

# Sales Representatives & Sales Specialists

A guide for newcomers to British Columbia



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## Sales Representatives [NOC 2021: 64101 / NOC 2016: 6411]

## & Sales Specialists [NOC 2021: 62100 / NOC 2016: 6221]

***Sales and account representatives may also be called:***

- Account representatives/managers
- Booking agents
- Sales associates/administrators
- Distributors
- Exporters

***Technical sales specialists may also be called:***

- Business agents
- Sales consultants
- Technical sales representatives
- Wholesale sales brokers
- Sales engineers

## 1. What Would I Do?

***Sales and account representatives*** sell *non-technical* goods and services to retail, wholesale, commercial, industrial, professional, and other clients domestically and internationally. Your duties may include:

- Promote sales to existing clients
- Identify and solicit potential clients

- Provide clients with presentations on the benefits of goods or services
- Quote prices, credit or contract terms, and warranties or delivery dates
- Prepare or oversee preparation of sales or other contracts
- Talk to clients to solve problems and to provide ongoing support
- Review and adapt to information regarding product innovations, competitors and market conditions
- Represent companies that export and import products or services to and from foreign countries
- May conduct sales transactions through internet-based electronic commerce
- May supervise the activities of other sales representatives

**Technical sales specialists** do almost the same job as sales and account representatives; the only real difference is that the goods and services they sell are more *technical* in nature. Examples include telecommunications and computer services, as well as scientific, agricultural, and industrial equipment. In addition to specializing in a particular line of technical goods or services, your duties may include:

- Promote sales to existing clients and look for new clients
- Assess clients' needs and recommend appropriate goods or services
- Provide input into product development
- Give sales presentations and develop reports to explain product benefits
- Negotiate prices, terms of sale and service agreements
- Estimate costs of installation and maintenance
- Prepare and manage sales contracts
- Work with clients to solve problems and provide ongoing support
- May supervise other staff
- May train their clients' staff to operate and maintain equipment

More information:

- **WorkBC** (Sales and Account Representatives)  
<https://www.workbc.ca/career-profiles/sales-and-account-representatives-wholesale-trade-non-technical>

- **WorkBC** (Technical Sales Specialists)  
<https://www.workbc.ca/career-profiles/technical-sales-specialists-wholesale-trade>
- **Career Cruising** (Sales Representative / Technical Sales Representative)  
Available from the VPL Digital Library  
<https://www.vpl.ca/digital-library/career-cruising>

## 2. Am I Suited for This Job?

***Sales representatives & sales specialists should be:***

- Good with people
- Persuasive
- Determined and persistent
- Active listeners

***You should have:***

- Strong communication skills

***Sales and account representatives*** typically work 40 hours per week for establishments that produce or provide goods and services, such as: petroleum companies; food, beverage and tobacco producers; clothing manufacturers; motor vehicles and parts manufacturers; hotels; business services firms; and transportation companies.

***Technical sales specialists*** are also employed by manufacturers and distributors of various products, however you are more likely to work longer hours, often working more than 60 hours a week, including evenings. You are also more likely to be in supervisory positions responsible for managing or training other staff.

While both sales representatives and sales specialists mainly work in offices, you may also be expected to travel to customers' homes or businesses.

Sources: WorkBC & Career Cruising

### 3. What Are the Wages and Benefits?

In British Columbia, the median annual salary for **sales and account representatives** is \$54,142.

In BC regions you can expect to make:

Community/Area	Low (\$/hour)	Median (\$/hour)	High (\$/hour)
<a href="#">British Columbia</a>	18.00	30.00	52.88
<a href="#">Cariboo Region</a>	20.00	28.85	38.94
<a href="#">Kootenay Region</a>	18.00	30.00	52.88
<a href="#">Lower Mainland–Southwest Region</a>	18.00	29.81	52.88
<a href="#">Thompson–Okanagan Region</a>	18.00	30.00	80.77
<a href="#">Vancouver Island and Coast Region</a>	18.00	30.00	52.88

Source: Job Bank <https://www.jobbank.gc.ca/marketreport/wages-occupation/23200/BC>

The median annual salary for **technical sales specialists** is somewhat higher at \$61,171. You can expect to make:

Community/Area	Low (\$/hour)	Median (\$/hour)	High (\$/hour)
<a href="#">British Columbia</a>	19.71	32.00	60.58
<a href="#">Cariboo Region</a>	20.77	32.00	47.58
<a href="#">Kootenay Region</a>	19.71	32.00	60.58
<a href="#">Lower Mainland–Southwest Region</a>	20.00	32.00	64.10
<a href="#">Northeast Region</a>	16.75	29.00	52.88
<a href="#">Thompson–Okanagan Region</a>	23.00	31.00	48.08
<a href="#">Vancouver Island and Coast Region</a>	18.50	31.25	51.92

