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**Chilliwack
Community Services**

"Bridge to Your Future"

**Employment Readiness Assessment Tool Kit for
Skilled Immigrants Moving to BC**

Chilliwack Community Services
45938 Wellington Avenue
Chilliwack, BC V2P 2C7
Tel: (604) 792-4267
Fax: (604) 792-6575

E-mail neavea@comserv.bc.ca
www.comserv.bc.ca

BRIDGE TO YOUR FUTURE

Employment Readiness Assessment Tool Kit for Skilled Immigrants Moving to BC

Prepared for Chilliwack Community Services
by Sheila Wallace and Associates
smwallac@dowco.com

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Are you a skilled immigrant who is, or will be looking for work in British Columbia?

This tool kit was created to help you prepare to seek work in BC **before you leave** your country, and **after you have landed**.

- **Before you leave your country**

You are filled with hopes and dreams of a new life in Canada. You may not know it can be **very difficult to find work in your occupation** in Canada. It may take **months, even years**, to find work, so you need to prepare as much as you can **before you leave**. While you are waiting in your country for the immigration process to be completed (1 - 2 years) - use this tool kit to start your job search. Once you are in Canada, you will be facing the challenge of finding work and supporting your family. You will be **spending your money to survive**, dealing with the **many adjustments to a new culture and new ways of communicating**. So prepare yourself while you are **still working and earning an income in your country**.

- **After arriving in Canada**

You may discover it is far more difficult to find work than you thought it would be and you may be feeling confused and frustrated. Use this tool kit to help you connect to **the resources and information** you need to **support you in your search for work** in BC.

Did you know?

Your ability to speak, listen, read and write English is the most critical factor to be successful in the settlement process. **Focus your efforts on developing strong language skills, it is essential to finding work, especially in a skilled profession. You must be able to communicate fluently in spoken English for most professional occupations.**

Predictors of Success

Your success in finding a job in your occupation depends upon many things. Some things you can control and some you cannot control. Preparing to find a job in BC **requires a lot of research before you leave your country. There is never a guarantee that you will find a job in your occupation in BC, however those immigrants who do find work were well prepared before leaving their country.** They:

- ❖ **Made sure they had the appropriate level of english, in listening, speaking, reading and writing**, to work in their occupation before coming to BC
- ❖ **Had a good knowledge of labour market issues** such as:
 - Where to find occupational information, what qualifications are required in BC and what other positions they are qualified for if they cannot get work at their current level
 - Which occupations are in demand in BC and had contacted employers for information about positions for their occupation
- ❖ **Know how to have their credentials evaluated**, know what their professional associations, licensing bodies and trades organizations require from them, and they had all the necessary documentation with them when they landed in BC.
- ❖ **Had a good knowledge of how to job search in BC**, in particular:
 - How to apply for work
 - How to approach employers and market themselves successfully
 - How to network effectively and how to meet people that can help them
 - How to make use of existing links to their cultural communities, families and colleagues
- ❖ **Had begun making contact with people** and local community resources that could help them with all aspects of settlement, upgrading and language training
- ❖ **Had an awareness of Canadian cultural norms** in the workplace, in business and in social situations and had a good level of knowledge about BC.
- ❖ **Are computer literate**
- ❖ **Maintained a positive, optimistic attitude**

DO YOUR RESEARCH

Successfully finding work in BC takes a lot of research on your part. **Use this tool kit** to guide your research and help you thoroughly prepare for success.

Employment Readiness Matrix

The six areas of preparation in this matrix are taken from the "**Predictors of Success**" on the previous page. Each area of preparation is divided into **levels numbered from 1 to 5**. Review each **area of preparation** and discover **what you need to do** to prepare for your search for work. **The higher level** you achieve, the **better prepared you are** to search for work in your occupation in BC.

You can download and print this matrix to use as a guide while you complete the steps in the matrix.

You can start anywhere on the matrix.

1) Pick an Area of Preparation to start.

2) Read the statement in each level and tick in the box that describes you at this time. This is your level of **readiness in that Area of Preparation**.

3) If you are using this tool online, Click on the next level of readiness (example - if you are at level 3 now, click on level 4) and you will be able to review web sites and complete self assessments to assist you to move to the next level. If you are using this in paper form, go to the page indicated to work on that level of readiness.

4) Record your work as you go through the tool kit and strive to complete Readiness Level 5 in all areas of preparation.

You may not be able to do complete all the tasks in each level while you are still in your country. (example - Canadian work experience) You can continue to use this matrix to measure your progress once you have landed in Canada.

