsellors.

While there are no language obstacles on the Canadian websites, one of my roles is to help students navigate ethnicity factors. Most of these students approach me with a desire to move to Toronto or Vancouver, two cities with large international populations. I usually suggest a visit to local universities and colleges to meet with an international student recruiter to best understand the academic, social and cultural components of the institution. An informed decision is vital to long-term success and far more important than quick decisions based on first impressions or pre-conceived ideas.

In my job, I also have a chance to work with students who have relocated with their families. When we have new-to-Canada students coming to ask questions about post-secondary institutions, the question of citizenship will always arise. Even if they have been a resident of New Brunswick for three years, if they are not a permanent resident or a Canadian citizen, they must pay international student fees. For some students, this might encourage them to start the process of citizenship sooner. I usually suggest students start looking at citizenship in grade 10. Citizenship requirements are challenging and must include permanent residency for at least four years, language testing in English or French, knowledge testing about Canada, as well as criminal or background checks. Citizenship information can be found at cic.gc.ca/english/citizenship/become.asp. Wait time is also an important consideration. While it may vary, currently, there is 12-month wait.

However, many of these items cannot be controlled by us. It is the responsibility of the family to go through the steps of citizenship. I might work with a family where the parents do not have the necessary language skills. Because the student must apply at the same time as their parent, this might not be feasible. Some universities encourage students to receive their citizenship so that student fees will be lower. This also becomes my focus so students can be eligible for scholarships and bursaries. When reading the eligibility criteria for most scholarships, students will notice that they have to be a citizen of Canada to be able to apply. Yes, they are still eligible for student loans, but not many of them can pay an extra \$8,500 per year for four years. Most of them will opt for a college-level course, while their hopes and dreams point towards university. I work to counsel them through these, and many more stressful situations.

Rester au Canada

Lorsque des étudiants me disent qu'ils souhaitent terminer leurs études secondaires au Canada et s'inscrire dans un établissement postsecondaire ici, je vérifie d'abord les exigences pour l'obtention du diplôme d'études secondaires. Nous devons examiner les crédits qu'ils ont acquis en 11e et 12e année pour s'assurer qu'ils respectent les exigences du Nouveau-Brunswick pour l'obtention du diplôme et qu'ils ont réussi les cours avec crédit obligatoires pour être admis dans l'établissement postsecondaire de leur choix.

Après la vérification des principales exigences, nous commençons à chercher le meilleur établissement postsecondaire. La recherche doit porter sur certains critères essentiels. Que veulent-ils étudier? Souhaitent-ils vivre en ville ou en région rurale? Quelles sont les exigences particulières requises pour les étudiants étrangers? Quels examens d'anglais doivent-ils réussir? S'ils doivent passer un examen d'anglais, c'est habituellement au début de la 12e année, pour que les conseillers à l'admission puissent consulter les résultats.

Bien que la langue ne pose pas de problème sur les sites Web canadiens, l'une de mes tâches consiste à aider les étudiants à s'y retrouver parmi les différences culturelles. La plupart des étudiants qui viennent me voir souhaitent déménager à Toronto ou à Vancouver, deux villes très cosmopolites. Je leur suggère habituellement de visiter les universités et les collèges à proximité afin de rencontrer les recruteurs d'étudiants étrangers et de mieux comprendre les volets académique, social et culturel de l'établissement. La réussite à long terme dépend d'une décision éclairée, qui est beaucoup plus importante que des décisions rapides fondées sur des premières impressions ou des idées préconçues.

Dans le cadre de mon travail, j'ai aussi l'occasion de travailler avec des étudiants qui ont déménagé avec leur famille. Lorsque des étudiants nouvellement arrivés au Canada viennent se renseigner sur les établissements postsecondaires, la question de la citoyenneté est toujours abordée. Même s'ils vivent au Nouveau-Brunswick depuis trois ans, s'ils ne sont pas résidents permanents ou citoyens canadiens, ils doivent payer des droits de scolarité pour étudiants étrangers. Cette mesure peut encourager certains étudiants à amorcer plus rapidement le processus de demande de citoyenneté. Je suggère habituellement aux étudiants de commencer à y penser en 10e année. Les exigences en matière de citoyenneté sont strictes : il faut entre autres un statut de résident permanent pendant au moins quatre ans, une évaluation des connaissances linguistiques en français ou en anglais, un test de connaissances sur le Canada ainsi qu'une vérification des antécédents criminels. Les renseignements sur la citoyenneté se trouvent sur le site cic.gc.ca/francais/citoyennete/devenir.asp. La période d'attente est également un point important à prendre en considération. Bien qu'elle puisse varier, elle est actuellement de douze mois.

Notons que bon nombre de ces éléments ne dépendent pas de nous. Il incombe à la famille de faire les démarches de demande de citoyenneté. Je pourrais avoir affaire à une famille dont les parents ne possèdent pas les compétences linguistiques nécessaires. Mais comme les étudiants doivent faire leur demande en même temps que leurs parents, la démarche pourrait s'avérer impossible. Certaines universités poussent les étudiants à obtenir leur citoyenneté afin que leurs droits de scolarité soient moins élevés. Je fais



Returning to their home country

When students tell me they want to go back to their home country, but wish to return to Canada after post-secondary education is complete, together we try to find a college or university that has similar standards as Canadian post-secondary institutions. This depends on the country and the desired program. I caution them on programs that require national testing (fields such as medicine or law, for example) as our Canadian certification boards may not accept their diplomas. Even though they might be a nurse or a firefighter in their country, they could be asked to either complete the final assessment or return to post-secondary for a few courses.

As a school counsellor, my issue is often the language barrier. As an example, if a student wants to return to China, it is difficult for me to personally research, as most websites are in Chinese. I also do not have access to background information about the institutions. Are they known for certain programs? Are they in a safe and convenient location? How much is tuition? How much will it cost to live in this place (lodging, food, travel)? How will the institutions best respond to the needs of the students? This is where the students must take action. While we ask them to be active throughout the entire process, some students need to have tasks assigned to become more engaged. They must do their “homework” and seek answers to these questions, then bring their findings back to me so we can discuss options. At this point, I always suggest also having the parents involved in the discussion, either with my help or through the student. At age 18, a post-secondary decision is difficult to make and seems so final.

Finding work in Canada

Job opportunities also require attention. I encourage international students to stay in New Brunswick by looking at the Government of New Brunswick’s Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour Occupational Profiles. I also connect them with local international organizations, such as MAGMA (Multicultural Association of the Greater Moncton Area) or other community outreach agencies. Networking opportunities such as co-operative education courses in high school are a great way for students to gain connections, experience and passion. They may not have the permanent residency yet to get a part-time job, so this might be their first introduction to work. There are many research initiatives available through the universities which would introduce international students to agencies and opportunities in their own municipality. The biggest help for students to find employment is a strong support system. With adults that can guide them toward the correct agencies and associations, I trust that they can make an informed decision.

Through my years as a counsellor in large high school populations, I have met many international students. Some work toward a once-in-a-lifetime cultural exchange experience by coming to Canada to live with a host family for a semester. Others come to see if Canada is a place where they might hope to build a future. Some come with the intent to never return to their home countries. No matter what the objective, my role is to help all students achieve their career goals and ambitions. From the beginning, I am honest. I do not pretend to be all-knowing, but in partnership with the students, my commitment is to share my knowledge, provide networking opportunities, and best ensure a rewarding academic and cultural journey.

d’ailleurs porter mes efforts là-dessus pour que les étudiants puissent être admissibles aux bourses d’études. À la lecture des critères d’admissibilité de la plupart des bourses d’études, les étudiants constatent qu’ils doivent avoir la citoyenneté canadienne pour pouvoir faire une demande. Ils sont quand même admissibles aux prêts aux étudiants, mais peu d’entre eux peuvent payer un supplément de 8 500 \$ par année pendant quatre ans. La plupart opteront alors pour un cours de niveau collégial, alors qu’ils rêvent d’aller à l’université. Je m’occupe de les conseiller au fil de ces étapes et face à de nombreuses autres situations stressantes.