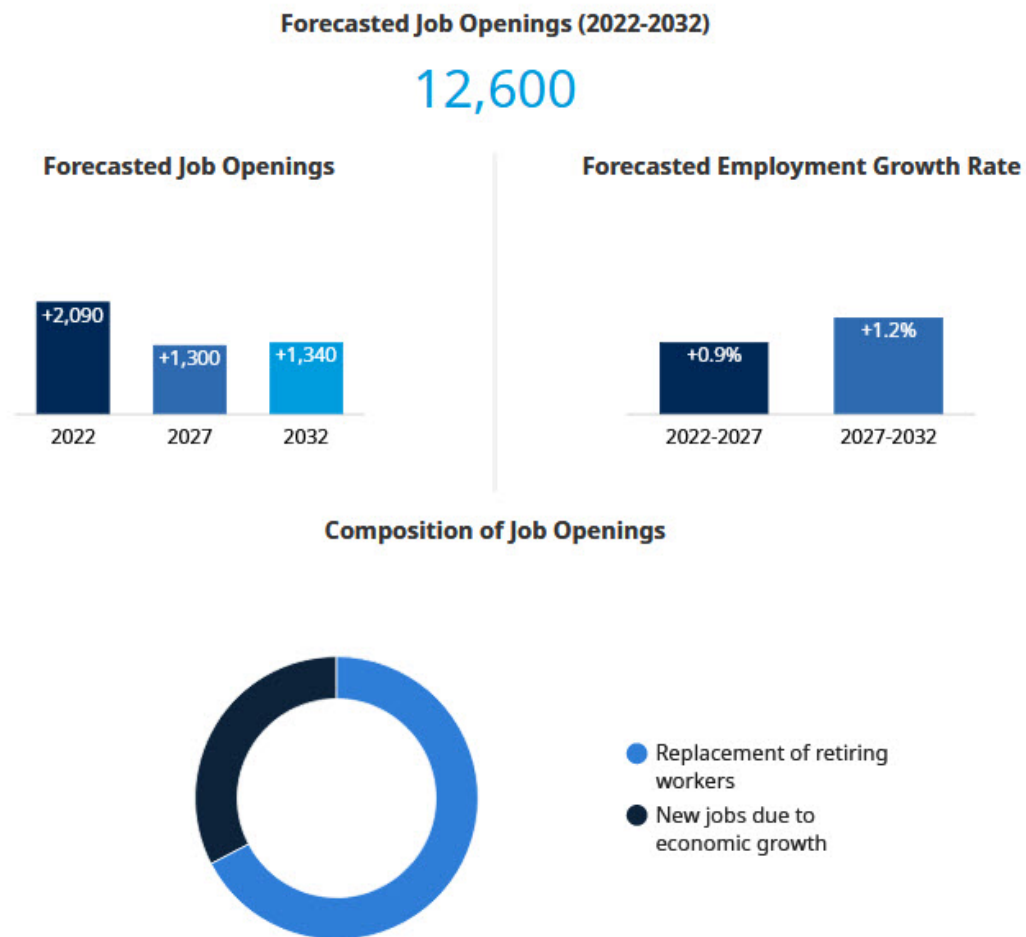
Source: Job Bank <https://www.jobbank.gc.ca/marketreport/wages-occupation/6127/BC>

If you work in a permanent full-time position, you may also receive benefits such as extended health coverage, paid vacation, and sick leave.

## 4. What Is the Job Outlook in BC?

The employment outlook is expected to be moderate for **sales and account representatives** for the 2023-2025 period.

WorkBC forecasts 12,600 new jobs between 2022 and 2032. The majority of job openings are expected to be found in the Lower Mainland (+9,310), followed by the Vancouver Island/Coast (+1,560) and Thompson-Okanagan (+1,320) regions.

