

Career Developments

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Canadian Career Development Foundation

BUILDING COHESION AND COHERENCE: THE CANADIAN COUNCIL OF CAREER DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATIONS

The Canadian Council of Career Development Associations (CCCCA) brings together the executives of provincial/territorial career development associations, action groups and networks with the over-arching goal of promoting stronger professional identity across the field. The group works to strengthen collaboration around common interests—standards for practice, quality training, certification, mobility, evidence-based research and advocacy—in order to promote cohesion and coherence in our field.

Key priorities set by CCCCCA for this year include:

- To keep the Canadian Standards and Guidelines for Career Development Practitioners (S & Gs) current and vital;
- To be a mechanism for increased communication and collaboration across the field.

In March, the CCCCCA formed two working groups—one focusing on the S & Gs and the other on communication.

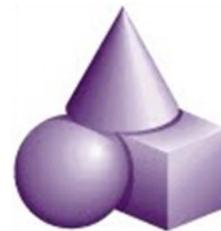
Many of you probably have been involved in some way in the **Canadian Standards and Guidelines for Career Development Practitioners** (http://www.career-dev-guidelines.org/career_dev/). You many have:

- Participated in early consultations to shape the structure and/or content of the S & Gs;
- Developed competency-based training;
- Applied for provincial certification linked to the S & Gs;
- Written a job description or employment profile based on the S & Gs—or applied for a job with specific competency requirements

articulated;

- Completed a career development training program grounded in the competencies; or
- Used them as a guide in your own ongoing professional development.

The S & Gs were always meant to evolve, just as thinking and practice in our field evolves. Accordingly, with the support of the New Brunswick Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour, the CCCCCA has been working to update and “revitalize” the S & Gs.



Following a national call for input, two priorities were identified for this phase of the revitalization.

- Reflecting in the S & Gs the massive influx of technology by including competencies for the infusion of technology into practice; and
- Reflecting the diversity of Canada’s population by including competencies for the delivery of quality career services to diverse client groups.

A third priority was identified by the Career Development Chapter of the Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association—to review the specialization competencies in the area of Career Counselling to ensure the interplay between the broader field of career development and the

specialized competencies for counselling are clearly articulated.

Practitioners from across Canada with expertise in these areas have joined the CCCDA S & Gs working group and have established three parallel teams, each focused on one of the above priority areas. Groups have completed literature reviews, designed a soon-to-be-released webinar on the S & Gs revitalization initiative and are now beginning to map out proposed revisions/new competencies to be added to the S & Gs.

Beginning this month, we'll be pilot-testing a consultation process to gather your input around these proposed revisions and changes. Consultations have already been scheduled for November 30th at the New Brunswick Career Development Action Group Forum and in Ontario at CANNEXUS in January 2011. Our hope is that members of the CCCDA will host consultations, resulting in input being gathered from across the country both via face-to-face focus groups and online consultations.

Please watch for information on the webinar and consultations in your area and get involved—it's your opportunity to ensure the S&Gs truly reflect your realities and priorities!

The second working group established by the CCCDA has been focusing on communication. Our first task was to develop a website. Step one of that—the creation of a logo/visual identity has been created. The graphic element is a circular design composed of two differently shaded elements, suggesting ideas like collaboration, diversity and inclusion. The subtle maple leaf in the centre, of course, is for Canada. The shape of the elements is also (subtly) a "C" and a "D" for "career development". The logo is bilingual and can be designed to place the English element first, or the French depending on which is needed. We hope you like it!



The CCCDA website is currently under construction, with a projected January launch date. It will be closely linked to the S & Gs website (which is also currently being revitalized, also in anticipation of a January launch). The CCCDA site will, among other things, be a repository of information on provincial certification requirements and endorsed training.

If you have any questions about the CCCDA or want to get more involved, please contact Sareena Hopkins (s.hopkins@ccdf.ca).

Spotlight on Evidence-Based Research

- *Are career development programs and services in workplaces a good investment for employers?*
- *Do they make a difference for employees?*
- *If yes, what kind of difference do they make and what do employers get out of investing in them?*
- *What "proof" is there that they make a worthwhile and positive contribution?*

The Canadian Research Working Group on Evidence-Based Practice in Career Development (CRWG), a partnership among seven researchers, six universities and the Canadian Career Development Foundation (CCDF), undertook a research project to develop, test and evaluate a range of career development programs for application in the workplace. The project was funded under the Workplace Skills Initiative of HRSDC from 2007-2010.

