

Career Counsellors

A guide for newcomers to British Columbia



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Career Counsellors [NOC 2021: 41321 / NOC 2016: 4156]

Career counsellors may also be called:

- employment counsellor
- career development consultant
- career coach
- occupational counsellor
- relocation counsellor
- vocational counsellor
- outplacement counsellor

1. What Would I Do?

You offer assistance, advice and information on all aspects of employment search and career planning. You may also provide advice and information to employers regarding human resource and employment issues.

Your duties can include:

- interview clients to get employment history, educational background and career goals
- give and interpret tests designed to determine the interests, aptitudes and abilities of clients
- identify barriers to work and help clients with matters such as job readiness skills, job search strategies, writing resumés and preparing for interviews

- assess need for assistance such as rehabilitation, financial aid or further vocational training and refer clients to the appropriate services
- provide established workers with information on maintaining a job or moving within an organization, dealing with job dissatisfaction or making a mid-career change
- collect labour market information for clients regarding job openings, entry and skill requirements and other occupational information
- provide consulting services to community groups and agencies, and to organizations that offer community-based career planning resources

More information:

- **WorkBC Career Profile for Employment Counsellors -**
<https://www.workbc.ca/Jobs-Careers/Explore-Careers.aspx>
- **Career Cruising** (profiles for 'career counsellor' and 'career coach')
<https://www.vpl.ca/digital-library/career-cruising>
Available from the VPL Digital Library | Explore our Digital Library page

2. Am I Suited For This Job?

Career counsellors should:

- *have an interest in human behaviour and development*
- *have good communication skills; be able to listen and ask questions effectively*
- *be knowledgeable about careers and the labour market*
- *be patient and understanding*

Most career counsellors work 9-to-5, Monday to Friday. You may work nights or weekends if you are participating in workshops or other events. The job can be stressful when working with clients who have personal problems, or who have recently lost their jobs.

Sources: WorkBC & Career Cruising

3. What Are The Wages And Benefits?

In British Columbia, the annual median salary for career counsellors is \$53,183. Your earnings vary considerably depending on where you work. Experience, education, and geographic location also affect earnings.

Full-time counsellors usually receive benefits such as paid vacation, paid sick days, and dental coverage. Self-employed counsellors must provide their own benefits.

In BC's regions, you can expect to make:

Community/Area	Wages (\$/hour)		
	Low	Median	High
British Columbia	21.00	24.65	31.00
Cariboo Region	21.00	24.65	31.00
Lower Mainland–Southwest Region	21.00	22.86	28.00
Thompson–Okanagan Region	21.00	24.65	31.00
Vancouver Island and Coast Region	21.00	24.65	31.00

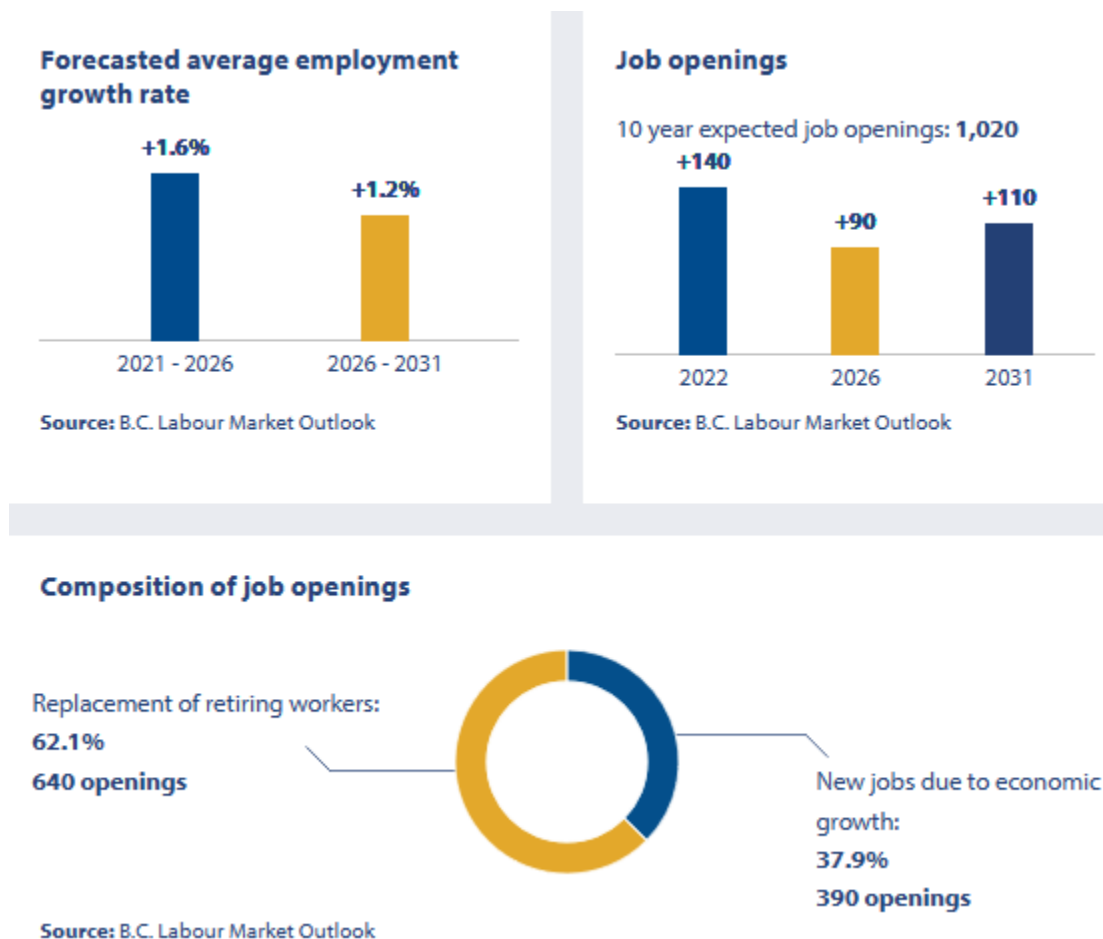
Source: Job Bank Wage Report <https://www.jobbank.gc.ca/trend-analysis/search-wages>

