

2021

The Pan-Canadian Competency Framework for Career Development Professionals





Canada

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The Pan-Canadian Competency Framework for Career Development Professionals

The Pan-Canadian Competency Framework for Career Development Professionals (Competency Framework) details and describes effective performance, knowledge, understanding, and abilities for Career Development Professionals (CDPs), career influencers, career educators, and thought leaders.

The Competency Framework can be used by:

- The public to better understand the breadth of services and value of the career development sector
- Employers of CDPs and others focused on career development to inform recruitment, selection, performance appraisal and training
- Training providers to develop and design career development course curriculum and professional programs, tools, or training
- Current and future CDPs, career influencers, career educators, and thought leaders to validate their knowledge, skills and abilities and plan for career growth
- International career development leadership organizations and governments to promote common language, standards, and collaboration across the global career development sector

Career Development Professionals and Services

Career Development Professionals help individuals navigate learning and employment transitions across the lifespan. They help individuals to manage learning and employment, acquire and enhance skills, seek and create employment, and access community services that support personal and professional growth in an increasingly complex, interdependent and changing world.

Career Development services are dependent on several things including, scope of practice, level of training, and workplace requirements. Career Development services include collaborating with individuals, employers, education and training providers,



community-based services, and other private and public institutions to promote positive health, and the social and economic outcomes of individuals, institutions, and communities.

Development of the Pan-Canadian Competency Framework for Career Development Professionals

The Competency Framework was developed through a process of research, consultation, and validation with stakeholders and CDPs across Canada's provinces and territories from diverse workplace contexts. It provides context and shared language for continued professionalization in the field of career development. Beginning in 2018, and with generous funding from the Government of Canada's Sector Initiatives Program, the Canadian Career Development Foundation brought together Canadian leaders, frontline practitioners, and influencers to collaborate in the development of the 2021 Pan-Canadian Competency Framework for Career Development Professionals through the national project *Supporting Canadians to Navigate Learning and Work*. The Competency Framework delineates the professional competencies underpinning the sector's capacity to support the socio-economic health of Canadians.

Scope and Structure

Scope

The Competency Framework details and describes effective performance, knowledge, understanding, and abilities of professionals in the career development sector.

These competencies can be used to inform or shape diverse roles in the field of career development, including but not limited to front-line professionals delivering career services to individuals or groups, career educators, researchers, thought leaders, or policy makers. Comprised of 26 series, the 101 competencies that make up the Competency Framework are structured according to four categories:



PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

Professional Practice include 34 competencies across 9 series that enable effective practice. Foundational to Career Development Professionals (CDPs), these competencies are also indicative of related fields of practice.

The Professional Practice category includes:

- Series 1: Professional Responsibility
- Series 2: Ethics and Regulations
- Series 3: Client-Practitioner Relationship
- Series 4: Diversity and Inclusion
- Series 5: Evidence-Based Practice
- Series 6: Professional Development
- Series 7: Health and Wellness
- Series 8: Communication
- Series 9: Digital Literacy

CDP CHARACTERISTIC

The CDP Characteristic category include 31 competencies across 6 series that distinguish the field of career development practice. These competencies are generally distinct to CDPs and embody the main activities that apply to most CDPs.

The CDP Characteristic category includes:

- Series 10: Foundational Knowledge and Applied Theories
- Series 11: Service Delivery Process
- Series 12: Learning and Job Readiness
- Series 13: Awareness of Diverse Worldviews
- Series 14: Career Resources
- Series 15: Client Work Search Strategies
- Series 16: Referrals to Professional Services



CDP EXTENDED

The CDP Extended category includes 17 competencies across 5 series that are required to deliver specialized services provided by CDPs. Generally, these competencies apply to experienced CDPs with responsibilities that extend beyond the characteristic competencies.

