

LABOUR MARKET

Government of Alberta
 Employment and Immigration
 NORTHEAST REGION
 MORINVILLE / FORT SASKATCHEWAN / REDWATER

NEWS



JOB SEEKER CONNECTIONS

Keeping you working! Charting your career course through rough waters.

In recent years, Alberta has enjoyed the highest economic growth rate and the lowest rate of unemployment in the country. Due to the economic slowdown, many individuals have found themselves looking for other employment opportunities. Even Alberta has felt the effects of the slowdown in the global market, meaning individuals may be facing layoffs or contemplating career changes. So how do you get back on track if your career path has taken a short detour?

Successful businesses rely on a trained, skilled, educated work force to maintain

a competitive edge. In a tight labour market, employers may be forced to hire inexperienced workers with little education or training. But when the job market tightens, employers can select employees from pools of highly educated, skilled candidates.



The Alberta Government will invest nearly \$180 million this year in employment and training programs and partnerships with industry and employers to keep Albertans working. *Government of Alberta Budget 2009*

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Careers in Transportation

This publication has been prepared by Alberta Employment and Immigration. We would like to thank Service Canada for their assistance and insight in the development of this bulletin.

Enhancing your skill set

If you lack the training, skills, or education that employers demand, the impact of a layoff will be different for you than for people with transferable skills and educational backgrounds that make them competitive.

It's important not to jump to conclusions about the educational requirements for particular fields. Research the situation carefully. For example, you might assume that a degree is preferred over a certificate or diploma; but that's not always the case. In some fields, employers are more eager to hire people with practical or technical training than people with theory-based academic degrees.

If your skills are highly specialized in an industry experiencing cutbacks, you may find yourself facing some hard decisions. You may need to move to an area where your skills are still in demand; or you may need to review your skills and identify which ones are transferable to other fields.

Exploring your options and examining your opportunities

During an economic downturn, people often think their only option is to find a new job in the same field. Take some time to examine some of these questions: Are jobs available? Are they located

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where you want to live? Is the economic outlook in your industry favorable? Are jobs in this sector likely to be secure? Are you qualified for the positions you seek? Do you have a good chance of being hired? Do you really enjoy the work? Will having a job in this field help you achieve your personal career goals?

Asking yourself these questions about your current occupation will help you decide what path you might need to follow on your career journey. Here are some factors to consider: If you plan to find a new job, what is the unemployment rate in your chosen location? What opportunities are available for someone with your qualifications? What is the vacancy rate in your chosen location? What is the cost of living? How about the cost of housing? Researching these questions will help you decide if you need to relocate to find employment.

Changing Occupations

If you've been laid off, changing the type of work you do is a viable option. Your new field of work might be completely different or might include components of your old occupation. Here are some questions to consider if you're thinking about making a change: Have you explored quick-career alternatives and done some career planning? Have you thoroughly researched your options? Have you chosen a field that is compatible with your values, skills and interests? What are the employment prospects in your new occupation? Are they better than those for your current one? Are you willing or able to update your training or education to find employment in your new field?

Returning to School

A layoff may present the perfect opportunity for you to return to learning, or upgrade, retrain or even embark on a whole new course of study. There are many options to consider including full-time studies, part-time studies, distance learning, web-based learning, and apprenticeship. Each one of these options needs

Did you know?

Alberta's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was six per cent in April 2009, the third lowest in the country. The national average was eight per cent.

Source: Alberta Labour Force Statistics, April 2009

to be weighed appropriately in alignment with your career goal.

Going back to school, even for a small course, requires careful consideration. To make the right choice for you, researching the ins and outs of each option will be necessary. One of the biggest concerns about retraining is the cost. Applying for a student loan, grant or bursary might be the best option for you. If, however, you are unemployed or receiving Employment Insurance, funding is often available if you meet a set criteria set out by Alberta Employment and Immigration. For more information about learner benefits, please see page three of this publication.

Sometimes, short courses such as WH-MIS, H2S, and First Aid / CPR may be all that you need to upgrade your skills to find employment. These exposure courses supplement job specific skills or provide the necessary certification you need to re-enter the work force quickly. For information on exposure courses see page five of this publication.

Develop, Develop, Develop

In today's ever-changing labour market, employers are hiring people with the right skills and knowledge. Developing these basic employment skills can help you succeed in any economy.

Develop a good attitude. Demonstrate that you are an employee of choice. Coming in late, chatting on your cell phone at work, and providing sub par customer service shows that you do not care about the company or your position. A good work ethic and positive attitude towards your work goes a long way.