Retourner dans leur pays d’origine

Lorsque des étudiants me disent vouloir retourner dans leur pays d’origine, pour ensuite revenir au Canada après leurs études postsecondaires, nous essayons ensemble de trouver un collège ou une université qui possède les mêmes standards que les établissements postsecondaires au Canada. Tout dépend du pays et du programme choisi. Je leur signale les programmes qui imposent un test de niveau national (comme la médecine ou le droit, par exemple), car nos comités d’accréditation canadiens pourraient ne pas accepter les autres diplômes. Même s’ils étaient infirmiers ou encore pompiers dans leur pays, on pourrait leur demander de passer l’évaluation finale ou de suivre quelques cours de niveau postsecondaire.

Dans mon travail de conseillère scolaire, la barrière de la langue constitue souvent un obstacle. Par exemple, si un étudiant veut retourner en Chine, il m’est difficile de faire moi-même des recherches, puisque la plupart des sites Web sont en chinois. Je n’ai également pas accès à l’historique des établissements. Sont-ils reconnus pour certains programmes? Sont-ils situés dans un endroit sûr et pratique? À combien s’élèvent les droits de scolarité? Combien en coûtera-t-il pour y vivre (logement, nourriture, déplacements)? En quoi les établissements répondent-ils le mieux aux besoins de l’étudiant? C’est là que l’étudiant doit agir. Bien que nous demandions aux étudiants de voir à tout le processus, certains ont besoin qu’on leur assigne des tâches pour y participer davantage. Ils doivent « faire leurs devoirs » et trouver des réponses aux questions susmentionnées, puis me communiquer les résultats de leurs recherches afin que nous puissions discuter de leurs options. À ce stade, je suggère toujours que les parents prennent part à la discussion, par mon entremise ou par l’étudiant. À 18 ans, il est difficile de prendre une décision qui paraît si définitive à propos des études postsecondaires.

Trouver du travail au Canada

Les perspectives d’emploi sont aussi à considérer. J’encourage les étudiants étrangers à rester au Nouveau-Brunswick et à consulter les profils des professions sur le site Éducation postsecondaire, formation et travail du gouvernement du Nouveau-Brunswick. Je les mets également en relation avec des organismes internationaux locaux, comme l’Association multiculturelle du Grand Moncton (AMGM) ou d’autres organismes de sensibilisation de la collectivité. Les occasions de réseautage comme des formations en alternance au secondaire sont d’excellentes façons pour les étudiants de tisser des liens, d’acquérir de l’expérience et de développer une passion. Ainsi, comme ils n’ont peut-être pas encore leur statut de résident permanent pour décrocher un emploi à temps partiel, ils peuvent faire une première incursion dans le milieu du travail. De nombreux programmes de recherche dans les universités permettraient de présenter



Online Exclusive

To learn more about international students in secondary education, visit contactpoint.ca/careering to read "The Importance of International Students in the K to 12 Education Sector in Canada" by Jeff Davis, Director of the International Student Program for the Greater Victoria School District and Vice-President of the Canadian Association of Public Schools – International.

AUTHOR BIO

Julie Doucette is a School Counsellor in Riverview, NB. She has been a teacher, as well as a counsellor since 2005. She has worked primarily as a personal and career/post-secondary counsellor since 2012. She currently works at a large high school.

les étudiants étrangers aux organismes et de faire connaître les occasions d'emploi dans leur propre ville. C'est par un réseau de soutien solide que les étudiants peuvent obtenir le plus d'aide pour trouver un emploi. Avec des adultes qui peuvent les guider vers les bons organismes et les associations pertinentes, je suis convaincue qu'ils peuvent prendre une décision éclairée.

Au cours de mes années de service à titre de conseillère dans de grandes écoles secondaires, j'ai rencontré de nombreux étudiants étrangers. Certains venaient s'enrichir d'une expérience d'échange culturel unique en vivant au Canada dans une famille d'accueil pendant un semestre. D'autres venaient voir si le Canada pouvait être un endroit où ils aimeraient s'établir dans l'avenir. Et certains autres venaient avec l'intention de ne jamais retourner dans leur pays d'origine. Quelle que soit leur motivation, mon rôle consiste à aider tous ces étudiants à atteindre leurs objectifs de carrière et à réaliser leurs ambitions. Je suis honnête avec eux dès le départ. Je ne prétends pas tout connaître, mais en collaborant avec les étudiants, je m'engage à transmettre mes connaissances, à offrir des possibilités de réseautage et à veiller le mieux possible à ce que leurs parcours académique et culturel soient une réussite. ■

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Julie Doucette est conseillère scolaire à Riverview, NB. Elle a été enseignante et occupe le poste de conseillère depuis 2005. Elle a principalement travaillé comme conseillère personnelle et d'orientation professionnelle au postsecondaire depuis 2012. Elle travaille actuellement dans une grande école secondaire.

Overcoming Cultural Differences to Facilitate Integration and Success

How cultural values and assumptions influence international students and newcomers' career choices and job search behaviour

By Ben Yang

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In his bestselling book *7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, Stephen Covey advocates the habit “Seek first to understand, then be understood.” This is a motivational message that has inspired immigrants to overcome culture and language barriers to integrate into the Canadian workplace. However, when it comes to understanding immigrants, there seems to be a lack of reciprocal awareness for learning other cultural values and behaviours on the part of the host community. Often career practitioners focus their efforts on teaching Canadian norms and expectations.

Culture, the 'lens' through which we view the world

As a former international student from China, I remember my uneasy feeling at the “assertiveness training” offered at my university’s career centre. Rationally, I understood that communicating confidently was an important skill for my career success in Canada. But, emotionally, I felt that the assertiveness, promoted in the workshop, came across as impolite and selfish. It contradicts the Eastern virtue of being humble and modest; the cultural value I was brought up. As a result of this internal conflict, my assertiveness act, in the workshop role play, was unconvincing and lacked authenticity. After nearly 30 years living in Canada, putting on an assertive persona is still awkward for me, similar to wearing someone else’s jacket.

Cultural values are instilled in people by a dominant social norm during the formative years. Once they are formed, cultural values are deeply rooted and carry a strong inertia. They profoundly impact on an individual’s attitude and behaviours towards communication, relationships and decision making. Kevin Avruch and Peter W. Black, two scholars at George Mason University in Virginia, define culture as “the ‘lens’ through which we view the world; the ‘logic’ by which we order it; and the ‘grammar’ by which it makes sense.”¹

In the area of career development, cultural values significantly influence individuals’ approach in finding work and workplace behaviours. What information can be shared or kept private in an interview; how punctuality is understood; how to relate with people in authority; what is considered ethical and unethical at a networking event; to what extent people can negotiate their salary; whether a conversation with a co-worker should be formal or informal; and even what is viewed as formal and informal are all interpreted through a particular cultural “lens,” “logic” and “grammar.”

“Two scholars at George Mason University in Virginia, define culture as “the ‘lens’ through which we view the world; the ‘logic’ by which we order it; and the ‘grammar’ by which it makes sense.”

"High-context culture" vs. "low-context culture"

Since culture is complex, it is impossible for any individual to learn all aspects of one culture, let alone to know everything about many cultures. The "high-context culture" and "low-context culture" framework developed by the American anthropologist Edward Hall in the 1970s provides a valuable tool for career professionals to understand communication styles and cultural values that are different from their own.²

According to Hall, high-context cultures rely more on non-verbal and contextual cues to convey a message. The responsibility for comprehension lies mainly with the receiver of the message, who is attuned to subtleties conveyed by markers such as body language, silence, a person's status, tone of voice, and the presence or absence of significant individuals. People from high-context cultures regard the emotional quality of communication as more important than words. Maintaining social harmony and

"saving face" by avoiding open conflicts are paramount for high-context cultures. Countries in Asia, Africa, Middle East and South America are considered high-context cultures. Indigenous communities in North America also share high-context cultural characteristics.