The CDP Extended category includes:

- Series 17: Development and Delivery of Group Sessions
- Series 18: Research
- Series 19: Assessment and Evaluation Instruments and Procedures
- Series 20: Career Guidance in Educational System
- Series 21: Career Management

OUTREACH AND LEADERSHIP

The Outreach and Leadership category includes 18 competencies across 5 series related to advancing the career development field for improved social and economic outcomes for clients and communities.

The Outreach and Leadership category includes:

- Series 22: Employer Outreach and Relations
- Series 23: Community Capacity Building
- Series 24: Policy and Advocacy
- Series 25: Strategic Delivery of Career Development Services
- Series 26: Career Development Leadership

Structure

The Competency Framework is structured to reflect the ever-changing environment in which Canadians live, learn, and work. Each competency series allows room for growth (new competencies) and adaptation (revised and updated competencies) as the field of career development grows and adapts. Regular applied use of the Competency Framework in career practice, training, or organizational policy development helps keep the Competency Framework a ‘living’ document.



Each competency is delineated in detail, including:

- the purpose/context
- markers of effective performance
- knowledge and understanding
- contextual variables
- a glossary or key references
- context rating scales

For each competency, the **purpose** or context explains why the competency standard is important, or how it relates to the role of a CDP. The **markers of effective performance** detail actions that a competent CDP must be able to do and accomplish with proficiency. Each competency outlines **specific knowledge and understanding** pertinent to effective performance of the competency standard. **Contextual variables** (unique considerations in applying the competency), relevant **glossary** terms, and **key references** are highlighted. Each competency standard is measured against a series of **context rating scales** along the following dimensions:

- **Criticality** – defines the level of risk (to the CDP, those they serve, their employer and other key stakeholders) should a CDP be unable to perform this skill according to the standard. Ratings are based on the following scale:
 1. No risk, no consequence: not critical
 2. Minimal risk: somewhat critical
 3. Moderate risk: critical
 4. High probability of risk: very critical
 5. Severe risk: extremely critical
- **Frequency** – defines how often and under what conditions the competency is performed. Ratings are based on the following scale:
 1. Routinely, regular course of procedure
 2. Occasionally, e.g. generally several times in a month
 3. Unexpectedly, e.g. when emergency arises



4. Circumstantially, e.g. per project, when a specific event arises
 5. Timely, e.g. every month, weekly, hourly
- **The Level of Difficulty** – defines how difficult it is (physically, cognitively) to perform this competency under routine circumstances Ratings are based on the following scale:
1. No difficulty or complexity
 2. Minimal difficulty or complexity
 3. Moderate difficulty or complexity
 4. Very hard or challenging
 5. Intense or highly complex
- **The Time Required to Gain Proficiency** – defines the average length of time or number of repeated events that are minimally necessary for a CDP to become proficient in performing the competency to the standard. Ratings are based on a period of time, or a benchmarked number of clients served.
- **Interdependency** – demarcates competencies that inform and are informed by the competency in question. Through use and application of the competencies, listed interdependent competencies will grow in size and scope.
- **Autonomy** – highlights whether or not the CDP performs the competency with or without supervision, and whether they perform the competency alone or as part of a team.
- **Automation** –projects the risk (unlikely, somewhat likely or very likely) of automation associated with the competency.
- **Requisite Work Aids, Tools, Equipment or Materials** – Details the physical tools needed for effective performance of the competency. These may include client records, reports, or software.



Acknowledgements

Over the course of three years (2018-2021), over 600 professionals contributed time, energy and expertise to the development of the Competency Framework. We are deeply grateful to the members of the National Stakeholder Committee, National Certification Steering Committee, associated Working Groups and to all who participated in focus groups and consultations across the country. CCDF would like to acknowledge the work of eMerit consulting for their expert guidance and development, and l'Alliance des centres-conseils en emploi (AXTRA) for their support and skilled expertise. In addition, CCDF acknowledges the financial support of the Government of Canada, Employment Services and Development Canada and its Sectoral Initiatives Program, without which this publication and the broader initiative to raise the bar of excellence for career development practice would not be possible



Summary of Competencies

Professional Practice

Competencies enabling effective practice.

