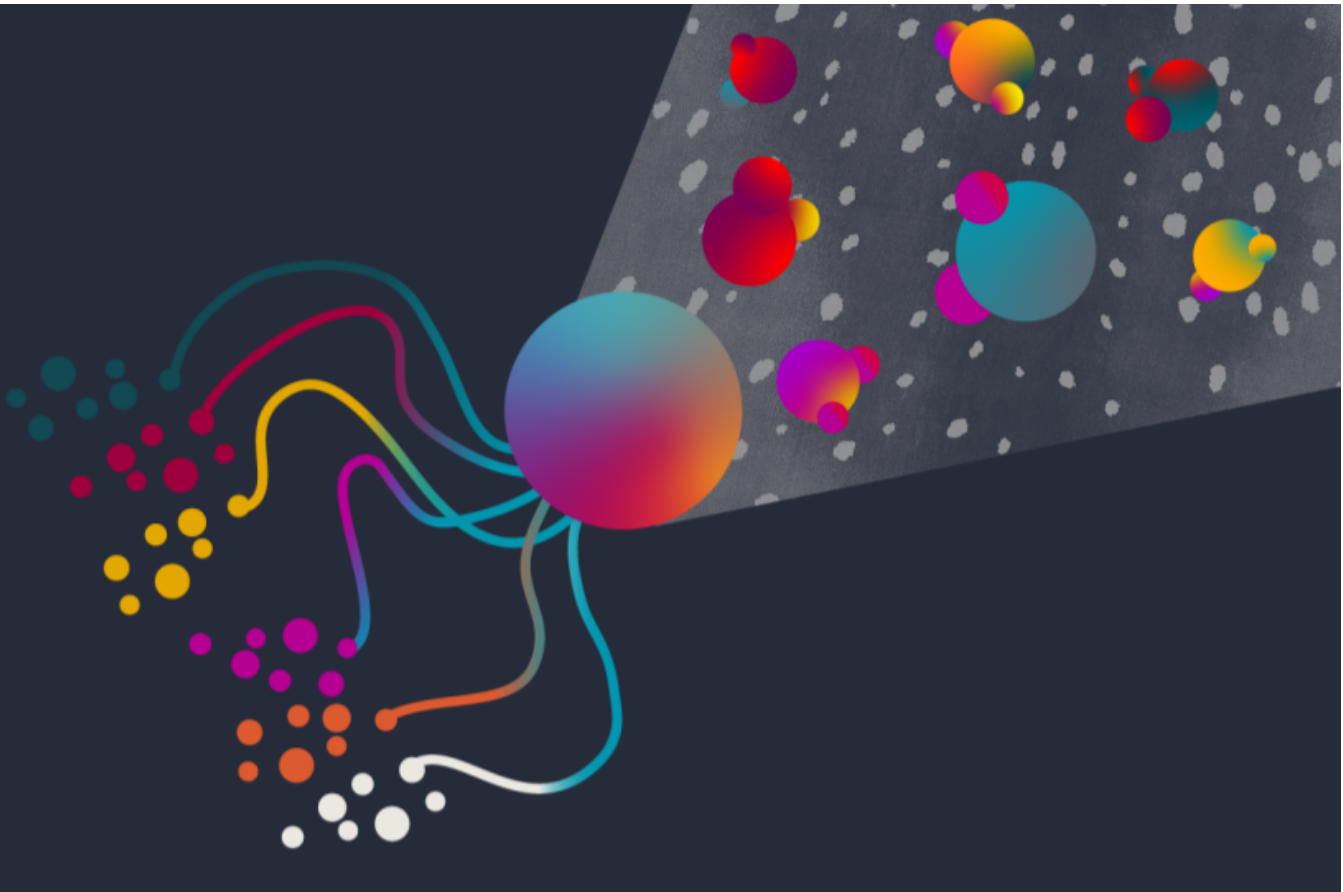


Career Development in 2040



10 Major Changes Impacting the Futures of Work and
Workers in Canada

OCTOBER 2023



CERIC

Advancing
Career
Development
in Canada

Promouvoir
le développement
de carrière
au Canada

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1. Introduction

Looking forward to 2040, what might be the role of career developers? Will “careers” as they are currently conceptualized exist in the same way, or how might they evolve given current macro-level changes impacting jobs and the way we work? The following report explores these significant changes with the potential to shape career development in 2040. The purpose of this report is to explore a range of complex changes that may influence career development and career-oriented services by 2040, to help Career Development Professionals (CDPs) better prepare.

Changes impacting the future of career development are complex, uncertain, and abounding. The labour force is facing ongoing disruptions and shocks that are making it increasingly challenging for CDPs to support individuals. However, in exploring how these changes may evolve over time, CDPs can better anticipate opportunities and new areas of focus.

Given the future-oriented focus of this report, it was created using a strategic foresight research approach called horizon scanning. Strategic foresight is a discipline rooted in the academic discipline of futures studies and provides structured and evidence-based methods for understanding our futures. Strategic foresight is not about predicting the future, but instead explores a range of possible futures that could unfold based on changes that can be observed today. Horizon scanning is the approach used to identify these changes, capturing broad social, technological, economic, environmental, political, and values-based changes with the potential to impact the future of any given topic¹.

The following report outlines key changes impacting the futures of work, workers, and the career development profession by extension. These changes are not meant to be a prediction of the future but to provide critical insight into the range of possible futures that may impact the future of career developers and career development services. While this report covers a comprehensive set of changes, it is not meant to be conclusive or exhaustive. Nor is it meant to be a deep dive into any given topic. Instead, the purpose of this report is to spark thinking about how CDPs may need to adapt in the coming years.

This report is part of a broader research project led by Creative Futures Studio Inc. commissioned by CERIC to explore the following questions:

1. What are the macro factors redefining the changing workplace and career paths?

¹ Choo, C. W. (1999). The Art of Scanning the Environment. Bulletin of the American Society for Information Science, 25(3), 13–19. Retrieved from <http://choo.fis.utoronto.ca/fis/respub/asisbulletin/ASISbulletinES.pdf>



2. What is the future role and identity of career developers?
3. What career-oriented services and supports will people need in the future, and how will current services and practitioners need to adapt to meet these needs?

This report is focused on the first question listed above, while subsequent reports will explore the remaining questions.



Why 2040?

- By thinking about what might change over the next 15-20 years, career developers can anticipate and imagine unexpected changes and new paths forward.
- 2040 is far enough into the future to allow readers to be bold and imaginative about all of the possibilities.



2. What is Strategic Foresight?

Exploring the topic of career development in 2040 requires a set of research methodologies designed to explore the future, which is precisely the purpose of strategic foresight. According to the OECD, strategic foresight is “a structured and systematic way of using ideas about the future to anticipate and better prepare for change. It is about exploring different plausible futures that could arise, and the opportunities and challenges they could present. We then use those ideas to make better decisions and act now.”²

General Facts about the Future(s)

1. “The future” does not exist therefore; it cannot be predicted with any degree of certainty.
2. There is not a single version of “the future,” there are many, so embrace plurality of “futures”.
3. For an idea about the future to be truly useful, it should at first seem strange and possibly ridiculous.

Modified from Jim Dator’s *Laws of the Future*

Unlike prediction or forecasting, the purpose of strategic foresight is to develop an understanding of a range of possible scenarios by exploring a broad range of changes, even those that may not always seem obvious or directly related to the topic. This relates to the underlying principles of strategic foresight that contend that “the future” does not exist therefore, it cannot be predicted with any degree of certainty³. Additionally, strategic foresight posits that there is not a single version of “the future”, but many, therefore the discipline embraces plurality, and typically uses “futures” instead of future in the singular⁴. Lastly, strategic foresight encourages us to lean into unexpected ideas that may seem strange and possibly ridiculous⁵. This is because strategic foresight contends that for an idea about “the future” to be truly useful, it should not be obvious or what we are expecting. As such, the following report explores a range of key changes, some of which are well known, whereas others may seem unusual to include in a report about the future(s) of work, workers, and career development.

² OECD. (nd). *What is Strategic Foresight?* OECD website: <https://www.oecd.org/strategic-foresight/>

³ Dator, J. (2019) “What futures studies is, and is not” from *Jim Dator: A Noticer in Time*. Anticipation Science, vol 5. Springer, Cham.

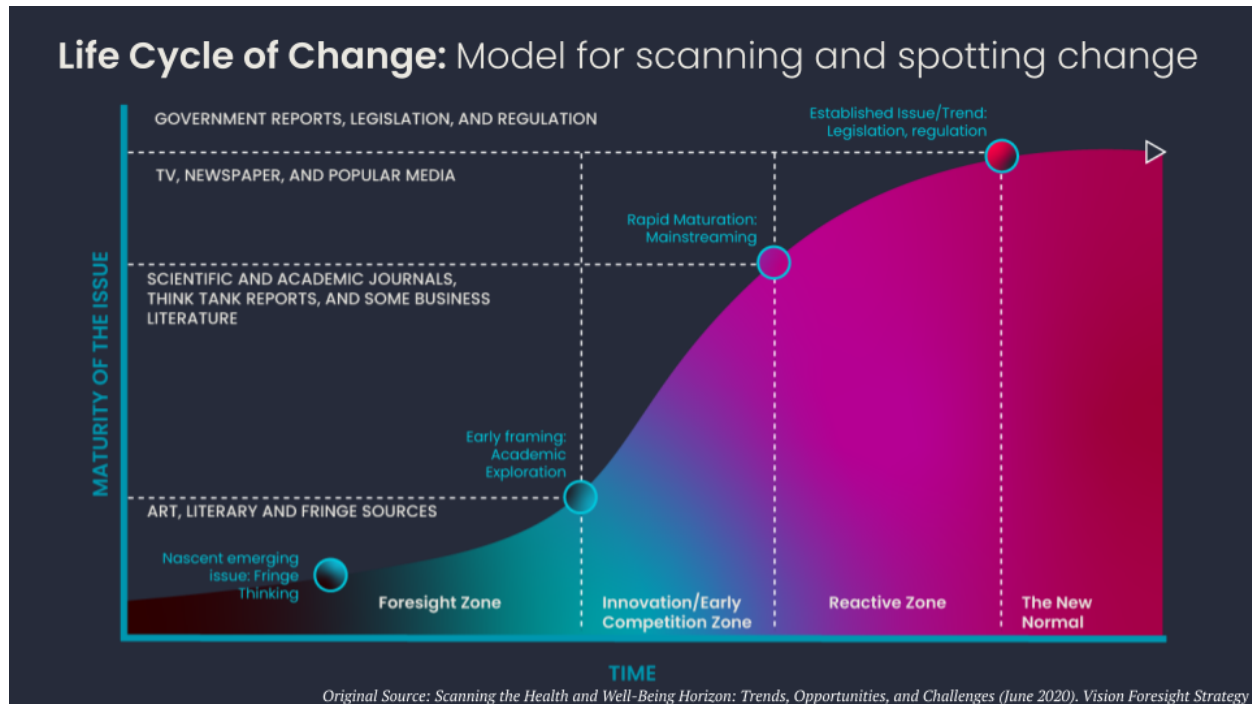
⁴ Dator, J. (2019) “What futures studies is, and is not” from *Jim Dator: A Noticer in Time*. Anticipation Science, vol 5. Springer, Cham.