In contrast to high-context cultures, low-context cultures communicate information in a direct manner that relies mainly on words. There is little or no implied meaning apart from the words that are being said. Cohesiveness is less important and emphasis is placed on persuasion and logical argument. The responsibility for communication lies mainly with the sender of the message to provide clear reasoning and facts. In low-context cultures, evidence is more important than intuition in decision making. Individuality (personal space and privacy) and independence are valued in low-context cultures. Social conformity and behavioural expectations are not emphasized to the same extent as in high-context cultures. Countries such as the US, Canada, Germany and Switzerland are considered low-context cultures.

The impact of cultural differences

Some years ago, I was a part of a group that developed a mentorship program to match Canadian lawyers with internationally trained lawyers. The objective was to help immigrant lawyers to enter the legal field in Canada. A female attorney at a law firm in Toronto volunteered to mentor a female lawyer recently immigrated to Canada from Iran. The mentor was enthusiastic and eager to help but she was very upset when her mentee, the Iranian lawyer, stormed out during their first meeting.

"How did it happen?" I asked the mentor. "I don't know," she replied. She explained, "Right after I asked the question 'Why do you want to stay in Canada?,' her face changed and she stood up and walked out." For most Canadians, "Why do you want to stay in Canada?" is a value-neutral question without any implied judgement. From a low-context culture background, the Toronto lawyer was totally surprised to learn that according to the "logic" and "grammar" of a high-context

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culture, the question was interpreted as a sneaky way of degrading the immigrant's home country and challenging the legitimacy of the mentee's intention to immigrate to Canada.

In another interaction, a Chinese student tried to give an expensive watch to a manager of an IT company at a networking event. In China, the concept of "networking" is more than getting to know each other and exchange information. Fancy banquets, gift giving and even passing "red bags" (red envelopes with cash that symbolize good luck) are not uncommon at networking events. However, viewing from the "lens" of the low-context culture employer, the gift giving symbolized an expectation of a favourable hiring decision. In his mind, it was bribery and unethical. What frustrated the manager even more was that when he criticized the student, she kept smiling while she was saying "I'm sorry." In East Asia, there are many types of smiles that have nothing to do with humour. Certain types of smiles actually express embarrassment, apology and guilt. The non-verbal cue was completely missed in the exchange between the high-context culture student and the low-context culture manager.

Understanding differences for more effective career counselling

There are countless examples where behaviours are considered perfectly "normal" in one culture, but unacceptable and even unthinkable in the other. Sometimes people personalize an unfamiliar intercultural encounter and become suspicious about the other's integrity and intention. But when people examine the unfamiliar closely, they realize that the parties involved simply conducted themselves using a different "lens", "logic" and "grammar" without any sinister intent.

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AUTHOR BIO

Ben Yang came to Canada as an international student from Beijing, China. Currently he serves as the Director, Global Engagement at Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo, ON. Prior to this, Yang worked at the University of Toronto for 19 years as a Career Counsellor and then as the Director of the International Student Centre. He is a frequent presenter on cross-cultural communication and career development to international students and immigrants in Canada.

Based on Hall's framework, most of the career strategies such as "assertiveness training" and "self-directed career decision making" are developed according to the "logic" and "grammar" rooted in low-context culture values. Since Canada plans to welcome 280,000 to 305,000 new immigrants in 2016 (2015 Annual Report to Parliament on Immigration) and the majority of them are from high-context cultures – a trend that is forecasted to continue – it is critical for career professionals to gain a deeper understanding of the clients they serve and develop culturally effective and appropriate strategies to assist immigrants to succeed in the Canadian workplace. ■



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From Book Bags to Briefcase:

International Student Transition to Employment in Canada

“International education is a key driver of Canada’s future prosperity, particularly in the areas of innovation, trade, human capital development and the labor market.”

Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development, 2012.¹

By/Par Jennifer Browne & Sonja Knutson



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A primary reason for countries to engage in international student recruitment is the direct contribution of billions of dollars spent by international students in schools and communities in which they choose to study and live. While this direct economic impact is important, equally important in Canada is the potential for international students to fill labour market gaps. The Higher Education Academy defines employability as, “the opportunities to develop knowledge, skills, experiences, behaviours, attributes, achievements and attitudes to enable graduates to make successful transitions and contributions; benefiting them, the economy and their communities.” Employability for international students encompasses this range of knowledge, skills and attitudes, overlaid by cross-cultural difference, with an overarching purpose of enabling graduates to remain in Canada and benefit the economy and their communities.

According to the Canadian Bureau for International Education, Canada is the world’s seventh most popular destination for international students. Over 350,000 international students are studying in Canada, more than half of whom are enrolled in universities. International students, with local friends and networks generally well-developed, are a source of highly-skilled workers able to integrate relatively easily into the Canadian labour market and society. Canada’s immigrant-friendly policies allow students to work while studying and after graduation. Canadian universities have taken note of these policies and are developing creative and thoughtful programming focused on ensuring that international students have opportunities to learn about careers, both inside and outside the classroom.

“According to the Canadian Bureau for International Education, Canada is the world’s seventh most popular destination for international students.”

The Canadian labour market forecasts reflect future shortages in professional and skilled trades that require highly qualified personnel, and there is concern that our ability to remain competitive in the new knowledge economy is at risk. Each province has its own particular context and is able to develop specific immigration streams tailored to region-based needs. The demographic challenges are keenly felt in smaller centres in particular. There is a growing intent by federal and provincial governments, and even by specific regions such as the four provinces of Atlantic Canada, to further refine immigration streams, programming and incentives to ensure international students smoothly transition from study to work, and, subsequently to permanent residency in regions outside of the large urban centres.

A majority of international students wish to stay in Canada and transition into the workforce. A recent survey of international students participating in programs offered by Memorial University’s Career Centre found 84% indicated they wished to remain in Canada. The University of Alberta found similar results in their International Student Barometer survey where 80% indicated they wished to stay post-graduation. Ensuring international students have access to programming and opportunities that improve their employability is a responsibility of post-secondary institutions, and most Canadian campuses have career advising, programming and experiential learning opportunities that are focused on international student employability.

At Memorial, a recent survey on where international students go for career support found that besides online job boards, family and friends, international students identified a strong propensity to lean on campus career centres, career advisors and supervisors. When asked what are the biggest challenges faced by international students finding employment in Canada, 82% of international students indicated minimal to no professional networks established in Canada, 52% indicated lack of work or volunteer experience and 41% identified language barriers. Memorial University, with its special obligation to the province of Newfoundland and Labrador, is fully engaged with supporting provincial population growth and labour market initiatives. Programs to develop career skills for international students encompass both direct teaching of basics (resume writing and interviewing) and networking practice, as well as experiential and subsidized work placements on-campus. Besides support for the career search, a second major initiative is ensuring international students, early in their academic careers, are encouraged to consider entrepreneurship. Information on how to set up a business is shared, and networking opportunities and mentorship with local entrepreneurs provided. These programs are well evaluated by student participants, and have high retention rates even though they are extracurricular programs.

A sample of Memorial’s range of programs to support international student employability include:

Professional Skills Development Program (PSDP)

mun.ca/isa/employment/psdp.php

The national award-winning Professional Skills Development Program (PSDP) – which was recognized as a “best practice” in *Supporting International Students on Campus: 17 High Impact Practices to Ensure Student Success*, published by the Educational Advisory Board in 2014 – is an eight-week program focused on preparing international students for professional employment in the province and across the country. PSDP includes eight one-hour sessions (on topics such as communication, culture, volunteering), two networking events and a mandatory volunteering component. Since its inception in 2010 some 623 international students have participated.

Entrepreneurship Training Program (ETP)

mun.ca/cdel/Student_Programs/ETP

Since 2012, Memorial has offered an innovative Entrepreneurship Training Program (ETP) for international graduate students that aims to develop both the entrepreneurial mindset as well as technical and managerial competencies necessary to create new ventures. The program is a combination of workshops, networking events, special presentations, one-on-one advising and mentorship.

