

## Lesson 3: Information Sources and Resources

By now you have probably narrowed down your career interests to just a few choices. There is a wealth of information available to you to explore those careers in more detail. While it is not possible to search out and use every source or resource, you can become skilled at finding good sources and resources.



### People

You already have your own network of resources—the people you know. They can provide you with a great deal of information about the jobs they do, as well as lead you to information about available jobs or educational opportunities.

Following is a list to remind you of some of the people resources you can access:

- family members such as parents, siblings, grandparents
- your friends and their families
- teachers, coaches, school counsellors, or tutors
- co-workers or managers at your place of work
- government departments
- professional associations or organizations
- entrepreneur networks



## Places

There are also places where you can go to find information about careers and job openings. Following are some examples of such places:

- community agencies or political organizations
- employment centres
- libraries
- local businesses
- local Chamber of Commerce
- post-secondary institutions
- human resource departments of large organizations



## Other Resources

Other sources of information include the following:

- the Internet
- computer programs on career planning
- Yellow Pages and government pages of telephone books
- newspapers and magazines with articles on career trends or want ads
- books on occupations and career trends
- newsletters from professional organizations
- television and radio
- Statistics Canada, which has data on work and occupations

# Factors That Affect Employment Trends

Employment trends—the increase or decrease in demand for specific occupations—might affect your career decisions. Changes in technology, social changes, economic changes, environmental issues, and political actions all have an impact on employment trends.

- **Changes in technology.** New developments in technology may mean fewer workers are needed for certain occupations, the creation of new occupations, or that workers must learn new skills to keep up with technological changes.
- **Social changes.** Examples of social changes that might affect employment trends include the following:
  - Increased communication as a result of technological changes has led to an increased awareness of other places.
  - Increased mobility results in people being more willing to relocate to find a job.
  - Better literacy and numerical skills are required. This means workers need more education.
  - A shift from a resource-based economy to an information-based and service-based economy has meant a change in the type of work to be done and the types of jobs available.
  - Increased chance of being hired for a short period of time where special skills are required means more consulting, contract, and part-time work.
  - Increased number of entrepreneurs generates new jobs.
  - Greater demand for services and products for an aging population means an increase in occupations related to that demographic.



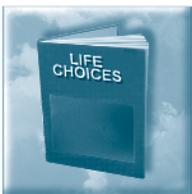
- **Economic changes.** Global competition means that goods will often be made in countries where they can be produced most cheaply. Workers there are paid poorly since there is no minimum wage, benefits are non-existent, and unions are often illegal. As a result, Canadian businesses may not be able to compete, and jobs can be lost because labour costs in Canada are higher.

Some regions of Canada go through boom-and-bust cycles. The economy might be stimulated, for instance, by high demand for a resource or product. Jobs will be plentiful and more secure. When demand lessens or the resource runs out, the economy can slow down. Jobs may be scarce and some people may lose their jobs.

- **Environmental issues.** In order to protect the environment, the cost of producing goods has increased. While environmental protection is necessary for the long-term existence of the planet, in the short term, it drives up costs and can cause loss of jobs. On the other hand, occupations that deal with environmental protection are increasing.
- **Political Actions.** Political decisions can influence employment trends. For example, governments may choose to subsidize a particular industry, pay people not to fish or not to grow certain crops. These actions can impact the local economy. Laws requiring certain hiring practices, such as employment equity, affect employment.

1. Factors that affect employment trends affect the way people work and the choices they have within their occupations. They also affect people's lifestyles and the way communities grow and develop. Think about the lifestyles that are evident within your community. How are lifestyles shaped and affected by some of the factors you have just read about?

**Compare your answer with the Suggested Responses at the end of the lesson.**



Read “Where the Work Is” on pages 56 to 59 of *Careers*, which explores the changing nature of work in Canada and provides a sampling of high technology, entrepreneurial, and home-based employment. Some hot jobs according to Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) are listed.

There are many styles of employment available to Canadian workers. For example, a person can share a full-time job or do part-time contract work. Read “It’s Flex Time” on pages 117 and 118 of *Careers* to find out about the variety of working arrangements available.



Segment 19: Forms of Work on your Student Support CD also provides information on alternatives to full-time employment.

## Using the Information



Probably the most important piece of advice is not to consider only one bit of information when trying to interpret future trends and occupational opportunities.



One very good source of information regarding employment trends is Job Futures found at the following Internet address:

**<http://emploiavenir.ca/>**

This site provides employment projections for occupations in Canada. The Job Futures website is developed by Human Resources Development Canada and is part of the online National Occupational Classification site.

2. Use the information from the Job Futures website to answer the following questions.
  - a. What kind of information does this website provide?
  - b. Select two occupations that interest you, and describe the information available on each occupation at this site.
  - c. What are the work prospects for these two occupations?
  - d. What basic skills are required for these two occupations?
  - e. What factors are affecting the future trends for each occupation?

