



10 WAYS

**EMPLOYERS CAN ADDRESS
THEIR TALENT NEEDS**

**BY PARTNERING WITH CAREER
DEVELOPMENT PROFESSIONALS**

2023 EDITION



CERIC is a charitable organization that advances education and research in career counselling and career development, in order to increase the economic and social well-being of people in Canada.



Overview

Today’s tight labour market requires new approaches and flexibility to attract talent with shifting jobseeker and employee expectations.

A career development professional (CDP) can partner with employers to meet their recruitment, retention and training needs by helping them to navigate this changing labour market.

In most communities, these services are free to employers.

A CERIC Environics survey, published in 2022, asked 500 Canadian employers about their needs.

- 81% are having difficulty finding people with the right skill set
- 40% are losing talented employees to other organizations
- 53% are aware of CDPs but only 12% have worked with one in the past

HR vs. CDPs: Career development services do not take the place of HR or recruiters. While HR works for the employer, CDPs work for all aspects of the labour market and bring immense value to employers with hiring, upskilling and reducing turnover.

You’ll find career development professionals in educational institutions, community agencies and private practice. Their services vary, but they uniquely meet employer needs while preparing youth and adults for the workforce or career growth.

10 WAYS EMPLOYERS CAN ADDRESS THEIR TALENT NEEDS

#1  **Work with CDPs to Tackle Your Pain Points**


#6 **Use Creative Approaches for Selecting the Best Candidates** 

#2  **Understand Changing Jobseeker Expectations**


#7 **See Beyond the Gaps for Skills & Experience** 

#3  **Reimagine the Employee Value Proposition**

#8 **Access Training & Development** 

#4  **Find Untapped Talent Through Non-Traditional Hiring**

#9 **Focus on Employee Retention, Engagement and Wellness** 

#5  **Write Clear and Compelling Job Postings That Get Results**

#10 **Build Community Partnerships That Make Good Business Sense** 



#1

Work with CDPs to Tackle Your Pain Points

With a problem-solving focus, a career development professional (CDP) works with employers to identify, assess and address various workforce-related business challenges. They offer many free resources and supports before, during and after hiring, including:

- writing **job postings** that work
- recruiting the best candidates to fill vacancies by tapping into **wage subsidy** programs
- **onboarding** new employees
- offering **training** to bridge skills gaps

CDPs will get to know an employer's distinct needs, the labour market conditions, and can provide ongoing access to a range of value-added services.

50%

Half of Canadian workers (50%) plan to look for a new job in 2023, a nearly twofold increase from just a year ago.

