



CAREER CONNECTIONS

WORLD OF WORK PREPAREDNESS HANDBOOK



STUDENTS ABILITIES
CONFIDENCE ADAPT PLAN
SKILLS TRANSITION
CLEAR WORLD IMPLEMENT

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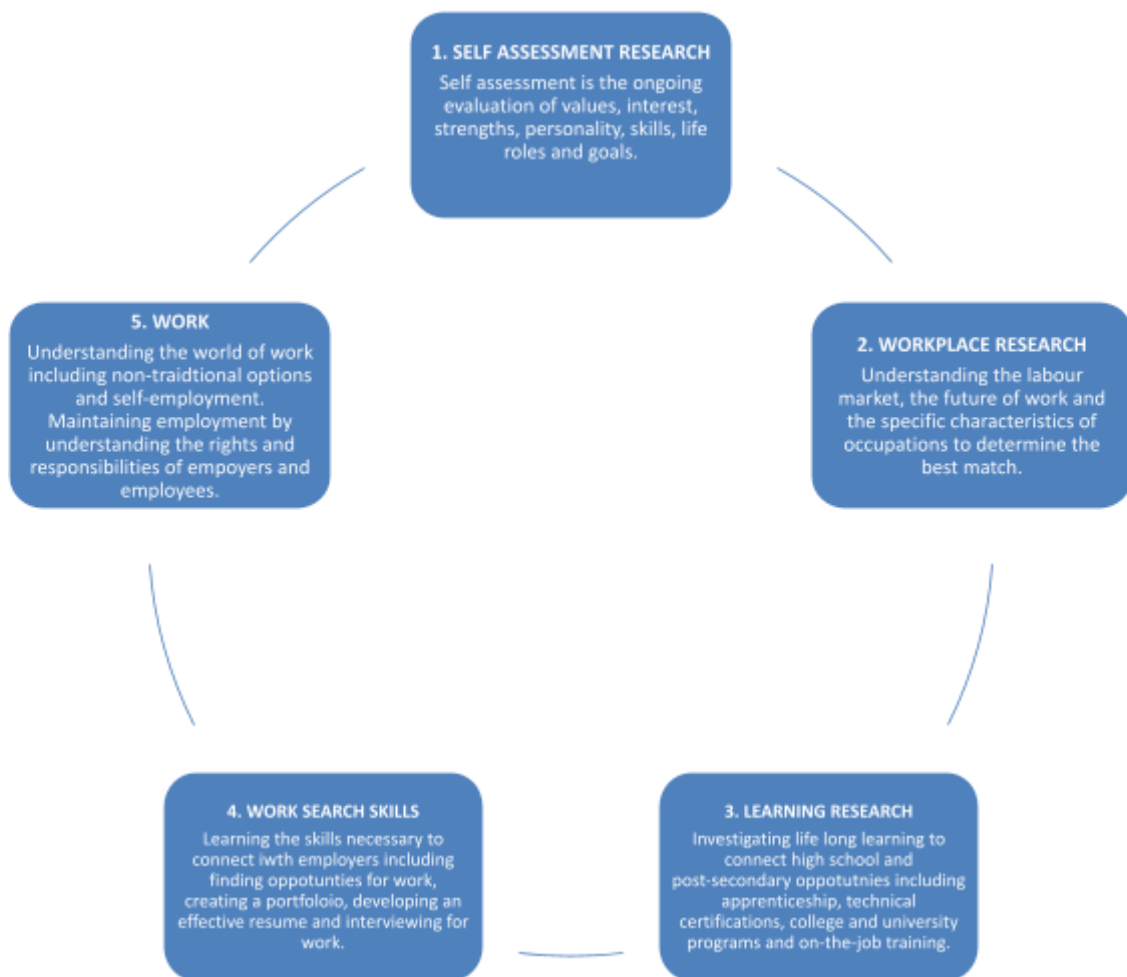
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INTRODUCTION

Many students are unsure what direction they want to go after high school or what career path might be the best fit for them. Other students may have a career or post-secondary plan but want to take time to work and save up some money. Maybe students have completed their necessary career training and are now looking to transition into the world of work.

Whatever the reason, students are looking to get into the workforce, and this handbook will help them navigate the various steps and processes.

This handbook will also address how students can prepare to be successful in the workforce and to begin to live independently. If students determine that they require career training in the future, there's also information on how they can obtain different types of training and potentially go back to school.



TERMINOLOGY

Applicant: a job seeker who has applied for employment at a company.

Applicant Tracking System (ATS): is software employed by Human Resources to assist in filtering out candidates based on resume keywords, specific skills, and other variables designated by the operator.

Application: an official request from a job seeker to be considered for employment given to a company or recruiter. A job application may be a simple email with a resume or cover letter attached to it, or it could be done through an applicant tracking system.

Apprenticeship: a career training arrangement in which someone learns a job, usually a skilled trade, under another qualified individual.

Benefits: items and services offered by a company on top of monetary compensation (salary). Common employer benefits include medical insurance, dental insurance, retirement benefits, disability insurance, and paid time off.

Brokering: brokers or agents earn income by marketing other people's talents or products and taking a fee (e.g. sports and talent agents, literary agent). Brokers have tools and resources to reach the largest possible base of buyers.

Career: this is defined as the sum of all the roles we have had and all of our experiences. Therefore, your career may include paid work, volunteerism, parenting, coaching, athletics, education, and leisure activities.

Collective Agreement: a written contract between the employer and a union or group of workers that outlines many of the terms and conditions of employment for employees in a bargaining unit. The terms and conditions are reached through collective bargaining between the employer and the union.

Compensation Package: the combination of the salary and various benefits an employer offers you in exchange for employment.

Consulting: a consultant is usually an expert or an experienced professional in a specific field and has a wide knowledge of the subject matter. Typically a consultant provides their expertise on a temporary basis, usually for a fee.

Contracting: taking on work within an organization for a set period of time. The contractor receives a set fee with no employee benefits.

Cover Letter – A cover letter is an employment document that a job seeker writes to formally state their application for a job, explain why they're qualified, and detail why they'd be an ideal candidate. A cover letter usually accompanies a resume and is attached together in an email as a job application.

Criminal Record Check: is a review process performed by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) at the request of a company on a particular job applicant to determine if they have any criminal charges in their past which could harm the company or prevent the individual from completing their job.

Curriculum Vitae (CV): an application document detailing a candidate's work history, personal information, skills, academic qualifications, degrees, awards, publications, achievements, and other pertinent information. A CV is usually a much more comprehensive account of a person's academic and professional background than a standard employment resume.

Deductions: money taken from your paycheck in order to pay for specific services, like taxes, life insurance, RRSP contributions, etc.

Dismissal: the removal of an employee from a position with the employer, usually for disciplinary or performance reasons.

Entrepreneurship: runs a business that sells a product or service and employs others.

Employment: the relationship between a worker (employee) and a hirer (employer), usually a company or a private client. Employment most often involves the employer compensating work performed by the employee in monetary terms.