International Student Work Experience Program (ISWEP)

mun.ca/cdel/jobs_for_students/ISWEP

The International Student Work Experience Program (ISWEP) is an on-campus part-time employment program for undergraduate international and English as Second Language students with a valid study permit. These positions are completed over one semester and can be 40 or 80 hours in length. Positions are available throughout campus with faculty and staff and provide career-related professional experiences. Students and employers complete a Learning and Reflection Agreement to encourage dialogue between student and employer, and to actively reflect on and identify the transferable skills and competencies they have gained as a result of the ISWEP experience.

Career Advising

mun.ca/cdel/Student_Resources

A dedicated International Career Advisor position sees students one-on-one regarding their career development needs, facilitates ISWEP and the PSDP program, and is connected with many groups and resources internal and external to the university that support international student engagement and retention.

These examples from Memorial University are found in varying degrees across Canada, and yet retention of international students post-graduation remains difficult to both track and to evaluate. There is no

pan-Canadian data on the influencers on international students' decision to stay in Canada after they graduate, though the natural assumption is the availability of jobs. There is no data available on how many students transition successfully from studies to work and then to permanent residence, and there is no evaluation on how career counsellors can guide them efficiently.

The dialogue regarding international student employability and subsequent transition into the labour force is occurring worldwide. Canada is one of many countries developing strategies based

on its own needs while globally there is increased dialogue, sharing and research focused on internationalization and employability. Staff in career centres and international offices on post-secondary campuses play a critical role assisting international students navigate the path to career success in Canada. Engaging internal and external partners, providing a variety of experiential opportunities to gain relevant experience and increase their professional network with strong advising and support from trained staff is key to attracting and keeping talented international students in Canada. ■

Online Exclusive

To learn more on how career professionals can ensure international students' career success, visit contactpoint.ca/careering to read "Understanding and Supporting the Needs of International Students" by Anna-Lisa Ciccocioppo and Martha Liliana Gonzalez from the University of Calgary.

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AUTHOR BIO

Jennifer Browne is the Associate Director of Student Life at Memorial University. She has worked in the area of career for over 15 years including leading the Memorial Career Centre for a decade. Browne is one of the founding organizers of the International Experiential Learning Institute held annually since 2013 and currently Chair of the Canadian Education and Research Institute in Counselling (CERIC).

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Sonja Knutson is the Director of the Internationalization Office at Memorial University. She is a frequent presenter on the Canadian context of international education. Since 2006 she has been an instructor with the Queen's University International Educators Training Program. She has served for six years on the Board of Directors of the Canadian Bureau for International Education, and is Chair (elect) with the NAFA International Education Leadership Knowledge Community.

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Overcoming the “Lack of Canadian Experience” Hurdle

By Joanna Samuels

By applying these eight recommendations, I have helped countless newcomers to Canada build their careers – in their chosen fields

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Client: Is Canadian experience really required for getting a job in my field in Canada? I am new to Canada and am looking for work in accounting. I have been interviewed several times, and the feedback is that I do not have enough Canadian experience. My Microsoft Excel, QuickBooks and other technical skills are top-notch. These are required for the jobs. What is going on here?

Over the years, I have discussed this common complaint of our newcomer clients with other career professionals, job developers and coaches in community agencies as well as several employers from all industries with whom I collaborate. The general consensus from the front-line is that Canadian experience is not vital to getting a job in one's field in Canada, other than a few cases in highly regulated fields such as engineering, medicine, law, chartered accounting and architecture. However, the staffing employment agencies who have a fee-for-service business model often require Canadian experience as demanded by their “clients” (employers).

To support this consensus, I have heard from countless hiring managers that they recognize and value international experience. Of course, as with every selection process, add the recruiters, it is critical that the client have the skills and qualifications required for the position. There are some cases in which I have read a job description that requires Canadian experience, and I have spoken to employers who are specific that they are looking for candidates with Canadian experience.

Some employers have explained to me that the phrase “lack of Canadian experience” is often code from the interviewer that the candidate will not fit into the workplace or team culture. In addition, this feedback can also be code for “you do not have the technical or soft skills we are looking for.” Often this means that the candidate is not communicating (verbally and non-verbally) and not properly prepared to handle the interview questions, especially the behavioural interview. Another employer remarked that Canadian experience was important because his company's projects required extensive teamwork as defined by the Canadian workplace cultural norms. He felt that newcomers were used to a different way of working together. It is challenging to figure out the workplace culture. This applies to everyone looking for work in the job market. This is a subjective criterion for hiring a candidate, but research demonstrates that likeability is key when interviewers make hiring decisions.



Here are eight suggestions for career professionals on how to tackle this obstacle facing your newcomer and/or internationally trained clients with their efforts to build their careers in Canada.

1. Prepare

Together with your client, prepare a sector-specific and targeted resume and cover letter, and interview presentation and social media profile, especially on LinkedIn. Research the company, their website, the job descriptions, and identify the hiring managers who would be interested in your client's skills, experience and education. Learn the values, the workplace culture and the nature of the business by helping your client arrange information interviews, connecting with a mentor and engaging in sector associations. Use social media resources such as LinkedIn and Twitter to do this.

2. Communicate

Teach your client how to articulate his or her skills, experiences, projects and talents in a clear, concise and effective way for both networking and interviewing purposes. Role play with your client so he or she can practice interview skills. There are government-funded specialized employment programs for newcomers to Canada such as Enhanced Language Training programs that might be worth exploring for your clients at sector-specific employment programs for newcomers.

3. Look for internships or placements

Some newcomer jobseekers report that taking an opportunity to get Canadian experience, even if it's nominally paid (or even unpaid) may be worth it. They are able to acquire hands-on experience that is critical for their resume and LinkedIn profile, keep their skills fresh and updated, build a professional network and hopefully obtain references and sometimes even paid employment, eventually. One source of local placements for newcomers is provided by Career Edge in Toronto. Some Enhanced Language Training (ELT) programs offer co-op placements.

4. Secure a mentor

Linking your client up with a professional in their field can be a very effective way to make contacts and learn about the local labour market. TRIEC's The Mentoring Partnership, is a great resource for this.

5. Consider evaluating your credentials and degrees

Figuring out how your client's credentials are evaluated in Canada can help to add to their credibility and competitiveness. Information on this process can be found at Settlement.org. This evaluation can be included in the resume under "Education" as: "evaluated by... as equivalent to a Canadian Master's degree..."

6. Build a professional network

Since over 80% of the jobs in the labour market are hidden and can only be found through connections. It is critical that new immigrants (or any jobseeker, for that matter) network as much as possible through social media, associations, trade shows, conferences, career fairs and employer events, so to learn from and mingle with professionals in their field. Be sure to advise your client that the networking continues even after he or she secures employment!

7. Volunteer

Although many of the newcomer clients that I worked with were hesitant about working for free, in our culture, giving back to the community is a value. It shows good citizenship to the employer in addition to helping your client help others, build his or her network, and sometimes gain a reference and experience. If possible, the client should find volunteer opportunities in his or her field (or close to it). If that is not possible, advise your client to spend time in a meaningful environment and meet people who might be in a position to refer them to others or to jobs. Once you come to an interview with a recommendation, your lack of local experience is less likely to be an issue.

8. Seek out Canada's best diversity employers

In an article in *The Globe and Mail's* Ask a Recruiter column, Julie Labrie suggests that newcomers do research to identify organizations that lead the way in hiring diversely, such as the annual list of 100 companies that are Canada's Best Diversity Employers. "See if companies in your field made those lists. Explore companies that market their services to the new-to-Canada segment, too. Many industries, including the financial and telecom sectors, are serving the immigrant population as a key part of their business strategy. Also consider applying for relevant government jobs related to your past experience," she explains.

