

Canadian Standards and Guidelines
for Career Development Practitioners

Glossary of Career Development Terms

2012

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Assessment

Assessment is a process involving gathering information, identifying issues, needs, and clarifying personal and environmental resources in relation to the issues and needs. Assessment helps individuals to increase self-awareness; understand their career issues; establish work, learning, and/or life balance goals; and provides a foundation for taking action and an indicator of ongoing progress. Assessment methods may include a variety of formal and informal techniques such as standardized and non-standardized instruments, interviews, personality measures, questionnaires, checklists, behavioural observations, and reports by significant others. Assessment can be done in an individual or group context.

Career

Career is a lifestyle concept that involves the sequence of work, learning and leisure activities in which one engages throughout a lifetime. Careers are unique to each person and are dynamic; unfolding throughout life. Careers include how persons balance their paid and unpaid work and personal life roles.

Career Counselling

Career Counselling refers to an individual or group process which emphasizes self-awareness and understanding, and facilitates people to develop a satisfying and meaningful life/work direction. Career counselling is used to guide learning, work and transition decisions, as well as to manage responses to changing work and learning environments over the lifespan. Career Counsellors (i.e., those who provide Career Counselling services) have a unique scope of practice and specialized counselling competencies – they are fully competent career development practitioners *and also* fully competent counsellors.

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Career Development

Career Development is the lifelong process of managing learning, work, leisure, and transitions in order to move toward a personally determined and evolving preferred future.

Career Development Practitioner

Career Development Practitioner is an umbrella term that refers to any direct service provider in the career development field. This includes but is not limited to: career practitioners, career educators, career information specialists, career management

consultants, work development officers, employment support workers, work experience coordinators, job developers, placement coordinators, career coaches, and vocational rehabilitation workers. Although the term “counsellor” has historically been used with many job titles in the field (e.g., employment counsellors, rehabilitation counsellors, career counsellors), in recent years there has been increasing recognition that a “career counsellor” has a specific scope of practice (see the Career Counselling Specialization). Employers are encouraged to use titles without “counselling” in them for all employees and service providers who are not professional counsellors/therapists.

Career Educator

A Career Educator works with individuals or groups in educational settings to assist them to learn career development knowledge, skills and applications. Career educators help youth and adult learners to construct their careers through acquiring knowledge and skills that will enable them to identify, choose, plan and prepare for learning, training, work and other life-roles.

Career Exploration

Career exploration is the process of investigating and reflecting on self, personal contexts, learning and work opportunities, and training and educational requirements, as a basis for making career-life choices over the lifespan.

Career Information

Career Information is information related to the world of work that can be useful in the process of career development, including educational, occupational and psycho-social information related to working (e.g., availability of training, the nature of work, the status of workers in different occupations, etc.).

Career Information Specialist

A Career Information Specialist helps clients access relevant information needed for their career decision making process. The Career Information Specialist identifies, secures, manages and interprets career information for their clients. This includes national and international labour market, education, occupation and job search resources.

Career Practitioner

Career practitioners facilitate the ability of clients to take charge of their own career development by assisting them in the process of identifying and accessing resources, planning, and managing for their career-life development.

Community Capacity Building

Community Capacity Building refers to the processes and procedures whereby long-term strategies are developed and implemented which connect community, career and economic development in the interests of unemployment reduction and economic growth at the community level.

Employment Counselling

Employment Counselling refers to a problem-solving process addressing one or more of the following domains: career/occupational decision-making, skill enhancement, job search and employment maintenance. The purpose of Employment Counselling is to help clients improve their employability and self-sufficiency in the labour market.

Employment Counsellor

Employment Counsellors work collaboratively with individuals to assess needs related to decision-making, job search skills, training, and employment maintenance in order to help clients improve their employability and self-sufficiency in the labour market.

Facilitated Individual and Group Learning

Facilitated Individual and Group Learning refers to applying learning principles in order to design, develop, adapt and deliver a range of experiential activities leading to knowledge and skill acquisition. Activities are tailored towards meeting specific career-life planning needs of individuals or groups of clients. Learning activities may occur in one-on-one interview meetings, in classrooms (usually by guidance counsellors and co-operative education teachers), in supervised work experience (co-operative education teachers), and/or workshop settings.

Information and Resource Management

Information and Resource Management refers to developing, organizing, maintaining and disseminating information and resources related to work, learning and life-balance across the lifespan. The keys to effective information and resource management are the currency of the information and resources; the degree to which information and resources meet the needs of individuals and communities in which they are located; and the support services available which coach/assist individuals and communities to research, use and manage information in ways which support their needs and goals.

Job

A job is set of tasks that take place in a particular environment. Jobs may be paid or unpaid, part time or full time, and of short or long duration.

Labour Market Information

Labour Market Information is information concerning conditions in, or the operation of, the labour market, and includes, for example: data on employment, wages, standards and qualifications, job openings, working conditions. Information may be historical, current or projected; formally or informally collected; and based in skills, occupations or industries.

Occupation

A group of similar jobs found in different industries or organizations.

Personal Agency

Refers to people's beliefs about the extent to which they are active agents in their own life events, in contrast to being passive recipients of the events one experiences.

Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition

Prior Learning Assessment is a systematic process that involves the identification, documentation, assessment and recognition of competencies (knowledge, skills and attitudes) that have been developed through many formal and informal means (e.g., work experience, training, independent study, volunteer activities, travelling and hobbies). The recognition can be used toward the requirements of an academic or training program, occupational certification or labour market entry.

Self-Assessment

The process of evaluating one's abilities, talents and personality traits.

Work

Work is a set of activities with an intended set of outcomes, from which it is hoped that a person will derive personal satisfaction and contribute to some greater goal. Work is not necessarily tied to paid employment, but to meaningful and satisfying activities, (e.g., volunteer work, hobbies).

Work Development

Work Development refers to the processes and procedures whereby workplace, employment and volunteer opportunities are negotiated on behalf of individuals and/or groups of clients. The objectives of Work Development are long-term attachment to the labour market for workers, and employer satisfaction through providing employers with workers who meet their workforce needs and expectations.

Glossary Definitions Adapted From:

Alberta Advanced Education and Career Development. (1993) *Understanding the Labour Market*. Edmonton, AB: Alberta Human Resources and Employment.

Canadian Career Development Foundation. (2002) *Career Development A Primer and A Glossary*. Ottawa, ON.

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For a more detailed definition of labour market terms and issues, see *Understanding the Labour Market* published by the Information Development and Marketing Branch of Alberta Advanced Education and Career Development (ISBN 07732-06167).