Foundational to Career Development Professionals (CDPs), these competencies are also indicative of related fields of practice.

1 Professional Responsibility

Adhere to professional code of conduct

- 1.1 Deliver services within scope of practice
- 1.2 Maintain professional boundaries
- 1.3 Obtain informed consent
- 1.4 Protect information and records
- 1.5 Represent career development qualifications

2 Ethics and Regulations

Guide practice using ethical decision-making process

- 2.1 Comply with legislation and regulations
- 2.2 Follow ethical decision-making process

3 Client-Practitioner Relationship

Nurture a collaborative and trusting relationship

- 3.1 Establish and sustain working alliance
- 3.2 Build self-agency
- 3.3 Help clients address and prevent conflict
- 3.4 Engage reluctant or resistant clients
- 3.5 Manage abusive client behaviour
- 3.6 Help clients manage mental health

4 Diversity and Inclusion

Promote a diverse and inclusive workforce and equitable access to resources and opportunities

- 4.1 Respect diversity and inclusion
- 4.2 Promote diversity and inclusion
- 4.3 Advocate for client



5 Evidence-Based Practice

Develop and sustain an evidence-based practice to improve outcomes

- 5.1 Develop evidence-based interventions
- 5.2 Monitor client progress
- 5.3 Maintain client records

6 Professional Development

Commit to lifelong learning by developing new skills aligned with development in the field of practice and society

- 6.1 Develop and maintain professional relationships
- 6.2 Engage in lifelong learning
- 6.3 Collaborate with peers

7 Health and Wellness

Promote well-being and a healthy work environment

- 7.1 Manage emotional responses
- 7.2 Interact with others in respectful and civil manner
- 7.3 Plan and organize work
- 7.4 Maintain health and wellness

8 Communication

Communicate in a clear and effective manner

- 8.1 Use active listening skills
- 8.2 Communicate verbally
- 8.3 Communicate non-verbally
- 8.4 Communicate in writing
- 8.5 Conduct meetings
- 8.6 Deliver presentations

9 Digital Literacy

Leverage current and emerging technologies to support career development practice

- 9.1 Use digital technology
- 9.2 Respond to cybersecurity breaches



CDP Characteristic

Competencies distinguishing the field of career development practice.

These competencies are generally distinct to CDPs and embody the main activities that apply to most CDPs.

10 Foundational Knowledge and Applied Theories

Develop foundational knowledge of field of practice

- 10.1 Understand career development theories and models
- 10.2 Apply career development theories and models

11 Service Delivery Process

Engage clients in a structured career exploration

- 11.1 Conduct intake interview
- 11.2 Conduct employability assessment
- 11.3 Help client develop goals and action plans
- 11.4 Select and monitor interventions
- 11.5 Help client build support network
- 11.6 Manage caseload

12 Learning and Job Readiness

Provide individualized support to achieve learning and employment goals

- 12.1 Explore learning and employment possibilities
- 12.2 Develop learning readiness skills
- 12.3 Develop job readiness skills

13 Awareness of Diverse Worldviews

Develop tailored approaches for client populations

- 13.1 Work with Indigenous Clients
- 13.2 Work with Immigrant Clients
- 13.3 Work with LGBTQ2+ Clients
- 13.4 Work with youth at risk
- 13.5 Work with clients affected by work disruption
- 13.6 Work with clients living in poverty
- 13.7 Work with clients post-incarceration
- 13.8 Work with clients living with a disability
- 13.9 Work with clients experiencing racism



14 Career Resources

Manage career resources to support client services and self-directed learning

- 14.1 Maintain and deliver career resources
- 14.2 Maintain current knowledge of labour market
- 14.3 Use assessment tools and approaches
- 14.4 Deliver services using technology