By applying the above eight recommendations in my practice over the past 11 years, I have helped countless newcomers to Canada build their careers here in their chosen fields. Further, I have educated many employers to focus on the strengths of the candidates regardless of their background rather than the lacking as good business drivers. I consider this as best practice and the strategies can be applied to any client looking for work in this competitive and complex labour market. ■



AUTHOR BIO

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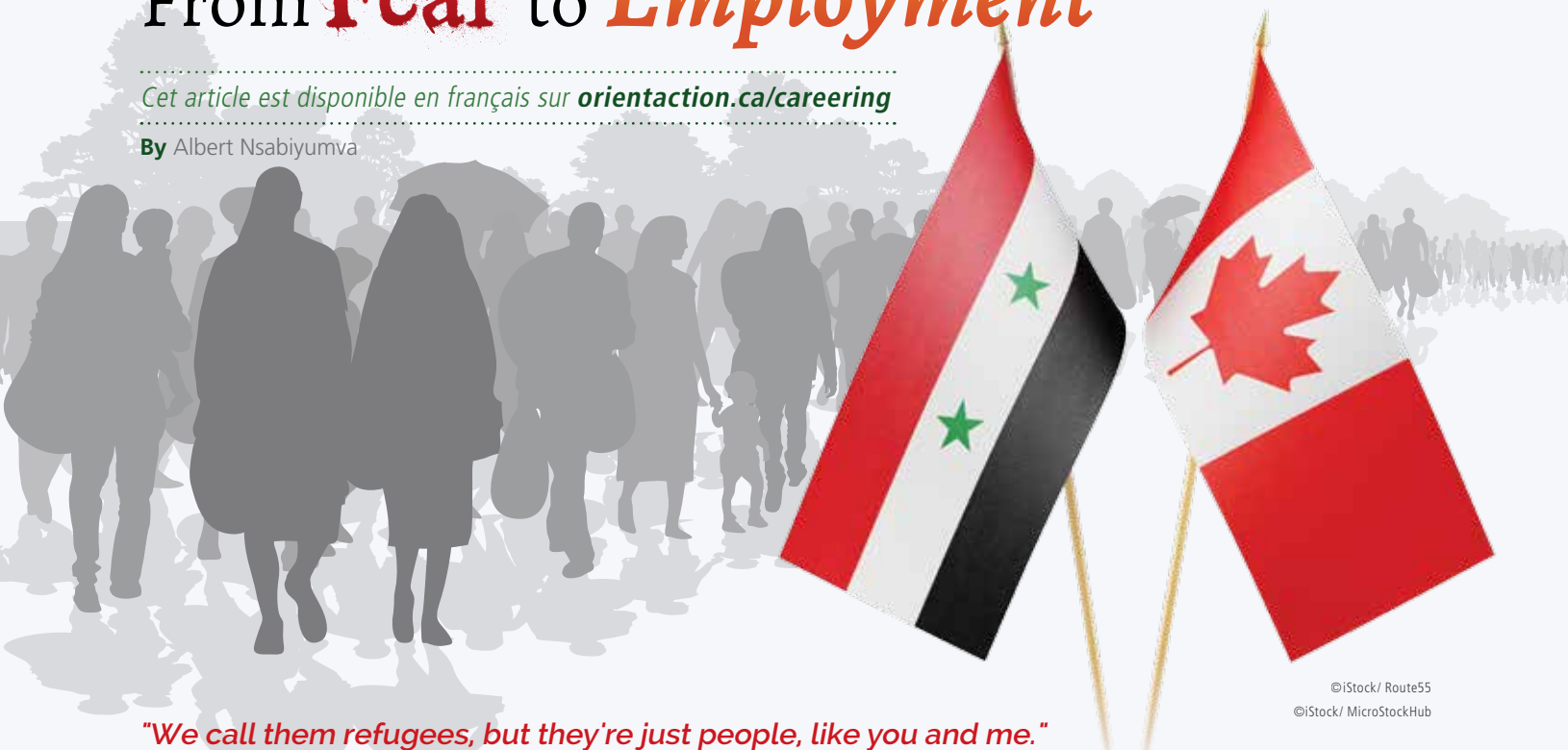
Joanna Samuels, MEd, CMF, RRP, is an Employment Resource Specialist at www.reena.org. She has over 11 years of experience providing supported and customized employment/career coaching, job development, facilitation and program co-ordination to diverse unemployed and underemployed jobseekers in the community. Samuels is also a certified Life Skills Coach, certified Personality Dimensions Facilitator, and part-time instructor of employment counselling with George Brown College's Certificate of Community Mental Health program.

WORKING WITH REFUGEES:

From **Fear** to **Employment**

Cet article est disponible en français sur orientation.ca/careering

By Albert Nsabiyumva



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"We call them refugees, but they're just people, like you and me."

"We all stand on the shoulders of good people who didn't look away when we were in need".¹

- George Clooney, Oscar-winning actor

Hearth-rending pictures of a child's lifeless body washed ashore on a Turkish beach sparked horror on Wednesday, September 2, 2015, as the cost of Europe's burgeoning refugee crisis hit home.² Those images of the 3-year-old drowned toddler, Aylan Kurdi, became the tragic symbol of the Syrian refugee crisis.³ They appeal to every person living on this planet earth to ask the question about our individual and collective responsibility in relation to this tragedy.

Refugees in the world

According to the UNHCR⁴, 65.3 million people were displaced as of the end of 2015: This is the first time that the threshold of 60 million has been crossed, and these numbers mean that 1 in every 113 people globally is now either an asylum-seeker, internally displaced or a refugee.⁵ There is a big difference between a refugee and an immigrant even though both are considered to be immigrants after a while. An immigrant is a person who chooses to move to another country, and settle permanently in that country. A refugee is a person who is forced to flee from persecution and who is located outside of their home country.⁶

When we talk about refugees and immigrants, it is important to understand the many different terms used to describe refugees and immigrants⁷:

- Government-assisted refugee (GAR)
- Privately sponsored refugee (PSR)
- Convention refugee
- Resettled refugee
- Protected person
- Asylum-seeker
- Refugee claimant
- Internally displaced person
- Stateless person

You may also hear about "political refugee" and "economic refugee;" these terms have no meaning in law, and can be confusing as they incorrectly suggest that there are different categories of refugees. Each single term has a specific meaning, and getting to know them better can help in understanding the long path that refugees have to take.



“1 in every 113 people globally is now either an asylum-seeker, internally displaced or a refugee.”

Refugee claimants in Canada

Each year, Canada provides asylum to more than 10,000 persecuted persons and welcomes another 12,000 refugees from abroad.⁸ In 2011, Canada expanded its refugee resettlement programs by 20% over three years. The country has a long history of welcoming refugees. In 1796, the first refugees were 3,000 Black Loyalists, among them freemen and slaves, who fled the oppression of the American Revolution and came to Canada.

A look at the countries of origin for refugee claimants in Canada from 2005 to 2014 shows that they come from around the world.⁹

Total refugee claimants	233,861	%
Mexico	35,098	15.01%
Colombia	14,469	6.19%
China	14,346	6.13%
Haiti	12,655	5.41%
Hungary	12,093	5.17%
USA	8,485	3.63%
Sri Lanka	7,002	2.99%
Nigeria	6,823	2.92%
Pakistan	6,098	2.61%
India	5,506	2.35%
St. Vincent and the Grenadines	4,143	1.77%
Somalia	3,727	1.59%
Afghanistan	3,663	1.57%
Congo, DRC	3,490	1.49%
Burundi	2,050	0.88%

Understanding refugees' issues to better help them

While employment would be the ultimate goal to get a refugee resettled, there are five stages that refugees go through, and getting a better understanding of each stage may bring effectiveness to the kind of help career practitioners provide.

1. **Denial and isolation:** The refugee tries to deny the reality of his/her situation.
2. **Anger:** The refugee's anger may be aimed at inanimate objects, complete strangers, friends or family.
3. **Bargaining:** Secretly, refugees may make a deal with God or a higher power in an attempt to postpone the inevitable. This is a line of defence to protect them from their painful reality.
4. **Depression:**
 - *Depression (Type 1)* occurs when sadness and regret predominate in the mind of the refugee.
 - *Depression (Type 2)* is subtle and, in a sense, perhaps more private. It is a quiet preparation to separate and to bid goodbye to the lost life.
5. **Acceptance:** Reaching this stage of mourning is a gift not afforded to everyone.