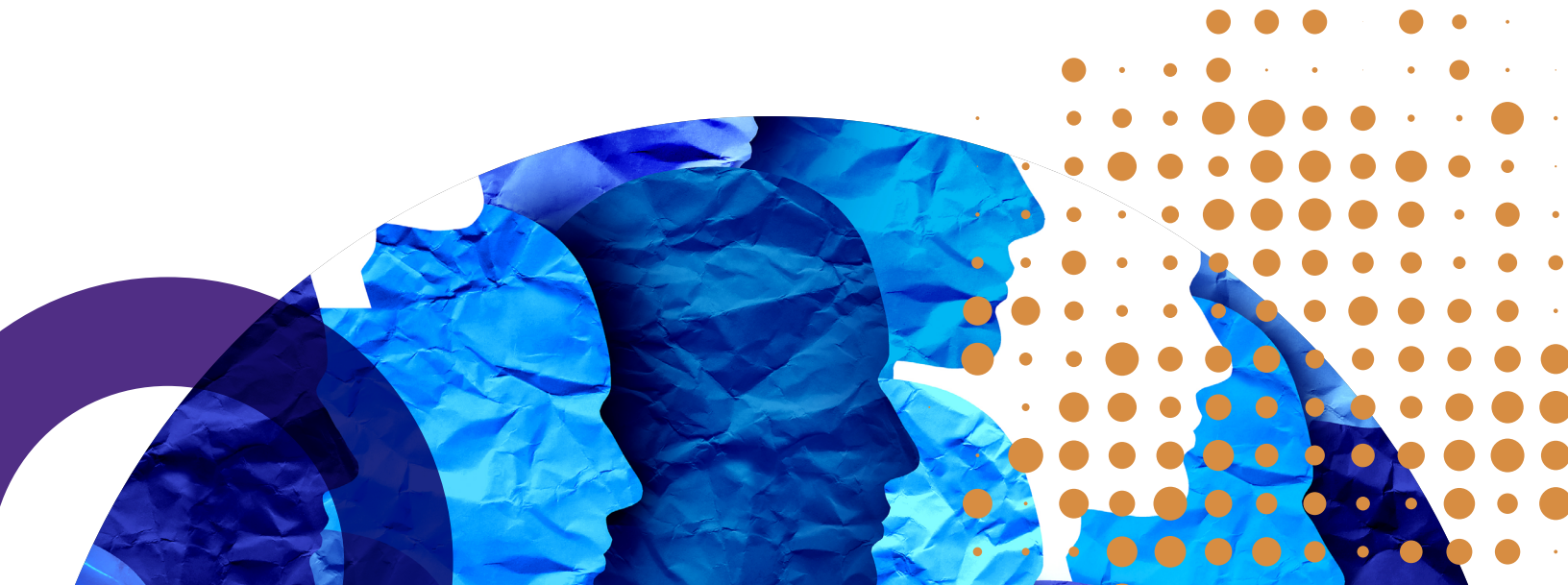
Robert Half Survey, January 2023



60%

With 60% of companies facing lost revenue due to labour shortages, bringing in new talent is a critical bottom-line issue.

Business Council of Canada
Survey, June 2022





#2

Understand Changing Jobseeker Expectations

Younger jobseeker and employee needs are changing fast. CDPs can help employers understand younger workers to attract or retain them such as:

- what graduating students or young adults in career transition need
- what potential barriers may be preventing candidates from accessing particular roles
- what employers themselves need to do to navigate the labour market differently

At the same time, CDPs can prepare young jobseekers so that they set realistic expectations.

What do younger workers really want?

- ✓ They have diverse interests
- ✓ They don't want long commutes; but they do want remote and hybrid work options
- ✓ They want employers to reflect values important to them like climate change and equity
- ✓ They want work-life balance and mental health to be a consideration
- ✓ They need to be paid a living wage and have good working conditions
- ✓ They want employers to invest in training and developing their potential
- ✓ Smartphones and other devices are part of their socialization
- ✓ Many are highly educated, having stayed in university longer
- ✓ They are being more selective and negotiating to meet their own needs
- ✓ They want the opportunity to provide feedback – and have employers be receptive

**73%**

Nearly three-quarters (73%) of 13- to 34-year-olds are prepared to leave their current employer for another that is offering what they consider to be better benefits with the top desired benefit being support for mental health.

RBC Insurance, June 2022



#3 Reimagine the Employee Value Proposition

The dynamic labour market and shifting candidate expectations are forcing employers to reimagine or update their employee value proposition. CDPs can help employers do that.

Questions employers can consider:

- ✓ Are you offering a living wage?
- ✓ Is transportation a barrier? Could you offer shuttles, carpooling or bus passes?
- ✓ Can you offer flexible work hours or workdays?
- ✓ Is remote work possible?
- ✓ Can you offer family days versus sick days?
- ✓ Can you offer cultural leave or more flexibility with some holidays?

13%

Satisfied employees are productive employees – 13% more productive, according to a recent study.

University of Oxford Business School, 2019



The cost of replacing an employee ranges from half to two-times their annual salary; overlooking retention is a costly mistake.

University of Oxford Business School, 2019





#4

Find Untapped Talent Through Non-Traditional Hiring

CDPs work with employers to access untapped talent they may not even realize is available by helping employers move away from legacy hiring practices and understand subconscious biases.

Nine questions CDPs encourage employers to ask themselves:

- 1 Are your job descriptions inclusive of the people you could hire?
- 2 How much experience is really needed, especially for more entry-level roles?
- 3 Who is your best employee in this role and why?
- 4 Are you going beyond ads, job fairs, internal referrals?
- 5 Can you host open houses, info sessions or hiring events that put jobseekers more at ease?
- 6 How willing are you to diversify and expand your candidate pool outside of a narrow pipeline?
- 7 What transferable skills do candidates have that would apply to a particular job?
- 8 How can you help prospective employees envision themselves growing with your organization?
- 9 Are you “screening in” vs. “screening out” to find current employees with potential to develop?

