

Canadian Standards and Guidelines
for Career Development Practitioners

Areas of Specialization

Work Development

2004



S5 Work Development

S5.1 Develop Work Opportunities for Clients

S5.1.1 liaise with clients, employers and professionals

Why is this competency important?

- to create employment opportunities for clients
- to actively market clients to employers
- to avoid duplication of services
- to educate employers
- to develop key workplace/community agency contacts
- to improve clients' potential for entering the workplace environment
- to identify a proper fit between clients and key contacts
- to help ensure inclusion of all clients
- to help clients to be self-reliant

To demonstrate this competency, career development practitioners must:

- a) identify and collaborate with interested organizations, e.g., *employers, non-profit organizations, unions, employment equity organizations, government agencies*
- b) initiate and follow up on initial contacts with potential employers
- c) assist employers in accessing appropriate information/services relevant to employers' requests, e.g., *upgrading programs for staff*
- d) maintain contacts in organizations that include clients, employers, professionals
- e) maintain contacts in government agencies
- f) maintain memberships
- g) maintain databases, if available

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S5.1 Develop Work Opportunities for Clients

S5.1.2 facilitate work and work-related opportunities

Why is this competency important?

- to collaborate with clients and employers in order to develop work leads and contacts
- to improve clients' potential for entering the workforce
- to encourage clients' and employers' responsibility as participants in the labour market

To demonstrate this competency, career development practitioners must:

- a) determine the target market:
 - identify employers by goods or services produced and/or offered
 - review employer profiles, when available
 - identify client labour market goals
 - compare client labour market goals and employer profiles
- b) contact employers in the target market, e.g.,
 - *make presentations to groups*
 - *meet with employers one-on-one*
 - *conduct a direct-mail marketing campaign*
- c) establish themselves as a contact person:
 - provide information to employers on client base, programs and services offered
- d) determine employers' needs and expectations by:
 - identifying the number and type of positions available
 - identifying the types of skills required
 - previewing job descriptions
- e) screen employers, considering:
 - employers' needs
 - suitability of employers
 - client skills and required on-the-job supports, e.g., *technical aids, job coaching*
 - eligibility to use services
 - wages and benefits offered
 - potential problems that might affect clients
- f) negotiate workplace opportunities with employers:
 - finalize workplace agreements, e.g., *contracts, training opportunities, wage subsidies, benefits*

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- g) identify relevant legislation, e.g., *Occupational Health and Safety, Employment Equity, Workers' Compensation Board, Employment Standards*
- h) maintain employer information files:
 - document employer contacts and follow-up, e.g., *job maintenance, performance appraisals, pay slips, employer contracts*

Notes

- It is important to note that long-term vocational rehabilitation and short-term career counselling overlap, but are separate.
- Paid employment is not the only way to gain work experience. Other strategies such as co-op education, internship, mentoring, job shadowing, volunteer positions and entrepreneurship activities can help clients to develop their skills.
- The goal of this competency is to facilitate clients' self-advocacy and to empower clients with skills to maintain a long-term attachment to the labour market.
- The duration of the work opportunity should be predetermined with flexibility appropriate to the client, work environment and employer, and should be acceptable to all.

S5 Work Development

S5.1 Develop Work Opportunities for Clients

- S5.1.3 prepare clients to respond to the labour market

Why is this competency important?

- to assist clients in becoming self-reliant
- to set realistic expectations of work search
- to develop work search strategies
- to help clients access employment/training

To demonstrate this competency, career development practitioners must:

- a) provide support to clients, if appropriate, e.g.,
 - *review value of self-marketing*
 - *provide detailed and updated information*
 - *assess impact of labour market on clients' needs*
 - *coach and reinforce work search skills*
 - *encourage flexibility*
- b) help clients to identify work search resources in the labour market, e.g.,
 - *bulletin boards*
 - *electronic/on-line*
 - *one-on-one*
- c) facilitate clients' appropriate job selections:
 - review clients' self-evaluations
 - guide clients' evaluations of opportunities:
 - review clients' goals and abilities
 - review job qualifications and conditions, e.g., *salary, driver's licence*
- d) solicit clients' feedback regularly:
 - determine which supports for work search were helpful
 - monitor progress of work

Notes

- A career development practitioner should respect a client's wish to accept a job the career development practitioner may consider inappropriate.

S5 Work Development

S5.1 Develop Work Opportunities for Clients

S5.1.4 support clients with work maintenance

Why is this competency important?