Employment Contract: a signed agreement between an individual employee and an employer. It establishes both the rights and responsibilities of the two parties: the worker and the company.

Employment Website: also known as an online job board, is a website where job seekers can search for available opportunities and apply for jobs.

Experience: the combination of skills, knowledge, and practice someone gains through working. Experience can also be known as work experience, work history, job experience, job history, or employment experience.

Franchising: a business operating system that is leased by an entrepreneur (franchisee) from the company that owns the system (franchisor). The franchisor usually provides the place of business, trains the franchisee, provides advertising support and monitors the operation to be sure standards are met and maintained.

Full-Time: employment at or above a certain number of hours. In most places full-time work means either 30+ or 40+ hours per week. Anything under full-time employment is considered part-time employment.

Hard Skills: skills and abilities which are able to be taught and quantified, for the most part. Hard skills are usually learned in a classroom, via an app, or through work experience, and it is able to be quantified through testing or surveys.

Human Resources (HR): a company department which is responsible for managing affairs related to employees, such as company culture, performance, training and onboarding, compensation and benefits. HR tends to also be responsible for hiring, firing, job interviews, and exit interviews.

Informational Interview: a conversation in which a person seeks insights on a career path, an industry, a company and/or general career advice from someone with experience and knowledge in that area.

Internship: a temporary work program offered by an organization to an individual, often a student or recent graduate, looking to build experience or skills in a particular field. A person accepted into an internship program is called an intern.

Intervention Record Check: required by employers when the employee will be working with children or youth. Must complete an application at your local [Children's Services Office in Alberta](#).

Interview: a meeting between a job candidate and one or more company representatives for the purpose of determining whether the candidate would be a good fit as a potential employee.

Job: a specific position held within a company or an organization. Example: teacher in Chinook's Edge School Division, framer for Handyman Construction, Premier of Alberta, X-ray technician at Leduc Hospital

Leave (Short-Term, Long-Term, Parental, etc.): a benefit offered by companies, sometimes required by law, which allows an employee to take time off from work. Depending on the company and the local and national laws, work leaves can range in time and in compensation, being both paid and unpaid.

Minimum Wage: the lowest monetary compensation legally allowed in a particular locale. Usually a per-hour amount, companies are not permitted to pay their employees less than the minimum wage in a given area.

Notice: when the employee gives or gets notification that their work with a particular employer will end by a specified date.

Occupation: this is a group of similar jobs. It can be expressed in many ways, and is defined by its skills. Example: teacher, construction worker, politician. People usually pick an occupation that matches their values, interests, skills, and life goals.

Offer Letter: a letter given by a company to a potential employee that provides key terms of the prospective employee's employment.

Onboarding: a post-employment process an HR representative guides a newly-hired employee on to bring that employee up to speed as far as the company history, culture, ways of the office, and any other knowledge an employee might need to be able to be proficient at their new job.

One-Person Enterprise or Sole Proprietorship: offers a product or service without employing others; is often run as a home-based business.

Overtime: an amount of work performed by an employee which is greater than the normal amount of working hours. Overtime may be set at a company level, city level, or national level, and it usually involves a higher rate of compensation for the extra time (above normal working hours) worked.

Part-Time: employment which is under a designated time, usually meaning either under 30 hours or under 40 hours per week. Any more than this is considered full-time (or overtime).

Pension: a registered plan that provides the employee with a source of income during their retirement. Payments into the pension are typically made by employees and may be "matched" to a certain amount by the employer.

Portfolio: A portfolio is a collection of materials and examples of past work a job seeker compiles to showcase their skills, talent, and experience to prospective employers.

Promotion: a company action which involves advancing an employee to a higher rank in the organization. Many promotions involve more responsibilities and may include an increase in benefits and perks.

Recruiter: an agent who locates qualified candidates for job openings or ideal employment opportunities for job seekers. Most recruiters are usually not affiliated with a company, often working solo or part of a recruitment agency.

References: people who can talk about your work experience, work habits, character and skills. Choose your references carefully as you may be asked to provide the names of people whom a potential employer can contact to find out more about you.

Resume: is an employment document a job seeker creates detailing their work history, academic achievements, skills, certifications, awards, and any other relevant information. A resume is less extensive and comprehensive than a CV.

Skills: the knowledge and abilities you have to perform particular tasks or actions.

Soft Skills: talents and abilities that are harder to assess or quantify and usually learned throughout a lifetime, especially those involving relationships, social intelligence, communication, character, emotional intelligence, and personality.

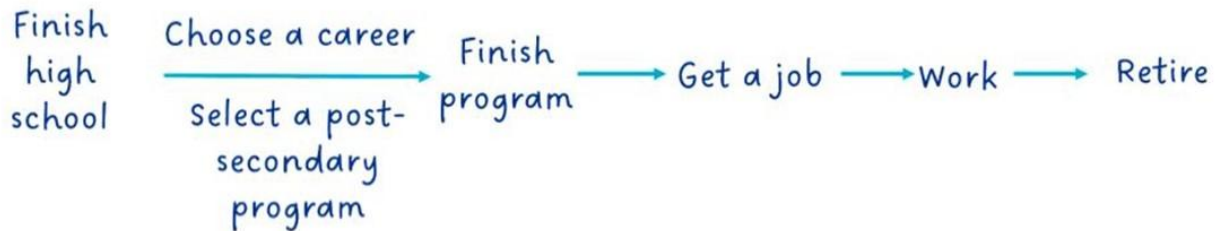
Talent pooling: group of self-employed people with different talents and related interests that together possess all the skills required to win a particular contract that none of them could handle on their own. They form a consortium and offer their services as a “virtual company” – forms to carry out a project and disbands when it is done.

Transferable Skills: talents and abilities that are used or acquired at one job which are also able to be utilized at another job.

Work: any activity where something is produced or a service is provided. It is different from a job because it includes paid and unpaid work (e.g. paid employment positions; volunteer work; parenting; home-based chores).

Work-Life Balance: the ability to tune the time you spend on your professional and personal lives in order to find a healthy medium that enhances your quality of life. Depending on your specific situation, this may not always be a perfect 50/50 balance, but overall you should feel that your job gives you adequate time to have a life outside of work.

▶ EXPECTATIONS



▶ REALITY



Remember: “In squiggly careers, there’s no one size fits all version of success. Success is as individual as you are.”

- Helen Tupper & Sarah Ellis, Co-Owners and Authors, Amazing If : <https://www.amazingif.com/>

PART 1: PREPARING FOR THE WORLD OF WORK

WHAT DO I NEED BEFORE I APPLY FOR A JOB?

Apply for your SIN

To work in Canada or access government programs and benefits, you need a 9-digit number known as a Social Insurance Number (SIN).

Your SIN is private and it is illegal for anyone else to use it. You are responsible for [protecting your SIN](#).