An initial worker survey showed that workers were satisfied overall with their work, but five

important needs which are very closely connected to career development were seen as not being met:

- Matching of skills and interest with workplace duties;
- Sustaining a feeling of accomplishment;
- Positive communications and work relationships;
- Independence; and
- The need for ongoing development of career plans.

This survey informed the development of three innovative and very different career development workplace programs which were tested in Canadian SMEs across the country:

1. **Workplace Skills Assessment and Development** (Bilan et développement de compétences): a program delivered by a professional career counsellor to help individuals to inventory their personal resources (interests, values, knowledge, qualities), environmental resources, current skills and needed/wanted skills and to build a learning plan to support movement toward a balanced and satisfying work life. This program consists of a number of skills assessment and development sessions (3 to 10 depending on the person) with a professional career counsellor with significant personal work completed by the individual in between sessions.
2. **Career Conversations:** a career conversation is a discussion between an employee and his or her manager that supports the employee in developing career goals and an action plan for achieving these goals. It is not a performance appraisal and it is intended to be beneficial for both the employee and the employer. Supervisors are trained to initiate and conduct a career conversations with employees to help them

articulate their own career aspirations, the competencies that they possess or would like to develop, and positions within the organization where those competencies could be put to use in a manner that employees would find satisfying and fulfilling.

3. **My Career GPS:** is a self-directed guide which enables individuals to assess their current life and work paths, personal characteristics, values, career aspirations and identify personal projects they wish to undertake. Who am I at work? What can I do to have a healthy career? How can I find balance between my work and my personal life? My GPS contains seven introspective sections and takes between 12 to 20 hours to complete.

So ... What were the results?

All three interventions resulted in positive impacts. Employers reported that their initial fear that examining career goals would result in employees seeking employment elsewhere, was unfounded. A common theme running through all three interventions is that when employees examine their own competencies, reflect on their career goals, and become more aware of job possibilities within their current organizations, their job satisfaction increases and they are more likely to remain within their current employment setting. Regardless of which intervention an employer might choose, doing something to promote employee career self-management is likely to have a positive effect on both the employee and the organization. Career Development works for employers and employees!

Copies of all research reports, interventions and information on how to implement these in workplaces will be available on the CRWG website at www.crwg-gdrc.ca by end of November.

COMING SOON...

A research study on the **impact of labour market information** is well underway. Two provinces have partnered with the CRWG and CCDF to examine the relative impact of tailored LMI packages and/or targeted face-to-face assistance from a counsellor on a range of outcome variables. The preliminary results are in and they are VERY EXCITING!! Stay tuned for more in the next edition of *Career Developments!*

A Provincial View: Alberta

By Doreen Kooy, CDAA

The career development environment has changed across Canada, which is both exciting and demanding more of each of us as professionals in the field. The current labour market, other fields of practice as well as the diversity in this field are challenging us. This is asking for a renewed

commitment, accountability, collaboration and consistency within the field. It has become of critical importance to the profession and to those practicing in the field to develop a stronger sense of ourselves and the scope of our work.

As a provincial board we believe in Advocacy and Partnership. This means the advocacy of career development as a field of practice and partnerships with organizations and individuals who dedicate themselves to working in this field. This initiative of the CCCDA is one of the partnerships which truly advocates for career development and the development of the profession. The Career Development Association of Alberta (CDAA), in its Certification initiative adopted the National Standards and Guidelines for Career Practitioner as a foundation for the criteria by which individuals are certified as professionals. These standards and guidelines are now used educationally in the development of career development curriculum and programming. We

have been an active part of national initiatives which work to strengthen our profession. As a provincial association, membership and involvement in a national professional body demonstrates a broader commitment and recognition from its members to their field of practice and specifically to:

- Identify areas of collaboration i.e. professional development, research, information sharing as well as be a Forum for discussing regional concerns that impact mobility of its workforce; council members are supported by local members, which would provide on the ground support, information and feedback. Coordinating efforts across provinces utilizes resources more effectively, therefore building sustainability.
- Build awareness, communication and credibility for the career development field.
- Promote and build a common understanding and language within the field.
- Contribute to policy and programming at all levels of education, government, agencies, business and front line professionals.
- Establish and maintain governance and management of the Standards and Guidelines, which has proved to be a most valuable defining tool for the profession across provinces.
- Provide and maintain an up to date clearing house of information, education, training and certification practices, which simplify, streamline and promote certification and ease of provincial mobility, while honouring and maintaining provincial jurisdiction. Alberta and BC collaboration on Certification and mobility is a current example. More to come on the details.
- Build international linkages more effectively.

We have come a long ways and to continuing! It is a collective investment of our time, energy and resources to move forward. The CDAA is pleased to be a part of CCCDA!