

the
WORK
handbook
a resource guide to jump-start your career

Your Starting Point to find out about...

useful employment/career resources

industry and occupational information

great career Web sites

helpful tips for managing your career

interesting facts about the world of work

Plus:

pages to write notes and useful information

an action plan checklist for your future



Youth
Employment
Strategy

Stratégie
emploi
jeunesse

Canada



Canada Career Consortium
Consortium canadien des carrières

**About to enter the work force for the first time?
Unemployed?**

Thinking about a career change?

Re-entering the work force after a time away?

Foresee changes in your workplace?

New to Canada and looking for work?

THIS WORK HANDBOOK IS FOR YOU!

- 1** Getting **STARTED**
- 2** **YOU**—Your Most Important **RESOURCE!**
- 6** **EXPLORE** Industries and Occupations
- 8** **CHECK OUT** Government Resources
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The Work Handbook is a publication of the Canada Career Consortium (CCC)—an alliance to help Canadians better access the information they need to make sound decisions for the future. For more information about the CCC, visit <http://www.careerccc.org> on the Internet.

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getting **STARTED**

Welcome to The Work Handbook. It may be your first step toward managing change in your work and life.

Who?

This Handbook will be useful if you're facing or thinking about career changes that will affect you and your family.

What?

The Handbook contains general information about resources—people, organizations, schools, the Internet—that can help you plan or make career changes. The information on the following pages will give you a “head start” on managing career change.

When?

The timing is up to you, but change often involves planning and choosing. Making good decisions requires research and time. If you're thinking about changes in your work and life, then it's a good idea to start exploring the possibilities *now*.

Where?

The Handbook points you to several important resources that can help you explore your options, learn how to handle change in your life, and make well-informed decisions for your future.

Why?

Changes in your work life will affect every aspect of your lifestyle—from how you deal with family and friends, to your choice of housing, to the groceries you buy, to the type of leisure activities you can afford. *Managing career change well is one of the most important things you can do for yourself and your family.*

What is a career? A lifetime journey

“I just want a job now,” you may be thinking. “A career can come later.” Getting work is important, but every job you have is part of your career, including your learning, leisure and volunteer activities. A career is a lifetime journey of building and making good use of your skills, knowledge and experiences.



YOU—your most important RESOURCE!

Don't forget the collection of skills, abilities, knowledge and contacts that you bring to a new work or life situation.

Your skills and abilities

Your skills and abilities are the personal resources you take with you no matter what happens or where you go.

- **Your specific work skills:** what you're qualified to do such as build houses, fight fires, translate text, or provide excellent service to clients and customers.
- **Your positive traits:** what others respect about you. For example, you're someone who doesn't give up easily, is creative, or can make people laugh.

- **Your transferable skills:** what you do well and can apply in different work situations.

For example, you are able to fix anything, speak more than one language, or are good with people.

- **Your essential skills:** what you know and can do that employers require in every workplace such as your ability to read text, understand basic math, and be a problem-solver.

NOTES to myself

My specific work skills:

Write down the know-how that you can bring to work that you've been trained to do.

- 1 I know how to _____
- 2 I know how to _____
- 3 I know how to _____
- 4 I know how to _____
- 5 I know how to _____

My positive traits:

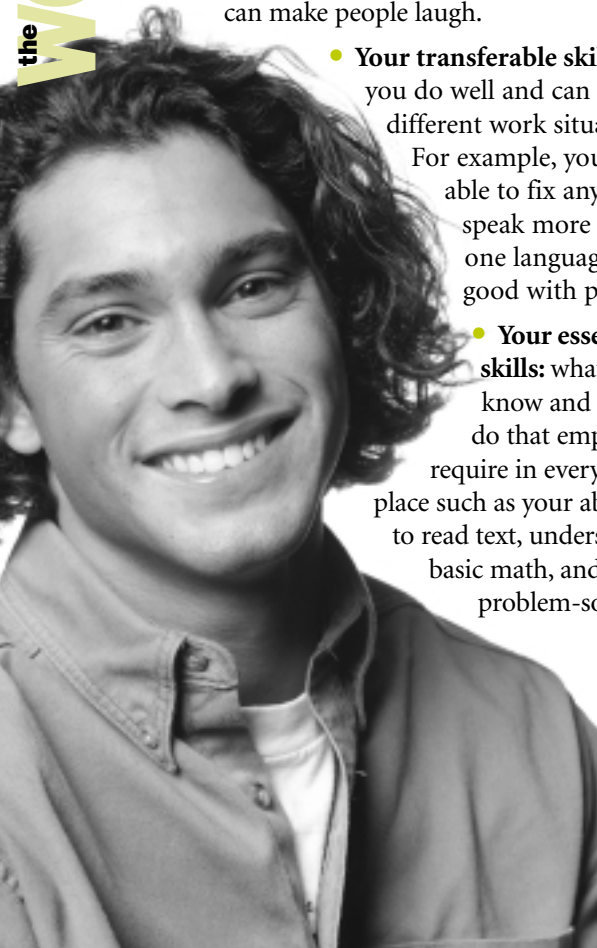
Check off the statements that apply to you.