AREAS OF PREPARATION	Readiness Level 1	Readiness Level 2	Readiness Level 3	Readiness Level 4	Readiness Level 5
English Language	<input type="checkbox"/> I don't know my English language level page 8	<input type="checkbox"/> I know my Canadian Language Benchmarks English level, now I need to practice my English Page 11	<input type="checkbox"/> I have contacted my professional/trade association and know the English test required for my occupation page 12	<input type="checkbox"/> I passed the required English test for my profession or trade and have the official test documents page 13	<input type="checkbox"/> I have practiced my spoken English and others can understand my English page 13
Where are the jobs in my occupation? (Labour Market Information)	<input type="checkbox"/> I don't know what my occupation is called in BC page 14	<input type="checkbox"/> I know what my occupation is called in BC and I know which other related occupations I have the transferable skills to do page 14	<input type="checkbox"/> I have found the regions of BC where my occupation is in demand and I know what I am likely to be paid to start page 17	<input type="checkbox"/> I know the main employers in BC in my profession/ trade. Page 17	<input type="checkbox"/> I have contacted several employers and I know what they expect from me when I apply for work page 17
Credential Recognition	<input type="checkbox"/> I don't know if my occupation is regulated in BC page 18	<input type="checkbox"/> I have contacted the provincial regulatory body for my profession or trade and I know what steps to take to be able to practice in BC page 21	<input type="checkbox"/> I have contacted employers in BC and I know what jobs I am qualified to do in my occupational area before and after my credentials are recognized page 23	<input type="checkbox"/> I have contacted the credentialing organizations in BC, and I know the process, cost and time required to get my credentials approved page 23	<input type="checkbox"/> I have collected all the required documents (transcripts, reference letter etc) required for credential process page 24
How do I Look for Work in BC? (Job Search Strategies)	<input type="checkbox"/> I don't know how to look for work in BC Page 25	<input type="checkbox"/> I have reviewed several career web sites. I know how to do a resume and cover letter to apply for work. I can describe my skills and experience to employers so they will understand page 25	<input type="checkbox"/> I am using different ways to search for a work in BC in my profession/trade. I am researching specific job search skills training for professionals page 28	<input type="checkbox"/> I am actively networking through my occupational associations, local employment agencies, business organizations, friends and colleagues page 28	<input type="checkbox"/> I know what employers expect in the workplace. I can describe my work skills and my personal skills to employers page 29
Community Resources	<input type="checkbox"/> I don't know anything about the community I am moving to page 31	<input type="checkbox"/> I have researched the facts about the community I am moving page 32	<input type="checkbox"/> I know the names of immigrant services agencies in my new community page 32	<input type="checkbox"/> I know where to get English language training and settlement assistance. Page 33	<input type="checkbox"/> I have contacted the settlement worker and I know how to prepare to move to my community page 33
Canadian Culture	<input type="checkbox"/> I don't know anything about Canadian culture page 34	<input type="checkbox"/> I have looked at several Canadian web sites about Canadian culture and workplace practices page 34	<input type="checkbox"/> I have completed the Canadian citizenship practice test page 35	<input type="checkbox"/> I have read books on BC and have read newspapers from cities in BC page 35	<input type="checkbox"/> I feel confident I know enough about BC to settle there successfully page 35

English Language Assessment Websites

I don't know what my English level is

Your ability to listen, speak, read and write English is probably the most important factor in gaining employment in BC. Skilled immigrants have told us their fluency in spoken English was critical to their success in finding a job in their occupation.

The following self-assessment is based on **Canadian Language Benchmarks Levels (CLB)** of English skill. This assessment is used in Canada, to test the English skills of new immigrants so they can be referred into the correct level of English classes. This is **not a test for your occupation**. If you want to check the English required for your occupation, click on **Credential Recognition, page 18** find your occupation and call your association.

English Language Assessment

To determine your English level, read each of the statements below and choose which level High, Moderate or Basic best describes how you communicate in English now. Then click on the web links to practice and improve your English.

	HIGH	MODERATE	BASIC
	You can communicate effectively in most social and work situations.	You can use English with people you know, people you don't know, and at work.	You know some English
Read	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you follow main ideas, key words and important details in a two to three-page text on a familiar topic? • Do you read newspaper and magazine articles, easy fiction stories or academic and business materials? • Can you find the information you are looking for in items such as recipes, maps or on forms? • Can you find facts, attitudes and opinions in items that you are reading? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you read and understand the words and follow the main ideas and details in plain English? • Can you read printed or handwritten notes, memos, letters or schedules? • Can you learn new facts by reading in English? • Do you use a simple English dictionary? <p>http://www.english-online.org.uk/toefl/toefl_read5.htm</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you read some things in English, for example a newspaper, a sales flyer, coupon or some things in a newspaper? • Do you use an English dictionary often? • Do you practice English by reading it? • Can you understand some English when you read it silently and slowly? <p>http://www.english-online.org.uk/ket/reading/ketp1_1.htm</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you read in English for information, to learn the language and to develop reading skills? • Do you use an English dictionary to learn new words with? <p>http://www.english-online.org.uk/prof/reading/profred1_d.htm</p>		
Speak	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you confidently have conversations in social situations and at work? • Can you have conversations with others about ideas or concepts? • Can you describe and explain things and share your opinions? • Do others usually understand you? • Do you speak English fairly easily? <p>http://www.collegeem.qc.ca/cemdept/anglais/diagnose.htm</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you talk about t yourself and your needs? • Can you ask and understand questions about yourself? • Can you describe a situation or tell a simple story? Do you know enough English to greet you through the day? • Do you need help with English sometimes? • Can you use the phone in English? <p>http://www.collegeem.qc.ca/cemdept/anglais/trouble3.htm</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you have short conversations in English about yourself? • Can you tell others about yourself and what you need? • Can you ask and answer simple questions? • Can you use short sentences to talk about something or to tell a simple story? • Can you talk about something that happened yesterday or in the past? • Is it hard for others to understand you sometimes? • Do you need a little help when you are speaking sometimes? • Do you use a phone? <p>http://www.collegeem.qc.ca/cemdept/anglais/100/diag100a.htm</p>

<p>Write</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you write three or four sentences to form a paragraph? • Can you write business letters (for example: cover letters for applications) • Could you write directions or instructions if someone clearly spoke them to you? • Can fill out complicated forms? • Can read a page of information, and then write a paragraph to describe the main points? • Do you know how to construct a sentence and spell the words you wish to use? <p>http://www.englishjet.com/english_courses_files/test_cambridge_first_certificate.asp</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you write some things in English? • Can you write one- or two-paragraph letters or stories? • Can you fill out job application forms? • Can you look at something that is written, and write it down yourself (copy it)? • Can you listen to someone and take some simple notes? • Can you write some simple notes from something you read? • Can you read something and tell someone else about what you have read? • Can you write down a phone message? • Can you write sentences easily? <p>http://www.englishjet.com/english_courses_files/test_pre-intermediate.asp</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you write some sentences about yourself? • Can you write a simple story about yourself, your family or other topics things you know about? • Can you write short messages, postcards, notes, directions, and letters? • Can you fill out simple application forms? • Can you look at something that is written, and write it down yourself (copy it)? • Can you write something down that someone is telling you if they speak slowly and repeat words for you? <p>http://www.englishjet.com/english_courses_files/test_beginners.asp</p>
<p>Listening</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When you are listening to another person, can you understand their main points, details and their attitude? • Can you follow most formal and informal conversations? • Can you follow a conversation about abstract and complex ideas on a familiar topic? • When someone is speaking, can you tell what his or her mood, attitudes and feelings are? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you follow the main idea Learner can follow the main idea when you are listening to a person or a radio? • Can you understand and follow some instructions or directions? • Do you often need someone to say things more than once to help you understand? • Can you follow simple short phone calls? <p>http://www.esl-lab.com/office/offrd1.htm</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When people speak slowly, can you understand people when they are talking about things you know about? • Can you answer some simple questions about yourself? • Do you understand many English words and phrases? • Do you ask people to say things again to help you understand?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do you find it difficult sometimes to follow fast conversations between English speaking people? <p>http://www.esl-lab.com/garden/gardrd1.htm</p> <p>http://www.esl-lab.com/learn/learnrd1.htm</p>	<p>http://www.esl-lab.com/office/offrd1.htm</p>	<p>http://www.esl-lab.com/roots/rootsrd1.htm</p> <p>http://www.esl-lab.com/garden/gardrd1.htm</p>
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I know my Canadian Language Benchmarks English level, now I need more practice

