



To access this
guide online visit

WorkBC.ca/Aboriginal

BC's Career Guide for Aboriginal People



OUR OPPORTUNITY IS HERE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword	p. 2
1. Explore careers	p. 3
2. Start your plan	p. 7
3. Build your support system	p. 9
4. Education and training	p. 10
5. Your job search	p.16
6. Success at work	p. 21
7. Take the next step	p. 23
Appendix 1: Tools and Resources for Self-Employment	p. 24
Appendix 2: Sample Budget Template	p. 25
Appendix 3: Post-Secondary Institutions	p. 26
Appendix 4: Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy (ASETS) in B.C.	p. 28
Appendix 5: Sample Resume Template	p. 29
Appendix 6: Sample Cover Letter Template	p. 30
Appendix 7: Sample Interview Questions	p. 31

This guide has been developed through a collaboration of provincial Ministries and Aboriginal partners. It provides information on career planning, employment, and education and training resources available for Aboriginal job seekers in British Columbia.

Foreword

Your career awaits!

If you are beginning to plan for your career or a career change, congratulations on your exciting journey! This guide is a resource toolkit that includes a wide range of information on programs and services, resources, tips, checklists and worksheets to support your career planning journey. It is intended to complement online resources such as WorkBC.ca/Aboriginal and [Aboriginal Learning Links](#).

Although it does not represent an exhaustive list, there are many links to career planning resources throughout this guide. If you are reading this guide online, you can click directly on the links or, if you are reading this guide in print, you can use the link titles to easily search for the resources the next time you are online.

Look at the big picture of your career plan

Reaching your career goals involves many phases and can be viewed as a cycle rather than a straight path.



Career Planning and Development

1. Explore careers

Are you looking for a job that fits your current skills, considering a career change or working on a long-term career plan? This section will walk you through things to consider in finding a career for you.

Where do you begin? How do you find a career?

Check out [WorkBC's Plan Your Career](#) to find resources to help you plan the steps you'll take to get a productive and satisfying career.

Identify your strengths and interests to help you find a career that fits you. Here are some online self-assessments and career quizzes to help you:

[WorkBC's Career Compass](#)

Take online quizzes to find careers that fit you best.

[BDC Entrepreneurial Potential Self-Assessment](#)

If self-employment interests you, take this self-assessment questionnaire to measure your fit for entrepreneurship.

What are your strengths and skills? What are you good at?

What are your interests? What do you enjoy?

Start exploring careers!

Explore your career options by talking to people who work in different careers, by contacting your local First Nation, Métis or Aboriginal organization, by using online tools and by contacting:

[WorkBC Employment Services Centre](#)

Find your WorkBC Employment Services Centre online or call 1-877-952-6914 for support in finding your next job, accessing job search resources, employment planning, skills assessment, training, work experience placement and more.

[Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy \(ASETS\)](#)

[Find the ASETS agreement holder](#) in your area that will link your training needs to labour market demands, providing you with training or skills upgrading and help with finding a job. See Appendix 4 for a list of ASETS in B.C.

[Métis Nation British Columbia \(MNBC\) Métis Employment & Training Program](#)

MNBC provides funding for education and training, and [ASETS](#) support through Métis Employment & Training Program offices throughout B.C.

Here are some useful online tools to help you start exploring careers:

[WorkBC's Explore Careers](#)

Explore 500 career profiles and get all the details you need, from job duties and wages to projected demand in your region.

[WorkBC's Blueprint Builder](#)

Blueprint Builder is an online career planning tool that contains essential career, education and job search resources to help with planning a career path, finding the right education and funding, and targeting jobs in a selected field.

[WorkBC's Career Trek](#)

Watch 95 different Career Trek videos of real life British Columbians doing jobs that may interest you. You'll find 95 Career Trek videos on this site.