Employers sometimes overlook great candidates and CDPs promote candidates to the employer that they think would be successful.

CDPs can provide support for diverse hiring such as training, onboarding, coaching and assistive technologies to help employers recruit and retain those from racialized communities, persons with disabilities, immigrants and youth. They can also provide help to access wage subsidies and funded training.

**36%**

Only 36% of employers have worked with community employment agencies to meet their hiring needs. And only 18% of employers have “put a lot of effort” into customizing their recruitment approaches to reach members of underrepresented groups – a huge missed opportunity.

CERIC/Environics National Business Survey, Jan. 2022



#5

Write Clear and Compelling Job Postings That Get Results

CDPs can help employers to learn how to write clear, inclusive and effective job postings.

Employers need to ask for what is critical for the job and what is available in the labour market, moving away from “unicorn” candidates.

The job posting gives employers the chance to “sell” their organizational culture as much as the job itself.

**Best practices are:**

- ✓ **Job titles should clearly describe the role instead of taking a “creative” but opaque approach**
- ✓ **Write descriptive job postings so jobseekers can understand how to showcase their qualifications or know what skills to acquire to work in that role**
- ✓ **Avoid jargon; use plain, accurate language in the job posting so a candidate is prepared and knowledgeable for the interview**
- ✓ **Extend job descriptions beyond knowledge and skills to highlight desired values, strengths and to consider the “whole” person**
- ✓ **Job descriptions should match the recruitment level. Postings for entry-level positions need to be written to reflect entry level-skills (e.g. “developing” versus “excellent”)**
- ✓ **Incorporate more soft or transferable skills in the posting to help jobseekers relate their skills and experience to the position being advertised**
- ✓ **Add statements about commitment to diversity, inclusion, accessibility and other organizational values to encourage more jobseekers to apply and promote a sense of belonging**
- ✓ **Increasingly, employers are listing wages or salaries on job postings – and these roles tend to be filled faster**
- ✓ **Include perks and incentives in your job posting (flexible work schedules, benefits, education programs, transportation) and check what your competitors are offering**
- ✓ **Position the “value” of a job opportunity for growth, not just pay**





#6 Use Creative Approaches for Selecting the Best Candidates

How do employers select the best candidate for the role?

Improving and increasing flexibility in the screening process (e.g., how applicant tracking systems are used) will allow for better results.

It is critical that interview questions be designed appropriately to help you find the right candidates. CDPs often work with clients to ensure that employers receive full and relevant answers.

If employers use assessment tools for the selection process, CDPs can provide insights into the strengths and limitations of these tools.

They can also provide other strategies for employers to evaluate candidates such as paid work experiences, job shadowing, job trials and internships.

CDPs will support employers to prioritize recruiting and selecting people vs. just sets of skills. They can help employers see past potential barriers that may prevent them from hiring an excellent candidate.

Employers should also have a strong job description and work plan so when the best candidate is selected, expectations can be met, which leads to success for everyone.





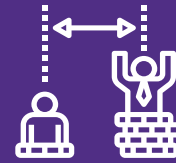
#7 See Beyond the Gaps for Skills & Experience

There are concerns about gaps when it comes to finding workers with the right skills. Employers can look at experience and skills differently. Shift to “assets” versus “deficits” by recognizing transferable skills between jobs and industries.

- An appetite and ability to learn mean employers can train new hires for other skills; a high-demand skill can often be developed in a short time through in-house training
- CDPs can help employers identify transferable skills by drawing from the jobseekers' experience
- CDPs can bring together employers and applicants – particularly youth – to support building relationships and social skills, allowing employers to access new talent
- Employers can work with CDPs to clarify and define what they are looking for in a candidate (e.g. developing a “skills taxonomy”) to support an objective hiring process
- Soft skills – problem-solving, reliability, work ethic and adaptability – are in high demand from employers. CDPs can provide access to community supports to help develop these skills when needed
- Likewise, CDPs will engage with employers in a complex labour market to understand how to better equip the talent pool with in-demand technical skills (e.g. a software developer may need more training because the skillsets are so varied)

TIP!

Employers can access more talent by thinking flexibly about skills and experience such as highly skilled immigrants who don't possess Canadian experience or older workers with extensive experience who may require some upskilling.



78%

78% of employers perceive a skills gap between skill level and experience for prospective employees. Viewing skills differently can help employers address this problem.

