

Chinese Immigrant Orientation Program

Module 4

Finding a Job, Building a Future

Objectives

This module will provide you information that will start you on your way to establishing a career in Canada.

Goals

You will learn about:

Employment Opportunities
Regulated Professions
Employment Laws
Taxes

Types of jobs

In Canada, full-time jobs are common. However, a growing number of people have part-time or short-term jobs. Women make up a large portion of the work force and many have important, senior positions.

Canadians may change jobs and careers several times. This is often a personal choice. Sometimes people must change jobs because the economy changes. For these, and other reasons, getting a job is not easy. Many people are looking for work.

Newcomers to Canada rarely enter the job market quickly and often must start with jobs below the skill level they worked at in their home country. Once they have Canadian job experience and their ability in English or French improves, so do their job prospects.

International educational assessment services in Canada

Even if you have many years of experience, you do not automatically have the right to practise your trade or profession in Canada. In most cases, you will need to have your credentials assessed to see whether you need more training, education or Canadian work experience before being qualified to practise. You may wish to get your credentials evaluated before you leave for Canada. The following organizations can tell you how to get your credentials assessed:

The Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials Web site (www.cicic.ca) has information on academic and occupational credentials for all of Canada and lists nearly 150 professions and trades, in alphabetical order. When you click on your profession or trade, you will find a link to the address and telephone number of the professional or trade association, the addresses and telephone numbers of provincial evaluation services and regulatory agencies, and labour market information (for example, whether there is a demand for people with your particular trade or profession). You will also be able to find out whether your profession or trade is regulated.

The Centre does not grant equivalencies or assess credentials. It gives advice and refers newcomers to sources of help. Find the contact information of the Centre at the Resource Centre.

Provincial evaluation services assess academic credentials for a fee. The assessment will tell you how your education compares with educational standards in the province where you are planning to settle. You can give your assessment to any employer in Canada. It may help you in your job search.

Employment in regulated professions and trades

In Canada, about 20 percent of jobs are regulated by the government to protect public health and safety. For example, nurses, doctors, engineers, teachers and electricians all work in regulated professions. People who want to work in regulated jobs need to get a licence from the regulatory body in the province in which they live. If you want to know more about how to enter a particular profession or trade in a particular province, you should contact the provincial regulatory body for that job. The professions are self-regulating and they administer the provincial laws that apply to their profession. Rules for entering professions also differ from province to province. (For more information, visit www.cicic.ca.)

Regulated occupations in Canada usually require many years of education, training and practical experience, and the successful completion of a technical examination. Technical examinations to enter a trade or profession can be very expensive.

Language skills

It is important to learn English or French as quickly as possible. Many newcomers begin life in Canada by looking for a job that will allow them to learn or improve their English or French. The [Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada \(LINC\)](#) program gives eligible adult immigrants the chance to take basic English or French classes at no charge.

People with foreign credentials need a Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) score to enter Canadian colleges and universities. Colleges and universities offering courses in French use various French language tests.

Look into taking English classes through the LINC Program.

Job opportunities

- **Human Resources Development Canada Centres:** Counsellors at these centres can give you free advice and information about job and language training and work creation programs for newcomers. They can help you plan an effective job search and prepare a résumé of your education and experience. Each centre also has listings of available jobs on computer or on bulletin boards.
- **Classified advertisements:** Every daily newspaper in Canada has a classified advertisements section where you will find a variety of jobs listed. In many areas, there are also weekly or monthly employment papers that advertise jobs.
- **Local help:** To help newcomers prepare to enter the Canadian work force or to gain access to their profession or trade in Canada, immigrant-serving organizations have a variety of programs. Some give workshops on job search skills, where participants get an overview of the job market where they live. Participants learn, among other things, how to write a good résumé and how to behave in an interview. In some areas, there are job-finding clubs, mentoring programs, programs to help you get volunteer work experience, and wage subsidy programs.
- **Your personal "network":** One of the best ways to learn about jobs is to talk to people. They can be people you know well, or people you have just met. Even if they cannot lead you directly to a job, they can provide you with information, ideas and names of other people who might be able to help and encourage you.
- **The Internet:** Many Web sites have information on job opportunities. You can search for a job on-line in any part of Canada. Some sites also give practical advice on how to plan your job search. Others allow you to apply for a job directly on the Internet, or to post your résumé (in English or French). When you do this, your résumé goes into a database that can be searched by employers. Find out the links for websites to help you along your way.

When you arrive in Canada, refer to the pamphlet called "Finding Help in Your Community" in the booklet *Welcome to Canada: What You Should Know* for a list of the immigrant-serving organizations across Canada. Contact an agency in your area and ask about job search programs for newcomers.

Employment laws

Federal and provincial laws protect workers and employers by setting minimum wage levels, health and safety standards, and hours of work. They provide for maternity leave, annual paid vacation and protection of children who are working. There are also human rights laws that protect employees from unfair treatment by employers based on sex, age, race, religion or disability.

Discrimination

There are laws to protect workers from discrimination. For example, an employer must hire employees on the basis of their qualifications. Employers cannot refuse to hire you because they don't like your skin colour or your religion. This is discrimination. It is also discrimination if you are refused a job because of your age, sex, marital status, disability or sexual orientation.

Deductions and Taxable Benefits

Whether you are a Canadian citizen or a permanent resident, when you are hired, your employer will deduct money from your pay cheque to pay for the following:

Income tax

All Canadian residents who are old enough to work must file an income tax return each year, whether they earned any money or not. That is the law. If you are working for an employer, a percentage of your pay cheque will be deducted and sent to the federal government to cover the income tax that you owe. If too much is deducted, you will get a refund. If you paid too little, you will have to pay more. This money helps pay the cost of government services.

Canada Pension Plan

A small part of your pay cheque goes into this plan. When you retire, you will receive a monthly pension from the federal government. The amount will vary according to how many years you worked in Canada before retiring and what your salary was. Residents of Quebec pay into the Quebec Pension Plan, which works the same way as the federal plan. These plans also include survivor's pensions for the spouses of deceased pensioners, disability pensions and death benefits.

Employment Insurance

When you are working, a small percentage of your pay cheque will be deducted each month to go into the Employment Insurance Account. Your employer contributes to the account as well. Employment Insurance gives money to eligible, unemployed Canadian residents for a short time, while they look for a new job or take some training to learn new skills.

Taxable benefits

Your employer may provide some benefits (for example, life insurance, special medical care, a dental plan or a private pension plan) that are taxable.

Union dues

If you are in a union, and the union has an agreement with your employer, some money will be deducted to pay for the union dues.