Service Canada is responsible for issuing SINs, which comes in a paper format (Confirmation of SIN letter). If you have a plastic SIN card that has not expired, it is still valid.

If you are 12 years of age or older, you can apply for your own Social Insurance Number.

If you are applying for yourself and are a Canadian citizen, then the documents you will need to provide as part of the online application are:

1. Primary identity document

You must provide 1 of the following documents:

1. birth certificate issued by the vital statistics agency in the province or territory of birth
2. certificate of Canadian Citizenship issued by IRCC or CIC
3. certificate of Registration of Birth Abroad issued by CIC before 1977

2. Secondary document

You must provide 1 of the following documents. It must contain the legal name (family name and given name) and the date of birth.

1. a passport (Canadian or foreign)
2. a Canadian provincial or territorial ID card or driver's license
3. any other Canadian government-issued ID

3. Proof of address

You must provide a document that confirms the address indicated in the online SIN application. A response to your request will be mailed to this address. It must:

1. be issued by one of the following: a government, a company, an institution, an organisation, a landlord or an employer and be:
 - a document, or
 - an attestation letter signed by the issuer
2. contain the name (surname and given name) that appears on your primary, secondary or supporting document

4. Supporting document

If the name on any document provided is different from the name on the SIN application, a legal document stating the most recent name used is required

Set-Up a Bank Account

When you get a job, the company may pay you with a cheque or they may do direct deposit.

Either way, you need a place to put your money when you get it!

Make sure to connect with a financial institution in your area and set-up a bank account.

Many institutions will offer accounts with no banking fees for those in high school or post-secondary.

How Can I Choose a Job That is a Good Fit?

- Personal reflection and evaluation - [Learn More About Yourself](#):
 - Skills - What are the things you know how to do?
 - Values - What do you value most or what things are the most important to you?
 - Areas of Interest - Favourite subjects in school, hobbies, extracurricular activities.
 - Strengths - What comes easily to you?
 - Motivators - What are you passionate about?
 - Assets - What do I have experience in?
 - [ALIS - Know Yourself Quizzes](#), [16 Personalities Assessment](#), etc.
- Do your Career Research!
 - [ALIS - Occupational Profiles](#)
 - MyBlueprint
 - Career Assessments
 - Volunteer or get a job in your field of interest
 - Find someone that has the job you want and then see if you can interview and/or job shadow with them
- Don't stress over "what will I like doing for the rest of my life?"
 - Most people will make major career changes at least 3-7 times in their life.
 - Focus on what you might like to do for the next 5-10 years, as that's more likely!
- Be cautious of the idea of "take your hobby and make it your job." Sometimes hobbies are meant to be hobbies! If you make it your job, it might not be fun for you anymore! You definitely want to find a job that is interesting and fulfilling, but not every hobby makes for a good career path!

ALIS: <https://alis.alberta.ca/careerinsite/know-yourself/>



Know Yourself

Interests Exercise



Know Yourself

Abilities Exercise



Know Yourself

Core Skills Exercise

What Are Some Ways to Explore Options While in High School?

- CTF (Middle School) and CTS (High School) Courses
 - Allow you to explore different areas of interest and build skills
 - Earn credits towards your high school diploma
- Dual Credit
 - Earn credits towards high school diploma and post-secondary credits at the same time.
 - Allows students to understand post-secondary expectations.
 - Opportunity to try a program or career path before applying.
- Internships & Work Experience
 - This can be done through general Work Experience and [CAREERS Internships](#).
 - Earn credits towards high school diploma, gain work experience and potentially earn money.
 - Allows students to understand employer expectations.
 - Opportunity to try a career before deciding if it's the right path.
- Green Certificate
 - Earn high school credits in a variety of agriculture-related fields.
 - Learn under the direction of experienced farm personnel.
 - Must pass testing to earn credits.
- Volunteering
 - Explore different opportunities, develop “soft skills” and give back to the community
- Job Shadow
 - Connect with a mentor in a career area and see what a “day in the life” is like.
- Clubs and Organizations
 - Can help you explore passions and interests during your spare time
 - 4H, Sports, Interact, Student Council, etc

High School Opportunities



Research Possible Employment Opportunities

There are a number of ways to find potential employment opportunities, including:

- CAREERS
- Your school
- Online websites & social media
- Employment agencies
- Community organizations
- Personal network

CAREERS is a not-for-profit organization that helps youth explore careers in the Trades, Information & Communication Technology, Agriculture and Health through paid internships. They work primarily with high school students (Grade 10-12) but can also assist recent graduates through their new U21 Program. Internships through CAREERS can help you earn high school credits, make money and gain valuable work experience.

If you are looking for employment opportunities, check with your school! Many times employers will connect with schools when they are looking to hire, as they know students are looking for work. The school may also be able to recommend employers that students have worked with in the past through Work Experience and other off-campus opportunities.

There are many websites and social media options for searching for job opportunities, including: Indeed, LinkedIn, Kijiji, Facebook Groups, classified ads and more!

There are numerous employment agencies and community organizations that you can connect with as well, if you're looking for work. Some agencies are free while others will have a cost associated with their services. Getting connected to a network of people through community organizations (Rotary, Lions, etc) can be a great way to build your network. This may involve work opportunities or ways that you can volunteer and give back to your community.

Finally, use your network and the people that you know!

Reach out to friends, family and other people in your circle that may know of employment opportunities in areas that you are interested in. In many cases, this is the best way to "get your foot in the door" and have an employer pay attention to your application.

Once you have found potential employers, ***it's also important to do some research into the position and company that you are applying for.*** Things that you want to find out about include:

- Company's Mission and/or Vision - you can find these on most company websites....does it align with your own values and beliefs?
- Hours of Operation - will you be able to work when needed and does their schedule work for the other commitments you may have in your life?
- Salary - is the pay in line with what you would expect and require?
- Company Culture - do you know of other employees that work there that you could talk to? Check out Google Reviews and other company reviews to see what others have to say about the company.

The more research you do, the better prepared you'll be for an interview and the more sure you'll be that this opportunity is a good one for you!

Develop Skills That Employers Are Looking For

Employers are looking for specific soft skills in their employees, especially young people who may not have a lot of experience or hard skills on their resume. You can start to build these soft skills while you are in high school, by using them in the classroom.

Treat your school work like your “job” and put in your best effort. Getting into that habit will help you transition more successfully to the working world and will set you up to meet the demands of your future employers.