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EMPLOYER CONNECTIONS

Work-Sharing

Work-Sharing is an adjustment program designed to help employers and workers avoid temporary layoffs when there is a reduction in the normal level of business activity that is beyond the control of the employer. The measure provides income support to workers eligible for Employment Insurance benefits who are willing to work a temporarily reduced work-week. Work-Sharing Agreements must be agreed upon by both employee and employer representatives, and approved by Service Canada.

Work-Sharing is about:

- helping employers retain skilled employees to avoid the costly process of recruiting and training new employees when business returns to normal levels.
- helping employees maintain their skills and job by supplementing their wages with Employment Insurance benefits for the days they are not working.

A full outline of this program and eligibility criteria can be found at the Service Canada Web site as follows:

www.servicecanada.gc.ca/eng/work_sharing/index.shtml

Did you know?

Employers are generally required to issue a Record of Employment (ROE) within five calendar days from the time an employee is last paid. If you do not have your ROE within 14 days of your last pay, contact a Service Canada Center for help in obtaining it: call 1-800-206-7218.



Focus on... Learner Benefits through Alberta Works

Full time programs:

Alberta Employment and Immigration (AE&I) provides funding, called Alberta Works Learner Benefits, for approved and designated full time programs that can be accessed by unemployed, marginally employed or low income Albertans who are in need of skill training to obtain sustainable employment.

Examples of funded programs include:

- Upgrading (grades 1-12)
- University and college preparation
- English as a Second Language
- Integrated Training (blend of occupational related skills, employability and basic skills, work experience and applied academics)
- Transitional Vocational Program (for persons with mild developmental disability)
- Occupational Training (1 year certificate and 2 year diploma)
- Self employment training

Learner Benefits may include tuition and books and a living allowance. A prospective learner has to meet Alberta Works programs eligibility criteria and have a financial need. Eligibility for funding is determined through an Employability Assessment.

The amount of Learner Benefits is based on the cost of training and the family resources. Examples of family resources are spousal earnings, Employment Insurance benefits, pension, child support payments, savings.

Individuals who are applying for or are currently in receipt of Employment

Insurance benefits may be eligible to apply for Learner Benefits. In some instances the Employment Insurance benefits exceed the calculated training need, in which case an individual may choose to self pay for the program, cover his/her own living allowance and ask to be exempt from looking for work and keep his/her Employment Insurance benefits while going to school. This is called a Fee Payer situation.

Individuals with no current Employment Insurance eligibility, but who have ended their Employment Insurance claim within the last 36 months or received maternity or parental benefits within the last 60

months may be eligible to access Learner Benefits. This is called Reachback Status funding.

Part time programs:

Alberta Employment and Immigration (AE&I) provides funding for part time training, which includes the cost of tuition and books. Part time funding is

available through either Skills Investment Bursary (up to \$5000 per year) or Part-time Bursary (up to \$900 per year). Financial eligibility for both bursaries is based on family's income.

Part time training involves taking less than 50% course load in a semester from any approved and designated Alberta Works program. An example of part time training is taking English 33 and Math 33.



For more information about full time learner benefits and part time bursaries contact a student advisor at the college you are planning to attend. You may also get information from a Career and Employment Consultant at your local Alberta Employment and Immigration centre.

For more information about Learner Benefits, visit the Alberta Works website at www.employment.alberta.ca/albertaworks

Please contact your local
Alberta Employment and Immigration Labour Market Information Centre (LMIC)
to inquiry about the application process for your area.
Refer to Page 6 of this publication to find the LMIC in your region.



Financial assistance for apprentice training

Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training Board Family of Scholarships

www.tradesecrets.gov.ab.ca/forms/publications/brochures_flyers/pdf/AAIT_Schol_Init.pdf

The Apprenticeship and Industry Training Board Family of Scholarships was created to recognize the accomplishments of apprentices. If you have taken apprenticeship technical training in the last year and have at least one period of technical training left or you have successfully completed a recognized pre-apprenticeship program or you were a RAP apprentice, then make sure to check out all the scholarships available to you. Download your scholarship application form at www.tradesecrets.gov.ab.ca or head to your nearest Apprenticeship and Industry Training office to pick up an application form today. Hard copies of the application can also be picked up at your institution's Registrar's or Student Awards office.

Apprenticeship Incentive Grant

www.rhdcc-hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/workplac-eskills/trades_apprenticeship/AIG/index.shtml

More recently, through Budget 2006, the Government of Canada announced major new investments to encourage apprenticeships and to support apprentices in their training. Many Canadians who wish to pursue a career in the skilled trades face financial barriers. The grant is available to registered apprentices who have completed their first or second year/level (or equivalent) in an apprenticeship program in one of the Red Seal trades, on or after January 1, 2007.

The AIG complements budget tax mea-

asures, available through the Canada Revenue Agency that offset the cost of tools for tradespeople and provide incentives for employers to take on apprentices.

