What is the CLFDB?

The Canadian Labour Force Development Board is made up of partners from business, labour, education and training, and the equity groups (women, aboriginal peoples, people with disabilities and members of visible minorities), working together to develop a highly skilled Canadian workforce that contributes to the well-being of Canadians and a productive and prosperous economy.

The notion of "working together" to bring about positive change is often articulated but seldom translated into key principles of public policy. The CLFDB -- a national, not-far-profit organization with an agenda and a work program set independently by the members -- was established in 1991 in response to the growing consensus that labour market partners must play a greater role in training and human resource development in Canada. The Board's mission is to work toward the creation of a coherent and coordinated system of labour force development that is equitable, effective and efficient.

The Board is made up of 22 voting members: eight representatives each from business and labour, two from the education and training community, and one from each of the' four equity groups. Board members are nominated by the constituencies they represent - over 89 national organizations. Provincial/territorial and federal departments responsible for labour force matters are represented by non-voting members. The Board works by consensus.

The CLFDB co-chairs have also been selected by their constituents: J. Laurent Thibault, former President of the Canadian Manufacturers' Association, as Business Co-chair, and E. Gérard Docquier, former Canadian National Director of the United Steelworkers of America, as Labour Co-chair.

The CLFDB mandate is to:

- play a lead role in developing commitment to training and labour force development in Canada;
- advocate more, relevant, higher quality and accessible training;
- provide direction on all aspects of training and related employment and adjustment programs and policies;
- provide the labour market partners with opportunities to conduct meaningful dialogue and build consensus;
- establish a framework for government accountability with respect to training and labour force development programming;
- ensure that the Board has the information needed to monitor and evaluate training outcomes and be accountable to its constituencies.

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Putting the pieces together: Toward a coherent transition system for Canada's labour force

Report of the Task Force on Transition into Employment to the
Canadian Labour Force Development Board

This document reflects the consensus reached by the members of the Task Force on Transition into Employment, not necessarily that of the Canadian Labour Force Development Board. The CLFDB is distributing the report widely and, based on this broader consultation, will discuss the report and develop an implementation strategy for Board approval.

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Executive Summary

In the 2 years between 1989 and 1991, one out of every three Canadians was part of a transition process into employment. More than 8 million transitions occurred --16,000 per working day -- involving over 5.5 million Canadians.

In many cases, these transitions were not as smooth as they can and should be. Although some individuals moved directly from one job to another, most experienced periods of unemployment and other difficulties. Canadians today face a maze of unconnected education and training options, including conflicting funding restrictions for training programs, diverse counselling windows, lack of portability of accreditation, inadequate labour market information, and poor human resources planning.

The Canadian Labour Force Development Board (CLFDB) created the Task Force on Transition into Employment in February 1992 to deal with the policy and program issues surrounding the transition of people who are unemployed or not in the workforce into paid employment. This included both young people making the transition from school to work and adults reentering the workforce or entering it for the first time.

The Task Force was composed of representatives from business, labour, the education and training community, and the designated equity groups -- women, aboriginal peoples, people with disabilities, and members of visible minorities. The Task Force met 15 times, interviewed 19 experts (Appendix A), and through the CLFDB commissioned five studies (Appendix B). After a series of lengthy and often difficult discussions, we reached a consensus on 71 recommendations.

Although many studies and reports have addressed transition into employment issues, none has addressed the entire range of issues or proposed any comprehensive models. In this report, we have developed a coherent Canadian model for transition into employment. The CLFDB will consult with constituencies and governments across the country to find agreement on the model and, more importantly, decide by consensus what changes are needed in Canada to make this model a reality.

The concept of employability

Transition into employment is a process. Its success depends on a complex set of factors, including characteristics of the labour market as well as those of individuals. The concept of employability captures what is at stake in the transition process. The Task Force defines employability as: the relative capacity of an individual to achieve meaningful employment, given the interaction between personal characteristics and the labour market.

Building a successful model for transition into employment implies bringing together, in a coherent framework, all of the elements affecting employability: education, training, counselling, prior learning and skills assessment, labour market information, hiring and

separation practices, work organization, equity, human resources planning, and employer-employee relations.

It also implies considering all of the stakeholders in the transition process and how they interact with each other: families, peers, governments, Canada Employment Centres (CECs), organizations providing education and training, counsellors, communities, social and community agencies, employers, and labour unions.

In a coherent system, the interactions between stakeholders tend to compliment each other. In an incoherent one, the individual is confused, and this often leads to inefficient allocation of resources, both human and financial.

The Canadian context

Before making any recommendations, we reviewed a number of studies describing the Canadian labour market environment. We found many of these studies to be flawed as they did not always adequately account for visible minority or aboriginal participation in the workforce.

Diversity is a fundamental feature of Canadian society -- we have an aging population, an uneven population distribution across a wide geographic area, and citizens of many different racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds. A Canadian model for transitions has to take all of these realities into account.

Statistics show that less-educated Canadians experience more transitions, take longer to find full-time jobs, receive much lower pay, and have limited opportunities to catch-up with more educated Canadians.

It is also clear that members of designated groups are at a disadvantage in the Canadian labour market. They experience lower employment stability and suffer more often from lack of information and recognition of their skills, experience, and education. As a result they are forced to accept lower quality jobs.

Toward a coherent transition system

A coherent Canadian system for transition into employment should:

- support the development of *meaningful employment* opportunities and prepare individuals for them;
- *serve the diversity of needs*; it should integrate principles and practices of equity into each of its aspects;
- incorporate appropriate mechanisms to assess and provide the *basic skills* (literacy, numeracy, communications, and problem solving) needed to work and learn in present and future environments;

- ensure that skills and competencies are *portable*, across provinces and territories between providers of education and training, and *transferable*, from one industry to another;
- ensure that *linkages* are established, between education and training providers and among labour market partners, and clearly identified to develop knowledge, skills, and experience to facilitate career progress (i.e., career "laddering");
- contribute to an *effective labour market* and, hence, to the economic viability of the country;
- be a responsibility of governments, but also be *responsive and accountable to the partnership of business, labour, equity groups, and education and training*, as a condition of its success;
- incorporate *monitoring and accountability* within its various elements;
- develop a built-in *capacity to cope with change*, to allow the transition process to adapt to changing circumstances and to occupations of the future; and
- operate on the understanding that *learning is a continuous process* throughout one's lifetime.

We believe that there are two necessary preconditions for a successful transition system:

- There must be a job available for everyone willing to work. This means that there must be a clear political commitment to a high level of employment in Canada.
- All levels of government -- federal, provincial/territorial, regional, and local -- must work together to develop a coordinated system of policies, programs, funding, institutional linkages, and standards. We believe that this should be the responsibility of ministers responsible for labour market matters and the Council of Ministers of Education.

There are seven critical and interrelated elements to consider in developing a coherent and effective model for transition into employment:

- labour market information,
- income support and other support services,
- education,
- training,
- career and employment counselling,
- prior learning and skills assessment, and
- labour market practices.

All of these elements must be considered as parts of a holistic model and not in isolation from each other.

Labour market information

Labour market information is the life-blood of the transition system -- it should flow in a permanent loop, letting workers know employers' short and long-term needs and providing employers with information about the existing pool of workers. Labour market information gives direction to the education system, assists individuals making career choices, helps determine the nature and extent of training programs, and helps establish effective career and employment counselling.

Canada does not have a labour market information system that can support a coherent model of transition into employment. Labour market information is too fragmented, relies too much on networking, and is not comprehensive or widely available. As a result, opportunities are limited. We recommend the creation of a new labour market information system that is available, comprehensive, relevant, and accessible. Fully aware that additional administrative burdens cannot be imposed on employers, we recommend using new technologies and personal computers to build this new system.

Key recommendations:

1. We recommend that the CLFDB initiate the establishment of a national employment opportunities database -- an instant electronic listing of job opportunities filed by employers. Building from local databases, all job opportunities in the country would be listed along with details about skills and competencies expected.

2. We recommend that Human Resources Development (HRD), through the Canada Employment Centres (CECs), develop a jobseekers database -- a comprehensive listing of all individuals seeking jobs, not only those eligible for unemployment insurance (UI). This database would be electronically accessible to all employers looking for employees and would contain information currently collected by CECs through their routine processing of UI claims as well as information collected from community agencies dealing with clients ineligible for UI or requiring other specialized services best provided by these agencies.

3. We recommend that HRD coordinate the development of a hirings and separations database, classified by occupation and industry. This information should be generated regularly and disseminated widely to increase understanding of employment patterns and trends. The database could be compiled from existing sources, such as tax remittance forms for hirings and records of employment for separations, and should use occupation and industry codes based on the National Occupational Classification and the Standard Industrial Classification.

10. We recommend that job descriptions in these databases use common definitions of skills and experience that take into account not only education and training but also life experiences that enhance a person's ability to do a job, for example, informally acquire skills, transferable farming skills, parenting and volunteer activities, and

knowledge and experience from working and living in diverse cultural, linguistic, and racial settings. These life experiences should be listed as assets in the databases.

13. We recommend the creation of a one-stop information system, where individuals have access to all information related to unemployment benefits, social assistance, and employment or reemployment services (such as counselling, prior learning and skills assessment, and orientation to training). This requires coordination among federal, provincial/territorial, and local authorities.

Income support and support services

Most transitions involve a period of nonemployment and thus significant income loss. Many Canadians have received income support from public programs such as unemployment insurance, social assistance, and student loans at some point during their lives. In 1993, Canadians received $22 billion in ill (paid for entirely by employers and employees), $16 billion in social assistance (federal share was $6.8 billion), and $1.5 billion in student assistance. However these programs are not complementary and often leave individuals stranded between sources of support. A complementary system of income support is required to ensure equality and effectiveness of transitions.

In the last few years, access to publicly funded training has focused mainly on those eligible for UI. It has not taken into account the change in work patterns -- the move toward part-time jobs, multiple jobs, short duration jobs, low-paying jobs, home-based employment, and self-employment -- all realities in today's economy. As a result, many working Canadians are cut off from our social safety net. In other cases, Canadians who *are* eligible for UI are unable to participate in some training courses because it would make them ineligible.

For Canadians receiving social assistance, access to employment services depends on whether the individual is considered employable or unemployable. This assessment depends more on the past experience of the individuals than on their possibilities or desires. Employment services -- such as labour market information, counselling, training, and prior learning assessment -- should be available to all social assistance recipients to enhance their employability and integrate them into the workforce when possible.

We defined "other support services" as the personal, attitudinal, and situational support services required to enhance a person's employability, for example, child care, equipment and facilities for people with disabilities, and multilingual information centres and services.

We believe that income support and other support services are essential to successful transitions. The dramatic differences in access to employment services between UI recipients, social assistance recipients, and those not receiving any assistance should be

eliminated. Assistance should be based on individual needs and not on the type of income support a person is receiving.

Key recommendations

15. We recommend that mechanisms to build up entitlement and eligibility for VI be reviewed to take into account changing working conditions, including the increase in part-time employment, multiple job holding, short duration jobs, low-paying jobs, working from home, and self-employment.

16. To improve the employability of social assistance recipients, we recommend that federal and provincial/territorial governments and labour market partners review social assistance programs to ensure:

    - access to information about services through one-stop information systems,
    - access to high-quality employment services regardless of income support received,
    - a holistic approach to the provision of training, and
    - access to training without losing benefits.

17. We recommend that federal and provincial/territorial government policies and practices, as well as the attitudes of labour market partners toward support services (especially child care, equipment and facilities for people with disabilities, information about support services and their accessibility for immigrants and members of visible minorities), be closely examined to ensure that they are consistent and that they enhance people's ability to make effective transitions into employment, rather than prevent them from doing so.

Education

Education matters! Although education is not the only factor in a successful transition to employment, it is a critical one. The way in which our education system is organized, the opportunities it offers, and the curriculum it delivers, all have an impact on how students are prepared to enter the world of work. We defined education as the formal initial acquisition of general knowledge and entry-level skills for youths and adults; training is the formal further acquisition of skills required to meet the needs of a job. Education and training are integrated parts of a seamless continuum.

We consider high-school graduation to be the minimum level of education required to participate in today's labour market. The education system must facilitate school-to-work transition and equity principles must drive the education system. Every Canadian should have access to similar education opportunities leading to comparable employment opportunities. This means that members of the designated equity groups as well as students with general learning difficulties must have access to adequate and sustained support while attending school.

An education system that facilitates the school-to-work transition begins at the elementary level with career education -- a process that formally integrates an awareness of the world of work into a student's academic studies. Students learn work values, commitment and cooperation, how to work under supervision, how to make decisions, solve problems, look for jobs, handle authority, and acquire new skills. They are given the opportunity to integrate knowledge and experience drawn from the world of work back into their academic studies.

Cooperative education complements career education and provides an opportunity to practice employability skills; allows for experimentation with nontraditional occupations; exposes employers to emerging workforce diversity; expands student contacts, networks, and references; provides knowledge about work organization, structure, communication, management styles, and personnel roles; and provides an opportunity for students to acquire transferable skills and increase self-esteem. The current cooperative education system works reasonably well at the postsecondary level. At the secondary level, however, it is not structured enough, nor is it appropriately integrated into the curriculum. Canada cannot afford to wait any longer to develop an accessible cooperative education system for all high-school students. This would be a waste of human potential. Developing the new system proposed in this report requires commitment from education institutions, employers, and communities.

We believe that educators must find ways to make the school experience relevant for all youth and adults -- not only those who are academically oriented -- and parents, teachers, counsellors, employers, and workers must convey the message that education improves access to meaningful employment.

Key recommendations

18. We recommend that the provincial/territorial ministries of education and the Council of Ministers of Education Canada adopt a generic model of an education system that facilitates the school-to-work transition while respecting existing Canadian provincial/territorial jurisdictions.

19. We recommend that the Employability Skills Profile (p. 104) be used as a basis for developing curricula in secondary schools throughout Canada.

21. We recommend that education ministries integrate into the school curriculum an awareness program on the cultural diversity of the Canadian population to enhance respect for and understanding of the cultural differences that make up our society.

22. We recommend that all provinces/territories develop, implement and adequately finance compulsory career education courses starting at the elementary level.

25. We recommend that cooperative education be the central component of the transition system. Efforts must be made by all stakeholders to make the present system of cooperative education at the secondary level more structured. All students in the last 2

years of high school should have the opportunity to participate in credit-granting cooperative education programs.

26. We recommend that local boards provide the structure for community involvement in cooperative education by acting as information clearinghouses for multiway partnerships.

28. We recommend that cooperative education placements in unionized firms be increased as a result of management-labour discussions during collective bargaining.

29. We recommend increased communication and cooperation between coordinators of cooperative education programs, teachers, and career counsellors in each school.

31. We recommend that all of the partners in cooperative education make every effort to integrate the learning experience, so that students clearly see the reciprocal relevance of both learning settings -- the school and the place of work.

32. We recommend that future teachers be trained in the cooperative education approach as part of the core curriculum at university faculties of education.

Training

In a coherent transition system, training opens up a wide range of new opportunities and career challenges. However, training alone does not create jobs. Policies to promote job creation must be in place so that the economy generates an appropriate number of meaningful jobs.

If Canada is to acquire and maintain a highly skilled labour force, Canadians must take part in a continual process of upgrading, retraining, and lifelong learning. This means that we need a training system that properly identifies training needs, makes appropriate training available and accessible, provides adequate and equitable financial support for trainees, and recognizes skills acquired through training, work, and life experiences.

The current training system, however, is not coherent and is in fact loaded with systemic barriers to individuals. The research reports commissioned by the CLFDB to identify these barriers found that they include:

- access or entry issues, such as lack of programs, unstable funding, long waiting lists, inappropriate eligibility requirements, remote locations, sexism, racism, and language;
- financial and other support issues, such as lack of income support, lack of child care, lack of transportation;
- quality and relevance issues, such as inflexibility of curriculum and unavailability of counselling and upgrading programs.

Trainees who receive social assistance need training that is progressive, allowing them to move continuously through higher and higher levels of skills acquisition. Successful programs that move individuals from dependency to independence require stability, coordination of funding, and linkages with a wide range of sequential training programs. Training must lead to recognized qualifications and competencies that are portable and transferable to any jurisdiction in Canada.

We believe that all working-age individuals have a right to training opportunities.

Key recommendations

35. We recommend that labour market partners, working through local boards, identify the training needs in a community -- both employers' needs and individuals' needs. Local boards should assess training needs, collect and disseminate information on skills in demand and training programs available, and guide training delivery.

36. We recommend that training providers (educational institutions and community-based trainers) adopt a holistic approach to training delivery -- integrating a wide range of services to support specific clients' needs and developing a capacity to respond quickly to local labour market needs.

37. We recommend that professional associations and employers ensure that training and career development are provided to training professionals, to allow them to adapt to and support the changing learning environment.

38. We urgently recommend that federal and provincial/territorial governments work together to coordinate training initiatives.

39. We recommend that training programs be made more accessible, regardless of income support that candidates receive. Systemic barriers -- for women, aboriginal peoples, people with disabilities, members of visible minorities, and those with low levels of education -- need to be removed. To improve access to training, we recommend that:

    - eligibility criteria for training programs be reviewed and unnecessary impediments removed,
    - counselling be available to all in need,
    - scheduling of training be more flexible, and
    - training be delivered in a variety of modes to meet the diverse needs of the community.

40. We recommend that the federal government restore access to the training system to people not eligible for unemployment insurance.

41. We recommend that federal and provincial/territorial governments fund multiyear training programs to ensure their stability over longer periods. Local boards should play a major role in identifying training needs and monitoring and evaluating training programs to ensure that these needs are being met.

Career and employment counselling

Career and employment counsellors help individuals plan for and make appropriate career choices -- they provide the tools that individuals need to make career decisions. Counsellors today face a wide variety of counselling situations and counselling needs:

3.3 million students attending secondary school in Canada, 500,000 attending community college, nearly a million in university, 1.5 million unemployed, 2 million on social assistance, 400,000 underemployed. Many are in need of career and employment counselling, yet many do not receive it -- they fall between the cracks in the existing system. Studies show that most high-school dropouts never discuss leaving school with anyone from the school.

They also reveal that counsellors tend to reinforce the academic bias of our education system by not promoting career opportunities outside of those offered by colleges and universities. Counsellors' lack of awareness of career options in the trades, the apprenticeship system, and entry-level jobs in the service sector means that young people are not being provided with the information they need to make career decisions. Less than 10% of Canada's apprentices are informed about apprenticeship opportunities by counsellors or teachers.

In every province/territory in Canada, except Quebec, anyone can establish him- or herself as a career counsellor with no accreditation. Professional preparation of counsellors -- whether in schools, colleges, community centres, or CECs -- is a necessity.

We believe that counselling can play a pivotal role in a coherent transition system.

Key recommendations

47. We recommend that a survey of clients -- actual and potential -- be made to determine the extent and characteristics of their need for counselling and whether this need is being met in terms of both quantity and quality.

48. We recommend that career and employment counselling be provided on the basis of clients' actual needs, not the kind of income support they receive. This means that the type of needs assessment currently provided by CECs should be available to all those who require it.

49. We recommend that local boards identify and prepare local directories of counselling resources, indicating specific services provided and specializations ~n specific clienteles including the designated equity groups. If adequate services are not available, local boards should establish them.

51. We recommend that the Canadian Guidance and Counselling Foundation develop and promote national training and occupational standards for career and employment counsellors, and work with training providers to develop a curriculum that allows trainees to meet the standards.

52. We recommend that professional associations and government departments develop extensive in-service training programs aimed at upgrading the career and employment counselling capabilities of counsellors.

Prior learning and skills assessment

Successful transitions into employment build on the prior experience and accumulated knowledge of individuals. Without formal mechanisms to recognize experience and skills, people cannot find jobs that use their full potential. This results in severe costs both to the individual, who must spend extra time and money acquiring formal credentials, and to society, which must pay the cost of duplicating unrecognized learning and experience.

Prior learning assessment (PLA) refers to a variety of methods used to assess two types of learning -- prior experiential learning (knowledge and skills acquired outside the formal education system) and prior academic learning (knowledge or qualifications gained within the jurisdiction of another education system).

For workers whose qualifications were earned in other jurisdictions, PLA can promote a speedy transition into the labour force by ensuring that barriers to employment are eliminated and that wasteful underemployment of highly qualified people does not occur. The unnecessary, lengthy and costly retraining of immigrants can also be avoided.

PLA allows workers who have been laid off to obtain official recognition for the knowledge and skills they acquired in one job that may be useful in another. These individuals have years of job-related experience but no credentials.

PLA must be coordinated in such a way that linkages are formed among the various training providers and between jurisdictions. We believe that a well-articulated national PLA system could significantly speed up the creation and maintenance of a highly skilled labour force.

Key recommendations

54. We recommend that prior learning assessment be established in the formal education system to recognize and provide credit for learning that takes place outside the formal system, but results in the acquisition of valuable knowledge and skills.

55. We recommend that education authorities and occupational and professional associations coordinate their efforts and establish national, standard methods of assessing credentials earned in other jurisdictions (other provinces/territories and other countries). This will prevent duplication, ensure that equivalencies awarded by one partner will be acknowledged by all others, and promote mobility. The Quebec model for assessment of credentials should be closely examined as a possible model for other jurisdictions.

58. In light of the number of concurrent prior learning assessment initiatives across the country, we recommend that the CLFDB convene a national conference to share information about current developments, review gaps, and design orientations for the future in a coherent and coordinated way.

Labour market practices

All employers (private, public, and not-for-profit organizations), workers and their representatives, and governments should be involved in establishing labour market practices that facilitate employability and transitions. These practices include maintenance of a comprehensive labour market information system; employer commitment to equal opportunities when hiring; equity awareness and implementation; and workplace organization that allows for regular consultation between employers and employees on the wide range of labour market issues.

We believe that a key to successful transition is the acquisition of skills through training while employed. Employees have a right to opportunities for training. Employers have a responsibility to provide the training that their employees need to carry out their tasks and enhance their careers within the organization. Both employees and employers will benefit from regularly updating workforce skills. This means putting into practice lifelong learning. However, governments bear the responsibility for basic skills training and literacy.

Human resources planning allows the employer to articulate the needs of the organization clearly to the wider community -- to the local board which decides what training to purchase, to the schools which provide career development courses and cooperative education, to the colleges which need to develop appropriate courses and to counsellors so that they can effectively guide students through the system. Integrating human resources planning into the strategic planning of a business brings coherence to the transition system; it facilitates information dissemination, recruitment, and the development of training plans.

Key recommendations

59. We recommend that human resources personnel be trained in cultural sensitivity and equity issues and demonstrate an inclusive attitude in the recruitment and selection process.

60. We recommend that employers clearly and publicly articulate their criteria for recruiting personnel for entry-level positions to send adequate signals to students, parents and professionals in the education system, and training providers about aptitudes, competencies, and qualifications required for those positions.

63. We recommend that employers assist employees, who are affected by permanent layoff, in the transition process by allowing them time to pursue assessment, counselling, and training.

68. Although employers are responsible for providing training in occupation-related skills, we recommend that public funding be available to assist employers in upgrading the basic skills and literacy of their workforce.

69. We recommend that employers make a firm commitment to employment equity, pass that commitment on to their employees, and dismantle the systemic barriers that limit their potential workforce.

71. We recommend that the CLFDB establish a standard for excellence in human resources practices. The standard would describe desirable practices in a number of complementary areas, such as:

    - human resources planning;
    - providing labour market information and contributing to local employment opportunities databases;
    - being an equity employer;
    - providing training to employees;
    - contributing to cooperative education and business-education partnerships;
    - contributing to business-labour harmony.

Achievement of the standard would be publicly acknowledged locally and nationally by the presentation of a certificate.

Preface

We are pleased to submit our final report, *Putting the Pieces Together: Toward a Coherent Transition System for Canada's Labour Force,* to the Canadian Labour Force Development Board. The CLFDB established the Task Force on Transition into Employment in February 1992. We met for the first time in July 1992 and held 14 more meetings in the following months. This report is thus the result of a long and intensive process and reflects the consensus of all members of the Task Force.

Our mandate was quite broad:

> To deal with the substantive policy and program issues surrounding the transition of people who are unemployed or not in the workforce into paid employment and make firm recommendations to the Committee on Training and Labour Adjustment for transmittal to the Board. This will include both young people making the transition from school to work, and adults who may be re-entering or entering the workforce for the first time.

Our composition was similar to that of the CLFDB with representatives from business, labour, the education and training community, and the four designated employment equity groups -- women, aboriginal peoples, people with disabilities, and members of visible minorities.

We found that although many studies and reports addressed transition into employment issues, none addressed the entire range of issues nor did any propose a model for a coherent Canadian system.

Rather than taking as a starting point the existing Canadian situation and finding ways to improve on it, we decided to start from an empty slate for two reasons. First, it was beyond our capacity, in a limited period of time, to make an exhaustive inventory of the Canadian situation in all areas and jurisdictions. Second, we did not want to feel constrained by any existing policies and programs. We did, however, examine the current situation of transitions in Canada and developed our analysis and recommendations based on those realities.

Each Task Force member brought to the table his or her own diverse experiences and learned from the experiences of the others. Nineteen experts were invited to work with us in specific areas and we would like thank all those who contributed so much expertise to our discussions. (They are listed in Appendix A.)

The establishment of our Task Force provided the opportunity to discover how little is known about the specific situation of the groups in our society that are most disadvantaged when confronted with making a transition into employment. During the course of our work, the CLFDB commissioned four research reports that provide important information about the situations faced by women, aboriginal peoples, people

with disabilities, and members of visible minorities making transitions. (They are available from the CLFDB and are listed in Appendix B.)

We adopted a holistic approach to our task and examined all of the elements involved in the transition process: labour market information, income support and other support services, education, training, counselling, prior learning assessment, and labour market practices. As a result of lengthy and often difficult discussions, we developed what we believe is a model for a coherent Canadian system of transition into employment. We emphasize the issue of coherence because each of the elements in our model was considered on its own and as a symbiotic part of the whole system. Each element reinforces the others and means that certain issues appear in more than one section, and certain recommendations depend on recommendations made in other sections.

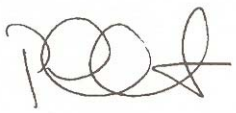
We did not directly address the financial implications of our recommendations, not because we do not think they are important but because no relevant cost evaluation can be made without factoring in the savings that would be gained from getting rid of a transition system that does not work and replacing it with a coherent system.

The first chapter of this report presents the conceptual framework used as our starting point. The second describes the Canadian environment within which transitions occur and the third describes each constituency's views on how transitions work today. In the last chapter, we examine in detail each of the elements that form a coherent transition system and make 71 recommendations arrived at by consensus. The number of recommendations reflects the complexity of our task.

We hope that this report will be widely discussed across the country with all the relevant labour market partners. We know that change cannot come overnight, but we believe that our recommendations can be the start of a process to develop a coherent Canadian transition system.

We wish to thank the CLFDB for the opportunity to contribute to an important part of the Board's mandate. We hope our work will make a useful contribution to a wider public awareness of these issues and to the necessary public policy developments.

We would also like to thank Patrice de Broucker, CLFDB Research and Policy Officer, for his patience, abilities, and hard work; and Kevin Hayes, Senior Economist at the Canadian Labour Congress, for his assistance.



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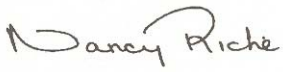

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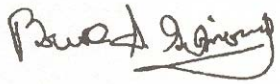

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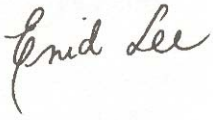

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1 - Employability and transitions into employment: a conceptual framework

People go through a transition into employment several times during their lives: after initial schooling, after an extended period out of the labour force because of layoff or leaving employment, or as a new immigrant. In this report, we develop a framework for a successful model for transition into employment in Canada.

Transition into employment is a process. Its success depends upon a complex set of factors, including characteristics of the labour market as well as those of individuals. The concept of *employability* captures what is at stake in the transition process. It encompasses both personal and labour market characteristics and their interactions. We define employability as:

> The relative capacity of an individual to achieve meaningful employment, given the interaction between personal characteristics and the labour market.

Each word in the definition is significant:

- An *individual* is a person who may have characteristics that give him or her a social identity as well as an individual personality. The transition process involves an individual matching process.
- *Capacity* is the unique combination of attitudes, aptitudes, competencies, interests, choices, and potential of an individual.
- *Relative* refers to strengths and weaknesses when comparing the characteristics of individuals.
- *Achieve* is used to emphasize the idea that finding meaningful employment is an engaging process; it is successful when the employment corresponds to the job searcher's objectives.
- *Meaningful* means that the employment must have a personal value, that is, it must provide a combination of reasonable monetary reward, self-esteem, and social recognition.
- *Employment* refers to a broad spectrum of possible activities, from self-employment to private or public sector employment, and from part-time to full-time work.
- *Personal characteristics* are the attributes of an individual resulting from both accumulated experience (education, training, work experience, life skills) and circumstances that are out of the individual's control (gender, race, physical abilities).
- *The labour market* is the broad range of groups (primarily employers and governments) and their actions governing work, both legislated rules and less formal practices.
- *Interaction* reflects the idea that personal characteristics and labour market characteristics do not develop in isolation, but rather in a reciprocal relationship.

In this report, we attempted to cover all issues related to making a transition into employment. Because members of the designated equity groups -- women, aboriginal peoples, people with disabilities, and members of visible minorities -- often face additional challenges when trying to move into employment, equity concerns form an important part of the report. We adopted the following definition of the term "equity."

The meaning of equity

Equity is an ancient principle of justice that was included in law to ensure fairness for disadvantaged members of society. Implementing equity principles means ending overt or systematic discrimination against members of a social group by providing them with education, training, or both; reasonable accommodation of their needs; and opportunities for employment.

In employment, the equity principle in the Canadian context would result in fair access, treatment, and outcomes for women, aboriginal people, people with disabilities, and members of visible minorities - social groups that have been and continue to be disadvantaged by law and social custom. The equity principle would "level the playing field" so that race, gender, and disability would have no effect on employability and full participation in society.

To put equity principles into practice, special measures must be taken to ensure that these groups are employed throughout organizations and work sites; accommodated in and participating fully and comfortably in their work context; treated with respect, fairness, and dignity; fairly evaluated in terms of their experience and education; and promoted on the basis of their competence. Recognition for and understanding and valuing of the range of human differences demonstrate the successful practice of equity in the workplace.

Employability: an appropriate concept for the transition process

Before recommending improvements to the Canadian transition system, we must carefully examine the concept of employability (Figure 1). Both personal and labour market characteristics are determinants of an individual's employability.

In the upper corners of Figure 1 are listed characteristics that are not under the direct control of either the individual (upper left) or the employer (upper right). In the lower corners are characteristics that are the result of decisions made by the individual (left) and by the employer (right). We do not mean to imply that all decisions leading to an educational path, occupational experience, attitudes and behavior or personal and social relations are made by the individual free of constraints;

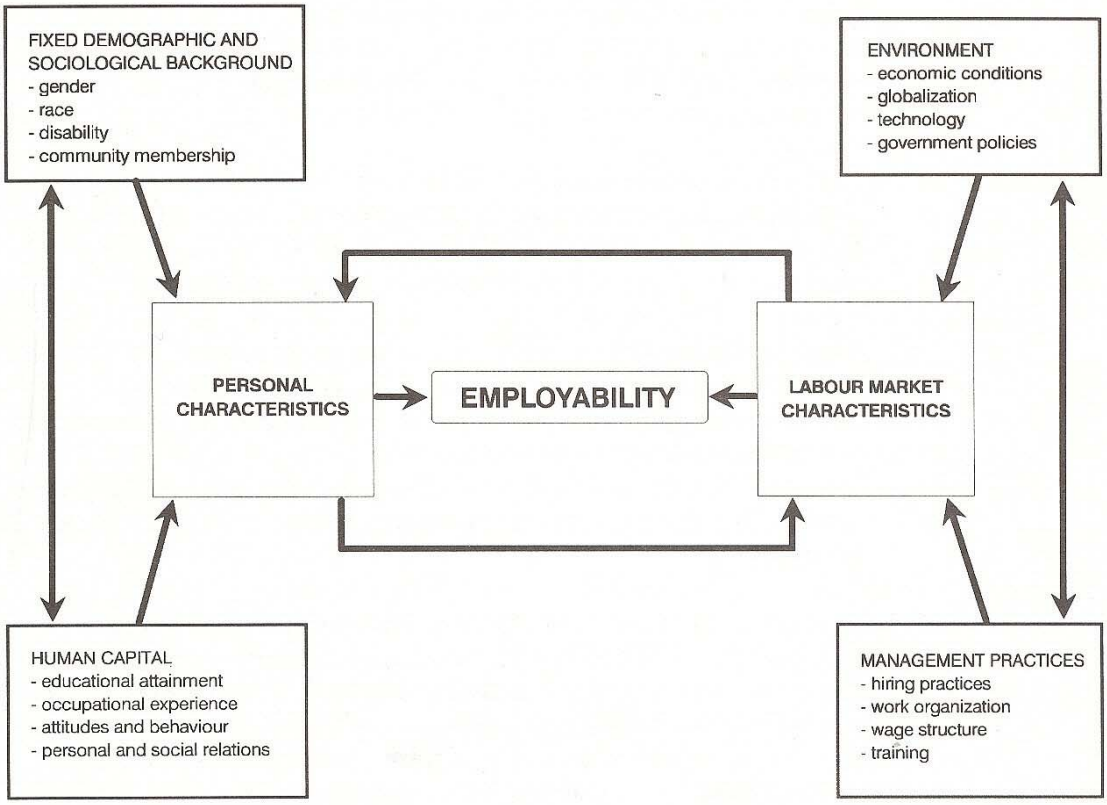


Figure 1. Factors affecting employability and transitions into employment

however, the individual has more latitude to choose in these areas. Similarly, employers have choices when developing hiring practices, organizing work or wages, and making decisions about training employees.

Individual characteristics are essential determinants of employability…

As Figure 1 shows, personal characteristics have a strong bearing on an individual's employability. As a consequence, the concept of employability takes into account: all types of disabilities (physical or mental), impediments faced by members of a "disadvantaged" group, and accumulated educational difficulties. No personal characteristic can be omitted when assessing an individual's employability. Any mechanism aimed at enhancing employability should be able to address special needs, such as attendant care, tutors, or materials in an alternative format.

…but employability is also conditioned by labour market characteristics.

Labour market characteristics also play a role in fostering or impeding employability. In addition to the factors listed in Figure 1, this side of the employability framework has two additional dimensions: a quantitative dimension and a qualitative one.

The *quantitative* dimension refers to an issue beyond the scope of the Task Force, an assumption that there are employment opportunities. It would be unfair to incriminate, for example, the education and training systems for the flaws in a transition system if there are insufficient jobs to "transit to." Although this issue must be addressed by economic policy, it should not be overlooked.

In fact, economic conditions may have an ambiguous effect. Adverse conditions often allow for a significant number of new opportunities, but of a less desirable type: unstable, short term, and part time. In assessing real employability, we must consider the question: for what kinds of jobs? Quality must be included among the criteria used to judge the success of a transition into employment.

The *qualitative* dimensions of the organization of work, the wage structure, and personnel management practices send signals to students, education and training facilities, counsellors, and labour market entrants. The information articulated by employers is often the basis upon which an individual makes career path decisions. We believe that it is important to address these qualitative dimensions in this report.

Employability includes several features relevant to transitions into employment.

- It pertains to all types of transitions: from school to work and later entry or reentry into the labour force.
- It pertains to every group in society, in particular the equity groups.
- It refers to the widest range of skills (from literacy and numeracy to the development of new skills through lifelong learning) and, in that sense, is constantly changing.
- It is at stake in the competition for scarce jobs; the fewer jobs available, the fiercer the competition.

To understand the context in which transitions into employment occur in Canada (the subject of chapter 2), it is relevant to note that there are two competing views on how our economy works:

- The "pure market" view emphasizes competition among fundamentally equal individuals. Applied to the labour market, this view ignores factors such as gender, race, disability, etc.
- The "community" view embodies the notion of a diverse population and recognizes that this is a core consideration in policy development, not an ad hoc, add-on factor.

An ideal world always draws on both views. We have identified a unique Canadian situation in which there is a major gap between stated intentions and reality. Diversity is a fundamental -- often highlighted -- characteristic of Canadian society. However, employers, governments, and other institutions tend to act according to "pure market"

rules, without recognizing this diversity. For example, the education system does not fully recognize the variety of students' interests and aptitudes. Hence, the organization of our society does not respond in an appropriate manner to the changes needed to close the identified gap between our stated intentions and reality.

A lesson from countries with successful transition systems is that such systems have emerged out of joint, positive interaction between institutions helping individuals build employability and those forming the basis of the labour market in a broad context. A recent statement of the Economic Council of Canada (*A Lot to Learn*, 1992) demonstrated the essential role of coherence in overall economic performance.

The Task Force's challenge has been to develop a "model" that is deeply rooted in the Canadian reality.

Building a model to enhance employability

Building a successful model for transition into employment implies bringing together, in a coherent framework, all elements affecting employability. We identified a number of key elements in such a framework. The challenge is to relate one to another and orient them toward the common goal of enhancing employability. (These elements and good practices are presented in chapter 4.)

Transition into employment comprises five steps:

- **Getting to know yourself**
  Prior learning assessment
  Counselling,
  Self-assessment

- **Getting to know the environment**
  Labour market information,
  Counselling.

- **Getting ready**
  Further education,
  Training,
  Lifelong learning.

- **Getting a job**
  Hiring practices (networking),
  Employment equity,
  Job search skills.

- **Getting along in a job**
  Work attitudes,
  Organization of work,
  Wage structure,
  Training and lifelong learning.

These steps are not sequential, but occur simultaneously. They contain interrelated elements that contribute to employability.

The employability enhancement chart (Figure 2) is an attempt to clarify the role and logic of some tools used by the Task Force to develop its framework. It illustrates the relations of various stakeholders to employability. The word JOBS across the figure is

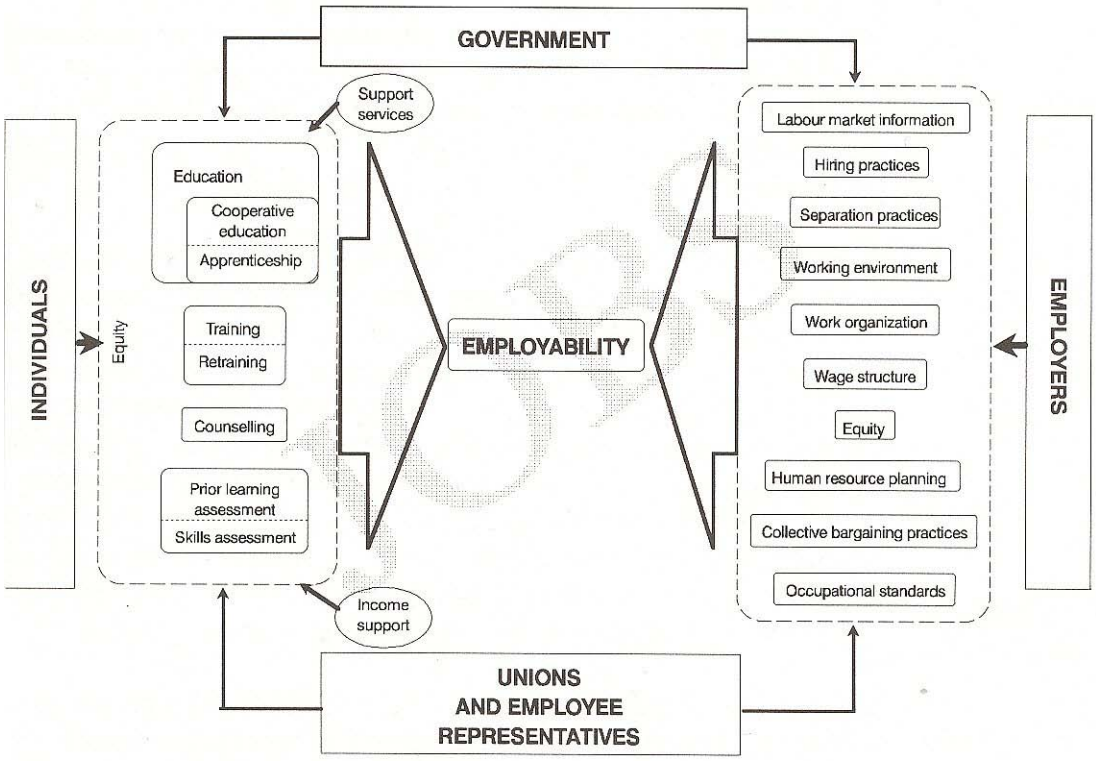


Figure 2. Employability enhancement chart

to remind us that ultimately a transition system focusing on employability enhancement cannot work properly in the context of a shortage of jobs. The number of jobs available is a crucial determinant of employability.