CERIC/EnviroNics National Business Survey, Jan. 2022



#8 Access Training & Development

CDPs can provide employers with access to many forms of value-added and often free training. This training can be for jobseekers and existing employees (e.g. First Aid, safety, literacy).



Employers and their managers can access workshops such as inclusive hiring, unconscious bias, and best practices to recruit and retain their staff.

As strategic partners, CDPs can help employers understand the motivations and values of employees to help guide additional training and development.

Training best practices for employers identified by CDPs:

- ✓ **Don't fear investing in employee training: it will make your business better**
- ✓ **Cross-train employees to ensure mission-critical knowledge is available AND to enrich jobs**
- ✓ **Build information systems to minimize loss of expertise when an employee does leave**
- ✓ **Set up a learning passport that encourages employees to gain skills and certifications**
- ✓ **Ensure a strong succession plan is in place for both employees and managers**

Additionally, if employers can provide their senior talent as mentors, CDPs can help find the young talent to mentor.

TIP!

When employers let CDPs know ahead of hiring, CDPs can help jobseekers prepare and train in advance, sometimes accessing new talent pools.





#9

Focus on Employee Retention, Engagement and Wellness

Employee turnover and burnout are growing concerns that affect an employer's bottom line and have real human costs.

- Career development can help with workforce retention, engagement, recognition and wellness
- Career development should be offered consistently across the organization – regardless of position
- Career development should be aligned with the corporate mission and values: employees who understand how they support the organization are more engaged and likely to stay

CDPs can assist by:

- ✓ Mapping pathways of progression in organizations that employees can work toward
- ✓ Creating a database of employee profiles that includes psychometrics as well as current and desired employee competencies, considering strategic employer goals
- ✓ Devising employee surveys to seek feedback on culture and help leaders take action
- ✓ Coaching managers to recognize the “whole” employee and support their development
- ✓ Advising employees about managing their own career aspirations within the workplace
- ✓ Designing mentorship programs



73%

While 73% of employers agree they have a responsibility to provide career management programs for employees, only 27% provide them. Employers who offer these programs can expect higher engagement.

CERIC/EnviroNics National Business Survey, Jan. 2022





#10 Build Community Partnerships That Make Good Business Sense

Employers and CDPs are part of a larger ecosystem of players who want to see people have jobs and jobs have people. They share a goal of supporting growing, healthy and vibrant communities. CDPs can be sources of meaningful connections for employers, bringing partners together. This can include:



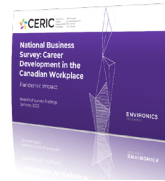
- Working through local Chambers of Commerce, associations or other industry/business groups to address what's working and what's not in the local labour market
- Collaborating with a larger network of other career and employment service providers to help employers fill vacancies more quickly
- Accessing a wide range of employers across sectors and facilitating sharing of information on market conditions and encouraging businesses with similar needs to network
- Connecting employers to other types of service providers (health, transportation, child care) who provide specialized supports for various groups of employees
- Taking a "whole community" approach to developing the skills of the workforce, whether that is multiple employers coming together to offer joint training to a pool of candidates or working with post-secondary providers to meet emerging skills needs



Additional Resources for Employers ceric.ca



Retain and Gain: Career Management for Small Business Playbook



Career Development in the Canadian Workplace: National Business Survey



Wayfinder: Enhance Career Development within Experiential Learning

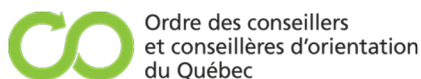


Strengthening Mental Health Through Effective Career Development



Making It Work! Managing Successful Maternity Leave Career Transitions

This employer toolkit was created by the career development professionals who work with employers every day within their communities. It is a compilation from close to 200 CDPs with advice for helping to mobilize local labour markets.



THANK YOU ALSO TO BCCDA FOR SUPPORTING THIS INITIATIVE.



In 2022, CERIC, in partnership with ASPECT BC, the Ontario Association for Career Management, the Career Development Association of Alberta, and the Ordre des Conseillers et conseillères du Québec (OCCOQ), hosted virtual community roundtables with career development professionals in these provinces. This resource is intended to convey the most impactful approaches to helping employers solve their labour challenges that emerged from the discussions. This 2023 revised version incorporates the additional insights shared by the Alberta and Quebec roundtables held in fall 2022.