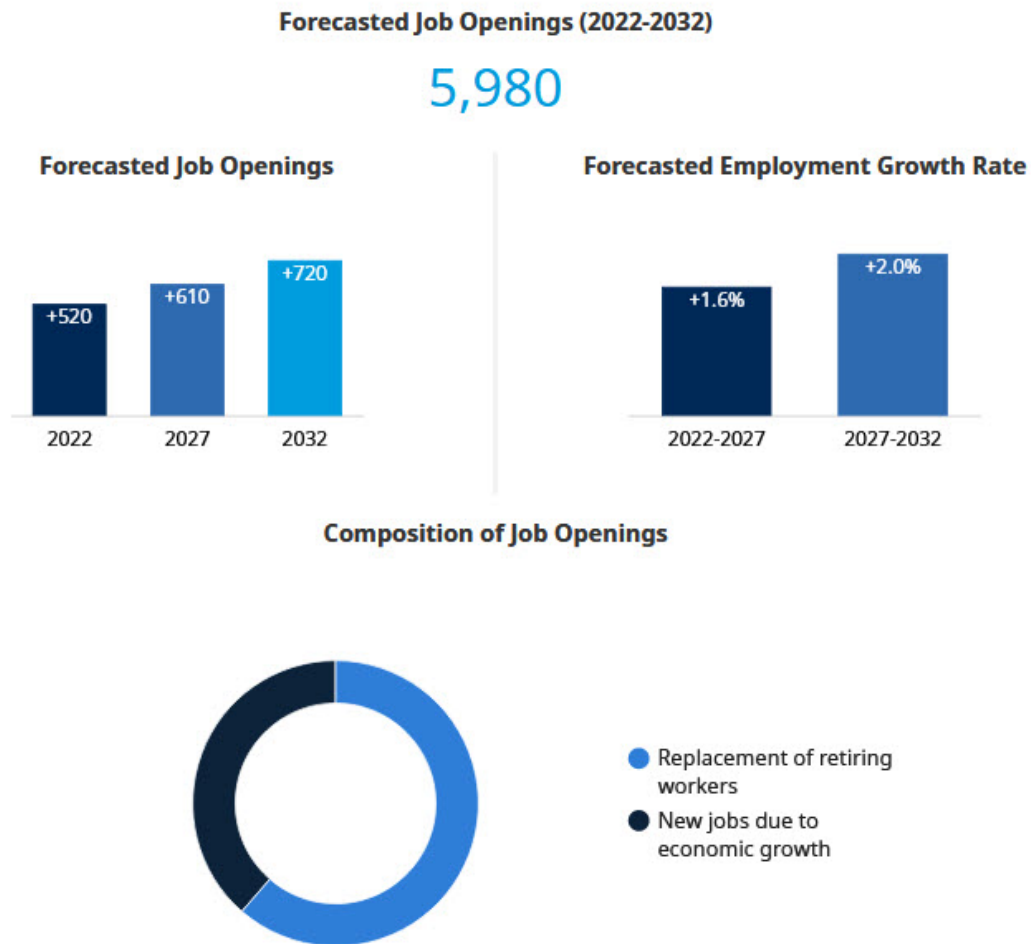


Sources:

- Job Bank <https://www.jobbank.gc.ca/marketreport/outlook-occupation/23200/BC>
- WorkBC <https://www.workbc.ca/career-profiles/sales-and-account-representatives-wholesale-trade-non-technical>

The employment outlook for **technical sales specialists** is also expected to be moderate for the 2023-2025 period.

WorkBC forecasts 5,980 new jobs between 2022 and 2032. The majority of job openings are expected to be found in the Lower Mainland (+4,640), followed by the Thompson-Okanagan (+600) and Vancouver Island/Coast (+520) and regions.



Sources:

- Job Bank <https://www.jobbank.gc.ca/marketreport/outlook-occupation/6127/BC>
- WorkBC <https://www.workbc.ca/career-profiles/technical-sales-specialists-wholesale-trade>

## 5. How Do I Become a Sales Representative or a Sales Specialist?

In BC, there is no mandatory certification or licensing requirement to work as either a sales and account representative or as a technical sales specialist. However, employers may require a university degree or college diploma, preferably in a program related to their product or service. Fluency in a foreign language and/or experience working/travelling abroad may also be required by companies that import or export their products.

Because salespeople must be able to understand and explain the products and services they are attempting to sell, more prior related education and experience is generally expected from those working in highly technical industries such as science or IT. Some employers also offer extensive in-house training programs to provide employees with the knowledge and skills needed to successfully sell their company's offerings.

**Voluntary certification** is available through the *Canadian Professional Sales Association (CPSA)* in three categories: Certified Sales Associates (CSA), Certified Sales Professionals (CSP), or Certified Sales Leaders (CSL). Voluntary USA certification is also available through the *National Association of Sales Professionals (NASP)* in two categories: Certified Professional Sales Person (CPSP) or Certified Professional Sales Leader (CPSL).

More information:

- **CPSA Certification**  
<https://www.cpsa.com/professional-certification/get-certified>
- **NASP Certification**  
<https://www.nasp.com>

Sources: WorkBC & Career Cruising



## 6. How Do I Find a Job?

***Sales and account representatives work for:***

- Business services firms
- Food, beverage, and tobacco producers
- Clothing or retail manufacturers
- Transportation companies
- Other non-technical wholesalers

***Technical sales specialists work for:***

- Computer or engineering services firms
- Pharmaceutical companies
- Industrial equipment manufacturers
- Hydroelectric companies
- Telecommunication companies

### ***Finding Advertised Jobs***

Jobs are advertised in a variety of sources including newspapers, magazines and online job sites.