People who are grieving do not necessarily go through the stages in the same order or experience all of them.

In my years of work as an employment counsellor, I have faced cases that require an understanding of the real reason hidden behind a refugee's job search. M.H., a woman from Iraq in her 60s who had just spent a year in Canada, came to see me for help in finding a job. She spoke neither English nor French, and our communication took place through a translator. Asking her about the kind of work she was able to do and wanted to have, her answer was "Any." It was then that I began to ask a series of motivation-related questions which she answered without flinching. When I asked about her husband and how he was doing, the woman burst into tears.

Through her answers, I realized that she was looking for work in order to get out of the house because her husband, a former mechanic technician in their country of origin, was the reason behind her employment research. I asked M.H. to call her husband to come and meet with me. The husband appeared within 10 minutes, and to my surprise, he spoke English easily and fluently. He wanted to find a job opportunity, and he was ready for it. I then offered him a job option that was available and he did not hesitate to seize it. The next day, he started his first job in Canada. When I followed up, a week later, not only was the couple happy with the husband's employment, but also the woman was no longer looking to work. I had identified the problem: M.H. was in depression while the husband was in denial, isolation and anger.

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Practical ways to effectively help refugees

Here are some practical actions that local agencies, groups and even individuals in your community can take to support refugees¹⁰:

- a) Volunteer your specific skill, for example, your technology skills or coaching a sports team.
- b) Teach them language, start an entrepreneurial venture with them, socialize.
- c) Help refugees to integrate into a new culture: There are feelings of isolation that refugees can experience when they are relocated to a new country and then try to get over their trauma and restart their lives.
- d) Encourage your university to offer refugee scholarships: For refugee students, losing the chance to pursue their studies is devastating.
- e) Employ refugees: Note however that in some cases refugees are not permitted to work.
- f) Seek/offer opportunities for refugees to volunteer: In cases where refugees can't work legally, volunteering can lend the days more purpose.
- g) Hold/support awareness and fundraising events for refugees.

Learn more about working with refugees at my session at the *Cannexus17 National Career Development Conference* on January 23. ■

AUTHOR BIO

Albert Nsabiyeumva, Eng., MBA, is a former refugee from Burundi. He has been in Canada since 2008, and has been involved with community organizations since 2009. His integration into the Canadian workplace has not been easy: Arriving in the middle of the 2008 economic recession, when the Windsor, ON automotive companies were laying off their employees, he decided to set aside his engineering degree, and use his transferable skills to make his way in the new environment. His jobs ranged from a van driver to employment within a bilingual call centre. He holds an MBA from Laval University, and now helps others in teaching, settlement and employment. Follow him on Twitter at @nsabalbe.

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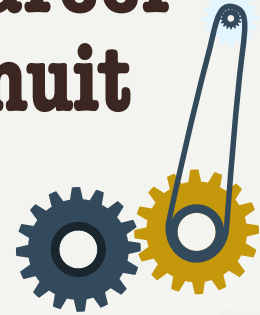
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A Cultural Approach for Career Development Among the Inuit

Understanding the differences and adapting to clients for better career counselling

By Gabrielle St-Cyr

Cet article est disponible en français sur orientation.ca/careering



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According to the 2011 census, 59,000 Inuit live in Canada, making up 4.2% of the country's Aboriginal population and 0.2% of the total population nationwide. Three quarters of the Inuit population live in Inuit Nunangat, a vast northern region that stretches from Labrador to the Northwest Territories.

With a median age of 23, as compared to 41 for Canada's non-Aboriginal population, the Inuit have the youngest population of the country's three Aboriginal groups (First Nations, Métis and Inuit).¹ As of 2012, only 42% of Inuit across Canada had completed a high school diploma or the equivalent, which represents about half of the non-Aboriginal population.² Aboriginal communities are also some of the poorest in Canada, mainly due to their low level of education, a salary gap vs. their non-Aboriginal peers and the exorbitant cost of life in remote areas.³ Despite these challenges, the context of labour shortages and demographic challenges will propel an increasing number of young Inuit – and more generally, Aboriginal – workers into the labour market over the coming years. It is therefore important to provide them with career development services adapted to their culture and needs.



“As of 2012, only 42% of Inuit across Canada had completed a high school diploma or the equivalent, which represents about half of the non-Aboriginal population.”

Culture-infused career counselling

Career development affects all aspects of an individual's life, including training, work, family life and leisure activities. In this regard, it is infused by the culture, values and ways of thinking of each human being. According to the culture-infused career counselling approach, developed by Nancy Arthur and Sandra Collins among others (see the book *Culture-Infused Counselling*),⁴ it is essential to adapt career development strategies and intervention techniques to the sociocultural particularities of the target clientele. For Inuit communities, these cultural particularities are varied and rich, and include the relationship to time, closeness to the land and the importance of relationships with others. Based on oral tradition, the Inuit culture is also focused on observing and imitating desired behaviours, a learning method that applies to technical and personal skills equally – to both “hard” and “soft” skills. For example, Inuit youth learn the use of traditional hunting, fishing, sewing or cooking tools very quickly through observation and manipulation.⁵

Adapting interventions, a new method for counsellors

Employment counsellors who work with Inuit clients are faced with special challenges, whether they are Inuit or not. It is relevant for them to adapt their practices (generally based on Western

representations) in accordance with the sociocultural particularities of the Inuit culture. But how can a strong cultural presence be ensured in individual and group interventions? Which strategies should be used with Inuit clients who have addiction problems or a weak educational background? How do you adapt one's communication style and reduce one's cultural filters in a context of culture-infused bilingualism (Inuktitut and French/English)?

In order to support counsellors working with Inuit clients, a reference guide was developed in 2016 in collaboration with Inuit representatives: the *PINASUUTITSAQ* guide (which means “working with” in Inuktitut) (RQuODE, 2016b). This CERIC-supported guide is based on two sources of data: literature review and industry professionals' expertise, through focus groups and individual interviews with stakeholders based in Nunavik and Montreal (for instance, local employment agency staff, employment counsellors, career development professionals and professors).

The *PINASUUTITSAQ* guide suggests 50 intervention strategies, in addition to discussing the most frequent challenges for these clients. The areas of adaptation are many: developing relationships with clients, transitioning to a community-based approach, paying attention to self-confidence and empowerment, and diversifying the types of learning and communication. As an example, the following excerpt from the guide describes how the counsellor should interact with the client.

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Prioritize developing and maintaining a trusting relationship with your client

Inuit society is based on human relationships and sharing. As in any support relationship, the working alliance must be a priority. For the Inuit, trust is earned over time through the demonstration of know-how. Given the high turnover rate of personnel, however, building trust may take longer in northern communities. Building a personal relationship with the client first, rather than focusing on the creation of a productive professional relationship, may be a useful approach.

- When possible, refer to “us” (e.g. we are going to do this together).
- Put aside more “conventional” approaches (e.g. take the time to talk about lighter topics, offer the client a coffee or water).
- Don’t try to rush the relationship or the working alliance. The Inuit are known for their patience and their keen sense of observation. They notice efforts, intentions and interests, even if they don’t mention them directly.
- Democratize the client–counsellor relationship. Despite your role as an “expert,” demonstrate humility and openness because, after all, the client is the expert when it comes to their own life. Remember: it is all about sharing knowledge.
- Speak about personal and professional experiences with the client (self-revelation), while taking care to respect boundaries.

Download the free *PINASUUTITSAQ* guide

(available in both English and French) at ceric.ca/inuit_career. ■

AUTHOR BIO

Gabrielle St-Cyr is a Researcher and Project Manager at the Regroupement québécois des organismes pour le développement de l'employabilité (RQuODE). Since 2011, she has worked as lead researcher on several projects aimed at facilitating the employment integration of underrepresented groups, including new immigrants and Inuit adults.

