

Career Development Practitioner

What is a Career Development Practitioner?

Career Development Practitioners work with people of all ages and career stages to help them manage their life, learning, and work. The goal of career services is to help individuals pursue learning and find work which is personally meaningful and to teach individuals how to manage transitions in today's ever-evolving labour market.

Career Development Practitioners can be found in not-for-profit, academic, government, and private sectors. They work in high schools, post-secondary institutions, guidance centres, career centres, government offices, and community agencies. Some work in organizations, outplacement firms, small businesses, or as independent practitioners.

Job titles within the career development field vary considerably and may include: Career Consultant, Career and Employment Consultant, Career Coach, Career Transition Professional, Guidance Counsellor, Rehabilitation Consultant, Job Placement Specialist, Job Coach, Resume Writer.

Career Development Practitioners, depending on their level of expertise, may provide one or more of the following services:

- Career assessment and career decision making
- Identification of educational and training options
- Resume writing and cover letter development
- Job search strategies
- Interview preparation and follow up
- Individual and group employment preparation
- Labour market analysis and information
- Workforce development strategies and solutions
- Ongoing assessment, evaluation, and case management

Career Development Practitioners may work as Counsellors but not all Career Development Practitioners are Counsellors. In order for Career Development Practitioners to call themselves Counsellors they should have completed formal education in counselling and have a counselling designation.

What is a Certified Career Development Practitioner?

Certified Career Development Professional (CCDP) is a voluntary designation administered and granted by the Career Development Association of Alberta (CDAA) that certifies a Career Development Practitioner as having achieved a minimum level of education and work experience and demonstrated specific career development competencies. Career Development Practitioners must apply to the CDAA to receive this des-

ignation. CCDPs are required to stay current in the career development field by participating in ongoing professional development, following the Canadian Standards and Guidelines for Career Development Practitioners, and abiding to a professional code of ethics to maintain their certification which is renewable every 3 years. More information can be found on the CDAA website.

How do I become a CCDP?

There are two pathways to becoming a CCDP. The first pathway is to complete a post-secondary training program in career development. The second is to meet criteria which include a combination of education and 10 years work experience.

Athabasca University, Concordia University College of Alberta, University of Calgary, and University of Lethbridge have programs that have been pre-approved by CDAA for the CCDP designation. There are a range of programs from certificates to Master's degrees. These institutions also provide approved courses in Professional Ethics and Career Development Theories for candidates who already have experience working in the career development field. Applicants with education and training from programs that are not pre-approved will be evaluated on a case by case basis.

In order to become certified you must be a member of the CDAA but you can be a member without being certified. The certification process is strictly voluntary.

The CDAA Standards and Certification

Committee is responsible for assessing and approving CCDP applications and renewals based on an established criteria.

Why should I become a CCDP?

- Certification confirms mastery of critical professional competencies, and recognizes professional development and growth.
- The process of achieving and maintaining certification demonstrates continuous improvement and refinement of practice.
- Certification demonstrates the use of industry respected best practices to clients, competitors, suppliers, peers, employers, and funders.
- Certification holds practitioners to a higher level of skill development that can open the door to career / promotion opportunities and possibly garner a higher income.

- Certification offers opportunities for
 - recognition by peers, employers / funders, and recruiters as a competent professional
 - in the field; it can provide a professional competitive edge.
- Certification establishes practitioners as experts, leaders, and innovators in field.

For more information about the CCDP designation please visit <http://www.careerdevelopment.ab.ca/becomeccdp> or contact the CDAA Administrator at admin@careerdevelopment.ab.ca