Here are some more self - assessment web sites to help you practice your English. These **are not official tests**, they are **just for practice**. Do as many as you need to, until you feel confident about your understanding of English.

1) This site is a more in-depth assessment using **the Canadian Language Benchmarks** method. Click on:

<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/skilled/>

↳ then click on learn "How to Assess" your language skills

2) This site will help you with your **listening skills**. You will need to have **RealPlayer** downloaded onto your computer to hear the audio clips. **It can be downloaded free from this site.**

Click on:

<http://www.englishforjapanese.com/>

↳ click on Self-assessment Audio Test to download the listening tests
You can also download other self-assessments from this same page.

↳ "Listening: Self-assessment Quiz" and

↳ "Self-assessment tests of English language" level

3) This site has a **68 question** test to determine your level of English. It is mostly **grammar practice**. This site also has some **audio practice** exercises.

Click on:

http://www.englishjet.com/english_courses_files/tests.htm

↳ then click on Level test

When you complete the test - practice your English by working on all the levels.

When you have completed the English levels

↳ click on Resources at the top of the page.

↳ click on the left side menu - Games Online, Songs on Line and Top Sites. In Top Sites - try some of the **free english practice** sites. Some have audio practice (although the voices may have British or American accents), and many have grammar practice.

4) This site also has some **audio practice** exercises.

Click on:

<http://eleaston.com/>

↳ click on Don't Forget Pronunciation on the right hand side of the page. You can then choose from a long list of audio practice exercises. Try them all to really improve your pronunciation. Once again there may be an accent.

5) This site has lots of quizzes and tests to try.

Click on:

<http://www.english-forum.com/00/interactive/>

When you have completed all the assessments and practice lessons, the next step is finding out **what level of English you need for your occupation** in BC. The **tests you take to complete your immigration application may not be the same ones required to work in your occupation in BC** - you must **research** to be sure.

If you already live in BC the best form of English language assessment is face to face with a trained assessor. The English Language Services for Adults (ELSA) is the program in BC that can help you. To find an ELSA program in your area, click on:

[Hwww.elsanet.org](http://www.elsanet.org)H

↳ Click on Schools

↳ Click on the area of the province you will be living

If your English skills are high but you need more training for employment or academic studies, go to the nearest public post secondary institution and ask for the English as a Second Language Department (ESL).

I have contacted my Professional/trade association and I know which English test is required for my occupation in BC

There are many **different English Language tests** and **each occupation or school may use a different test**. When you know which test(s) you need to take for your occupation or for the academic training you need, **click on the correct website** below to tell you **how to register** for that test and if you can do it in your country. Some of these tests (assessments) cost money and can only be completed in person at certain sites in BC or in your home country.

TOEIC (Test of English for International Communication):
<http://www.toeic.ca/toeicindex.htm>

TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language): <http://www.ets.org/toefl/>

IELTS (International English Language Testing System): <http://www.ielts.org/>
CAEL (Canadian Academic English Language Assessment): <http://www.cael.ca/>
CanTEST (U of Ottawa test - articulated to Canadian Language Benchmarks 6 - 10):
<http://www.cantest.uottawa.ca/>

ACCUPLACER (Placement test for entrance into post secondary institutions)
<http://cpts.accuplacer.com/docs/StudentGuide.html>

CLB (Canadian Language Benchmarks) : <http://www.language.ca/>

When you have completed the official tests you need to take, make sure you get **official documentation of your test scores** and you have **the original or certified copies** needed. Ask your professional association what you need. **Credential Recognition, page 18.**

I passed the required English test for my profession or trade and have the official test documents

Skilled immigrants have told us that practicing your spoken English is more important than getting good test scores. You need to be able **to communicate clearly with British Columbians** to be employed in most skilled professions.

One way to practice your English listening skills, is to tune **in to CBC Radio Canada International**. This is the Canadian Public Broadcasting Network and can be heard around the world on a short wave radio. You can hear many different programs about Canada as well as listen to **the Language Courses**, a series of 15 minute radio programs about life in Canada, and listen to Canadian speaking normally about their life and work. To find out how to tune in Click on:

<http://www.rcinet.ca/>

- ↳ click on the language you wish to use
- ↳ click on either Schedules and Frequencies for the station in your country
 - ⇒ or click on FAQ for answers to your questions about how to use CBC
 - ⇒ or Language Courses - to start listening to Canadians talking

I have practiced my spoken English and others can understand my English
Go to **Employment Readiness Chart**, to record your work.

Where are the Jobs in my Occupation in BC? **(also called Labour Market Information)**

Labour Market information tells you **where the work is**, what the **employment trends** are, and **which occupations are in demand** in BC. The first thing you need to know is what your occupation is called in BC.