Some of the most common soft skills that employers are looking for include:

- **Reliability:** will you show up for work when you are scheduled?
 - **How to build it:** show up to class! Attendance is important!
- **Punctuality:** will you arrive at work on time and be ready to go when your shift starts?
 - **How to build it:** get to class on time and hand in work when it is due.
- **Resilience:** will you continue to work hard even when faced with challenges and not give up easily?
 - **How to build it:** work with teachers to better understand concepts you may be struggling with.
- **Problem Solving:** will you approach problems in different ways in an effort to solve them?
 - **How to build it:** identify the problem and brainstorm ways to address it, then practice different approaches to solving the problem and then assess what strategies worked best
- **Time Management:** are you able to manage your time effectively and get tasks done?
 - **How to build it:** use a planner, Google calendar, or notifications and alarms on your phone (or all three or any other method that works for you) to keep yourself organized.
- **Focus:** are you able to keep your attention on the task at hand and not get distracted by your phone or other things around you?
 - **How to build it:** put your phone away and pay attention to what is happening in class.
- **Accountability:** do you take ownership of your mistakes and look for ways to improve?
 - **How to build it:** if you get a bad mark or don't hand something in on time, own it and work with your teachers to find options for improvement.
- **Initiative:** do you look for ways to improve and gain more knowledge? Ask lots of questions and show that you're willing to learn.
 - **How to build it:** are there things you can do to improve in class or to get more out of your school experience, like joining clubs and taking part in dual credit or other extra-curricular opportunities?
- **Teamwork:** can you work well with others?
 - **How to build it:** take advantage of group projects and other opportunities to learn how to work well with classmates.

As you are researching different employment opportunities, pay attention to the job descriptions and make note of the types of skills that they are looking for. If you make the effort to develop these skills while in high school, you will be prepared to carry them into the workforce with you as well.

Make sure that you include these skills on your resume or highlight them in your cover letter (or both), especially if they are skills that have been identified in the job description as being particularly important for the specific position you are applying for.

Create Your Cover Letter & Resume

Your cover letter and resume are your “first impression” to a prospective employer, so you want to make sure that they are done well!

Resumes are sent to prospective employers so that they can evaluate whether you might be a good fit for a particular job. There are numerous resources available to help you create a resume, including:

- [MyBluePrint - Resume Builder](#)
- [ALIS - Resumes and References](#)
- CALM Teacher or Career Counsellor/Practitioner
- [CESD Cover Letter & Resume Template](#)

There are even agencies that will help you format your resume, but there is often a fee required for those types of services.

There are numerous ways to format a resume and different formats may work better for different applicants or for different employment situations.

[This article from Indeed](#) provides examples of three popular resume formats, as well as a basic template for each resume type.

Chronological Resume

Display your work experience in reverse-chronological order, with your most recent position at the top. This is a very traditional format and is often used in many industries today.

A chronological resume often lists information in this order:

- Contact details
- Objective/goals statement
- Work experience
- Relevant skills
- Education
- Additional information (i.e., volunteer work and special interests)

A chronological resume suits candidates whose employment record is consistent. If you've spent the past several years in the same profession advancing steadily to more senior positions, this type of resume format is a good option for you.

Functional Resume

Features skills rather than work history. It may include information in this order:

- Contact details
- Summary or objective statement
- Relevant skills
- Experience
- Education
- Additional information (i.e., volunteer work and special interests)

A functional resume is also a good idea if you're re-entering the workforce after a lengthy pause.

Combination Resume

May work for you if you don't have many gaps in your employment history. A combination resume is a blend of the chronological and functional resume types. It emphasizes your work experience along with your relevant skills.

The combination resume often includes the following information in this order:

- Contact details
- Goals or objective summary
- Work history
- Relevant skills summary
- Education

The combination resume is a more flexible format; you can list either your skills or your work experience first depending on which you consider more important for the role.

The article also provides some other tips on how to properly format a resume.

A well-formatted resume is an easy-to-read document. Employers only plan a short amount of time to look through resumes, so your formatting decisions must present the information clearly and make your most impressive qualifications easy to find.

Here are the key steps for formatting a resume:

- **Choose appropriate margins:** Standard margins for resumes are one inch on all sides. If you adjust your margins out of this measurement, it is best to keep them under 1.5 inches. Left-aligning your resume makes it easier to read.
- **Select a font:** Many companies employ an Applicant Tracking System (ATS) to aid in screening resumes. It doesn't always read and interpret intricate fonts correctly. Avoid "light" or "thin" fonts as they are often more difficult to read. Sans serif fonts (fonts without tails) are excellent fonts for resumes.
- **Adjust the font size to 12:** Anything more might appear cartoonish or unprofessional. If you think you need a smaller font to include more information, you may actually need to streamline.
- **Use section headers:** Stylizing the font for section headers can help employers quickly find the information they are looking for. You can do this by making your section headers bold, by enlarging section headers to 14 or 16 point font or by using underlines for section headers. These adjustments can also be applied to your contact details at the top of the resume.
- **Use bullet points where appropriate:** Bullet points can be used to list achievements in an eye-catching way, but if you have less than three pieces of information, simply list them in sentence form.
- **Look at other resumes:** Researching other resumes that have been submitted for positions you are interested in can help you decide on a format. Examples are available for various fields on the internet. You may notice a certain format is particularly popular for a specific job, and it can be used for inspiration for your own. You may also confirm that the format you have chosen aligns with the industry you are seeking to find a role in.

Your resume does not have to be overly stylized, but you can add colour, icons, etc, if you wish.

What is most important is that the information is presented clearly and that you've reviewed all of the information to ensure it is accurate, as well as being grammatically correct. **Proof-reading is essential!**

Cover Letters are also sent to a prospective employer along with the resume. It is a brief letter that offers one more chance to attract the attention of the employer and shows how you can meet specific qualifications of the job you are applying for. The letter highlights your skills that are applicable to the job and tells the employer that you are enthusiastic about the possibility of the job.

As with the resume, there are many ways to format a cover letter, but this is an example of a very basic and common cover letter format:

Your First & Last Name

Your Address

Date of Writing

Name of Company Representative

Their Department

Company Name

Company Address

Salutation

Opening Paragraph to Introduce Yourself

Cover Letter Body Paragraphs

Ending Paragraph

Closing Sentiment

Your Name

Additional resources for writing cover letters are also available online, including on the ALIS website.

[ALIS - Cover Letters](#)

Cover letters should be tailored to each specific job you are applying for, whenever possible, as this shows that you have done your research into the company and position, and that you've taken the extra time and initiative to make a specific cover letter.

When creating your cover letter and resume, make sure you read the job description and application instructions carefully, as they may ask for something specific, like providing 3 references or that you quote a competition number. Following these instructions is important, as failing to do so could eliminate your application from consideration.

You also want to ensure that you proof-read your cover letter and do not have any grammatical or spelling errors, as this can lead to employers disregarding your application and not even looking at your resume.

Create a Portfolio

A portfolio is a document that conveys your talents and skills to a potential employer. They are quite common in more artistic or creative fields, like marketing, architecture, journalism and graphic design. However, employers may request a portfolio for any type of job and many job seekers are creating portfolios as a way to better demonstrate their fit for a particular role.

A portfolio expands on the information presented in your resume and provides specific examples and evidence of the skills and experience that you bring to the table.

Portfolios can take on many different forms, including a website, a book, digital files or other mediums.

[ALIS - How to Build a Job Portfolio](#)

[How to Build a Portfolio](#) - Google Slide Deck

Consider Your Social Media

When applying for a job, you can increase your chances of success through online networking.