The employability enhancing factors on the left side of Figure 2 are those associated with personal characteristics, i.e., education, training and retraining, counselling, prior learning, and skills. The availability of services, such as child care and supportive equipment for people with disabilities, and the provision of income support also have a

bearing on employability. These complement the personal factors and must be part of a successful transition system.

The right side of Figure 2 shows a set of labour market characteristics that influence an individual's employability. These are the constituents of employers' personnel management practices. Labour market information is included here to emphasize the fact that employers are the primary source of such information. Employers seldom establish their practices independently: as workers' representatives, unions participate in setting some practices through collective bargaining, and governments stipulate some parameters through legislation. All stakeholders should be concerned that management practices be established coherently to enhance employability.

Although the graphic representation simplifies the situation for the sake of clarity, all the elements are interacting continuously. For example, for all the elements on the left side of the figure to have a positive impact on employability, appropriate labour market information -- mainly originating with employers -- is critical. Although standards should be part of the framework as a link between the two sides, placing them among the labour market characteristics emphasizes the crucial role of the labour market partners in their establishment. Standards give relevance and recognition to training and should play a major role in the definition of employers' management practices.

Most of the recommendations of this Task Force pertain to the elements shown in Figure 2. and the coherent "Canadian model" of transition into employment proposed by the Task Force (chapter 4) reflects their necessary coordination.

One last piece of information, necessary to build the effective transition system that Canada needs, is an understanding of who the stakeholders in a coherent transition system are, what role they play, and how they interact. Borrowing a format used by the Economic Council of Canada in *A Lot to Learn* (1992), Figure 3 shows the wide spectrum of groups involved in the transition system, working together to diffuse information, design and implement policies, and adjust incentives. At the centre of the figure is the individual. He or she is subject to many influences, on the one hand, and looking for relevant information, advice, and support from all these stakeholders, on the other.

Examples of the roles of these stakeholders in relation to enhancing employability and facilitating the transition process are identified in Table 1. **In a coherent system, the interactions between stakeholders tend to complement each other. In an incoherent one, the individual is confused, and this often leads to inefficient allocation of resources, both human and financial.**

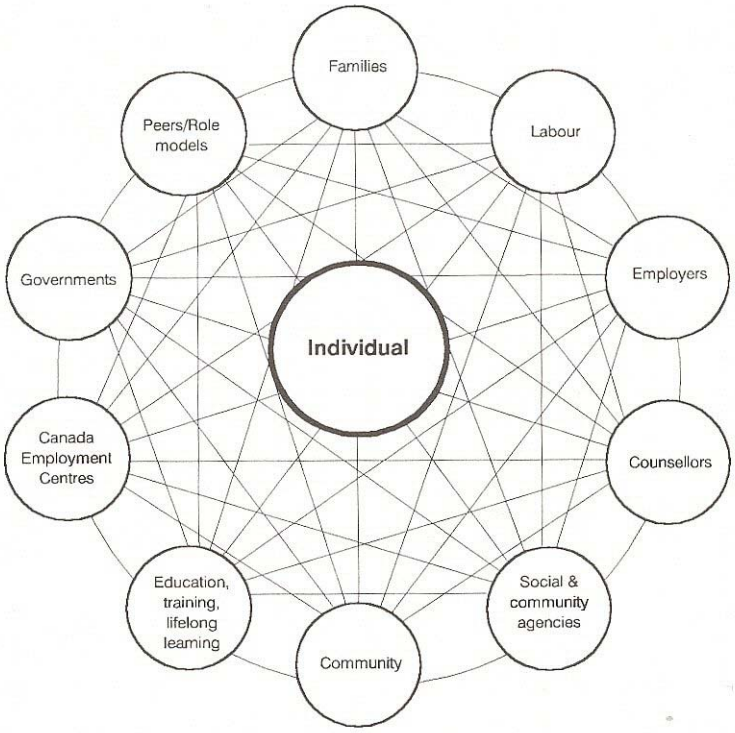


Figure 3. Stakeholders in a coherent transition system

Table 1: Roles of stakeholders in a coherent transition system

Stakeholder	Roles
Families	First source of influence Act as role models Have expectations Give support
Peers and role models	Major influence on attitudes, possibilities, and choices Communicate through television, advertisements, etc. Influence through sports and other activities
Governments	Set the legislative environment Frame the role of institutions Promote and ensure equity Provide an essential source of income support Purchase training courses
Canada Employment Centres	Distribute labour market information Provide employment services Provide counselling
Providers of education, training, lifelong learning	Set curricula to achieve standards Respond to training needs Relate to labour market
Counsellors	Influence education and career orientation Disseminate labour market information Assist in placement Provide job-search support
Community	Provide network support Provide advocacy Communicate through newspapers Demonstrate a supportive attitude
Social and community agencies	Provide counselling and placement support Provide community-based training Support individuals with specific needs
Employers	Influence government decision-making Set personnel management practices Establish standards Provide training opportunities, cooperative education, apprenticeship Provide job opportunities
Labour	Influence government decision-making Influence human resources practices through collective bargaining Contribute to the setting of standards Support training, cooperative education, apprenticeship in the workplace Provide training

2 - The Canadian environment

The Canadian environment, in which a transition system must operate, is unique. In this chapter, we look at the changing labour market in Canada and at the kinds of transitions occurring there. We examine the statistics or quantitative data available and provide some background information about Canadian demographic and labour market trends. These "Canadian realities" are then taken into account in the model developed in chapter 4.

In the first part of this chapter, we examine the diversity of individual situations and detail the characteristics of the emerging Canadian workforce -- the supply side of the Canadian labour market. We also describe current labour market conditions -- the demand side -- and look at the trends in employment, by industry and occupation, and in workplace organization.

In the second half of this chapter, we provide details about Canadians currently making transitions. We look at how education -- both secondary and postsecondary -- has an impact on the success of transitions.

The diversity of individual situations

The demographics of the Canadian population and its uneven distribution have significant effects on transitions into employment. Age, gender, and ethnic factors have profound consequences for Canadian society and, particularly, for the labour force. The combined effects of a low fertility rate, increased life expectancy, and immigration are rapidly changing the structure of the population. Data presented in this section were drawn mainly from Statistics Canada and Employment and Immigration Canada surveys, national censuses, and Human Resources Development (HRD) reports.

Aging of Canadian society

Recent and projected figures clearly show that the labour force is aging (Figure 4); the proportion of people under 35 years of age (15-24 and 25-34 groups) has decreased from almost 60% of the labour force in 1980 to less than 50% in 1990 and is expected to be under 40% by 2005. Actually, the trend is toward "middle-aging" as the proportion of people 55 years of age and over has been decreasing and is now becoming stable. Previously, increasingly early retirement tended to offset the increasing size of new generations reaching that age group. From the first years of the new century, this may not be the case as the generations continue to be larger and pressure to work longer, rather than retire early, may be felt.

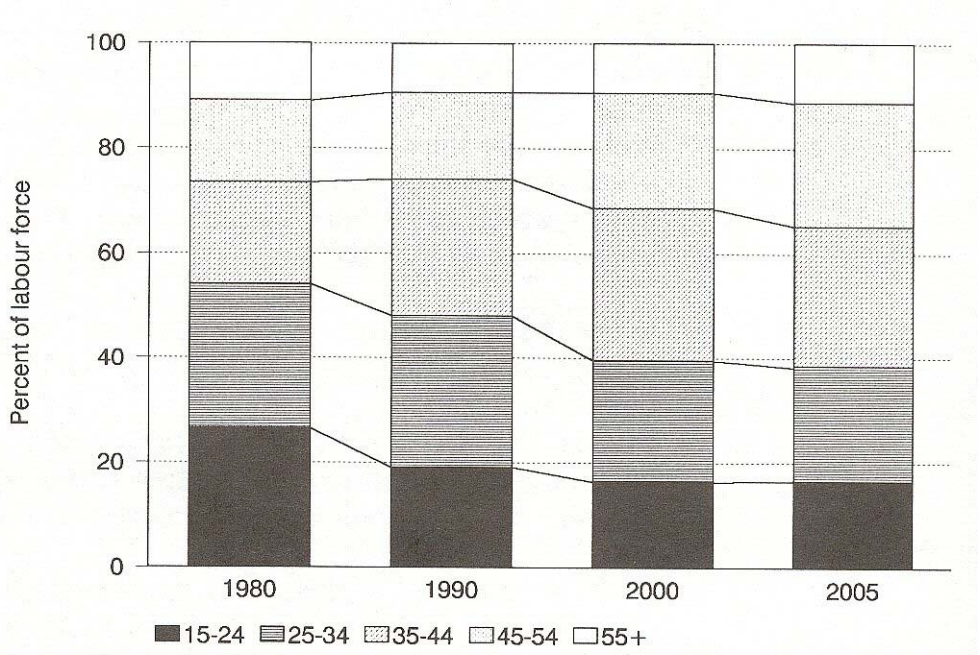


Figure 4. Changing distribution of the labour force by age group (COPS Reference: 1992 Projections, Employment and Immigration Canada)

As the large generations of the 1950s and 60s have entered adulthood, when participation in the workforce is highest, the proportion of people in this age range has grown (from 62% in 1980 to 74% in 2000). With only a marginal decrease in the proportion of older workers, these gains have been a result of the relatively large decrease in the youth labour force (from 26% in 1980 to 16% in 2000).

The decline in the proportion of youth is not simply a relative phenomenon. In the early 1990s, the number of 15 to 24 year old workers decreased to fewer than 2.5 million; in 1980 it was over 3 million. Certainly the sharp decline in fertility rate in the 1960s and 1970s, to well below the generation replacement rate in the first half of the 1970s, is having an impact. Staying in school longer, especially among older youth (20-24 years) has also been a significant factor.

As a consequence of these trends, the average age of the labour force has risen from 32 years in 1971 to 37 in 1990, and is likely to be over 40 years by 2005.

Because of changes in fertility rate and shifts in immigration, the composition of the youth labour force cohorts is increasingly diverse: the proportion of members of visible minorities is growing rapidly. In this group, the proportion of youth under 15 years is larger than in the general population.

Immigration

In Canada, immigration is a major factor in population growth. Immigration accounted for 24% of the net population growth in the first half of the 1980s; it now accounts for 50% and this share is likely to continue to increase. Although Canada has counted upon immigration, with variations over the decades, to increase its population, the composition of the immigrant population has changed dramatically (Figure 5).

During the two periods, the magnitude of immigration was similar: 159,000 people annually in 1970-74 and 138,000 in 1985-89. In recent years, the number has increased to about 200,000 annually and is expected to remain at this level for the rest of the decade. However, the composition has shifted from predominantly European to mainly Asian. The proportion of people coming from Africa and South America has also increased slightly. This trend is expected to continue and even become amplified through to the end of the century.

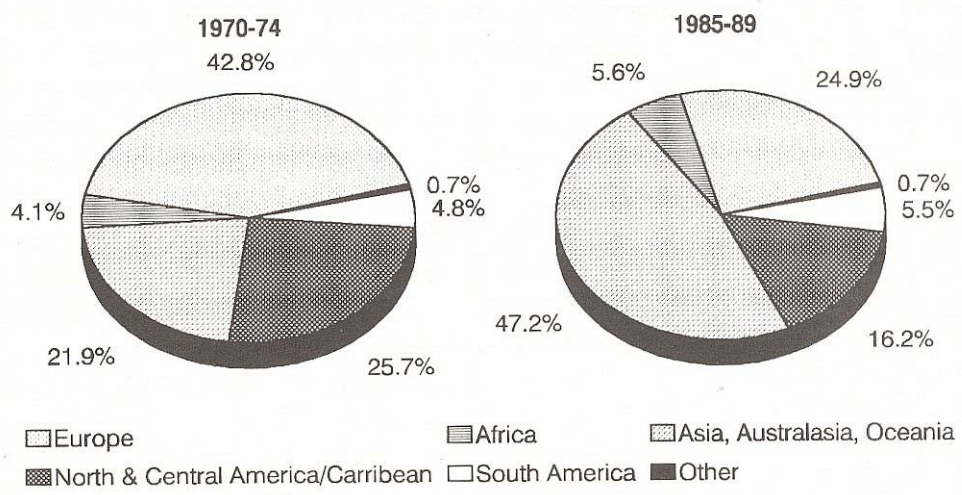


Figure 5. Immigration to Canada from various regions of the world (Immigration in Canada, Employment and Immigration Canada, 1991)

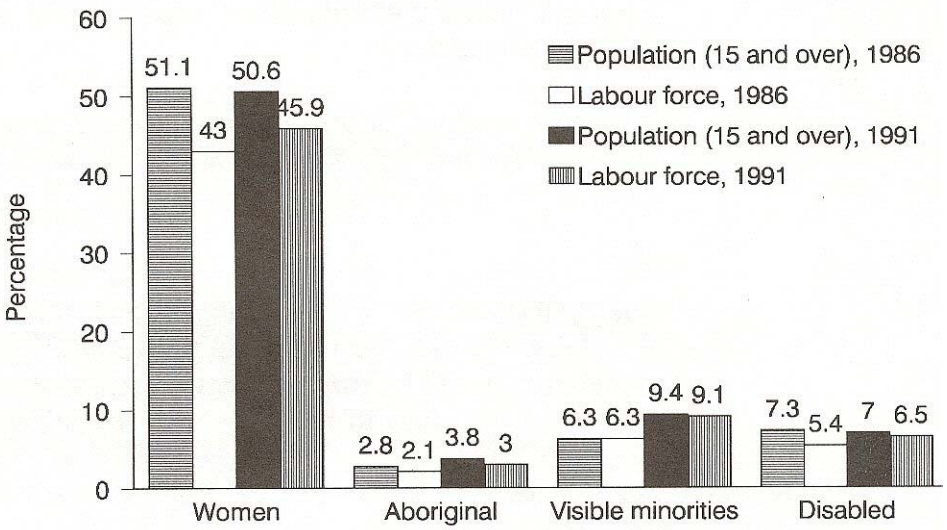


Figure 6. Representation of the designated equity groups in the population and in the labour force (1986 and 1991 censuses of Canada; HRD)

Equity groups in the population

The changing structure of the labour market requires an examination of the diversity of individual situations and labour market experiences of equity groups in Canada (Figure 6). All of the designated groups -- women, aboriginal peoples, people with disabilities, and members of visible minorities -- face difficulties in the labour market. Under-representation in the labour force indicates one of the difficulties. Public policy and labour market partners must meet the challenge of easing access to jobs, training, and employment opportunities for these groups.

In the 1990s, almost two-thirds of the total growth of the labour force will result from the increased participation of women, especially those aged 35 to 54 years. By the year 2000, 47% of the labour force will be women (compared with 27% in 1961 and 33% in 1971). Of all women of working age, 61% will be at work or looking for work in the 1990s.

Visible minorities are a diverse group comprising people of many ethnic backgrounds and different demographic characteristics.

This group represented 6.3% of the Canadian population in 1986, 9.4% in 1991, and is projected to account for 13% by the year 2000. Generally, its members tend to be highly educated compared with the general population.

Aboriginal peoples make up close to 4% of the Canadian population. They have significantly lower participation rates in the labour force than the average for all Canadians. In 1991, the average unemployment rate for aboriginal peoples was 19.4%, almost double that of the general population. Aboriginal peoples are on average much younger than the total population, with 57.7% under 25 years of age; hence, they are very

concerned with transition into employment issues. Problems in this respect are amplified by high-school dropout rates among this group (over 18% have less than grade 9 education) and lower rates of university graduation than the general population (5.9% compared with 13.4 %).

According to the 1991 Health Activity Limitations Survey (Statistics Canada), people with disabilities constituted 7% of the population. People with disabilities are among the most disadvantaged economically in Canadian society. Although significant progress has been made in recent years, their rate of participation in the labour force remains much lower than that of the general population.

Labour force status and level of education

Figure 7 shows the status in the labour force of the working age population by age group. The 15 to 24 year old group is divided into full-time students (average of 8 months full-time participation in the education system over the period January to April and September to December 1992) and others. Some full-time students (35%) also hold a job, usually part time.

Despite the problem of a high-school dropout rate that is too high, the educational attainment of the Canadian labour force is rising rapidly as older workers, with a lower average level of formal education, retire and are replaced by younger generations who have spent more years in the education system (Figure 8).
The proportion of the labour force with education beyond high school has risen from less than a third in 1975 to more than half in 1992.

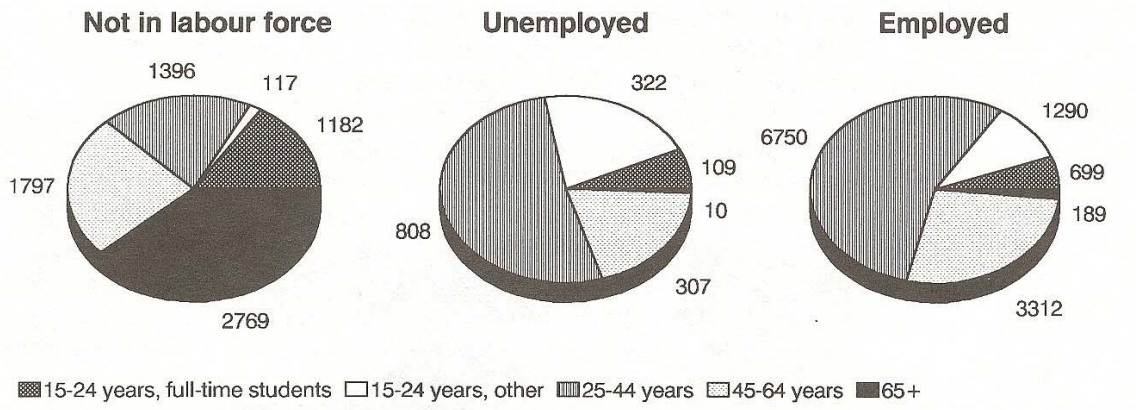


Figure 7. Age distribution of working-age Canadians ('000) who are employed, unemployed, or not in the labour force (Labour Force Survey, Statistics Canada, 1992)

Although Canadians are attaining higher education levels, they are not concentrating on science and technology to the degree that some of the other industrialized nations are. For example, 39.6% of France's graduates are in the fields of engineering and sciences; in Canada the proportion is only 17.6%.

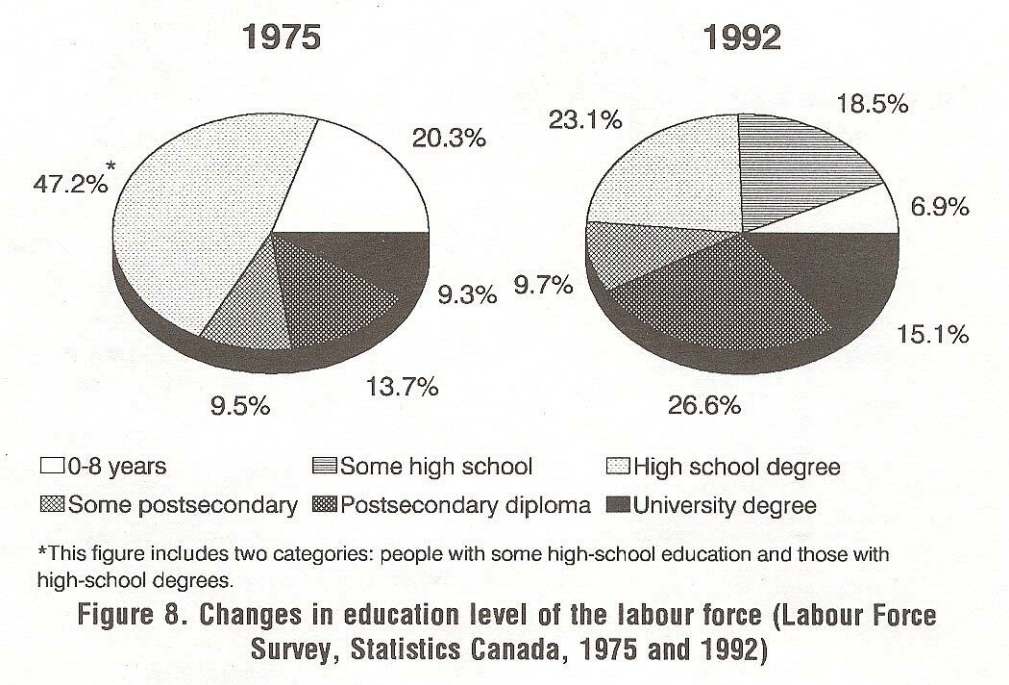


Figure 8. Changes in education level of the labour force (Labour Force Survey, Statistics Canada, 1975 and 1992)

Geographic distribution of equity groups

Canada's challenges are not only related to the demographic trends and the increasing diversity of its population and labour force, but also to the uneven distribution of the population and its components across the country (Figure 9). The provinces east of Ontario have a lower than average proportion of both visible minorities and aboriginal peoples; the other provinces show a higher share of one or both of these groups. In British Columbia, the population of visible minorities increased by 57% between 1986 and 1991, the aboriginal population by 36%, but the total population by only 14%.

Also significant is the age distribution of aboriginal peoples and members of visible minorities compared with the overall population. In 1986, 21 % of the total population of British Columbia was under 15 years of age, compared with 26% of members of visible minorities and 35% of aboriginal peoples. This difference is leading to the growing presence of these equity groups in the labour force. The situation is similar in the other three western provinces. This geographic distribution must be considered in the provision of adequate support services.

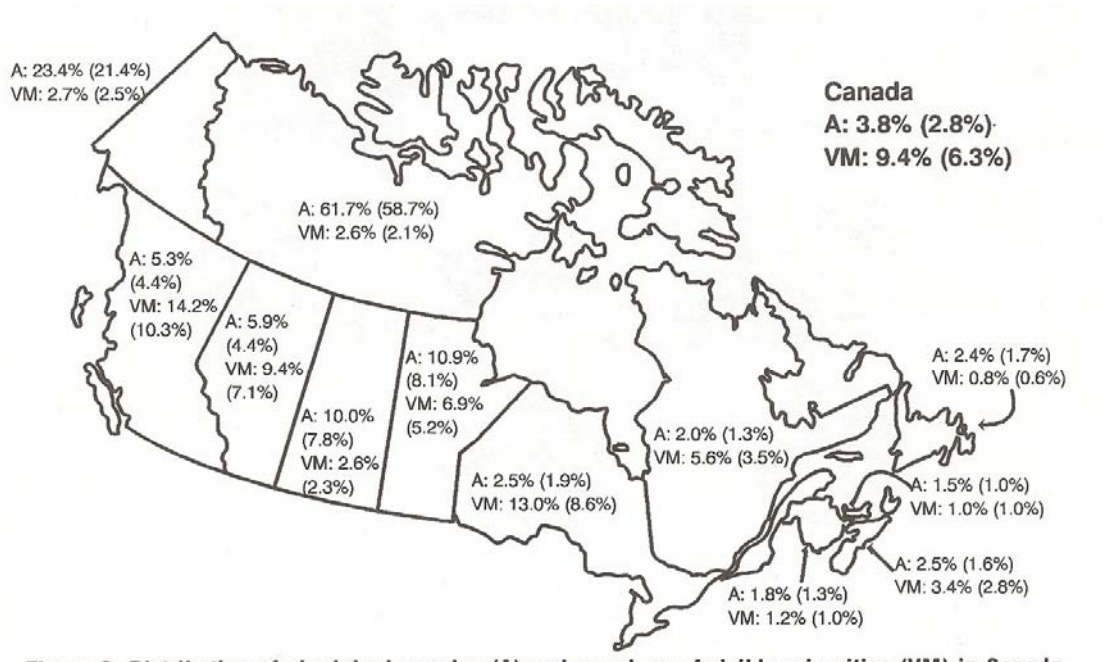


Figure 9. Distribution of aboriginal peoples (A) and members of visible minorities (VM) in Canada (1991 [and 1986] censuses; Employment and Immigration Canada)

The distribution of visible minorities is closely linked to the destination of immigrants. For the past four decades, most people coming to Canada have settled in major urban centres. In 1989, Montreal, Toronto, and Vancouver attracted almost 60% of all immigrants. Less than 1.6% were destined for Atlantic Canada.

This concentration of immigrants should help public authorities and support groups focus their activities where they are most needed. It also indicates the magnitude of the need for specific support and assistance, such as language training and recognition of prior learning and credentials.

Occupational structure of equity groups

The designated groups are underrepresented in highly skilled, highly paid occupations -- both "white-collar" or upper and middle managerial levels and "blue-collar" or skilled crafts and trades (Figure 10).

Women are relatively absent from decision-making positions, even in settings where they form the majority of the workforce. For example, in 1989, women held about 72% of all full-time jobs in banking, but only 6% of upper-level managerial positions.

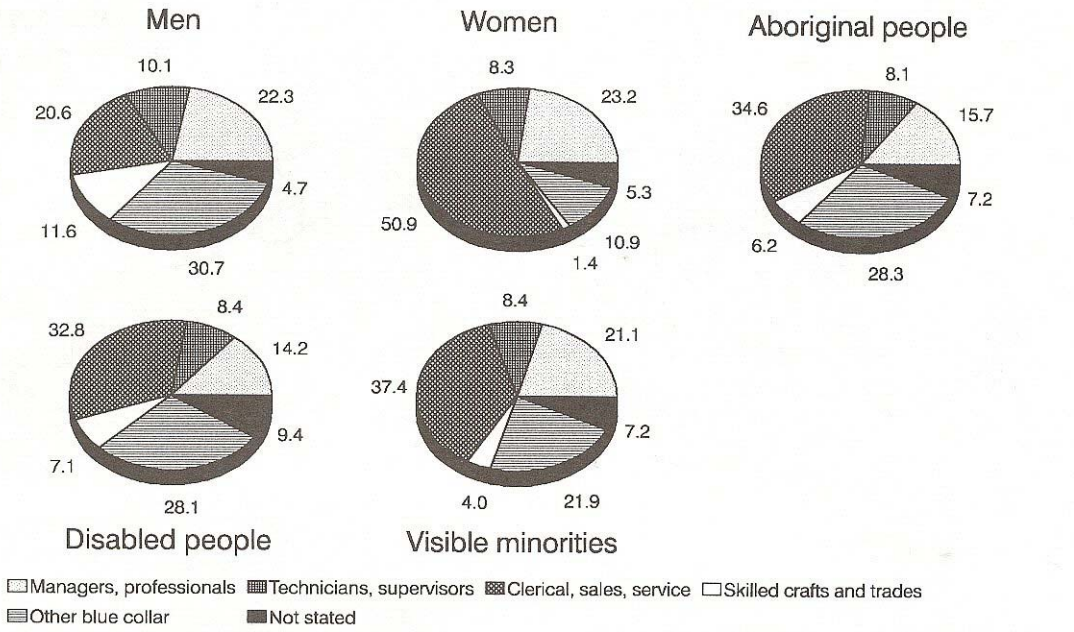


Figure 10. Employment distribution of designated groups (1991 census; Health Activity Limitations Survey, 1991; Employment and Immigration Canada)

The percentage of members of visible minorities in upper managerial positions is lower than that for the general population, despite the fact that they are generally better educated: almost 30% of the visible minority group has some university education or a university degree, compared with fewer than 18% of the rest of the population. Their low representation in managerial positions may be a result of barriers, such as a failure to recognize foreign credentials or discrimination.

A high proportion of aboriginal peoples have poor literacy and numeracy skills, reducing their chances of obtaining stable employment. The grade 12 completion rate for aboriginal peoples is half the rate for non-aboriginal people. This raises the question of access to formal schooling and availability of the necessary support.

People with disabilities face a lack of accessible training and education opportunities. As a result, they are often limited to segregated, low-paying, entry-level positions.

The labour market

Although forecasting in the volatile economic context that Canada is experiencing is highly speculative, it is necessary to consider the future, especially when one is trying to assess the environment for transitions into employment. Most of the material in this section is based on Employment and Immigration Canada's *COPS Reference: 1992 Projections.*

Trends in employment by industry

In the 1990s, service industries will account for close to 90% of employment growth, while less than 10% will be contributed by manufacturing industries (Figure 11). However, taking into account the effect of the recession in the early part of the decade, the growth of the manufacturing industries (especially durable goods) will have to be slightly larger to include recovery to pre-recession employment levels (subject to employment trends during the recovery period).

Among service industries, prospects for employment will be important in the health and education sectors: demand for health services will increase steadily as a large proportion of the population ages; and a highly competitive job market, along with decreasing emphasis on labour-intensive jobs, will require higher levels of education and training of the existing workforce.

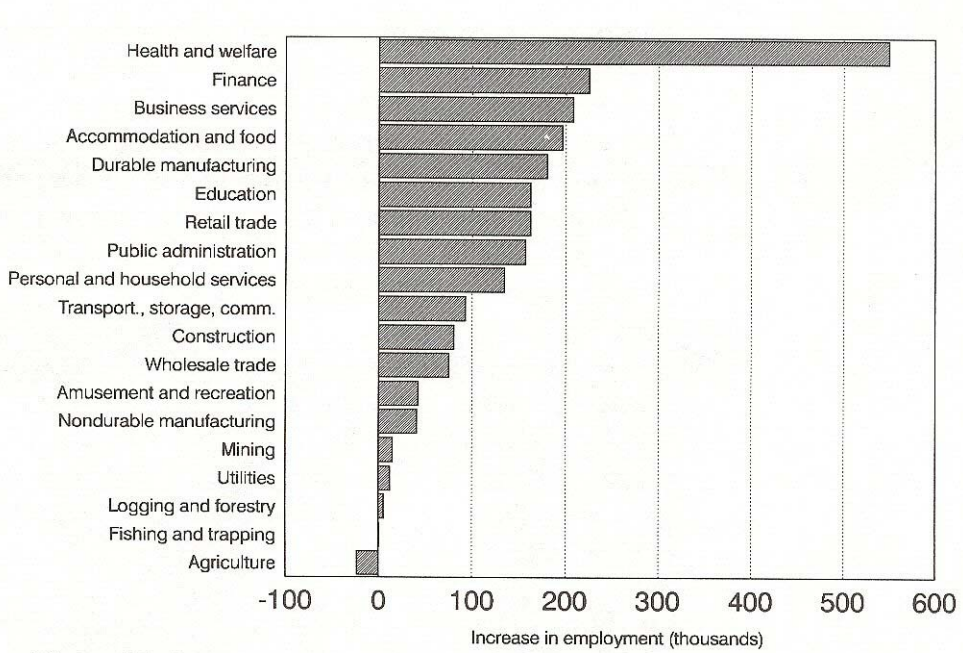


Figure 11. Projected growth in employment by industry (COPS Reference: 1992 Projections, Employment and Immigration Canada)

Trends in employment occupation

The Canadian economy of the 1990s will be characterized by a movement toward jobs demanding higher levels of education and training. Projections and analyses of employment by occupation are not common in this country. The only projections available are those generated by HRD's Canadian Occupational Projection System (COPS). HRD's projections attempt to relate occupations to the amount of education and training they require. They take into account not only the level of formal education attained, but also training in the workforce.

HRD's most recent projections of employment by occupation show that, although in 1986, 23% of the labour force were in jobs requiring more than 16 years of education or training, 48.5% of new jobs created in the 1990s are expected to require that level of education or training. Conversely, 55% of the 1986 labour force had 12 years or less of education or training (high-school level), and only 36% of new jobs in the 1990s are expected to demand such a minimal level. Such projections suggest a need to emphasize the role of education and training to meet the demand for skills and knowledge by the labour market. However, in the current labour market situation, which is likely to prevail in the foreseeable future, one may question the rationale of too much education for jobs that do not exist.

A high rate of increase in the number of jobs in highly skilled occupations is expected (Figure 12), for example, managerial and administrative positions, health-related occupations, and jobs in social and natural sciences and engineering. Most of the new positions are expected in fields that require more than 12 years of education or training.

A profession like engineering will face a challenge in matching labour supply with market demand. According to Supply/Demand Forecast for Canadian Engineers 1992-2002 (Canadian Engineering Human Resources Board, available from HRD) 31,000 employment opportunities in engineering will be created by the year 2002; however, the supply of engineers is expected to be only 12,000. The study also noted that currently Canada has the lowest number of scientists and engineers per 1,000 inhabitants among the G-7 nations.

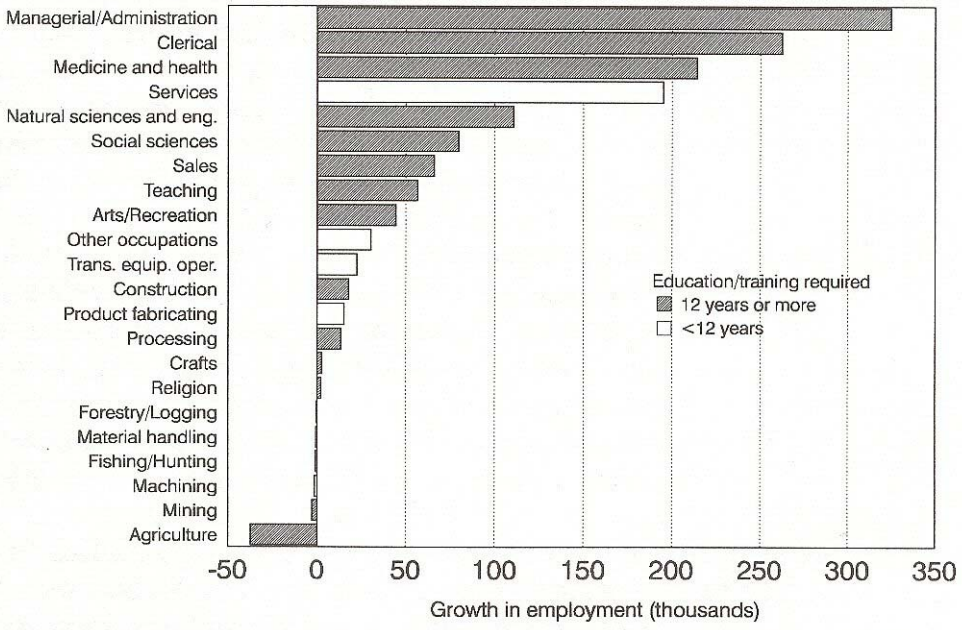


Figure 12. Projected growth in employment by occupation (COPS Reference: 1992 Projections, Employment and Immigration Canada)

Although substantial growth in employment will occur in occupations that require skill and training, strong growth is also envisioned in particular occupational streams where 12 years or less of education is sufficient. For example, employment in personal and household services should grow 2.8% annually.

The challenges in shaping Canada's labour supply arise from several factors. The "greying" of Canada's population is producing a diminishing pool of young people entering the labour force. Combined with constant competitive pressures on employers to adapt to technological change, this will shift the emphasis to retraining current staff rather than searching for highly qualified new workers.

In addition to upgrading workers' skills in known high-value-added job sectors, a way must be found to prepare workers for emerging occupations, such as environmental engineering and biotechnology. Professional education and workplace training will have to encompass a sufficiently broad range of technical and scientific skills to accomplish this.

Options for enhancing skills are not necessarily restricted to the so-called "leading-edge" occupations or those requiring advanced education. Even workers in some primary industries may benefit from advanced training. Job growth in the mining sector, for example, is projected to be negative; however, *Breaking New Ground: Human Resource Challenges and Opportunities in the Canadian Mining Industry* (Steering Committee of the Human Resources Study of the Canadian Mining Industry, HRD, 1993) points to a need to upgrade the technical skills of miners, so that existing workers can maintain their levels of productivity. This need extends to several occupations in manufacturing industries, where the number of workers will shrink, but the quality of their skills must be improved to meet changes in the work environment.

Trends in self-employment

According to an article in Perspectives called "The renaissance of self-employment" (Statistics Canada, Summer 1993), self-employment was a major form of employment when agriculture was the dominant industry in Canada. It has decreased dramatically along with the decline of the agricultural sector. However, in the last two decades this trend has reversed due to growth of self-employment in some industries. In 1971, 540,000 workers were self-employed; in 1991, the number was 1, 109,000, reflecting a growth that outpaced that of paid workers (105% vs. 70%). The rate of growth was similar to that of overall employment in the 1970s, but was much higher in the 1980s. In the latter decade, the increase in self-employment occurred mainly in such areas as personal services (self-employment accounted for 25.6% of overall employment in the sector in 1991), special trade contractors (22%), services to business management (20.1%), miscellaneous services (17.4%), general contractors (16.4%), amusement and recreation (13.3%), and insurance agencies and real estate (11.4%). Overall, self-employment accounted for 8.4% of total employment.

Among the hypotheses explaining the rise in self-employment, three are worth mentioning because they relate to transitions into employment:

- Industrial restructuring in the economy favors the production of services, a process that generally requires less investment in capital and more in skills and knowledge, thereby opening more opportunities to more people.
- The aging and rising education level of the workforce produces more skilled and experienced workers willing to risk self-employment.
- Difficult economic times force people into self-employment because they have no other option.

Changes in the workplace

Future transitions in employment must be considered against the background of a number of forces shaping the workplace of the 1990s. Internationalization of the Canadian economy and reengineering of processes due to advances in computing and communications have produced fundamental changes in the working environment. These changes are likely to increase in the future.

Because Canada lags behind other industrialized nations in the application of advanced manufacturing technologies, the challenge before Canadian workers will be to ensure that they have either suitable skills or access to the training and retraining programs necessary to adapt successfully to the rapid change in processes on the shop floor and in the office.

Evolving paradigms of business organization pose a particular challenge to those making transitions in employment. The traditional pyramidal corporate structure -- with its linear chains of command and communications and expectation of performing all necessary functions within the corporation -- is already giving way to flatter organizational structures. Table 2 lists characteristics of the "traditional model" .of the workplace and the "emerging model," which is receiving more and more attention as it is said to be at the root of the economic success of Canada's most important competitors.

Research being carried out at the Industrial Relations Centre, Queen's University, demonstrates a relation between "progressive" management policies and practices and economic performance. It also confirms the superiority of the "emerging model" in the Canadian context.

With employers moving toward increasingly diversified, flexible models of organization, there will be growing pressure on workers to adapt their skills and undertake training to meet rapidly changing corporate requirements. As well, less-stable corporate structures present the prospect of less-secure employment for many workers. This has given rise to the development of nonstandard forms of employment. In Good Jobs, Bad Jobs (1990), the Economic Council of Canada reported that only 50% of employment growth in the 1980s was in standard employment (full-time, permanent jobs); 32% was in part-time jobs and 18% in other nonstandard arrangements (short-term jobs, self-employment, and

temporary work through agencies). Both part-time and short-term employees are most likely to be young and female -- the people who also experience the most transitions. These jobs do not usually offer the experience necessary for taking advantage of more rewarding employment opportunities.

