



## Workshop 4 Career Exploration I - Research Your Choices

### Student Summary

This workshop will seek to provide you with the following:

- An overview of research strategies to help you effectively research specific careers by using a variety of tools such as online resources, informational interviews, and job shadowing.
- Present the purpose and an overview of the contents of a career portfolio.
- Use online tools to explore details about specific career(s) of interest including information on career trends, future demand, job descriptions, educational requirements and approximate financial implications.
- Discuss volunteering as a way to explore career areas of interest and a way to gain work experience.
- Discuss labour market and educational trends.

At the end of this workshop you will take with you:

1. Handouts outlining the key steps in researching specific career areas.
2. Completion of at least one personal career profile.



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### Setting the Context

#### Overview of Career Exploration 1 – Researching Careers

In this session, we're going to focus on the topic of career exploration, specifically, researching career areas that you are interested in exploring or pursuing.

Research involves a lot of effort and time but the satisfaction of making informed career decisions is priceless. The growth of print and online information tools such as the Internet gives us the opportunity and ability to quickly and effectively research occupational choices and educational training facilities. This research effort will help you make informed career decisions, matching your interests, values and skills with career areas that are stable, growing and emerging with new opportunities.

In this workshop, we'll give you information on using a career portfolio as an efficient way of keeping organized, and tracking your learning, work experience and accomplishments. We don't have the time to fully explore this hot topic that is covered in workshop 1, but we will point you to resources that can provide you with more information

#### Discussion Points:

- **Shifting demographics:** Low birth rates and the growing number of baby boomers nearing retirement age will leave occupational vacancies that the current workforce may not be able to fill, creating a projected labour/skills shortage; *Good News:* By 2011, a decline in the labour force growth rate is expected, resulting in more work opportunities, reducing the length of the school-to-work transition period, and increasing labour force participation of young adults, aged 18-34; availability and influx of skilled immigrants—future shortage in the supply of high-skilled workers will increasingly rely on professional and skilled immigrants to meet labour market demands. Source: Trends in Today's Canada, Norman E. Amundson et al., UBC
- **Advances in technology:** Widespread use of computers in the workplace has increased the demand for highly educated and highly paid workers; immediate access to information through CNN, communication tools and the Internet, making the Internet the chief commodity of the 21<sup>st</sup> century; replacing and creating jobs—technological improvements will continue to replace unskilled labour; efficient telecommunication tools; businesses are offering work-based training to ensure staff have the technical skills needed.
- **Globalization and its effects on local and international economies:** Free trade—to succeed in the global village Canadians have to trade and cooperate with all the surrounding companies of the world; increased mobility of skilled workers; jobs are moved to developing regions because of easier access to cheap labour, facilities and lax laws; 'for e.g., competitive pressures are highlighted in the manufacturing sector as firms continue to restructure, and new companies enter and old companies exit the marketplace;' "international trade has positively impacted the wages of both more educated and less educated workers... the wages of the more educated workforce is higher." Source: Trends in Today's Canada, Norman E. Amundson et al. UBC)



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- **Environment:** Companies have new regulations to adhere to; growing consumer concern about waste, GMF, pesticides, etc.
- **Education and training LMI:** Continuous lifelong learning will be essential; wage gaps will grow larger between occupational and educational levels; demand for skilled workers increases in all industries; educational and skill requirements for jobs increases; increased competition for training spaces; increasing educational costs; inability of skilled immigrants to have credentials recognized efficiently
- **Sector or industrial LMI:** Huge demand in western countries, including Canada, for skilled labour; severe labour shortages in sectors such as construction; focus on apprenticeships and creating new spaces for upcoming apprentices.
- **Work life:** Increase in part-time workers; employees are shifting towards a more balanced and flexible work schedule; workers are choosing non-standard employment choices like self-employment.
- **Youth:** Youth participation in the labour market has been offset by increased post-secondary enrollment; since the 1900s, there has been a decline in Canada's youth's labour market participation; unskilled entry-level jobs that led to middle-class job security in the past no longer exist. *Source: Trends in Today's Canada, Norman E. Amundson et al., UBC.*
- **Gender:** Improved academic performance by females over males has resulted in greater female participation in the labour market, and the earnings difference between men and women has narrowed as women attain higher levels of education and increase participation in the labour force. *Source: Trends in Today's Canada, Norman E. Amundson et al., UBC.*

### Introduction to New Trends in Employment

**Overview:** Now we will present information on trends in employment in specific global regions. As we present this information, look for commonalities and differences between the regions and think about what this means for you and your future career. Feel free to make notes and record questions for discussion.