⁵ *ibid*



3. Methodology

A foundational tool of any strategic foresight approach involves information gathering, in this case, horizon scanning. Similar to literature reviews or environmental scans, a horizon scan is a strategic foresight approach for gathering broad evidence about the future of a topic, based on data that is currently available. Like literature reviews and environmental scans, horizon scanning includes the review of traditional information sources such as academic journals and government and non-governmental reports. Horizon scanning, however, also includes the review of non-traditional information sources, such as patents, artworks, social media, and fringe sources. This is because emerging changes about the futures take time before they appear in more formal reports. In reviewing additional information types, strategic foresight is able to uncover emerging changes and provide opportunities for proactive changes, instead of reacting to what is already happening⁶.

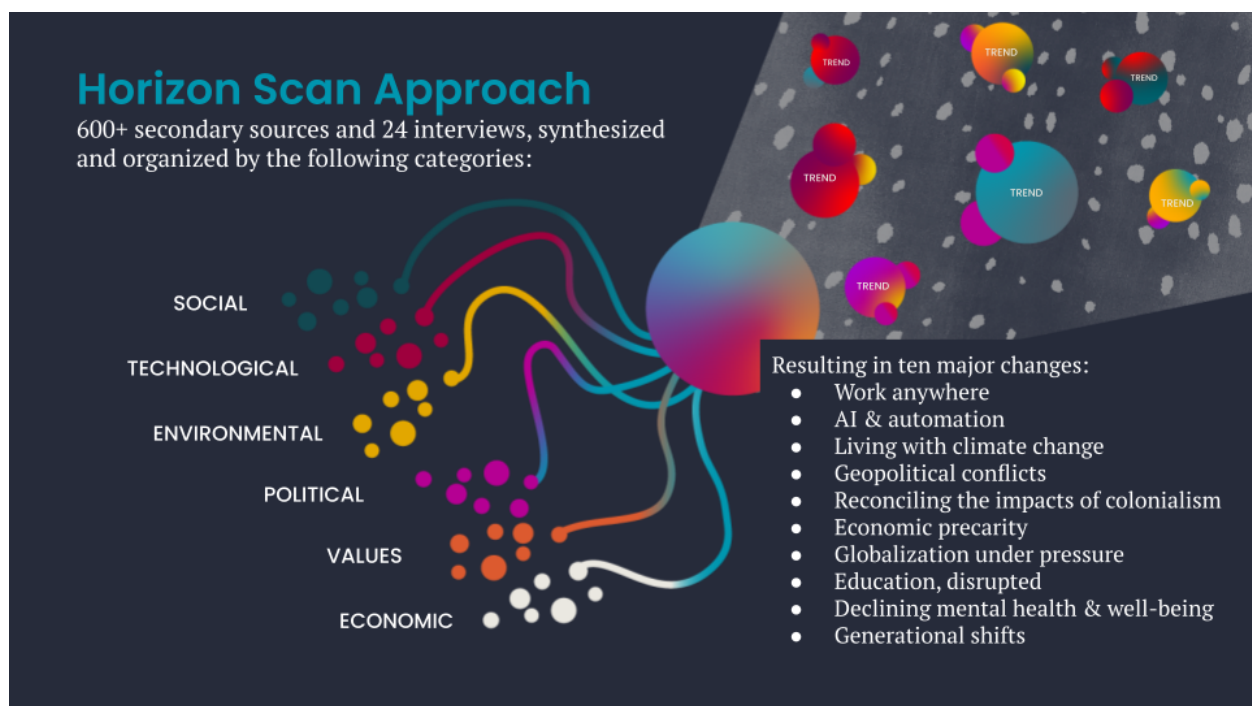


For this report, over 600 secondary sources were studied, including traditional as well as non-traditional publications to ensure a comprehensive review of possible changes and implications. This research was conducted over the course of two months. To supplement this research, outreach attempts were made from coast to coast to coast, and ultimately interviews were conducted with 15 CDPs from British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Ontario, New

⁶ Vision Strategy Foresight LLC. (2020) *Scanning the Health and Well-Being Horizon: Trends, Opportunities, and Challenges*. Foresight for Health. Retrieved from <https://www.foresightforhealth.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/FORESIGHT-TEIs-in-Scenarios-final.pdf>

Brunswick, and Nova Scotia. CDPs were asked to reflect on changes they were observing in the field, and what it could mean for 15 years in the future. To provide additional insight, nine “users” composed of past, present and future users of career development services were interviewed, who were asked to reflect on their possible careers in 2040, and the types of supports they might need. Users were provided an honorarium for their time.

Data collected from the horizon scanning activities and interviews was synthesized into key themes, organized based on the origin of change being either social, technological, economic, environmental, political, or values-based. From there, the data was distilled into 10 major changes, and 32 related smaller changes.



4. Context: Career Development in 2023

Today, Canada has a rich landscape of career development professionals. According to the Pan-Canadian Competency Framework for Career Development Professionals, CDPs “help individuals to manage learning and employment, acquire and enhance skills, seek and create employment, and access community services that support personal and professional growth in an increasingly complex, interdependent and changing world.”⁷ CDPs help students, newcomers, individuals facing multiple barriers to employment, mid-career workers transitioning to new opportunities, employers, and employees, to understand career options and how to get the right skills and training to pursue these goals. They also help people to find work, keep their jobs, grow within their positions, or start businesses. Many also help individuals address life issues that may prevent them from reaching their career goals.⁸ Another project, *Scoping the Canadian Career Development Landscape*, is underway to scope and map who is providing career services across Canada.⁹

Understanding the future of career development requires a deep understanding of the history and current state of career development. Career development and vocational support started in Canada in the early 1900s, largely focused on supporting newcomers to connect to job opportunities, followed by support for World War I veterans. During the Great Depression, community based-organizations such as Goodwill Industries and Toronto’s Woodgreen Community Centre were founded in part to provide career guidance. Later in the 1940s, career guidance focused on hygiene and mental health supports, while Toronto District School Board teachers started developing the first version of labour market information (LMI) to distribute to students. By 1980, the need for LMI was widely accepted, and the Government of Canada responded with the development of the Canadian Occupational Forecast (COPs), followed by a National Occupational Categorization (NOCs).¹⁰

CDPs today are required to develop and maintain a range of competencies to support their work as client-facing professionals. The National Competency Profile (2021) includes the following competencies to support the current career development practice:

⁷ Canadian Career Development Foundation. “The National Competency Profile for Career Development Professionals.” 2021. https://ccdp-pcdc.ca/media/competency_framework_downloads/competency_framework_downloads6.pdf

⁸ Bonen, T., Williams, T. (2021). *Are Adults Making Use of Career Services in Canada?* Labour Market Information Council & Future Skills Centre

⁹ CERIC. (2023, May 9). *Scoping the Canadian Career Development Landscape - CERIC*. <https://ceric.ca/projects/scoping-the-canadian-career-development-landscape/>

¹⁰ Van Norman, M., Shepard, B., Mani, P., (nd) “Career Development Practice in Canada: Chapter 1- The Emergence of Career Development in Canada.” CERIC. Accessed Jul 5, 2023, <https://ceric.ca/textbook/career-development-practice-in-canada-perspectives-principles-and-professionalism/>



Professional Practice

- Professional Responsibility
- Ethics and Regulations
- Client-Practitioner Relationship
- Diversity and Inclusion
- Evidence-Based Practice
- Professional Development
- Health and Wellness
- Communication
- Digital Literacy

- Client Work Search
- Referrals to Professional Services

CDP Extended

- Development and Delivery of Group Sessions
- Research
- Assessment and Evaluation Instruments and Procedures
- Career Guidance in Educational System
- Career Management

CDP Characteristic

- Foundational Knowledge and Applied Theories
- Service Delivery Process
- Learning and Job Readiness
- Awareness of Diverse Worldviews
- Career Resources

Outreach and Leadership

- Employment Outreach and Relations
- Community Capacity Building
- Policy and Advocacy
- Strategic Delivery of Career Development Services
- Career Development Leadership

However, despite this comprehensive range of support, career development services are vastly underutilized.¹¹ While 50% of youth aged 18 - 24 have accessed these services in the last 5 years, only 1 in 5 adults aged 25 - 64 have,¹² which is well below the average for OECD countries.¹³ The Labour Market Information Council and Future Skills Centre found that career development services are underutilized largely because individuals are not aware that these services exist, they don't believe they need the services, or face barriers to accessing career development services.

Recent work from Blueprint evaluated several career development programs, identifying promising new approaches being taken to increase impact and versatility of career services.¹⁴ Building on this, Blueprint and Future Skills Centre's Responsive Career Pathways program is researching, developing, and testing innovative approaches to career guidance.¹⁵ However, given vast and complex changes impacting the future of work, it may be challenging to know what would be most helpful for career developers to be prepared for the future.

¹¹ Bonen, T., Williams, T. (2021). *Are Adults Making Use of Career Services in Canada?* Labour Market Information Council & Future Skills Centre

¹² *ibid*

¹³ OECD (2022) *Career Guidance for adults in Canada*. OECD. Accessed Jul 5, 2023, <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/0e596882-en/index.html?itemId=/content/publication/0e596882-en>

¹⁴ Blueprint.(2021). *Evaluating Future Skills Solutions*. Blueprint website. Accessed Nov 22, 2022 <https://www.blueprint-ade.ca/insights/evaluating-future-skills-solutions>

¹⁵ Blueprint. (2022) Responsive career pathways. Blueprint website. Accessed Dec 12, 2022 <https://www.blueprint-ade.ca/case-studies/responsive-career-pathways>



Prior to COVID-19, a host of broad social, technological, economic, environmental, political, and values-based changes were disrupting Canada's labour market¹⁶ shifting the demand for certain occupations.¹⁷ COVID-19 accelerated many of these changes, with a dramatic shift to remote work and digitalization of services, while introducing new disruptions,¹⁸ further complicating the landscape for career development.

Based on interviews with users of career development services and directly with CDPs, career development continues to be very important to navigate the change and uncertainty in the external environment. There are new models of career development services emerging, especially in the wake of COVID-19, to provide virtual and asynchronous programming. However, overall CDPs feel that they lack ongoing training and a common source of information to understand the range of changes taking place in order to appropriately provide support and guidance for their clients. Some of the CDPs interviewed were worried that their own jobs would be automated by the rapid adoption of AI tools being used for resume writing and job searching. In particular, many of the CDPs interviewed were supportive of a national credentialing system, in order to ensure clients are receiving the same standard of advice no matter where they live in the country.

Understanding these complex changes is daunting, but it's critical to anticipating the possible changes to career development in 2040. Within this context, many CDPs who participated in interviews expressed how they are grappling with their need to adapt, given the complexity facing their clients. The following changes are meant to shed light on the range of possibilities on the horizon, providing insight into how CDPs may need to adapt in 2040.

¹⁶ Thornton, J., Russek, H., O'Neil, T. (2019) *Turn and Face the Strange: Changes impacting the future of employment in Canada*. Brookfield Institute for Innovation + Entrepreneurship.

¹⁷ Rivera, D., Zacharia, J., Rajabi, Y., Willoughby, R. (2020) *Ahead by a decade: Employment in 2030*. Brookfield Institute for Innovation + Entrepreneurship.

¹⁸ Russek, H., Thornton, J., Elias, D. (2021) *Yesterday's Gone: Exploring the futures of Canada's labour market in a post-COVID world*. Brookfield Institute for Innovation + Entrepreneurship.