Table 2. Organization of the workplace

Traditional model	Emerging model
• Mass production • Jobs defined in terms of a limited number of tasks • Clear distinction between conception and execution • Hierarchical management structure • High level of education requested for management and technical positions; no specific demands for workers' education • Workers reliable, steady and willing to follow direction • Technology leads to improvements in productivity	• Small batch production • Self-directed multi-skilled teams • Workers required to use judgment and make decisions • Workers autonomy based on mastery of high-level skills • Few management layers • Emphasis on continuous training: the "learning enterprise" • Involvement in decision-making on investment and work organization • Productivity gains from appropriate meshing of technology and work organization

Developments in communications technology are also leading to the emergence of new working arrangements. Employers are beginning to examine options such as flex-time, job-sharing, and work-at-home programs. The Public Service of Canada, for example, has encouraged work-at-home programs, a move made easier by the "symbolic analyst" nature of many civil service functions and cost-effective access to computer data-link technology.

With the increased participation of women, dual-earner families, and single parents in the labour force, workers are facing the challenge of balancing work and family responsibilities and are placing increasing pressure on employers to meet these changing needs.

In summary, the structure of the workplace of the 1990s will reflect the clash of technological forces that improve productivity at the expense of conventional shop-floor organizations and those that allow for more genuine worker participation. An unfortunate consequence is that the rewards of such changes are often unevenly distributed among workers.

Considering the Canadian environment, a transition into employment system must address a number of challenges to be effective. A response to diversity must be built into the system, not dealt with as an ad hoc adjunct to a system that addresses the needs of a few, often privileged people.

People making transitions

Transitions to employment in Canada must be considered within the context of a volatile labour market. To comprehend the magnitude of the issue and characteristics of transitions better, the CLFDB commissioned a study of the labour market from Statistics Canada. The report, *Getting a New Job in 1989-90 in Canada*, is based on data from the *Labour Market Activity Survey* (LMAS; available from the CLFDB). Information from this study is presented in this section to show the number of people making transitions into employment, establish the profiles of these individuals, and identify the particular challenges facing the equity groups. Because the transition of students entering the workforce cannot be adequately described from the LMAS data, the recent *School Leavers Survey and The Class of 1986* are referred to in subsequent sections.

We discovered several important limitations in the LMAS -- it does not cover the aboriginal population, its sampling frame limits the information available for members of visible minorities and people with disabilities, and it was discontinued in 1990. This prompted us to recommend that the CLFDB commission research into the transition situation of the equity groups. Summaries of these reports are presented in Appendix B. The full reports are available on request from the CLFDB.

Magnitude of the population undertaking transition

The LMAS showed the distribution of the Canadian working age population by their employment status in 1989 and 1990 (Figure 13). The shadowed boxes highlight groups who experienced one or several transitions into employment or wanted to work but did not. Over the 2-year period, almost a third of those aged 16 to 69 who did not spend any time in school made at least one transition into employment (28%). Many experienced more than one transition, as the data reveal that close to 6 million new jobs were started by these people -- an average of 1.5 jobs per person. By comparison, 8.5 million people (54%) held a job with the same employer for the whole period.

The number of school-to-work transitions may be estimated from the information in Figure 13. About 1.5 million people were in school for only part of the period. Therefore, we can infer that they may have had some activity in the labour market. These people started 2.2 million new jobs (also 1.5 jobs per individual). Some of the volatility of the labour market can be attributed to the higher-than-average propensity of young people to start new jobs. In September 1989, 52.3% of all jobs were held by people aged 16 to 34 years; two-thirds of all jobs started in the 1989-90 period were by people in that age category. Two major factors explain this phenomenon: "job shopping", whereby young workers change jobs to enhance their knowledge of the job market and look for a better fit of skills with employers' demands; and lack of seniority, which makes them more likely to be laid off. The former factor hints at a lack of knowledge about the labour market acquired while in school, as well as a lack of linkage between the education system and the world of work.

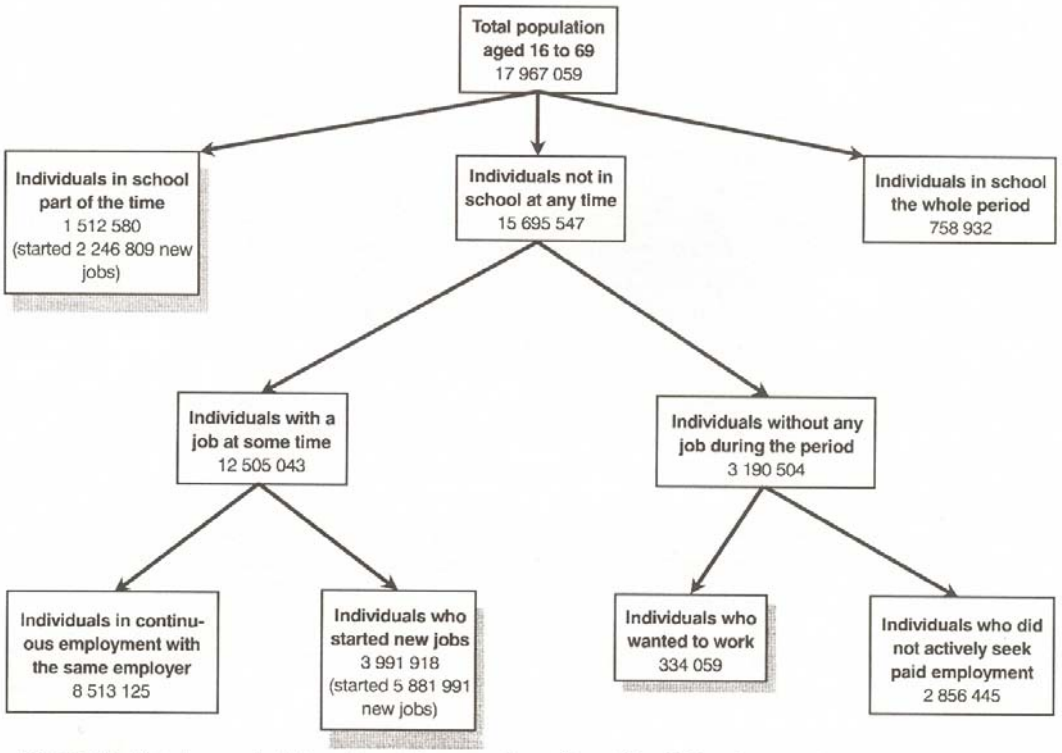


Figure 13. Employment status of working age Canadians (René Morrissette, Getting a New Job in 1989–90 in Canada, CLFDB/Statistics Canada, 1994)

The difficulty of getting a new job

How hard was it to get a new job? The length of periods of nonemployment and the intensity of a job search before starting a new job are relevant indicators. On average, individuals were not employed for 26 weeks before starting a full-time job with a new employer. However, this does not reflect the difficulties experienced by some people. Omitting the 44% of transitions into full-time employment that did not involve any non-employment period results in an average period of nonemployment of 49 weeks for the remainder.

The number of consecutive weeks spent in searching for a job is much lower than the number of weeks not employed. Only 41 % of periods of nonemployment included time spent in active job search and, in those cases, the duration of the search averaged 15 weeks. Active job search was reported by fewer than three quarters of people who experienced a transition into employment after a nonemployment period.

The average period of nonemployment was calculated from a wide distribution, reflecting quite diverse attachments to the labour force. Some people -- most often women -- enter or reenter the labour force after long periods of nonemployment. Considering only spells of nonemployment of less than 2 years identifying those most likely to show long-term attachment to the labour market -- the average time not worked before starting jobs was

about 11 weeks (and similar for men and women), and the average number of consecutive weeks of job search was 6 (slightly longer for men than for women).

Education

Getting a New Job in 1989-90 in Canada underscores in several different ways the importance of education and training in making a transition to employment.

- *Frequency of transitions:* People who did not graduate from high school were more likely to experience discontinuities in employment than better educated people: only 54% of men and 43% of women who did not complete high school and worked at some time in the study period worked all weeks of the 2-year period; the corresponding proportions are 61% and 56% of those with a trades certificate or diploma and 76% and 63% of those with a university degree. In other words, the lower the education level, the higher the probability of experiencing job instability.

- *Length of nonemployment period and job search*: Men who did not complete high school took, on average, 7 weeks longer to find a job than those who had more than high-school education, and the time they spent actively looking for a job was almost 4 weeks longer (Table 3). For women who did not complete high school, the period of nonemployment was more than 5 weeks longer than for those who had more than high-school education, but job searching took only a week longer. The durations also varied with age, but the effect of education was fairly consistent across age groups.

- *Impact on wage level:* Level of education substantially affected wage rate in a new full-time job. After taking into consideration various characteristics of the individuals (age, disability, visible minority status) and of the new jobs (union status, firm size, industry, occupation), men with university degrees received hourly wages that were 29% higher than men who had not completed high school. Among women, university graduates received an hourly wage 52% higher than those who had not finished high school. Interestingly, men with a trades certificate or diploma from a vocational school or apprenticeship training earned 21% more than those who had not graduated from high school. Relative gains for women in the same situation were significantly lower (13%). The relative advantage of completing high school was not substantial: less than 8% for men and slightly more than 9% for women.

Table 3. Gender Differences in time spend not employed and searching for a job by level of education[a]

	Period of nonemployment (weeks)		Length of job search (consecutive weeks)	
Level of education	Men	Women	Men	Women
Less than high school	14.8	15.0	8.4	5.6
Completed high school	11.2	12.0	6.6	5.1
More than high school	8.1	9.5	4.8	4.5

[a] People who started full-time jobs with a new employer in 1989-90 after a period of nonemployment shorter than 2 years.

In addition, lack of education increases the probability of getting jobs that provide earnings insufficient to live on. Assuming that people work 1750 hours per year, a third of the new full-time jobs started in 1989 by individuals with less than high-school education paid less than Statistics Canada's "low income measure" for one adult in the same year (i.e., below $11,351). Only 13% of the new jobs acquired by people with more than high-school education paid a salary below the low income measure.

Education is also a crucial factor in making a financially rewarding transition from school to work. The CLFDB/ Statistics Canada study indicated that, in general, higher education leads to higher wages. In 1990, people aged 16 to 24 years, who had left school in 1989 with a university degree, earned almost twice the salary of people who had left school in 1989 without a high-school diploma. This trend applied to both men and women: men with a university degree earned, on average, $25,842 annually compared with $13,636 for those without a high-school diploma; women university graduates earned, on average, $19,095 compared with $10,785 for women without a high-school diploma. People with a trades certificate or diploma also fared relatively well.

- Limitations on opportunities: People with less education recognize the hurdle this presents when they look for a new job. Lack of necessary education was pointed out as a major hindrance in 36% of the jobs started by people who reported active job search and had less than high-school education. Such a situation was reported for only 9% of the jobs started by university graduates and 12% of the jobs started by people with a trades certificate or diploma.

The quality of the new jobs

In the CLFDB/Statistics Canada report, the distribution of jobs started with a new employer in 1989-90 was compared with that of jobs held by the study population in September 1989. New jobs were

- more likely to be at the white- and blue-collar level, rather than professional or managerial;
- less likely to be full time;
- much less likely to be unionized;
- much less likely to be covered by a pension plan;
- more likely to be in firms with fewer than 100 employees; and
- more likely to be at the lower end of the remuneration scale.

Equity groups and transitions

Information provided by the CLFDB/Statistics Canada study on the transition into employment of the equity groups is summarized in Figure 14. No information is available from this source for aboriginal people. For people belonging to visible minority groups and those with disabilities, the sample size permits only limited analysis. Nevertheless, the following points can be made.

- The indicator of employment stability was working all weeks during 1989 and 1990, i.e., staying in the same job for the 2 years or working in different jobs during that period without any period of joblessness. Designated groups generally faced more difficulties in keeping their jobs or in finding another one without an intervening period of joblessness than the rest of the population. People with disabilities were at a particular disadvantage. Statistics from HRD's Employment Equity Branch for 1990 reveal that members of visible minorities required far more referrals to obtain job placements than the general population and other designated equity groups: an average of 15.9 referrals to obtain one placement compared with only 4.5 for the general population.

- The designated groups spent more time not employed before getting a job, although the time spent in active job search was often not as long as it was for men in the general population. Again, people with disabilities were at a particular disadvantage.

- Shortage of jobs in their geographic area was the primary difficulty faced by people looking for a job. Apart from this problem, which was shared by all groups, men and women faced a comparable level of difficulty in getting a job; skills and experience were most lacking, followed by education and labour market information. Members of visible minorities and people with disabilities reported difficulties for these three reasons much more often than men and women in the general population. The way in which labour market information is communicated -- often through private networking, rather than public employment services -- may limit access to relevant information for some groups that are not well integrated into the appropriate networks. Limited, or more often lack of, recognition of foreign credentials and prior learning and the difficulty of acquiring relevant experience sharply aggravate the situation for members of visible minorities and people with disabilities.

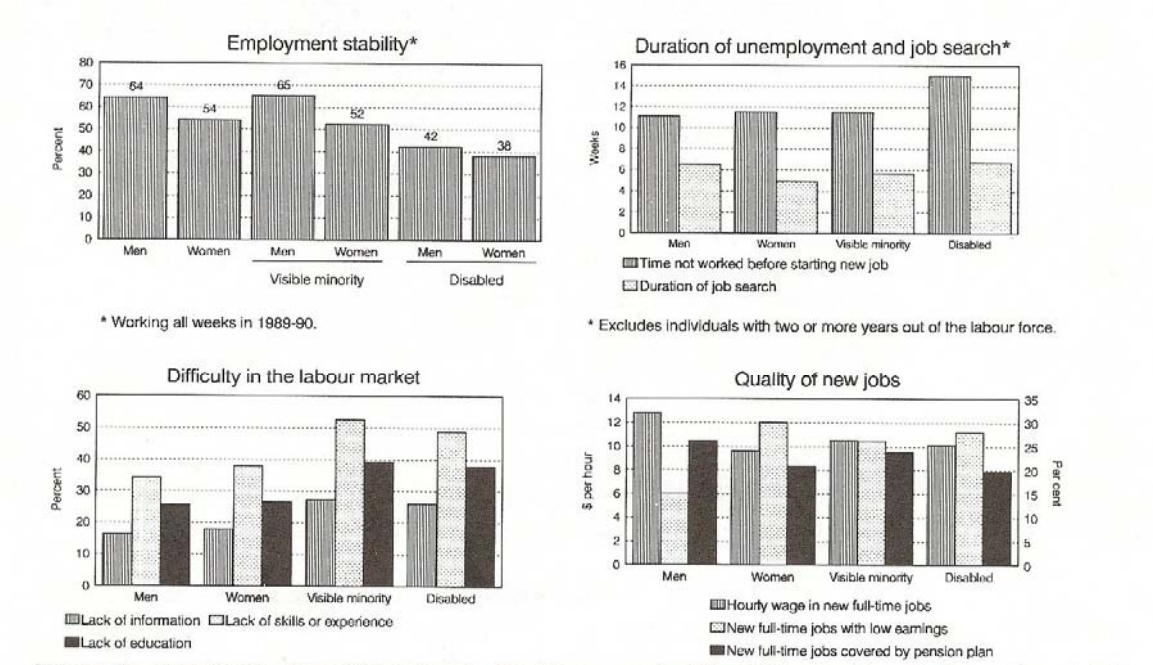


Figure 14. Experience of equity groups in the labour market (René Morrissette, Getting a New Job in 1989–90 in Canada, CLFDB/Statistics Canada, 1994)

- People belonging to the designated groups got jobs paying significantly less than men: 25% less for women, 21% for people with disabilities, and 18% for members of visible minorities. Because people in the designated groups have more difficulty staying employed, lower wages contribute significantly to lowering their overall earning capacity.

- Individuals in the designated groups more often entered jobs that did not provide a standard of living above the poverty line (the Statistics Canada's low income measure). In 1989, 30% of new jobs taken by women generated annual earnings below this poverty line. This was the case for 26% of new jobs for members of visible minorities and 28% of the new jobs taken by people with disabilities.

- Overall, only 24% of the new, full-time jobs started in 1989-90 were covered by a pension plan. Women and people with disabilities were significantly less likely than others to enter such a job. Members of visible minorities were on par with the national average in this respect.

The experience of school leavers

A significant proportion of people entering the labour force come directly from high school. However, leaving high school before graduation has become an increasing area of focus. In this section, we examine the experience of school leavers compared with that of graduates, focusing on their demographics, profiles, and employment transitions.

Over the last 10 years, growing concern over the large number of school leavers has raised questions about the effectiveness of Canadian educational institutions in enhancing the country's economic prosperity and ability to compete in the global economy. Many foresee that future Canadian jobs will demand high levels of skill and technical training. To be "trainable" for many growth occupations, applicants will require at least a high school diploma. Although, by international standards, educational attainment in Canada is high and Canadians have ready access to postsecondary education, a relatively large number of students do not complete high school.

To shed light on the dropout phenomenon, Human Resources Development (HRD) commissioned a study from Statistics Canada, the *School Leavers Survey* (1991), which attempted to examine the factors that influence school leaving and to explore the prospects of school leavers compared with high-school graduates. The data analyzed here were derived mainly from this survey.

Profiles of school leavers and graduates

Estimates of the school leaver rate vary widely depending on the approach used. Average national figures range as high as one third. The *School Leavers Survey* estimated the rate at 18%; provincial rates ranged from a low of 14% in Alberta to a high of 25% in Prince Edward Island. However, the statistics revealed even wider variations between the sexes (Figure 15). This disparity occurred in all provinces but Saskatchewan, but was greater in the eastern provinces and narrower in western Canada.

A large majority of school leavers (62%) had only grade 9 or 10 education, and most (66%) were 17 years of age or younger. In terms of socioeconomic status, leavers were more likely to:

- come from a single-parent household;
- be married (especially females);
- have children of their own; and
- have parents with a low level of education and blue-collar jobs.

As well, youths with physical disabilities and especially aboriginal youths were more likely to leave school. Immigrants and their children, however, had a lower likelihood of dropping out of school than their native-born counterparts.

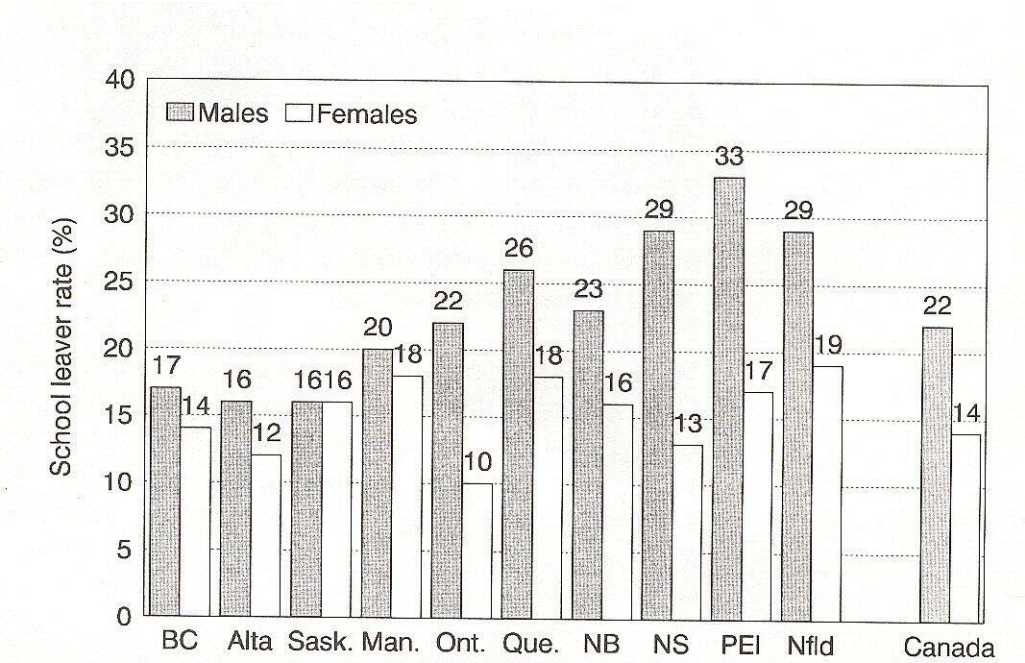


Figure 15. School leaver rates among 20-year-old survey respondents by province and sex (School Leavers Survey, Statistics Canada, 1991)

Attitudes and characteristics of the education system also played a substantial role in school leaving. Of school leavers, 40% of men and 41% of women reported that they dropped out because of "school-related" issues. This reason was given by more people than work-related and personal or family factors.

Leavers were less likely than graduates to enjoy school, to find their classes interesting, to get along with their teachers, and to participate in extracurricular activities. Leavers were also more likely to have difficultly in class and core subjects, such as English, French, and mathematics. Peer attitudes may also be a contributing factor as leavers had a significantly lower proportion of friends who thought that completing school was important.

Part-time jobs have a positive effect on students if they are limited to 15 hours or less per week. The students who had more "intensive" work schedules, especially males, were more likely to leave school.

Effect of leaving school on transitions into employment

Leaving school has serious consequences for individuals and, potentially, for the economy. In this section, we look at four aspects of transition to the labour market: employment, quality of employment and income, types of job search activities, and future prospects in the labour market.

Leavers are more likely to be unemployed or not in the labour force than graduates. Female leavers are at a particular disadvantage in terms of employment: only 50% had a job, compared with 63% male leavers and 75% of graduates, both male and female (Figure 16).

The difference in income between leavers and graduates is only marginal. This may well be one reason why leavers do not perceive a significant benefit from staying in school. Although they work long hours (26% of male leavers worked 50 or more hours a week and 47% worked 40 to 49 hours; ratios were similar for graduates), both leavers and graduates reported low earnings, mostly due to the lower-level entry jobs available to them at their current level of education. In the previous 12 months, 51% of male leavers and graduates had earned a total personal income of $10,000 or less. Only 12% of the male leavers and 11% of graduates had personal incomes over $20,000. Female graduates and leavers earned even less. However, leavers' total personal incomes more often came from unemployment insurance, social assistance, or welfare and family allowances than did graduates'.

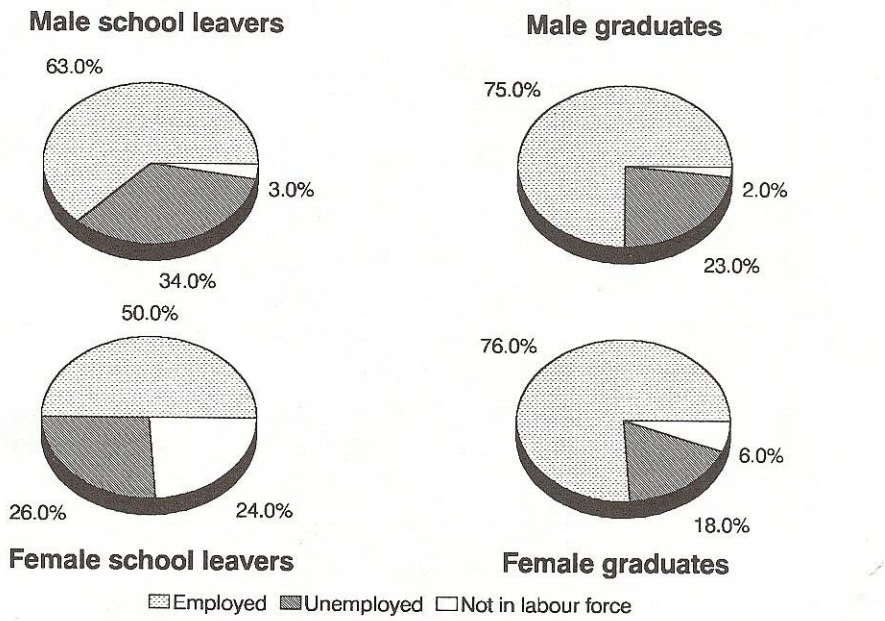


Figure 16. Status in the labour force of high-school graduates and school leavers by sex (School Leavers Survey, Statistics Canada, 1991)

Although differences were not large, leavers tended to have less knowledge about training programs or places to look for jobs. Even if they did know about other job search methods, they were less likely to use them. Most leavers and graduates indicated that they would not receive job search assistance from school counsellors or teachers; this was especially true for male leavers (79%). As well, low levels of literacy and numeracy limited the job opportunities of leavers more than graduates.

Although leavers are in greater need of training in the labour force, the jobs they get are much less likely to offer training opportunities. Most leavers and graduates either planned

to seek further education or training or were interested in acquiring new skills. School leavers were less likely to know how to get proper training for the careers they were interested in. Moreover, school leavers lacked clear career objectives and, thus, appeared less motivated and focused than graduates.

The role of postsecondary education

In 1986, about one-quarter of a million Canadian students graduated from universities, community colleges, and trade or vocational programs. Given the high cost of postsecondary education, both to the individual and to society, it is important to understand how the transition process works for these graduates and what factors contribute to a successful transition.

In this section, we review three sets of factors that have an impact on the outcome of the transition process:

- the economic climate, which affects the number of hirings and knowledge and skill requirements;
- human capital, including education and prior work experience; and
- membership in the equity groups: women, aboriginal peoples, people with disabilities, and members of visible minorities.

Statistics Canada conducted three national surveys for Employment and Immigration Canada to examine the activities of postsecondary graduates during the period following graduation. Some of the results from the most recent one appear in *The Class of 1986: A Compendium of Findings* (Statistics Canada, December 1991), which looks at the 1988 situation of students who graduated from postsecondary institutions in 1986. (Unfortunately, this report does not identify visible minority status.) The graduates were classified into five levels: bachelors, masters, and doctorates (university), college graduates, and trade or vocational school graduates.

The indicators used to measure the outcome of the transition process were: status in the labour market; the proportion who experienced unemployment during the transition period; the length of unemployment before getting a job; the permanency of the job; salary; relation between the job and level of education; the education requirements of the job; and participation in cooperative education.

The extent to which graduates are successful in making the transition into the labour force is a function of economic conditions. In 1984, when unemployment rates in the total labour force were high, the unemployment rates for graduates were also markedly high. By 1988, unemployment rates for the labour force had fallen; a commensurate decline occurred in unemployment rate for postsecondary graduates of 1986 who had significantly less difficulty finding jobs than the 1982 cohort.

Level of education and field of study

Success in the labour market is strongly influenced by two key variables: the type of qualification earned and the field of study. Generally, more advanced educational qualifications lead to more successful transitions. An examination of four labour force status indicators revealed that graduates at the doctorate level had the most successful transition, experiencing the shortest periods of unemployment and the highest level of full-time work. Trade or vocational school graduates faced the most difficult transitions, with the highest level of unemployment and the lowest level of full-time work. College graduates experienced less unemployment than those with bachelor's degrees.

For those who were forced to accept part-time work because no full-time jobs were available, part-time work indicated a failure to make a successful transition. In 1988, a substantial proportion of 1986 graduates working part-time were doing so because they could not find full-time employment; about half of trade or vocational (53%) and college (46%) graduates and 37% of university graduates accepted part-time employment because they could not find full-time work. Again, those with advanced qualifications were less likely to experience this problem.

Job prospects were better in certain fields: graduates from the more applied disciplines, such as commerce, education, health, and engineering, experienced lower rates of unemployment compared with graduates in general arts and science, humanities, fine and applied arts, and the social sciences.

Unemployment during the transition period

An alternative method of judging the success of the transition process is to determine the proportion of graduates who experienced unemployment during the transition period and its extent. More advanced degree holders experienced less unemployment. During the transition period, trade or vocational school graduates averaged the longest period of unemployment (6.9 months); for other graduates, the period ranged from 4.8 months for college graduates to 5.4 months for those with doctorates.

Job permanence

Most of those employed in May 1988 had obtained permanent employment. Based on this measure, the expected relation between education and employment was not sustained. Those with doctorates were the least likely to have permanent jobs (68%), followed by those with bachelor's (76%) and master's degrees (81%); college and trade or vocational school graduates were the most likely to have a permanent job (84%). This finding may be a result of the particular job market for graduates with PhDs, which may be characterized by short-term contracts in teaching or research.

Earnings

The two key variables -- level of education and field of study -- were also important in estimating annual median earnings for graduates holding full-time jobs. In 1988, median earnings ranged from a low of $19,000 for trade or vocational school graduates to a high of $39,000 for those holding a doctorate. In general, however, those in the more applied fields had higher earnings. Among trade or vocational school graduates those in engineering, applied sciences, mathematics, and computer science earned most (median $21,000), and those in the arts earned least ($13,000). At the college level, graduates in the health sciences had the highest median earnings ($27,000) and those in humanities the lowest ($17,000). University graduates in the health professions ($32,000), engineering and applied sciences ($30,000), and mathematics and physical sciences ($30,000) had the highest incomes. The lowest incomes at this level of education were reported by graduates in the fine and applied arts ($24,000).

Relation of job to education

Graduates were asked to estimate the extent to which the job they held in May 1988 matched their education. At all education levels, a large majority reported a good match. However, the highest proportion of those reporting no relation was graduates of trade or vocational schools (22%). People with bachelor's degrees (16%) and college graduates (13%) were similar. Graduates with master's degrees (7%) or doctorates (4%) were the least likely to be in jobs unrelated to their programs.

Education requirements of the job

A comparison between the education requirements of the job and the credentials of the graduate revealed that, in May 1988, about half of the trade or vocational school graduates, 41% of those with a college diploma, 36% with bachelor’s, 62% with master’s, and 12% with doctoral degrees reported job entry requirements below their level of education. Such findings may indicate the degree to which there is a mismatch between the skills of new graduates and the demands of the labour market.

Job satisfaction

When job satisfaction was compared with the extent to which the education requirements of the job matched the graduate's credentials, a clear pattern emerged: the better the match the higher the job satisfaction. Average job satisfaction scores were highest among doctorates followed by graduates at the master's level. Those with bachelor's degrees and graduates of colleges and trade or vocational schools had slightly lower scores.

Graduate of cooperative programs

Cooperative education provides participating students with a link to the labour market before graduation. During work assignments, students acquire relevant and valuable experience and knowledge of what employers need and expect from employees. Cooperative programs have the potential to make the transition process more efficient and evidence tends to support this. However, in 1986, few students -- 3% of all university and college graduates -- participated in such programs. At the university level, participation in cooperative programs was concentrated in engineering and applied sciences (13%), mathematics and physical sciences (12%), and commerce, management, and administration (3%). Among college graduates of cooperative programs, 7% were graduates of engineering and applied sciences and 3% of business and commerce

Compared with other graduates, a higher proportion of those who had participated in a cooperative program found full-time employment, and a considerably smaller percentage were employed part-time or unemployed. The proportion of graduates not in the labour force was almost identical for the two groups. Median annual earnings were higher for cooperative program graduates. Cooperative program graduates in commerce, engineering, and mathematics had higher estimated earnings than others in these fields who had not participated in cooperative programs. A similar overall pattern was found among college graduates except in the field of business and commerce, where cooperative program graduates earned on average $1,000 less annually than their nonparticipating counterparts.

Gender

Male and female graduates differed in a variety of ways. In terms of prior full-time work experience, excluding summer jobs, women at all levels in university were more likely than men to have worked for more than 5 years. In contrast, a higher proportion of male trade or vocational school graduates had worked more than 5 years. Little difference was observed between men and women college graduates.

The selection of field of study also revealed important gender differences. Women tended to dominate in disciplines such as the social sciences, health fields (such as nursing), education, arts, and humanities except at the doctorate level. At this level a reversal occurred, i.e., all formerly female dominated fields were male dominated. Despite the increasing presence of women in the more applied fields such as commerce, engineering and applied sciences, and mathematics and physical sciences, they continue to be underrepresented.

Labour market outcomes were different for male and female graduates: a higher proportion of men worked full-time while proportionally twice as many women worked part-time (Table 4) This situation was particularly pronounced among trade or vocational school graduates.

Personal and family reasons were important factors for women, but not for men, in their choice of part-time work, indicating a continuation of the asymmetrical division of responsibility for family and child care within the household. Given that part-time work is not only less lucrative than full-time employment, but also less highly valued, employers may interpret acceptance of part-time work as indicative of a lesser commitment to a career and regard the experience as less legitimate. Hence, women may be paying a long-term price for this decision made so early in their careers.

Table 4. Gender differences in employment situation at various levels of education

Level of education	Males (%)	Fe males (%)
University:		
Full-time employment	78	71
Part-time employment	5	12
Career of technical:		
Full-time employment	85	79
Part-time employment	4	10
Trade or vocational:		
Full-time employment	75	61
Part-time employment	3	17

Differences in the proportion of graduates who were not in the labour force were least among university men and women, but increased for other graduates. Female graduates from trade or vocational programs were more than twice as likely as their male counterparts to be out of the labour force.

Unemployment levels varied by gender and type of program. Among trade or vocational, college, and bachelor's level graduates, men had higher levels of unemployment.

Looking at the length of unemployment during the transition period, at the trade or vocational, college, and bachelors level, men were more likely than women to have experienced some unemployment after graduation; in sharp contrast, more females with higher-level degrees reported being unemployed. Almost one-third (30%) of women with master's degrees could not find jobs compared with slightly less than one-quarter (24%) of men at that level. The proportions diverge even more dramatically at the doctorate level: twice as many women (25%) as men (12%) suffered periods of unemployment.

Female graduates also found it more difficult to locate long-term employment. At the end of the transition period, a smaller proportion of women than men had secured a full-time job of 6 months or more. The largest gender disparities emerged among trade or vocational school graduates and those with doctorates. In addition, when university women obtained long-term employment, they were more likely to have engaged in a lengthier job search. This finding was particularly evident among those with doctorates,

with 39% of females compared with 34% of males reporting a job search of 3 months or more.

In terms of permanent versus temporary jobs, the labour market experiences of men and women were also distinct. With the exception of female college graduates, a higher proportion of the jobs women obtained were temporary. This finding was most pronounced at the master's and doctorate levels.

Calculating median annual earnings revealed a gender wage gap. Women working full-time had lower incomes than men, regardless of the type of degree, diploma, or certificate obtained. Although this finding is not without precedent, it is significant that it occurs so early in the careers of men and women. However, a more in-depth analysis is required to explain the causes of the wage gap. One important factor is the field of study. However, the pattern remains intact; with the same type of qualification and in the same field of study, men continue to report higher earnings than women.

A comparison of the earnings of male and female graduates with previous full-time work experience duplicated the above pattern: with the same amount of prior work experience, men's median earnings were greater than women's. For example, with 5 or more years of full-time work experience, men earned $24,000 (median) and women earned $18,000 -- a difference of $6,000.

Graduates with disabilities

The proportion of graduates reporting a disability varied by type of program: university (2%), college (3%), and trade or vocational school (5%). Regardless of program, these graduates were much less likely to be working full-time, more likely to be unemployed or not in the labour force, but about equally likely to be working part-time by the end of the transition period as non-disabled graduates. Differences between the two groups were most pronounced at the trade or vocational level. Among graduates of these schools who were not in the labour force, over 60% cited disability or illness as the reason. Only 37% of university graduates not in the labour force listed this as a reason for nonparticipation.

The relation between income and disability was confounded by type of qualification. At the trade or vocational level, graduates with disabilities who had full-time jobs reported median annual incomes equal to those of non-disabled graduates. College-level graduates with disabilities earned $2,000 less, bachelors $3,000 less, and masters $2,000 less. However, doctoral graduates with disabilities reported earnings of $6,000 more than their non-disabled counterparts. The really large earning gap occurred between men and women in both the disabled and non-disabled groups: with the exception of those with a master's degree, women with disabilities earned less than men with disabilities.

Aboriginal graduates

The proportion of graduates who identified themselves as aboriginal peoples declined from 5% of trade or vocational school graduates to 2% of college graduates and 1 % of university graduates. A comparison of labour market outcomes of aboriginal and non-aboriginal graduates highlights some dramatic differences at the end of the transition process. At the college and trade or vocational levels, aboriginal graduates were less likely to be employed and more likely to be either unemployed or not in the labour force. This pattern was reversed at the university level, with aboriginal graduates having higher levels of employment and lower rates of unemployment or not being in the labour force. A university degree seems to lead to a better labour market outcome for aboriginal peoples compared with college or trade qualification.

Differences in median annual earnings between aboriginal and non-aboriginal graduates were not large ($1,000 to $2,000) and varied by level of qualification. Aboriginal graduates of trade or vocational and bachelor programs earned less, while those who possessed a qualification at the college or master's level earned more than their non-aboriginal counterparts. The biggest earning gap was between men and women in both the aboriginal and non-aboriginal groups; aboriginal women reported earnings $3,000 to $5,000 lower than their male counterparts.

Visible minorities

Because the Statistics Canada surveys of graduates did not identify members of visible minorities, this section is based on information from the constituency report commissioned by the CLFDB for this Task Force (see Appendix B). Despite a higher proportion of graduates with either a university degree or some university education, members of visible minority groups face less appropriate transitions from education to employment. Almost 30% of members of visible minorities had a university education, compared with less than 18% of the rest of the population. Yet visible minorities are underrepresented in upper managerial positions.

An important factor in these transitions is lack of recognition of foreign educational and professional credentials by Canadian institutions. Foreign qualification holders, a significant number of whom fall into the visible minority equity group, have expressed a profound sense of frustration and anguish over the problem of recognition. Associated problems include poor procedures for assessing prior learning and experience; inadequate retraining and upgrading procedures; lack of technical language training; insufficient financial support; and high fees for re-qualification.

Equity group participation in cooperative programs

Women, graduates with disabilities, and aboriginal graduates participated to a lesser degree in cooperative programs than did men, non-disabled, and non-aboriginal

graduates. Female and disabled cooperative program graduates had higher levels of full-time employment and lower part-time and unemployment levels. Both male and female university graduates of cooperative programs had higher median earnings than non-participants in these programs. At the college level, female graduates of cooperative programs did not report higher median earnings than nonparticipating graduates. However, for all groups at the university and college levels, males had higher median earnings then females.

Conclusions

Two education variables are key predictors of the success of the transition process: type of qualification and field of study. Generally, the more advanced the qualification the better the transition outcome, and graduates from the more applied disciplines had a distinct advantage in the transition process. The majority of graduates *did* obtain full-time employment, although finding a job was the most difficult for trade or vocational school graduates. Those who obtained work found that the jobs were unrelated to their education or required less education than their qualifications. Job satisfaction was highest when job entry requirements and education credentials were closely related. Satisfaction with the job was related to the type of qualification; graduates at the master's or doctorate level reported the highest degree of job satisfaction.

The relation between type of qualification, field of study, and labour market outcome, as reported above, was attenuated by membership in an equity group. Women, aboriginal peoples, people with disabilities, and members of visible minorities were disadvantaged compared with their counterparts and, among disabled and aboriginal graduates, women were doubly disadvantaged. Cooperative education appeared to improve the chances of a successful transition. The relation between educational credentials and labour market outcomes is not a pure one (i.e., it does not hold under all conditions). Other intervening variables enter into the equation forcing us to conclude that qualities unrelated to education contribute to the transition outcome. Human capital is only one factor, albeit an extremely important one, in predicting the success of the transition.

Formal and informal networks

Ideally, transition in the labour market refers to the way an appropriately skilled population meets the needs of employers. Relevant skills are usually those acquired in the formal education of individuals who demonstrate the mental skill and capacity to perform (or be trained for) an occupation. As the earlier sections indicate, education is a major factor in determining how successful the transition process is likely to be. Nevertheless, translating skills and education into a job is done in a context of informal and formal networks.

The job market comprises two sectors: visible and hidden (Figure 17). The visible or formal sector comprises only a small proportion of networks used to create jobs -- the tip of the iceberg. Formal networks include advertisements in newspapers or on job bulletin boards, employment agencies, and other formal methods of application. When job positions are communicated in the formal market, the competition for them is great.