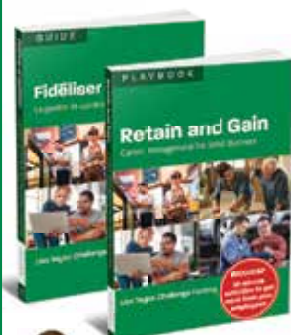
Culture-Infused Career Counselling: An Approach Applicable to Other Realities

The culture-infused career counselling approach is also relevant for counsellors who work with immigrants or clients from other Aboriginal communities. Many cultural references transcend ethnic groups, especially as they relate to the community dimension and oral communication, so career counsellors can also use the adaptations proposed in the *PINASUUTITSAQ* reference guide. Since each individual and each situation is unique, it is up to counsellors to select and tailor the strategies set out in this guide by taking into account the local realities (e.g. northern communities, rural regions, metropolitan areas), the particular needs of each client, and their own strengths and needs as professionals.

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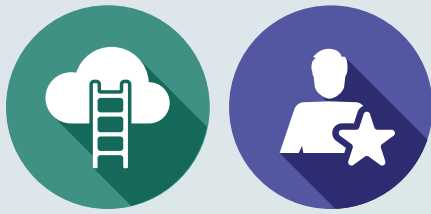
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Later life career development



How to approach career transitions among workers age 50 and older

By Suzanne Cook



The only constant is change. This is certainly the case today.

Within Canada's socioeconomic context, more and more people appear to be in a career transition. Those age 50 and older are no exception. In fact, they represent a large and growing proportion of those who seek employment services and career counselling.

In the CERIC-funded Redirection Project, I examined older adults who were shifting into new occupations, pursuing second or third careers. My focus has been on Canadians age 50 and above. My research and the research of other scholars points to how older adults are eager to remain engaged, active and productive in society. Furthermore, these older adults want or need to work.

I chose to study work, aging and later life career development for two reasons. First, as a gerontologist and adult educator, I spoke with older adults in different communities about their experiences looking for work and their desire for later life work options. These individuals were not planning to retire to a life of leisure as they approached the later stages of their career. They did not see an end to "working life."

Second, the generation of baby boomers is a large population. They are entering their later years and are now older workers. I was very interested in their occupational choices.

The growing proportion of older workers is a growing social issue, as well as a significant social shift away from previously held expectations and perceptions of later life. For practitioners in the field, it is important to develop and share best practices that address the changes we are seeing in society.

Changing careers is difficult, and there are barriers during the transition process. Older adults can have occupational and career crises. They require employment assistance. Because they make up a large and growing proportion of the people entering employment agencies looking for guidance, it is important to me that I share this research with the broader career development community and people working in the field. In other words, I believe it is critical that information and knowledge gained through the research be translated into theory and practice. Furthermore, it is important to develop relevant tools and resources for practitioners working with older clients.

My research indicates we can group older adults who change occupations or find a new

career into a few different categories. In this way, a typology of later life career redirection can be developed. This can be a useful resource for practitioners in the field who are assisting older clients. Several sub-categories describe the individuals who redirect into new occupational pursuits. I have developed the terms "Movers, Shakers, Shifters" to describe them. Those who are seeking redirection are: "Strivers, Stuck in Transition" (SiT), and a third category for which I have coined the term "SNAAFU." The dictionary states that "snafu" is "a confused or chaotic state," and currently this is the best concept to describe this category of redirection seekers.

It may be helpful to provide this typology to clients so that they can see where they fit in the Redirection model. Awareness of the process and understanding of their experience and situation, can be very helpful to someone at the beginning or in the middle of a career transition. It is also beneficial to acknowledge the accomplishments, and success of someone who comes through the Redirection process.



Where to Learn More About Redirection Project Findings

- A free CERIC webinar with Dr Suzanne Cook on January 12, 2017 will be recorded and posted online.
- At the Cannexus17 National Career Development Conference, Dr Cook will screen her Redirection: Movers, Shakers and Shifters documentary film on January 23. In addition, she will facilitate the session "Experienced and Greater than Average" during Cannexus Connections on January 24.
- The documentary film Redirection: Movers, Shakers and Shifters and a companion guide will be posted online after the conference for free access. The film trailer is available for viewing at: <https://vimeo.com/175275711>

Check ceric.ca/redirection for links and the latest information.

I want to share three of my personal learnings and reflections that can be developed into best practices to assist older workers with career transition. These ideas are not new to the

field; however, they need to be restated and highlighted because they are central tenants for work with older clients.

1. Every person is an individual. This must be reflected in a later life career development model. What is required is an approach that adapts to individual needs. Therefore, the career development model needs to be flexible. It should be an approach that begins where people "are at" when they come in the door. The model must be both broad (for diversity) yet specific (for practicality). Above all, the model must validate older adults and their experiences. In other words, the career development model must be both non-judgmental and empowering.

2. The career development model must recognize career as lifelong (and this is important to discuss with all age groups). In other words, the model must recognize that older workers may work another 20 years (or more). It must acknowledge their life experience and their learning needs. It must be a model where work and occupation are embedded in the kaleidoscope of life so that career counselling and employment services consider the whole, entire life of the client. Furthermore, it must recognize lifelong and life-wide vocational experiences.

3. Finally, this is a social transition and a social issue. Society should be paying more attention to work, aging and later life career development. Furthermore, older adults need to be aware that they are not alone. Relatedly, peer support is critical to the process. Older adults need other older adults. Work is a social experience and looking for work is similarly a social experience, requiring social interaction and support. Having other older adults talking together about their experiences as older workers is critical.

I believe these three objectives are important for work with older clients. In my research and application, I believe I am accomplishing these key goals. Working on the Redirection Project has been wonderful and I invite you to join me as I share the findings of this research in various ways. ■

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AUTHOR BIO

Dr Suzanne Cook is a social gerontologist and Adjunct Professor at York University in the Department of Sociology and York's Centre for Aging Research and Education. She is a leading-edge researcher who studies career development and older workers, with a particular focus on second careers. Her research bridges theory, research and practice.

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QUESTIONS

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The Right Honourable Paul Martin was the 21st Prime Minister of Canada from 2003 to 2006, Minister of Finance from 1993 to 2002 and he served as the Member of Parliament for LaSalle-Émard in Montreal, QC from 1988 to 2008. He graduated in honours philosophy and history from St. Michael's College at the University of Toronto and is a graduate of the University of Toronto Faculty of Law.

Domestically, Martin founded the Martin Family Initiative (MFI) focusing on elementary and secondary education opportunities for Aboriginal students and the Capital for Aboriginal Prosperity and Entrepreneurship (CAPE) Fund, an investment fund developing business expertise and mentoring for Indigenous business. In December 2011, he was appointed as a Companion to the Order of Canada. He married Sheila Ann Cowan in 1965 and they have three sons: Paul, Jamie and David, and five grandchildren.

Q In one sentence, describe why career development matters.

A Career development matters because it is integral to achieving a fulfilling future for each of us. Furthermore, the future of a country depends on the way in which its younger citizens approach the years and decades that lie ahead.

Q Which book are you reading right now?

A I'm currently reading *The Orenda* by Joseph Boyden.

Q What did you want to be when you grew up?

A I wanted to work in Africa on economic development.

Q Name one thing you wouldn't be able to work without?

A The support of Therese Horvath, who has been my assistant since 1988.

Q What activity do you usually turn to when procrastinating?

A Exercise. It also helps keep my back healthy.

Q What song do you listen to for inspiration?

A Leonard Cohen's "Hallelujah" ... sung by the composer or kd lang, a Canadian singer and songwriter.

Q Which word do you overuse?

A "Essentially" or "basic."

Q Who would you have liked to work with most?