Globally, the economy is becoming increasingly complex as it evolves with the forces of technology, globalization and population shifts, which inevitably affect how and where we work.

**Developing Asian nations** such as Taiwan, India, Japan, and Hong Kong are becoming powerful global economic forces and are positioning their countries to develop a skilled workforce. Many of these countries have a burgeoning population (ie: places like India and China are bulging with 1+ billion citizens).

The **Taiwanese** government recognized that a skilled workforce is the basis of all development and is implementing policies accordingly. (Source: Taiwan Yearbook 2003, [www.gio.gov.tw/taiwan-website/5-gp/yearbook/chpt18.htm](http://www.gio.gov.tw/taiwan-website/5-gp/yearbook/chpt18.htm)).



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Other regions such as **Japan** and **Hong Kong** are still recovering from long recessions, and waves of employment downsizing conducted by multinationals and local firms. However, forward thinking is allowing these countries to position themselves to be strong competitors in the creation, commercialization, and distribution of technology.

In regions such as **China**, the shift away from state-owned enterprises and toward the expansion of private industry, small and medium-sized companies offer the best opportunities for employment.

**OPPORTUNITY**--Employment is plentiful in sectors with human resources shortages, such as the agricultural, construction and building, engineering, hotel and service, IT, shipbuilding, oil and mining, and textile industries. China is considered wealthy in terms of the social and economic fundamentals necessary to support a high-technology economy. These include its huge population, the rapid adoption of new technology by its consumers, and the expansion of modern fibre-optic networks throughout urban areas. (Source: China Career Guide, GoingGlobal.com).

**OPPORTUNITY**-- Despite this continent's large, highly educated population base, it is also experiencing a wide range of human resources shortages in knowledge-based occupations such as IT (microelectronic specialists, robotic specialists, marketers, biotechnology specialists, lawyers with a technical background, etc.)

Africa--In regions such as **South Africa**, unemployment is high, in large part due to a shortage of skilled workers.

**OPPORTUNITY**—Major areas of employment include financial services, business services and mining. Observers believe that South Africa holds the promise of becoming a major manufacturing country in the global marketplace. (Source: South Africa Career Guide, GoingGlobal.com).

**India's** Vision 2020 report foresees India evolving into an information society and knowledge economy based on a platform of information and communication technology.

**OPPORTUNITY**--India's claim to the title Silicon Valley of Asia will be followed by the diversification from IT to biotechnology, medical sciences and other emerging fields of technology, widening the field of India's international competitiveness and generating a large number of employment opportunities for educated youth. These developments, driven by the commitment of the government, and a rapid expansion of vocational training programs, will ensure jobs for skilled workers by 2020. (Source: India Vision 2020 report)

Other Western countries—Similar to many developing nations, developed nations such as **Australia** and the **UK** have a huge demand for educated professionals especially in the IT field.

**OPPORTUNITY**—For example, it is predicted that within the next three years, there will be a 25 percent shortfall of IT staff in the UK (Source: Australia Career Guide, GoingGlobal.com, and United Kingdom Career Guide, GoingGlobal.com) .

**Germany** is working to become more attractive to skilled workers from other parts of the world.



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**OPPORTUNITY**—Currently, Germany is experiencing a shortage of qualified workers in areas such as media, information technology, professional services, and research and development. (Source: Germany Career Guide, GoingGlobal.com).

North America—Similar to other western nations, **Canada** also faces a critical shortage of skilled workers. This situation is exacerbated by the trend of skilled Canadians leaving for the US for better wages. It is estimated that the shortage of skilled worker could grow to one million by 2020.

**Opportunity**—The Bank of Canada recently suggested that a shortage of skilled workers in Canada is spreading beyond high-tech industries, forcing employers in numerous sectors to compete for a shrinking pool of qualified labour. Industries now experiencing employment shortages include construction trades, truck transportation, engineering, food services, and accommodation.

To increase the skilled employment pool in Canada, legislation has been introduced to make it easier for immigrants to enter the country (Source: Canada Career Guide, GoingGlobal.com).

In the **United States**, the employment picture has been characterized by widespread flux for the past two decades, as companies hire and fire workers to adjust to economic conditions. This practice is expected to continue. The hardest hit by employment cuts have been the telecom, technology, airlines, tourism, and media/advertising industries.