5. Changes Shaping Career Development in 2040

The following section outlines 10 major changes shaping the futures of work, workers, and career development in Canada. For each change, the nature of the change is described, as well as high-level implications for CDPs in 2040. Additionally, a series of more specific and related changes are provided to explore in more detail how this change may exist or evolve. These more specific changes may be isolated or marginal in comparison to the 10 major changes, however the purpose of their inclusion is to illustrate the range of dynamics, uncertainty and complexity inherent in these changes. While the changes are described in a way that suggests directionality, it is important to remember that they are not a prediction, but an exploration of what might be.

In reviewing these major changes and their related elements, readers are encouraged to consider the following reflection questions:

- What if this change accelerated? What might it mean for CDPs and career-oriented services?
- Where can we see examples of this change already happening? What can we learn from this?
- What do we need to do differently today, to prepare for this possible future?

10 major changes shaping the futures of work, workers, and career development in Canada

1. **WORK ANYWHERE:** COVID-19 accelerated a transition to remote work, creating conditions for working from anywhere - across borders, with greater mobility, and for any company.
2. **AI & AUTOMATION:** Artificial intelligence and automation is exploding across the labour market, with significant investments across all industries.
3. **LIVING WITH CLIMATE CHANGE:** The impacts of climate change, such as wildfires, heat waves, droughts, and storms are likely to increase, with impacts to air quality, food production, and diseases.
4. **GEOPOLITICAL CONFLICTS:** Shifting global powers, conflict, and natural disasters are creating complex political and economic dynamics with local impacts.
5. **RECONCILING THE IMPACTS OF COLONIALISM:** There is a growing awareness of the intergenerational impacts of colonization, the pervasiveness of systemic racism embedded in institutions, and truth and reconciliation as a national project.
6. **ECONOMIC PRECARITY:** Cost of living and affordability is increasingly a challenge for many Canadians, exacerbated by the housing crisis and increasing the number of residents who are food insecure.



- 7. GLOBALIZATION UNDER PRESSURE:** COVID-19 and global conflicts have challenged principles of globalization, which may provide the conditions for a localized economy, or conversely accelerate the power of global corporations.
- 8. EDUCATION, DISRUPTED:** Employers and hiring practices are focusing on skills over credentials, the rising cost of post-secondary education, and the availability of free online learning platforms may transform the post-secondary education sector.
- 9. DECLINING MENTAL HEALTH & WELL-BEING:** Mental health challenges and drug and addiction rates have all grown significantly in recent years, in part due to COVID-19, economic precarity, climate anxiety, and increased use of technology.
- 10. GENERATIONAL SHIFTS:** New generations are taking power with different values than previous generations, while older workers are working longer.





WORK ANYWHERE

The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the transition to remote work, with [43% of core-age employees \(age 25 to 54\) shifting to working from home](#) as a result of lockdowns. Early in the pandemic, approximately 60% of [individuals with college or university degrees tended to work from home](#), making them the largest cohort of WFH workers, according to Statistics Canada. By December 2021, the percentage of employees with college or university degrees working from home had [fallen to about 40%](#).

Given how many organizations were able to pivot to remote work during COVID-19, it is unlikely to disappear. Remote work may even evolve over time and impact other aspects of the labour market, such as the geographic location of work, cost savings, talent recruitment, and many more aspects. According to a Deloitte global study, 27% of organizations say they [allow employees to work fully remote](#) without ever going to the office. This is a key part of the talent strategy, with employers hoping to attract talent from an expanded pool and many workers now considering it a right to be able to work remotely. Another benefit of remote work is the cost saved on things like commuting, clothing, and eating out. According to [FlexJobs](#), employees can save up to \$12,000 per year by working remotely on a full-time basis. In Canada, the province of [British Columbia has implemented a remote work policy](#) that allows public service employees to work from home whenever possible and to reside anywhere in the province. By 2030, according to McKinsey, [25% of workforces in advanced economies](#) could work from home 3-5 days a week. These examples paint a picture of how if remote work continues, it may impact many aspects of work over the next 15 to 20 years.

While a number of the CDPs and users interviewed in this project feel that remote work provides many opportunities - to work from anywhere, for any company - not everyone agrees with this perspective. Sam Altman, the CEO of OpenAI, says “[the remote work experiment was a mistake](#)” and that it is causing a decline in productivity with many executives pointing to remote work as the cause of this decline. There is concern that remote work brings with it some drawbacks such as reduced innovation and creativity, difficulty with creating connections with colleagues, and challenges with mentorship, particularly for early career workers. A [recent study](#) published in Nature concluded that videoconferencing hampers idea generation, finding that it focuses communicators on a screen, which prompts a narrower cognitive focus. [Additional challenges](#) with remote work include longer working hours, and missed in-person connections. One of the users interviewed as part of this project is also concerned about how difficult it is to make connections with colleagues in a virtual environment.



On the other hand, [new Oxford University research](#) found that the rise of remote collaboration has sparked the pursuit of new ideas in scientific discovery. If academics have access to better digital infrastructure, remote collaboration with new teams could improve research productivity.

What could this mean for career development in 2040?

- Career development services may not be tied to specific geographies. For example, a CDP in Alberta could provide services to individuals from anywhere in Canada, even though this would require CDPs to be highly skilled to understand the range of employers and local labour markets;
- There may be a dramatic shift from in-person to digital and asynchronous career development programs, like the 12 week self-paced online program [Ready to Rise](#) that was offered to eligible women in BC and Alberta; and,
- With a shift to a global workforce and talent recruitment, career development services could also be broadened to take a global focus. One example of this could be offering career services to support immigrants before they arrive in Canada.



The Metaverse

In the wake of COVID-19 and virtual work, the [metaverse](#) is purported to be the new way of working and interacting using virtual reality, augmented reality and other advanced technology. It is not a well-defined term, with various descriptions of a virtual space where people can interact, potentially buy and sell services or goods, which continues to evolve even when an individual isn't present. While the metaverse has not been fully realized yet, a group of big brands and technology experts have founded the [Metaverse Standards Forum](#) to define how corporate universes connect into one, gigantic multiverse. There is also discussion of the [industrial metaverse](#) that mirrors and simulates factories, cities, transportation networks, and other systems, in order to allow businesses to model and test design interactions in real time before committing physical and human resources to a project.

New technologies are being developed and deployed to facilitate interaction in the metaverse. Researchers in Japan have developed a system that enables users to [feel contactless touch at a distance](#), and [augmented reality \(AR\) is being used in job training](#). The [AR market](#) is expected to grow from US\$6 billion in 2020 to US\$21 billion by 2024, and the [global Virtual Reality \(VR\) market](#) is projected to increase from US\$12 billion in 2022 to US\$22 billion by 2025.

With the growth of new tools and an emphasis on collaborating in the metaverse, there is a need to develop digital skills quite broadly. [Microsoft has launched an initiative](#) to help 25



million people worldwide acquire digital skills. As well, [new jobs are likely to emerge](#) such as avatar clothing designers, metahuman doctors, metaverse construct architects, metaverse event directors, and worldbuilders.

Why this matters for CDPs:

In 2040, advanced and comprehensive digital skills may be increasingly important, requiring continuous upskilling to keep pace with emerging technologies and an evolving labour market. As this trend accelerates, it may require CDPs and job seekers to invest and adapt to an even greater level than required today.



City quitters

With the cost of home ownership unattainable in many urban and suburban areas across Canada, and remote work creating flexible work arrangements, [recent data](#) shows that families are moving to new communities in search of affordable ownership. Over the last year, more than 100,000 people left Toronto, while more than 35,000 left Montreal and another 14,000 left Vancouver. The fastest-growing cities in the country were Moncton (up 5.3%) and Halifax (up 4.4%). This net migration is primarily younger families in search of more space. However, newcomers prefer large urban centres and as a result, Canada's largest centres gained more than 600,000 people from international migration.

In addition to migration to rural and suburban areas, according to a [2021 study by IWD](#), 66% of employed Canadians want their employer to offer a workplace within 15 minutes of their home. The pandemic sparked a desire for a local lifestyle, with people spending time in their neighbourhoods, avoiding long commute times, working and playing closer to home. IWG is hoping to double its network of suburban, localized and flexible workplaces to 250 locations, in places such as Cambridge, ON; Richmond, BC; Sherbrooke, QC; and Truro, NS.

Why this matters for CDPs:

In 2040, the population of Canada may be less concentrated in urban areas, requiring broader distribution of career-oriented services. This may mean CDPs need to provide virtual and asynchronous support, and understand a changing landscape of employers and labour market conditions in a larger geographic area. It may also impact wage expectations of workers, creating complex service needs, and further development of the CDP extended competencies such as research, and career management.





Anywhere workers

The rise in remote work has led to an increase in [digital nomads](#). Digital nomads are individuals who work remotely from anywhere in the world, and may move around on a frequent basis. This approach to work is part of a [transition away](#) from the traditional work model to focus on work-life balance and freedom. According to a [recent survey](#), the digital nomad lifestyle is not only for single, young professionals. Almost 50% of the digital nomads surveyed have children under the age of 18. Canada has recently announced it is promoting a [digital nomad program](#) as part of its tech talent attraction strategy, following in the footsteps of [many countries](#) around the world that have relaxed immigration rules to accommodate digital nomads.

Anywhere workers are not the only digital nomads. Remote work has removed geographic limitations between employers and employees, offering a potential global talent pool. Businesses that consider [mobility policies](#) will be able to take advantage of talented individuals seeking to work remotely from across the globe. According to a [survey](#) of 1000 HR professionals across 16 countries, 88% of HR professionals are considering mobility as a strategy to address talent shortages. Individuals may take advantage of this situation as well with the rise of the “[cross border career](#)”.

Why this matters for CDPs:

In 2040, clients and job seekers may be looking for career development support that takes into consideration opportunities in their local geographies, across Canada, and across the globe. CDPs will need to stay informed about the types of global opportunities that exist in order to advise their clients. It may also mean that CDPs have a role to play in preparing young people for global work cultures, as well as how to manage relationships in a digital environment.





AI & AUTOMATION

Tech companies are investing billions in artificial intelligence (AI) development, with [Google leading the pack with US\\$30.7 B invested in AI](#). AI, along with smart machines, robotics, blockchain, 3D printing, and automation are predicted to significantly impact careers and the workforce in the future.

Many of the individuals who were interviewed as part of this project were very worried about robots taking over their jobs in the future. However, according to the McKinsey Global Institute, more than [90% of jobs will not be fully automatable](#) in the future. [Routine physical and cognitive tasks will be the most vulnerable](#) to full automation, such as those in office administration, production, transportation, and food preparation. Overall, investments in AI and automation will [move the workforce from low-skilled to high-skilled](#). Businesses are already changing their practices to adopt AI, with IBM announcing that it will begin to [slow or suspend hiring for jobs that could be done by AI](#), expecting to replace 30% of its back office roles.

The explosion of generative AI and other tools (e.g. image recognition, computer vision, robotics, predictive analytics) is likely to create a productivity boom. According to a [survey of employees and managers](#), there are many benefits imagined by 2030, such as producing high-quality work in half the time, being able to understand the most valuable ways to spend their time and energy, and never having to mentally absorb unnecessary or irrelevant information again. The [Brookings Institution](#) estimates that large language models, such as Google's Bard, ChatGPT, and others could affect 80% of the US workforce in some form. For example, software engineers might be able to code twice as fast, writing tasks could be completed twice as fast, and economists could be 10-20% more productive using large language models.