15 Client Work Search Strategies

Use tailored approaches to prepare client for learning and employment

- 15.1 Work with clients to develop résumés
- 15.2 Work with clients to write communications
- 15.3 Work with clients to assemble portfolios
- 15.4 Work with clients to develop value proposition
- 15.5 Work with clients to develop references
- 15.6 Work with clients to prepare for employment interviews
- 15.7 Work with clients to build a professional network

16 Referrals to Professional Services

Refer client to other professionals as required

- 16.1 Maintain network of referral resources
- 16.2 Arrange professional referrals



CDP Extended

Competencies required to deliver specialized services provided by CDPs.

Generally, these competencies apply to experienced CDPs with responsibilities that extend beyond the characteristic competencies.

17 Development and Delivery of Group Sessions

Design and deliver sessions to address career-related learning and development needs

17.1 Design information sessions or workshops

17.2 Deliver information sessions or workshops

18 Research

Conduct and lead research

18.1 Lead research projects

18.2 Conduct research

18.3 Perform data analysis and reporting

19 Assessment and Evaluation Instruments and Procedures

Use assessment and evaluation methods

19.1 Identify assessment and evaluation methods

19.2 Follow administration procedures specified by test publisher

19.3 Score, interpret and protect confidentiality of test results

19.4 Report assessment results

19.5 Use technology in assessment and evaluation

20 Career Guidance in Educational System

Facilitate transition from school to employment

20.1 Promote benefits of career development in school

20.2 Mobilize career influencers

20.3 Integrate career development across curriculum

20.4 Facilitate experiential learning opportunities

20.5 Design and implement career program

21 Career Management

Facilitate talent mobility

21.1 Optimize workforce development

21.2 Support employee mobility within the organization



Outreach and Leadership

Competencies reflecting the strategic role of career development professionals.

The focus of these competencies is related to improved social and economic outcomes for clients and communities.

22 Employer Outreach and Relations

Work collaboratively with employers to address workforce challenges

- 22.1 Work with employers to create job opportunities
- 22.2 Support employers in development of recruitment and selection strategies
- 22.3 Support employers and employees in development of job maintenance strategy

23 Community Capacity Building

Leverage capacity within the community

- 23.1 Assess labour market needs
- 23.2 Develop labour market action plan
- 23.3 Implement labour market action plan
- 23.4 Evaluate labour market action plan

24 Policy and Advocacy

Engage in policy development and advocacy to further the interest of clients and the field of practice

- 24.1 Contribute to development of public policy
- 24.2 Develop advocacy strategies
- 24.3 Advocate on behalf of profession
- 24.4 Build public awareness of Career Development Professionals

25 Strategic Delivery of Career Development Services

Establish a culture of strategic thinking

- 25.1 Build strategic plan
- 25.2 Build strategic partnerships
- 25.3 Develop performance monitoring system
- 25.4 Prepare performance reports
- 25.5 Manage risk

26 Career Development Leadership

Contribute to the advancement of the field

- 26.1 Mentor others
- 26.2 Lead change



Professional Practice

Competencies enabling effective practice.

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1	Professional Responsibility	1.1 Deliver services within scope of practice	1.2 Maintain professional boundaries	1.3 Obtain informed consent	1.4 Protect information and records	1.5 Represent career development qualifications	
2	Ethics and Regulations	2.1 Comply with legislation and regulations	2.2 Follow ethical decision-making process				
3	Client-Practitioner Relationship	3.1 Establish and sustain working alliance	3.2 Build self-agency	3.3 Help clients address and prevent conflict.	3.4 Engage reluctant or resistant clients	3.5 Manage abusive client behaviour	3.6 Help clients manage mental health
4	Diversity and Inclusion	4.1 Respect diversity and inclusion	4.2 Promote diversity and inclusion	4.3 Advocate for client			
5	Evidence-Based Practice	5.1 Develop evidence-based interventions	5.2 Monitor client progress	5.3 Maintain client records			
6	Professional Development	6.1 Develop and maintain professional relationships	6.2 Engage in lifelong learning	6.3 Collaborate with peers			
7	Health and Wellness	7.1 Manage emotional responses	7.2 Interact with others in respectful and civil manner	7.3 Plan and organize work	7.4 Maintain health and wellness		
8	Communication	8.1 Use active listening skills	8.2 Communicate verbally	8.3 Communicate non-verbally	8.4 Communicate in writing	8.5 Conduct meetings	8.6 Deliver presentations
9	Digital Literacy	9.1 Use digital technology	9.2 Respond to cybersecurity breaches				