- to encourage continued success in maintaining employment

To demonstrate this competency, career development practitioners must:

- a) support clients and/or employers, e.g.,
 - *make employment standards information available to client*
 - *seek feedback from employers, supervisors, co-workers and clients*
 - *respond constructively to the feedback*
 - *solve problems:*
 - *identify issues, e.g., skill requirements, personality conflicts, employment equity*
 - *identify strategies to resolve the issues, e.g., participate in skill development, seek mediation*
- b) review the appropriateness of matches between clients and employers:
 - if inappropriate:
 - seek options with the current employers to improve situation and maintain employment, e.g., *training*
 - seek opportunities with other employers
 - explore self-employment opportunities

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SSC1 Work Search Strategies

SSC1.1 Guide Client in Work Search Strategies

- SSC1.1.1 guide clients to identify own skills, strengths, personal characteristics, values and interests

Why is this competency important?

- to help career development practitioners to:
 - market clients to employers
 - determine barriers and limitations
- to help clients gain:
 - confidence and improve self-esteem
 - a better understanding of themselves
 - a better understanding of what they have to offer

To demonstrate this competency, career development practitioners must:

guide clients to:

- a) identify skills, including:
 - technical skills/ job skills:
 - usually obtained in school and on the job
 - transferable skills/ functional skills:
 - developed throughout life, e.g., *communication, working with others*
 - used in almost any work situation
 - self-management skills
- b) identify work, leisure experiences and community accomplishments, including:
 - barriers that have been overcome
 - skills used
 - sources of motivation
 - satisfaction gained
- c) identify strengths, interests and values
- d) identify aptitudes, e.g., *technical orientation, mechanical inclination*
 - connected with ability to learn a particular skill or job quickly
 - can point to future career objectives
- e) identify skills that they would like to develop, e.g., *language skills*:
 - set goals for development
- f) identify personal characteristics, e.g., *attitudes*

SSC1 Work Search Strategies

SSC1.1 Guide Client in Work Search Strategies

- SSC1.1.2 guide clients to complete application forms

Why is this competency important?

- to increase clients' probability of success in work search
- to provide clients with step-by-step instructions on how to effectively complete job application forms
- to meet employers' expectations

To demonstrate this competency, career development practitioners must:

guide clients to:

- a) obtain two copies of application forms:
 - suggest one be used for practice and clients' own files
 - suggest the good second copy be given to the prospective employer
- b) follow instructions carefully:
 - ensure the form is:
 - filled out completely and accurately
 - signed and dated, if required
- c) use correct grammar and spelling
- d) use neat handwriting or printing
- e) be honest
- f) be specific, e.g., *include a specific position title*
- g) refer to résumé, if applicable
- h) fill in the additional comments section:
 - suggest clients use this as an opportunity to promote themselves
 - emphasize skills, abilities and accomplishments

Notes

- Inform clients that not all application forms are the same and that some require a résumé to be attached.
- An application form may become part of an employee's permanent record.
- On-line applications are becoming common. These require practice, as some do not easily allow editing once a box has been filled in.
- Explain vocabulary that is unfamiliar or ambiguous, e.g., *bondable*
- An application form might be the first contact with an employer, and is therefore very important.

SSC1 Work Search Strategies

SSC1.1 Guide Client in Work Search Strategies

SSC1.1.3 guide clients in writing cover letters

Why is this competency important?

- to help clients tailor an approach to an employer or an employment opportunity
- to enhance the application process
- to showcase clients' relevant strengths to the company

To demonstrate this competency, career development practitioners must:

guide clients to:

- a) use cover letters to introduce résumés or application forms:
 - encourage the employer to read the résumé or application form:
 - appeal to the prospective employer's needs and interests
- b) match information in a letter with the job description's list of duties and qualifications
- c) highlight skills and accomplishments in cover letters
- d) target cover letter to the industry, field or company
- e) keep cover letter to one page
- f) link themselves to employers, e.g., *refer to the job advertisement or person who referred them*
- g) include sections that:
 - provide important facts about themselves and information about why the particular company or opportunity appeals to them
 - describe how the company would benefit by hiring the applicant
 - ask for an interview
- h) sign their names

Notes

- Cover letters are used most often for advertised and professional positions. They are also used in impersonal forms of job search, i.e. not face-to-face, but e-mailed or faxed résumés.
- Clients who are seeking self-employment opportunities should be informed that proposal writing is an extension of the points in this competency.

SSC1 Work Search Strategies

SSC1.1 Guide Client in Work Search Strategies

SSC1.1.4 guide clients in preparing résumés

Why is this competency important?