AI is being directly applied in the career development landscape: From AI-based career coaching services that use [AI to provide personalized career guidance and support](#), to [companies using AI to find, recruit, interview and select candidates](#), as well as a number of tools that are automating cover letter and resume generation. [HR staff see the benefits of AI](#) to help job seekers with advice and to find the perfect position. This was reiterated by the individuals who were interviewed as part of this project. They are using AI to answer specific questions that would have been quite difficult to answer in the past, and to apply to 20 jobs in one day.

The job seekers or possible users of career services who were interviewed as part of this project were quite optimistic about the future because of emerging technologies and the AI revolution.



From their perspective, there will be more job opportunities because of technology. They also see technology as an incredible resource where many people have access to the same information rather than having to find someone with specific expertise. These individuals imagine that every organization will need to change and adapt in order to co-exist with AI.

However, a Deloitte study shows that businesses are implementing this emerging technology even though nearly [90% lack an ethical framework and principles](#) to guide its use. Career developers interviewed as part of this project were also concerned about the responsible use of AI as well as about misinformation and deep fakes (the creation of fake images or videos using AI) that will become increasingly problematic in the future. Organizations are trying to put in place guidelines to support the responsible use of AI, including the [Government of Canada, Partnership on AI](#) and many others. This will likely continue, to balance the benefits and potential drawbacks of AI to support various sectors, including career development.

What could this mean for career development in 2040?

- Career development may be completely transformed by 2040 to a system that is self-serve and asynchronous, where individuals interact with AI models to get advice and answers, to conduct psychological assessments, and to support their career journey;
- Career developers may spend much more time on research about new jobs and occupations being created rather than searching existing job postings, because this portion of the position may be automated;
- With such an emphasis on AI and automation over the coming years, mental health, emotional concerns, and well-being may become an increasingly important part of career development; and,
- Career developers may need continuous training on emerging technologies and AI in order to support their clients.



Personal data ownership and privacy

Artificial intelligence relies on data collected by governments and companies in order to train machine learning algorithms. The issue of [data ownership](#) is becoming increasingly important, particularly as it relates to content creation on social media platforms. This is being described by some as [unwaged labour](#), where the hundreds of small tasks people perform daily on the internet or with mobile devices are being used to train AI systems.

In response, Canada has proposed [new data privacy legislation](#) as part of Bill C-27 that limits collection of private data in AI. The bill also proposes to establish standard requirements for the design, development, and use of AI systems. Organizations are also focused on protecting



their data and systems by investing in cybersecurity. Between 2015-2021, the number of [cyber jobs advertised globally](#) more than quadrupled. This rising demand for cyber skills does not match the current supply.

Why this matters for CDPs:

In 2040, if data collection continues on its current trajectory, extensive employment skills, work experience, and other data may be publicly available and used as part of an employer assessment. As such, CDPs may need to understand how to support workers in the management of their employment data to support future career goals. Alternatively, in 2040, in response to the data being collected today, and implementation of new privacy legislation, individuals may be very careful about their digital footprint and employers may not have access to a reliable digital profile to assess possible candidates. As such, CDPs may need to navigate incomplete data sources to advise their clients.



Natural language processing+

[Natural language processing](#) is a type of AI technology that allows individuals to ask questions and assist with composing emails, essays, code, and much more. One of the well-known current products that provides this service, ChatGPT, came up in almost every interview conducted as part of this project. It is an example of an AI tool that exists today and demonstrates how quickly AI could change the landscape. OpenAI launched the new tool in November 2022 and by January 2023, had reached 100 million monthly active users, [making it the fastest-growing consumer application in history](#). There are other natural language processing tools that are emerging such as Bard AI, Bing AI, and many more. Given that interviewees referred primarily to ChatGPT, this section will refer to this particular product as an illustration of the potential impact of natural language processing on career development more broadly.

Some of the CDPs who were interviewed were quite worried about whether ChatGPT would take over their job. Given that an American charity recently [replaced eating disorder helpline workers with ChatGPT](#), these concerns are echoed by a range of professionals. On the other hand, users think ChatGPT is a very useful tool to support resume and cover letter writing, as well as other aspects of their current jobs. In one example, individuals are using ChatGPT to write drafts of a media release or edit a LinkedIn post. They said this was particularly helpful in a working environment for someone whose first language was not English.

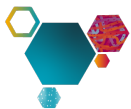


Microsoft researchers say that [ChatGPT-4 is a significant step towards artificial general intelligence](#) (AGI). AGI is described as nearing human-level intelligence where AI can evaluate complex situations, apply common sense, learn, and adapt.

However, there is an emerging backlash against ChatGPT. [Italy has banned the platform](#) because of unlawful collection of personal data. As well, [the technology is illegal in China](#) and police arrested a man who used ChatGPT to write a story about a fake train crash.

Why this matters for CDPs:

In 2040, natural language processing AI-based tools may have replaced many of the generalist and specialized elements of career development. Today, natural language processing tools are replacing resume and cover letter development and review. In the future, this may expand to replace job searching on behalf of clients, assessments and evaluations, and some aspects of the client-practitioner relationship, by providing virtual CDP consultations powered by generative AI, as well as providing recommendations and predictions for individual clients. Emerging technologies created over the coming years may become more sophisticated and able to respond to more complex situations. To prepare, CDPs will need new skills and training to adapt to a world with natural language processing+ and likely many more emerging technologies over the next 15 years. This may mean leaving behind certain CDP competencies and developing new highly skilled and specialized competencies to focus on the human-based interactions needed to support their clients.



Tech-body enhancements

Biohacking and neurohacking is not new. [Biohackers and neurohackers experiment with their biology](#) through exercise, coffee, wearable devices, and microchips embedded under the skin. Their goal is to upgrade their cognitive abilities, in some cases with the goal to have better focus at work.

Initially, [brain-computer interfaces](#) were developed to help people who are paralyzed; however, now there are many ways that these interfaces could be used in a workplace. There are a number of research projects underway aimed at creating human-machine interfaces. The US Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) has invested \$77M to develop [brain implanted devices](#) that are intended to restore the memory-generation capacity of people. The device has boosted memory by 15-18%. Another example of brain enhancement is where researchers at the University of Texas at Austin have used a brain scanner paired with an AI language model to [translate a person's thoughts into words](#). And in 2023, [Neurolink](#), a firm that



is developing brain microchips to treat conditions such as paralysis and blindness, obtained approval to proceed with human trials.

Beyond brain implants, [organoid intelligence](#) is an emerging field of biocomputing that is experimenting with cultures of human brain cells and brain-machine technologies to expand computing capabilities well beyond current AI models.

Why this matters for CDPs:

In 2040, should brain chips and other tech-body enhancements become more common, humans may learn skills in new ways. Perhaps tech-body enhancements will allow individuals to extend their career journey into older age or allow individuals to quickly upskill into new career journeys more easily. While this particular change is not as mature as some others in this report, CDPs may need to monitor how this change develops so they can understand how to support their clients in using this assistive technology. As well, CDPs may want to adopt this technology to help themselves with memory and retention of new information, such as broad changes to labour markets, across expanding geographies.





LIVING WITH CLIMATE CHANGE

The [most recent report](#) released by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) highlights that the planet has already warmed by 1.1°C above pre-industrial levels causing fiercer wildfires, heat waves, droughts, and storms. Many residents across Canada are actively experiencing these impacts with the [2023 record breaking wildfire season](#) resulting in “smoke days” and poor air quality. According to the CBC, as of August 2023, [over 167,000 Canadians have been displaced from their homes](#), and there have been more than 5,500 fires so far in 2023, significantly above the 10-year average of 2,751. In addition to fires and air quality, the [Western Wheat Growers Association](#) says that the extremely dry conditions in southern Alberta are resulting in crop losses with a worry that there will be minimal production in 2023. It is predicted that agricultural [water scarcity will increase in 80% of the world’s croplands](#) by 2050, threatening food security. There are other impacts of climate change, such as [three new types of tick-borne illnesses](#) in Ontario because of rising winter temperatures.

According to the [IPCC report](#), “there is a rapidly closing window of opportunity to secure a liveable and sustainable future for all” and “the choices and actions implemented in this decade will have impacts now and for thousands of years”. As such, many governments and global leaders are considering how best to address this challenge. In May 2023, the [G7 Summit](#) focused on how to tackle the climate crisis and identified key actions needed including to accelerate the phase-out of fossil fuels, accelerate the deployment of renewable energies, and to end plastic pollution.

Beyond governmental actions and collaborations, new industries and innovations are emerging, including carbon capture and storage. According to [Wood Mackenzie](#), capturing and storing CO2 addresses 20% of the emissions reduction needed to achieve global net zero by 2050. The [Dubai Future Foundation](#) estimates that carbon could be a US\$15 trillion dollar industry of the future and new innovations are emerging such as a [DAC or “direct air capture”](#) commercial-scale plant in Texas. In Ontario, the provincial government is [proposing new rules for underground carbon capture](#) as a way to trap and store greenhouse gas emissions.

Other shifts may occur to respond and adapt to the climate crisis. [France has banned short-haul flights](#) to cut carbon emissions, London UK has an [Ultra Low Emission Zone](#) in order to improve air quality, [businesses are reducing travel](#), and organizations may [promote remote work](#) as a way to reduce their carbon footprint after seeing global carbon emissions plummet during the COVID-19 lockdowns. Organizations may even start to consider the [climate benefits of a four-day work week](#) after seeing the results of a UK trial, where they observed a reduction in carbon emissions with a 21% reduction in the number of miles travelled by car.



What could this mean for career development in 2040?

- Increasing climate migration and climate refugees may mean that career developers need to direct their energy to supporting these newcomers and identifying career opportunities in different parts of the country;
- Career developers may need to stay informed about climate-related innovations and new industries emerging so they can advise their clients about new opportunities;
- Job seekers may be experiencing climate anxiety and trauma as part of their career development experience and this aspect will need to be acknowledged as part of their career development journey; and,
- The “green skills revolution” may need more emphasis as part of the overall career development approach in order to support clients whose jobs are being transformed to achieve a net zero economy in Canada.



Climate displaced communities

The Institute for Economics and Peace predicts there could be [1.2 billion climate refugees](#) by 2050. Climate refugees or climate migrants are people who have been forced to leave their home temporarily or permanently due to environmental disruption. In 2022, there were [8.7 million people displaced](#) inside their own countries because of floods and famine. Last year in the US, more than [3 million residents lost their homes](#) to climate disasters. As the impacts of climate change become more severe, it is possible that more of the world’s population may find themselves displaced. A climate scientist at the University of Waterloo predicts that [Canada may be an ideal destination for climate refugees](#), advising that the federal government prepare for the upcoming influx of displaced people.

Why this matters for CDPs:

In 2040, CDPs may need to quickly identify people’s skills and advise climate refugees where to settle in Canada. It may also mean that northern Canada becomes a more popular destination in the future with new cities and intense migration. CDPs may need to evolve to respond to this change in migration by offering their services in new locations, by proactively creating programs that directly respond to a large influx of climate refugees to Canada, or by adjusting their practice to integrate the trauma and anxiety of climate refugees. A few of the CDPs interviewed as part of this project could imagine career development being part of an overall system of assessment for climate refugees upon their arrival in Canada.





Smoke days and heat stress

According to the [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change \(IPCC\)](#), the number of annual extreme heat days (i.e. temperatures above 32°C) could double by 2050. It is also projected that more frequent storms will occur, with high intensity, leading to flash flooding in urban areas.