I don't know what my occupation is called in BC

Your occupation may **have a different name** in BC than in your own country. You need to know **what your occupation is called**, to find out **what qualifications and credentials** you need to work in your occupation in BC. To find out what your occupation is called in BC, click on:

<http://www23.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/2001/e/generic/welcome.shtml>

- ↳ click on Index of titles
- ↳ click on Key Words
- ↳ then look through the list to find your occupation

To find **other occupations in your area of work** on the same website

- ↳ click on Occupational Descriptors
- ↳ find your occupational group and click
- ↳ click on your occupation and read to find out other occupations you may have the transferable skills in which to work

To get a description of industry profiles in the lower mainland of BC, click on:

<http://plaza.kwantlen.ca/sites/industrialprof.nsf/pages/welcome>

- ↳ click on Sector Booklets

I know what my occupation is called in BC and I know which other related occupations I have the transferable skills to do

The next step is to find out **what the labour market situation is** for **your occupation** in BC. If the unemployment rate is very high for your occupation in the community in which you plan to live, you will want to **consider looking for work first then choosing where to settle**.

To find out about **the labour market in the** region **you plan to settle** click on:

www.labourmarketinformation.ca

- ↳ click on English or french
- ↳ click on About the Local Labour Market
- ↳ pick from the list the province you will be looking for work (British Columbia)
- ↳ pick from the list the Area you will be looking for work (example - Fraser Valley)
- ↳ click Labour Market Bulletins
- ↳ then click Search
- ↳ choose the **most recent** Labour Market Bulletin for your area.

Another source of information is the current Issue of the Labour Force Survey in BC
Click on:

<http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/en/bc-yk/59/jwtc/lmi/menu.shtml#4>

For the Daily Canadian update - Statistics Canada **on economic factors**

Click on:

<http://www.statcan.ca/english/dai-quo/>

The BC government has **developed the BC Provincial Nominee Programs, (BC PNP)** which is designed to allow BC to **select immigrants on a case by case** basis depending upon **persistent shortages of qualified applicants** for their occupation in BC. To see if your occupation is on the current list
Click on:

<http://www.mcaaws.gov.bc.ca/amip/pnp/>

If you want to see **which occupations will have good prospects** for employment in BC in the future, click on:

<http://jobfutures.ca/en/home.shtml>

- ↳ click on "I want to be"
- ↳ click on "Work Prospects"
- ↳ choose from **Current Prospects** or **In the Future**. You will be able to see which areas of your occupational group will be in demand. To see what **the salary and wage** range is likely to be in your occupation click on:

www.labourmarketinformation.ca

- ↳ click on English
- ↳ Click on wages and salaries

There may be **different Labour Market demands in different areas of the province** depending upon the **main industries and population characteristics**. For example in Northern BC, the petroleum industry requires very different occupations than in the Interior of BC, where agriculture and tourism are the main industries. Contact the **local Human Resources Development office** to ask for more information **about the local labour market**. To find the office in your area, Click on:

http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/en/gateways/nav/top_nav/our_offices.shtml

- ↳ Click on the map of BC (1A)
- ↳ scroll down to find the name of your city or click on Search for an Office
- ↳ then type the name of your city.
- ↳ When you find the office in your area - call and ask for the name of the local employment assistance service to help you with your job search

Another web site that lists all the employment support services (non-government agencies) for job search is Netwercc.

Click on:

<http://www.netwercc.com>

- ↳ click on Public Menu
- ↳ scroll down to Agency Search and click
- ↳ click on the City you wish to live in and then under client group - Immigrants

Other ways to find out where your occupation is needed:

1) Contact your professional association

<http://www.cicic.ca/profess-en.php>

or Trades associations:

www.learnandearn.bc.ca

- ↳ click on Skills Shortages Information

2) Read the newspapers published in the area you plan to live

www.bccommunitynews.com

www.canada.com/vancouver/vancouver_sun

I have found the regions of BC where my occupation is in demand and I know what I am likely to be paid to start

The next step is to **research the main employers** in your occupation in your area. Are they large companies or small businesses? Is your occupation usually a government position? Is your occupation usually unionized? How do employers advertise when they need employees?

Again your professional or trade organization can help you to find this information. You can also use the organizations listed above and read the local newspapers. Call the local **Chamber of Commerce** or **Business organizations** by using the phone book

www.yellowpages.ca

↳ click on "Find a business, or type in key word search

or find business links through the Vancouver Public Library databases

<http://www.vpl.ca/branches/LibrarySquare/bus/directorylinks.html>

or search for your industry or professional association by clicking on

<http://www.canadiancareers.com/sector.html>

↳ scroll down to your occupational group

I know the main employers in my profession/trade.

The next step is to **contact employers**. **Call them directly**, or send a copy of your resume (**Job Search Strategies, page 25**), with a **letter stating your skills and experience**. Ask them what they require from their employees, so you know what you will have to prepare. **Most employers will not hire you before you land in BC**, but **making contact is a critical step in developing your job search network**.

Even though **you may be qualified in your occupation**, you may **still not find a job**. Many Canadians have difficulty finding work because they live in a city where the **vacancies in their occupation are very limited**. If you discover there is **not enough of a demand** in BC for your occupation, you may come here and **be unemployed or working in a very low skill job**. Consider **looking at other provinces or the United States** to see if you can find a position in your occupation there. Be sure to research your options before relocating.

I have contacted several employers and I know what they expect from me when I apply for work

Go to **Employment Readiness Matrix, page 7**, to record your work.

Credential Recognition

Getting your **credentials, education and qualifications recognized** in BC is a **very complex process and takes time, patience and money**. There are different steps depending upon your occupation and whether it is a regulated or non-regulated profession or trade.

Assessment of your credentials for immigration purposes is different than assessment for licensing purposes!