[Career Journeys First Nations Career Role Model Program](#)

Get inspired by watching videos featuring First Nations role models in a variety of career fields (developed by the First Nations Education Steering Committee and First Nations Schools Association).

[ITA Trade Programs](#)

If you are considering a trade, explore a range of trades with the Industry Training Authority (ITA). From carpenter, mechanic, electrician or welder to baker or arborist, ITA manages over 100 trade programs in B.C.

[Aboriginal People in Trades Training](#)

ITA's Aboriginal Initiatives support and assure an industry training system in B.C. that supports Aboriginal people with access to opportunities and success in apprenticeships and the skilled trades.

[ITA's Youth Programs](#)

Check out the youth programs that ITA also manages.

[First Nations Health Authority Health Careers Guidebook](#)

If a career in health interests you, check out this guidebook which includes profiles of a wide variety of health careers to give you an idea of the diversity of careers available to you in the health field.

Is there a job out there?

It's important to know if you will be able to find work in your desired career. Use these tools to find out about the job demand in the career you are interested in:

[WorkBC's Labour Market Information](#)

Check out the demand for various jobs and careers in the guides including the Labour Market Outlook.

[WorkBC's Regional Profiles](#)

Look at the estimated demand for your desired career in each region of B.C. over the next 10 years.

Self-Employment

Do you want to be your own boss and be self-employed? Creating your own business may be a good choice for you. Creating a small business could include a wide variety of business areas from providing goods and services (e.g., merchandise sales, restaurants, childcare,

art or consulting), to taking advantage of procurement (contract) opportunities in your area. See Appendix 1 for tools and resources to help you get started in planning for self-employment.

The characteristics of successful entrepreneurs include passion, motivation, risk-taking, self-belief, hard work and discipline, adaptability and flexibility, money management and planning.



Is the career right for you?

Before you make a career choice, make sure it is right for you. You can get information about your options by asking questions and talking to someone such as an education, employment or youth coordinator in your community or Métis or urban Aboriginal organization. When making your career choice, you should think about:

- **Job requirements:** You may need to take some training or upgrade your skills to qualify for your career of choice. Perhaps you will need to attend a training program, complete a college or university degree or get some of the required training while on the job. For example, technology, trades and health-care jobs often require formal training and certifications and many require certain levels of math or science.
- **Working conditions:** Different jobs have different physical demands and conditions. For example, working as a policy analyst or in information technology involves a lot of desk work. On the other hand, working as a chef requires you to be on your

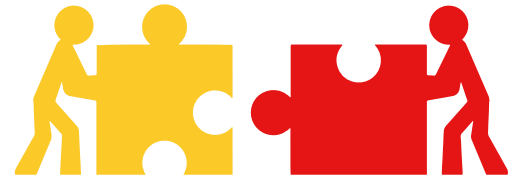
feet most of the time. Teachers and counsellors are around people a lot. In contrast, environmental stewards may work alone, spending much of their time outdoors.

- **Work in your community or relocate for work:** If you don't want to relocate for your career of choice, then look for careers that are likely to have local job openings. Local career options could include work in areas such as teaching, counselling, local government, administration, health care, construction or natural resource development.

If you are able to relocate for work then you will likely have a wider variety of career options. However, you'll have to balance this with other factors that come along with relocating such as leaving your community and finding a new place to live. If you know someone who has relocated for work, talk to them to get advice.

What careers are a good fit for you?

Write your top career choices across the top of the table below, answer the questions to help you compare them and choose the best fit for you. If you answer mostly YES, the career could be a good fit for you!



	Career Choice #1	Career Choice #2	Career Choice #3
Does it match your interests?			
Do you have the skills, education and training required?			
Are you interested in gaining the required skills and education?			
Is the salary suitable for your lifestyle?			
Does the location of this career work for you? Is it close to your home?			
Are the working conditions a good fit for you?			

Your thoughts and questions:

2. Start your plan

Everyone's career path is different. Make a plan that is right for you.