[LinkedIn](#) is a popular career networking site, so having a profile there and connecting with people in industry is a great way to help you find a job now or in the future.

You want to ensure your LinkedIn profile is professional and matches up with the information on your resume.

Also important, you want to ensure that you have the privacy settings on your other social media channels (Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, etc) set appropriately so that content cannot be seen by people you are not friends with.

Many employers will “scope you out” on social media, and if they see images or posts that don’t align with their organization’s mission and values, it could result in you not being considered for job opportunities.

[ALIS - Networking Online for Career Success](#)

WHAT SHOULD I DO WHEN I APPLY FOR A JOB?

Follow Instructions

When applying for a job, make sure you read the job description and application instructions carefully, as they may ask for something specific. Following these instructions is important, as failing to do so could eliminate your application from consideration.

Many job postings will also tell you **how** to submit your application. It might be online, via email, or they may ask you to apply in-person. Again, following directions is important, as it shows you pay attention to details and can follow instructions.

Be Professional

Professionalism can be defined as the skill, good judgment, and polite behavior that is expected from a person who is trained to do a job well. Professionalism is commonly thought of as an individual's adherence to a set of standards, code of conduct or collection of qualities that characterize accepted practice within a specific work environment.

It's very important to behave professionally when applying for a job. Here are a few things to consider when attempting to be professional during your job search:

- **Email Etiquette**
 - **Email Address:** make sure your email address is appropriate....sexykitty69 isn't the most professional first impression to make on an employer.
 - **Application Submission:** if you are submitting your application, resume, etc, via email, make sure that the message you send along with your attachments is professional and indicates clearly which job you are applying for.
 - **Response Required:** make sure you are regularly checking your email, in case the employer follows-up or sends any other important information to you, and respond as soon as possible to any emails they may send.
- **Phone Etiquette**
 - **Greeting:** always answer your phone in a professional manner, in case it happens to be a prospective employer calling!
 - **Voicemail:** make sure your voicemail is professional (no jokes or profanity) and clearly identifies who you are, in case an employer calls and needs to leave you a message.
 - **Call Back:** always call them back! Even if you are no longer interested in the position, make sure to always call back prospective employers....ghosting or ignoring them is NOT professional.
- **Personal Appearance**
 - **Dress Appropriately:** the rule of thumb is to dress for your job interview the way you would dress for work, but up a level.

Prepare for a Job Interview

For an in-person interview, here are some things to consider when preparing:

- **Know Where You're Going:** make sure you have directions on what room or building you are going to, where to park, etc. Plan your route and ensure you arrive early so that you have plenty of time to get to the interview location.
- **Technology Check:** if you're using technology as part of your interview in any way, make sure all of your technology is working properly. Ensure devices are fully charged and functioning properly, and double-check microphones and speakers, as well as your internet connection.
- **Make a Good First Impression:** dress smartly, look bright and attentive, make eye contact and introduce yourself with a firm handshake, and speak clearly and confidently. First impressions really do count - studies show that employers make a decision about whether to hire you within the first seven minutes on average.
- **Documentation:** bring copies of your cover letter and resume, letters of reference, your portfolio (if applicable) and any other documents that you might require during the interview, such as a criminal record check, etc.
- **DO YOUR RESEARCH!** Know about the job and company you are applying for.

For a virtual interview, here are some things to consider when preparing:

- **Technology Check:** if your interview is online make sure all of your technology is working properly. Ensure devices are fully charged and functioning properly, and double-check microphones and speakers, as well as your internet connection.
- **Location is Key:** make sure you have a quiet location where you can participate in your interview, devoid of as many distractions as possible.
- **Lighting:** try to find a location with good, natural lighting, as this will help people see you better during the video interview.

Here are some things you want to make sure you **DO** during your interview:

- Think Ahead: Prepare answers for the most common questions
- Tell Stories: Use examples from your past experiences to illustrate the skills you bring to the table.
- Sell Yourself: Be positive about yourself and your experiences.
- Know Your Worth: when discussing salary, know the market and don't underestimate your value.
- No Distractions: Turn off your mobile phone and give the interviewers your undivided attention.
- Make sure to breathe and think before responding

Equally important, here are some thing to **NOT DO** during an interview:

- Be late
- Swear or use slang words
- Slouch in your seat or do anything that makes you look uninterested
- Lie
- Let your nerves show too much - a few nerves are normal but extreme nerves will affect your performance. Use breathing techniques and try to remember that it's not a life and death situation!
- Be arrogant and assume you've got the job - nothing turns off employers more than someone who is disrespectful and overconfident
- Discuss controversial topics such as religion, politics and gender relations
- Read from notes or your CV — you should be familiar enough with your own history to be able to talk about it unprompted
- Criticize former employers or colleagues
- Argue with the interviewer - remember to keep things positive!

An interviewer wants to see how you respond and think when asked certain questions. The interviewer will try to evaluate whether you will be a good fit for the job he/she is offering.

Some of the common questions you may be asked are:

- Tell me about yourself.
- Why do you want this job?
- What are your strengths?
- What are your weaknesses?
- Can you give an example of a time when you had to cope with a difficult situation?
- Can you work under pressure?
- What kind of supervisor do you prefer?
- What has been your greatest achievement?
- Where do you see yourself in 3-5 years?
- Why should we hire you?

You will also want to be prepared for scenario-based questions, where the interviewer asks how you would handle specific situations. These scenarios usually focus on key skills that are required for the job, like customer service, dealing with angry or upset individuals, teamwork, solving problems, etc.

You can also ask the interviewer questions. Some appropriate questions may include:

- Can you tell me more about the day-to-day responsibilities of this job?
- What is your favourite part of working for this company?
- If I were hired for this position, would I be going through any training prior to actually starting the work?
- What kind of shifts are available in this position?
- How far in advance are schedules available?

Usually interviewers will give you a timeline on the next steps and when you can expect to hear back from them on if you are the successful candidate or not. If they don't give you this information, make sure to ask, so you know what to expect next.

Above all, preparation is the key to performing well in interviews. Research the role and organization, and prepare evidence and examples of your skills and competencies. You'll do great, so go in with confidence and do your best!

Here are some additional resources on preparing for job interviews:

[ALIS - Interviews and Offers](#)

[ALIS - How to Succeed at a Job Interview](#)

[Indeed - Interviewing](#)

[Indeed - How to Prepare for a Job Interview](#)

After the interview, it is important to send a [“thank you” note or email](#) to the interviewers, just to show your appreciation that they gave you the chance to interview.

WHAT SHOULD I DO WHEN I GET THE JOB?

Celebrate!!! Congratulations on landing the job! But now what?

Here are some common “next steps” to prepare for once you get the good news that you were the successful candidate:

Negotiations

When you are contacted by the employer and offered the job, they will usually give you details about the position, such as the salary, the schedule or work hours, the start-date and other important information. Many of these details can be negotiated (depending on the position), so be sure you are prepared to negotiate if you feel their first offer doesn't quite meet your needs or expectations.