The hidden or informal market consists of information about jobs that are not publicized through a formal network. It is estimated that 80% of jobs are found through informal networks. This network is characterized by casual opportunities to provide and get information concerning employment openings.

Using these networks requires that individuals locate and approach the relevant stakeholders in the labour market. However, few people use these informal networks despite the greater opportunities and lower rate of competition. Using an informal network may be as simple as meeting with peers to discuss opportunities in town or conducting interviews with employers to seek out a position (filling a niche) in a firm that has not advertised a job. Many firms today do not advertise available positions due to the nature of the job market, which would flood their human resources departments with résumés.

The "upper end" of informal networks ranges from contacts established through work in voluntary associations and cooperative education programs to exchanges of information made through membership in or exposure to professional environments and occupation-related associations. The difficulty that many people encounter is that of access to the "productive" connections -- those leading to "good jobs" -- leaving individuals to conduct their job search in "unproductive" isolation.

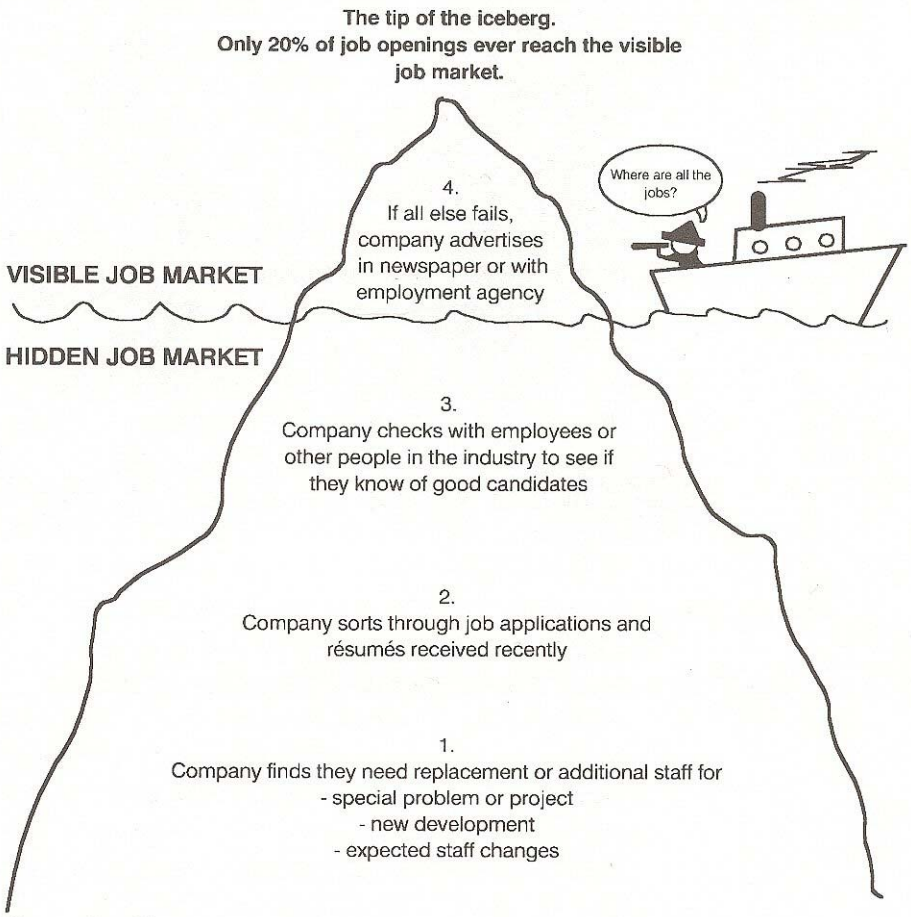


Figure 17. The nature of the job market (posted in the Native Employment Services office in Winnipeg)

3 – In our own words

In addition to the quantitative information gathered in surveys (chapter 2), the Task Force also considered the views of the constituencies that its members represented. In this chapter, we present these perspectives. The material, sometimes including recommendations, was prepared by individual members of the Task Force. Where consensus on solutions was reached, they were incorporated into the recommendations presented in chapter 4.

The business perspective

An enormous amount of change is taking place in the economy and in the organization of work: the push for total quality management, growth of the information economy, rapid implementation of new technologies, changes in the demographic structure (e.g., decline in the labour force participation of youth and increase in that of members of visible minorities), the majority of job creation in small firms, and workplace empowerment. As well, the signing of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the recent General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT) have ensured that, in a decade from now, Canada's borders will be open to quota-free and duty-free products from everywhere in the world. Collectively, these phenomena have generated a substantial amount of change in the economy and the world of work.

For employers, these changes mean increased competition from domestic and foreign firms and consumers who demand better quality products and services, competitive prices, and more variety. For some employers, they might also present a myriad of opportunities to penetrate foreign markets and expand businesses domestically. To succeed in this environment, employers are transforming the way they operate on a day-to-day basis. For many owner-managers, the workplace of today and tomorrow will demand skilled, flexible, and adaptable workers who can respond to constant change. In the workforce as a whole, the trend is away from unskilled labour toward skilled and semiskilled workers, and toward teamwork and innovative workplace organization. Consequently, employers are recognizing that human resources planning is increasingly becoming the foundation for business success.

Employer needs

Most Canadian companies require workers with very different capabilities than in the past. Employers need workers with the basic skills that enable them to learn continuously and adapt to organizational change.

> The foundation of a continuous learning society and ability to continually upgrade the performance of the labour force depends largely upon basic skills. Society, primarily educators, must ensure that new entrants into the workforce have the basic skills required to progress in an environment of

> continuous learning. Students must enroll in curricula consisting of language, mathematics, science and other analytical disciplines. These subject areas must be at the heart of the education system. As well, there is a need to promote excellence in the science, engineering, and technical fields as they become increasingly important in today's technology-oriented workplace. [Business Liaison Group of the CLFDB, *Statement on Training and Education Policy for the Business Community in Canada,* Ottawa, 1993]

In 1992, the Conference Board of Canada prepared a report -- *Employability Skills Profile: What Are Employers Looking For?* -- that identified academic, personal management, and teamwork skills as the basic requirements that employers look for in a worker.

Academic skills: the ability to communicate effectively in the workplace (oral, reading, and writing) and solve problems in an analytical manner using mathematics and other related disciplines, and to learn on a continuous basis.

Personal management skills: skills that display the motivation to progress in the workplace through positive attitudes and behavior, confident self-image, and willingness to accept challenge and adapt to changes in the workplace.

Teamwork skills: the ability to work as a member of a team toward an objective, to understand the importance of the job in the overall context of the organization, and to plan and make decisions collectively.

In addition to basic employability skills, employers need workers with a broad range of abilities. To function effectively in a flexible workplace, workers must be able to perform a host of tasks. Many occupations will also require workers to learn new processes to complement their existing set of skills. For example, an architectural technologist no longer works at a drafting board, but must acquire skills involving computer technology, such as computer assisted design (CAD).

Public education system

The public education and training systems will play a major role in determining Canada's future economic success. For the business community, the challenge is to ensure that the performance of the systems will benefit all Canadians.

Compared with other industrialized countries, Canada's commitment to education is impressive. As a percentage of gross domestic product, Canada's public expenditures rank among the top Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries and first among the seven industrialized countries. Regardless of these statistics, the results (in terms of the quality of output) are not encouraging: the

high-school drop-out rate is around 19% (high by the standards of the industrialized world); student performance on international tests is ordinary; a high proportion of the adult population is functionally illiterate and finding it difficult to upgrade their knowledge because the education system is not geared to their needs; and a large number of students complete secondary school without assimilating basic employability skills and do not go on to postsecondary schooling. Most of these students enter the labour market with no marketable skills and eventually become part of the growing youth unemployment problem.

Employers have little influence over the methods that the public education system uses to prepare new entrants to the workplace and should not have to take on the responsibility of providing these new entrants with generic skills. Many business leaders believe that the public education system lacks the ability to integrate graduates effectively into the workplace. Some of the issues and concerns identified include the following.

- Enrollment in the sciences, computing, engineering, and other technical disciplines is decreasing as these areas become more critical in the so-called knowledge-based economy. This problem is even more pronounced in view of the fact that Canadian students have fewer instructional classroom days than students in other countries; Canadian students spend approximately 180 days in school per year, compared with about 240 days in Japan and Germany.

- The education system provides no standard mechanism for measuring student performance and comparing it across the country. This lack of a defined standard results in inconsistent educational attainment and performance of students across provinces and territories. Employers cannot be assured that the individual hired will have the skills required to function effectively in the workplace.

- Counselling is critical to an effective transition into employment. Unfortunately and too frequently, counsellors at educational institutions have inadequate skills to give students sound advice on careers and employment. There is a gap between public education institutions and the world of work.

- Governments spend a disproportionate amount of money on general postsecondary education and not enough on technical and vocational training that is more closely linked to specific occupations.

Public training system

In 1993-94, the federal government plans to spend about $3.7 billion on employment, training and adjustment programs, and services: $1.9 billion under the Unemployment Insurance Developmental Uses (UIDU) program; $1.5 billion from consolidated revenue funds; $0.3 billion from the UI account on employment and adjustment services. Yet the business community is generally unhappy with the effectiveness of the public training system. Some of the reasons for their concern follow.

- According to GECD statistics, Canadian governments spend disproportionate resources (compared with other industrialized countries) to support people who are not working -- through UI benefits and social assistance programs -- and little on training and skills development.

- Many business people believe that the lack of standards (occupational, skill sets, training) leads to inconsistency in the skills and abilities that are required to function in the workplace and that it adds to the cost of hiring.

- There are no concrete measures or indicators that provide evidence of the effectiveness of public training programs for the unemployed, such as UIDU.

Possible solutions

Employers must find innovative ways to encourage governments to pursue strategies that improve the ability of the public training and the education system to integrate new entrants and reentrants into the workplace.

- Policymakers must develop defined *educational standards* with testing to establish benchmarks in skills acquisition.
- *Apprenticeship training* must be closely integrated into the secondary school system to make it an effective method for transition into employment. It should be expanded to include a wide range of occupations in addition to the traditional trades.
- Employers and educators must work together to develop *vocational and technical curricula* that focus on developing an awareness of the opportunities and benefits of trade-related careers.
- Career *counsellors* must be nationally certified to provide accurate information on occupations, and employers must work with career counsellors to inform them of changes in the workplace.
- *National standards* (occupational, skill sets, training) should be developed to provide coherence to our training efforts and a better understanding of the skills needed to satisfy employer needs.
- *Evaluations* must be developed to measure the effectiveness of current public training programs, like UIDU.
- A *core curriculum* covering language, mathematics, science, and other analytical disciplines must be at the heart of an educational system.

Linkages between business and education

Employers, in cooperation with educators, must ensure that the system responds positively to structural changes in the Canadian economy. New innovative approaches to educate and train employees must be developed in cooperation with the education community. Some roles for employers suggested in the report of the Business Liaison Group of the CLFDB include:

- employer input into the development of curricula focusing on basic skills and workplace needs;
- employer-sponsored cooperative work terms for students (e.g., apprenticeship training);
- employer-initiated presentations on career planning;
- employer award programs for exceptional academic and vocational performance;
- use of employers' facilities for school assignments;
- courses offered by employers and recognized by schools for credit;
- employer cooperation with career counsellors to inform them of changes in the workplace;
- employer support for reward programs for educational excellence (for example, the annual Skills Canada competition).

For an employer, training is not the sole objective. The primary aim is to ensure that the training leads to better organizational performance. To achieve this, owners and managers must take the lead in moving toward a stronger private-sector training effort for the employed workforce.

- Firms should explore the benefits of sectoral training initiatives within an industry.
- For small firms, local training consortia must be developed (e.g., cooperative efforts by firms, assisted by colleges, vocational training institutes, and governments).
- Employers must find innovative ways to encourage governments and public school authorities to adopt higher standards. For example, business together with major public sector employers and interested postsecondary institutions could develop a generic employability test to assess the competencies of high-school graduates in basic literacy, numeracy, and problem-solving skills.

Transition into employment

Some people believe that the problems of the transition system can be solved by simply increasing government expenditures. This cannot be advocated by the business community in light of the current public deficits. In addition, although increasing resources in certain areas of activity through reallocation is justified, the business community believes that governments are devoting enough public funds to the education and training system. As a recent study prepared for the Alberta Ministry of Education points out; the existing education system does not need more money, but rather a reconfiguration so that it can respond more effectively to the needs of society.

The labour perspective

Transition programs, like UI, labour market information systems, placement services, counselling, education, and training, are intended to facilitate transitions and reduce the waste and pain of unemployment. In Canada, 16,000 transitions occur daily. Only a very small number of the people making them will move directly from school to work or from

one employer to another without the trauma and distress of unemployment. For most Canadians, transition means unemployment and the social and economic insecurity that accompanies it. Workers who are permanently laid off face long-term unemployment. Aboriginal people, people with disabilities, and members of visible minorities must overcome enormous barriers to employment.

The importance of full employment

Transition programs and systems, like education and training, labour market information systems, placement services, counselling, unemployment insurance, and pension plans, are based on the belief that government policy is directed toward full employment. Tax policy, government spending priorities, international trade agreements, industrial development strategies, research and development, monetary policy, and the array of other government economic policies are assumed to be focused on creating jobs. Programs like UI and counselling work under the assumption that there are sufficient jobs for everyone who wants to work. In the case of UI, benefits are paid if the claimant actively searches for work.

The abandonment of job creation as the highest priority of economic policy and the failure of governments to implement comprehensive employment and pay equity programs for women, aboriginal Canadians, people with disabilities and members of visible minorities have made transition extremely costly to millions of Canadians.

Assuming that all public policy is focused on achieving full employment, labour has made specific proposals to: improve worker training, strengthen the UI program, regulate layoffs and plant closures, improve employment and pay equity law, rebuild our national employment service, and develop a comprehensive labour market information system that is accessible to every job seeker and employer. An effective transition system also requires compulsory registration of job vacancies, more resources for counselling, and better job placement services.

Training

Training is an essential element of a full-employment strategy, but training cannot substitute for economic policies that create jobs. Nor is training a substitute for UI benefits. The UI system must be strengthened. The cuts in UI benefits and the financing of training courses from UI have made transitions more costly.

Labour believes that training is a right. The right must be universal. It must be available without barriers to all employed workers, the unemployed, and the working age population wanting to enter or reenter the labour force. This right must be entrenched in employment law. Every worker should be entitled to a minimum or 40 hours of training each year during normal working hours without loss of pay. Training must be seen as a fundamental part of the job. Labour has long advocated a levy or training tax on

employers. Employers who provide approved training to their employees would receive compensation from the training fund.

Training rights include paid educational leave. Adult workers who have not completed high school should be entitled to paid leave.

The content of training must be geared to workers' needs as they see them and must be developmental. Skills must be taught in a way that goes beyond a particular job and leaves trainees better able to take on new tasks.

Training must enable workers to have more control over technology, their jobs, and their work lives, by building on their capabilities and preparing them for the future. More than occupational skills are needed to eliminate job discrimination based on gender, race or ethnicity. Job-skills training must be structured to correct the exclusion of women, people with disabilities, and members of visible minorities. To achieve this, we must have a university accessible system for child care.

Women attempting to reenter the paid labour force are usually steered toward low-paying jobs requiring few skills. Other barriers facing women are lack of information about training opportunities, lack of adequate income support, little opportunity to update basic educational skills, spousal opposition, and a lack of job opportunities following training. These must be addressed.

The pattern of discrimination against members of visible minorities is maintained by many of the same barriers, compounded by a pattern of institutionalized racism that closes doors to good education and training programs and blocks access to good jobs even when access to training is gained. Every training program must ensure fairness and equality.

Training only makes sense when it is part of an economic strategy for full employment, the creation of secure jobs with adequate remuneration, and a labour process that relies on workers' skills.

Education

The labour movement has fought for many years for an educational system that is open to everyone who seeks the skills and knowledge needed to function fully at work, at home, and in the community. Opportunities to upgrade literacy and numeracy skills are an essential part of the training process. Training programs must be carried out in cooperation with public educational institutions. Some of these institutions may have to modify their own structures and approaches, but they are an invaluable resource suited to channeling training in a broader direction, sensitive to the needs of workers as clients, and providing accountability to the public.

Apprenticeship

Apprenticeship training is undertaken by fewer than 10% of all trainees. Half of all Canadian apprentices are in half a dozen trades like carpentry, auto mechanics, and electrical work. Apprenticeship learning is as relevant to occupations emerging in a postindustrial economy as it was to the traditional trades. The in-school portion of training must continue to be interspersed with practical experience in the workplace. The education system should not be used simply as a screening device before employers make a commitment. Apprenticeship training must become accessible to all.

Worker participation in decision-making

In an effective transition system, workers have an advisory as well as a decision-making role to play in adjustment programs. This principle has been accepted for over 50 years, beginning with the establishment of the Unemployment Insurance Commission with equal numbers of commissioners representing workers and employers. The advisory councils for labour market programs at the national level have generally also followed this principle, e.g., the CLFDB. However, it has not been extended to appointments to the several hundred federal committees and councils at the local and sectoral level. Labour had virtually no representation on community futures committees.

Workers and their unions must play a central role in determining the direction of training at all levels. The principles we have adopted for decision-making structures at the national, provincial, local, and sectoral levels must become even more firmly rooted in public policy. This requires labour-business parity on all training and adjustment boards, committees, and councils.

The governance of community colleges and publicly funded training institutions must be turned over to boards that genuinely represent the diverse interests of labour, business, and other groups within the community including teachers, support staff, and students. An equal number of board members should represent business and labour and they should represent the community and its diversity.

Canadians must have access to a one-stop national employment service that provides counselling, job placement, job vacancy information, financial assistance and ill administration, and access to training. The service must be available in every community across the country. The national network of Canada Employment Centres must be strengthened and provided with the necessary resources to expand publicly administered employment services.

The perspective of the education and training community

Successful transitions are only possible when individuals have full access to education and training. Individuals -- school leavers, recent graduates, members of equity groups, or those without a recent work history -- are often unable to find financially sustainable employment that allows them to develop work histories and gives them access to further opportunities both in the workplace and for further education. Issues in this area can be categorized as access to:

- information,
- prior learning assessments and skill competency assessments,
- available educational or training programs (or programs that need to be developed),
- entry-level jobs, and
- labour market adjustment education.

Information

Information about the range of courses and programs, eligibility, and alternatives is often difficult for individuals to obtain on their own. Barriers include language, sources of information, hours of operation, number of courses and programs, and reception by information providers. Early school leavers may not seek information about jobs because of their poor experience in formal schooling. They have often not adapted well to the school system and do not see it as an information resource.

Students often make choices about careers and life directions in Grade 8, before many have had career education. Career education programs are being introduced in some schools, but the practice is not sufficiently widespread and often does not include business, labour, and government as partners in the process.

Canadian society, in general, is biased toward university education and perceives other forms of education and training as less desirable. Efforts are being made to challenge this perception with cooperative education, speakers from business and labour, and worksite visits, for example.

Guidance and career counsellors are expected to have all the necessary information about all possible occupations (over 20,000 in Canada). This is not possible.

Distance from information sources, problems with the format of information available, and lack of opportunity to seek information are frequently cited, particularly by members of the equity groups, as barriers to obtaining information. All labour market partners need to work in conjunction to coordinate and inform. Efforts to centralize information are being made and should be further supported.

Information to the individual should include various sources of income for education or training, encouragement to return to learning, and support mechanisms to help develop meaningful employment.

Education and training organizations are often vying for funds, particularly in times of recession, thus making competitors out of potential partners. Often waiting lists for programs are extensive, thus limiting the number of people who can make use of them. Funding for pilot programs and programs funded annually limit planning efforts. A longer view should be taken regarding such programs.

UI beneficiaries are given priority in community training programs, further limiting the number of positions available to those who have been out of work for a long period.

Prior learning and skills assessment

Prior learning and skills assessment can provide a basis for comparison of education and training received in other countries and provinces or territories. Currently, it is difficult for employers, educators, and unions to evaluate the many, varied educational systems around the world, thus complicating the transition into employment for many immigrants and those moving from province to province. Models have been developed (in Quebec and the United States, for example) to address the problems people encounter when they are trying to obtain credit for education and skills.

Employers often value Canadian education and experience more than that received in other countries. Prior learning and skills assessments reduce bias and allow highly educated and trained immigrants to find an appropriate place in the Canadian job market.

Confusion about the information provided by prior learning and skills assessments may lead to their inappropriate use or disregard of their findings. A Grade 11 or 12 diploma is only one indicator of one's ability to make the transition into employment. Expanded use of prior learning and skills assessments would permit both employers and potential employees to match skills to occupations.

We need to value and give credit to both formal and informal learning. Assessments can help those who learn or develop new skills, even while unemployed. They provide an opportunity for them to receive credit for what they have learned.

Education-training programs

Funding restrictions limit the kinds and number of programs available to early school leavers and recent graduates. Business, labour, and those in the education-training system are currently developing joint programming that could be expanded in the future.

Career and job search courses form a small part of secondary school curricula. We assume that someone who has a diploma also has developed the skills to be employed. Career and job search skills are becoming more sophisticated and all labour market partners should be encouraged to work with the education system to develop programs to teach such skills to facilitate the transition into employment. Greater coordination among

business, labour, and those involved in education and training would ensure that learning is extensive and sufficiently individualized to meet the needs of potential employees.

Local boards (or their precursors) have had difficulty meeting the needs of the community for education and training. Efforts to adapt education and training programs to local conditions (shift work, layoffs, distance, and language barriers) have demonstrated their value but are too few in number.

Educators and trainers are not equal partners with business and labour on local boards and, thus, do not have an equal voice in planning solutions.

Current program and funding cuts might leave those who are not suited to the mainstream educational programs further removed from a successful transition into employment and further education or training. Shops classes, family studies, music, and art are vulnerable to cutbacks, but are often the courses most needed by some students.

Stay-in-school programs, flexible programs, special programs for "stop outs" are limited. They require better coordination and widespread support by all labour market partners.

Governments often have difficulty supporting adult continuing education and training programs that prove effective but are costly. All labour market partners should reexamine the requirements for lifelong learning. Lifelong education "credit cards" are being issued in England in a pilot study to ensure opportunities for learning in the future.

Entry-level jobs

Although the values learned in school transfer into the job market, students often do not understand the relation between school and their future work. Employers, unions, and those in the education-training system should articulate their needs more clearly to improve the transition from school to work. Cooperative education has been demonstrated to encourage this process.

Unemployment for long periods often makes potential workers ineligible for programs that would teach them some of the skills they need.

Labour adjustment education

The purpose of education is often presented as two pronged: to enrich the individual (with knowledge) and to train people for work. Business, labour, and those involved in education and training must develop closer partnerships to ensure that both are accomplished and that we have a well-trained, informed, well-rounded society.

Computer literacy must be expanded along with basic literacy and numeracy as components of education. Often classroom size makes it difficult to ensure high skill levels in these areas.

As a society, we often label training as something for those who are less than adequate, rather than seeing training as part of our culture. Governments, local boards, business, labour, and those in the education-training system must work together if we are to cope with the changes of the future.

Certification and standards

Joint support for certification and standards can make skills more portable and steps to further education or training clearer. The hospitality industry, for example, has achieved some success in this area and provides a model for other labour market partners.

All labour market partners must continue to educate themselves about the world of work and what it will probably be in the future, not on what it was in the past.

Education, skills identification, and development are critical elements for any worker. Certification and standards clarify the situation for each worker and encourage growth. The skills we have today may not be the ones we need tomorrow.

The perspective of women

The need for relevance and coherence

The present transition system reinforces women's poverty and their participation in low-paying occupations and presents formidable barriers to sequential learning and employment. Women are finding employment, but they are remaining in the occupations traditionally associated with women.

Enrollment and graduation figures of both community colleges and universities show that women are predominantly in the "female" fields of health, social sciences, and education. Similar patterns of representation are reflected in the number of women faculty members in both community colleges and universities. In the labour force, women are significantly concentrated in the clerical, sales, and service occupations. Representation is lowest in manufacturing, transportation/utilities, trade/finance, physical science, and engineering (*Winning with Women in Trades, Technology, Science and Engineering*, Report of the National Advisory Board on Science and Technology, Ottawa, 1993).

In spite of women's relatively equal participation (numerically) in the labour market, they tend to be poorer, have more family responsibilities, have less confidence, have been exposed to a narrower range of skills and options in the school system, experience larger

gaps in their employment history, have fewer options for learning English or French as a second language, and experience more violence and discrimination.

Across Canada, special programs for women have been successful in providing academic upgrading, skills training, and links to the workplace, but have not become an established part of the training system. Instead, these programs have been forced to rationalize their existence and need for funding, and struggle to provide linkages to traditional education and training systems.

Many education and training programs are reinforcing women's participation in low-wage jobs. Training eligibility criteria and changing funding requirements have provided additional barriers to access to the transition system. Women reentering the labour force, aboriginal women, young women, farm women, immigrant women, and women on social assistance all have less access to training and education than they did a few years ago because of the reduction of funding coming from consolidated revenues.

Special measures in the labour market have not resulted in equal participation in management positions, the justice system, trades, technology, science, and engineering. The achievement of increased participation in the transition system by designated groups is not reflected in required outcomes. The prejudices and stereotypes that have combined to discourage women from these occupations must be addressed. The removal of barriers preventing women from participating fully in all sectors of the labour market will result in major benefits for the Canadian economy.

Barriers in the transition system

In addition to the lack of employment opportunities, there are many barriers to training, education, and employment. The Women's Reference group to the CLFDB reviewed the extensive literature on labour market and training issues; these problems are recorded again and again in many different studies. The following is a summary of the most common barriers:

- high tuition fees,
- lack of support for women's socialization,
- lack of adequate child care,
- lack of career and training information,
- physical barriers,
- eligibility criteria,
- low literacy levels,
- lack of role models,
- gender stereotypes,
- counsellors and educators with discriminatory attitudes,
- language barriers,
- lack of transportation, and
- inadequate income support.

There are too few programs, resulting in long waiting lists. With the elimination of the federal Canadian Jobs Strategy program, even fewer programs are available. Funding is often provided for too short a time to permit the sequential training needed to obtain knowledge-based and technical jobs. The quality and usefulness of training programs remains an issue. A lack of congruence between training and job skills in the economy results in women entering traditional occupations and a lack of jobs for graduates. Programs do not always provide the credentials necessary to gain access to the next level of education. Instructors and curricula perpetuate the idea of traditional work activity, and human resource personnel often do not value diversity.

Lack of part-time and flexible programming inhibits the participation of women with family obligations and disabilities. Career counselling and personal support are not available in many training programs and the workplace.

In preparing women to enter traditionally male occupations trades, technical, and operations work -- women-only programs take on special importance. Supportive programs for women are scarce in mathematics and science departments in community colleges, apprentice pre-employment programs, and universities.

Need for bridging programs

The transition system must address the barriers women face in learning and in progression in the labour market. This requires special programming for women, based on their needs and values, and sequential training opportunities that facilitate transfer of skills and academic certification to achieve linkage to the next level.

Many community women's groups have established successful bridging programs for women that have flexible learning opportunities and provide access to employment. These programs should become an established part of the transition system (pre-employment and employment programming). They provide the necessary support through counselling, follow-up, advocacy, self-help groups, access to community networks, child care, transportation, flexible scheduling, extended hours of operation, adequate financial support for participants, and referrals to other community services.

Programs must enable women to gain access to a variety of options:

- assessment of prior learning,
- career planning and labour market analysis,
- accredited academic upgrading,
- pre-trades and pre technology skills,
- personal development and support,
- entrepreneurial and business skills, and
- job search strategies and work experience.

Need for sequential transition steps

Both pre-employment and employment programs must provide marketable and transferable skills that lead to progressive learning and access to meaningful employment. Emphasis must be on work-related training in the emerging knowledge-based and technical occupations, apprenticeship, management, and occupations where there is potential for "career laddering." (Career laddering is the sequential accumulation of learning and skills from each employment opportunity to meet the qualifications and skill requirements of higher levels of employment.)

Basic education, literacy, numeracy, training in English or French as a second language, and career education and counselling are fundamental to the successful development of the labour force. A framework of national training standards would ensure a move toward higher-quality, longer-term sequential training for women. Training must be structured so that individuals are able to progress from basic education and skills training to higher level occupations and courses, with as few interruptions as possible. Based on principles of access, equity, the right to basic education, the recognition of skills, quality, accountability, and the integration of training with economic development, national criteria are a means of ensuring coherence and equal access for people all across Canada.

Currently, people are faced with a maze of unconnected training options, counselling windows, conflicting funding restrictions, and sporadic labour market information. Poor coordination of programming, inadequate recognition of accreditation and lack of information are the greatest barriers to smooth transitions. People must be able to obtain counselling, information, basic education, and progressive skill training relevant to the labour market. The education system must be accountable for the employability of its graduates and adjust its programming to encourage women's participation in a full range of occupations. Human resource planning requires women's participation in training and equity access decisions.

The perspective of aboriginal peoples

Current data on education, income, and occupation levels of aboriginal peoples clearly indicate that they lag significantly behind the overall Canadian population in all three areas. Aboriginal peoples are more likely to be unemployed than other Canadians, with unemployment rates of 70% on reserves and 50% in urban areas. Aboriginal families living in cities are likely to have lower incomes, higher unemployment, less education, and a larger proportion of single-parent families headed by women than non-aboriginal families living in cities. Income levels of aboriginal people remain at one-half to two-thirds of those of non-aboriginal people, and the proportion of aboriginal people receiving social assistance is more than twice the national average.

Aboriginal peoples do not constitute one distinct group. Distinct cultural variations exist between Indians, Metis, and Inuit, for example. The socioeconomic diversity of aboriginal peoples adds to the cultural diversity and is based on factors such as

geographic location, migration patterns, urbanization, access to education and employment training, community development, economic development, and restrictions relating to a land base and land development issues on reserve lands.

Transition from learning to a work environment

The aboriginal population is much younger than the mainstream Canadian population. Although the majority of the Canadian population moves toward retirement over the next 10 years, the number of aboriginal peoples reaching working age will increase. This highlights the importance of aboriginal youth in the Canadian economy now and, increasingly, beyond the year 2000.

Many employment and training programs are aimed at a level above what youth require. The employment and training programs do not focus on education and life skills, but rather on short-term training for a specific skill that mayor may not guarantee long-term employment. Short-term training programs are not adequate to ensure long-term employment for aboriginal youth who begin their employment training undereducated.

Access programs must be funded to enable all aboriginal youth to take advantage of the opportunities that they provide. Access programs provide the necessary educational background for students pursuing a specific career. The scope of access programs must be broadened to include many education opportunities at the postsecondary level and in training areas, and they must begin with an orientation program that is designed in consultation with the aboriginal community. To be effective, access programs for aboriginal youth should

- familiarize students with the city and the educational institution and instruct students in the use of resources such as libraries, computers, and tutoring services;
- provide instruction in learning skills, technical writing, laboratory skills, and report presentation;
- provide introductory courses in core subjects to help students develop academic skills;
- assist in locating accommodation; and
- provide support to students in finding appropriate support groups and financial programs.

Business, labour, and government can assist communities and organizations in developing and enhancing the transition from education initiatives to employment through the development of cooperative education programs for high-school students. They should also assist communities by training community-based aboriginal counsellors to provide training and employment advice to students in the career areas on which they wish to focus. More effort should be made to provide career seminars for aboriginal communities, and a continuing dialogue should be maintained with aboriginal communities on new technological training and employment prospects in various economic sectors.

Business, labour, and government can achieve the goal of developing and enhancing the transition from education initiatives to employment by aboriginal youth by: familiarizing themselves with aboriginal communities; liaising with aboriginal employment agencies; placing job advertisements in aboriginal media; informing aboriginal education counsellors in academic institutions; ensuring that career counselling complements academic counselling; and participating in career days with aboriginal professionals employed in their sector.

Transition from training to employment

For aboriginal peoples, the issues in transition from training to employment centre around improving delivery of employment and training programs. Employers and government must be made aware that aboriginal peoples are in a transition before the transition to employment. More than education and training must be undertaken.

Government and industry must view aboriginal transition to employment from a different perspective than that used for other equity groups. Other groups experience similar socioeconomic factors, but the cultural experience of aboriginal peoples differs. Holistic models for employment and training should be considered. Life skills, for example, must be incorporated into other areas of training, not viewed as a separate area. Individuals' ability to determine and reach goals, both short and long term, must be enhanced. Life skills programs, skill development of other types, and academic education are complementary and equally important.

Aboriginal employment agencies need adequate resources to reach their diverse constituents. Programs must be developed in which participants receive academic education, career awareness, and role modeling, integrated with various cultural and historical aspects of aboriginal peoples.

Training levels on reserves and in remote communities are not adequate to obtain off-reserve or urban employment. There is a need for more intensive training to accomplish this transition. Specialized training programs for aboriginal women are a necessity, particularly because many aboriginal women have the added burdens of single parenthood and poverty.

Programs for aboriginal employment and training must be flexible. Projects should be considered developmental, in the sense that 1, 6, or l0-month increments could be used as starting points to further training. Training programs should include an assessment component to ensure that individuals can move forward, setting reasonable goals and having a chance of reaching them.

Developing individual skills to sustain employment is no more important than placement in employment. Trainees must be monitored after placement to provide support, if required, and to ensure that individuals stay employed.

Employment equity

An advisory board comprising representatives of aboriginal organizations, senior managers, and aboriginal employees in government should be established to further policy efforts and programs aimed at employment of aboriginal peoples. Aboriginal peoples must be involved within the Public Service Commission in the development and implementation of staffing policies, programs, and operations.

The Public Service Employment Equity Program must be strengthened to ensure that employment equity is an integral part of managing a diverse workforce and to provide clear distinction and accountability in management and personnel functions to achieve the desired results.

An expanded Aboriginal Special Measures Program would set aside resources (as in the Career Assignment Program) to allow for exposure and experience at officer and management levels by aboriginal employees in various departments. Participants in the program should be monitored so that third-party intervention can assist both managers and participants.

Cross-cultural training for all non-aboriginal staff, including managers, is a requirement to dispel stereotyping. Discriminatory practices in the work environment must be documented during performance review and evaluations.

New and current aboriginal employees should be educated about government functions, reporting systems, redress mechanisms, and work environments through on-going orientation sessions.

Aboriginal mentors should be identified for aboriginal people entering the public service. The mentors would provide feedback in career planning and identify required experience and training. A networking system is needed for aboriginal employees in the public service. Efforts should be made to provide developmental program opportunities for broader experience and exposure in positions of responsibility within aboriginal-related areas as well as in the mainstream public service to complement the mentor program.

Testing elements should be balanced with other selection tools, such as interviews, in competitions in the public service, and language requirements should be reassessed according to job requirements. Both factors would enhance aboriginal employment prospects.

Conclusions

The aboriginal labour force is more diverse than the non-aboriginal population, and it is less skilled and less educated. Aboriginal youth need training in adequate life skills and career development. More career counselling services are required. For employment and training programs to be effective, non-aboriginal people must understand that distinct

cultural differences exist among aboriginal peoples. This indicates a need to create more dialogue between aboriginal groups, business, education, labour, and governments. The private sector and government should establish cooperative work programs for aboriginal high-school students through partnerships with aboriginal peoples. Both internal and external mechanisms are needed to incorporate and use aboriginal input in implementing employment equity. Equity programs that recruit aboriginal peoples simply to fill minority quotas are not effective and are demoralizing to aboriginal employees.

The CLFDB can assist in the process of alleviating the difficulties experienced by aboriginal peoples in transition from training or education to employment by taking the following actions.

- Encourage the development of partnerships for employment, training, and education among government, the private sector, and aboriginal organizations, communities, schools, and businesses.
- Encourage the inclusion of aboriginal people in all levels of planning, developing, and implementing employment and training programs in all federal government departments.
- Encourage the development of orientation programs and the use of aboriginal counsellors within the Public Service Commission to provide support services.
- Assess the Public Service Commission's efforts to retain aboriginal people in the federal public service by reviewing employment standards, employee promotion procedures, and hiring practices.
- Promote meaningful employment equity by creating a model employment program for aboriginal peoples within the CLFDB offices.
- Encourage aboriginal cultural awareness training for all federal government departments.

The perspective of people with disabilities

Canadians with disabilities want to become more active in social and economic partnerships for their own self-fulfillment and to contribute to prosperity. Social policies, programs, and products for people with disabilities must be based on accurate information and a clear understanding of the complexity and diversity of this constituency. When considering abilities and potential related to disability, the concepts of equity and diversity are not mutually exclusive. The federal government must recognize the personal meaning of these concepts and define methods for making accurate, informed decisions to improve the quality of life for people with disabilities.

Demographic studies, such as those carried out by Statistics Canada and the Roeher Institute and national censuses, have resulted in a broader understanding of the issues faced by Canadians with disabilities. However, more pertinent information can be provided by the service and advocacy agencies representing people with disabilities because they represent the consumers' points of view. This information substantiates the complexity of the issues, barriers, disincentives, and challenges that people with

disabilities must address. Furthermore, the data highlight the catch-up work required to provide equity and opportunities of access for disabled people.

Social and economic policies must recognize the unique characteristics of individual disabled applicants (age of onset and type of impairment, extent of condition, access to direct service related to condition, education and training opportunities, social and economic status). Those designing social programs and services must avoid the damaging limitations imposed by generic policies. Initiatives that are not flexible enough to consider the merits and needs of disabled individuals will not increase their economic participation. All levels of government must immediately define and coordinate responsive policies and programs that contribute directly to the development of disabled persons. This requires a comprehensive consultation framework based on the experience of people with disabilities.

Legislation forcing equity compliance upon educators, trainers, and employers is not sufficient. Although there is widespread sensitivity and general commitment to principles of employment equity, when it comes time for action, those in authority often do not have the skills and knowledge necessary to implement the concept. A shift in basic philosophy is required to ensure that equity principles and access are considered during all aspects of human resources planning, from physical design of the workplace to the provision of appropriate training and equipment. Information about job opportunities and required skills can then be transmitted to agencies dealing with nontraditional and traditional labour pools alike.

Both those who create jobs and those who prepare people for them must be responsive to all Canadians who are interested in training and employment. This goal can be reached through the establishment of national standards defining equity and access principles and guidelines for implementing accountable management strategies.

The context of disability is historic and evolutionary. Myths, fears, stereotyping, misperceptions, and the romanticizing of disability have resulted in bias, exclusion, segregation, and prejudice.

People with disabilities have been hampered in their efforts to seek opportunities for inclusion through self-determination, empowerment, self-advocacy, dignity, integration-partnerships, ability recognition, and codependence. Equity principles must be disseminated to promote a positive attitude and change behavior toward disabled citizens. The implementation of equity initiatives will continue to fall short if immediate proactive action is not taken.

Technological advances have made monumental contributions to improving the productivity and efficiency of disabled people. This progress has increased the potential for more training and employment opportunities for disabled persons. Innovation has minimized or removed the handicapping circumstances some disabled people encounter in seeking labour force participation.

To be useful, adaptive research and development must be consumer expedited, provide a solution for the client, and result in acceptable levels of compatibility and productivity.

People with disabilities are increasingly involved in the social and economic fabric of life. However, opportunities have not been afforded to *all* people with disabilities. The distinction between "employable" and "unemployable" is the most fundamental disincentive to participation in the labour market facing a person with a disability.

Eligibility for income support and the criteria for entrance into training programs are not mutually supportive; currently, the former precludes eligibility for government-funded training. If the applicant relinquishes social assistance to gain access to training, disability-specific support will apply only for the duration of the training program. However, the need for wheelchairs, interpreter services, attendant care, and adaptive technologies continues beyond this period. A conflict arises when an applicant who depends on social assistance for attendant care and essential daily medical aid seeks the human right to social and economic participation.