Apprenticeship Job Creation Tax Credit

www.cra-arc.gc.ca/whtsnw/pprntcshp-eng.html

The Apprenticeship Job Creation Tax Credit is a non-refundable tax credit equal to 10% of the eligible salaries and wages payable to eligible apprentices in respect of employment after May 1, 2006. The maximum credit is \$2,000 per year for each eligible apprentice. For detailed information, refer to Apprenticeship Job Creation Tax Credit at www.cra-arc.gc.ca/whtsnw/pprntcshp-eng.html.

Tradesperson's Tools Deduction

www.cra-arc.gc.ca/whtsnw/tls-eng.html

The Tradesperson's Tools Deduction provides employed tradespersons with an annual deduction of up to \$500 to help cover the cost of new tools necessary to their trade. For detailed information, refer to Tradesperson's Tools Deduction www.cra-arc.gc.ca/whtsnw/tls-eng.html

Apprenticeship Completion Grant

www.rhdcc-hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/workplac-eskills/trades_apprenticeship/ACG/index.shtml

The Apprenticeship Completion Grant (ACG) is a \$2,000 taxable cash grant for apprentices who complete their apprenticeship training and obtain Red Seal endorsement or a provincial or territorial Certificate of Qualification in a designated Red Seal trade.

Apprentices will be able to apply for the Apprenticeship Completion Grant in July 2009 with eligibility made retroactive to January 1, 2009.

The ACG builds on the existing Apprenticeship Incentive Grant (AIG) and provides an additional incentive for Canadians to finish their training and launch rewarding careers in the skilled trades.



Disability Related Employment Supports (DRES)

DRES is a program that is designed to address a disability related barrier to training or employment in order to level the playing field for a person with a diagnosed permanent disability. This program does not pay for tuition or living costs. An example of DRES workplace support can be a worksite modification such as a ramp to accommodate an employee in a wheelchair. An example of DRES educational support can be specialized computer software for a person with a learning disability.

For more information about DRES funding, contact your local Alberta Employment and Immigration centre and ask for a Career and Employment Consultant.



Child Support Services (CSS)

Child Support Services helps low income single parents and parents of blended families to negotiate child support agreements or obtain court orders for child support payment from the non-custodial parent. The agreements or court orders are registered with the Alberta Justice for enforcement and collection.

For more information about the CSS program, contact your local Alberta Employment and Immigration centre and ask for a Child Support Worker.

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Develop your skills. If your company offers any type of training to increase your skill set, use the opportunity. The more skills you develop the more indispensable you become. Take time to look at the main skills required in your occupation; what skills do you need to become more current? What skills need a little polishing?

Develop your network. Your network will become your biggest resource when you are job searching. Don't wait until you're unemployed to start developing your network. It is life long relationship building. Networking is about exchanging information – it is about give and get. You might help someone you meet who, in turn, might help you with job leads.

Develop your marketing package. Having an up-to-date resume is critical. Doing a skills inventory to see what you have gained from your past and current employment will help you develop your resume and prepare you for potential interviews. What does your work record say about you? If you have a questionable work history, ask yourself what you need to do at your current job to get a great reference. All of this should be in place while you are working so be proactive and get your documents in order.

Resources for your Journey

Whether you go back to school, change careers, or work on job skills while you're still employed the internet will direct you to the many resources available to help you. The Alberta Learning Information Service (ALIS) website at www.alis.alberta.ca provides valuable information on career development, education options, resume writing and much more.

There are many free resources to help prepare you for the world of work. Your local career centre should have publications on career planning, resume writing, and handling job loss among others. To find an Alberta Employment and Immigration Labour Market Information Centre (LMIC) in your region, please refer to page six of this publication.



Exposure Courses

Exposure courses augment job specific skills or provide certification required to re-enter the work force in as brief a time as possible.

Exposure courses may be available to unemployed Albertans who are job ready except for a specific skill; and who can demonstrate that they will be employed within one month of completing the course. Participation in full-time exposure courses must not exceed 10 consecutive work days. Part-time exposure courses must be completed in six weeks or less. The chosen course must **not** cost more than \$2,500. Exposure courses are not intended for 'career changers'.

Eligible courses are those that provide certification on completion, are a mandatory requirement for a specific job and are required as part of regular duties for a specific job.

Examples of Exposure Courses include:

- WHMIS (Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System)
- Computer courses that augment basic skills and are required for a specific job (i.e. Word Perfect to Microsoft Office)
- H2S Alive
- Transportation of Dangerous Goods
- First Aid / CPR (Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation)
- Drivers Training only to upgrade a driver's license from Class 3 to Class 1 for a specific job

For approval to attend an exposure course a client must contact Alberta Employment and Immigration (AE&I) for a specific exposure course.