You may need to be willing to compromise in order to come to an agreement with your new employer. You may even need to be prepared to turn down a job offer, if the terms of employment do not end up where you need them to be.

However, if you're happy with the job offer, then accept it and get ready for your new work adventure!

[ALIS - How to Negotiate Your Job Offer](#)

Paperwork

There is normally paperwork required when you start a new job.

Employers may send this to you in advance via email, or they may have you fill it out on your first day, or sometimes both!

Some of the paperwork you need to be prepared to complete include:

- Banking and Direct Deposit Information - bring a void check or your banking info, so that your employer can pay you via direct deposit, if applicable.
- Tax Forms - make sure you know your Social Insurance Number...you'll need it to fill out these forms!
- Benefits - if your role comes with benefits, you may have paperwork to complete, including designating dependents and/or beneficiaries, if applicable.

Many positions will also require proof of certifications (First Aid & CPR, for example) or background checks like a Criminal Record Check and/or a Child Intervention Check. Have copies of these documents ready to go, so you can get them to your employer as soon as possible.

Prepare for Your First Day

Come prepared for your first day on the job with a few key things:

- Name of the person you're supposed to report to and the location of where you should go first
- Notebook and pen
- A positive attitude!

Typically the first day on the job is used for any necessary training, getting set-up with technology (computer, printer, etc) and learning the names and roles of the people you'll be working with. Try not to get overwhelmed and take things one step at a time.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I DON'T GET THE JOB?

[ALIS - What to Do After an Interview](#)

There are many reasons you may not get a job offer:

- Maybe someone else was more experienced.
- Maybe your answers were not complete.
- Maybe the interviewers wanted to hire someone they already knew.
- Maybe you weren't a good fit with the company's culture.

Many interviewers are willing to tell you why you did not get the job. Consider contacting the employer for feedback. Make sure to clearly let the employer know you're not asking them to defend their decision. You are looking to learn so that you can do better at your next interview.

Common questions to follow up with are:

- How can I improve my resumé?
- How can I improve my interview skills?
- What can I do better in the future?
- Is there a chance for me to get a job at your company in the future?

Some interviewers may not want to answer. Other interviewers may give you some tips. Either way, make sure you are polite and do not argue with them. Thank them for their time and say goodbye.

Remember, this is not the end! Don't get frustrated!

It can take many job applications and interviews before you find success, so don't give up!



PART 2: SUCCEEDING IN THE WORLD OF WORK

[ALIS - Succeed at Work](#)

[ALIS - Get and Keep the Work You Want](#)

<https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/career-advice-for-young-professionals>

WHAT TO EXPECT...

[ALIS - New Job? Here's How to Make a Good First Impression](#)

[ALIS - Your First Two Weeks at Work](#)

On the First Day

The first day at a new job can be quite exciting, but also nerve-wracking! Here are some things that you may encounter during that first day on the job.

- **Introductions** - you'll most likely be introduced to the key people you'll be working with day-to-day. Use your notebook or an organizational chart (if available) to keep track of everyone and start to learn/remember names.
- **Tour** - you may be taken on a tour to see the key locations to be aware of on the worksite.
- **Rules & Regulations** - you may be introduced to the various rules and regulations that govern your worksite. Make sure you pay special attention to these and ensure you understand what your responsibilities are.
- **Orientation** - you may have an official orientation meeting with Human Resources. This may also occur during the first week or even month of your employment, depending on your organization.

In the First Week

The first week at a new job can be a bit overwhelming with lots of things to learn. Here are some things that you may encounter during that first week.

- **Systems** - you'll need to get familiar with the computer systems and programs, and other technology used in your job (point of sale systems, etc). There may be training offered or manuals you can use to learn how to effectively use the systems you need to do your job.
- **Paperwork** - you'll most likely need to meet with Human Resources in the first week to complete all the paperwork necessary for employment. This could include tax forms, direct deposit forms and those related to your benefits, if applicable.
- **Understanding Your Role** - the first week will give you a better understanding of your specific role and how you contribute to the company as a whole. Ask lots of questions of supervisors and colleagues to ensure you understand the big picture and the details of your individual responsibilities.
- **Remembering Everyone** - you'll most likely be taken around and introduced to your colleagues, so try to learn their names (maybe download an organization chart if one is available or write them down to help you remember them) and start to build that professional relationship.

In the First Month

The first month at your new job will go by in a blink as you'll be busy acclimating to your new work environment. Here are some things that you may encounter during that first month.

- **Company Culture** - over the first month you'll start to get a feel for the culture of the company, so take advantage of opportunities to participate in activities and events, if that's your thing, and you'll hopefully find that the culture is a positive and supportive one.
- **Developing Relationships** - you will spend more time with your colleagues each day than almost anyone else, so take the time to get to know people! Use breaks, lunch time, and conversations throughout the day to get to know the people you work with.
- **Getting Comfortable** - you'll start to feel more comfortable in your role as you learn more about the tasks, projects and outcomes that you are responsible for.

In the First Year

The first year at your new job will be full of challenges and learning curves, but also hopefully lots of exciting opportunities to grow and learn. Here are some things that you may encounter during that first year.

- **Finding Your Groove** - you'll find over the first year that you become more adept at doing your job and you will build confidence as you continue to learn and develop in your new role.
- **Building & Expanding Skills** - as you continue to develop, you may find yourself with the opportunity to participate in professional development, which you should definitely take advantage of! You will also build on the tasks and skills that you started with and may begin to develop higher levels of skills and abilities.
- **Contributing More** - as you build confidence and skill in your role, you may be tasked with higher-levels of responsibility or asked to mentor or train others, etc. These opportunities are a great way to continue to grow and contribute to your organization, if that's something you want to pursue.

HEALTH & SAFETY

You spend more time at work than anywhere else, so your workplace should be somewhere where you feel safe, valued and protected from harassment and dangers. Each jurisdiction will have its own rules and regulations around workplace health and safety, so make sure you know what rules apply to your workplace!

AB Occupational Health and Safety: <https://www.alberta.ca/occupational-health-safety.aspx>

- OHS Act, Regulations and Code: <https://www.alberta.ca/ohs-act-regulation-code.aspx>
- Workplace Harassment and Violence: <https://www.alberta.ca/workplace-harassment-violence.aspx>
- OHS Concerns and Incidents: <https://www.alberta.ca/ohs-complaints-incidents.aspx>

EMPLOYMENT LAWS & STANDARDS

Each jurisdiction will have its own rules and regulations around work, so ensure that you know what the standards are in your country/province/state.