Heat stress and smoke days have an impact on worker productivity. Heat stress affects outdoor workers, in agriculture and on construction sites, [the most](#). It is estimated that by 2030, [2.2% of total working hours worldwide will be lost to high temperatures](#) - a productivity loss equivalent to 80 million full-time jobs. Beyond 2030, as warming continues, labour productivity is expected to diminish even further.

Why this matters for CDPs:

In 2040, as extreme heat and poor air quality creates disruptions to work and productivity, CDPs may need to advise individuals on the climate related implications of different career paths. Additionally, CDPs may need to provide coaching specific to climate-related health monitoring.



Green skills revolution

With the transition to a carbon-free economy, the Rocky Mountain Institute predicts a net gain of [25 million new jobs](#) over the next decade. There are a host of emerging “green” jobs such as recycled fashion, carbon accounting, urban gardening, wind turbine technician, solar consultant, ecologist, electric bus mechanics, and more. According to LinkedIn, [“sustainability manager” was the fastest-growing green job](#) between 2016 and 2021. In Canada by 2035, in order to respond to a growing zero-emission vehicle market, the country will need [475,000 public charging ports and over 2 million ports](#) in residential buildings. This demand will require electricians, civil and general contractors, and others.

There is a need for rapid reskilling to respond to these new jobs and growing economies. [Global demand for green skills has risen by 40% since 2015](#), but only 13% of the workforce has the skills organizations need. According to [RBC](#), a green skilled workforce is essential to achieve a net zero economy in Canada. Eight of 10 major economic sectors will be impacted by the transition and as a result, approximately 3.1 million Canadian jobs (15% of the workforce) are expected to be transformed.



However, green skills are [poorly understood and defined](#). Advocates say we need to move beyond thinking about green skills as the “hard skills” of measuring carbon emissions to include other skills such as crisis management, storytelling, kindness, and connecting with nature.

Why this matters for CDPs:

In 2040, CDPs have an opportunity to influence their clients to focus on green skills as part of career transitions. To do this, CDPs may need additional training to understand “green skills,” particularly since they are not well-defined today. CDPs may also need to look outside of traditional labour market information to identify potential opportunities since the green skills revolution is emerging in real-time and is changing the skills required for many occupations.





GEOPOLITICAL CONFLICTS

In 2022, war and natural disasters left [71 million people internally displaced worldwide](#), according to the Norwegian Refugee Council's Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre. Of this, 11.6 million people have been displaced due to the war in Ukraine. The war in Ukraine has furthermore led to heightened global tensions and supply chain concerns. [Research](#) published in 2022 rated the probability of Russia cutting off gas to Europe to be “high” and the probability of a food insecurity crisis was also high due to this war.

Meanwhile, many countries are facing internal civil unrest and protests. For example, in Russia, there have been [anti-war protests](#), resulting in more than 1,300 arrests. In France, there have been violent protests in response to the increased [retirement age](#) and the [police shooting of an Algerian teenager](#). In [Kenya, South Africa, Nigeria, and Tunisia](#) there have been protests over access to energy, cost of living concerns, and political discontent. In Canada, the [Freedom Convoy occupied Ottawa](#) for weeks to protest COVID-19-related restrictions, and more recently, [Pride](#) celebrations.

According to the IMF, [rising concerns about global economic and financial fragmentation](#) have grown in recent years as a result of geopolitical tensions, strained ties between the United States and China, and Russia's invasion of Ukraine. This challenge is exasperated by the emergence of new technologies that support the [dissemination of fake news through social media, deep fakes](#), and [cyber threats](#).

What could this mean for career development in 2040?

- Canada may see an increase in refugees requiring trauma-informed employment supports and services;
- There may be increased need for intercultural communication skills and support for refugees and immigrants seeking employment opportunities;
- Workers may experience a higher degree of daily stress due to uncertainty and volatility associated with global conflicts requiring enhanced mental health support from CDPs;
- There may be an increased desire for job security among workers, and lower turnover as workers crave stability, reducing demand for career-oriented support in mid- and late-career workers; or
- Workers may require career support from CDPs as they struggle to adapt to the [innovation economy](#), as recent research finds that [an increase in geopolitical risk stifles technological innovation output](#).





World at war over resources

Historically, many wars have been [fought over resources](#), whether land or oil. As the impacts of climate change create hotter and drier conditions, it is possible that we may see wars fought over access to water and food. One of the CDPs interviewed as part of this project feels that water wars are inevitable. Water scarcity may lead to food insecurity, as it is estimated that [80% of global croplands will experience water scarcity by 2050](#).

In fact, a 2018 EU study identified global hotspots where [there is a risk of conflict](#) due to water scarcity. The most vulnerable areas are around the Nile, Ganges-Brahmaputra, Indus, Tigris-Euphrates, and Colorado rivers. Access to safe drinking water is already a major issue facing many First Nations communities, of which [33 communities are facing 52 water advisories](#) as of 2021. The United Nations estimates that global [demand for clean water will surpass what is available](#) by 40% in 2030. However, the protection of fresh water is becoming an increasing concern for governments, with the Magpie River in Quebec being [the first Canadian river to receive legal rights of personhood](#). This is part of an Indigenous-led movement to protect water.

Why this matters to CDPs:

In 2040, should there be an increase in conflict, there may be an increased demand for workers in defense-related jobs and services, meaning CDPs will have a role to play in supporting wartime efforts. It could also mean that CDPs are needed to support veterans to transition to new employment opportunities in times of peace, similar to decades past. For workers in resource-related or reliant industries, it could mean job disruption as conflict creates increased volatility and costs rise. If this is the case, CDPs may see an increase in career development support demand, especially for mid-career and late-career workers.



Democracy under pressure

In Canada, political polarization remains [less pervasive](#) than in the USA, however, experts are warning that policy issues, especially climate change, are being used for political gain at the expense of national unity. Meanwhile, residents' trust in government decision-making [has dropped](#) to 43% in 2022, down from 58% in 2020. Recent voter turnout rates present a mixed case: on the one hand, [voting in Canada's federal election has increased](#) from 70% in 2011 to 76% in the 2021 election. On the other hand, voter turnout at the provincial/territorial level ranges from [43% in Ontario](#) (2022 election), to less than [50% in Nunavut](#), and nearly [60% in Alberta](#) (2023 election). Recently it has also come to light that the



last federal election may have been impacted by [foreign interference](#), resulting in a public inquiry launched in late 2022.

Globally, several democratic countries have experienced pushback against democratic institutions and processes. This includes an [attempted coup](#) in Germany, another in [Brazil](#), and the [United States Capitol attack](#) on January 6, 2021. Additionally, numerous protests and demonstrations in countries such as [Canada](#), [France](#), and [South Africa](#) demonstrate growing unrest and discontentment with democratic governments in power.

Recent research has found that [social media and the proliferation of misinformation](#) have played a significant role in eroding democratic trust. With the increased usage of ChatGPT, there may be a further increase in the spread of misinformation, as in China, a man was recently arrested for [using ChatGPT to spread fake news](#).

Why this matters to CDPs:

In 2040, there may be increased scrutiny of public institutions, resulting in lower taxes, which would reduce public sector funding available for accessible career development services. As a result, private sector career services may become more prominent. This may result in an access divide between those who can afford to pay for career development support and those who cannot. Constrained government funding may also result in less funding for the Canada Pension Plan, pushing some workers to put off retirement, and requiring CDPs to support more older workers who are working past the age of retirement.



Bodies under threat

In 2022, the U.S. Supreme Court [overturned Roe v. Wade](#), paving the way for many states to make abortion illegal. In the same year, Florida signed a bill [banning discussion of sexual orientation and gender identity](#) from kindergarten to grade three. A year later, Florida made it [illegal to provide gender-affirming care](#) for trans kids, while other states have either [followed suit](#) or made [moves in this direction](#). The impact of these legal changes will be significant, for example, research shows that abortion bans [disproportionately impact vulnerable populations in low-income, rural communities](#).

While Canada has not seen the same changes to these legally protected rights, similar sentiments are present. Across Canada, Action Canada has found that women [have unequal access](#) to abortion, while a federal private member's bill has been criticized as a [veiled attack on abortion rights](#). Meanwhile, during Pride Month (June) in 2023, there were numerous [Pride protests that](#) in some cases led to [heated confrontations](#). These incidents follow a series of



[protests related to Drag storytime](#) events, that entail a Drag Queen reading stories to children at libraries or other community venues.

Why this matters to CDPs:

In 2040, CDPs may need to be hyper aware of broader social issues, and how they relate to different employers. For example, should abortion rights, LGBTQ2+ rights, and trans rights continue to be threatened, some workers, especially women, LGBTQ2+, and trans individuals, may face complex employment challenges.





RECONCILING THE IMPACTS OF COLONIALISM

In 2020, the [murder of George Floyd](#) by police led to a flood of #BlackLivesMatter protests and riots across the world. This incident led to a [global social justice awakening](#) and recognition of the deep prevalence of anti-Black racism in society. Following this, critical conversations about white supremacy and colonialism have grown substantially in workplaces and beyond.

A year later in Canada, the [discovery of hundreds](#) of Indigenous children's remains in mass graves at sites of former Residential Schools led to outrage and national mourning. Following this, the Canadian government established a new national holiday, the [Day for Truth and Reconciliation](#), while many organizations and businesses developed commitments to Indigenous reconciliation.

While the graves came as a surprise to some, their presence was known by many Indigenous communities who [identified their existence during the Truth and Reconciliation Commission](#) (TRC). The [TRC ran from 2008 to 2015](#), hearing from survivors of Canada's residential school system. Survivors shared their experiences, noting decades of abuse, mistreatment, and murder of Indigenous children, and the deep pain and generational trauma created as a result. In 2015, the TRC concluded with the release of [94 Calls to Action](#) to pave the way for reconciliation between Canadian settlers and Indigenous Peoples. As of 2022, only [13 of the 94 Calls](#) have been completed, suggesting there is still a lot of work to be done.

What could this mean for career development in 2040?

- CDPs may be called on to play a more active role in supporting the decolonization of workplaces, to support employers and to better support workers who are Indigenous, Black, and People of Colour;
- Career development services may continue to evolve to address changes to colonial practices and better support the needs of individuals who are Indigenous and Black; or,
- To shift away from the deeply entrenched colonial hiring practices we see today, CDPs may start to pay less attention to educational credentials and years of experience and greater attention to interest areas and value systems.



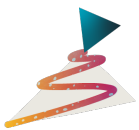


Embracing neurodiversity

It is estimated that between 15% to 20% of the world's population exhibits [some form of neurodivergence](#), which may include autism, dyspraxia, dyslexia, obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). According to Deloitte, [85% of people on the autism spectrum are unemployed](#), compared to 4.2% of the overall population; yet teams with neurodivergent workers can be 30% more productive, and have higher morale. Recent studies have also identified that neurodivergent individuals [possess unique skills related to pattern recognition, memory, and mathematics](#), yet struggle to fit the profiles sought by employers. This fact is further supported by a UK-based survey that found that [72% of human resource professionals](#) said neurodiversity wasn't included in people management practices. This is beginning to change as a growing number of companies such as [Microsoft, SAP, and Hewlett-Packard Enterprise](#) have changed their human resource processes to better access neurodiverse talent.

Why this matters to CDPs:

In 2040, career development services may continue to support the unique employment needs of neurodiverse individuals, taking a strength-based approach that helps communicate and translate their unique value. This may also require the development of new services that incorporate different ways of sharing and communicating employment information that is most appropriate and impactful for individuals who are neurodivergent.