To come to Canada, **immigration officials assess your education and professional experience**. You may have been told that your skills match what is needed in Canada in your field. However, you will need to **do another assessment process with your professional/trades regulatory bodies in BC** for the purposes of granting you a license or certificate to practice here. This two-level process has disappointed some new immigrants. While they thought they would be able to practice their profession in BC, the professional regulatory body has a different set of standards. They **may ask you to complete upgrading courses or reject your application entirely**. **Sometimes you can work in your profession without having your certification, but that depends upon the demand for your occupation and the employer.**

Don't know if my occupation is regulated in BC

Regulated Professionals in BC

Under the law in the province of BC, **certain professions are regulated** by a group of professionals in that occupation to **set standards of practice and competence** and to **protect the public**. These professions are **called regulated professions**. In some professions, it is illegal to work without being licensed by the regulatory body. For an alphabetical listing of the words used in the field of credential recognition in English in Canada [click on:](#)

http://www.cicic.ca/pubs/guide/guideEN_en.php

↳ scroll down to the word you need to define

To **legally work** in a regulated profession in BC, you need to **apply to be accepted as a member** of the organization responsible for regulating your profession (the **regulatory body**). The regulatory body will assess your qualifications and, **if you qualify, will license, register, or certify you to practice** your profession in BC.

As a regulated professional **considering immigrating, or recently landed** in BC, you **need to learn about this process before you can practice** your profession. You will need to **assess your situation carefully**. There may be **several steps** for you to go through to work in your profession.

You may have to be a member:

- ↳ at the federal (Canadian) level
- ↳ and/or the provincial (BC) level
- ↳ and/or with your professional association.

For example if you are a physician, the federal examination and licensing body is Medical Council of Canada <http://www.mcc.ca/english/news/index.html>
the provincial body is College of Physicians and Surgeons of BC www.cpsbc.ca

Each profession or trade is different and **requires you to research thoroughly**.

To find out if your occupation is regulated in BC, click on:

<http://www.cicic.ca/profess-en.php>

- ↳ find your occupation in the Canada list
- ↳ scroll down to British Columbia and find your occupation in the provincial list as well.

If you can't find information about your professional or trade association and licensing bodies, search on the Internet using a Canadian search engine

Example (Google.ca)

and type the name of the occupation.

Example: midwife BC

Call and speak to your regulatory body **before you come to BC**, to know which documentation you will need with you to apply to become a member. It is much **easier to get that documentation before** you leave your country. Find out if you **need original or certified copies** of documents and what kind of **references** you need. You can't do everything before you leave your country so make sure you have done everything you can do before you come. It will save you a lot of time, money and frustration.

There are also **organizations for internationally trained professionals in BC**. Contact them for up to date information

<http://www.bcitp.net/>

Some professions have developed self-assessments for their members to prepare to work in BC. If you are an **engineer** - try this site for a self-assessment

Click on:

www.apeg.bc.ca/index.html

- ↳ click drop down menu About APEG
- ↳ click on Internationally Trained Engineers
- ↳ click on Resources for Internationally Trained Engineers
- ↳ click on Career development tools
- ↳ click on Assessment of General Knowledge and Skill Sets

Try this one for the Canadian Engineering Association.

Click on:

<http://www.ccpe.ca/e/index.cfm>

- ↳ click on Immigration and Assessment at the top of the page
- ↳ click on download form

If you are a **nurse** here is a checklist to guide your process.

Click on:

http://www.rnabc.bc.ca/pdf/International_Nurses_%20Fact_Sheet.pdf

- ↳ go to page 7 of this document

<http://www.healthmatchbc.org/>

- ↳ click on Opportunities for Nurses
- ↳ click on Employment Requirements for Nurses
- ↳ click on Immigration
- ↳ then scroll to the bottom of the page and click on to "view a chart outlining options for Foreign Trained Nurses"

If you belong to a professional association in your country, contact it and ask if they have an affiliate in BC or Canada.

If you are a **medical doctor** here is a helpful introduction to the process of getting work in BC as a licensed medical doctor

<http://aimd.bcitp.net/index.cfm?wp=en&page=54>

Occupational facts sheet are available **for internationally educated nurses, accountants, engineers, and teachers** at the following site.

Click on:

<http://www.mcaaws.gov.bc.ca/amip/igp/regulated.htm>

Some professions are not regulated, but **may have voluntary professional associations**. Being a member of these associations **may be very valuable** to help you get work in your profession. Contact them to find how to become a member.

Trades in BC

If you are a **tradesperson** (carpenter, electrician, plumber etc), you will need to know **what certification you require** to work in your trade in BC. To find out about your trade in BC click on:

www.learnandearn.bc.ca

- ↳ click on Trades and Occupations
- ↳ find your occupation in the list and click
- ↳ click on Certification to find out what you need to do to work in your trade in BC

If you want to be able to **practice your trade across Canada**, you will need to see if it is a Red Seal trade. Click on:

www.red-seal.ca

- ↳ click on Occupational Analysis
- ↳ click on your trade
- ↳ click on Essential Skills

To **see if your skills and experience will transfer from your country to BC** you may need to challenge the entrance qualifications for your trade in BC. To find out about challenging the requirements, click on:

www.aved.gov.bc.ca/industrytraining

- ↳ click on Apply for Trades Qualification Challenge
- ↳ Download the TQ Challenger Application Form

I have contacted the provincial regulatory body for my profession or trade and I know what steps to take to be able to practice in BC

Next you will need to find out who the **main employers** are in your occupation. Once again the regulatory body for your profession or trade can give you help in researching this information. Some employers may be willing to hire you before you get all your certifications if there is a **high demand** for your occupation, in the area you will be living.

To find out the main trades employers in BC, click on:

<http://www.tradesbc.org/home.html>

↳ click on Employment Links

For the BC Construction Association, click on:

<http://www.bccassn.com/>

↳ click on Online Directory

↳ click on Region (where you will be living) or Division (which area of trades you will be working in)

You can also click on:

www.construction-jobs.ca

↳ click on Job Seekers at the top of the page

↳ click on Apply to Positions - at the left side

↳ click on Out of Country Applicants - at the left side

To find out how to apply from another country

For information on sector councils, click on:

<http://www.councils.org/>

↳ click on list of councils

↳ click on activity to find your occupational group

In some professions and in some provinces, you may be able to work temporarily in your profession if you are under the supervision of a registered professional. Check with your regulatory body. **Talk to employers to confirm the demand for your skill and the qualifications required by employers currently in your field.**

If your association tells you to take some education or training in BC to be eligible to work in your occupation, ask which institutions provide the training you need.