AB Employment Standards: <https://www.alberta.ca/alberta-employment-standards-rules.aspx>

- AB General Holidays: <https://www.alberta.ca/alberta-general-holidays.aspx>
- Exceptions for Specific Industries: <https://www.alberta.ca/exceptions-for-specific-industries.aspx>
- Hours of Work and Rest: <https://www.alberta.ca/hours-work-rest.aspx>
- Overtime Hours and Overtime Pay: <https://www.alberta.ca/overtime-hours-overtime-pay.aspx>
- Termination and Termination Pay: <https://www.alberta.ca/termination-pay.aspx>
- Averaging Arrangements: <https://www.alberta.ca/averaging-arrangements.aspx>
- General Holidays and Pay: <https://www.alberta.ca/general-holidays-pay.aspx>
- Job-Protected Leaves: <https://www.alberta.ca/job-protected-leaves.aspx>
- Payment of Earnings: <https://www.alberta.ca/payment-earnings.aspx>
- Vacations and Vacation Pay: <https://www.alberta.ca/vacation-pay.aspx>
- Deductions from Earnings: <https://www.alberta.ca/deductions-from-earnings.aspx>
- Group Terminations: <https://www.alberta.ca/group-terminations.aspx>
- Minimum Wage: <https://www.alberta.ca/minimum-wage.aspx>
- Temporary Layoffs: <https://www.alberta.ca/temporary-layoffs.aspx>
- Youth Employment Laws: <https://www.alberta.ca/youth-employment-laws.aspx>

PAY & TAXES

A part of being a working member of society includes paying taxes, both at the provincial and federal levels. Typically, your employer will deduct money from your paycheck to cover these costs, as well as others like Employment Insurance (EI) and Canadian Pension Plan (CPP), but it's important for you to understand what those deductions are and how to pay your taxes each year.

The Canadian Revenue Agency has a great set of courses that help you [Learn About Your Taxes](#).
[Starting to Work](#)

[Preparing to Do Your Taxes](#)

[Completing a Basic Tax Return](#)

[After Sending Your Tax Return](#)

[Using My Account](#)

[Purpose of Taxes](#)

[Accessing Your Benefits and Credits](#)

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

As you start working, you'll find that there may be skills you'd like to learn or improve on. That's where professional development comes in!

There are so many resources available, through post-secondary education, online courses, free resources, conferences and more, to help you develop skills that can benefit you in your career and beyond.

Some great free resources can be found on these platforms:

[LinkedIn Learning](#)

[Coursera](#)

[Alison](#)

More to Explore:

[20 Professional Development Topics That Can Help You at Work](#)

[A Guide to Career Development for Young Professionals](#)

[47 Online Classes That Will Help Your Career \(And They're Free!\)](#)

[Free Online Professional Development Courses](#)

WORK-LIFE FIT

There's a lot of talk these days about finding a "Work-Life Balance". Ideally, it's not so much of a balancing act, but more about prioritizing both work and life activities in different ways at different times.

[How to Find Your Work/Life Fit Worksheet](#)

Achieving Balance vs. Finding Fit



Achieving the perfect balance implies reaching a level of perfection that doesn't exist. It creates pressure and leads to comparison "if they can do it all, then why can't I?"



'work/life fit' focuses on finding out what is most important for you right now and fitting together the pieces of your work and life in the best way for you.

3 Ideas for action to find your fit

- 1 Fix and flex your fit:** Don't get too rigid or fixed on rules as it can create resistance and stress in a squiggly career.
Reflect on what you can fix and how you can be flexible with it.
- 2 Identify your mis-fit flags:** Work out the signals which help you know when your work/life fit isn't working.
Share these mis-fit flags with someone you trust to notice it.
- 3 Name the work/life conflicts that are out of your control:** Identify what is creating any challenge in achieving your desired work/life fit. Ask yourself these questions:
 - ? *What would a good / better / best outcome look like for me?*
 - ? *Who could I learn from that has experienced the same?*
 - ? *What compromises would I be willing to make to move forward?*

PART 3: LIVING INDEPENDENTLY

WHERE TO LIVE

At Home

If you're heading into the world of work after high school, you may have the opportunity to continue to live at home with your parents.

Things to think about:

- **Relationship with Parents:** think about the relationship you have with your parents and if staying at home is the best option for you. It may be, for a variety of reasons, including financially. Don't forget to do nice things for your parents and continue to contribute to the household, in appreciation of them allowing you to remain at home!
- **Learn and Prepare:** continue to learn as much as you can about running a household, so that you're prepared when you are ready to move out. Cooking meals, doing laundry, etc, are great ways to help out your parents too.
- **Cost:** your parents may allow you to live at home rent-free, or they may charge you rent or ask you to help out with costs in other ways, so make sure you have that conversation and come up with an option that works for everyone.

With Roommates

You may choose to move away from home once you start working, to start to gain some independence, but it can be financially beneficial to live with roommates.

Things to think about:

- **Manage Relationships:** living with others can create friction and friendships, so make sure you do your best to stay on good terms with each other and set clear rules and boundaries to help facilitate a positive living environment.
- **Divide and Conquer:** having roommates allows you to minimize how much "stuff" you need right away, as they may have couches, tables, etc, to contribute to the household. It also allows you to divide the tasks and chores necessary to maintain the household.
- **Cost:** living with roommates can help keep costs down, as you're splitting bills between you. However, you still need to make sure you have an accurate idea of the costs and are able to split them equitably.

On Your Own

Living on your own can be a great option if you are able to afford it. You get to make all the rules and have the entire space to yourself.

Things to think about:

- **Sole Responsibility:** living on your own allows you to do whatever you want with your space, but it also means that you are solely responsible for maintaining the household.
- **Safety:** there is safety in numbers, so living alone means you need to consider your safety more than if you lived with others. Does your building or unit have a good lock? Is there a security system and good lighting, etc.
- **Cost:** this option can be the most expensive, as you are solely responsible for all the bills, but it could be worth it to you if you really value your privacy and independence.

Rent vs Buy

Depending on your situation, it may make more sense to rent a place to live or it may be in your best interest to purchase. There are pros and cons to renting and buying, so it's important to do as much research as possible before deciding which option is best for you right now.

Rentals:

[Alberta - Residential Tenancies](#)

- [Rights & Responsibilities](#)
- [Starting a Tenancy](#)
- [During a Tenancy](#)
- [Ending a Tenancy](#)
- [Common Problems](#)

Mortgages:

[Canada - Preparing to Get a Mortgage](#)

- [Getting Preapproved for a Mortgage](#)
- [How Much You Need for a Down Payment](#)

[Alberta Mortgages - Rent vs Buy Calculator](#)

[Young & Thrifty - The Rent vs Buy Debate](#)

COST OF LIVING

When considering moving out (or even when living at home), there are many costs associated with living day-to-day life that you need to think about and budget for.