Navigating privilege

While some white settlers have focused on [self-reflection and learning](#) in response to a growing focus on reconciliation and diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI), some have struggled to understand how they fit in. For example, a recent study found that 70% of [white men feel “forgotten”](#) by DEI efforts. Another study found that some public or nonprofit sector leaders who are white do not feel they will continue to hold leadership positions in the future [based on their race](#). In more extreme cases, there are concerns among some white communities that immigration efforts are specifically [designed to “replace” white people](#). At the same time, there has been an increase in racially-motivated [hate crimes reported in Canada, up 27%](#) in 2021, demonstrating the complexity facing race and power dynamics in Canada. As white people have historically experienced the most power in North American society, growing critiques of white privilege have left some feeling uncertain about their future.

Why this matters to CDPs:



In 2040, as leadership roles become more diverse and racially representative of the population of Canada, some white workers may feel disenfranchised. As such, CDPs may see an increase in white clients who are facing challenges adapting to shifting power dynamics, requiring support to acknowledge their privilege and how they can best adapt and provide continued value in the workplace.



Rest as protest

In 2016, Tricia Hersey founded [The Nap Ministry](#) which advocates for Black liberation through rest, fighting back against “hustle culture” and capitalist economic principles that are rooted in slavery. More recently, Hersey released *Rest is Resistance: A Manifesto*, which has become a New York Times Bestseller. In 2022, this concept of focusing on rest and living a “[soft life](#)” has been popularized on TikTok, as Millennials have advocated for a future of work that is slower, kinder, and does not result in professional burnout. While “soft life” has been criticized [for cultural appropriation](#) of Hersey’s rest movement, it does articulate a growing preference among workers to have [flexibility, less workload, and to shift away from urgency culture](#).

Why this matters to CDPs:

In 2040, labour productivity may slow, as workers advocate to do less, and protect their personal time. In response, CDPs may have a role to play in supporting job sharing among clients, helping them to understand how to complement others to collectively meet employer needs. Conversely, should the labour market demand more productivity from workers, CDPs may have an enhanced role to play in coaching clients to manage their work-life balance to support longer term employment outcomes.



Halocracies & self-management

While more than 95% of people in the workforce either have a boss or are a boss, a growing number of small organizations are [experimenting with getting rid of bosses](#) altogether, opting for self-management structures. The American online retailer [Zappos](#) is one example of a company that has embraced a self-management structure.

Related to these shifts, a range of new organizational structures have emerged that explore less hierarchical designs. For example, a [holacracy](#) is an organizational structure that replaces the traditional management hierarchy of top-down corporations with a fluid governance process. [Decentralized Autonomous Organizations](#) (DAOs) on the other hand are a relatively new



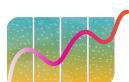
structure that use blockchain technology, and are built upon rules encoded as a computer program. Recent research also found that co-leadership models are increasing in popularity among non-profit organizations, while there has also been a rise in [co-operatives and employee-owned organizations](#).

Why this matters to CDPs:

In 2040, self-management may grow to be a key requirement of many workers. If this is the case, CDPs may play a role in supporting clients to assess this competency, and develop strategies for its development. This may include advocating for new approaches to learning in secondary school and higher education, or programs targeted at mid-career workers.

Additionally, as organizations become flatter and power is more distributed across teams, CDPs may need to support workers to navigate career trajectories that are less hierarchical through new career development strategies.





ECONOMIC PRECARITY

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, cost of living and affordability is increasingly a challenge for many Canadians. [Inflation rose by 3.4%](#) in May 2023, the smallest increase since June 2021 largely due to lower gasoline prices. Many residents are feeling the impacts of rising costs. A [growing number of older women are living in poverty](#), more [Canadians are carrying their mortgage into old age](#), and some people have started accepting barter in the form of payment, such as this [Ontario barber who accepts food for a haircut](#).

Many residents are concerned about Canada's economy. A [recent survey](#) found that 56% of respondents consider the country's economic conditions as "bad" or "very bad". This is in the context of the economy adding [60,000 new jobs and unemployment rising to 5.4%](#) in June 2023. One of the job seekers interviewed as part of this project was worried about being dependent on one particular job. They imagined that in 2040 it will be necessary to have more than one job because one source of income won't be enough.

Cost of living and affordability challenges are not impacting all residents in the same way. At the same time as some residents are being financially stretched, [global luxury sales of leather accessories, apparel, footwear, jewelry, and watches were expected to grow by 22% in 2022](#) to reach \$367 B. The [wealth gap in Canada is widening](#), and at the fastest pace on record. The wealthiest households (top 20%) accounted for more than two-thirds (67.9%) of net worth at the end of 2022, while the least wealthy households (bottom 40%) accounted for 2.6%. At the same time, the [greatest intergenerational wealth transfer in history](#) is expected with the handover impacting housing, education, health care, and more. Younger and core-working age groups are being impacted by economic challenges the most with the [debt-to-income ratios having increased well above what existed before the COVID-19 pandemic](#).

Employers and employees are responding in various ways to current economic conditions. In the wake of economic uncertainty, many organizations are doing "[quiet hiring](#)" to address business needs with existing employees or short-term contractors. At the same time, there is an emerging TikTok trend of "[rage applying](#)" where people send their resumes to numerous open positions with higher salaries and better perks to feel agency over their current work conditions.

What could this mean for career development in 2040?

- The gap that currently exists in the career development landscape, where individuals who are currently employed need to pay out-of-pocket for career development services, may be magnified by an even greater number of individuals who need support to



navigate economic precarity and meaning in their career journey but don't have the resources to access support;

- As such, governments may reconfigure or introduce new policy tools that better support the economic conditions of workers, such as expanding publicly funded career development services to provide services for employed individuals, or implementing universal basic income; and
- Rising unemployment rates may mean younger and mid-career workers may fight to stay in positions longer than has become common, seeking job security in the face of economic challenges, magnifying the mismatch between skills and work options for workers struggling to look for a job (any job).



Worker-centred supports

In response to growing economic precarity, there is greater demand to consider universal basic income. There have been a number of [basic income experiments](#) conducted to date including one in Stockton, California that gave residents \$500 per month for two years that improved participants' job prospects, financial stability and overall well-being. As well, Ireland has implemented a [basic income for artists](#). This has reached such attention that at the 2023 Liberal convention, installing a [Guaranteed Liveable Basic Income](#) was identified as a policy priority. On the other hand, the [B.C. Expert Panel on Basic Income](#) conducted an analysis on the benefits of providing basic income and did not recommend proceeding with a pilot program given the limitations of the potential program and other strategies that might be more effective.

In addition to basic income, workers in the gig economy are demanding greater control over their income, for example [Uber reached a deal with the United Food and Commercial Workers Union](#) in 2022. In addition, new models are emerging that support greater worker wealth, such as [unionized cooperatives](#), and California has passed new legislation, the [Employee Ownership Act](#), to help facilitate business transitions to employee owners and achieve the benefits of this model. The [National Center for Employee Ownership](#) found that employee-owners earn 33% more, stay in their jobs 50% longer, and have twice the household net worth of their peers.

However, with basic income and unionization, organizations are responding in different ways. In some cases, organizations are investing in AI and automation to obtain efficiencies, such as the National Eating Disorders Association that [replaced their helpline staff with ChatGPT after their workers unionized](#).

Why this matters to CDPs:



In 2040, if basic income is implemented, workers may be less interested in career development services and finding work. On the other hand, if basic income is implemented, workers may seek career development support that is focused on self-identity and understanding their interests and where best to apply themselves, without the pressure to fill immediate job vacancies. Related to this, if workers have more wage support due to unionization, there may be less demand for CDPs if workers are happier and want to stay in their positions longer. If so, the focus may be more on younger clients who need help deciding their career path, versus mid-career transitions.



Housing crisis

Canada has some of the [highest housing](#) prices in the G7 and OECD countries. Many have declared that Canada is facing a [housing affordability crisis](#), with soaring [rental prices](#), average [house purchase prices at \\$716,000](#), and growing [homeless encampments](#). The [Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation](#) estimates that 1 in 5 renters are spending more than 50% of their household income on rent. Forecasts also show that Canada does not have [sufficient housing stock](#) to house its growing population, suggesting there is no relief in sight to the housing crisis. [Recent data](#) shows that younger families are moving out of bigger cities to smaller communities in search of affordable home ownership.

In 2019, in response to these growing housing challenges, Canada passed the [National Housing Strategy Act](#) that makes adequate housing a human right. Other levels of government are responding to this concern, such as [municipalities creating outdoor shelters](#), and the [Ontario government](#) passing legislation aimed at making it easier for developers to create new homes over the next decade.

Why this matters to CDPs:

In 2040, the housing crisis is likely to be more magnified than today and one of the most important factors—if not the most important factor—of career-oriented decisions, particularly for younger workers. Individuals may seek out communities based on a lower cost of housing rather than job opportunities, with career opportunities being a secondary factor. This may also mean individuals will seek out other ways to align work opportunities with their desired community, through either remote work or entrepreneurship. As such, CDPs may need to support their clients with career-oriented services that have a broad geographical focus.





Rise of food insecurity

The [cost of groceries is increasing at 9% a year](#), as of May 2023, a much higher rate than overall inflation. The grocery items that have been increasing the most are edible fats and oils (20%), bakery products (15%) and cereal products (14%). As a result, [working class residents are food bank clients](#), 24% of Canadians are [cutting back on the food they purchase](#), 15% of Canadians have started [growing their own food](#), and 7% of residents are [skipping meals](#). Studies show that lack of access to food and adequate nutrition [negatively impacts a variety of daily functions](#), including labour productivity.

While inflation has been blamed for the rising costs of food, some corporations are profiting from price increases, with attention being paid to [Loblaws](#) as the company earned nearly 12% more in Q4 of 2022 compared to the same period the year prior.

Why this matters to CDPs:

In 2040, should this trend continue, many more career development clients may be experiencing food insecurity. Food insecurity may mean more clients are seeking better paying jobs, and looking for quick career changes that allow them to increase their overall income. It may also mean that CDPs need to continue to work closely with other service providers, focusing on wrap-around supports for their clients.





GLOBALIZATION UNDER PRESSURE

[According to the IMF](#), global economic growth slowed in 2022 due to uncertainty related to COVID-19, the war in Ukraine (and related gas and food price increases), stubbornly high inflation, and geopolitical fragmentation. In early 2023, the [World Bank made significant cuts to their 2023 growth outlook](#), reporting that the world was “perilously close” to a recession. Economies across the world face increasingly complex economic challenges, due to their interconnectedness. This has happened over decades due to [globalization](#), which advocates for businesses and organizations to develop international influence and operations, in the name of economic growth.

As China becomes a dominant economic power globally, the impact of COVID-19 and related shutdowns on their economy has been felt globally. It has resulted in widespread supply chain issues, and for some to declare “[the end of globalization](#).” Beyond COVID-19 related implications, the U.S. and China’s ongoing trade conflicts have resulted in the [decoupling of their economic dependence](#). As the [two largest economies globally](#), the impact of this fragmented relationship is much broader.

More recently, Russia’s war in Ukraine has created new global supply-chain issues, [especially related to oil](#), and [resulted in economic sanctions](#) that may have ripple effects for other countries. This impact has been especially [felt by African countries](#), many of which are facing food security challenges due to access to fertilizer, and rising cost of living due to energy prices.