- I'm enthusiastic about what I do and enjoy new challenges.
- I'm reliable and dependable.
- I can handle criticism well.
- I'm sociable and friendly—I enjoy being around people.
- I'm a self-starter—I know what work needs to be done.
- My other positive traits: _____

My transferable skills:

Write down your skills that could be useful in a variety of workplaces.

- 1 I can _____
- 2 I can _____
- 3 I can _____
- 4 I can _____
- 5 I can _____



My essential skills:

Put a checkmark in the column that best describes you.

Skills	Examples	Good in this area	Need improvement
Communication Skills: my ability to read, write, speak and listen.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • read a newspaper • write a letter or grocery list • carry on a conversation • understand and follow directions 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
“Numbers” Skills: my ability to know when and how to use numbers accurately.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make a budget • estimate costs when making purchases • measure ingredients in a recipe 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Computer Skills: my ability to use a computer and other computerized equipment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • write a letter with a word-processing program • surf the Internet • run equipment such as a VCR 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Decision-making and Problem-solving Skills: my ability to think about a problem and make good choices to solve it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fix a scheduling conflict at home • decide purchasing priorities when money is short • help two friends who are having an argument 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Learning Skills: my ability to keep on learning throughout my life.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • keep on top of current events by watching the news • develop a new hobby • consider mistakes as opportunities to learn 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Creative Skills: my ability to think of new ways to do or make things.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • barter with a neighbour to help stretch a budget • decorate a room • bring together people who could organize a local sports tournament 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teamwork Skills: my ability to work well with other people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • participate in a neighbourhood function • help out at a child’s school • play on a sports team 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Personal Management Skills: my ability to manage my life well.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • set goals and meet them • be on time for appointments • recognize stress and handle it 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Physical Skills: my ability to handle physical tasks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • do precision work • have stamina and endurance • lift and carry heavy weights 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Building my skills: What skill areas (specific, transferable, essential) do I need to improve? Here are some ideas for ways I can build these areas. _____

Count on Yourself!

You've checked out your skills and abilities, but you also have other important personal resources that can help you manage work and life changes.

Your network

Everyone has contacts who might help in a work search. Consider talking to your:

- Family members
- Friends and acquaintances
- Co-workers
- Neighbours
- Classmates
- Community leaders
- Librarians
- Doctors

Your knowledge

Use your “smarts” to spot signs of change and to start thinking of ways to manage that change.

- **Look for information** by reading the newspaper, particularly the career and business sections.