- to assist clients in using the most appropriate tool for their work searches
- to help clients use their marketable skills
- to meet requirements for interview selections

To demonstrate this competency, career development practitioners must:

guide clients to:

- a) create fact sheets describing employment, volunteer and education histories
- b) choose formats that are effective, considering:
 - chronological résumés:
 - list education and work experience
 - start with the most recent entry and work back
 - functional résumés:
 - list skills and achievements
 - combination résumés:
 - list education, work experience, achievements and skills
 - electronic résumés, e.g., *list key words in noun form to be read by electronic scanners*
- c) target résumés to emphasize qualifications, skills and abilities relevant to fields of work sought
- d) ensure résumés are concise and clear
- e) use action words, e.g., *negotiate, demonstrated, improved*
- f) avoid the pronoun "I"
- g) enhance the readability of their résumés, e.g.,
 - *bold specific information to draw the eye to key sections*
 - *use bullets*
 - *indent material*
 - *put headings in larger fonts*
- h) edit résumés to check for:
 - errors
 - effectiveness

Notes

- In some cases, it may be necessary for a career development practitioner to explain to a client what a résumé is and why it is important.

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- A career development practitioner should be able to create résumés in all formats.
- A résumé must represent the client who is involved in the work search.
- It is important that clients understand the significance of gaps in their work histories and develop strategies to effectively field questions regarding these gaps.

SSC1 Work Search Strategies

SSC1.1 Guide Client in Work Search Strategies

SSC1.1.5 guide clients in using portfolios

Why is this competency important?

- to assist clients in self-management and self-promotion
- to identify marketable skills
- to help clients to prepare for interviews

To demonstrate this competency, career development practitioners must:

guide clients to:

- a) provide evidence of skills, personal styles and accomplishments
- b) assemble materials in an appropriate manner
- c) collect items related to their careers, e.g.,
 - *certificates*
 - *awards*
 - *photos*
 - *evaluations*
 - *samples of past work*
 - *letters of commendation/reference letters*
 - *relevant newspaper articles*
- d) organize the items, e.g., *create categories*
- e) select portfolio materials to target specific employment opportunities

Notes

- A career development practitioner should have experience in creating a portfolio prior to instructing a client on the creation of portfolios.
- A career development practitioner should explain to clients how and when to present portfolios during an interview.

SSC1 Work Search Strategies

SSC1.1 Guide Client in
Work Search Strategies

SSC1.1.6 guide clients to develop self-marketing
plans

Why is this competency important?

- to assist clients in creating their own opportunities
- to assist clients in self-marketing

**To demonstrate this competency, career
development practitioners must:**

guide clients to:

- a) research needs of companies/fields/communities they are interested in
- b) match marketable skills and relevant experiences (see SSC1.1.1) to identified needs
- c) provide evidence of past relevant accomplishments (see SSC1.1.9)
- d) develop presentation packages, including:
 - clear statements of tasks and associated budgets for each task

SSC1 Work Search Strategies

SSC1.1 Guide Client in
Work Search Strategies

SSC1.1.7 guide clients in conducting cold calls

Why is this competency important?

- to help clients expand search for prospective jobs
- to identify hidden job markets

**To demonstrate this competency, career
development practitioners must:**

guide clients to:

- a) plan strategies, e.g.,
 - *create introductions*
 - *achieve a set number of calls per day*
 - *spend the day visiting certain types of companies*
- b) conduct telephone cold calls by:
 - introducing themselves
 - stating the purpose of their call
 - asking for a key person by name, if name is known:
 - pronounce the name correctly
 - ask to speak to the person responsible for hiring, if name is not known
 - handling refusals by:
 - asking for a name and time to call back
 - asking if you can drop off a résumé in person or fax/email a résumé to the appropriate person:
 - call back to confirm receipt of résumé, if appropriate
 - asking for an appointment
- c) conduct person-to-person cold calls by:
 - dressing appropriately
 - introducing self upon arrival:
 - state the purpose of the visit
 - ask to speak to the person responsible for hiring
 - handling refusals by:
 - asking for an appointment
 - asking for a business card of the person responsible for hiring
 - leaving a résumé

Notes

- It is important to note that some employers find cold calls intrusive. Networking and informational

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interviewing tend to be more effective ways of accessing the hidden job market.

- It can be beneficial for a career development practitioner to use phone script example dialogues and outlines with clients.

SSC1 Work Search Strategies

SSC1.1 Guide Client in Work Search Strategies

SSC1.1.8 guide clients with their personal presentations

Why is this competency important?