**OPPORTUNITY**—On the other side of the coin are industries like health care and certain segments of information technology, which can't find enough qualified employees to fill open positions. The Bureau of Labor Statistics states that the longer-term outlook for IT jobs in the U.S. is strong. Overall, engineering employment is expected to increase as well as the demand for sales and marketing professionals. (Source: USA Career Guide, GoingGlobal.com).

Certain states in **Brazil** are attracting investment and employment in agribusiness, which is still essential to Brazil's economy as it continues to shift to modern technology and professional management techniques. Business services and services in general are expanding faster than manufacturing and agribusiness. Employment in sectors like tourism and continued professional education are growing at a significant pace.

These brief profiles just provide you with a glimpse of what is happening around the globe but you probably picked up on some commonalities amongst the different regions.

### Top 5 Global Growth Fields

We have provided you with a handout listing the growth fields and sample careers and occupations within each area. Take a look at them on your own time and research a few that you are interested in. Try to find more in each area of growth that interest you. This is not an all-inclusive list and it changes regularly.

### **HO1 - TOP FIVE GLOBAL FIELD GROWTH LIST**



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### Interactive Activity

Share your top two career research methods and why you like them.

Examples:

- online resources
- print media
- documentaries
- discussions with teachers, friends, neighbours, coaches and community leaders
- exploratory research (volunteering, trial and error experiments)

### Overview of Research Strategies as They Relate to Career Research

Here are a few resources to get you started:

#### **HO2 – RESOURCES HANDOUT/OVERHEAD**

In Canada, it is estimated that there are 7,000 – 10,000 occupations and thousands of public and private post-secondary institutions to choose from. Through your research you will discover local, regional, provincial, national and international resources. It is easy to get lost in a plethora of information, spend hours pouring over books and the Internet, and still be unsure of your next move.

Here is a general overview of a few proven research strategies:

- Online resources (career and education related Web sites: look for online communication tools to ask questions and to get current info through listserves which are online mailing lists; college and university chat rooms which are now providing online orientations and details on what campus life is really like; and good old fashion e-mail).
- Print resources (newspapers, magazines, journals, newsletters, community papers, religious papers, school calendars).
- Informational interviews, volunteering and job shadowing with people working in career areas that interest you. To find these people, ask your friends, neighbours, coaches, community leaders, religious leaders, parents and community associations for references
- Networking involves building personal and professional relationships to support your career dreams. You can use a variety of methods including electronic, telephone, mail and personal connections (How do you build your network: talk with friends, parents, relatives, family friends, community members and leaders, employers, Chamber of Commerce, municipal and provincial government representatives, etc.).
- Community resources (local and post-secondary libraries, Human Resource Centres of Canada, youth community and employment centres, local education and training institutions, professional



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trade associations and trade unions, community economic development of community future organizations, business information centres, etc.).

Sources: *Surfing for Work in British Columbia* <http://www.surfingforwork.com>; and *Career Development eManual* <http://www.cdm.uwaterloo.ca/index.asp>

### **Discuss Details of a Career Portfolio**

**DEFINITION:** A career portfolio is a portable collection of documents and products that showcases learning, life experience and work experience.

**WHY:** This is an excellent tool for students to record their educational experience, to identify transferable skills, to keep track of career planning progress, and to showcase skills and learning during potential job interviews and post-secondary admissions interviews.

Source: UVIC Career Centre [www.stec.uvic.ca/tutorials/career-portfolio.html](http://www.stec.uvic.ca/tutorials/career-portfolio.html)

Check out workshop 1 for more details on portfolios.

An additional resource kit is available through the Manitoba Education Citizenship and Youth Web site [http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/ks4/docs/support/c\\_portfolio/index.html](http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/ks4/docs/support/c_portfolio/index.html).

### **Computer lab – Specific Career Area Research**

#### **HO – Occupational Research: Defining Your Top Occupational Choice**

Remember this is just a start, you need to continue your research to confirm your choices.

### **Review and Next Steps**

- Now you have some new ideas on how to collect things that are important to your future education and employment.
- You know that there are a variety of different ways to obtain information and each has its benefits and limitations.
- Now that you have a good start what is next for you? What is one thing you will do in the next month to advance your career development?
- Where can you find out more information about your areas of interest?
- Who can you involve to help you succeed in your goals?