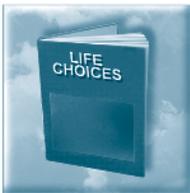
**Compare your answers with the Suggested Responses at the end of the lesson.**

The Alberta Career Education Network is another website that is a good source of information about occupational opportunities:

**<http://www.careerednetwork.ca/>**

Following are some other sources of information about employment trends:

- school counselling departments
- career centres and employment centres
- career fairs
- actual employers and employees in a specific career
- newspapers and other media
- libraries
- the Internet



To learn more about job availability, read “Facts” on pages 126 and 127 of *Careers*. This collection of statistics provides information about the Canadian labour market.

3. After having looked at a variety of information sources, what career areas do you think will be growing when you will be entering the job market?
4. You now have concrete information in your personal profile, and you have understandings of the range of choices available to you after high school. In addition, you have considered some careers or occupations that interest you. Create a short list of the occupations you are interested in.

**Compare your answers with the Suggested Responses at the end of the lesson.**



**Jamal:** I'm a little confused about some of the terms that are being used. Aren't an occupation and a career the same?

**Ashley:** I'm having the same problem. What's the difference between a job and an occupation?

**Mr. Romanchuk:** I can understand your confusion. People often use these terms interchangeably. For our purposes in CALM, these three terms mean quite different things. Perhaps the explanations that follow will clarify things for you.

**job:** a position of duty and responsibility within an organization

**occupation:** a group of jobs having similar characteristics, interests, tasks, abilities, requirements, and goals

**career:** a collection of an individual's life-time activities, which includes both paid and unpaid labour

- A **job** is a specific assignment of work that includes duties and responsibilities. Usually a job is described by naming the major task and giving the location and name of the business where it takes place. For example, a person can have the job of being a riding instructor at the Riverside Stables.
- An **occupation** is a specific collection of duties, activities, and responsibilities that can be performed in a variety of job settings and locations. The name of the occupation describes this collection. For example, being a cashier at a specific convenience store is a job, but that person and all others who are cashiers have the same occupation.
- A **career** is the sum of a person's life experiences. It can include education, paid work, unpaid work, parenting, volunteer work, hobbies, leisure activities, and retirement. It is the total picture of the roles a person experiences in life.

Consider the following two teachers. One is a Career and Life Management teacher at an outreach school, and the other is a chemistry teacher at a local high school. They have different jobs, but the same occupation. After work, one coaches soccer, and the other one plays in a band. Both find their hobbies satisfy social and self-esteem needs. They also find their hobbies enrich their work life. These hobbies are part of their lifestyle choices that contribute to their unique careers.

There is no assignment for this lesson. You will use the information from this lesson to respond to the assignment for Lesson 4.

## Looking Back; Looking Ahead

Because the job market is undergoing extensive changes, it's important to be able to respond to its demands. Potential employees must be flexible and prepared. This is one factor to consider as you choose the occupation you will pursue. You have now made some choices as to which careers you will seriously consider. In the next lesson, you will look closely at details of occupations that interest you. You will use your findings to develop an occupational profile.

## Glossary

**career:** a collection of an individual's life-time activities, which includes both paid and unpaid labour

**occupation:** a group of jobs having similar characteristics, interests, tasks, abilities, requirements, and goals

**job:** a position of duty and responsibility within an organization

## Suggested Answers

1. In some cases, these factors can have a negative impact. Businesses can be forced to close or downsize. Do you know of any business in your community that has closed or downsized? What factors do you think played a role in its closing?

What about the people you know? How have they been affected by these factors? Interview two or three adults in your community. How has their work been affected by social, economic, technological, environmental, and political issues? How has their work changed over the years?

2. **a. to e.** Your answers will vary depending on the information found and the occupations examined.
3. The careers that will have growing opportunities as you enter the job market will vary over time. The sources of information you have looked at predict the trends in occupations based on factors such as
  - where they see the economy growing or slowing
  - where they think new technologies will be having an effect
  - projected demographic changes

4. You may have already known the career or occupation that you want to pursue. By looking carefully at your personal profile, with details on your skills, interests, strengths, abilities, and values you should be able to confirm your choice or to consider another career choice. More knowledge about a number of careers and occupations has hopefully made your decisions easier.

Did the information about trends in occupations and employment change your views on occupations you might be interested in? While factors such as technological changes might make some occupations obsolete, these factors can also open new areas of interest to you.

## Image Credits

All images in this lesson were created by or for Alberta Education with the following noted exceptions:

### Page

- 50 **top:** Photodisc/Getty Images  
**bottom:** Image Club StudioGear/Eyewire/Getty Images
- 52 Photodisc/Getty Images
- 54 Kevin Peterson/ Photodisc/Getty Images
- 55 Photodisc/Getty Images
- 56 **all:** Photodisc/Getty Images