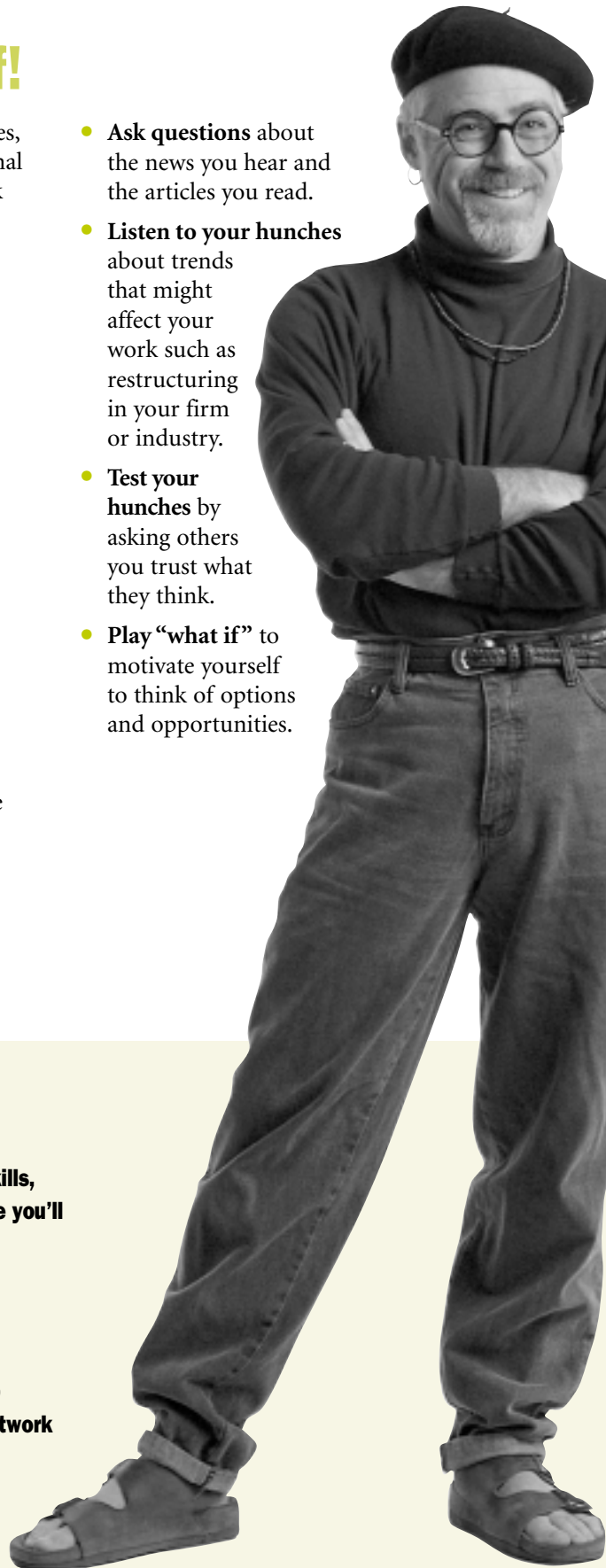
- **Ask questions** about the news you hear and the articles you read.
- **Listen to your hunches** about trends that might affect your work such as restructuring in your firm or industry.
- **Test your hunches** by asking others you trust what they think.
- **Play “what if”** to motivate yourself to think of options and opportunities.

Career Management Tip:

The more you know about yourself—your skills, talents, traits and interests—the better able you'll be to handle change in your work and life.

Career Fact:

Many opportunities are in the “hidden” job market—not advertised anywhere. Your network of contacts may be your most important resource in finding work.



NOTES

to myself

Members of my network:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone number: _____ E-mail: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone number: _____ E-mail: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone number: _____ E-mail: _____

PUT IT ALL TOGETHER: You've written down information about your personal resources. Consider making a list to see how it all fits together. For example, Mary is a carpenter and is looking for a full-time job.

1. Mary has the ability to:

- Identify types and quality of wood (specific work skill)
- Use a circular saw (specific work skill)
- Be motivated and enthusiastic about working with wood (positive trait)
- Be sociable and friendly with other trades persons on a construction site (positive trait)
- Follow blueprints (transferable skill)
- Complete work on time (transferable skill)
- See mistakes as learning experiences (essential skill)
- Do precision work by hand (essential skill)

2. Mary would like to build up her essential skills in communications by improving her ability to write more clearly. She decides to take a report-writing course at a local community college.

3. Mary also has a number of useful contacts. For example:

- A former co-worker who might know about job possibilities.
- A friend who would let her use his computer to search for Internet job listings.
- A cousin who will babysit Mary's children when she goes for job interviews.

Explore industries and occupations

Did you know that there are more than 25,000 occupations in the world of work? Let your curiosity be your guide as you explore options for your future.

Where to look

Career information is available in many places. Consider exploring:

- **Local industries and businesses** for the types of work in your community. Have you ever thought of asking a local employer about career opportunities in his/her business? You'd be surprised how many people enjoy talking about their work to someone who is sincerely interested in what they do.
- **The Directory of Canadian Associations** at your local library for ideas about different industries and occupations, and addresses to obtain more information.
- **Sector Councils** for career information about specific career opportunities in these industry-based groups. For information on Sector Councils and their addresses, visit <http://www.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/career-carriere> on the Internet. (Check *Surf the Internet* on page 14 for help on accessing Web sites.)