In the face of mounting economic uncertainty, some countries have adopted protectionist policies in an effort to create stability from global economic dynamics. The United Kingdom leaving the European Union (for a variety of reasons, one related to [economic protection](#)) is one example of this. However, to date the impact of Brexit on the UK’s economy has not necessarily [been beneficial](#). Nevertheless, the EU itself has cooled on its pro-free trade mantra of late, following the lead of the United States.

As labour markets have become increasingly globalized, intensified by the emergence and proliferation of remote work, these ongoing global economic disruptions may create new and unexpected challenges by 2040.

What could this mean for career development in 2040?

- Workplaces and employment opportunities may become more localized should global companies take this approach to limiting the impacts of global supply chain disruptions.



As such, CDPs may need to be more focused on connecting clients to employment opportunities within the community.

- Workers may be regularly impacted by global economic disruptions, creating new levels of stress, anxiety, and confusion that require enhanced counseling and support from CDPs; and,
- Fewer workers leaving jobs in pursuit of something new, or fewer people starting new businesses in the face of global economic uncertainty, resulting in less demand for career-oriented services of mid-career and late-career workers.



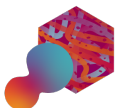
Global supply chain disruptions

Since COVID, global supply chain issues have continued to be a significant challenge. In 2021, [75% of small and medium-sized businesses experienced supply chain issues](#) in Canada. This challenge may not be solved anytime soon as Statistics Canada states that [32% of businesses should expect difficulty acquiring imports, products, or supplies](#) over the next year. Additionally, supply chain disruptions are posing specific [challenges to Canadian food security](#).

In many cases, the war in Ukraine is cited as a key issue in supply chain challenges, impacting energy prices, and causing experts to recommend the [diversification of supply chain management approaches](#). In Canada, supply chain challenges have also led to increased prices, with 54% of businesses reporting they have needed to [adjust prices due to supply issues](#).

Why this matters for CDPs:

In 2040, the employment needs of individuals may be more complex, as basic needs such as food security are not being met. There may also be more local manufacturing jobs as global supply chain challenges lead to more localized supply chains.



The concentration of corporate wealth and power

During COVID-19, 70% of global wealth was generated by 22 companies, and directly [benefited the richest 5% of Americans](#). Even before this, in the U.S., wealth concentration had returned to levels [last seen in the “Roaring Twenties”](#).

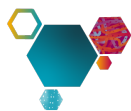
More globally, [the richest 1% own half of the world’s wealth while the poorest half own just 0.75%](#). In fact, companies like Apple, Amazon, Microsoft and Alphabet are now [more profitable than countries](#). Apple and Amazon alone are [wealthier than 90% of countries](#). As global wealth



becomes more concentrated, new power dynamics might emerge creating complex employment conditions.

Why this matters for CDPs:

In 2040, it is possible that the majority of employment opportunities may be with large companies. As a result, CDPs may need to become more directly aligned with specific firms, perhaps even fully integrated into internal HR teams to support talent mobility and development.



Localizing economies

In recent years, an increasing number of companies are adopting localized and climate-friendly business practices. For example, clothing companies [Decathlon](#) and [H&M](#) have embraced the circular economy, aiming to reduce waste, and shorten supply chains. Similarly, there has been a rise in [zero waste manufacturing](#), which also embraces a circular economy.

Other businesses are focusing on [fostering local economies](#) by sourcing locally. While “buy local” businesses have often focused on bricks and mortar storefronts, this has recently changed. For example, a website in Canada called “[Not Amazon](#)” is a directory to help shoppers find independent stores in four Canadian cities, while the [Digital Mainstreet](#) project during COVID-19 helped many small businesses develop online marketplaces.

Why this matters for CDPs

In 2040, the workforce may become more localized, reducing carbon emissions and reliance on global supply chains. As a result, CDPs may become more geographically focused. This may mean that CDPs will need to have deeply localized knowledge and relationships. It may also mean that workers are more focused on the jobs available nearby, comfortable taking whatever is available, and requiring less support from CDPs.





EDUCATION, DISRUPTED

According to the Council of Ministers of Education Canada, there are 223 public and private universities, and 213 public colleges and institutes across Canada, and millions of students who attend these institutions every year. But what if in 2040, individuals no longer seek post-secondary education? Employer requirements and hiring practices are changing to focus on skills over credentials, with companies like [Google offering six-week career certificates](#) that they accept instead of a four-year degree. As well, there is a [perceived rising cost of post-secondary degree programs](#) where the [average student loan debt](#) is \$28,000 for a Bachelor's degree and \$15,300 for a college diploma. In addition, some private colleges are being accused of [misleading advertising practices and high pressure sales tactics](#) in order to boost enrollment. And finally, global online platforms like [Coursera offer access to free and affordable learning](#).

The complete transformation of the post-secondary sector came up in many of the interviews that were held as part of this project. CDPs felt that by 2040 the entire post secondary structure will be “entirely different or gone”. They also see a big gap between what the labour market needs in terms of skills and training, and schools that are enrolling students in programs where jobs are likely to disappear over time. One of the CDPs interviewed said that “schools, universities, and colleges need to keep up,” so that people are getting trained in the right areas. The job seekers interviewed could also see how much might change within the education sector. One job seeker saw it as an incredible opportunity. If people don't require university or college credentials, then they don't have to go into debt to establish a career. As well, increasing options for online learning is a good thing because housing affordability is another challenge for students.

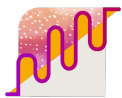
However, a university education delivers an [elevated and sustained long-term return on earnings](#) and provides an [opportunity for young people to learn important life skills](#) like networking, meeting people, and building relationships.

What could this mean for career development in 2040?

- With the potential transformation of the post-secondary sector, post-secondary student career services may disappear and be replaced by lifelong career development support through other venues and mechanisms outside of the traditional educational model;
- Career development transitions to lifelong career development support rather than being focused on specific career stages;
- Focused career development support may transition to happen much earlier in life, starting in kindergarten in partnership with parents, and throughout elementary and secondary school; and,



- CDPs may need to stay informed about a much broader range of training opportunities, both formal and informal, if learning becomes distributed well beyond traditional institutions.



Learn and earn

There is increasing debate about whether post-secondary education is preparing graduates for the job market. Some of the CDPs who were interviewed as part of this project reiterated that this gap exists and needs to be addressed. To understand the skills gap debate, the [Higher Education Quality of Ontario](#) conducted two trials to assess essential skills and critical thinking skills as a proxy for non-disciplinary skills that are increasingly important for the labour market. The studies found that 25% of graduating students scored below adequate in measures of literacy or numeracy, and identified little difference between incoming and graduating students in critical-thinking abilities.

In response to this gap, work-integrated learning (WIL) or the “[learn and earn](#)” model is growing to help students apply what they are learning. About [50% of university students and between 65-70% of college and polytechnic students](#) take part in some form of work-integrated learning. There are many examples across Canada, including [TalentED YYC](#), a work-integrated learning collaboration to build Calgary’s skilled talent pool, as well as York University’s [Lassonde School of Engineering](#), where students have full-time employment while studying for their degree.

Why this matters to CDPs:

In 2040, learning may primarily occur through employers and employment relationships. Individuals may be seeking to understand their career pathway through the learning and experience they might gain from specific employers, rather than thinking about this as two distinct steps, post-secondary education and then employment. As well, career development services may be more aligned with employer education programs, similar to the Lassonde program, where employers provide education and training rather than the post-secondary institutions.





Skills over education

Employers are increasingly turning to [skills-based hiring](#) as an alternative to traditional recruitment. A skills-based approach emphasizes a person's skills rather than educational background, degree, or previous job titles as the most important determinant of job success. It allows employers to [assess diverse experiences](#) and hire qualified candidates from historically overlooked sources and backgrounds. In response to this trend, the World Economic Forum is suggesting a [global skills passport](#) and standardizing skills, including building trust in micro-credentials and digital badges.

The labour market is changing so quickly that the World Economic Forum's Future of Jobs Report estimates that [61% of workers will require retraining between now and 2027](#). At the same time, in Canada, skills training for working age adults has restrictive eligibility requirements and is difficult to navigate. Employers, workers and educational institutions are putting greater emphasis on micro-credentials to respond to this gap. According to a [recent survey](#), 90% of students believe a micro-credential will help them stand out in the hiring process, and employers said they are 76% more likely to hire a candidate with an industry micro-credential. As part of a recent provincial investment in post-secondary education, [B.C. is investing in micro-credentials](#) where residents can apply for a grant of up to \$3500 to be used to take one of more than 400 short-term programs offered through the province's post-secondary institutions. One of the CDPs interviewed as part of this research thinks there will be greater emphasis on micro-credentials over time; however they don't have full validation yet.

Why this matters to CDPs:

In 2040, CDPs will need to be able to stay informed about emerging hiring practices, such as skills-based hiring, in order to support and advise their clients. As well, CDPs may spend more time on skills assessment in order to assist their clients with their skills passport.



Young entrepreneurs

According to a 2019 [BDC report](#), 3.3 out of 1000 young Canadians have started a business, and the number of residents under 35 years old starting a business increased by 80% between 2014 and 2018. This was reiterated by individuals who were interviewed as part of this project. One of the CDPs described the younger generation as entrepreneurial, where "they don't want to follow others". CDPs also observed that entrepreneurship programs are offered separately from career development services.



Why this matters to CDPs:

CERIC has already identified [entrepreneurship as a must-have skill](#) to navigate change and an uncertain future. In 2040, there might be even younger entrepreneurs, such as pre-teens and teenagers, starting their own businesses. As well, we might see an even greater uptake of entrepreneurship by mid-career workers in response to some of the other changes highlighted in this report. All of these individuals may seek entrepreneurial guidance from existing career development services.





DECLINING MENTAL HEALTH & WELL-BEING

According to the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, one in two [Canadians have faced a mental health challenge](#) by the time they are 40. Mental health is the leading cause of disability in the country, preventing nearly [500,000 employed Canadians](#) from attending work each week. It is estimated that the economic burden of mental illness in Canada is [\\$51 billion per year](#) including health care costs, lost productivity, and reductions in health-related quality of life. In fact, one in three [Canadian workers have needed to take time off](#) for mental health issues in the last five years due to mental health challenges.

While mental health challenges are impacting many, research shows that some communities are disproportionately impacted. For example, recent research finds that [teen girls and LGBTQ+ students](#) feel it most: Nearly 60% of female students and nearly 70% of LGBTQ+ students feel persistently sad or hopeless. Other research conducted finds that [First Nations youth report higher levels of mental health challenges](#) compared to non-Indigenous youth

COVID-19 has played a significant role in increasing stress, anxiety and depression among Canadians. For young people, there has been a [significant increase in mental health challenges](#), with 40% needing to access mental health support, while 41% report unmet needs. In general, [mental health challenges are highest](#) among 18-34 year olds, as well as women.

Climate change is also causing high levels of stress, with [45% of youth reporting that climate anxiety has negatively affected their daily life](#) and functioning. For others, [economic stress is the primary concern](#). Recent studies have also shown that for many, numerous small stresses or [micro stresses](#) are adding up everyday in ways that our brains do not immediately notice, creating accumulating high levels of stress.

In response to growing mental health challenges, [AI and wearable tech products](#) are now being used to monitor mental health. Additionally, [professionals such as barbers](#) in the U.S. are being trained to provide mental health counselling to their clients. Meanwhile, [South Korea has been providing \\$500 to reclusive youth](#), in an attempt to get them out into the world and incentivize the development of new social connections.

What could this mean for career development in 2040?