Sources: WorkBC & Career Cruising

4. What Is The Job Outlook In BC?

There are 2,200 career counsellors in British Columbia. The majority are employed in the Metro Vancouver and Victoria/Vancouver Island regions of the province. WorkBC highlights this as a high opportunity occupation.

Employment Outlook



Source: WorkBC

5. How do I become a career counsellor

Employers will usually require the following education:

- a bachelor's degree or college diploma in employment counselling, career development or in a related field, such as human resources development, psychology, education or social services
- a master's degree **may** be required in counselling psychology or a related field such as educational psychology, developmental psychology or social work

Although certification is not required in BC, it can provide better employment opportunities. In BC, certification as a ***Certified Career Development Practitioner (CCDP)*** is available through the BC Career Development Association (BCCDA). Certification requires completion of courses in ethical conduct, submission of professional references, **AND** a combination of education and relevant experience.

For further information, see:

- **Certified Career Development Professional**

<https://www.bccda.org/certification/individuals>

Source: WorkBC

6. How Do I Find A Job?

Where would I work?

Career counsellors work in a variety of settings including:

- *schools, colleges and universities*
- *governments*
- *large companies*
- *employment agencies*
- *social service organizations*

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

- **Indeed.com**

https://ca.indeed.com/advanced_search

- **BC Career Development Association Job Board**

<https://www.bccda.org/job-board>

- **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 company directories to produce lists of employers who employ career counsellors in Vancouver or the Lower Mainland. Contact them directly to find out if they're hiring.

- **Immigration and Citizenship Canada – Services for Newcomers**

<https://ircc.canada.ca/english/newcomers/services/index.asp>

Select "Finding a Job" and narrow by city or province

- **Career Counsellors in BC Public Education Institutions**

- BC School District contacts & websites:

<http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/schools/bcmap.htm>

- BC public post secondary institutions:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/post-secondary-education/find-a-program-or-institution/find-an-institution>

- **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 "Career &

vocational counseling” OR “employment counselling” and click LOOKUP. 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).

Networking, 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://www.govolunteer.ca/>

- **YWCA**

Volunteer opportunities may be available in the YWCA’s Employment Programs / Services

<https://ywcavan.org/programs/employment-programs-services>

<https://ywcavan.org/help/volunteer/volunteer-opportunities>

- **S.U.C.C.E.S.S.**
volunteer opportunities may be available in S.U.C.C.E.S.S. Employment Services (SES)
<https://successbc.ca/get-involved/volunteer/>
- **MOSAIC**
volunteer opportunities may be available in MOSAIC Employment Services
<https://www.mosaicbc.org/about/volunteer/>
- **ISS of BC (Immigrant Services Society)**
volunteer opportunities may be available in the ISS of BC Find Work program
<https://issbc.org/our-services/volunteer-with-us>

Additional community organizations offering employment services may be located by using BC211.ca:

- **BC211.ca**
<https://bc.211.ca/>
[click on Immigrants & Refugees, then click on 'Employment']
covers all types of community organizations Fraser Valley, Metro Vancouver, Squamish-Lillooet and Sunshine Coast

*For additional tips see the Guides available through the **Skilled Immigrant***

InfoCentre: <https://www.vpl.ca/siic/guides/job-search-resources>

- Networking for Employment
- 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/guides/job-search-resources>

8. Where Can This Job Lead?

Some career counsellors may progress to supervisory positions, and eventually to 'Director of Counselling' or to work in Human Resources or Training & Development.

9. Where Can I Find More Information?

- **CERIC – Advancing Career Development in Canada**

<https://ceric.ca/about/>

- **CareerWise**

<https://careerwise.ceric.ca/>

- **Careering**

<https://ceric.ca/careering-magazine/>

Careering is an online magazine that covers the latest career counselling and development practices and theories

- **Canadian Journal of Career Development**

<https://cjcd-rcdc.ceric.ca/index.php/cjcd>

- **Canadian Council for Career Development**

<http://cccda.org/>

- **Counselling Foundation of Canada**

<https://counselling.foundation/>

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

<https://www.vpl.ca/siic/guides/job-search-resources>

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>.