When evaluating the merits of a government pre-employment training or job development initiative, income assistance is an essential consideration for some forms of impairment. The nature of income assistance is a planning consideration related to needs determined by the level of impairment. The criteria should not be used as they currently are, as a means to measure an applicant's employability.

All levels of government responsible for administering income support must participate in making labour force access and opportunities equitable for persons with disabilities. Understanding the term "supports" clarifies the distinction between employable and unemployable. Supports required by disabled applicants in education, training, and on the job are characteristics of the disability, not the applicants' trainability or employability. Planning for potentials and abilities must be incorporated into social assistance schemes, not strategies influenced by limitations.

Labour force training opportunities have fallen far short of providing opportunities for applicants with disabilities. Access must become a fundamental element in planning all programs and services. Pre-employment certification of teachers and counsellors is required to provide disabled persons with relevant teaching and guidance. This means the curricula of diploma and degree institutions must be consistent with contemporary consumer learning characteristics. Students have been stereotyped and individual characteristics have been overlooked. Consequently, disabled students, particularly those with greater impairments requiring more individualized academic and adaptive supports, have faced a multitude of systemic and physical barriers.

Access has a generic application in terms of the larger constituency group; the term is further defined by disability group (physical impairment, learning disability, and sensory impairment, psychiatric and developmental impairments). Access for a person with a disability is ultimately defined by the personal characteristics of the individual. The awarding of government contracts and the funding of training positions must be

contingent on compliance to access guidelines where a real understanding of disabled-student access is demonstrated.

Less-restrictive eligibility criteria must be adopted to make training and upgrading more accessible to disabled persons with low levels of education. Academic standings are likely not reflective of the client's ability to learn. If the catch-up work required to provide equitable opportunities were available, both early school leaving and marginalization of disabled students would decrease with a net positive transition into the labour force.

UI must be redefined and additional alternative mechanisms must be established to ensure that funds for training are available and the funding mechanism suits the applicant's characteristics. Eligibility for UI funding for training commonly requires recent participation in the labour force. Programs are, therefore, unavailable to people with disabilities who have not recently been in the labour force or cannot be in it because of systemic barriers.

Policy, programs, and funding enabling trainees to become integrated into the mainstream labour market must be developed with an "inclusionary" attitude. Persons with disabilities are not interested in training for economic ghettoes characterized by segregation and homogeneous workforces. Their rationale for training is the same as anyone else's: to gain inclusionary, relevant, portable, mobile, transferable skills.

Training and educational institutions must be held accountable for making the necessary adjustments in their policies, human resources development, professional certification, teaching procedures, and physical facilities to ensure the widest access for disabled applicants.

Institutions that train elementary and secondary school teachers must incorporate a mandatory, curriculum component on disability. Human nature is such that people bring predispositions (attitudes and behavior) to bear when confronted with an unfamiliar concept such as disability. Supported learning and successful school-to-school and school-to-work transitions will depend on the competence of instructors familiar with the history and context of the evolving culture of disability, the characteristics of specific disabilities, and the learning characteristics and curves of disabled students.

Policy disincentives and program barriers have discouraged or prevented people with disabilities from participating in regional and local economic development. The participation of disabled people should be vigorously promoted, through local boards and grassroots networks, in developing priorities for public-sector investment in constituency- and region-based training. Governments must be responsible to the designated labour market partners for compliance with this principle.

The most critical investment to be made on behalf of disabled persons is that directed toward those who represent tomorrow's labour force, today's emerging labour force. Coordinated partnerships among the labour market partners (education and training

institutions, business, and labour) are required to generate information on human resources planning and labour adjustment trends. This will help build a foundation for greater perception and exchange of information related to employment and career planning. The capacity of these systems to deliver such services requires strengthening, using career education facilitation as a mechanism to promote coherence in the structure for successful transitions.

The number of competent, qualified, and willing people with disabilities seeking labour force participation will continue to increase. Proactive measures to address the learning, accommodation, and integration characteristics of these people will facilitate the creation of a positive interface and change. In terms of training and employment, persons with disabilities are often faced with narrower windows of opportunity by virtue of impairment characteristics. Social and economic policymakers must acknowledge that practical limitations in access to labour market opportunities may exist; on the other hand, in some cases the impairment is not a barrier to participation. Instead, because of attitudinal and technological changes, potentials and abilities of disabled people are developed just like those of any other applicant.

Training and job applicants with disabilities do not want to be perceived as a threat because they are taking employment away from other qualified applicants. They want to be viewed as qualified applicants wanting jobs like other eligible persons.
Through the incorporation of thoroughly researched and widely endorsed policies, a win-win situation will be achieved. Coherence and benefits for all labour market partners will result. Of critical value to an increasingly more adaptive and receptive society will be fulfillment for persons with disabilities. Social and economic partnerships, ability recognition, and the tapping of human potential will be the tangible benefits from this investment. Communication, collaboration, coordination, and commitment imply diversity that can be equated to real value and real returns, reflecting the real Canadian context and future for persons with disabilities.

The perspective of members of visible minorities

All things being equal

According to studies on the factors that affect transition from work to school, members of visible minorities (Africans/Blacks, South Asians, Southeast Asians, West Asians, and Latin Americans) should be making the transition with relative ease.
Level of education and field of study are among the most important factors easing the transition. Some members of visible minorities have high levels of education, but are among those who have greatest difficulty making the transition into work (*Visible Minority Transition in the Canadian Labour Market*, Aggrey et a1., CLFDB Task Force commissioned study, Ottawa, 1992). Even when they are qualified in such desirable areas as business, Black students were among the last of their classmates to be employed (*York University Study on Business School Graduates*, Toronto, 1986).

Level of education and field of study would be the most important factors in transitions if all things were equa1. But all things are not equa1. Family connections, which are linked to access to information and suitability, and perceptions of competence and the ability to fit in, which are frequently linked to racial stereotypes, have much to do with the transitions that members of visible minorities make into employment.

Visible minorities made invisible

These factors are frequently not discussed in research reports, such as the School Leavers Survey (Statistics Canada, 1986); visible minorities are made invisible in employment studies, such as those cited in this report (chapter 2). In 1991, there were 2.58 million members of visible minority groups in Canada. How was it possible to exclude visible minorities from important national studies? The invisibility of members of visible minorities and their concerns is a major factor in their ability to make the transition into employment. 'Little attention is paid by schools, researchers, employers, unions, and governments to the specific barriers faced by Canadians of visible minority background.

Visible and limited in all aspects of the transition processes

In chapter 1, five processes in transition are outlined. It is useful to examine how invisibility and inequality affect the transition of members of visible minorities in all five.

Getting a picture of yourself

- *Counselling:* Few counsellors deal with the issues of race and racism in counselling students who are entering the workforce and there is little development of skills to help students combat racism as they attempt to make the transition into a job. There is massive denial of the reality of this aspect of work in much of high-school counselling. In a more general sense, there is little employment information in career counselling classes, let alone employment information as it relates to racial groups.

- *Self-assessment*: In career education, self-assessment activities frequently omit the racial aspect of self, hence students of color are unable to enhance their sense of themselves by being able to connect with communities of color and experience a greater sense of belonging and of possibility. The color-blind approach is encouraged in many of these activities; unfortunately, the market does not take a color-blind approach. As a result, when visible minority students are unable to make the transition, they are ill-equipped to distinguish their own inadequacies from the attitudinal and institutional barriers that they face when seeking employment.

- *Prior learning assessment:* Some members of visible minority groups have received their formal education outside Canada. Many come to Canada with some or all of the skills and experiences required for the job market. However, because of inadequate mechanisms for assessing their credentials, the country often loses expertise and years

of experience and these individuals are unable to make the transition into meaningful employment.

Getting informed

- *Labour market information:* Like many others entering the labour force, students of color have little information about available jobs and ones that are to become available by the time they leave school. They often do not see their own communities or even themselves as potential sources of employment. They certainly get little information on how members of their own community are faring in the labour market. Labour market information, which is still conveyed largely by word of mouth, continues to circulate among those who already are in the information loop. Members of visible minorities are less likely to be in this loop than Canadians of the dominant racial group.

- *Counselling:* Some members of visible minorities report that they are discouraged from pursuing certain careers because of counsellors' perceptions of the kinds of employment in which they would be most comfortable. These perceptions often originate from racial stereotypes. Indirectly, such counselling provides members of visible minorities with misinformation, both about certain kinds of employment and about themselves.

Getting ready

- *Education:* The practice of "streaming" students as early as the elementary grades contributes to difficult transitions for visible minority youth. Because of streaming, they sometimes end up in dead-end courses that leave them unprepared for the jobs of the future. The overrepresentation of some minority males, particularly Black males in sport, ensures that they are underrepresented in certain courses and later in careers that are secure, well paid, and have high status.

- *Training:* Access to training is limited for some visible minorities for some of the same reasons as it is for members of other equity groups. Members of visible minorities are faced with information barriers, lack of income support, and insensitivity to race and culture. Training is intended to facilitate transition into employment, but if one does not know about it, or if one lacks the material support to attend the training, or if the training is an alienating experience, then the possibility of transition is reduced.

Getting into a job

- *Recruitment:* The discriminatory practices faced by members of visible minorities are well documented; for example, their applications are filed separately and never

examined, and candidates are told that jobs are filled when they are not. Interviews that do not allow interviewers to identify the strengths of visible minority candidates, but rather compare them unfavorably with candidates who are White are also obstacles to employment. Negative, often unconscious racial biases also sometimes occur in the recruitment process.

Getting along in the job

- Workpla*ce climate:* When members of visible minorities do make the transition into employment, they must often deal with the accusation that they have been given their jobs because of "reverse discrimination." Their ability to do the job is frequently undermined, their self-confidence is eroded, and their stay in the workplace is short and often tortured. In entry-level jobs, particularly, members of visible minorities often experience "ghettoization"; they are seen as fit for only certain kinds of employment. When industries are downsizing, they are among the first to be fired because they are among the last hired. Insecurity and a hostile climate often affect the transition of members of visible minorities into employment.

The twin evils of inequality and invisibility within the structure of the workplace limit the transition of members of visible minority groups into meaningful employment. The situation must be addressed by focusing on the systems of employment and pre-employment, examining the ways in which they have a negative impact on the chances of members of visible minorities, and altering the systems accordingly. At present, far too much emphasis is placed on the intention or lack of intention of counsellors and employers to discriminate against visible minorities. This is futile. Each of the processes outlined above must be examined for its impact and altered accordingly in consultation with the visible minority groups whose employment opportunities are limited because of these processes, which appear to be neutral.

4 – Recommendations for a coherent transition system

We strongly believe that a coherent transition system must be built around a set of principles against which all recommendations should be checked.

A coherent Canadian system of transition into employment should:

- support the development of *meaningful employment* opportunities and prepare individuals for them;
- *serve the diversity of needs*; it should integrate principles and ~ practices of equity into each of its aspects;
- incorporate appropriate mechanisms to assess and provide the *basic skills* (literacy, numeracy, communications, and problem ." solving) needed to work and learn in present and future environments;
- ensure that skills and competencies are *portable*, across If provinces and territories between providers of education and training, and *transferable*, from one industry to another;
- ensure that *linkages* are established, between education and training providers and among labour market partners, and clearly identified to develop knowledge, skills, and experience to facilitate career progress (Le., career "laddering");
- contribute to an *effective labour market* and, hence, to the economic viability of the country;
- be a responsibility of governments, but also be *responsive and accountable to the partnership of business, labour, equity groups, and education and training*, as a condition of its success;
- incorporate *monitoring and accountability* within its various r elements;
- develop a built-in *capacity to cope with change*, to allow the transition process to adapt to changing circumstances and to occupations of the future; and
- operate on the understanding that *learning is a continuous process* throughout one's lifetime.

In this chapter, we develop the elements of, and the arguments for, a coherent transition system closely related to the framework that was outlined in chapter 1 and illustrated in the employability enhancement chart (Figure 2). For the purposes of analysis, we grouped the factors affecting employability and transitions into employment into seven main categories:

- labour market information,
- support of various kinds,
- education,
- training,
- career and employment counselling,
- prior learning and skills assessment, and
- labour market practices.

No viable transition system can exist without a clear political commitment to a high level of employment. We firmly believe that the existence of jobs in numbers commensurate with the population of those willing to work is a necessary condition for any transition system to work.

Statement of belief

The Task Force calls on all parties responsible for setting policies and of belief practices that have an impact on the level of employment to put the highest priority on creating more and meaningful jobs.

We are also concerned about the fragmentation of the sources of authority and decision-making in the system. In this chapter, we frequently mention coordination; no system can be efficient without a great deal of coordination among the various stakeholders. In chapter I, we illustrated how many stakeholders are involved in transitions into employment.

Statement of belief

It is fundamental to the success of any transition system that all levels of government - federal, provincial/territorial, regional, and local develop a coordinated system with respect to all aspects of transitions into employment, i.e., policies, programs, funding issues, institutional linkages, and standards.

Such coordination should be the focus of the work of the Ministers Responsible for Labour Market Matters and the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC), if one wishes to rely first on mechanisms already in existence.

The following analysis and recommendations should be considered in conjunction with these preconditions for an effective system, not in lieu of them.

Labour market information

A labour market information system aimed at facilitating transitions into employment must be:

- available,
- comprehensive,
- relevant, and
- accessible

Labour market information is the life-blood of a transition system. It should flow continuously in a permanent loop, transmitting the short- and long-term requirements of

employers to current and potential workers, and various characteristics of the working age population to employers. Labour market information is necessary for making informed choices in the education system, making appropriate career decisions, determining the nature and extent of training programs, and providing effective career and employment counselling.

Several reports of Canadian Labour Market and Productivity Centre (CLMPC) task forces have pointed to the need for a better labour market information system (see recommendation 2 in *Older Workers Report;* recommendation 12 in *Unemployment Insurance Beneficiaries Report*; and recommendation 10 in *Entry-Level Programs Report*). In response to these recommendations, the federal government asked that this issue be considered by the Canadian Labour Force Development Board (CLFDB). While reviewing transitions into employment and in view of the imminent establishment of an extensive network of local labour force development boards and their need for information, we strongly believe that the CLFDB should take this opportunity to investigate ways to overhaul the labour market information system.

We believe that labour market information is currently too fragmented, relying too heavily on networks, not comprehensive, and not widely available because employers are not committed to supplying information about job opportunities. As a consequence, the system limits opportunities for a wide range of the working age population. We believe that the current state of labour market information cannot support a coherent model for transition into employment.

Availability, comprehensiveness, relevance, and accessibility are the key dimensions of our proposed new system. *Availability* of labour market information will be ensured by the establishment of local employment opportunities databases, consolidated in a national employment opportunities database. *Comprehensiveness* will be maximized if employers are offered incentives to reveal job openings and record them in the database. *Relevance* will result from employers' willingness to state clearly the criteria and competencies required for the jobs. *Accessibility* will be achieved by coordination of the parties at all levels of collection and diffusion of the information. We have tried to provide as precise directions as possible for the development of this new labour market information system.

Availability of labour market information

We propose that three-databases be compiled to form the essential elements of a labour market information system that would support an effective transition system:

- local employment opportunities databases, combined to produce a national employment opportunities database;
- a job seekers database;
- a record of hirings and separations by industry and occupation.

The rationale for these elements is based on four fundamental principles:

- Information is most needed to serve local needs; most transitions involve only limited geographic moves.
- Compared with people in other developed countries, Canadians show a high level of geographic mobility; thus, labour market information must be available nationwide.
- Employers and job seekers alike need appropriate information to make hiring decisions, career choices, and training or retraining decisions.
- Sound labour market analysis is essential to provide an understanding of the environment to be used in decisions by employers and individuals, in the definition of government policies, and in the adjustment of human resource development in the medium and longer term.

In establishing an improved system for providing labour market information, two time horizons must be distinguished.

- In the short term, information must focus on jobs, immediately or soon-to-be available, and individuals seeking employment, with given characteristics and limited possibilities to change them.
- In the longer term, information would be based more on an in-depth analysis of employment trends on which career orientation and choices should be based.

The local and national employment opportunities databases and the job seekers database would meet needs on the closer horizon; the hirings and separations database would address longer-term requirements.

We believe that technology that was not in place or accessible at a reasonable cost 10 years ago is now widely available and should be used to build the labour market information system that we propose. Technology makes it possible to combine rapidly information collected locally at a national level. It should be used. The result would be a decentralized network with some centralized functions and universal access. Use of the "electronic highway," which is being promoted under the name CANARIE (Canadian Network for the Advancement of Research, Industry and Education) by the federal Department of Industry with substantial involvement of the private sector, should be explored.

Local and national employment opportunities databases

1. **We recommend that the Canadian Labour Force Development Board (CLFDB) initiate the establishment of a national employment opportunities database - an instant electronic listing of job opportunities filed by employers. Building from local databases, all job opportunities in the country would be listed along with details about skills and competencies expected.**

Establishing the database would entail:

- design of a standard computer template to record information;
- design of local multiplatform computer networks;
- definition of hardware specifications;
- design of a template to record job information and the necessary on-line "help" support; and
- preparation of information for employers on how to use the system and the necessary occupational and industrial classifications.

Employers may still use other ways to reach potential job applicants, such as newspaper ads or placement agencies. The proposed system does not imply that placement should be an exclusive function of a public employment service, but rather that information about job opportunities should be widely disseminated.

Table 5. Using local and national employment opportunities databases

Employer's role	Individual's role	Public Service's role
• Record job information, using a standard template, either directly on the computer network or through telephone lines • Withdraw job information as soon as it ceases to be relevant	• Retrieve job information at access points • Follow information, assess own qualifications, and apply for advertised jobs	• Provide access to information to job seekers through the Canada Employment Centres • Make the system available through regular phone lines to employers who are not equipped with appropriate computer linkage

The job seekers database

2. **We recommend that Human Resources Development (HRD), through the Canada Employment Centres (CECs), develop a jobseekers database -- a comprehensive listing of all individuals seeking jobs, not only those eligible for unemployment insurance (UI). This database would be electronically accessible to all employers looking for employees and would contain information currently collected by CECs through their routine processing of UI claims as well as information collected from community agencies dealing with clients who are ineligible for UI benefits or need specialized services best provided by these agencies.**

We recognize the central role of the CECs in providing employment services to job seekers. These services must be available to all job seekers, not restricted to those who qualify for unemployment insurance benefits. CECs -- hence HRD -- should be the

organization responsible for maintaining the job seekers database, as part of its commitment to providing a wide range of employment services.

We realize that the question of confidentiality may arise. Such concerns should be addressed from the outset by the working group that will be in charge of putting the Task Force proposal into effect.

Table 6. Using a job seekers database		
Employer's role	Job seeker's role	Public Service's role
• Use the database to search for candidates with the appropriate profile.	• Provide relevant information to be entered into the database • Be responsible for notifying of changes in situation e.g., found a job	• Assist job seekers to complete the computerized standard résumé • Connect with community agencies reaching out to special groups • Maintain the database

The hirings and separations database

Considering the sophistication of the services available in the financial markets and the quality and reliability of the systems used in this industry, it is surprising that such limited attention has been paid to labour market information even though it can serve a much wider population. The generation and dissemination of the wealth of stock market information and the nationwide, interbank system for clearing checks, for example, might inspire the much needed overhaul of the labour market information system. By using existing ways of collecting administrative information, with only minor changes, we would like to initiate a process through which relevant labour market information will be readily available to facilitate labour market exchange, high-quality counselling, and training needs assessment

3. **We recommend that HRD coordinate the development of a hirings and separations database, classified by occupation and industry. This information should be generated regularly and disseminated widely to increase understanding of employment patterns and trends. The database could be compiled from existing sources, such as tax remittance forms for hirings and records of employment for separations, and should use occupation and industry codes based on the National Occupational Classification and the Standard Industrial Classification.**

The system could have a fee-for-access structure, that takes into consideration the type of service requested and the situation of the client. However, its fundamental universality should not be obstructed.

Table 7. Using the hirings and separation database		
Employer's role	Individual's role	Public Service's role
Fill out tax remittance form (when hiring) and record of employment (when separation occurs), adding industry and occupation codes	• No direct role	• Provide relevant information to employers on industrial and occupational classifications • Format and disseminate the information collected

The federal department in charge of labour market matters has always had a legal mandate to provide labour market information.

4. **We recommend that HRD reaffirm its central role in the labour exchange by making appropriate information on job opportunities, job seekers, and hirings and separations by industry and occupation available to a wide audience in a timely manner.**

Using the labour market information system: an employer's perspective

Anthony Smith -- the manager in charge of staffing at Efficient Information Services (EIS), located in Paradise, Canada -- wants to advertise a vacancy for a computer network specialist. On his computer, he dials the number of his local employment opportunities database and enters the relevant job information on the template that appears on the computer screen. Online assistance is provided; in particular, the list of occupations in the National Occupational Classification is readily available, with brief descriptions of the occupations. As soon as Mr. Smith completes the document, the information is available throughout the system and accessible to job seekers and counsellors, locally and nationally.

Mr. Smith can wait until he receives candidates' applications. However, he may take a more active role in searching for the appropriate candidate because he has access to the job seekers database. He may identify potential candidates by browsing through the database using filters for occupation, place of residence, education, etc. Information on how to get in touch with an identified candidate is provided on the template.

As soon as Mr. Smith has hired the new employee, Sally Martin, he deletes the vacant position description from the employment opportunities database, and Ms Martin deletes her entry in the job seekers database. At the end of the month, when he submits his monthly tax remittance form to Revenue Canada, Mr. Smith declares that he has hired a new employee and specifies her occupation according to the National Occupation Classification. The industry code for his company is already known by Revenue Canada.

When, months or years later, Ms Martin leaves her job at EIS -- for whatever reason -- Mr. Smith will issue a record of employment, on which he will state the occupation (according to NOC) of Ms Martin at the time of leaving in addition to information requested for unemployment insurance. A copy of the form is sent to Human Resources Development.

By integrating these steps into his normal method of operating, Smith benefits from the wealth and accuracy of relevant labour market information and contributes to the efficiency of the overall system.

Using the labour market information system:
a job seeker's experience

Sally Martin has just lost her job as a computer network specialist. She goes to the local employment centre in Paradise, where she lives. In addition to filing an application for unemployment insurance benefits, she enters information into the job seekers database -- her standardized resume -- on a template, under the supervision of an agent at the centre. The information can now be retrieved by employers, CECs, and other placement agencies.

While she is at the employment centre, Ms Martin scans the vacancies proposed by employers locally, or on a wider basis if she is interested in moving. She makes a note of interesting vacancies and of ways employers should be contacted. Among the possibilities, the EIS offer catches her attention. Soon after getting in touch with Anthony Smith, she is hired and begins her new job. She removes her resume from the database.

Comprehensiveness of labour market information

Local labour force development boards, which will be formed soon, will reflect the involvement of the community in decision making about training and, more generally, labour force development. This is a major step toward establishing a system that best serves the interests of the community.

Although we ruled out the possibility of making registration of vacancies with the public service agencies compulsory, we looked for ways to ensure that the clients of labour market information receive a comprehensive picture of the job market. The best way to achieve comprehensiveness is by demonstrating that the system is valuable to all participants and that, for employers, using it is a good business practice.

5. **We recommend that local labour force development boards play a major role in the new labour market information system by bringing together all local**

partners involved in labour market issues and promoting the use of the databases by all partners.

Useful identification of employment opportunities cannot take place unless employers clearly articulate their human resource needs. Human resources planning is a sound basis, not only for the identification of immediate job opportunities, but also for the identification of emerging employment trends.

6. **We recommend that employers make human resources planning an integral part of their strategic planning and clearly articulate their human resources needs (recruitment, employment projections, job classification, training, standards) to local boards on a regular basis to assist in the development of training and local labour force programs.**

Statement of belief

Good human resources planning should take into account not only the of belief employer's needs, but also emerging workforce and employment trends.

In parallel with the establishment of local boards, a major sectoral initiative is underway, supported by the CLFDB. In addition to promoting training to meet the needs of employers of a sector, the objective of this initiative is to encourage the development of human resources planning at the sectoral level. We support the approach adopted by the CLFDB.

7. **We recommend that sectoral organizations act as catalysts in the development of human resources planning for their sectors.**

Many services, including the provision of labour market information and employment placement services are provided by community agencies serving the needs of specific groups, most often those of the equity groups. Community agencies often belong to specific networks developed under the umbrella of a national organization (such as the Canadian National Institute for the Blind). Individuals who use these community agencies see them as an effective alternative to CECs, where they do not find the support they need, either because they are not eligible clients, or because the centres are not appropriately equipped to meet their needs. Often the community agencies maintain databases of their clientele and develop direct contacts with employers. The role that these organizations play is valuable and should be encouraged. However, their presence and activities should not deter the public employment centres from their mission to serve all Canadians who need labour market information and employment services.

8. **We recommend that the mandate of CECs include maintaining close links with local outreach agencies to develop and use the new labour market information system and prevent the marginalization of some groups.**

The characteristics and attitudes of the working age population evolve. Decision-makers at all levels, in all organizations have to be aware of the changes and their implications for future trends.

9. **We recommend that HRD make annual presentations to the labour market stakeholders on the evolution of the labour force and its emerging characteristics. These presentations must contain the information necessary for decision-making at the local level.**

Relevance of labour market information

Job opportunities should be clearly described using objective criteria for selection and explicit statements of competencies required to allow potential applicants to assess their ability to fill them.

Employers must be sensitive to the make-up of the community surrounding their operations. Their job opportunities should be made widely known to all community agencies and associations whose role is to serve that community.

The design of templates for both the employment opportunities databases and the job seekers database must be carefully prepared to promote equity objectives, not to be an instrument of discrimination by screening out members of equity groups.

10. **We recommend that job descriptions in these databases use common definitions of skills and experience that take into account not only education and training but also life experiences that enhance a person's ability to do a job, for example, informally acquired skills, transferable farming skills, parenting and volunteer activities, and knowledge and experience from working and living in diverse cultural, linguistic, and racial settings. These life experiences should be listed as assets in the databases.**

11. **We recommend that employers indicate their status as "equal opportunity employers" in the new electronic labour market information system. Being an equal opportunity employer means adapting hiring practices and making the necessary accommodations to give access to members of the equity groups.**

An equal opportunity employer puts equity principles into practice, in much the same way that the Task Force adopted its working definition for equity (see *The meaning of equity*, on page 2 of this report). Later in this report, we recommend various ways of implementing employment equity in the workplace (recommendation 70).

The enhanced labour market information system should provide appropriate information for policymaking. HRD should monitor unfilled vacancies as a basis for adjusting policy response in the areas of training, employer awareness programs, and immigration.

12. We recommend that HRD, the CLFDB, and provincial/territorial and local boards use the data and analysis generated through the new labour market information system to develop policies, programs, and directions for labour market development.

Accessibility of labour market information

Networks are proven to be the most efficient way to find jobs. They exist and will continue to exist. However, this does not preclude the wider dissemination of information. One of the main objectives of the Task Force in recommending the improvement of labour market information systems is to weaken the barriers that the dominance of networking creates, i.e., to offer an inclusive system rather than the exclusive one that networks constitute.

13. We recommend the creation of a one-stop information system, where individuals have access to all information related to unemployment benefits, social assistance, and employment or reemployment services (such as counselling, prior learning and skills assessment, and orientation to training). This requires coordination among federal, provincial/territorial, and local authorities.

14. We recommend that a variety of information delivery models be developed to meet the diverse needs of Canadians. Attention must be paid to the differences in individuals' capacity to gain access to information.

Career and employment counsellors are often primary intermediaries in the flow of labour market information. When designing reports based on the information collected with the new system, prime attention should be paid to providing counsellors with information in a form that they can "digest" and use.

Education and communication are central to the implementation and smooth operation of the proposed labour market information system.

Support for a coherent transition system

An effective system aimed at facilitating transitions into employment must include:

- well-tuned and nondiscriminatory income support, and
- adequate personal, attitudinal, and situational support services.

A common feature of income support and other support services is that governments - federal, provincial/territorial, or both have the leading role in establishing the regulations governing their application: amount and eligibility criteria for income support,

availability and subsidization policy for child care, equipment support for people with disabilities, etc.

Income support

Canadians have three major sources of income support:

- unemployment insurance (UI),
- social assistance, and
- income assistance for students.

Governments at all levels have a leading role in establishing the eligibility requirements for income support. In transition situations, many people will encounter at least one of these systems, perhaps all three, and perhaps more than once over a lifetime. In 1993, income support systems involved an estimated $22 billion in UI from premiums paid by employers and employees; about $16 billion in provincial/territorial social assistance (the federal share was $7.4 billion); and about $1.5 billion in financial assistance to students through loans, grants, or bursaries.

To facilitate transitions, the various income support systems should be complementary. Frequently, rules for income support dictate the accessibility of labour market programs (career and job search counselling, training programs, etc.).

Considering the characteristics of the Canadian environment, especially the diversity of individuals' situations when confronted with making a transition into employment,

Statement of belief

We believe that an appropriate system of income support is of utmost importance in ensuring equality and effectiveness in a transition system. However, assistance to people in transition should be provided on the basis of individual need rather than on the basis of the type of income support they are receiving.

This requires a radical change in the current philosophy behind the provision of publicly supported assistance services.

Unemployment insurance

The objectives of UI relate directly to the transition into employment process. This income support system relieves the unemployed from immediate and serious financial troubles allowing them to concentrate energy and efforts on effective job search. As an insurance-based program, eligibility criteria are related to accumulated entitlement resulting from previous employment.

In the past, eligibility criteria have been modified in response to financial problems in the UI fund, rather to diversification of forms of employment. The result has been a growing number of unemployed people who are not entitled to UI benefits. This is a particular matter of concern when eligibility for assistance in a transition (i.e., job search assistance, counselling, skills assessment, and training) depends on whether one receives such benefits. It is even more important as access to training, in particular, is more and more directed at UI recipients, through the Unemployment Insurance Developmental Uses (UIDU) program, at the expense of other groups who would benefit from publicly supported training.

Working patterns are evolving -- often beyond the control of the individuals concerned (this trend is well documented in *Employment in the Service Economy*, Economic Council of Canada, 1991). People holding part-time, short-term, or home-based jobs often find themselves cut-off from the UI safety net and from its related features, because they were not in a working situation that allowed them to build up entitlement.

15. We recommend that mechanisms to build up entitlement and eligibility for UI be reviewed to take into account changing working conditions, including the increase in part-time employment, multiple job holding, short duration jobs, low paying jobs, working from home, and self-employment.

However, we reaffirm the necessity of maintaining the integrity of the UI system as earnings insurance.

As the *Report of the Task Force on Labour Adjustment* stated: "Becoming unemployed impacts on an individual's well being, but remaining unemployed has an even more devastating effect." The transition system must provide ways to break the vicious circle of discouragement or, even better, prevent discouragement from occurring in the first place. Early intervention through diverse forms of assistance, even to would-be unemployed, is critical. This should be recognized in the UI system, as we argue later in this chapter, supporting the recommendation made by the Task Force on Labour Adjustment.

As training is critical to successful transition into employment, UI recipients -- like other individuals -- should be encouraged to engage in relevant training without losing UI entitlement. In some instances, preferential access to student financial assistance may be preferable. This is one example of how income support mechanisms can be complementary.

Social Assistance

Social assistance involves several levels of public administration: the federal government, the provincial or territorial governments, and municipalities. It is a complex system that

is not often driven by the need to enhance the active participation of recipients in the work force.

Social assistance provides income support to a wide array of people in different situations. Their access to employment services will often depend on whether they are considered employable. Assessment of employability is often based on criteria reflecting life contingencies of the individuals rather than the actual range of possibilities and desires of those people. Moreover, the criteria vary from province to province. Although we recognize that all social assistance recipients may not be able to take a job immediately, we believe that an appropriate range of employment services (counselling, training, job search assistance) should be available to them. A coherent transition system should promote the integration of social assistance recipients into the work force by providing the employment services they need.

Several issues must be addressed to make the social assistance system contribute to enhancing individuals' employability:

- *Access to information about services:* Social assistance recipients are often isolated from information sources; we address this issue in our recommendation (no. 13) for a one-stop information system whereby all information about the full range of employment services is provided in one location.

- *Access to high-quality employment services:* The income support systems do not base allocation of benefits on recipients' need to get back into employment. All those in need of employment services should have access to them, regardless of the type of income support they receive.

- *Provision of training:* Social assistance recipients are often prevented from engaging in training programs because they need complementary assistance to allow them to cope with their specific situation. Training providers must be empowered to provide, or direct their clients to providers of, such additional services to ensure that nothing prevents their clients from acquiring training.

- *Access to training without penalty*: Social assistance recipients are often prevented from entering training because they would lose their entitlement to benefits. Income support systems should encourage people to engage in training programs that are appropriate to their needs and those of the labour market. If one income support system ceases providing benefits, individuals should be able to get support from another source. For example, a social assistance recipient planning to enter a university program should have access to a loan or grant program if the entitlement to social assistance will end.

16. To improve the employability of social assistance recipients, we recommend that federal and provincial/territorial governments and labour market partners review social assistance programs to ensure:

- **access to information about services through one-stop information systems,**
- **access to high-quality employment services regardless of income support received,**
- **a holistic approach to the provision of training, and**
- **access to training without losing benefits**

Income assistance for students

Student loans, grants, and bursaries constitute a method of supporting individuals while they engage in education to better their skills and knowledge in relation to career choices. We have seen that education is an important determinant of successful transition into employment and rewards in the labour market. Therefore, it is essential that anyone with an interest and aptitude has the opportunity to acquire postsecondary education. Assistance should be designed to provide equal access.

This type of income support should be well integrated with other sources, so that an individual can move from one support scheme to another depending of the situation.

Conclusion

At the federal level, the amalgamation of various departments, each previously dealing separately with the three main income support systems, provides an excellent opportunity to review the whole issue of income support and develop a coherent system and effective support for transition into employment leading to more meaningful jobs.

Personal attitudinal and situational support services

Apart from lack of income support, other factors can prevent individuals from returning to, or becoming part of the world of work. To enhance their employability, many people require support services, such as child care, equipment and facilities for people with disabilities, multilingual information centres and services, and accessible information regarding all current services and ways to apply for additional services.

Although it is not within our mandate to recommend specific policies or practices regarding these support services, several issues require attention, as they do relate in a significant way to transition issues.

- Lack of child care is a major barrier to employment for those with young children or children with special needs. It is also a factor for parents seeking labour market information, counselling services, education, and training. Issues of access to child care, its quality, and the hours when it is available become very important to those who need it most. Workers -- most often women -- must make compromises in their

careers and social assistance recipients are prevented from undertaking training because of unavailable or inflexible child care facilities.

The availability of good-quality child care services not only gives parents the opportunity to participate in the workforce without worry, it often offers children a chance to begin life in a safe, learning-oriented environment. This consideration makes the issue of child care an important one for society.

- Special equipment and facilities are often essential for many people with disabilities to participate in the work force to their full potential. A commitment to equity throughout society should ensure that people who need specific equipment or facilities to make effective transitions into employment benefit from an appropriate level of support. Often, when their situation changes -- for example, they become unemployed or require social assistance - people with disabilities lose the use of equipment or a facility that accommodates their disability. Whenever necessary, continuity of support should be ensured. This involves the disabled individuals themselves, those who live and work closely with them, governments, employers, unions, and employee representatives.

- Information about support services and their accessibility are also important issues in Canada, where immigration is a major factor in population growth. The full use of the resources that immigrants bring to our country can only be achieved through an understanding of their needs and facilitating their integration into Canadian society. The recommended one-stop information and service delivery system should help address this problem by bringing together the providers of information and services to meet the needs of local populations.

17. We recommend that federal and provincial/territorial government policies and practices, as well as the attitudes of labour market partners toward support services (especially child care, equipment and facilities for people with disabilities, information about support services and their accessibility for immigrants and members of visible minorities), be closely examined to ensure that they are consistent and that they enhance people's ability to make effective transitions into employment, rather than prevent them from doing so.

Education

An education system aimed at facilitating transitions into employment must incorporate:

- high standards,
- career oriented education,
- partnerships,
- cooperative education,
- equity support, and
- linkages.

We regard *education* as the formal, initial acquisition of general knowledge and entry-level skills by youth and adults; and *training* as the formal, further acquisition of skills required to meet the needs of a job. Although, we address these two issues separately, we believe that education and training are integrated parts of a seamless continuum.

Education has a key role in providing access to meaningful employment. A wealth of analysis has shown a relation between education (level and type), the level of earnings, and the rate of unemployment. In the 1990s, high-school graduation should be considered the minimal level of education that Canadians must achieve to participate in the labour market. In the model of an education system that we present later in this section, completion of high school reflects a minimal capacity to make transitions later in life.

Statement of belief

Because this report is aimed at the vast audience of stakeholders in the transition system, we emphasize our belief that educators must find ways to make school relevant for all youth and adults -- not only those who are academically oriented -- and parents, teachers, counsellors, employers, and workers must convey the message that education matters.

In this section, we show how an education system cannot exist in isolation from the socioeconomic environment and indicate ways of making school relevant into the next century.

Our purpose in addressing education issues is not to engage in extensive discussion of the education system. Several recent reports have adequately identified the weaknesses in our systems and made appropriate recommendations. Instead, we have looked at education as an essential determinant of an individual's employability, hence a major component of a transition system. The study prepared for the Task Force by Statistics Canada clearly affirmed the positive relation between education and prospects in the labour market.

The Task Force was presented with a generic model of an education system for Canada that would focus on facilitating the school-to-work transition (Table 8). We endorse this model, because we are convinced that the present education system needs a major overhaul.

Table 8. An education system to facilitate school-to-work transition for youths and adults

Year or Grade	Trades, technology, science			Academic, arts, business		
6th year			PhD			PhD
5th year			MSc			MA
4th year	Certificate of apprenticeship		Honors BSc			Honors BA
3rd year		3-year diploma	BSc	Certificate of Apprenticeship	3-year Diploma	BA
2nd year		2-year diploma		Services	2-year Diploma	
1st year	Apprenticeship	College	University	Apprenticeship	College	University
	80:20	60:40	40:60	60:40	40:60	20:80
	Decision regarding ratio of practical to theoretical training					
Grade 12	Focus on science, technology and trades. Pretrades programs, cooperative education programs.			Focus on academic subjects, arts, and Business. Pretrades and cooperative education programs where appropriate.		
Grade 11	Education in common core generic skills, including language, mathematics, and technology across the curriculum; summer positions, entrepreneurial programs, workplace tours, guest speakers from all occupations and unions, team projects, career studies					
Grades 9 and 10	Education in common core generic skills, focusing on preparing students for school-to-work and transition programs in senior high school. Immersion in reading, writing, mathematics, computers, problem-solving, teamwork, interpersonal communication, personal attitudes, opinions and choices, access to counseling					
Grades 7 and 8	Workplace visits, entrepreneurial programs, vocational skills promotion, guest speakers and presentations from all occupations, career groups, unions and ethnic backgrounds, project teams, exposure to technology's impact on society, teacher-employer teams and exchanges, access to counseling					
Kindergarten to grade 6	Exposure to technology, workplaces, and unions through visits, introduction of role models for females and males in actual work settings, awareness of cultural and ethnic diversity, practical projects, student teams, issue immersion. Language, mathematics, technology, and problem-solving across the curriculum					

Source: Adapted from a presentation to the Task Force by Roland W. Schnippering.

18. We recommend that the provincial/territorial ministries of education and the Council of Ministers of Education Canada adopt a generic model of an education system that facilitates the school-to-work transition while respecting the existing provincial/territorial jurisdictions.

Some provinces have already moved in the proposed direction. Political commitment is necessary to ensure that such efforts are pursued.