What to ask

Getting good information means asking the right questions. Here are some "starters":

- What kind of work is available in your business/industry?
- What responsibilities do workers have? What are their tasks?
- What do people in your business/industry enjoy about their work?
- What skills and education/training are employers looking for?
- How could I get started finding career opportunities or looking for work in your business/industry?
- Do you have any tips or strategies that could help me?
- Other questions I would like to ask:

Career Fact:

The world of work continues to change at a dramatic and rapid rate. Jobs and industries are appearing and disappearing almost overnight. There has been more change in how people do work, lose work, look for work, and create work in the past 20 years than in the previous 150. You can expect to switch jobs at least six times during your work life. Be prepared for change and exciting challenges.



NOTES **to myself**

Businesses/industries that interest me:

Occupations that interest me:

People/organizations that I want to contact:



Check out government resources

All governments in Canada—federal, provincial/territorial and municipal—have resources to help people deal with career change.

Where can you go?

You'll generally find the telephone numbers for the following resources in your phone book.

- Your local Human Resources Development Canada Centre office (federal)
- Your provincial/territorial Ministry or Department of social services, education, training and/or employment
- Employment services offered by your municipality
- Community centres and agencies
- Public libraries

What kind of help can you get?

These government resources have a great deal of information about work and training opportunities. Some resources may have telephone and fax services to help you in your work search. Many also provide self-help resources.

- **Information kiosks** provide information about training opportunities as well as local and national jobs.
- **Computer workstations** are useful for helping you prepare cover letters and résumés.
- **Career Resource Centres** provide information on a wide variety of work search and training topics.
- **Career Hotlines** are toll-free numbers that are sources of information and assistance.

What will it cost?

Generally, government services are provided free of charge. They are also usually open to everyone. However, you should ask if there are any restrictions. For example, public libraries may allow only local residents to take books home.

Career Management Tip:

You can take control over changes in your work and life.

- **Be alert.** Check for signs of workplace changes such as rumours about layoffs so that you can be prepared.
- **Be aware.** Know your own personal strengths, aptitudes and skills. Consider ways you can rely on yourself when change happens.
- **Access your resources.** Search out every source of information and support during periods of change and at times when life is stressful.
- **Act now.** Be ready to use your new knowledge to seize opportunities and make change work for you.

NOTES **to myself**

My local Human Resources Development Canada Centre office:

Address: _____
Phone number: _____
Contact person: _____
Hours of business: _____
Useful information: _____

My provincial/territorial Ministry or Department office of social services, education, training and/or employment:

Address: _____
Local phone number or toll free number: _____

Contact person: _____
Hours of business: _____
Useful information: _____

Other resources I should check out:

My local municipal employment services office:

Address: _____
Phone number: _____
Contact person: _____
Hours of business: _____
Useful information: _____

My local community centre/agency:

Address: _____
Phone number: _____
Contact person: _____
Hours of business: _____
Useful information: _____

My local public library:

Address: _____
Phone number: _____
Contact person: _____
Hours of business: _____
Useful information: _____



Seek out Career Counselling

Employment/career counsellors help individuals identify their work skills and interests, learn about career options, and find work.



Where can you go?

There are two types of career counselling services:

- **Government career centres and non-profit community agencies** such as the YMCA / YWCA—call your township or municipal offices for information.
- **Private employment/career counsellors and agencies**—check the Yellow Pages under headings such as “Career Counselling,” “Career Planning Services” and “Employment Agencies.”

What’s the best type of employment/counselling service for you? It’s a good idea to talk to members of your network to see if they’ve used a service and would recommend it.

What questions should you ask?

Whether you’ve found an employment/counselling service in the Yellow Pages or had one recommended, you should ask the following questions to make sure that the service will be right for you:

- Do you charge a fee? If so, what services does it cover?
- Do you have a brochure about your services?
- Do you have specific criteria for people to get assistance? Do I fit your criteria?
- What is the waiting time for getting help?
- Do you have self-service options?

If you’re not satisfied with the answers to these questions, ask: “Can you refer me to other agencies that might be better able to help me?”

What will it cost?