### ***Local Newspapers***

You can look at the *Vancouver Sun* & *The Province* at Vancouver Public Library for free. Check the job postings daily, the careers section in the *Vancouver Sun* on Wednesdays and Saturdays and, in *The Province* on Sundays.

### ***Online Job Postings***

- **BC Jobs – Sales and Marketing Jobs**  
<https://www.bcjobs.ca/sales-marketing-jobs>
- **Jobs.ca – salesrep**  
<https://www.salesrep.ca>
- **Jobs.ca – callcentrejob**  
<https://www.callcentrejob.ca>
- **Indeed.ca**  
<https://ca.indeed.com>

- **Randstad**  
<https://www.randstad.ca/jobs/q-sales>
- **WorkBC**  
<https://www.workbc.ca/search-and-prepare-job/find-jobs#/job-search>
- **BC JobConnect**  
<https://www.bcjobconnect.ca> \*\*must have permanent resident number\*\*  
newcomers can post their skills, education and work experience to BC employers looking for workers

### ***Finding “Hidden Jobs”***

Many job vacancies are not advertised. The resources below will help you *with finding jobs in this “hidden” job market.*

### ***Using Directories to Create a List of Potential Employers***

You can use directories to produce lists of companies that are more likely to employ salespeople. Contact them directly to find out if they're hiring.

- **Canadian Wholesale Directory**  
<https://www.shopwholesale.ca>
- **Reference Canada**  
<https://www.vpl.ca/digital-library/reference-canada>  
Click on “Start Search” beside Canadian Businesses, then select the “Advanced Search” button. Select both “Keyword/SIC/NAICS” under Business Type and “City” under Geography. In the top search box enter “wholesalers”, or the specific industry in which you want to be employed, and click SEARCH. Select the appropriate headings. Lower down, select the Province, choose the cities, and click the “View Results” button.

*Available from the VPL Digital Library | Explore our Digital Library page*

**NOTE:** *You can access this database from a Library computer. If you are using a computer from outside the Library, you will need a Vancouver Public Library card to login to this database. After clicking on the database name, you will be asked to enter your library card number and PIN (usually last four digits of your telephone number).*

Since most company directories are industry-specific, it may be helpful to target your search to a particular type of employer. This is especially true if you have the background education and experience needed to become a technical sales specialist in a field like engineering or pharmaceuticals. Even if you don't have a specialized background, you may still benefit from narrowing your search to a specific industry in which you have a personal interest or to one that is currently in high-demand. There are many industry-specific directories available online as well as in print at the Library. You can look to the *Industry Profiles* and *Employment Guides* on our website <https://www.vpl.ca/siic> for suggested directories.

### ***Volunteering and Temporary Agencies***

Many positions are filled by people who have been recommended by someone they know. Networking, working as a volunteer or registering with a temporary employment agency are good ways of helping you find jobs and meet people in your industry.

#### ***Networking and the Hidden Job Market***

*When looking for work, be sure to talk to friends, relatives and neighbours. They may know someone who is hiring! Working as a volunteer, attending events, and joining clubs and associations are good ways to gain "Canadian experience." They are also good ways to meet people to learn about the local job market.*

### ***Volunteer Opportunities***

- **Volunteer BC**  
<https://volunteerbc.bc.ca>
- **GoVolunteer.ca**  
<https://govolunteer.ca>

*For additional tips see:*

- **Networking for Employment**  
<https://www.vpl.ca/siic/guide/job-search-resources/networking-for-employment>
- **Getting Canadian Work Experience**  
<https://www.vpl.ca/siic/guide/job-search-resources/getting-canadian-work-experience>

## 7. Applying for a Job

In Canada, employers usually expect to receive a resume and a cover letter that identifies the position you are applying for and summarizes your experience.

Use the library catalogue <https://vpl.bibliocommons.com> to find books on writing resumes and cover letters specific to your industry.

*For more information see:*

- **Writing Resumes and Cover Letters**

<https://www.vpl.ca/siic/guide/job-search-resources/writing-resumes-and-cover-letters>

## 8. Where Can This Job Lead?

With additional training or experience, you may be able to move into management or supervisory roles. It may also be possible to move between specializations in this occupation.

## 9. Where Can I Find More Information?

- **CPSA – Learning Hub**

<https://www.cpsa.com/resources>

- **NASP – Career Center**

<https://www.nasp.com/career-center>

- **Immigrant Employment Council of BC Programs**

<https://iecbc.ca/our-work/programs/>

- **Learn More About Working in BC and Canada**

<https://www.vpl.ca/siic/guide/job-search-resources/learn-more-about-working-in-bc-and-canada>

***Questions? Please ask the Information Staff at the Central Library or telephone 604-331-3603.***

*Please note that the information in this guide is also available online through the Skilled Immigrant InfoCentre website at <https://www.vpl.ca/siic>.*