In conjunction with greater emphasis on the world of work in the education system, we support the concept of employability skills assessment (ESA). The objective would be to develop a standard evaluation of basic skills required in today's working environment for entry-level job applicants. This assessment would set standards for knowledge and attitudes that high-school graduates should attain. Such standards should then be referred to in setting curricula. The Employability Skills Profile, developed by the Conference Board of Canada (Table 9) is an interesting example of the concept that the Task Force wants to promote. This profile has received wide support from employers; other groups, such as the Canadian Teachers' Federation, have also shown interest. More work must be done to implement the idea of an assessment based on such a profile, and the profile used must reflect a broad view, not only that of employers.

19. We recommend that the Employability Skills Profile be used as a basis for developing curricula in secondary schools throughout Canada.

We advocate a generic "seamless continuum" model for education and training. Such a model would encompass the following elements.

- To be relevant, curricula should be adjusted to include the basic skills listed in the Employability Skills Profile. A skills assessment should take place before completion of high school.

- Progressive awareness of the world of work and population diversity should be incorporated in the regular curriculum, starting as early as kindergarten.

Table 9. Employability Skills Profile – the critical skills required by the Canadian workforce

Academic skills (i.e., skills that provide the basic foundation for getting, keeping, and progressing in a job and achieving the best results)	**Personal Management skills** (i.e., the combination of skills, attitudes, and behavior required to get, keep, and progress in a job and achieve the best results)	**Teamwork skills** (i.e., the skills needed for working with others, progressing in a job, and achieving the best results)
Canadian employers need a person who can:	**Canadian employers need a person who can demonstrate:**	**Canadian employers need a person who can:**
Communicate • Understand and speak the languages in which business is conducted • Listen, to understand and learn Read, comprehend, and use written materials, including graphs, charts, and displays • Write effectively in the languages in which business is conducted	*Positive attitudes and behavior* • Self-esteem and confidence • Honesty, integrity, and personal ethics • A positive attitude toward learning, growth, and personal health • Initiative, energy, and persistence to get the job done	*Work with others* • Understand and contribute to the organization's goals • Understand and work within the culture of the group • Plan and make decisions with others and support the outcomes • Respect the thoughts and opinions of others in the group • Exercise "give and take" to achieve group results • Seek a team approach as appropriate • Lead when appropriate, mobilizing the group for high performance
Think • Think critically and act logically to evaluate situations, solve problems, and make decisions • Understand and solve problems involving mathematics and use the results • Use technology, instruments, tools, and information systems effectively • Find and apply specialized knowledge from various fields (e.g., skilled trades, technology, physical sciences, arts, and social sciences)	*Responsibility* • The ability to set goals and priorities in work and personal life • The ability to plan and manage time, money, and other resources to achieve goals • Accountability for actions taken	
Learn • Continue to learn for life	*Adaptability* • A positive attitude toward change • Recognition of and respect for people's diversity and individual differences • The ability to identify and suggest new ideas to get the job done – creativity	

Source: *Employability Skills Profile: What Are Employers Looking For?* Corporate Council on Education, a program of the National Business and Education Centre, Conference Board of Canada, 1992.

- After adequate preparation and counselling during the early years, in the last 2 years of high school, students should decide between an orientation toward trades-technology-science and an academic-arts-business focus. This decision should be based on students' abilities and well-informed inclinations. At this level, suitably structured cooperative education will provide relevant work experience.

- This end-of-high-school orientation drives students into a choice of three postsecondary routes: apprenticeship (understood here as a wider option than the present system, which is frequently criticized for its narrow occupational coverage and isolation from the education system), college, or university. Each route can provide a combination of theoretical and practical education and training, in various proportions.

- Transferability between programs and institutions should be ensured to minimize the cost of reorientation and adaptation to labour market demand. Prior learning assessment should be instituted and used to facilitate transferability.

Some of the features of this model are expected to help reduce the high drop-out rate by providing a curriculum that is more in tune with the "real world," without compromising core academic skills. The education system must impress upon students at an early age that they will have to earn a living and promote the importance of education in improving their future status in the labour force and access to opportunities for lifelong learning. We support programs, such as the Stay-in-School initiative. However, addressing the relevance of the school system would negate the need for such programs.

Education to high standards

The education system should aim at educating youth and adults to high standards in core academic skills. Schools must provide an opportunity to achieve and an adequate level of support to everyone.

Measures of progress are needed. Failure and dropping out of school are a result of a cumulative process that allows children to fall progressively further behind. In *A Lot to Learn*, the Economic Council of Canada recommended that "all provinces, school boards, schools should undertake regular *diagnostic assessment* of children's performance in basic skills from the earliest years of schooling." The diagnosis should be the first step in providing the support required for achievement. We applaud developments undertaken independently by several provinces and also jointly under the auspices of the CMEC.

20. We recommend that provincial/territorial ministries of education, school boards, and schools develop or continue to develop diagnostic tools and support services for helping youth and adults undertake self-assessments and make appropriate decisions regarding their career paths.

Diversity is an essential characteristic of our society. Working together is key to our economic development and a rise in our standard of living. Learning together, i.e., learning about and from each other, is an integral part of educating young people to high standards. It means removing the cultural and racial barriers that prevent this learning from taking place.

21. We recommend that education ministries integrate into the school curriculum an awareness program on the cultural diversity of the Canadian population to enhance respect for and understanding of the cultural differences that make up our society .

Incorporating career education into the curriculum

Career education is a process that combines a student's academic studies with work experience. It is concerned with information about self and the world of work, skill development (decision making, problem-solving, and job search), values, beliefs, attitudes, interests, motivation to acquire new skills, and an opportunity to practice through work experiences.

The school years offer the best opportunity to teach the largest number of students the various transition and career skills needed in career development. These skills are challenging and complex; they are also difficult to teach. Teaching work values, commitment, cooperation, ability to work under supervision, and handling authority is quite different from teaching factual subjects. These issues are person-centered and resources are required to teach them properly.

"Job Skills Simulation"

The Creation and Mobilization of Counselling Resources for Youth (CAMCRY) is a program initiated and managed by the Canadian Guidance and Counselling Foundation to plan, organize, and evaluate the creation and mobilization of new and innovative methods of career counselling for youth, and, equally, for the continuing education of counsellors.

Job Skills Simulation is one of over 40 projects in the CAMCRY program. It is designed to simulate a work environment to compensate for the lack of direct experience in job settings and the limited understanding, on the part of the youth, of what is expected by employers and their limited experience in developing work skills and attitudes, elements that hinder successful transitions to work.

The project will provide an "as if" work environment intended to give the users:

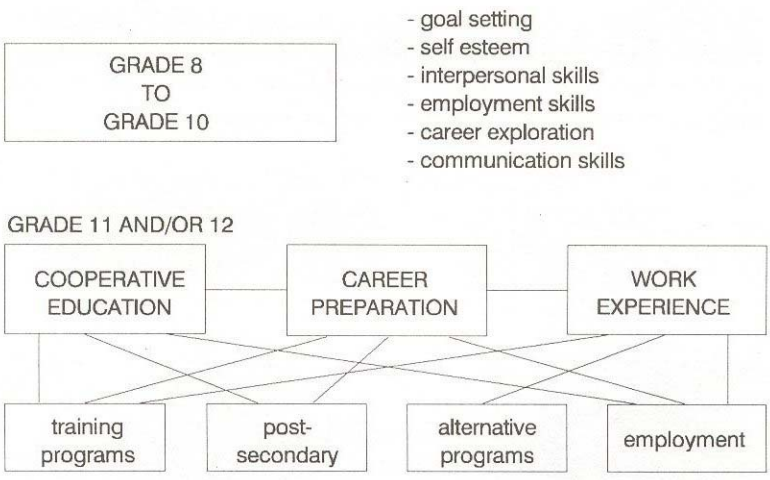
- generic skills required for successful work performance;
- information concerning specific skills needed in selected types of workplaces;
- information about their own values, attitudes, and interpersonal skills, and how these qualities may be expressed in day-to-day workplace behavior;
- a chance to explore a range of possible work environments to find out how they may interact with the students' current values, attitudes, interpersonal skills, and decision-making skills;
- practice in typical workplace interactions and negotiations with employees and managers; and
- an opportunity to compare their own values, attitudes and workplace decisions and behaviors with those of others as a means of developing greater self-awareness and knowledge of alternative approaches to dealing with workplace demands.

The simulation is intended to form part of the career education curriculum at the senior high school level, but it may also be used in a variety of other classroom situations and program contexts.

This project was developed at the University of Calgary and was tested successfully in Alberta in 1991-92.

Some provinces (e.g., British Columbia and Newfoundland) have recently incorporated a career education course into the compulsory curriculum throughout their jurisdictions, as early as grade 7 or 8 (see box, next page). Such a course should be based on actual labour market data and analyses and the experiences of people actually engaged in a range of occupations.

Surrey school district's career education model



Key components in the success of this model

- each school has a designated career program facilitator;
- strong parent, administrator, and board support, as well as a mandate from the ministry of education;
- open to all students of all abilities (not viewed as only appropriate for those not doing well in school);
- builds team approach to education of individuals;
- requires strong student participation, thereby students assume more responsibility for learning and decision-making;
- provides for the broadening of responsibility for total education by developing partnerships in the community;
- all work placements relate to school curriculum, providing relevance for students;
- strong parent involvement from the beginning;
- placements based on student's individual interests and goals;
- strong community and school partnership council to advise and assist with program development and quality.

22. We recommend that all provinces/territories develop, implement, and adequately finance compulsory career education courses starting at the elementary level.

The realities of the working world must permeate the regular curriculum in other areas, both to highlight the relevance of the regular curriculum and to help

students understand the economic and social environment. Can the pedagogy and the teaching methods of the past still serve students in an information age?

Bringing the world of work into the school system can take a variety of forms:

- career education course,
- exposure to workplace technology,
- workplace visits,
- introduction of female and male role models from a variety of cultures and races in actual work settings,
- exposure to unions,
- guest speakers from all occupations and career groups,
- career studies,
- exploratory programs,
- Junior Achievement,
- career fair or week,
- in-school career projects (Junior Enterprise),
- job shadowing,
- volunteer work,
- summer jobs, and
- cooperative education.

Most of these methods require partnership with groups or institutions that have traditionally been excluded from the schools. Career education courses provide an opportunity to bring knowledge and experience, gained from actual immersion in the world of work, into the school context.

Counsellors in secondary school should provide information on the various aspects of career education. Their role is reviewed more extensively in a later section.

Developing partnerships

Recent years have witnessed the development of partnership initiatives between business and education. Such initiatives often rest on the shoulders of visionary individuals (a school principal or a company head) without an adequate supportive framework. As the following list, adapted from A Lot to Learn, shows, partnerships can take a variety of forms.

Informal Contact

- career days, in which local employers host students,
- summer science camps,
- employer visits to schools for guest lectures and demonstrations, and

- job shadowing.

Support in the classroom

- loan or donation of equipment and facilities,
- secondment of personnel from businesses to schools to teach specialized courses,
- help in the certification of graduates,
- participation of employers and skilled tradespersons in curriculum planning and course design, and
- awards for superior performance.

Formal contact

- work experience terms for cooperative education students or apprentices,
- adopt-a-school programs, and
- work experience terms for teachers.

23. We recommend that the CLFDB develop a guide to good practices in business-education partnerships.

24. We recommend that local boards identify a network of resources for bringing the world of work into the school system.

Reciprocity must be an underlying principle in the establishment of partnerships; all participants have a legitimate right to benefit. Partnerships are sometimes criticized as not being reciprocal, e.g., schools want equipment provided by business, but are reluctant to accept further involvement of business in the schools.

Business-education partnerships should also reflect the community and local economic development needs.

Partnership programs: the Ottawa-Carleton Learning Foundation

The Ottawa-Carleton Learning Foundation is a nonprofit organization dedicated to strengthening lifelong learning. Established in 1985 and supported by the leaders of the education and business communities, the Learning Foundation enhances the management and delivery of quality education and skills training through innovative partnerships. These partnerships act as a catalyst to mobilize resources among educators, employers, employees, and learners to meet the challenges of our increasingly knowledge-based economy.

Breakfast Program: a partnership of education, corporation, and community organizations to meet the needs of children who come to school hungry.

Things for Kids: a program to distribute hardware and software no longer used by government and business to classrooms locally.

Destiny 2000: a science, engineering, and technology exposition for students, hosted by the high-tech sector.

Engineers in Canada: a professional and technical orientation program for foreign-trained engineers to assist their integration into the Canadian work force, delivered in partnership with business and professional engineering associations.

Dialogue: a forum for leaders in business and education to work together, building a high-quality, cost-effective education system and an internationally competitive business community.

Senior Volunteer Program: an opportunity for students to learn from retired workers.

Cooperative education

An essential element in the transition system.

One area where the development of partnerships is most needed is cooperative education. Cooperative education complements a career education program and incorporates workplace learning.

25. We recommend that cooperative education be the central component of the transition system. Efforts must be made by all stakeholders to make the present system of cooperative education at the secondary level more structured. All students in the last 2 years of high school should have the opportunity to participate in credit-granting cooperative education programs.

A cooperative education system should be neither elitist nor inferior. It should be offered as an accredited program, integrated into the curriculum for everyone in the last 2 years of high school. This will present a challenge, but we strongly believe that Canada cannot wait any longer, wasting human resource potential as it does so.

We are confident that a cooperative education system is an excellent way to enhance employability of individuals, provided that it has more structure, is accessible to all students, and gives adequate support to all those with specific needs, especially students belonging to the equity groups.

We have reviewed the current state of both secondary and postsecondary cooperative education. Because the system works fairly well at the postsecondary level, we focused on improving cooperative education at the secondary level, believing that more attention should be given to those leaving high school and entering the job market without adequate preparation.

Some benefits of cooperative education include:

- providing an opportunity to practice employable skills and attitudes;
- allowing experimentation with nontraditional occupations;
- exposing employers to emerging workforce diversity;
- expanding students' contacts, networks, and references;
- providing information about work organization, structure, communication and management styles, and personnel roles;
- providing an opportunity to acquire transferable skills and increase self-esteem.

A multiway partnership

Cooperative education should be viewed as a multiple partnership, requiring commitment from institutions, individuals, and communities. Partnerships must be sustained through processes and structures. Mechanisms must be put in place to ensure an ongoing relation between education providers and other stakeholders.

26. We recommend that local boards provide the structure for community involvement in cooperative education by acting as information clearinghouses for multiway partnerships.

Cooperative education programs have difficulty in finding work placements for students. Employers must be made aware of their crucial responsibility, toward their local community and society at large, in providing such placements. An information system for the placement of cooperative education students should be established with a view to possible integration in the employment opportunities databases.

27. We recommend that employers provide more opportunities for student placements through cooperative education programs.

Work placements are most often found in non-unionized firms, although unions generally support the cooperative education system. Gaining knowledge about unions and their role in the workplace is part of learning about the labour market. The search for coherence within the cooperative education system should lead to union and business influence in the school system.

28. We recommend that cooperative education placements in unionized firms be increased as a result of management-labour discussions during collective bargaining.

Those involved in cooperative education within schools also have a role to play in achieving an integrated approach.

29. We recommend increased communication and cooperation between coordinators of cooperative education programs, teachers, and career counsellors in each school.

Through its financial support of cooperative education programs, the federal government is directly involved as a partner in the system. Funding and appropriate curricula are critical issues when establishing a cooperative education system on a national scale. Cooperative education is a specific mode of instruction within a career education program that combines academic learning, technical learning, and on-the-job training. A well-organized cooperative education program requires the development of the following procedures: counselling and interviewing during student selection, work placement, and pre-placement orientation; individualized training plans; regular monitoring of training stations; evaluation of the out-:of-school activities; integration of placement experience in an informal classroom setting; and considering equity principles. Governments must examine these issues, so that the development of cooperative education can be achieved on the large scale that we propose.

30. We recommend that HRD, the provincial and territorial ministries of education, and the Council of Ministers of Education Canada expand the cooperative education system across the country.

An integrated learning experience

The cooperative education program should provide a way to apply academic knowledge as well as giving relevance to the school curriculum. As such, cooperative education programs should cover a wide range of workplace learning arrangements from general workplace awareness to pre-apprenticeship programs.

The in-school part of cooperative education should be devoted to developing a critical understanding of work, addressing issues of power, workers' human rights and responsibilities, work ethics, and also global issues such as trade agreements, the banking system, unemployment, and monetary and fiscal policies.

Cooperative education should serve disadvantaged members of the community by providing a way of integrating education, support, work experience, and cultural awareness. Aboriginal peoples consider cooperative education the best way to combine education, skills acquisition, and employment experience.

31. We recommend that all of the partners in cooperative education make every effort to integrate the learning experience, so that students clearly see the reciprocal relevance of both learning settings -- the school and the place of work.

The question of pay for work in the cooperative education system at the secondary level is a delicate matter. It raises several issues: the question of cheap labour for employers, normal remuneration for work done, resources diverted from production to support the cooperative education program, and young people being attracted away from schools by available paid employment. We believe that students should receive appropriate credit for the time spent and knowledge acquired at the workplace and some recognition toward further training in lieu of remuneration. The questions of insurance for the extension of the school day, the need for safety equipment in the workplace, transportation, and access to the work site should be carefully addressed. Employers should be ready to bear some of the costs encountered by students during their job placement.

Trained personnel in the schools

Proper training must be provided to teachers and counsellors involved in the cooperative education system, so that the workplace experience influences the way in which knowledge is delivered in the classroom.

32. We recommend that future teachers be trained in the cooperative education approach as part of the core curriculum at university faculties of education.

Monitoring and evaluation

The focus of a cooperative education system is enhancing students' employability. Operation of the system at the school and individual level must be closely monitored and regularly evaluated to ensure that the work experience is relevant and that the classroom curriculum is adjusted to complement this new form of learning.

33. We recommend integrating an appropriate monitoring and evaluation system into cooperative education programs. All stakeholders should take part in the monitoring and evaluation process: educators, supervisors, and counsellors in the schools and employers and employee representatives in the workplace.

An extension of the original cooperative education concept

The idea of cooperative education should be generalized to a wider range of learning situations. Community-based training usually takes place largely in the work setting and much is done to replicate such settings during the training. Adult learning centres frequently include on-site work and visits to help trainees see the practicality of what they are learning. Literacy programs often benefit from having students try their new skills in a work setting, in real life. The major advantage of cooperative education is that it shows the learner that "book-learning" has application in the real world and gives the learner an opportunity to discover what he or she still needs to learn, as well as what has been accomplished. Traditional educational settings often do not make the connection between learning and work clear, and thus lead to students dropping out of school. Cooperative education helps learners make the connection earlier and more meaningfully.

Cooperative education programs are usually developed on the initiative of educational institutions. We encourage employers and labour to take such a role ("reverse cooperative education programs") to allow dialogue in both directions, thus addressing current complaints by business and labour that they are ignored by those in education and training.

Ensuring support to all in need

The principle of equity must drive the whole education system so that everyone enjoys, as much as possible, similar education opportunities leading to comparable levels of employability. To fulfill equity requirements, adequate and sustained support must be provided to those in need. Such need is likely to be greater among aboriginal peoples, people with disabilities, and members of visible minorities, but it is also found among students with general learning difficulties. Support must be provided as early as at the beginning of school to prevent cumulative effects of "dropping behind" and a progressive increase in the severity of the problem.

Native access to technology and engineering programs

In 1992, Lakehead University introduced a Native Access Program designed to encourage the entry of aboriginal peoples into technology and engineering programs. It was designed jointly by the university and the aboriginal community. Students do not need a high-school diploma to qualify for entry. A summer program is offered to upgrade students' knowledge of math, sciences, and communication skills. This is followed by a 1-year intensive program in maths and sciences. At this point, students qualify for the 1st year of the 3-year technology program. Once they graduate from this program, they can apply for the 2-year post-diploma engineering degree program. In addition to academic support, counselling is available to help students cope with social and economic issues. Aboriginal peoples are represented in the faculty (program coordinator, counsellor, and secretary). Funding is provided by Ontario Hydro, Ontario Energy Corporation, and a number of private firms.

Youth apprenticeship programs

Two Canadian provinces have youth apprenticeship programs that allow students to combine their last 2 years of high school with a regular apprenticeship program: the Secondary School Workplace Apprenticeship Program (SSWAP) in Ontario and the Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP) in Alberta. SSWAP allows students to work toward an Ontario secondary school graduation diploma while accumulating apprenticeship hours that will lead to certified status as a "journeyperson."

In Lincoln County, Ontario, students enter the trade of their choice through regular cooperative education classes at the grade 11 level. This cooperative education experience is a probationary period, during which the student decides whether he or she wishes to pursue the trade and the employer decides whether the student is an appropriate apprentice. If all parties agree to make a commitment, the Ministry of Skills Development will designate the student as an apprentice at the end of the grade 11 school year. Students who are accepted continue to work through the summer as paid apprentices. In the fall or winter semester, they move back to secondary school, enrolling in regular classes for one full semester of grade 12. One trade-related course must be included at this time. The other grade 12 semester is spent at the workplace.

Students receive cooperative education credits, apprenticeship hours, and pay. All in-school compulsory courses are completed and students remain registered in school for the entire period. Students may return for a 5th year of secondary schooling to earn Ontario academic credits, continue in the apprenticeship, or both. This system leaves apprenticeship candidates with the same options as all other secondary school diploma holders, if they choose to leave the program at the end of grade 12.

Establishing institutional and community linkages

The education system is not only divided into compartments (school boards, colleges, and universities), but is also isolated from the rest of the world of training. A continuum of learning opportunities should be clearly perceived by students and those responsible for providing information to them.

The school system is also increasingly open to adult learners. In 1991-92 in Ontario, one in eight secondary school students were 19 years of age or over; in 1980-81, the ratio was less than one in 30. These people, even more than younger students, need institutional linkages. They also need recognition of their skills and experience through a formal system of prior learning assessment.

A cooperative education system at the secondary level must have continuity with further education, whether in colleges and universities or in apprenticeship. Opportunities for career "laddering" (as in the hospitality and tourism industry) will facilitate the school-to-work transition and lifelong learning.

Transfer of credit from one system to another will facilitate efficient use of resources and prevent duplication or repetition of learning. Prior learning assessment would aid in the regular monitoring of prerequisites and adult admission policies. Equity groups should have broad input into setting adult admission policies.

34. We recommend that key personnel in the education system (school boards, colleges, and universities), private training institutions, apprenticeship programs, and community-based groups establish linkages to create a continuum of opportunities and career paths.

Links to help adults upgrade their education

The school of engineering at Lakehead University offers post-diploma programs in chemical, civil, electrical, and mechanical engineering designed specifically for graduates of technology diploma programs. Graduates of the 2-year program earn a Bachelor of Engineering degree. Students may enroll directly after earning a diploma or after working in their chosen field as technologists. Those who choose the latter route tend to be somewhat older (usually in their late 2Os), have several years of work experience, and often have family responsibilities. The program accepts students from technology programs across Canada. During the summer before entry into the program, students are required to enroll in math and science courses to ease their transition to a university degree program. A similar program is offered by the École de technologie supérieure in Montreal, making these two programs unique in Canada. Graduates have been well received in Canadian industry because of their maturity and combined technology and engineering knowledge.

Articulation in Ontario: overview and background information

Articulation is a formal process to link secondary and college programs in a manner that facilitates student progress and provides career and postsecondary goals for students at the secondary school level. Thus it enhances opportunities for success. All secondary school programs can be articulated with appropriate college programs.

Concerns about student attrition, a decline in student interest in science and technology, and the need for a highly skilled labour force to maintain the health of Ontario's economy are creating an urgent need for all levels of education to collaborate in the development of strategies to address these issues. (Blueprint for School-College Linkage, Ontario Ministry of Education and Ministry of Colleges and Universities)

Articulation addresses the following specific issues:

- relevance of curriculum as viewed by students in meeting their specific career needs;
- student retention in secondary school;
- understanding of postsecondary programs; and
- student retention in postsecondary school.

The purposes of articulation are:

- to coordinate existing and new secondary and postsecondary curricula to make education more responsive to students' and employers' needs; and
- to increase student awareness of career options and college programs.

The benefits of articulation for students are:

- to provide a more guided focus for students as they proceed through secondary school;
- to improve focus for general-level students on postsecondary opportunities;
- to ensure coverage of prerequisite content for related college programs; and
- to help students gain access to chosen career paths.

The benefits of articulation for staff are:

- to allow for professional development opportunities through curriculum exchange;
- to provide for staff exchanges and joint endeavors in professional development;
- to enable teachers to motivate students and direct them toward better career choices by refining their curricula;
- to provide an effective continuum of courses from one level to the next; and
- to examine teaching and evaluation methods.

Training

A well-integrated training system aimed at facilitating transitions into employment must:

- properly identify training needs,
- make appropriate training available,
- make training accessible,
- provide adequate and equitable financial support for training, and recognize skills acquired through training by developing occupation and skills standards.

We believe that training alone does not create jobs and that policies to promote job creation must be in place so that the economy generates an appropriate number of meaningful jobs.

The training loop (Figure 18) illustrates how the various elements that need to be taken into consideration interact in a functioning training system and the necessary feedback as the labour market evolves. This figure will guide our investigation of the training issue.

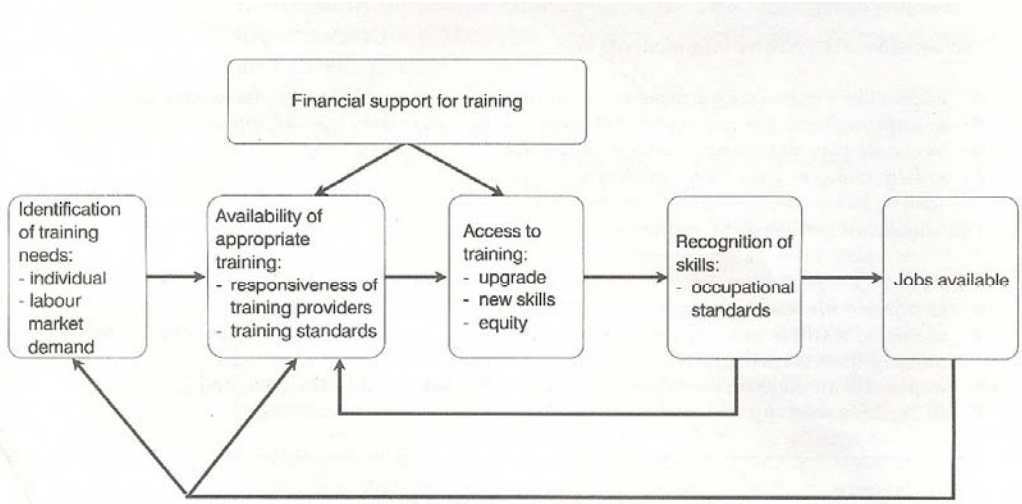


Figure 18. The training loop

Training received much attention from the CLMPC task forces on labour force development strategies (CLMPC, Ottawa, 1990). They identified a need for more relevant, flexible, and accessible training in a wider variety of occupations and delivery modes.

There is a widely shared sense that skills are becoming obsolete more quickly and that, as a consequence, training as a lifelong process has become a necessity for workers and society in general.

The need for training is an outcome of economic development, the setting of occupational standards (labour market demand), and individual needs. Presently, in Canada, the training offered by training institutes is traditional and workplace training is poorly distributed, with the more educated benefiting most from employer-based training.

Statement of belief

The concept of a training culture must be fostered by all stakeholders and all efforts must be made at every level, especially local, to reinforce this attitude. Training outcomes must meet - although not exclusively the demand articulated by industry.

Identification of training needs

Training needs are twofold. They include:

- those expressed by employers through labour demand for specific skills;
- those needed by job applicants to match employers' requirements.

The two perspectives are related, as an efficient training system is driven by both the characteristics of the demand and the characteristics of individuals.

The identification of training needs must be linked to labour market information. Local boards will collect and disseminate information on skills in demand and training programs available. Labour market partners and the community must be involved in the identification of training needs. The training system must be industry driven, i.e., training must respond to the needs of industry. Because systemic barriers exist for designated groups, equity groups also need to be involved in the identification process.

35. We recommend that labour market partners, working through local boards, identify the training needs in a community -- both employers' needs and individuals' needs. Local boards should assess training needs, collect and disseminate information on skills in demand and training programs available, and guide training delivery.

Availability of appropriate training

The training system must generate programs to meet the cultural needs of individuals as well as identified labour market needs. Training is necessarily multifaceted and must bring opportunities to all those who wish to work and open up real opportunities for meaningful jobs.

Often, inertia or the mechanisms for setting course standards in schools, colleges, and universities make training providers slow to adjust courses to changing demand.

Community colleges have particularly been the target of such criticism. Education and training institutions need to assume responsibility for the employability of their graduates.

The Ontario Network of Employment Skills Training Projects (ONESTeP)

ONESTeP is the umbrella organization for Ontario skills-based community training projects. Each province has such a group to be a voice for community training at all levels. Community training projects have existed since the late 1890s with the YWCA's clerical skills training program for farm women.

Funding comes from the federal, provincial/territorial, and municipal governments and through private and corporate donations. However, their community base means programs help local people with pre-employment training and support. Continued funding usually depends on participant outcomes, i.e., employment or further education. Often, those who have the most difficulty getting work also have other difficulties. For example:

- Chuck Brown is a 34-year-old man who came to the pre-employment program after being out of work for a year and a half. He had a history of conflicts with co-workers and supervisors. After being expelled from the program, he returned to participate in a TELL workshop, which taught him "to have a closer look at people because everyone has something to offer if you take the time to listen and comprehend." He returned to the Personal Employment Preparation Program and is now exploring ways to change.
- Hélène Levesque was quiet and nonassertive. She wanted to learn mechanical skills and worked hard. While at ONESTeP's industrial centre for women, she was featured on the cover of a government guide. After graduation, Ms. Levesque found the job that she still holds. She is more stable now, both financially and in employment, and is much more confident in her abilities.

The availability of community-based training has considerably increased in the last few years, partly to fill a gap left by public training providers and partly to target the needs of specific populations as they have become more recognized.

Specific training needs can be identified for particular groups. One example mentioned to the Task Force was the need for management training for aboriginal peoples in the perspective of self-government. In its report to the CLFDB, the Women's Reference Group presented a detailed analysis of what it considers to be model training programs (Appendix B). Programs for women only, with a variety of components, are outlined in case studies of successful programs that have been running for some time (see box, below, for a description of WISE).

Women Interested in Successful Employment (WISE)

WISE is an example of "best practices" programming for women making transitions in St. John's and Gander, Newfoundland. Its components include:

- orientation to trades and technology,
- communication,
- professional and personal development,
- career counselling and decision-making,
- occupational investigation,
- computer skills,
- work placement,
- family violence,
- academic upgrading,
- math and science demystification, and
- individual assessment and vocational planning.

Child care, transportation, and financial support are provided. The program has been operating since 1987, sponsored by the Canadian Congress of Learning Opportunities for Women and the Association of Lifelong Learning. Funding is provided by HRD.

Training in response to local needs

The pulp and paper industry has been a major employer in the St. Catharines-Thorold area since the early 1900s. It now employs over 2000 people, with an annual payroll of $76 million and annual sales of $400 million. Like most North American industries, it has experienced economic downturns over the years. However, it is now suffering its worst depression since the 1930s. The five area mills (Domtar Specialty Fine Papers, Georgia Pacific, Kimberly Clark Canada Inc., Noranda Forest Recycled Papers, and QUNO) have diversified their product lines and remain competitive in the global market. With the development of a unique broad-based technology training program, a major training initiative has been undertaken to enhance their competitiveness.

To implement this initiative, a partnership was formed among the five mills, Niagara College, the Lincoln County Board of Education, and the Ministry of Skills Development (now the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board). It will involve about 250 trades-people over the next 3 years. Some of the trades addressed in this training plan will be millwrights, pipe fitters, electricians, instrumentation, machinists, welders.

For the mills to continue to be successful, the concept of "Flex-Trades" must be implemented. Under it, people in the various trades will be trained to perform tasks at agreed upon levels within their associated trade area. For example, a millwright would be able to carry out welding and pipefitting tasks up to the agreed level, depending on the individual's competence.

The Flex-Trades concept will allow for more efficient use of personnel within the mechanical and electrical (maintenance) areas. In addition, each tradesperson will gain a higher skill level and an in-depth understanding of interdisciplinary relations.

Training to deal with structural adjustment is an example of a response to current industry needs. The vignette (above) on paper mills in Ontario describes an example of the local training community providing a coordinated response to a specific situation in conjunction with the local business community.

Many young people enter the labour market directly after high school, but lack the basic skills required in today's working environment for entry-level jobs. Unfortunately, our statistical analysis did not identify entry-level occupations and the characteristics of workers in them. We hope that the Best Practices research project developed by HRD will provide this much needed information. However, the education model that we have recommended should help solve the transition problem. In the meantime, trainers must provide employability improvement training to the young people who have left school insufficiently prepared for work or for skill training.

36. We recommend that training providers (educational institutions and community-based trainers) adopt a holistic approach to training delivery - integrating a wide range of services to support specific clients' needs and developing a capacity to respond quickly to local labour market needs.

Individuals involved in training (teachers, counsellors, instructors, cooperative education coordinators, administrators) should have access to training and accreditation. There is a need for "industry leave" (like the cooperative education system) for educators and trainers in schools, colleges, and community-based systems. They should receive not only a combination of practice in the classroom and theoretical courses, but also periods in actual working sites in the private and public sector.

37. We recommend that professional associations and employers ensure that training and career development are provided to training professionals, to allow them to adapt to and support the changing learning environment.

Access to training

The present system is filled with barriers, resulting from the incoherence of the transition system. Members of the equity groups and other individuals with acute learning disabilities generally face those barriers most often.

Statement of belief

We believe that all working-age individuals have a right to training of belief opportunities.

The research reports prepared for the four equity groups (Appendix B) identified the major barriers to training:

- Access or entry issues, such as lack of programs, long waiting lists, unstable and short-term funding, high entrance fees, lack of information about programs, physical barriers and lack of technical aides, inappropriate eligibility requirements, distance, sexism, racism, language;
- Lack of financial and other necessary support, such as income support, child care, emotional support, transportation, cultural awareness;
- Poor quality and usefulness of programs, such as flexibility of curriculum and program, availability of life skills, career planning, and counselling, preparation and upgrading programs.

Access to programs by the equity groups has become restricted recently, with fewer programs supported by the Consolidated Revenue Fund. Lack of income support prevents many members of these groups from participating in the training that is available. Parents require child care to give them equal access to training.

Lack of language and literacy skills exclude many from participating in transition training unless they have access to training to overcome these barriers. Social and communication skills are often lacking among those with a checkered work history or no work history; their needs should be met with additional training in these areas.

38. We urgently recommend that federal and provincial/territorial governments work together to coordinate training initiatives.

Recognizing the importance of the barriers to training, we propose measures to alleviate them, as an essential contribution to bringing coherence to the transition system. Such measures can be grouped under four categories:

- *Eligibility:* as eligibility requirements have become a major barrier, they should be reviewed to eliminate unnecessary impediments to relevant training.

- *Access:* because career counsellors play a major role in informing individuals of training opportunities, a high priority should be given to providing the services of a well-trained, well-informed counsellor with the skill to make appropriate assessments and referrals to all those in need of training. Equity guidelines should be implemented in all training programs.

- *Scheduling:* training programs should be offered on a regular, on-going basis. Training providers should find ways to offer their services with more flexibility regarding start dates, time, location, part-time options, and distance education options. Most training institutions begin courses on specific dates during the year. People may waste time and taxpayers' money waiting for the starting date, and even become ineligible if, for example, their entitlement to benefits runs out.

- *Modes of delivery:* training must be provided in many ways to meet the diverse needs of the community, the complexity of human experience, and equity concerns. Because, in Canada, geography may be a serious barrier to access to training, distance education should be widely used. Canada is a world leader in developing and implementing distance education.

Local boards will have a great deal of influence over training issues and in setting priorities with respect to spending training funds to meet local needs. The participation of equity groups on the local boards is essential for improving access to training.

39. We recommend that training programs be made more accessible, regardless of income support that candidates receive. Systemic barriers -- for women, aboriginal peoples, people with disabilities, members of visible minorities, and those with low levels of education -- should be removed. To improve access to training, we recommend that:

- **eligibility criteria for training programs be reviewed and unnecessary impediments removed,**

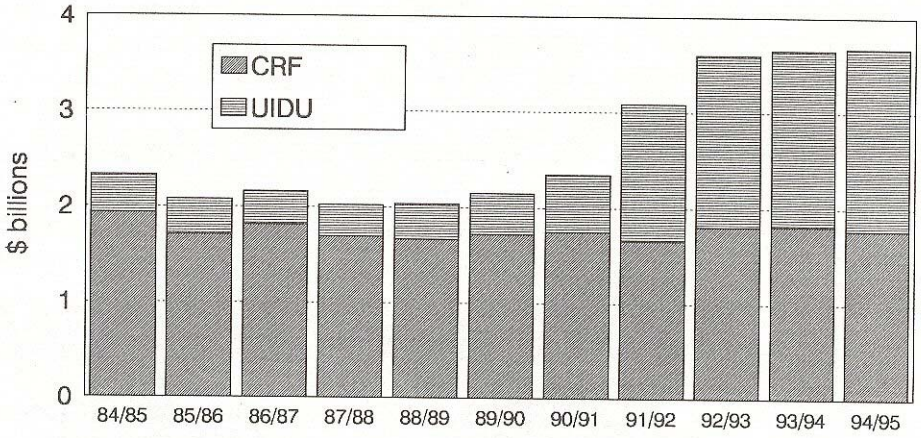
- **counselling be available to all in need,**
- **scheduling of training be more flexible, and**
- **training be delivered in a variety of modes to meet the diverse needs of the community.**

Financial support for training

A solid funding base is required for a high-quality training system. The structure of the current funding system prevents access by many people in desperate need of training or retraining.

Public training providers require stable funding for developing and delivering new and existing curricula, programs, and support services, as proposed in our previous recommendations.

We are concerned about the reduction in training funds originating from the Consolidated Revenue Fund and the government's emphasis on training UI recipients through the UIDU (Figure 19). As a result, many people have lost access to training.



Notes: CRF (Consolidated Revenue Fund) expenditures include operating costs. UIDU (Unemployment Insurance Developmental Uses) expenditures are for fiscal years. The 1993/94 data reflect program expenditures as of 30 September 1993 for CRF and trend analysis for UIDU as of 7 January 1994. The 1994/95 data are forecasts as of 7 January 1994 and regional input for UIDU.

Figure 19. Use of public funds for training (HRD, 1994)

40. We recommend that the federal government restore access to the training system to people not eligible for unemployment insurance.

As recommended by the CLMPC task forces, mechanisms must guarantee funding of training programs over several years, although this does not preclude on-going evaluation to ensure their accountability.

41. We recommend that federal and provincial/territorial governments fund multiyear training programs to ensure their stability over longer periods. Local boards should play a major role in identifying training needs and monitoring and evaluating training programs to ensure that these needs are being met.

Adult programming and continuing education is an ever-increasing activity of certain school boards, colleges, and community-based organizations. This trend clearly shows that there is a need for affordable training to benefit individuals.

42. We recommend that adult programming and continuing education offered by public institutions and community-based organizations reflect the needs of trainees and the demands of the labour market.

People receiving social assistance are often caught between the various levels of government with regard to funding and responsibility for income support, training allowances, and availability of training through "seat purchases." In some provinces, the present system is not guided by clearly stated policies and training objectives and, therefore, results are not measured.

To gain access to a training program, an individual who is receiving social assistance must often attend career orientations and interviews in different locations with a provincial social worker or counsellor, a federal HRD career counsellor, and a counsellor associated with the training provider. This process may be difficult for those with limited transportation and access to child care. People have experienced a reduction in living allowances (e.g., dental, medical) while they are attending training programs as a result of conflicting regulations and policies between levels of government. People with disabilities who receive personal support (e.g., attendant care, interpreters, transportation) are denied access to this support while they are attending training programs.