To find a listing of schools, click on:

www.openingdoorsbc.com

- ↳ click on Program Search
- ↳ click on Search
- ↳ click on Focus Areas and then pick your study subject
- or
- ↳ click on Institution and find the school your association suggested

To know the **English language entrance requirements** for the institution, **contact that institution directly** to find out how you can complete the appropriate test before you leave your country.

I have contacted employers in BC and I know what jobs I am qualified to do in my occupational area before and after my credentials are recognized

Once you know what your profession or trade requires of you, you may have to **have your credentials evaluated** here in BC. To **learn about the process** of having your credentials recognized, click on:

<http://www.cicic.ca/factsheets/factsheet2en.stm>

If you are **ready to start the process**, there are two agencies that can **evaluate** your credentials for use in Canada. Both these agencies charge money for this service.

Before you pay for that service, make sure you have researched what your particular profession or trade needs for credentials, so you don't pay unnecessarily. Sometimes you can work in your profession without this process.

<http://www.icascanada.ca/English/main.html>

www.ola.bc.ca/ices

I have contacted the credentialing organizations in BC, and I know the process, cost and time required to get my credentials approved

The final step is to gather all the documents you will need to meet the requirements of your profession or trade in BC. This may take a few months, and you may not be able to complete the process until you come to Canada.

Many occupations require you to have **Canadian work experience before you can become licensed to practice your profession** in Canada. . Sometimes this can be on a **volunteer basis**, but may **be limited by issues of confidentiality, internship placement limits, or lack of professional supervisors**. This can make it impossible for new immigrants to work in their profession. You may be required to take more education, or start in a lower skill job to get that experience. Do your research to ensure you do not arrive in BC and find you cannot get a job in your occupation.

I have collected all the required documents, transcripts, letters of reference etc. required for the credentialing process

Go to **Employment Readiness Matrix, page 7**, to record your work.

Job Searching in BC

I don't know how to search for a job in BC

There are **many steps** to finding a job in your occupation in BC. Knowing how to find work in BC can **save you time and frustration**. The following sites will help you assess your job search skills. They include many areas of career preparation that you can review, to find the job search section only, click on:

www.cdm.uwaterloo.ca

↳ click on Networks and Contacts
from there you can learn how to do a resume, cover letter and how to conduct yourself in interviews in Canada

For a step by step tutorial on how to use the internet for your job search, click on:

www.surfingforwork.com

↳ click on Start the tutorial

Another great website for understanding how to look for work in BC

<http://www.workinonet.bc.ca/default.htm>

↳ click on Employment on the left side

If you are looking for work in a regulated profession - go directly to your professional association's website to find out how to apply for work in that profession. Go to **Credential Recognition, page 18.**

Attend meetings, seminars, and conferences of **your professional association, trade group or local Chamber of Commerce** to get to know people in your profession, who may be able to help you make connections within your occupation.

I have reviewed several career websites. I know how to do a resume and cover letter to apply for work and I know how to describe my skills and experience to employers so they will understand what I have to offer them.

Now you need to learn how people look for work in BC. You can look for work in several ways:

1) Contact an Employment Assistance Service for immigrants to talk to an employment counselor about job search training, interview preparation and assistance with credential recognition. For a list of all the employment support agencies, including immigrant employment support, click on:

<http://www.netwercc.com>

- ↳ click on Public Menu on the left side
- ↳ click on Agency Search
- ↳ click on the city you plan to live in and then click on immigrants
- ↳ click on Conduct Search

Searching for work as a professional can involve different job search techniques. You will need to know how to **network as well as drop-in on companies you wish to work for, market yourself confidently, conduct a meeting, draft, present and negotiate a proposal for work, create customized resumes, cover letters and portfolios.** Talk to your professional association about where to **take job search skills for professionals** in your area.

2) Internet searching

Here are some good internet sites to do a general job search. For the federal government job bank, click on:

<http://jb-ge.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/>

- ↳ click on English
- ↳ click on Job Search
- ↳ click on British Columbia
- ↳ click on By Area
- ↳ click on Search Now

www.bcjobs.net

- ↳ click on your occupation under category
- ↳ click on region you live

<http://www.jobsetc.ca/>

- ↳ click on Jobs
- ↳ click on Job Listings
- ↳ click on Specialty Sites and then choose your occupational area and click

www.workinphonet.bc.ca

- ↳ click on Find Web sites
- ↳ click on Employment
- ↳ click on Job Opportunities and scroll down to review web sites

For positions in Government, click on:

<http://postings.gov.bc.ca/index.html>

For careers in Health, click on:

<http://www.healthmatchbc.org/>

<http://www.medhunters.com/region/British%20Columbia.html>

For careers in the non-profit sector, click on:

www.charityvillage.ca

- ↳ click on Enter
- ↳ click on Jobs
- ↳ click on By Region and scroll down to the area of BC in which you live and click (or click All Current Jobs for a listing across Canada)

For careers in business, click on:

<http://www.bcbc.com/>

- ↳ click on Links for drop down menu
- ↳ click on Member Companies

For a listing of Canadian companies, click on:

<http://strategis.ic.gc.ca/>

For manufacturing companies in BC, click on:

www.made-in-bc.ca

For jobs in information technology, click on:

www.bctechnology.com

For information on trades employment support centres around the province, click on:

<http://www.tradesbc.org/home.html>

↳ click on Employer Links

3) Contact employers directly by phone, email, fax or regular mail (resume)

4) Network - networking is the process of talking to people about who you are, what you have to offer and what kind of job you are looking for. **Networking is considered the most effective way of finding a job.** It demands time and motivation, but it is an essential part of your job search. The more people know you, the better your chances of finding the right job. To review networking techniques, click on:

www.cdm.uwaterloo.ca

↳ click on Networks and Contacts

↳ click on Work Search

↳ click on any of the three Network options

I am using different ways to search for work in BC in my profession/trade

The next step is to **DO IT**. Networking is often considered the most difficult part of a job search, but Canadians and recently immigrated skilled professionals both tell us it is the best way to get to know the people who can help you find the work you want.