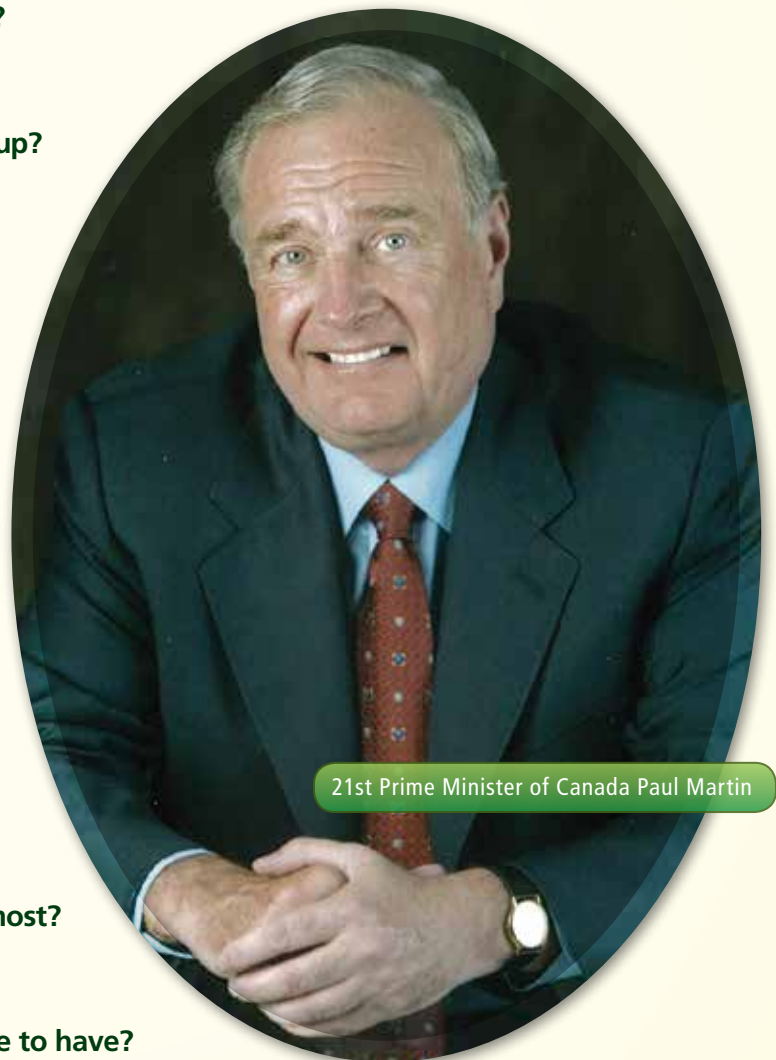
A Nelson Mandela.

Q Which talent or superpower would you like to have?

A The ability to foresee the future.

Q What do you consider your greatest achievement?

A The Kelowna Accord. Although it was rejected by the government that followed mine, it nonetheless established the only process that can work because it sustains the partnership that is so essential between government and the Indigenous people of this land. ■



21st Prime Minister of Canada Paul Martin

Photo courtesy of Paul Martin

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HOT LINKS:

CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES ON CAREER & WORK

Patterns and Determinants of Immigrants' Sense of Belonging to Canada and Their Source Country

This 2016 study by Statistics Canada assesses immigrants' acculturation profiles as measured by their sense of belonging to Canada and their source country by looking at possible acculturation outcomes and determinants as well as data from the Statistics Canada's 2013 General Social Survey.

statcan.gc.ca/pub/11f0019m/11f0019m2016383-eng.pdf

Literature Search:

Career Development Challenges Facing Immigrants

This CERIC literature search updated in November 2016 covers topics such as: Educational attainment; Post-secondary education; Bridging programs; Gender, class and race; Immigrant skills; Immigrant women; and more.

ceric.ca/literature-searches

Refugee Career Jumpstart Project (RCJP)

The Refugee Career Jumpstart Project (RCJP) is a Canadian non-profit focused on streamlining the process between the arrival of Syrian refugees and their employment.

rcjp.ca

Webinar Recording: Best Practices Working with International Students

In this webinar recording from the National Career Development Association (NCDA), learn strategies of engaging employers in the benefits of hiring international students, gain tools to working across campus to address the needs of international students and develop resources to expand global opportunities for international students.

bit.ly/2ixhq81

Globalization and Canada's PSEs: Opportunities and Challenges

A new Conference Board of Canada report finds that between 2004 and 2014 the number of international enrolments expanded by 122%, compared to only 24.5% in Canadian enrolments. However, to make the most of the opportunities, Canada needs to effectively settle and integrate international students.

conferenceboard.ca/e-library

Immigrant Access Fund

Immigrant Access Fund (IAF) supports immigrants, including refugees, who arrive in Canada equipped with professional skills but face barriers to employment. IAF provides micro loans of up to \$10,000 so they can obtain the Canadian licensing or training they need to work in their field.

iafcanada.org





ceric

CANADIAN EDUCATION AND RESEARCH INSTITUTE FOR COUNSELLING

INSTITUT CANADIEN D'ÉDUCATION ET DE RECHERCHE EN ORIENTATION

CERIC (Canadian Education and Research Institute for Counselling) is a charitable organization that advances education and research in career counselling and career development.

Le CERIC est un organisme caritatif voué à la progression de l'éducation et de la recherche en matière d'orientation professionnelle et de développement de carrière.

INITIATIVES

Project Partnerships Partenariats de projets

CERIC funds both research as well as learning and professional development projects that advance the body of knowledge in career counselling and career development in Canada. For more information about our current funding priorities and project partnership details, please visit ceric.ca.

Le CERIC finance à la fois des projets de recherche et des projets pédagogiques et de développement professionnel qui promeuvent l'ensemble des connaissances dans le domaine de l'orientation professionnelle et du développement de carrière au Canada. Pour de plus amples renseignements sur nos priorités de financement et nos partenariats de projets, visitez le site ceric.ca.



Canada's bilingual National Career Development Conference promoting the exchange of information and innovative approaches for career development and counselling. **Ottawa, January 22 - 24, 2018.**

Cannexus est un congrès national bilingue favorisant l'échange d'informations et d'initiatives novatrices dans le domaine de l'orientation et du développement de carrière. **Ottawa, du 22 au 24 janvier 2018.**



ContactPoint is a Canadian online community providing career resources, learning and networking for practitioners.

OrientAction est une communauté en ligne destinée aux praticiens(iennes) en développement de carrière au Canada, leur fournissant des ressources en développement de carrière, d'apprentissage et de réseautage.



The CJCD is a peer-reviewed publication of career-related academic research and best practices. cjcdonline.ca.

La RCDC est une publication qui porte sur la recherche universitaire et les meilleures pratiques évaluées par des spécialistes du secteur. rcdcenligne.ca.

Graduate Students Étudiants(es) aux cycles supérieurs

Graduate Student Engagement Program and Graduate Student Award. For information, visit ceric.ca/grad_program.

Programme de mobilisation des étudiants(es) aux cycles supérieurs et Prix des études supérieures. Pour obtenir plus d'information, veuillez visiter ceric.ca/programme_etudiants.

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RESOURCES & PROJECTS RESSOURCES ET PROJETS



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Fidéliser et mobiliser : la gestion de carrière dans les petites entreprises

In partnership with the Canadian Chamber of Commerce / en partenariat avec la Chambre de commerce du Canada

ceric.ca/sme

ceric.ca/pme



Redirection: Work and Later Life Career Development

Se réorienter : travail et développement de carrière chez les adultes d'un certain âge

In partnership with York University / en partenariat avec l'Université York

ceric.ca/redirection

ceric.ca/sereorienter



Making It Work! How to Effectively Manage Maternity Leave Career Transitions: An Employer's Guide

Making It Work! How to Effectively Navigate Maternity Leave Career Transitions: An Employee's Guide

In partnership with / en partenariat avec Canada Career Counselling

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Reference Guide for Career Development Counsellors Working with Inuit Clients

Guide de référence pour les conseillers en développement de carrière intervenant auprès de la clientèle inuit

In partnership with / en partenariat avec Regroupement québécois des organismes pour le développement de l'employabilité (RQODE)

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