A significant problem for trainees who are receiving social assistance is the lack of progressive training stages. Clients who attend a literacy program experience a delay before proceeding to academic upgrading, skills training, or career education. Successful programs that enable social assistance recipients to move from dependency to independence require stability, funding coordination, and linkages with a wide range of types of sequential occupational training.

Many case studies of social assistance recipients compiled by the Department of Health and Welfare, Policy, Research and Planning Branch, have cited examples of fear, frustration, and increased poverty in the efforts of these people to increase their employability. The CLMPC Task Force on Social Assistance Recipients recommended 5-year agreements for shared funding, national training objectives and criteria, common evaluation, and single-tier levels for training allowances.

Statement of belief

Coordination and division of responsibilities (income support and training costs) between the various levels of government with respect to social assistance recipients and training agreements should be considered of utmost importance to ensure that a coherent transition system exists for such people.

Recognition of skills

The recognition of skills entails two issues:

- skills acquired through the training program;
- skills that a person brings to the training program, whether formally certified or acquired through work or life experience.

The second issue is dealt with in the section on prior learning assessment.

The training system should support lifelong learning by providing opportunities for career "laddering." To be effective, a training system must impart portable and transferable skills.

- Portability implies that skills and competencies certified in any province or territory will be recognized by employers and providers of education and training in other jurisdictions;

- Transferability means that skills and competencies validated in one industry can be recognized and validated for further training for a job in another industry.

Occupational standards

Standards are critical for ensuring portability and transferability of skills. Occupational standards describe in detail the skills, knowledge, and sometimes the attitudes that are required to perform competently in a given occupation. The most effective standards are those based on competence and set by the private sector (by incumbents and those closely associated with the occupation) with input from the education-training community and relevant regulators and other government representatives. Standards are also developed in some areas for individual skills or skill bands, particularly in areas where the skill mix changes frequently and occupations are not the best framework in which to develop standards.

Occupational and skill standards serve a number of purposes. They are used by employers to select, evaluate, and train employees. They are tools for educators and providers of training to use in determining appropriate course content. Standards show employees and potential employees what skills employers are looking for and whether

course content will cover the required skills. Standards are also the basis for certification. Certification and standards help identify career paths, attracting people to an industry or sector, and boost employee morale by providing professional credentials. National certification permits employee mobility and, when widely recognized, makes the selection process easier for employers.

Standards ease transition into the workforce. In the case of entry level positions, where skill requirements are minimal, short courses can provide them quickly. Where certification based on standards exists, credentials can be acquired quickly, facilitating entry into the workforce. Standards are also being used successfully in combination with government programs to subsidize wages while new employees undergo the required training for certification.

The present education-training system suffers from a lack of coordination. Instead of the current maze, we must establish a coherent system in which anyone can make linear progress in acquiring knowledge, rather than having to move backward before advancing, at a cost to the individual and society.

In our society, a diploma has become a credential that serves a purpose beyond affirming the abilities that can be expected in its holder. It has become a screening device in the hiring process, somewhat independent of the skills it is supposed to certify. Therefore, training must be standardized and guarantee that the trainee meets occupational standards.

To achieve coherence in the transition system, workers and employers should both have confidence that the training acquired in the transition process is relevant and accepted. We believe that each major stakeholder has a responsibility in the development of standards and in ensuring that standards are relevant and accepted by other stakeholders on a national basis.

43. We recommend that employers and labour develop national occupational or skills standards in consultation with the appropriate labour market partners, such as government, equity groups, and the education and training community. This consultation is critical in developing standards that are recognized by both the education and training system and industry. This is the only way to establish standards that lead to portability and transferability of skills.

44. We recommend that the CLFDB and the federal government support the development of national occupational or skills standards, where appropriate, and that the federal government reallocate resources to achieve the development and implementation of standards. Federal assistance for training should be based on the existence of standards and should be provided for programs that deliver the skills identified in the standards.

45. We recommend that the CLFDB continue to develop a national standards framework and establish flexible guidelines and methods for the development,

validation, and evaluation of standards. This framework should promote the electronic storage and retrieval of standards to prevent duplication and facilitate the sharing of information.

Apprenticeship

Apprenticeship is a recognized training system in Canada, leading to certification as a journeyperson. It is a good training system, but there are limitations to considering it as part of a transition into employment system. For most apprentice able trades, it is a way of moving from unskilled to skilled employment, not from non-employment to employment. As such, it does not address the needs of training for entry-level occupations. Moreover, apprentice able trades do not constitute the whole spectrum of occupations. There are 169 apprentice able occupations in Canada, but no more than 100 in anyone province. Only 44 trades belong to the Red Seal program, which allows for inter-provincial mobility. The process of having skills designated as apprenticeable is also too difficult and too complex.

We believe that those in the Canadian apprenticeship system should reconsider its contribution to transitions into employment and make it better integrated with the overall model that we are proposing. We are aware of the attention that is given to the apprenticeship program, especially by the CLFDB, and leave the CLFDB and its National Apprenticeship Committee the task of promoting the necessary changes.

46. We recommend that the CLFDB's National Apprenticeship Committee examine ways to expand the apprenticeship system into a wider range of occupations and develop linkages with the education and training system so that apprenticeship becomes part of a coherent transition system.

Career and employment counselling

Career and employment counselling aimed at facilitating transitions into employment must:

- recognize the tremendous need for such services,
- understand the variety of counselling situations,
- raise counsellors' and clients' awareness of a wide array of career options,
- provide accessible and relevant services,
- empower clients,
- enhance professional preparation and in-service training, and
- connect with partnership networks.

Career and employment counselling is a key element in bringing coherence to the transition system. We are witnessing a shift away from an education and training system driven mainly by educators to a more balanced one driven by both labour market and

social needs. Although education and training have broader functions, the more balanced system is needed to prepare people for working life in the present socioeconomic environment. In such a new context, career and employment counsellors must act as facilitators to integrate the missions of the education and training system.

Career and employment counsellors have a pivotal role in the broader view of transitions into employment (Figure 20). First, counselling is "downstream" from labour market information and the counselling process is a main user of such information. Hence, it is important to make labour market information relevant for counsellors and their clients, an issue emphasized in the first section of this chapter. Figure 20 lists the diverse potential client groups and presents the various objectives of those requiring counselling assistance. Career and employment counsellors face a wide variety of situations and, consequently, counselling needs.

Counselling covers a wide range of areas from personal or family counselling to counselling related to job placement. Although we endorse a holistic concept, we focus on career and employment counselling as the aspect more relevant to the transition process.

Career and employment counselling is a process by which a counsellor helps an individual or group prepare for and implement appropriate education, career, or work choices and plans by providing:

- Assistance in planning the strategies and acquiring the skills to enable individuals to take advantage of identified opportunities. The assistance is provided according to the actual needs of the individual in terms of education and training, job search assistance, and attitude and behavioral adjustment.

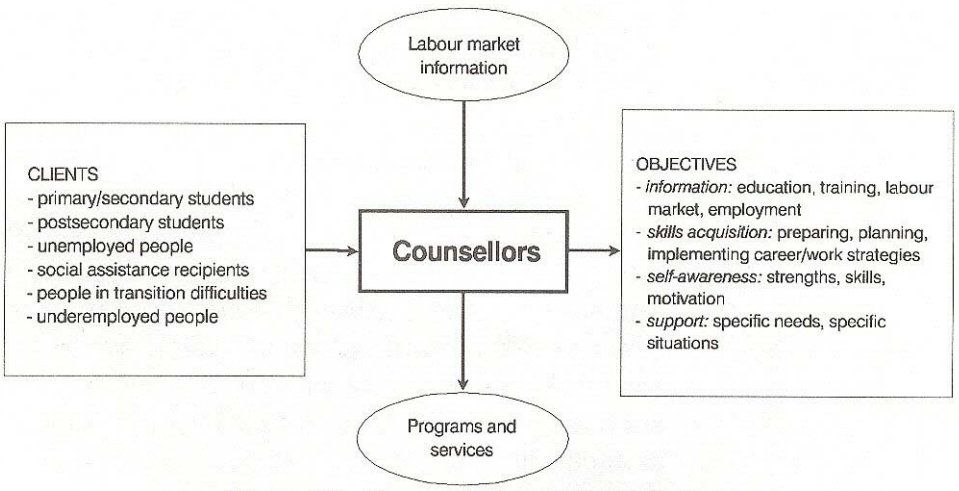


Figure 20. The central role of counsellors

- Orientation toward skills training in areas that foster the capacity to take control of and plan one's own career, including (but not restricted to) skills in problem-solving and decision-making, self-management, stress management, communication, and self-marketing to employers.

- Assessment of personal abilities, skills, knowledge, and interests (assisted self-assessment).

- Assessment of the individual's need for support, taking into account the whole person, i.e., the complexity of the interrelations between the individual's personal situation and the potential work environment.

- Accurate information about career, education, and training opportunities.

- Information about attainable employment opportunities based on adequate labour market information.

The tremendous unmet for counselling

Although proven facts and empirical evidence are rare, there is a diffuse, but strong, sense of a critical need for career and employment counselling. In this section, we summarize the disparate pieces of evidence that were brought to our attention.

The following statistics convey a sense of the magnitude of the potential client population:

- nearly 3.3 million students attend secondary schools;
- over 0.5 million are in the college system;
- enrollment in universities is approaching 1 million;
- over 1.5 'million Canadians are unemployed; in 1992, more than 2.5 million filed an initial regular claim for UI benefits; in 1992-93, counsellors in CECs conducted 463,000 interviews with 239,000 clients (these data seem to indicate that fewer than 10% of UI claimants receive counselling);
- in March 1993, close to 3 million Canadians received social assistance;
- more than 400,000 underemployed individuals (in involuntary part-time work, in job-sharing schemes for economic reasons, discouraged workers) need direction to establish themselves more firmly and productively in the labour market.

In-school guidance counsellors are rated as relatively effective at providing advice to students on their course selection (according to 70% of students), but they seem less helpful with respect to education and career planning (fewer than 60% of students find counsellors helpful) (Canadian Youth Foundation, *Canada's Youth: Ready for Today,* Ministry of State for Youth and Fitness and Amateur Sport, Ottawa, 1988).

The qualitative research done in preparation for the *School Leavers* Survey (reported in chapter 2) showed that many school leavers did not discuss dropping out with anyone at school. Most school leavers reported that they received little support for remaining in school. They viewed the guidance counsellor as a person to consult regarding course schedules or timetables, not as advisors interested in the student's school problems or decisions. The experts interviewed mentioned the high ratio of students to counsellors, which compounds the problem. They also reported that many counsellors have not received training to deal with the complexity of problems presented by today's students.

There is evidence that counsellors in schools may not provide adequate information on careers in the trades, but reinforce the bias toward the academic stream. According to the most recent *National Apprenticeship Survey*, only 7% of apprentices were encouraged to register in an apprenticeship program by guidance counsellors or teachers. The main sources of useful information for apprentices were employers and friends and relatives.

The recent *Career and Employment Counselling Study,* commissioned by the CLFDB (1994), is based on a survey of counsellors. It also provides some information on the overall inadequacy of counselling in meeting the need:

- Most secondary school counsellors believe that their service is "not as good as it could be."
- Some 21 % of secondary school counsellors turned clients away because of their mandate, the proportion was higher among college counsellors (45%), and dramatic among community counsellors and CEC counsellors (74 and 72%, respectively); this indicates that many people looking for counselling are not finding it in the existing system.
- All counsellors cited understaffing as the major reason for client overload.
- On one hand, "labour market information" and "career/occupational information" were among the main areas in which counsellors, wherever they serve, would like to receive training. On the other hand, "career decision-making" ranked first or second in their mandate, and among the main counselling-related problems that clients bring to counsellors. This situation raises doubts about the adequacy of the service in terms of quality. It gives an image of career and employment counsellors ill-prepared for their essential tasks.

In Ready For Change, Career Counselling in the 90s (September 1992), the Canadian Guidance and Counselling Foundation provides some indication of the present situation:

- Existing services "tend to be scattered and fragmented, partly because career counselling services are provided in an estimated 30,000 points of service by 100,000 counsellors."

- "Career counselling is provided by a wide variety of community agencies, most of which are specialized in areas of counselling other than career and employment counselling and are ill-equipped to provide this particular service."

- "Current career counselling frequently does not include accurate and adequate information on the labour market... not only do a limited number of service providers give any form of labour market information, the information is of questionable accuracy."

- "The networks within the career counselling community are not well developed; they are selective, informal and underutilized."

Several of the CLMPC task forces addressed the counselling issue:

- Counselling services "are often not provided to Canadians who need them and those services that are available are frequently not geared to the special needs of the target groups who have been identified as most prone to long-term unemployment."

- "Most unemployed persons are matched with training programs not through counselling that determines their needs and capabilities, but through the administration of preset criteria that have the effect of disqualifying large numbers of people who could potentially benefit from training programs."

It is obvious to the Task Force that a major gap remains in our understanding of the need for counselling from the client perspective.

47. We recommend that a survey of clients -- actual and potential -- be made to determine the extent and characteristics of their need for counselling and whether this need is being met in terms of both quantity and quality.

Variety of counselling situations

There are a number of counselling situations related to the transition process (Figure 20). Employment and career counselling is not likely to be a unique event in a lifetime, but rather a service potentially needed every time an individual is in a new situation of transition into employment. Typical situations that may be faced more than once in a career are:

- school-to-work transitions at various levels of education, with or without a diploma,
- late initial entry into the workforce,
- re-entry into the workforce after a significant interruption (e.g., women after child-rearing),
- recent immigration to Canada,
- displacement after layoff or plant closure,
- underemployment (and the possibility of better employment opportunities),
- people with disabilities in transition into employment.

Because the various clienteles are quite different, these situations call for different approaches and counselling expertise. For clarity, we can distinguish two broad categories of counselling situations:

- student counselling, where the counsellor operates within an educational institution (school, college, or university) and addresses the orientation needs of a student population facing choices about education, initial career choices, or both;

- adult counselling, where the counsellor operates in a variety of settings where individuals in employment transition are looking for support services (employment centres, community services) and addresses the needs of adults confronted with a wide array of circumstances related to changing jobs.

Counsellors are also confronted with a variety of objectives of individuals resorting to career and employment counselling (Figure 20):

- to obtain information on education and training or on the labour market to assist in education or career orientation;
- to acquire specific skills related to making a transition into employment: preparation, planning, and implementation of career-work strategies;
- to develop self-awareness to be able to assess one's own strengths, skills, and motivation;
- to obtain support in response to specific needs or specific situations (e.g., problems related to disabilities, sudden job loss).

As any of the clients listed above may have any of these objectives, there is clearly no one-to-one relation between them. To meet the demands of the diverse clientele, counsellors deliver programs as well as counselling services. All of the programs and services depend critically on the information that counsellors receive about education and training programs and institutions, the labour market situation, the links between education and training, and employment opportunities.

Awareness of a wide range of career options

A major criticism of counsellors, especially in-school counsellors, is that they tend to reinforce the academic bias of our education system by not promoting career opportunities outside those offered by colleges and universities. A lack of awareness of other opportunities seems to be the root of the problem. Counsellors need to know about career options in the trades, the apprenticeship system, and entry-level jobs in the service sector to be able to provide better service to students other than those destined for university.

Most apprenticeship programs require that the candidate have a job before starting the program; hence, guidance counsellors are remote from a decision to enter apprenticeship. Nevertheless, counsellors need to know about this system and provide full information to

young people about the qualifications for apprenticeship. They must also present these options objectively.

"White collar" apprenticeships are not well known. They are available to workers in banking, credit granting, and accounting jobs, who are enrolled in formal training programs (sometimes by correspondence) to acquire accreditation. Counsellors have little or no information about these sorts of opportunities.

In-school counsellors must consider the context in which they operate and the public they address. Most high-school students do not go on to postsecondary education; some leave high school before graduation. If career and employment counselling, also called guidance counselling in the school system, is to be relevant to all students, it must present a range of accessible opportunities.

In carrying out their responsibilities, counsellors should support gender-free models or models encouraging women to enter nontraditional occupations, such as the Women In Trades and Technology (WITT) program (see box, below).

The Women in Trades and Technology (WITT) network

The national WITT network is an education and advocacy organization that promotes and assists in the recruitment, training, and successful employment of women in trades, technology, operations, and blue collar work. WITT is a communications and support network for women and groups working locally, provincially, and regionally.

We recommended an expansion of career education courses early in the school system and cooperative education in secondary schools. In such a context, counsellors should take an active role in the schools in promoting and supporting initiatives to develop tools to complement career education courses and to help students and teachers create a bridge between experience in the world of work and curriculum-related activities. A variety of such tools is presented earlier in this chapter (see section on Education).

When employability skills assessment is formally established, not only for secondary school graduates, but also for the adult population, counsellors would be key agents either in handling the assessment or in directing people to the appropriate institution. They would also be involved after the assessment by providing advice on orientation or remedial measures and possibilities.

This discussion highlights the importance of labour market information to the career and employment counselling function. In many circumstances, counsellors are responsible, not only for providing information, but also for interpreting the information, guiding clients through the information sources and finding ways and means for them to use information for their own benefit.

An accessible and relevant service

Currently, counselling is provided in public education institutions (schools, colleges, and universities), CECs, community centres, and private organizations. Access to counselling services outside the education system and outside private fee-for-service practice is based on the type of income support received -- UI recipients are directed to CECs, social assistance recipients to community agencies -- not on an identified need. The UI system plays a major filtering role. Those not receiving income support, but who may nevertheless be in need of counselling to make a successful transition into employment may never receive it, because the mandate of the system does not accommodate them. Adults entering or reentering the labour market, recent immigrants, or workers willing to change career or forced to change by structural adjustment may have no place to go, except at high cost.

48. We recommend that career and employment counselling be provided on the basis of clients' actual needs, not the kind of income support they receive. This means that the type of needs assessment currently provided by CECs should be available to all those who require it.

A career counselling service must be accessible and relevant for everyone in need of it. The service must be available in places that individuals are likely to visit when in transition and where counsellors are trained to understand and assist the diverse potential client population. In its discussion paper, the Canadian Guidance and Counselling Foundation states:

> The challenge [of improving career counselling services] might be met through a restructuring of existing community-based services to offer strengthened career counselling services. A structure which is efficient and within reach of community-based organizations is that of *Skill Clinics*.

We believe this is an approach worth considering (see box, below)

Considering the specific needs of some groups in the population (aboriginal people, people with disabilities, members of visible minorities), counselling services must be developed to address those needs, because these groups would not use the general services or would not find adequate assistance through the general services. The survey of counsellors showed that the composition of counsellors is biased in favor of white females and against people with disabilities, members of visible minorities, and males. Although counsellors do not think it important that they be members of the same identifiable population as their clients, representatives of the equity groups believe that the counselling needs of these groups are better served by members of the groups or individuals specially trained and sensitive to their issues. Although a significant number of clients belong to the designated groups, the training of counsellors has not reflected the special needs of these populations.

Except for CEC counsellors, only a few of the counsellors surveyed stated that they would like to receive training in counselling members of the equity groups.

Skills clinics

Skills clinics, located in all municipalities and big businesses, could offer intake, assessment, referral, and career counselling all at the same location, thus reducing duplication of these services by several providers and significantly reducing time and effort invested by clients to receive services.

Counselling in the skills clinics would include:

- *Assessment:* evaluation of prior and current skills, knowledge, and interests, through educational and occupational assessments. Assessment provides the basis for further education and training including the acquisition of life and literacy skills where necessary.
- *Counselling:* career counselling helps individuals identify career directions that most appropriately fit interests, abilities, values, provide personal relevance, and are self-motivating. Career counselling also includes teaching the self-management skills of job hunting, job retention, and coping with job transitions.
- *Referral:* through assessment of skills and interests, referral to any of the following may occur: educational and occupational training programs, pre-employment programs, career counselling, or a job.

Source: Canadian Guidance and Counselling Foundation, *Ready For Change - Career Counselling in the 90s*. September 1992.

Aboriginal peoples, who form a high proportion of the emerging labour force in some provinces and territories, need a service provided by aboriginal peoples. We examined some successful initiatives -- like the Native Employment Service in Winnipeg -- and suggest that such models be closely examined and extended beyond the current experimental basis.

Relevant counselling for people with disabilities encompasses so many interrelated issues (medical rehabilitation, equipment and financial support, vocational assessment, including prior learning assessment, career opportunities, workplace adaptation) that only specially trained personnel can effectively handle their needs. Dealing with the transition problems of people with disabilities means moving away from the dominant medical-physical model of intervention to a vocational model. In the former, rehabilitation occurs sequentially and can take a long time, during which the individual remains away from work, and, as a consequence, faces the risk of discouragement. On the other hand, the vocational model encompasses a whole range of simultaneous interventions and activities

allowing individuals to gain or regain confidence more quickly -- a key to building employability -- and enhance their ultimate chance of a successful transition.

We believe that local boards can play an essential role in this area.
They can ensure the availability and accessibility of relevant counselling in their jurisdictions.

49. We recommend that local boards identify and prepare local directories of counselling resources, indicating specific services provided and specializations in specific clienteles including the designated equity groups. If adequate services are not available, local boards should establish them.

In search of a clear mandate: empowering clients

The fundamental task of career and employment counsellors is to empower clients, to give them the necessary tools to permit them to make choices. Counsellors are not rule enforcers, although counsellors at CECs are often perceived as such. Certainly a good knowledge of the rules (contained in UI legislation, for example) is a prerequisite, but empowering the client should remain foremost.

Defining a clear mandate for career and employment counsellors raises two issues:

- a social and political recognition that counselling has a major role to play in the transition process;
- a need for ongoing evaluation of counselling based on its defined mandate.

The CLFDB's recent survey showed that counsellors do not receive support and recognition commensurate with the essential role they play in helping people to assess their own situation, aptitudes, skills, and opportunities when facing a transition problem. It also showed that counselling is not systematically evaluated -- and often not evaluated at all. The difficulty of evaluation in this area is certainly one reason for this lack. However, a fundamental misunderstanding of the counselling function is also responsible. Our ability to measure economic or tangible outcomes is well developed, but counselling must be evaluated in terms of "learning outcomes," the precursors to socioeconomic outcomes. Learning outcomes include self-awareness, opportunity-awareness, decision-making skills, and transition skills. A clear link between these outcomes and - subsequent career satisfaction and success has been demonstrated.

50. We recommend that the Canadian Guidance and Counselling Foundation develop a framework for evaluation of counselling, taking into consideration the specific nature of counselling services and their outcomes.

Improving preparation and in-service training for counsellors

The perceived lack of professionalism in counselling is seen as a major hurdle to assuring quality and expanding the service. The CLFDB survey revealed that the best trained counsellors are in colleges, CEGEPs, and secondary schools; those with the poorest training are in community agencies. Except in Quebec, any person can establish him- or herself as a career counsellor with no specific accreditation. As the report of the survey states:

> There is a need to establish a minimum standard of competence for people providing career and employment counselling to others. There may be a need to make arrangements for the registration or certification of career and employment counsellors.

51. We recommend that the Canadian Guidance and Counselling Foundation develop and promote national training and occupational standards for career and employment counsellors and work with training providers to develop a curriculum that allows trainees to meet the standards.

In Ready For Change -- Career Counselling in the 90s (September 1992), the Canadian Guidance Counselling Foundation outlined the key areas that the professional preparation should cover. They are:

- counselling for career self-management,
- career development processes and special populations,
- group career counselling and career and life skills,
- career information, resources, and labour market information, and
- program planning and management.

Professional preparation should follow a core curriculum containing these elements. Opportunities should be offered to counsellors to pursue training in more specific areas or to prepare to serve the needs of specific groups, for example those of people with disabilities, as discussed above. Groups, such as the Canadian Association for Vocational Evaluation and Work Adjustment (see box, next page), are promoting the concepts of vocational evaluation and work adjustment as they relate to enhancing the employability of people with disabilities. We support such initiatives.

An extensive effort should be made to provide practicing counsellors with appropriate retraining opportunities, based on the five core areas listed above, to allow them to improve service to their clientele.

52. We recommend that professional associations and government departments develop extensive in-service training programs aimed at upgrading the career and employment counselling capabilities of counsellors.

The Canadian Association for Vocational Evaluation and Work Adjustment (CAVEWA)

CAVEWA is a national association concerned with the management and development of vocational assessment standards, programs, and services. It is a member of the National Professional Associations Committee (NPAC) of the Canadian Rehabilitation Council for the Disabled (CRCD).

Vocational evaluation is designed to assess and explore a working environment (either real or simulated). The information is used to help people make informed decisions about education and career planning. It includes data from various fields: medical, psychological, social, vocational, educational, cultural, and economic.

Prior learning assessment has become a fundamental element of vocational assessment as literacy and numeracy skills and practical work skills influence an individual's level of development.

Work adjustment is a multifaceted concept. It is a transitional, time-limited, treatment or training service that is:

- consistent with programs using both individual and group work related activities;
- intended to help people understand the meaning, value, and demands of work;
- used to modify or develop attitudes, personal characteristics, and work behavior;
- defined by central vocational assessment themes;
- meant to develop functional capacities of individuals to help them achieve the highest level of vocational development.

Counselling is not exempt from the changes that affect society, the economy, and the labour market. Counsellors are confronted daily with socioeconomic change. Access to adequate training and retraining is essential for those responsible for providing career and employment counselling. Considering the diversity of clients' needs and of workplace situations, training and retraining must provide counsellors with sensitivity to cultural differences and be an opportunity for acquiring hands-on-experience with workplace issues as gender, equal opportunity, stereotyping of particular occupations, challenging bias against certain career choices (particularly nontraditional ones), skilled trades, and apprenticeship.

These areas need the attention of the whole education community, as well as counsellors. In fact, because regular teachers are often called upon to provide counselling, their professional preparation and their in-service training should include compulsory training for this role.

Connecting with partnership networks

The CLFDB survey of counsellors revealed the isolation in which they live professionally: from colleagues within a school, from the reality of the workplace, and from the wider community. Few counsellors spent time "working with third parties," such as other agencies, employers, or counselling specialists. This situation must be changed. Career and employment counselling is a key element in a successful transition system. To be effective, it must be integrated with the other elements of the system. School counsellors should become the students' window on the world of work; they must play an essential role in the proposed expansion of cooperative education and career development curriculum and courses. Counsellors in CECs and community agencies should communicate regularly with employers and enhance their knowledge of changes in the workplace. A stronger training and retraining program should include information on these aspects of counsellors' responsibilities.

The establishment of local boards should be used as an opportunity to include counsellors in the local private-sector network.

If counsellors feel more confident because they are well trained, if they are recognized by society as professionals with a major role to play in the transition process, and if they are better equipped with adequate information, especially labour market information, they will be better able to carry out their important task. The goal of coherence, in our approach to transition issues and, more specifically, within the vast area of career and employment counselling, calls for coordination of the various initiatives.

53. We recommend the formation of a federation of all guidance and counselling associations.

Prior learning and skills assessment

A prior learning and skills assessment system aimed at facilitating transitions into employment must recognize:

- experiential learning,
- academic learning,
- occupational standards, and
- the need for coordination.

Canada requires a highly skilled labour force if it is to compete successfully in the global economy. Producing skilled workers does not refer only to the youth population currently in school. Maintaining a skilled labour force requires continual upgrading, retraining, and lifelong learning among the adult population, including those in the labour force and those wishing to make the transition into work. However, the needs of adults are very different from those of young people for whom the education system is largely designed. Adult workers have generally been out of the formal education system for many years

and may lack the self-confidence to return. Some have had negative experiences in schools in their youth, many have never mastered the core skills of literacy and numeracy, and most lead busy lives with family and work responsibilities. Consequently, innovative and flexible measures must be developed to accommodate the unique needs of the adult learner.

Prior learning assessment (PLA) has been referred to in previous sections. It deserves further attention as it should play a key role in the development and maintenance of a highly skilled labour force and facilitate the transition into occupations requiring such skills and paying high wages. PLA can be carried out using a variety of methods designed to assess two types of learning: prior experiential learning and prior academic learning. PLA provides a flexible, dynamic approach to upgrading the skills of adult learners and has the potential to be an effective and efficient method of integrating immigrants and out-of-province workers into the labour force at the level for which they were trained. Although there are many advantages to implementing a national PLA system, we realize that there are many obstacles to doing so.

Prior experiential learning

Experiential learning consists of the knowledge and skills acquired outside the formal educational system. Non-formal learning can occur in a variety of settings: at work, in the home, in pursuit of hobbies and volunteer activities, and through self-instruction. The assessment procedure is designed to determine the academic equivalency of the knowledge and skills acquired in non-formal educational environments. When students enroll at an institution where a PLA capacity exists, they identify the courses in which they have prior knowledge and skills and prepare to be tested according to the formal PLA procedures at that institution.

A number of Canadian institutions have already implemented a process for assessing prior experiential learning. The work of the First Nations Technical Institute (FNTI) was brought to our attention (see box, below).

The First Nations Technical Institute (FNTI)

The FNTI was established in 1985 to serve the postsecondary needs of the aboriginal community. The institute is managed by aboriginal people and located on aboriginal territory in Ontario. It is dedicated to the principles of adult education and, as such, has implemented a prior learning assessment process. FNTI is one of the pioneers in PLA in Ontario. At the institute, the teacher acts as a facilitator for the student who determines the objectives, skills, and knowledge that he or she wants from the training.

54. We recommend that prior learning assessment be established in the formal education system to recognize and provide credit for learning that takes place outside the formal system, but results in the acquisition of valuable knowledge and skills.

Prior academic learning

A second form of PLA applies to learning that has occurred within a formal educational system in another jurisdiction. It may consist of courses taken at a recognized educational institution for which credit has been earned or qualifications granted (degrees, diplomas, or certificates) in another Canadian province/territory or outside Canada. Accurate assessment of academic learning depends on the availability of comprehensive knowledge about the education systems in other parts of Canada and around the world. Unfortunately, the methods used to evaluate academic credentials are often applied on an ad hoc basis and differ in each province/territory. The process is frequently confounded by lack of knowledge about the education system in the country issuing the qualification. This too frequently results in immigrants having to repeat much of their education, or having to accept jobs in which their capabilities are underutilized. Formal education acquired out-of-province or in another country, should be subjected to an objective and knowledgeable assessment to determine equivalencies and allow evaluators to make recommendations about the credentials of the individual.

Quebec has a system for assessing the prior academic learning of its immigrants. The provincial government has developed a data bank with extensive information on many foreign educational systems. It is updated continually and permits rapid referral to previous decisions and established norms. The applicant is charged $90 for the assessment in addition to the cost of translating original documents. If the appropriate information is in the data bank, the service can be completed within 10 days. About 9000 requests are received annually.

The applicant receives a certificate of equivalency, which states how their education compares with the Quebec system (e.g., incomplete secondary, 3 years of college, 1 year of university). A weakness of this system stems from the fact that neither the education system nor the occupational bodies that govern entry to practice automatically accept the equivalency. In practical terms, this means that the individual may still not receive advanced standing from an educational institution for courses already taken or receive certification from an occupational association that may have regulatory control.

55. We recommend that education authorities and occupational and professional associations coordinate their efforts and establish national, standard methods of assessing credentials earned in other jurisdictions (other provinces/territories and other countries). This will prevent duplication, ensure that equivalencies awarded by one labour market partner will be acknowledged by all others, and promote mobility. The Quebec model for assessment of credentials should be closely examined as a possible model for other jurisdictions.

Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials

This centre was established in the fall of 1990. It is a national, nonprofit body, co-founded by the Council of Ministers of Education and the Department of the Secretary of State (now part of HRD). It represents a joint undertaking of the provincial and federal governments. It was created to ensure that Canada fulfills its obligations under the terms of the Unesco convention signed in 1989. The purpose of this convention is to encourage the international mobility of workers by ensuring that higher education and professional qualifications are recognized as widely as possible. The centre is part of an international network of similar centres.

Its mandate is to serve as a referral service for individuals and organizations who desire information on the assessment of academic and professional qualifications. It does not evaluate credentials, grant equivalencies, or participate in the assessment process. To facilitate the work of the centre, two databases are currently being developed. One is the Paris-based TRACE network, which contains information describing education systems around the world. The second database will contain a list of all organizations in Canada that assess academic and professional qualifications.

PLA is important for the adult learner because it emphasizes learning outcomes rather than traditional education. A strong feature of PLA is its focus on the student - it offers a bridge from the student's current position to his or her goal and, therefore, promotes transition into the labour force or career progress within the labour force. In this context, PLA and employment counselling are complementary, and highlight the potential usefulness of employability skills assessment.

56. We recommend that federal and provincial/territorial governments, in collaboration with community groups, establish integrated services addressing the unique, ongoing learning needs of adults. Innovative models must be developed, including counselling, prior learning and employability skills assessment, orientation to training, and flexible learning schedules and approaches.

PLA is both efficient and cost-effective. It can reduce the time and resources needed to acquire a formal education, both for the adult learner and the educational institution. In an era of scarce resources and fiscal restraint, this is an important characteristic.
The prior learning and skills assessment approach can be formalized in a "skills portfolio," which shows the accumulation of certified skills and validated experience on which an individual builds further training and experience.

57. We recommend that all labour market partners legitimize a "skills portfolio" approach to help Canadians progress in their careers. This approach provides formal recognition of the knowledge and skills accumulated through past learning and work experience, determined by prior learning assessment.

For workers whose qualifications were earned in other jurisdictions, PLA can promote speedy transition into the labour force by ensuring that barriers to employment are eliminated and that wasteful underemployment of highly qualified people does not occur. In addition, through PLA the unnecessary lengthy and costly retraining of immigrants, whose education has not been properly evaluated, can be avoided.

During the hiring process, employers perform an informal PLA when they evaluate job applicants on the basis of their resume and through the interview process. The employer community follows the development of formal tools for PLA with great interest, looking for relevant ideas to enhance some of their personnel management practices.

Occupational standards

In a society where credentials are so important, a system of PLA allows people with experience to obtain official recognition for the knowledge and skills they have acquired. This is particularly important for workers who have been laid off and are looking for new job opportunities. Many have extensive knowledge and skills, gained from years of work-related experience, but no credentials to prove it. The development of a national system of occupational standards could facilitate the PLA process by stipulating the competencies required to perform tasks associated with an occupation.

Coordination

If PLA is to function efficiently, it must be coordinated in such a way that links are forged among the components of the system (e.g., high schools, on-the-job training, colleges, universities), between the larger systems (e.g., education and the labour market), and between jurisdictions. A well-articulated PLA system could serve Canada well by speeding up the creation and maintenance of a highly skilled labour force.

Statement of belief

We support the development of a functioning, integrated system of PLA. Such a system must be supported by all stakeholders across Canada, so that the decisions made in one jurisdiction will be recognized and accepted throughout the country.

Various systems of PLA are being developed or implemented in Canada. Unfortunately, efforts in this growing area are not adequately coordinated. Therefore, it is timely to urge that greater coordination of efforts and homogeneity of outcomes become a priority.

PLA for engineers in Canada

"Engineers in Canada" is a community-corporate training project developed by the Ottawa-Carleton Learning Foundation in partnership with Digital Equipment of Canada and the Professional Engineers of Ontario. This professional orientation and technical upgrade training project for foreign-trained engineers assesses prior learning from the viewpoint of employability rather than academic accreditation or professional certification.

In the assessment, the following aspects are addressed:

- level of education in engineering and area of specialization;
- previous work experience and its relevance to the Canadian job market;
- level and timeliness of technical skills;
- language skills: verbal, oral, technical;
- number of years (if any) not working in engineering;
- attitude toward change (need for workplace acculturation).

Engineers in Canada addresses barriers to employment by providing:

- an understanding of how business and engineering are conducted in Canada;
- training in current technologies;
- technical language skills;
- Canadian work experience and references;
- integration into the local engineering community;
- professional level career management skills.

Between 1991 and 1993, 24 engineers took advantage of the program; 80% of them were subsequently able to find work in their field. The Engineers in Canada model has the potential to be adapted for other professions in the area and across Canada.

58. In light of the number of concurrent prior learning assessment initiatives across the country, we recommend that the CLFDB convene a national conference to share information about current developments, review gaps, and design orientations for the future in a coherent and coordinated way.

Labour market practices

A labour market that enhances employability and facilitates transitions into employment includes:

- comprehensive labour market information,
- comprehensive hiring and separation practices,

- work organization and training that offer career opportunities,
- equity awareness and implementation,
- human resources planning incorporated into strategic planning, and
- advanced employer-employee relations.

In the conceptual framework that we have adopted (described in chapter I), labour market practices have as much influence on employability as individual characteristics (Figure 2).

Statement of belief

Much emphasis must be placed on labour market policies and practices to permit the establishment of a coherent transition system.

All employers -- private, public, and not-for-profit organizations -- contribute to establishing labour market practices and, hence, affect employability. Workers and their representatives, most often through the bargaining process, are also involved. Governments are active in this area, mainly by setting labour market practices.

Today's workplace has changed considerably in the last few decades. It has adapted to changes in the environment: demographic, technological, political, and economic. In this broad context, we see labour market practices as an essential factor in the employability equation. Can this country afford to lose output by misusing the human capital it has helped to build or has acquired through immigration?

Comprehensive labour market information

As noted earlier in this chapter, adequate labour market information is essential to the operation of an effective transition system. Employers are the key providers of that information. They are also its major users. We propose a major overhaul of labour market information available in Canada, with the establishment of local and national employment opportunities databases, a database of job seekers, and a database of hirings and separations by industry and occupation. Although compiling such data will be difficult, we are confident that the outcome is worth a persistent effort by the many parties concerned. An understanding by all partners, and especially employers, of the role and value of the information collected for the efficiency of the labour market and, hence, the transition system, is essential for the information to be comprehensive.

A good information system brings ample benefits to all. In the absence of a compulsory system forcing commitment from individuals and employers, market forces should demonstrate that returns obtained from providing information to the system are higher than the associated costs. Although it is difficult to list all the benefits of the labour market information system that we propose, some of the most striking are:

- minimization of hiring costs;
- minimization of the cost of job placement;
- minimization of the cost of job search;
- reduction of the paper burden;
- minimization of the duration of unemployment, hence unemployment insurance costs;
- provision of a wider range of opportunities for employers and job seekers.

Statement of belief

The CLFDB and the provincial/territorial and local boards should actively emphasize the importance of relevant and comprehensive labour market information, in general, and strive to make headway in establishing the system that this report outlines.

Comprehensive hiring and separation practices

Hiring Practices

The hiring process is an important mechanism for offering opportunities to enhance employability when it is well integrated with a whole range of efficient personnel management practices, such as apprenticeship opportunities, employer-based training, incentive pay, and employee participation. The commitment to "equal opportunity" -- publicly announced in advertising jobs in the database -- will also play a role in improving the labour market situation of disadvantaged people.

59. We recommend that human resources personnel be trained in cultural sensitivity and equity issues and demonstrate an inclusive attitude in the recruitment and selection process.

Employers, individually and collectively through their sectoral organizations, have a major impact on orientation and career decisions made early by students in the education system. Ignoring school marks or providing incentives to students to leave school before graduation by offering short-term, low-wage jobs sends the wrong signals to students and harms them in the long term by affecting their future employability. On the other hand, by clearly articulating what they expect from young recruits, employers send a useful message to students and all partners in the education system.

60. We recommend that employers clearly and publicly articulate their criteria for recruiting personnel for entry-level positions to send adequate signals to students, parents, and professionals in the education system, and training providers about aptitudes, competencies, and qualifications required for those positions.

61. We recommend that sectoral organizations develop standards, where appropriate, and facilitate partnership initiatives with educational institutions and training providers.