Non-profit community agencies may provide services free or for a small fee. Private employment/career counsellors and agencies charge fees of varying amounts. If you are being downsized, your current employer may pay for counselling services.

NOTES **to myself**

Government career centres:

Name: _____

Phone number: _____

Address: _____

Contact person: _____

Other information: _____

Name: _____

Phone number: _____

Address: _____

Contact person: _____

Other information: _____

Non-profit community agencies that provide employment/career counselling:

Name: _____

Phone number: _____

Address: _____

Contact person: _____

Other information: _____

Career Fact:

Your public library, educational institution library and community bookstores have many self-help books on career planning, development and management.

Name: _____

Phone number: _____

Address: _____

Contact person: _____

Other information: _____

Private employment/career counsellors and agencies:

Name: _____

Phone number: _____

Address: _____

Contact person: _____

Other information: _____

Name: _____

Phone number: _____

Address: _____

Contact person: _____

Other information: _____

GOOD QUESTIONS TO ASK

- **I have a lot of questions about how my strengths/limitations will fit in different workplaces (list them for the counsellor). Can you help me with these questions? If not, where would you suggest that I go for help?**
- **What sort of work would we do together?**
- **How long will this work take?**
- **Are there other useful things that I could do while we work together? For example, can you suggest any self-help resources that would help me better prepare for change?**

Other questions I would like to ask:

Take a career COURSE

Your community has many learning institutions that provide courses or programs on work search and career management.

Where can you go?

You'll find the telephone numbers and addresses for these organizations in your phone book and the Yellow Pages.

- High schools
- Community colleges/Cégeps
- Universities
- Union, professional and trade associations
- Municipal economic development offices
- Community organizations
- YMCA/YWCAs
- Religious organizations
- Private employment and training services

What can you learn?

You can take workshops or courses in a variety of skills-building and career management areas.

- Practice Interview Sessions
- Work Search Strategies
- Tapping the Hidden Job Market
- Résumé Preparation
- Marketing Yourself
- Identifying Transferable Skills
- Setting up a Small Business
- Getting Ahead in Your Career
- Managing Career Transitions
- Personal Exploration—Discovering Your Strengths and Skills
- Managing Job Loss
- Learning How to Search for Work on the Internet

What will it cost?

Some organizations offer courses at no fee or for a very reasonable cost. Educational institutions and associations often provide career services to students/members free of charge or for low fees.

Career Management Tip:

When taking courses, ask questions that will give you the answers you need.

- **Who is hiring locally, in our province/territory, or nationally?**
- **What are the workplace skills that employers are looking for?**
- **How can I make the best advantage of my age, enthusiasm and experience?**
- **Can I ask my company to help me if they lay me off?**
- **How can I explain my time out of the work force to a prospective employer?**
- **How could I use volunteer work to my advantage?**
- **What are my rights in an interview—are there questions employers can't ask me?**
- **Am I doing everything I can to find work and get it?**

Career Fact:

Many people are probably going through similar transitions to yours. "Team up" and share information with classmates for support and confidence-boosting.

NOTES **to myself**

My local high schools, community colleges/Cégeps and universities:

Name: _____
Phone number: _____
Address: _____
Contact person: _____
Courses that interest me: _____

Name: _____
Phone number: _____
Address: _____
Contact person: _____
Courses that interest me: _____

Union, professional and trade associations:

Name: _____
Phone number: _____
Address: _____
Contact person: _____
Courses that interest me: _____

Name: _____
Phone number: _____
Address: _____
Contact person: _____
Courses that interest me: _____

My local municipal economic development office:

Name: _____
Phone number: _____
Address: _____
Contact person: _____
Courses that interest me: _____

My local community organizations:

Name: _____
Phone number: _____
Address: _____
Contact person: _____
Courses that interest me: _____

Name: _____
Phone number: _____
Address: _____
Contact person: _____
Courses that interest me: _____

Private employment and training services:

Name: _____
Phone number: _____
Address: _____
Contact person: _____
Courses that interest me: _____

Name: _____
Phone number: _____
Address: _____
Contact person: _____
Courses that interest me: _____



Surf the **INTERNET**

The Internet is becoming one of the best resources in Canada for finding out about work opportunities and career management.

Where can you go?

If you don't have a computer with an Internet connection, check out the following places in your community to get Internet access. And if you need help using the Internet, ask if there is someone who can assist you.