These costs may include:

- **Rent/Mortgage:** the cost of your house, apartment, etc.
- **Utilities:** may include municipal utilities (garbage, water, etc), as well as power/electricity and heat/natural gas.
- **Property Taxes:** if you own a home, you will most likely need to pay property taxes to your municipality.
- **Phone:** cost of cell phone and landline (does anyone have a landline anymore!?).
- **TV/Streaming Services:** cost of cable or satellite TV and/or various streaming services.
- **Vehicle:** if you are driving a vehicle, you'll need to factor in the cost to purchase it, the maintenance costs, repairs, and gas.
- **Parking:** if you're working in a larger centre or at an organization with paid parking, you need to factor in those costs.
- **Transportation:** if public transportation is available, and you choose this over having your own vehicle (or in addition to), you'll want to factor in those costs as well.
- **Insurance:** you need to protect your assets with insurance, for home/rental, car, and even for your life.
- **Food:** buying groceries, eating out and ordering in can all add up.
- **Entertainment:** going out with friends to bars, restaurants, movies, etc, can be lots of fun, but they can add up, so plan for those in your expenses too.

BUDGETS & SAVING MONEY

In order to afford all the things (and there are a lot of things!), it's really important to make a realistic budget and stick to it. You also want to work to increase your financial literacy, so that you understand how to manage your money and hopefully make it work for you in the long run through investments and other savings options.

There are a ton of resources out there to help you get started on your journey to financial literacy and wellness. Some of these programs are free, others have a fee associated with them, and others can come right into your school, so take advantage of the information they share to help you be financially successful.

[ALIS - Financial Literacy for Students](#)

[Money Mentors - Schools](#)

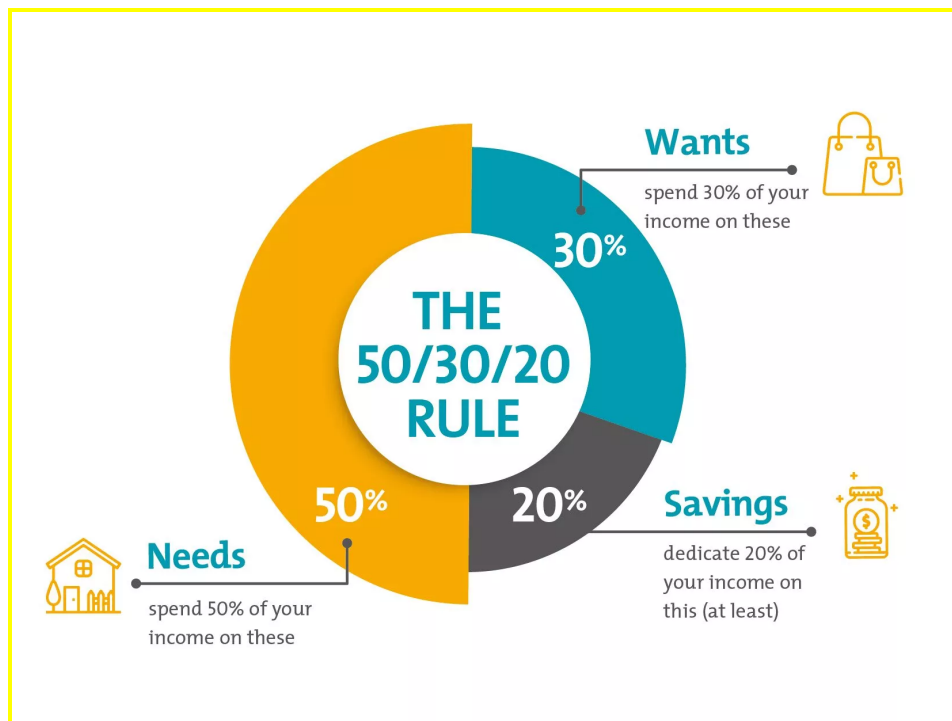
[Enriched Academy](#)

[CPA Alberta - Financial Literacy](#)

[Junior Achievement - Programs](#)

[Aspire All - Financial Wellness \(\\$\\$\)](#)

When it comes to making a budget, you want to ensure that you always set some aside for the unexpected. Make sure to talk to the adults in your life (parents, grandparents, friends, boss, teacher, coach) and ask them for the “tips & tricks” that they’ve learned over the years in regards to making (and sticking to) an effective budget.



You also want to ensure that you do everything you can to protect your money, so ensuring you are secure from identity theft and other financial scams is really important.

[Alberta - Fraud Prevention](#)

[Alberta - Identity Theft](#)

SERVICES & SUPPORTS

When living independently, it's important to take care of yourself in all aspects of life. This includes financially, physically, mentally, socially and more.

There are so many services and support out there to help you...in most cases, you just have to take the first step and reach out! Most municipalities will have a section on their website that highlights many of the services available in the community, so check those out for people or organizations that can support you.

The [HelpSeeker](#) website is another great resource for finding services in a variety of areas, from across the entire province and country.



HOW TO DO THINGS

Part of growing up and becoming independent is learning how to do all of the things required to successfully “Adult”. There are a lot of ways to learn these things, like asking your parents, siblings, friends or others to show you, watching YouTube videos, Googling, taking courses, attending workshops and more.

It's impossible to list all of the things you need for Adulting, as much of it will be learned through trial and error, but we've compiled some lists and resources that we hope will be helpful in getting you started.

[CESD Adulting 101 Checklist](#)

Make a copy of this checklist and then you can use it and add/delete items to help you navigate the process of learning to Adult!

[Life Skills to Live a Rewarding Life](#)

[31 Day Adulting Challenge](#)

[33 Skills Teens Need to Know to Adult](#)

PART 4: RETURNING TO LEARNING

Throughout your working life, you may need or want to return to school or some other form of training. Lifelong learning is imperative if you want to advance in your career, switch into a new career, or just keep up with the ever changing world around you.

There are many ways to “go back to school”, many of which can be done part-time while you are still working. Options may include:

- **Continuing Education & Micro-credentials:** these are typically short-term courses that are not for ‘credit’, offered by post-secondary institutions. They are more flexible than credit classes, and can be offered online, during the evening or on weekends, etc, and normally don’t have many, if any, admission requirements. However, traditionally they are not eligible for government student loans, so you will need to be able to pay for them out-of-pocket.
- **Professional Development:** as mentioned above, there are so many professional development opportunities that you can participate in throughout your career, including courses, workshops, conferences and more. Many jobs will provide funding for you to pursue professional development opportunities as well.
- **On-The-Job Training:** most jobs will require you to do some on-the-job training to learn the basic skills necessary to do your work. Your organization may also offer additional training throughout the year to help with skill building or to update staff when things in the industry change, etc.
- **Higher Levels of Education:** it is very common for individuals to pursue higher levels of education as they move throughout their career, including working towards a Bachelor’s Degree, a Master’s Degree or a PhD. More and more of these programs are being offered online, with the ability to take them part-time while also continuing to work.

Depending on the type of training you want to pursue, you may need to ensure you have the academic requirements to get into the program you need. Academic upgrading may be required.

The CESD [Post-Secondary Preparedness Handbook](#) and the [Trades & Apprenticeship Preparedness Handbook](#) are both great resources for navigating some of the more formal training options.

BENEFITS OF LIFELONG LEARNING