In BC employers like to hire people they know or people who are recommended to them by a friend or colleague. The bigger your network, the closer you get to the employer you wish to know.

I am actively networking through my occupational associations, local employment agencies, business organizations, friends and colleagues

Understanding the Canadian workplace is also important for successful employment. To find out what employers expect from you, click on:

<http://www.jobsearch-in-canada.com/employer-expectations.html>

To see if you have the **Essential Workplace Skills** expected on the job in BC, click on:

<http://www.towes.com/measureup.asp>

↳ click on How do your Skills Measure Up?

Canadian employers often request that job applicants **have "excellent communication skills"**. These are also called **"soft skills"**. These skills refer to **your ability to get along with people, work on a team and deal with conflict effectively** in the workplace. Take a **self assessment** to discover your personality type and what that means in the workplace, [click on:](#)

<http://www.typefocus.com>

↳ click on free assessment (on the left side of the screen)

To download a List of the Employability Skills the employers are looking for in the workplace, [click on:](#)

<http://www.conferenceboard.ca/education/learning-tools/pdfs/esp2000.pdf>

I know what employers expect in the workplace. I can describe my work skills and my personal skills to employers

What Employers want to know:

These are some of the typical questions employers will ask you when you call to inquire about work. Prepare your answers for your conversations with employers.

Why do you want to work for this company/organization?

What skills and experience do you have that prepares you to do this work?

What are your qualifications/credentials, and where did you attain them?

Which certification do you have to work in this occupation?

What kind of Canadian work experiences have you had, either paid or volunteer?

Why should I hire you?

If you cannot find a job in your occupation, you will need to look at other possibilities. If you **cannot obtain certification** to practice in your profession/trade **right away**, because of the time required to complete all the steps, it would **be wise to consider other positions in your occupational area**. Sometimes you can work in **an entry-level position** in your career area, without licensure, while you are waiting for the process to be completed.

Example: Registered Nurse - work as Resident Care Attendant
Professional Engineer - work as an Engineering Technician

You can also explore volunteer work, temporary employment, contract work, part time employment, self employment, job sharing, and seasonal employment.

To find out more about ways people in BC work, click on:

<http://www.jobsetc.ca/>

- ↳ Look under Jobs
- ↳ click on Other Ways of Working

Go to **Employment Readiness Matrix, page 7**, to record your work.

Community Resources

I don't know anything about the community I am moving to

In BC, government services are available to help new immigrants to settle successfully in BC. It is important to know **what community supports** are available to you in the community in which you plan to live.

Where do you plan to settle in Canada? _____

To find information on communities in BC, click on:

www.britishcolumbia.com

↳ click on the area of the province you want to explore.

For a listing of all the cities in BC, click on:

<http://cgii.gc.ca/m-BC-e.html>

↳ click on the city you want to know about.

It is important to know about the climate, cost of living, landscape, industries and cultural activities are in your community. **BC is a large province** and the lifestyle can be very different from one part of the province to another. Again - **Do the Research.**

APPROXIMATE COST OF MODERATE STANDARD OF LIVING IN BC*

Single person

Shelter (2 bedroom apartment shared, including utilities)	\$507
Food (Agriculture Canada's Nutritious Food Basket)	\$207
Miscellaneous (personal/health care, clothing, household cleaning, communications)	\$208
<u>Local public transportation</u>	<u>\$64</u>
Total allowance	\$987

Single parent (excluding costs for child)

Shelter (1 bedroom apartment including utilities)	\$778
Food (Agriculture Canada's Nutritious Food Basket)	\$207
Miscellaneous (personal/health care, clothing, household cleaning, communications)	\$208
<u>Local public transportation</u>	<u>\$64</u>
Total allowance	\$1258

Married & spouse (excluding costs for child)

Shelter (2 bedroom apartment including utilities)	\$1015
Food (Agriculture Canada's Nutritious Food Basket)	\$367
Miscellaneous (personal/health care, clothing, household cleaning, communications)	\$441
Local public transportation	\$128
Total allowance	\$1950

Costs for each child/wholly dependent relative

Shelter	\$201
Food (Agriculture Canada's Nutritious Food Basket)	\$164
Miscellaneous (personal/health care, clothing, household cleaning, communications)	\$96
Local public transportation	\$64
Total allowance	\$526

*from Ministry of Advanced Education web site

http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/student/services/student/apply/how_much/mod_sol.htm

I have researched the facts about the community in which I want to live.

The next step is to find out **which immigrant serving agencies** provide the services you need in your new community. These agencies provide **English Language training, settlement support and sometimes employment counseling and job search support.**

For a listing of immigrant serving organizations in BC, click on:

<http://www.amssa.org/>

- ↳ click on Are You Immigrating to BC
- ↳ move to the end of the page and click on area of province you will be living (Vancouver, Fraser Valley, Vancouver Island, North/Interior)

For a listing of all the **cultural groups** in BC, click on:

www.vcn.bc.ca/multicultural/the_index.html

- ↳ scroll down to find your cultural group

I know the names of the immigrant services agencies in my new community

In large cities like Victoria and Vancouver, where **there are large populations of immigrants**, there may be more services, than in smaller rural communities where fewer immigrants have settled. **Look at the agency websites** and find out if the **services you need are available in your community**.

I know where to get English language training and settlement assistance.

Next, **contact the local immigrant agency and find out how you access services**. Are there employment support services, career development workshops and what are the costs. It is best to **make an appointment with a settlement worker**, who can answer many of your questions, as well as direct you to the other resources you need. **Ask lots of questions**, so you know what to expect in your new community.