- Public libraries
- Community employment services offices
- Some Human Resources Development Canada Centres
- High schools, community colleges/Cégeps and universities
- Internet cafés

What will it cost?

Most government services provide Internet access free to the public. Schools provide Internet services free of charge to students. Internet cafés usually charge an hourly fee.

Career Management Tip:

Employers are looking for people with Internet know-how. Add on-line skills to your résumé as a demonstration of your ability to work with computer technology.

What are some good career web sites to explore?

There are many good Canadian sites with information about work opportunities and work search strategies. Here are a few to get you started. *Circle the ones that interest you.*

- <http://www.workinfont.ca>—*WorkInfoNET*: career information and links to many Web sites including provincial/territorial sites.
- <http://www.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/career-carriere>—*The Career Information Site*: information about career planning and work opportunities.
- <http://ele-spe.org>—*Electronic Labour Exchange*: an on-line employment service that matches work to people and people to work.
- <http://www.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/JobFutures>—*Job Futures*: information on work prospects.
- <http://jb-ge.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca>—*The Job Bank*: a list of work opportunities in Human Resources Development Canada Centres.
- <http://lmi-imt.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca>—*Labour Market Information (LMI) Service*: job market conditions in local areas.
- <http://www.worksearch.gc.ca>—*WorkSearch*: information on work opportunities and work search techniques.
- <http://www.volunteer.ca>—*Volunteer Canada*: information on volunteer opportunities that could provide you with workplace experience and contacts.

Career Fact:

You can search for additional career sites by using key words on an Internet search engine. For example, if you're interested in a career as a drafting technologist, type in *Drafting technologies + Canada*. Here are some helpful Internet search engines:

- AltaVista—<http://www.altavista.com>
- Ask Jeeves—<http://www.askjeeves.com>
- Excite—<http://www.excite.com>
- HotBot—<http://www.hotbot.com>
- Go Network (Infoseek)—<http://www.go.com>
- Lycos—<http://www.lycos.com>
- Yahoo! Canada—<http://www.ca.yahoo.com>
- Webcrawler—<http://www.webcrawler.com>

And remember—if you find a useful site and have your own computer, be sure to bookmark the site for future reference.



NOTES to myself

Web sites I've found useful:

http:// _____

http:// _____

http:// _____

http:// _____

http:// _____

http:// _____

http:// _____

http:// _____

http:// _____

http:// _____

http:// _____

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http:// _____

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http:// _____

http:// _____

http:// _____

Useful key words and phrases for finding career information on the Internet:



Taking **ACTION**

You have many resources to help you manage your career. But it's important to remember that you have to take the first step to "activate" these resources.

Use the following checklist to make sure that you're taking action for your future.

- I've checked out the resources that may be helpful to me.
- I've contacted various government and community agencies.
- I've learned how to use the Internet for career management.
- I've realistically assessed all my skills, talents, traits and interests.
- I've analyzed ways that I handle and think about change.
- I've talked to people in my network about my situation and goals.
- I've researched ways to upgrade my skills.
- I keep an "open mind" to options and opportunities.
- I'm using resources to improve my work search techniques such as writing cover letters and résumés.

- I know that one source of information may not be enough, so I check others.
- When I hear about a lead, I follow it up.
- I look for support when I get discouraged or stressed out.
- I make long-term goals but approach them step-by-step, day-by-day.
- I remember to thank everyone who provides me with help and support.

Other "action" steps I could take:

Career Management Tip:

If you want to know more...

- **Be persistent.**
- **Ask questions.**
- **Be alert to change.**
- **Plan ahead as you take action.**

WANTED!

Your Feedback on *The Work Handbook*

- What sections helped you the most?
- What sections could use improvement?
Do you have any suggestions for making these sections more useful to you?
- What other kinds of information would you like to see added?
- Where did you pick up the Handbook?
- Do you have any other comments?

To request additional copies of *The Work Handbook*, complete the order form below and send it along with your feedback to us by E-mail through our Web site at <http://www.careerccc.org>, by fax at (613) 230-7681 or by mail to:

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the **WORK** **handbook**

“This Handbook contains general information about resources — people, organizations, schools, the Internet — that can help you plan or make career changes.”

CHECK IT OUT!

Visit *<http://www.workinonet.ca>* for up-to-date career and labour market information resources in your region.