Layoff and separation practices

What is the effect of separations initiated by the employer for economic reasons on the employability of workers? Layoffs are often the starting point in a transition period. The conditions under which this event takes place are critical to the success of the transition.

The Task Force on Labour Adjustment has addressed this issue in a way that is fully supported by us. It recommended:

> There should be minimum standards in all jurisdictions for notice of layoff and severance pay with respect to individual layoffs, and for group layoffs in two categories, namely, where greater than 10 but less than 5O, and greater than 50 workers are displaced. However, the varying situations of employers in the different provinces and territories, the total additional costs to business and industry of increasing the magnitude of severance payments, and the length of notice of layoff periods need to be recognized. [Recommendation 3]
>
> Educational and skills upgrading are needed for increasing numbers of displaced workers, many of whom have worked for the same company or in the same industry for most of their lives. Improved employability through literacy training, academic upgrading, or skills training is a key to their successful and rapid re-employment after being laid-off. Thus, it is recommended that a new program to assist these workers to receive training for employment in alternative vocational area, or to upgrade existing skills while still on the job prior to layoff, be introduced. A means of doing this is to provide counselling and training, under an agreement with employers, for one or two days a week, with employees working regular hours the remainder of the week UI income support would be provided during the training/counselling days, and the employer would pay salaries for the rest of the week [Recommendation 14]

By providing access to counselling and training to workers who are to be laid off, employers help them make a transition into other employment under better conditions. Employers must notify people of layoff to allow reasonable time and opportunities to prevent major loss of income.

Transition for an employee with a disability

At one of Canada's major postsecondary institutions, Michael Nkruma, a visually impaired employee, was laid off. Grant funding to the employee was discontinued and the employer supported an adjustment period of 3 months required for reemployment investigations. In addition to monitoring newspaper postings, Mr. Nkruma contacted the local CEC and the CEC funded outreach counsellor at the Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB).

Mr. Nkruma was conscious of his reduced employment options due to the impairment. The few employment opportunities available would be aggressively sought by a large number of applicants. Consequently, he wanted to make the best use of available resources. To his discouragement and frustration, CEC advised him that he was not entitled to support until he was officially unemployed.

Historically, unemployed job seekers contact their local CEC office for needs determination and subsequent CEC or contracted help (counselling, job search assistance, labour market analysis, resume writing, employability skills self-inventory assessment, etc). To a lesser degree, the CNIB outreach counsellor would facilitate some of these services. However, to minimize duplication in service delivery systems, the CNIB counsellor is now kept from accommodating client requests because the CEC is the only authority permitted to make referrals.

Mr. Nkruma was also denied access to information; CEC-supported outreach offices are not linked to central labour market and job posting data banks. Given the high level of technological advancement in the last decade, it is odd to learn that outreach counsellors must go to the CEC office to find out critical labour market information pertaining to their applicant case load.

This example shows how systems can present some of the most costly and troublesome barriers to those who are looking for work, especially those who continue to be ignored in the design of policy and physical delivery systems that are perceived by social policymakers to be responsive to all labour market partners. The cost to the system was greater simply because a visually impaired person was denied access by virtue of eligibility criteria. He was forced to draw UI benefits when there was an option to make a successful job-to-job transition.

Advance notification of employment termination can prepare the employee for successful transition. Self-concept and self-worth, in addition to on-the-job professional support, are critical elements in successful reemployment without a period of unemployment. Mr. Nkruma did not experience problems as a result of his impairment as much as because the system did not respond to labour market conditions. The challenge for this qualified person lies in the fact that he sought merit-based consideration in a labour force delivery system that does not recognize that impairment is a function of individuals, not their employability.

62. We recommend that employers be required to give reasonable advance notice to employees being permanently laid off. Recommendation 3 of the Task Force on Labour Adjustment is fully supported.

63. We recommend that employers assist employees, who are affected by permanent layoff, in the transition process by allowing them time to pursue assessment, counselling, and training.

Work organization and training with career opportunities

Organizing work to reflect the composition of the workforce

Earlier, we presented evidence of the wide diversity of the Canadian population and labour force. The present trend is in the direction of increasing diversity. We have emphasized the need for the education system to adopt cultural awareness programs. The workplace must also be sensitive to cultural differences and employers should promote activities that develop better knowledge and appreciation of cultural differences. To offer good working conditions to people with disabilities, the same kind of awareness and sensitivity should be fostered.

Running a business means constantly adapting to changes, including reorganizing the workplace to stay competitive and productive. In doing this, employers should be aware of the specific challenges that employees face in these circumstances.

64. We recommend that employers consult workers or their representatives when reorganizing the workplace.

Organizing working time to accommodate family responsibilities and individual constraints

Working time may also be an issue in transitions, because it impinges on the employability of so many individuals, most often members of the equity groups. Participation in the labour force is often constrained by family responsibilities or disability. As a consequence of changes in society and technological progress, the traditional work pattern -- regular, full-time, full-year job -- has crumbled. The need and the rationale for it has also been eroded, but too often it remains the standard for "good" jobs. All other options -- part-time work, flexible hours, or flexible scheduling -- are considered inferior. These new arrangement must be valued as much as the traditional model.

65. We recommend that employers examine their schedule of operations with a view to offering flexible working arrangements to workers.

Employer-based training

An individual's future transitions will be enhanced by the experience and the skills acquired in his or her present job. However, the level and quality of employer-based training are difficult to assess. The 1991 *National Training Survey* found that records of training were often not kept by employers; where records existed, the lack of standards for reporting was an obstacle to getting accurate training data.

66. Because the assessment and monitoring of employer-based training is of utmost importance, we recommend that the CLFDB undertake research to develop a standard approach to recording employer-based training activities.

Just as we emphasized the right to an opportunity to undergo training for everyone looking for meaningful employment, we recognize the same right for employees willing to progress in their careers. The lifelong learning paradigm should be practiced with the active support of employers: employability is a constantly moving target, and both employees and employers benefit from regularly updating the skills of the workforce.

In addition to showing the overall extent of training in the private sector, the *National Training Survey* also revealed that workers who benefit from training are those who are already most educated. Emerging forms of work organization (teamwork, jobs requiring a specific set of skills, use of computers in manufacturing as well as in service jobs) require extension of training to first-line workers. Such training will enhance career "laddering" and promotion opportunities (promoting from within saves money) and also facilitate further transitions.

Statement of belief

We firmly believe that the key to successful transitions is the acquisition of skills through training, and that career "laddering" opportunities are enhanced for employees who have a right to training opportunities. It is an employer's responsibility to offer training opportunities.

67. We recommend that employers, in consultation with workers or their representatives, develop and regularly update a training plan.

Ways to increase employer-based training, while making it relevant to both the operations of organizations and their employees, are being debated in Canada. We support developments in this area in which employers and workers, either in an

individual organization or at a sectoral level, engage in joint management of training activities. The establishment of training trust funds is a promising development. The United Food and Commercial Workers International Union (UFCW) in partnership with Zehrs Markets in Cambridge, Ontario is funding the Clifford Evans Training Centre; the Sectoral Skills Council is another example.

Employers have a responsibility to provide the training that their employees need to carry out their tasks and enhance their career prospects within the organization. As large employers, governments must also be committed to the training of their employees. However, in their regulatory and service functions, governments also bear the responsibility for training in basic skills and literacy and providing those who need to gain access to training with support services. Thus, with respect to training, we advocate a clear delineation of responsibilities between employers and public authorities.

68. Although employers are responsible for providing training in occupation-related skills, we recommend that public funding be available to assist employers in upgrading the basic skills and literacy of their workforce.

Equity awareness and implementation

Employment equity is a fundamental and important principle to use in planning, developing, and managing any productive workforce and economy. As a policy, it can achieve well-being for all and shape a new labour market.

Pay equity is a major element of employment equity. When it is integrated into general personnel management practices, it sends the message that every individual has equal access to the same range of occupations and their associated remuneration.

Employers throughout North America are realizing that implementing employment equity is not simply being a good corporate citizen, it makes sound business sense. Affirmative action is a sound corporate strategy.

The emerging workforce will be more diverse in terms of gender, family status, race, color, ethnic origin, language, religion, and health status. Employment equity will become a reality. It could also confer competitive advantage on employers who are better at attracting, retaining, and motivating people from all backgrounds.

Best practices for equal opportunity employers

- Business plans include professional development on valuing diversity for management and organization.
- Practical orientation in equity/cross-cultural or life experience is part of the qualifications needed for positions in human resources.
- Commitment to career education and cooperative education programs is shown by providing information and placement opportunities.
- Diverse community windows are sought for job postings and recruitment, and technology and community support systems are used to accommodate workers who need them.
- Flexible work schedules are permitted and information and skills development strategies promote the value of diversity (antiracism policies, supportive attitudes, identification of barriers to diversity, gender bias addressed, cultural awareness, and employee assistance).
- Human resources plans are published with local boards and made accessible to community groups.
- Equity advocates are part of the labour relations process and setting industry occupational standards and organizational training plans.
- Specific goals for diversity are set and outcomes are measured and reported annually to shareholders, local boards, and community groups.
- Community diversity and support agency expertise are considered in training and planning of equity/cross-cultural goals.

Groups traditionally left out of the labour force can contribute knowledge that can be used in the design of products or in the marketing of goods and services. Business success depends upon employers' ability to recruit and retain high-quality personnel and support innovation.

By adopting equity principles in hiring and recruiting, employers will have access to a considerably broader skills base. Employers will have to challenge the misconceptions that surround equity, help managers accommodate members of the equity groups, create positive work environments, and clarify senior commitment to innovative change.

Credited seniority for members of designated groups

Collective bargaining can play a role in implementing elements of employment equity. Effective 1 January 1993, a letter of understanding between the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool and Grain Service Union and its employers stipulated that members of the designated equity groups are credited with seniority in bidding on vacancies, maintaining employment in cases of layoff, and recall where designated group members are underrepresented within an occupational grouping. Seniority is credited in the amount of one-half of the average term of service of the members of the bargaining units (6.2 years). Posting of vacancies indicates which designated groups may exercise credited seniority rights.

There is another compelling reason for promoting employment equity in the workplace: for Canadian society, it is far more efficient to have a larger pool of taxpayers contributing to prosperity than to have a large group drawing on prosperity.

Training on the job, cooperative education, apprenticeship placements, and education-industry partnerships are excellent opportunities for the employer to develop a diverse labour force.

69. We recommend that employers make a firm commitment to employment equity, pass that commitment on to their employees, and dismantle the systemic barriers that limit their potential workforce.

70. We recommend that local boards play a role in fostering equity awareness and implementation which includes:

- **integrating equity concerns into human resources planning,**
- **providing training in equity awareness and appropriate practices and behavior,**
- **monitoring the achievement of equity objectives and the establishment of accountability mechanisms though labour-management consultation.**

Requirements stipulated in Ontario's equity legislation might serve as implementation guidelines for employers.

"Equity is not a women's issue. It is a management challenge"*

The Task Force on the Advancement of Women in the Bank (of Montreal) identified three major barriers to women's advancement:

- outdated assumptions and false impressions that have become conventional wisdom;
- lack of access to opportunities and information needed to achieve potential;
- changing values in society, pressure to maintain balance with family, community, education, and the workplace.

The following action plan to address these barriers has been implemented:

Get the facts out: Bridge the gap between perception and reality about women's abilities, career interests, and commitment.

Help employees get ahead: Provide clearer and more information about access to job options and career enhancing opportunities.

Reduce the stress: Implement policies to support women and men in multiple commitments to work, family, education, and community.

Make it official: Make managers accountable for ongoing dramatic change toward workplace equality in all job families and all levels.

Specific actions taken to date:

- formalize flexible work,
- increase awareness,
- highlight personal potential, expand career opportunities,
- set goals and measure progress.
- train managers (attitudes and leadership),
- develop people skills,
- publicize job opportunities,
- create people care days,

Quote from Bank of Montreal President F. Anthony Comper, November 1991.

Human resources planning

Human resources planning means incorporating the human dimension into a forward-looking, strategic approach to developing the business. Human resources planning is an essential tool for an employer in thinking about the organization's

needs and designing internal polices and practices. It is the basis for outlining career paths and job opportunities within the firm.

Human resources planning is also the essential element that allows the employer to articulate clearly the needs of the organization to partners in the community - the local board in decisions about purchasing training, the schools in influencing career development curricula through partnership and in planning placements for cooperative education, the colleges in advising on upcoming skills requirements, counsellors in providing them with relevant, timely information.

We believe that human resources planning serves the best interests of the employer, the employees within the organization, and those in the community where the organization is established. The integration of human resources planning into the regular operation of businesses helps bring coherence to the transition system. It facilitates the provision and distribution of information, the recruitment process, and the preparation of training plans both within the organization and in the community.

Human resources planning relates to issues such as cultural sensitivity in the workplace, stress reduction, equity issues, management skills, and career planning (see box, next page).

Employer-employee relations

The policies and practices discussed above, which are aimed at enhancing employability and supporting the transition process, benefit from regular consultation between employers and employees. We view the definition of policies and practices within the firm as an inclusive process, in which employees are empowered in decision-making.

Where a union is present, it will naturally play the role of management's partner in discussing with employees the wide range of issues involved. Where there is no union, labour-management consultation must take a different approach.

Effective human resources planning

A well thought out approach to human resources planning would usually include the following step-by-step process:

- defining skill needs of the organization and focusing on the role of its employees and how they fit into the overall objectives of the business;
- translating overall organizational needs into the skills and competencies that employees require to achieve the objectives of the business;
- evaluating the skills that the organization currently possesses;
- determining skills gaps and determining training needs;
- developing and planning formal and informal training objectives to be incorporated into the everyday life of the business;
- cultivating employer-worker working relationships to execute training effectively;
- evaluating the effectiveness of the training program in meeting organizational needs.

The level of complexity and sophistication of the planning and training process will vary greatly depending upon the size and characteristics of the organization. However, an approach that includes these steps will be effective, whether it is applied intuitively by the owner of a small firm or articulated in a full-fledged corporate plan in large firms.

Source: *Statement on Training and Education Policy for the Business Community in Canada,* CLFDB Business Liaison Group, Ottawa, 1993, p.24.

Employer-employee relations are defined by the wide scope of labour-management discussions. Drawing from previous sections, the following items might be included:

- wages (level and structure), pay equity;
- introduction of new technology and its impact on the organization of work;
- training (needs assessment, access);
- equity issues;
- human resources planning and career opportunities;
- hiring and separation practices;
- work time, flexibility in relation to family responsibilities and individual constraints, paid leave.

Conclusion: a human resources standard

Excellence in human resources management is a key determinant of an organization's economic success. It is critical in enhancing employability of Canadians. Employers should strive for excellence for their own benefit and that of all Canadians.

71. We recommend that the CLFDB establish a standard for excellence in human resources practices. The standard would describe desirable practices in a number of complementary areas, such as:

- **human resources planning;**
- **providing labour market information and contributing to local employment opportunities databases;**
- **being an equity employer;**
- **providing training to employees;**
- **contributing to cooperative education and business-education partnerships; and**
- **contributing to business-labour harmony.**

Achievement of the standard would be publicly acknowledged locally and nationally by the presentation of a certificate.

Appendix A: Experts consulted by the Task Force

Lynne BEZANSON	(career and employment counselling) Executive Director Canadian Guidance and Counselling Foundation
Ron CONLON	(prior learning assessment) First Nations Technical Institute
Sandra DOBROWOLSKY	(community-based training) Executive Director Ontario Network of Employment and Skills Training Projects, Toronto
Sid GILBERT	(School Leavers Survey) Professor of Sociology and Anthropology University of Guelph
Sue HALPIN	(cooperative education) National Resourcing Centre Northern Telecom
Sue HARPER	(cooperative education) Coordinator of Career Education Program Surrey School District, BC
Doug HIGGINS	(School Leavers Survey) Education Division Statistics Canada
Gail KOVACS	(career and employment counselling) President, Career Probe Inc. and Canadian Association of Rehabilitation Personnel
Margaret LAING	(graduate survey) Senior Research and Policy Analyst Canadian Labour Force Development Board
Marileen McCORMICK	(career and employment counselling) Executive Director Native Employment Services of Winnipeg
Danny MALLETT	(cooperative education) National Coordinator Canadian Labour Congress
Jim O'CONNOR	(cooperative education) Executive Director CCWEAC's National Co-operative Education Centre
Hilda POLLARD	(cooperative education) Co-operative Education Consultant Division of Program Development Department of Education, Newfoundland

Gay RICHARDSON	(overview of transition issues) Director Employment and Immigration Analysis Policy and Program Analysis Strategic Policy and Planning Human Resources Development
Roland W. SCHNIPPERING	(education and school-to-work transitions) Coordinator Training and Development with the Human Resources Department of Siemens Electric Ltd.
Wendy SWEDLOVE	(occupational standards) Senior Policy Advisor Tourism Industry Canada
Jim WILSON	(cooperative education) Director of Co-operative Education University of Waterloo
Paul ZAKOS	(prior learning assessment) First Nations Technical Institute
Elaine ZINMANMADOFF	(assessment of foreign credentials) Chef de la Division des équivalences Ministère des Communautés culturelles et de l'Immigration Gouvernement du Québec

Appendix B: Summaries of reports commissioned for the Task Force*

Women making transitions

Ingrid WELLMEIER, Researcher

This report contains a list of the barriers women face: a literature review of barriers and a summary statement; the principles, objectives, and training criteria for women's programming; case studies of four transition programs for women in Canada and 20 recommendations to the Task Force.

Literature review

Literature review For over 20 years, women have been working to establish training programs to give women access to the full range of occupations, apprenticeship training, and college and university programs to end their concentration in the lowest paying occupations in service and clerical work. Research reports that deal with the barriers women face with respect to training are listed. A summary statement of barriers is presented under the headings access or entry issues, financial and other necessary supports, and quality and usefulness of the programs.

Access or entry issues: Funding, lack of information, physical barriers, eligibility and insufficient training opportunities, sexism, racism, language barriers.

Financial and other necessary supports: Lack of income support, child care, transportation, emotional support.

Quality and usefulness of the programs: No coordination between training and the economy; discriminatory attitudes in counselling; lack of instructional support; inflexibility of curriculum and programs; and lack of access to personal and professional development, skills training for trades, technology and operations work and preparatory programs.

Training principles, objectives and criteria

The report advocates principles, objectives, and criteria for training and educational programming to effect positive outcomes that support women in transition into a full range of occupations in the labour market. Some programs have produced positive results. These "women only" programs have been based on the following criteria, which are necessary to achieve different labour market outcomes for women.

*Copies of the five reports summarized in this appendix are available on request from CLFBD.

Training criteria:

- learner-centered, holistic approach with a broad perspective for economic renewal;
- equity and accessibility;
- collateral supports: income, child care, flexible delivery, specialized learning aids, transportation allowances;
- English/French as a second language and literacy training are part of skill development;
- prior learning assessment to evaluate academic and nonacademic knowledge;
- flexible, accessible, integrated components, counselling, academic and technical skills, academic certification to achieve transfers, personal and professional development, employment skills, work placements, computer literacy;
- high-quality, anti-sexist, antiracist curricula, role models, and trainers;
- portability and transferability of training;
- use of active learning techniques with learners involved in decision-making and evaluation of components and the program as a whole.

Case studies

Five case studies of "women only" programs were chosen to illustrate how the training criteria developed to overcome existing barriers are implemented. *These exemplary programs are not representative of the training opportunities available to women. The success of model programs has been proven time and again in evaluations and follow-up studies, yet they are still not integrated into Canada's training system.*

The programs profiled are:

Women in Trades, Gibsons, British Columbia: The program is designed to provide participants with the opportunity to learn specific trade skills through an integrated combination of classroom and shop training and on-the-job experience. This program meets the national standards and program development guidelines set by the Women in Trades and Technology Network.

Focus on Change/Focus for Change, Metropolitan Toronto YWCA: This program has served sole-support mothers for 20 years. It runs in six locations in Toronto and the majority of the participants are immigrant women. Literacy, academic subjects, personal support, and career planning are focused.

Women in Successful Employment, St John's, Newfoundland: This bridging program began in 1987 with components to allow women to complete high school and enter career paths with goals that are realistic in the local economy.

Aboriginal Women and the Workplace, Fort McMurray, Alberta: This Pathways program consists of personal and professional development, academic subjects, work placement, and employment readiness.

Recommendations

The Women's Reference Group developed 20 recommendations that relate to training criteria for public funded programs. Training programs must provide marketable and transferable skills that lead to progressive learning and access to meaningful employment. Emphasis should be on work-related training in emerging knowledge-based and technical occupations, apprenticeship, and occupations with reasonable career "laddering" potential. They should be available to all women who need them, whether they are underemployed, unemployed, social assistance recipients, new immigrants, or women who wish to move into trades, technical, and operational work.

The linkages between these training programs and the established educational system - such as school boards, colleges, and universities - must be developed and enhanced. The availability of unique learning experiences that are accredited and sequential is necessary to change women's economic situation and limited participation in the labour market. A framework of national training standards would ensure a move toward coherence in a transition system. Consultation with women is necessary to ensure that transitional training is provided in a comprehensive manner.

Aboriginal peoples making transitions

Pam PAUL

A summary of this report appears in chapter 3, in *The perspective of aboriginal peoples.*

People with disabilities making transitions

Cameron CRAWFORD and Michael BACH, The Roeher Institute

People with disabilities experience and often require unique or creative circumstances to obtain equitable opportunities for access to and participation in employment. Public policy formulation and implementation, specialized professional competencies and subsequent services, relevant and contemporary labour market information, and a changed orientation to the meaning of "client-based, disability-specific supports" are critical elements for review and change if disabled persons are going to achieve labour force representation.

Section I

This section defines the term "transitions" in the context of persons with disabilities. An integral factor contributing to successful life-long transitions for a person with impairment is comprehensive understanding by policymakers and service providers of what is meant by "supports" (accommodations) for a person with a disability. This systemic factor has generated tremendous barriers preventing or discouraging labour market entry and employment retention by persons with disabilities. Data sources used for the report are described along with the difficulties encountered in obtaining statistics due to the complexity of factors influencing social and economic stability for people with disabilities. Quantitative information providing an assessment of why labour force transitions are and are not working for disabled people is difficult to obtain because of a lack of coordinated, centralized relevant information, defining the diversity inherent in this population.

Section II

The demographic characteristics of people with disabilities who are involved in labour market transitions are presented. Social policy development, based on a generic approach to disability, results in obstacles because the variation between and within different disabilities has not been considered during program planning and implementation. Labour market policy designed to benefit disabled people is frustrated by the lack of guidelines to permit differentiation between an individual's employability and his or her disability.

Section III

An overview of the policy and program frameworks designed to facilitate labour force adjustments is presented.

Section IV

Key public policy and program barriers and disincentives preventing or discouraging transitions to employment opportunities are discussed. The concept of access and its implications for people with disabilities is an intimate relation. Public dollars are used to fund "seats" in pre-employment counselling, training, and skill development programs, and other community based and vocational training initiatives. Access and human resources development guidelines as criteria for public funding compliance are not standardized, thus preventing disabled applicant access to labour force participation because of the systemic and physical barriers created.

Section V

Some of the more obvious economic costs associated with disability in relation to the labour market are outlined. The criteria for eligibility for the range of income supplements are in conflict with each other. Income support related to requirements of a disability (attendant care, mobility aids, adaptive technologies, interpreter services, medication) preclude the disabled applicant from meeting eligibility requirements for pre-employment training and other labour market adjustment initiatives. There is economic prudence in the commitment to consult and collaborate with the disabled constituency group in the design of enterprises facilitating their inclusion in the labour market. Wherever possible this should be promoted, regulated, and monitored instead of leaving individuals on the economic periphery of Canadian society.

Section VI

Effective and essential program components enhancing disabled persons' transitions to the labour market are featured. Recent attention to the individual learning and workplace characteristics of disabled people has resulted in innovative programs supporting transitions from education to training and into the labour force (cooperative education and other models for career education preparation). Programs that have been designed from the conceptual stage through to outcomes with disabled persons in mind do not receive sufficient study. Analysis of successful strategies reflective of and responsive to the individual characteristics of this population is required.

Section VII

The report concludes with a number of directions for change including recommendations and items requiring action at public policy, program, and service levels. Action on these elements will provide wider mutual benefits and economically viable change.

The observations and conclusions were developed with a view to the interests, mandate, and linkages of CLFDB partners. Provincial or territorial level boards are the ultimate agents responsible for the implementation of regionally responsive and reflective labour force adjustment programming. The report recognizes that many factors operate across a number of policy and program areas that either assist or hinder the transitions of disabled persons in the labour market.

Visible minorities making transitions

José AGGREY, Joanne JOHN, Jacqueline LAWRENCE
Policy, Research and Analysis Group
BRODTOS International Inc.

In this study, we identified a number of barriers faced by members of visible minorities who are attempting to make a transition into employment; assessed the government-sponsored training programs designed to facilitate transition; and examined strategies, other than training, for entering the workplace. The study also contains recommendations for changing the situation and numerous illustrations of the relation between the education levels of visible minorities and their rates of transition into employment.

Among the most significant findings of this study is that although many members of visible minority groups are highly qualified, they have difficulty making the transition into employment. Systemic discrimination is a major cause of this situation. Inadequate mechanisms for assessing credentials earned in other countries is also a barrier, as is lack of proficiency in French and English.

The study describes a number of cases that reflect the effort of community organizations to respond to the situation by providing training programs. Assessment of these programs revealed that when skill development was approached in a holistic manner, participants benefited from the training. The duration of the programs and the fact that participants were required to be UI recipients were seen as severe limitations.

Some case studies revealed that members of visible minorities found that volunteering was a successful method of entering the labour force.

This study's major recommendation concerns the removal of systemic barriers through education and legislation to facilitate the access of members of visible minorities to both training programs and to the workforce.

Getting a new job in 1989-90 in Canada

René MORRISSETTE

The analysis of the *Labour Market Activity Survey* contained in this report is discussed in detail in chapter 2 under *People making transitions*.

Appendix C: List of recommendations

Labour market information system

1. We recommend that the Canadian Labour Force Development Board (CLFDB) initiate the establishment of a national employment opportunities database an instant electronic listing of job opportunities filed by employers. Building from local databases, all job opportunities in the country would be listed along with details about skills and competencies expected.

2. We recommend that Human Resources Development (HRD), through the Canada Employment Centres (CECs), develop a job-seekers database -- a comprehensive listing of all individuals seeking jobs, not only those eligible for unemployment insurance (UI). This database would be electronically accessible to all employers looking for employees and would contain information currently collected by CECs through their routine processing of UI claims as well as information collected from community agencies dealing with clients who are ineligible for UI benefits or need specialized services best provided by these agencies.

3. We recommend that HRD coordinate the development of a hirings and separations database, classified by occupation and industry. This information should be generated regularly and disseminated widely to increase understanding of employment patterns and trends. The database could be compiled from existing sources, such as tax remittance forms for hirings and records of employment for separations, and should use occupation and industry codes based on the National Occupational Classification and the Standard Industrial Classification.

4. We recommend that HRD reaffirm its central role in the labour exchange by making appropriate information on job opportunities, job seekers, and hirings and separations by industry and occupation available to a wide audience in a timely manner.

5. We recommend that local labour force development boards play a major role in the new labour market information system by bringing together all local partners involved in labour market issues and promoting the use of the databases by all partners.

6. We recommend that employers make human resources planning an integral part of their strategic planning and clearly articulate their human resources needs (recruitment, employment projections, job classification, training, standards) to local boards on a regular basis to assist in the development of training and local labour force programs.

7. We recommend that sectoral organizations act as catalysts in the development of human resources planning for their sectors.

8. We recommend that the mandate of CECs include maintaining close links with local outreach agencies to develop and use the new labour market information system and prevent the marginalization of some groups.

9. We recommend that HRD make annual presentations to the labour market stakeholders on the evolution of the labour force and its emerging characteristics. These presentations must contain the information necessary for decision-making at the local level.

10. We recommend that job descriptions in these databases use common definitions of skills and experience that take into account not only education and training but also life experiences that enhance a person's ability to do a job, for example, informally acquired skills, transferable farming skills, parenting and volunteer activities, and knowledge and experience from working and living in diverse cultural, linguistic, and racial settings. These life experiences should be listed as assets in the databases.

11. We recommend that employers indicate their status as "equal opportunity employers" in the new electronic labour market information system. Being an equal opportunity employer means adapting hiring practices and making the necessary accommodations to give access to members of the equity groups.

12. We recommend that HRD, the CLFDB, and provincial/territorial and local boards use the data and analysis generated through the new labour market information system to develop policies, programs, and directions for labour market development.

13. We recommend the creation of a one-stop information system, where individuals have access to all information related to unemployment benefits, social assistance, and employment or reemployment services (such as counselling, prior learning and skills assessment, and orientation to training). This requires coordination among federal, provincial/territorial, and local authorities.

14. We recommend that a variety of information delivery models be developed to meet the diverse needs of Canadians. Attention must be paid to the differences in individuals' capacity to gain access to information.

Income support and other support services

15. We recommend that mechanisms to build up entitlement and eligibility for UI be reviewed to take into account changing working conditions, including the increase in part-time employment, multiple job holding, short duration jobs, low-paying jobs, working from home, and self-employment.

16. To improve the employability of social assistance recipients, we recommend that federal and provincial/territorial governments and labour market partners review social assistance programs to ensure:

    - access to information about services through one-stop information systems,
    - access to high-quality employment services regardless of income support received,
    - a holistic approach to the provision of training, and
    - access to training without losing benefits.

17. We recommend that federal and provincial/territorial government policies and practices, as well as the attitudes of labour market partners toward support services (especially child care, equipment and facilities for people with disabilities, information about support services and their accessibility for immigrants and members of visible minorities), be closely examined to ensure that they are consistent and that they enhance people's ability to make effective transitions into employment, rather than prevent them from doing so.

Education

18. We recommend that the provincial/territorial ministries of education and the Council of Ministers of Education Canada adopt a generic model of an education system that facilitates the school-to-work transition while respecting the existing provincial/territorial jurisdictions.

19. We recommend that the Employability Skills Profile be used as a basis for developing curricula in secondary schools throughout Canada.

20. We recommend that provincial/territorial ministries of education, school boards, and schools develop or continue to develop diagnostic tools and support services for helping youth and adults undertake self-assessments and make appropriate decisions regarding their career paths.

21. We recommend that education ministries integrate into the school curriculum an awareness program on the cultural diversity of the Canadian population to enhance respect for and understanding of the cultural differences that make up our society.

22. We recommend that all provinces/territories develop, implement, and adequately finance compulsory career education courses starting at the elementary level.

23. We recommend that the CLFDB develop a guide to good practices in business-education partnerships.

24. We recommend that local boards identify a network of resources for bringing the world of work into the school system.

25. We recommend that cooperative education be the central component of the transition system. Efforts must be made by all stakeholders to make the present system of cooperative education at the secondary level more structured. All students in the last 2 years of high school should have the opportunity to participate in credit-granting cooperative education programs.

26. We recommend that local boards provide the structure for community involvement in cooperative education by acting as information clearinghouses for multiway partnerships.

27. We recommend that employers provide more opportunities for student placements through cooperative education programs.

28. We recommend that cooperative education placements in unionized firms be increased as a result of management-labour discussions during collective bargaining.

29. We recommend increased communication and cooperation between coordinators of cooperative education programs, teachers, and career counsellors in each school.

30. We recommend that HRD, the provincial and territorial ministries of education, and the Council of Ministers of Education Canada expand the cooperative education system across the country.

31. We recommend that all of the partners in cooperative education make every effort to integrate the learning experience, so that students clearly see the reciprocal relevance of both learning settings -- the school and the place of work.

32. We recommend that future teachers be trained in the cooperative education approach as part of the core curriculum at university faculties of education.

33. We recommend integrating an appropriate monitoring and evaluation system into cooperative education programs. All stakeholders should take part in the monitoring and evaluation process: educators, supervisors, and counsellors in the schools and employers and employee representatives in the workplace.

34. We recommend that key personnel in the education system (school boards, colleges, and universities), private training institutions, apprenticeship programs, and community-based groups establish linkages to create a continuum of opportunities and career paths.

Training

35. We recommend that labour market partners, working through local boards, identify the training needs in a community -- both employers' needs and individuals' needs.

Local boards should assess training needs, collect and disseminate information on skills in demand and training programs available, and guide training delivery.

36. We recommend that training providers (educational institutions and community-based trainers) adopt a holistic approach to training delivery -- integrating a wide range of services to support specific clients' needs and developing a capacity to respond quickly to local labour market needs.

37. We recommend that professional associations and employers ensure that training and career development are provided to training professionals, to allow them to adapt to and support the changing learning environment.

38. We urgently recommend that federal and provincial/territorial governments work together to coordinate training initiatives.

39. We recommend that training programs be made accessible, regardless of income support that candidates receive. Systemic barriers -- for women, aboriginal peoples, persons with disabilities, members of visible minorities, and those with low levels of education -- should be removed. To improve access to training, we recommend that:

    - eligibility criteria for training programs be reviewed and unnecessary impediments removed,
    - counselling be available to all in need,
    - scheduling of training be more flexible, and
    - training be delivered in a variety of modes to meet the diverse needs of the community.

40. We recommend that the federal government restore access to the training system to people not eligible for unemployment insurance.

41. We recommend that federal and provincial/territorial governments fund multiyear training programs to ensure their stability over longer periods. Local boards should playa major role in identifying training needs and monitoring and evaluating training programs to ensure that these needs are being met.

42. We recommend that adult programming and continuing education offered by public institutions and community-based organizations reflect the needs of trainees and the demands of the labour market.

43. We recommend that employers and labour develop national occupational or skills standards in consultation with the appropriate labour market partners, such as government, equity groups, and the education and training community. This consultation is critical in developing standards that are recognized by both the education and training system and industry. This is the only way to establish standards that lead to portability and transferability of skills.

44. We recommend that the CLFDB and the federal government support the development of national occupational or skills standards, where appropriate, and that the federal government reallocate resources to achieve the development and implementation of standards. Federal assistance for training should be based on the existence of standards and should be provided for programs that deliver the skills identified in the standards.

45. We recommend that the CLFDB continue to develop a national standards framework and establish flexible guidelines and methods for the development, validation, and evaluation of standards. This framework should promote the electronic storage and retrieval of standards to prevent duplication and facilitate the sharing of information.

46. We recommend that the CLFDB's National Apprenticeship Committee examine ways to expand the apprenticeship system into a wider range of occupations and develop linkages with the education and training system so that apprenticeship becomes part of a coherent transition system.

Counselling

47. We recommend that a survey of clients -- actual and potential- be made to determine the extent and characteristics of their need for counselling and whether this need is being met in terms of both quantity and quality.

48. We recommend that career and employment counselling be provided on the basis of clients' actual needs, not the kind of income support they receive. This means that the type of needs assessment currently provided by CECs should be available to all those who require it.

49. We recommend that local boards identify and prepare local directories of counselling resources, indicating specific services provided and specializations in specific clienteles including the designated equity groups. If adequate services are not available, local boards should establish them.

50. We recommend that the Canadian Guidance and Counselling Foundation develop a framework for evaluation of counselling, taking into consideration the specific nature of counselling services and their outcomes.

51. We recommend that the Canadian Guidance and Counselling Foundation develop and promote national training and occupational standards for career and employment counsellors and work with training providers to develop a curriculum that allows trainees to meet the standards.

52. We recommend that professional associations and government departments develop extensive in-service training programs aimed at upgrading the career and employment counselling capabilities of counsellors.

53. We recommend the formation of a federation of all guidance and counselling associations.

Prior learning assessment

54. We recommend that prior learning assessment be established in the formal education system to recognize and provide credit for learning that takes place outside the formal system, but results in the acquisition of valuable knowledge and skills.

55. We recommend that education authorities and occupational and professional associations coordinate their efforts and establish national, standard methods of assessing credentials earned in other jurisdictions (other provinces/territories and other countries). This will prevent duplication; ensure that equivalencies awarded by one labour market partner will be acknowledged by all others, and promote mobility. The Quebec model for assessment of credentials should be closely examined as a possible model for other jurisdictions.

56. We recommend that federal and provincial/territorial governments, in collaboration with community groups, establish integrated services addressing the unique, ongoing learning needs of adults. Innovative models must be developed, including counselling, prior learning and employability skills assessment, orientation to training, and flexible learning schedules and approaches.

57. We recommend that all labour market partners legitimize a "skills portfolio" approach to help Canadians progress in their careers. This approach provides formal recognition of the knowledge and skills accumulated through past learning and work experience, determined by prior learning assessment.

58. In light of the number of concurrent prior learning assessment initiatives across the country, we recommend that the CLFDB convene a national conference to share information about current developments, review gaps, and design orientations for the future in a coherent and coordinated way.

Labour market practices

59. We recommend that human resources personnel be trained in cultural sensitivity and equity issues and demonstrate an inclusive attitude in the recruitment and selection process.

60. We recommend that employers clearly and publicly articulate their criteria for recruiting personnel for entry-level positions to send adequate signals to students, parents, and professionals in the education system, and training providers about aptitudes, competencies, and qualifications required for those positions.

61. We recommend that sectoral organizations develop standards, where appropriate, and facilitate partnership initiatives with educational institutions and training providers.

62. We recommend that employers be required to give reasonable advance notice to employees being permanently laid off. Recommendation 3 of the Task Force on Labour Adjustment is fully supported.

63. We recommend that employers assist employees, who are affected by permanent layoff, in the transition process by allowing them time to pursue assessment, counselling, and training.

64. We recommend that employers consult workers or their representatives when reorganizing the workplace.

65. We recommend that employers examine their schedule of operations with a view to offering flexible working arrangements to workers.

66. Because the assessment and monitoring of employer-based training is of utmost importance, we recommend that the CLFDB undertake research to develop a standard approach to recording employer -- based training activities.

67. We recommend that employers, in consultation with workers or their representatives, develop and regularly update a training plan.

68. Although employers are responsible for providing training in occupation-related skills, we recommend that public funding be available to assist employers in upgrading the basic skills and literacy of their workforce.

69. We recommend that employers make a firm commitment to employment equity, pass that commitment on to their employees, and dismantle the systemic barriers that limit their potential workforce.

70. We recommend that local boards play a role in fostering equity awareness and implementation which includes:

- integrating equity concerns into human resources planning,
- providing training in equity awareness and appropriate practices and behavior,
- monitoring the achievement of equity objectives and the establishment of accountability mechanisms though labour-management consultation.

71. We recommend that the CLFDB establish a standard for excellence in human resources practices. The standard would describe desirable practices in a number of complementary areas, such as:

- human resources planning;
- providing labour market information and contributing to local employment opportunities databases;
- being an equity employer;
- providing training to employees;
- contributing to cooperative education and business-education partnerships; and
- contributing to business-labour harmony.

Achievement of the standard would be publicly acknowledged locally and nationally by the presentation of a certificate.

Acronyms and abbreviations

CANARIE	Canadian Network for the Advancement of Research, Industry and Education
CAVEWA	Canadian Association for Vocational Evaluation and Work Adjustment
CECs	Canada Employment Centre
CLFDB	Canadian Labour Force Development Board
CLMPC	Canadian Labour Market and Productivity Centre
CMEC	Council of Ministers of Education, Canada
COPS	Canadian Occupational Projection System
DRCD	Canadian Rehabilitation Council for the Disabled
ESA	Employability Skills Assessment
ESP	Employability Skills Profile
FNTI	First Nations Technical Institute
HRD	Human Resources Development
LMAS	Labour Market Activity Survey
NOC	National Occupation Classification
NPAC	National Professional Associations Committee
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PLA	Prior Learning Assessment
SLID	Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics
UI	Unemployment Insurance
UIDU	Unemployment Insurance Development Uses
WITT	Women In Trades and Technology