- to increase clients' ability to self-market
- to increase clients' understanding/awareness of themselves and the impact this awareness has on work searches
- to identify cultural differences
- to increase clients' self-confidence

To demonstrate this competency, career development practitioners must:

guide clients to:

- a) identify the factors of personal presentation, which are:
 - verbal communication, including:
 - tone of voice
 - speed
 - volume
 - language
 - non-verbal communication, e.g., *body language, facial expressions*
 - accessories, e.g., *jewelry*
 - attitudes/behaviours
 - clothing, e.g., *shoes*
 - grooming, e.g., *hair, perfume or cologne, makeup*
 - hygiene, e.g., *skin, teeth, fingernails*
- b) ensure their presentation is appropriate to the field and adapted to the company in which work is being sought

SSC1 Work Search Strategies

SSC1.1 Guide Client in
Work Search Strategies

SSC1.1.9 guide clients in networking

Why is this competency important?

- to be aware of and access the hidden job market
- to assist clients in overcoming fears and challenges

To demonstrate this competency, career development practitioners must:

guide clients to:

- a) list all networking resources, e.g.,
 - *professional associations*
 - *past co-workers/supervisors*
 - *government agencies*
 - *colleagues*
 - *family*
 - *friends*
 - *social contacts*
- b) nurture relationships with networking resources
- c) demonstrate how to:
 - use networking scripts and checklists to obtain job leads
 - network, e.g., *use phone*
- d) offer examples of networking strategies from past clients

Notes

- It is important for a career development practitioner to emphasize to clients the value of networking.

SSC1 Work Search Strategies

SSC1.1 Guide Client in
Work Search Strategies

SSC1.1.10 guide clients in using references

Why is this competency important?

- to be able to verify information on applications and résumés
- to increase success in work search

To demonstrate this competency, career development practitioners must:

guide clients to:

- a) consider the criteria for good references:
 - not a family member
 - can be long distance if email or online phone address is given
 - references should speak English or French
 - someone who has worked with client in a job or educational setting
 - someone who has personal knowledge of client's character
- b) ask selected references for permission to use their name
- c) prepare the references:
 - describe the job that he/she is applying for
 - provide current résumé to references
 - indicate what experiences and qualifications he/she would like emphasized
 - confirm that references are accessible
- d) obtain letters written to the potential employers from the references, if possible
- e) review references periodically:
 - add or delete out-dated references
 - ensure contact information is current
- f) take a list of references to an interview

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Notes

- Inappropriate use of references can be damaging.
- Many organizations have an internal policy of not giving written reference letters and limiting verbal references to confirming date of employment. Clients may require coaching on how to get personal (versus company) references from colleagues under such circumstances.
- Whether listed or not, most employers are interested in speaking with an individual's most recent supervisor or manager. Omitting this person can act as a "red flag", suggesting there was a problem. An individual should be prepared to have the supervisor or manager contacted.

SSC1 Work Search Strategies

SSC1.1 Guide Client in Work Search Strategies

SSC1.1.11 guide clients in effective interview skills

Why is this competency important?

- to increase clients' competencies with interview strategies
- to increase clients' confidence in the interview process

To demonstrate this competency, career development practitioners must:

identify client guidelines for interviews, including:

- a) describe the purpose of different types of interviews:
 - information interviews:
 - for applicant to gather information
 - screening interviews:
 - to determine which applicants are qualified for the job
 - hiring interviews:
 - to determine the suitability of candidates
 - can be in various formats, including:
 - panel interviews
 - group interviews
 - phone interviews
 - combined screening and hiring interviews:
 - to explore both qualifications and suitability
- b) describe different kinds of questions asked during interviews:
 - open-ended, e.g., "Tell me about yourself."
 - close-ended, e.g., "Have you ever used a computer?"
 - situational, e.g., "If _____, then _____?"
 - behavioural, e.g., "Describe the things you do to try and improve the morale in your office?"
- c) prepare clients for interviews, e.g.,
 - role play
 - videotape mock interviews
 - review portfolios or résumés
 - encourage clients to be conscious of their body language
 - have clients practice answering anticipated questions

- *get clients to write questions that they would like to ask the prospective employer, e.g., What kind of training is available?*
- d) advise clients not to discuss salary at the first interview, unless asked:
 - clients should have an answer prepared, in case they are asked, e.g., *market rate*
- e) discuss with clients how to develop rapport with an interviewer, e.g.,
 - *discover what is important to the interviewer, e.g.,*
 - *“What skills, in your opinion, are important for success in the job?”*
 - *“What are the main challenges in this department?”*
 - *discover why the position is available, e.g., expansion, injury*
 - *provide information to the interviewer to address key concerns and motives*
 - *clarify how interviewee can fulfill the company’s needs*
 - *restate interest in the job*
 - *ask when the decision will be made, if appropriate*
 - *recognize when interview is over*

Notes

- Interviews provide useful learning opportunities.
- Explain to clients why employers ask particular questions. Encourage clients to develop effective answers to common questions.