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12	Learning and Job Readiness	12.1 Explore learning and employment possibilities	12.2 Develop learning readiness skills	12.3 Develop job readiness skills.															
13	Awareness of Diverse Worldviews	13.1 Work with Indigenous Clients	13.2 Work with Immigrant Clients	13.3 Work with LGBTQ2+ Clients	13.4 Work with youth at risk	13.5 Work with clients affected by work disruption	13.6 Work with clients living in poverty	13.7 Work with clients post-incarceration	13.8 Work with clients living with a disability	13.9 Work with clients Experiencing Racism									
14	Career Resources	14.1 Maintain and deliver career resources	14.2 Maintain current knowledge of labour market	14.3 Use assessment tools and approaches	14.4 Deliver services using technology														
15	Client Work Search Strategies	15.1 Work with clients to develop résumés	15.2 Work with clients to write communications	15.3 Work with clients to assemble portfolios	15.4 Work with clients to develop value proposition	15.5 Work with clients to develop references	15.6 Work with clients to prepare for employment interviews	15.7 Work with clients to build a professional network											
16	Referrals to Professional Services	16.1 Maintain network of referral resources	16.2 Arrange professional referrals																



CDP Extended

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Generally, these competencies apply to experienced CDPs with responsibilities that extend beyond the characteristic competencies.

17	Development and Delivery of Group Sessions	17.1 Design information sessions or workshops	17.2 Deliver information sessions or workshops			
18	Research	18.1 Lead research projects	18.2 Conduct Research	18.3 Perform data analysis and reporting		
19	Assessment and Evaluation Instruments and Procedures	19.1 Identify assessment and evaluation methods	19.2 Follow administration procedures specified by test publisher	19.3 Score, interpret and protect confidentiality of test results	19.4 Report assessment results	19.5 Use technology in assessment and evaluation
20	Career Guidance in Educational System	20.1 Promote Benefits of Career Development in Education Settings	20.2 Mobilize Career Influencers	20.3 Integrate Career Development Across Curriculum	20.4 Facilitate Experiential Learning Opportunities	20.5 Design and Implement Career Program(s)
21	Career Management	21.1 Optimize workforce development	21.2 Support employee mobility within the organization			



Outreach and Leadership

Competencies required to deliver specialized services provided by CDPs.

Generally, these competencies apply to experienced CDPs with responsibilities that extend beyond the characteristic competencies.

22	Employer Outreach and Relations	22.1 Work with employers to create job opportunities	22.2 Support employers in development of recruitment and selection strategies	22.3 Support employers and employees in development of job maintenance strategies		
23	Community Capacity Building	23.1 Assess labour market needs	23.2 Develop labour market action plan	23.3 Implement labour market action plan	23.4 Evaluate labour market action plan	
24	Policy and Advocacy	24.1 Contribute to development of public policy	24.2 Develop advocacy strategies	24.3 Advocate on behalf of profession	24.4 Build public awareness of CDPs	19.5 Use technology in assessment and evaluation
25	Strategic Delivery of Career Development Services	25.1 Build strategic plan	25.2 Build strategic partnerships	25.3 Develop performance monitoring system	25.4 Manage risk	20.5 Advocate for client
26	Career Development Leadership	26.1 Mentor others	26.2 Lead change			