- As mental health becomes a challenge for the majority of workers, CDPs will need to be trained in providing basic mental health supports, and work closely with mental health practitioners for referrals when necessary;



- Work-life balance may become a more central component of employment supports provided by CDPs;
- Mental health data may be used to assess employment viability, meaning CDPs may have a role in understanding and translating this data;
- Some workers may be unable to work full time due to mental health challenges, meaning CDPs have a role facilitating job sharing opportunities; or
- It may become more common for mid-career and late-career workers to take sabbaticals or make major career transitions, opting for a job that is deemed less stressful. As such, CDPs may play a role in helping clients identify when a sabbatical is necessary, and tailored services to support later-career transitions.



Four-day work week

For some, the answer to growing mental health challenges is to work less. In fact, 57% of Canadians rank a four-day work week as [one of the top three professional benefits](#) they would like their company to offer. This is a benefit that more employers may offer in future, given that the [world's largest four-day work week trial](#) ended with almost all companies that participated continuing with the model. Studies also show that [a four-day work week is good for the planet](#), which may garner greater support as more companies adapt to climate change.

Women are especially looking for [more flexible work options](#), as 95% reported that their work-life balance could benefit significantly from more flexibility. However, 97% felt asking for flexibility would negatively affect their chance of promotion. For some young workers, they've adopted "[Bare Minimum Mondays](#)" whereby they do as little as possible on Mondays, to avoid the feeling of dread on Sunday evenings. This slowdown of productivity may incentivize some employers to shift to a more flexible arrangement.

Why this matters for CDPs:

In 2040, it may be more common for individuals to work reduced hours, and perhaps even move to part-time work. CDPs may have a role in facilitating "job sharing" where two individuals share a single role, or helping clients assess how many hours they're able to productively work in a given week.



Growing drug and addiction rates

It is estimated that 21% of Canadians and about six [million people will meet the criteria for addiction](#) in their lifetime. While addiction is complex and has many side effects and



implications, an increase in opioid related deaths has led to particular concern in recent years. In 2022, over [7,000 people died from opioid toxicity](#), on average 20 a day. This is up from 10 a day in 2019, but down from 22 a day in 2021. In Ontario, [opioid death rates have tripled for teens](#) since 2014, while in the Yukon, two First Nations have declared [a state of emergency due to opioid related deaths](#), as the Yukon faces Canada's highest per capita death rate from illicit drugs. Studies show that addiction and drug use are impacted by a [variety of complex social factors](#), including racism, discrimination, stress, housing precarity, and childhood trauma, among other factors. As such, the growth of opioid related deaths is deeply tied to a range of other changing environmental factors.

Why this matters for CDPs

In 2040, addiction rates may continue to rise, presenting complex employment needs for CDPs to navigate. In some cases, CDPs may need to provide enhanced mental health support for their clients or play a role connecting them to additional health services. It could also mean that overdose prevention becomes a core component of health and safety training for workers, including CDPs.





GENERATIONAL SHIFTS

For the first time in Canada's history, there are now [more individuals over the age of 65](#) than there are children under the age of 15. Like most industrialized countries, Canada's population is experiencing significant changes: its population is aging due to lower fertility rates and longer life expectancy. Additionally, Canadians at age 65 can expect to live [six years longer](#) than a person of the same age in the 1960s.

As the average age of Canadians increases, there are concerns that this may lead to widespread [labour and skill shortages as workers retire](#). In response, the [Century Initiative](#) has called for a significant increase in immigration targets, while the [federal government has announced plans](#) to increase immigration to support the economy.

Meanwhile, workplaces across Canada have experienced changing cultural dynamics as Millennials (individuals born 1981-1994) prepare to move into [senior management positions](#), and Generation Z (individuals born 1995-2010) have [entered the workforce](#). As with previous generations, both generations possess unique values and characteristics that are in some cases [challenging existing corporate structures and cultures](#).

What could this mean for career development in 2040?

- Workers in Canada may stay in the labour force longer, meaning CDPs will need to adapt their services to support older adults; and,
- Immigration and migrant labour may increase to solve labour shortages, with CDPs playing a significant role in supporting job placements and employment readiness.



Declining fertility rates and kid-free families

Currently, 115 countries representing about half the world's population [are beneath fertility replacement rates](#), meaning more people are dying than children are being born. Canada is included in this list. There are many reasons for this decline in fertility. Among the CDPs interviewed as part of this research, some commented that younger clients do not believe they will have the financial security to support a family. In other cases, couples are [opting to be kid-free for political or environmental reasons](#). COVID-19 has also played a role in people's decision to have a family, with nearly one in four people aged 15 - 49 having [changed their fertility plans because of the pandemic](#).



For others, it has been less of a choice, as [infertility challenges now face 1 in 6 people](#) worldwide, according to the World Health Organization. In response to this, scientists have been experimenting with innovative solutions, including the development of [a synthetic human embryo](#) that had a beating heart, created without sperm or eggs, [a mouse born with two fathers](#), and more recently, a baby born in the UK from [three people's DNA](#).

Why this matters for CDPs:

In 2040, there may be fewer young people in Canada, therefore less need for career development support for this age category. This may mean CDPs are no longer embedded within educational institutions but instead become more focused on mid-career and late-career workers, as well as newcomers.

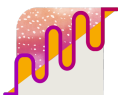


Pandemic babies

[Generation Alpha](#) are individuals born after the year 2010, typically children of Millennials, and younger siblings of Gen Z. They have also been nicknamed [Generation C](#) for Generation COVID, as they were either very young or born after the COVID-19 pandemic. While it is early to know exactly how this generation will be impacted, 84% of adults believe [COVID-19 will significantly shape this generation](#), while 78% feel this means they'll be more resilient. Research to date has found that Generation Alpha like things that are [familiar, have a strong sense of personal agency and autonomy, and tend to be hopeful](#).

Why this matters to CDPs:

In 2040, individuals who were very young or born after COVID-19 will be entering the workforce. Many will be more comfortable communicating digitally than previous generations, having spent early years talking to family by Zoom, WhatsApp, or FaceTime and participating in virtual school or recreational programs. While this generation is still too young to be able to say what type of employment support they might need, CDPs will need to expect variation from previous generations.



Gen Z in charge

Born between 1995 and 2010, Generation Z are digital natives who have had [access to the internet their entire lives](#). They are also known for being values-driven, concerned about climate change and social issues, and [look for employers whose values align](#) with their own. In fact, a [Deloitte report](#) found that 44% of Gen Z have rejected assignments due to ethical concerns, and 39% have turned down employers that do not align with their values. This same



report found that 35% have mentally distanced themselves from their jobs due to burnout, and 33% want a four-day work week. Studies also have found that Gen Z tend to [prefer to work remotely](#), are more likely to be [working multiple jobs](#), and [do not want minimum wage jobs](#). Additionally, according to some research, Gen Z are struggling with [nonverbal communication skills](#) at work.

Many of the CDPs interviewed as part of this research echoed how values-driven Gen Z clients are, and that they expect work to have meaning that is related to their broader worldview. This requires CDPs to understand the wider culture in which clients live and work. Other CDPs mentioned that Gen Z tend to have a high degree of anxiety around the future due to high expectations about what they need to be and the contribution they seek to make to society. Having said that, their goals are quite different from previous generations. One CDP mentioned that when asking Gen Z about their future they did not believe having a family or house would be within their financial reality due to the cost of housing. This point is reinforced by research that finds [55% of Gen Z requiring mental health treatments due to stress](#) related to seeing poor economic opportunities and low stability.

Why this matters to CDPs:

In 2040, Generation Z will be 30 - 45 years old, likely holding decision-making roles and making hiring decisions. As such, it is possible hiring decisions may become more values-based over skills-based, and Gen Z seeks to have employees who might personally identify with the purpose or approach of the organization. As such, CDPs may need tools to support the assessment or articulation of values.



Living longer

As the world's population gets older, many HR professionals have been looking for better ways to [support older workers](#). Already, employment participation of 55-64 year olds in Canada has gone from [47% in 1996 to 65.8%](#) in 2016. As individuals age, health challenges may create barriers to employment participation; however this may change in the future as new scientific breakthroughs support the cognitive function of older adults. For example, an [experimental Alzheimer drug](#) was recently successful in halting the clinical progression of the disease in 47% of patients, while slowing the rate of cognitive decline by 35%. Recently there have been innovations and advances in [gene therapy](#) that could help advance longevity. In fact, some gene therapy experiments in elderly mice have shown [reverse aging](#). On the technological side, “biohackers” have been looking for ways to “[upgrade](#)” [their biology](#) using implants, while an AI research consortium called OpenFold has focused efforts on understanding human biological systems [to discover new medicines and treatments](#) using AI.



Why this matters to CDPs:

In 2040, there may be individuals working well into their 80s, as new medical breakthroughs make it easier to do so, and broader economic conditions make it necessary. As such, CDPs may need to expand services to a much older population than is currently offered.



6. Preliminary Insights

We are living in a time of increased uncertainty, where multiple environmental, economic, health, and geopolitical challenges are creating complex social, political, and labour market conditions. As a result, the needs of employers and workers are complex, uncertain, and volatile, and by extension, so is the role of CDPs.

Based on the major changes described in this report, careers, career development, and career services may look very different in 2040. For example, an older workforce may mean new career services specifically designed for the unique needs of seasoned workers who may require age-related accommodations. Conversely, ongoing global supply chain challenges may mean Canada's workforce becomes more localized and place-based as small, medium, and large employers do what is possible to reduce risks. It is also possible that remote work and housing affordability may impact the locations where career-oriented services are needed most.

Depending on how these changes mature and evolve over time, CDPs may need a range of new skills in the future, such as expanded digital skills that respond to emerging technologies; advanced research capabilities to understand broader geographic areas and opportunities; enhanced mental health interventions; coaching skills related to climate health; and likely many others that respond to the ten major changes identified in this report. The next phase of this project will translate these changes into three possible scenarios, and engage CDPs in a deeper exploration of the possible implications of these changes. In doing so, CDPs will collectively identify key skill requirements, and how services may need to evolve by 2040. The results of this work will be available in early 2024.



7. Next steps

The purpose of this report is to outline the range of diverse and complex changes impacting the futures of work and workers in Canada, and their potential implications for CDPs. Not only is the workplace changing, but so are concepts of work, the needs of workers, and the ways in which career-oriented services may need to be delivered. These changes are occurring during a time of complex social, economic, environmental, and political uncertainty, which means these changes are not only more complex, but more volatile.

While this report briefly touches on the potential impacts these changes may have on CDPs in 2040, it is part of a broader series of work exploring Career Development in 2040. Subsequent reports explore how these changes may impact the role of career developers in more detail, with specific emphases on CDP skills and service gaps, and professional development needs. For more details about this project, see <https://ceric.ca/projects/career-development-in-2040-how-the-changing-nature-of-work-will-impact-the-concept-of-careers-and-the-role-and-identity-of-career-developers/>



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This report was written by Creative Futures Studio Inc., commissioned by CERIC. Creative Futures Studio uses applied strategic foresight methodologies to help organizations prepare for their futures. For more details, see: www.creativefutures.studio

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The authors wish to thank the individuals who generously gave their time to be interviewed as part of this report. These individuals were a mix of CDPs, career development users and non-users, who provided critical insights into the changing nature of work and career-oriented services.

In addition, the authors wish to acknowledge Christopher Wilson, Sabrina Ash, and Tara O'Neil who supported trend research activities in various ways.



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