For more information, please contact Alberta Employment and Immigration toll-free at 310.0000.

Helping you fund your education

**What is a Scholarship?**

A scholarship is a monetary award based on academic merit or excellence in a specific area of study or discipline (athletics, music, volunteerism, etc.).

What is a Bursary?

A bursary is a monetary grant based primarily on financial need.

Learn more about specific Alberta scholarships and bursaries through: ***Achieving Excellence - Alberta Scholarship and Bursary Programs***
<http://alis.alberta.ca/pdf/scholarships/ScholarshipsBrochure.pdf>

**What is a Student Loan?**

A student loan is financial aid for students and is intended to supplement your financial resources for education costs.

A student loan is a formal financial agreement between you and: a lending institution, such as a bank; the provincial government; the federal government; a combination of all three.

For more information on Student Loans, please contact:

Student Funding Contact Centre

Toll-Free: 1-800-222-6485
Edmonton: 780-427-3722

EDULINX

Toll-Free: 1-866-827-0310
www.edulinx.ca

National Student Loans Service Centre

Toll-Free: 1-888-815-4514
<https://nslsc.canlearn.ca>

Looking for work? Here's some help...

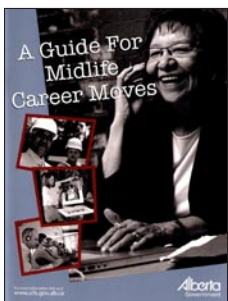
Pick up these and other free publications at your local *Alberta Employment & Immigration Labour Market Information Centre* or download a free PDF copy at www.alis.alberta.ca



Job Smart: Tips for staying employed

This basic guide to keeping a job features information about what employers are looking for in their employees. It includes self-assessment exercises, tips on problem solving and a list of helpful community resources. Written in plain language.

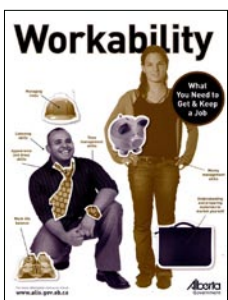
assessment exercises, tips on problem solving and a list of helpful community resources. Written in plain language.



A Guide for Midlife Career Moves

Changes in your work life may come gradually or quite suddenly. Regardless of why you are going through a career transition, this

book for job seekers aged 45 years old or older will help you take stock of where you are now and where you ultimately want to be.



Workability: What you need to get & keep a job

This revised and expanded workbook provides practical information about key skills and attitudes required by job

seekers in today's job market. It includes activities to self-assess current skills and develop the skills and attitudes needed for success in the workplace.

Quick Links: Job search websites

Service Canada Job Bank

www.jobbank.gc.ca

Young Canada Works

www.pch.gc.ca

Government of Alberta Jobs

www.jobs.alberta.ca

Government of Canada Jobs (Public Service Commission)

jobs-emplois.gc.ca

Working Canada

working.canada.com

Canuck Careers

www.canuckcareers.com

Workopolis

www.workopolis.com

Monster Jobs

www.monster.ca

Career Builder

www.careerbuilder.ca

My Job Finder

www.myjobfinder.ca

Job Classified

www.jobclassified.ca

Job Boom

www.jobboom.com

Construction JobStore

ab.constructionjobstores.com

Alberta Builder Connect

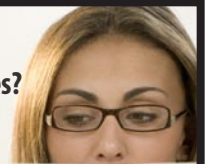
www.albertabuilderconnect.com

Alberta Job Centre

www.albertajobcentre.ca

These links are being provided as a convenience and for informational purposes only; they do not constitute an endorsement or an approval by Alberta Employment and Immigration of any of the products, services or opinions of the corporation or organization or individual. AE&I bears no responsibility for the accuracy, legality or content of the external site or for that of subsequent links. Contact the external site for answers to questions regarding its content.

Looking for work?
Looking for employees?
We can help.



Regional career and employment services

Career Employment & Counselling Services

9815 100 Street
Morinville, AB T8R 1R3
p. 780.939.2353 f. 780.939.6795
e-mail: admin@cecscareers.com
www.cecscareers.com

Careers Under Construction

Market Square Shopping Centre
162, 10404 99 Avenue
Fort Saskatchewan, AB T8L 3W2
p. 780.992.0250 f. 780.992.9264
www.careersunderconstruction.ca

For more information on
Alberta Employment & Immigration
centres and services, call the
Alberta Career Information Hotline at
1.800.661.3753 or visit
<http://employment.alberta.ca>

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Did you know?

It is estimated that every one billion invested in infrastructure spending supports 11,600 jobs across the economy, from engineering and construction to the retail and service sectors. Capital planned spending this year is expected to support more than 80,000 jobs.

Source: Government of Alberta Budget 2009