You are required to have a **certain amount of money** in order to immigrate to Canada, however, even if you have that amount, it may not be enough to maintain you and your family if you cannot find work in your occupation right away. If you need to take an entry-level job while you go through the credentialing process, it is important to know what you will earn and how much it will cost to support your family. The cost to live in BC is very different between communities - rural to urban and north to south. Talk to the settlement work in your area to find out what the cost of living is and how other immigrants have managed.

I have contacted the settlement worker and I know what I need to do to prepare to move to my new community

Go **Employment Readiness Matrix, page 7**, to record your work.

Canadian Cultural Awareness

I don't know anything about Canadian culture

The **more familiar** you are with Canada as a country and the Canadian people, the **more confident** you will feel in communicating in your personal and work life in BC. To explore Canada and Canadian culture, click on:

<http://www.canadainternational.gc.ca/menu-en.asp>

↳ click on About Canada (at the top of the page)

To hear Canada's national anthem and the correct pronunciation of Canada, click on:

http://onlineedition.culturegrams.com/world/world_region.php?contid=6&wmn=North_America

↳ find Canada on the map and click

↳ click on "hear national anthem" or "hear Canada"

Another source of information about Canada is CBC Radio International. You can listen to Canadians talk about the economic, political and social issues in their country. To find out how to tune in on your short wave radio, click on:

<http://www.rcinet.ca/>

↳ click on the language you wish to use

↳ click on Schedules and Frequencies for the station in your country

I have looked at several Canadian websites about Canadian culture and workplace practices

One way of assessing your knowledge of Canada is to take the Canadian Citizenship practice test. Although you are not eligible to apply for Canadian citizenship until you have been in Canada for three years, these practice tests will help you develop your knowledge of Canadian culture.

www.yourlibrary.ca/citizenship_booklet_Sept03.pdf

I have completed the Canadian citizenship practice test

The next step is to **read all you can about Canada and BC**. Talk to people who have moved to Canada, about their experiences. Ask lots of questions - the more you know and understand, the better you will be able to move into the Canadian workplace with confidence.

To read about other **skilled immigrants' experiences** in moving to BC,

<http://www.mcaaws.gov.bc.ca/amip/iqp/factsheets.htm>

or

www.cic.gc.ca/english/newcomer/welcome/index.html

or

www.walkamilecanada.com

A **newspaper written for immigrants in BC** was just started in May 2004 - it is an excellent resource to learn about BC from the immigrant's point of view.

www.theCanadianimmigrant.com

I have read books on BC and have read newspapers from cities in BC

Canadians have a strong commitment to life long learning - which means our education never stops. Even though you may be qualified in a certain profession or trade, we expect people in our workforce to continue taking training and higher education throughout their lives.

I feel confident I know enough about BC to settle there successfully

Go to **Employment Readiness Matrix, page 7**, to record your work.

Service Providers Guide

As a person providing services to skilled immigrants, you play a vital role in linking immigrants to the information they need to successfully acquire employment in BC. This site is one more tool for you to:

- 1) assess skilled immigrants readiness to seek work in BC in their occupation**
- 2) identify key web links for information on skilled immigrant employment issues**

If you are in touch with skilled immigrants before they come to BC, offer this website as a tool to help them prepare.

How to Use the Employment Readiness Tool Kit

This Employment Readiness Assessment Tool Kit is divided into five sections.

Welcome

Predictors of Success (link to page 5)

This list of predictors was developed from interviews with skilled immigrants, service providers, ESL educators and employers. It is a starting point for discussion with Skilled Immigrants about either their preparation to immigrate (by phone or email) or to discuss their steps to success in acquiring employment once in BC.

Possible exploration activities:

- ⇒ Link directly to success stories (www.jobsearch-in-Canada.com)
- ⇒ Link to the Canadian Immigrant newspaper
- ⇒ Link to Roadmap to Success - MCAWS website

Employment Readiness Matrix (link to page 6)

This matrix is intended for self-assessment of readiness in 6 of the predictor areas. Each square of the matrix is linked to web sites, many with specific self-assessment exercises and information specific to that predictor.

The Employment Readiness Matrix can be used as an independent research tool for skilled immigrants to pursue alone or as an exercise to facilitate a relationship with skilled immigrants while assessing their employment readiness. The concrete, step by step approach to employment readiness, encourages a sense of progress while useful activities are accomplished and new skills learned.

This chart is a printable record that immigrants can use as basis of communication with employers, settlement workers, educators, employment counselors, government personnel and regulatory bodies about their level of preparation. If used effectively the tool will reduce or eliminate multiple assessments between different service providers, as the skilled immigrant negotiates systems here in BC to access information and ultimately, work.

Using the Matrix online or in hard copy

- ↳ Review the 5 step instructions at the top of the Employment Readiness Matrix. The immigrant can pick any area of readiness in which to start. In some areas they may be at level 5 and in some at level 1.
- ↳ Review the levels of readiness and click on the one they are currently working on. This will take them to the explanation of that level and link to web based assessments and information specific to that area.
- ↳ Work through the matrix and assist the immigrant with connections to local resources that relate to that level of readiness.
- ↳ As they move through the matrix, encourage them to collect documents in a file or portfolio to be presented to other service providers or employers as required.

Employment Readiness Web sites (link to page 6)

This begins with an explanation of what is required in each square of the matrix and active web links to key web sites to assist immigrants to move forward in each area of readiness.

The web sites vary in terms of what they provide. Some have self-assessments (English/credentials) and some provide information. Web sites are enhanced with specific "Click on" instructions to direct the person to the exact page of the site that addresses that readiness level.

Please inform us immediately if a link is broken or the steps to the page are no longer accurate.

Service Provider's Guide

Contact Us

Contact Us

Thank you for taking the time to review this website. I hope it was helpful in preparing you to find work and settle successfully in BC. Please email us to give us your comments and suggestions.

smwallac@dowco.com