Use [WorkBC's Blueprint Builder](#) to start your career plan, explore career paths, find the right education and search for jobs.

Consider your timelines. Reaching your career goal may take just a few months or a number of years. Your plan may change as you progress. When you run into unexpected delays or reach milestones, reflect and re-evaluate your plan if necessary.



Create a budget

Your plan will be more successful if you have the financial support you need. Calculate your living expenses including rent, food, utilities, transportation, childcare and trips to your home community (if you have relocated for work or school) and consider your expected income. Here are some tools to help you create a budget:

[StudentAidBC Budget Worksheet](#)

Use a student budget template to create a budget.

[WorkBC's Cost of Living Calculator](#)

Use this interactive calculator to help you explore the cost of living in over 150 communities around B.C.

[Paying for School – Aboriginal Learning Links](#)

Use these budgeting tools, tips and information on band sponsorship, awards, bursaries and scholarships.

Also see Appendix 2 for a sample budget template.

Keep your documentation handy

You will likely be asked to provide some documents to support your study, training or job application process. Here are some examples of documents that you'll likely need to have on hand:

- birth certificate
- driver's licence
- Social Insurance Number
- Indian Status Card/Métis Card
- transcripts
- degrees, diplomas, certificates
- volunteer acknowledgements
- awards
- criminal record check
- reference letters

Your Social Insurance Number (SIN) is an extremely important document when it comes to your employment and finances. If you don't have it, you can go to the [Service Canada](#) website to find out how to apply for it.

If you have lost a piece of government ID, find out how to [Replace your card](#) or contact your Band or Métis organization for information. For Status Cards you can also contact the [Government of Canada](#).

If you have lost any of your other documents, contact the institution that issued it and ask for a replacement. For example, contact your [high school](#) or school district for a replacement copy of your transcripts.





Identify your skills

Make a list of your experience, skills, knowledge and interests. Do you have work, volunteer, extra-curricular, community and cultural experience? Include your credentials and certificates, e.g., degree, certificates, driver's licence, first aid training, high school diploma.

Identify your skills needs. What training, skills or experience will you need? What kind of post-secondary education or skills training might you need to reach your career goals?

[illegible]

3. Build your support system



Do you know anyone who works in the career you are interested in? Start talking to people to build your career support system.

Consider volunteer opportunities to build skills and relationships. People that you meet through volunteering, including potential employers, could help you on your career journey.

If you find a company or organization that you are particularly interested in, contact them to ask for an informational interview to learn more about what it's like to work there and what skills and credentials you might need to get a job with them.

Find a career supporter

A career supporter is a trusted person who can guide and support you on your career journey. A career supporter can share information about their own career path and provide you with guidance, motivation and support.

A good career supporter is someone who:	A potential career supporter could include:	Tips for working with your career supporter:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has experience or knowledge of the career you're interested in • can be your role model • clicks with you personally • has a long-term commitment to your future • can take time to advise you on making your career plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • someone you know (e.g., a family member) who has worked in the career you're interested in • Elder or leader from your community • sports coach • school guidance counsellor • education, employment or youth coordinator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approach your prospective career supporter by making a phone call or sending an email to introduce yourself. Let them know why you see him or her as a good career supporter for you. • Find times that work for you and your career supporter to meet. • Think of some questions ahead of time to ask your career supporter so that you get the most out of your time together.

"Family is really important, and having [my big sister] support me really helped me achieve my dream. I aspire to be the best I can be in my career (welding)."

– Tianna Adzich, Métis Youth attending Okanagan Community College completing her C ticket in Welding.

Identify your supports

Fill in the spaces around “you” with the names of people who can support you on your career journey.



4. Education and training

Advancing your career is a big job, especially if you need to increase your education or skills level. There are great resources and Aboriginal student supports available to help you plan and take the next step on your education journey.

Find practical information on education planning and financial resources at:

- [Advanced Education Aboriginal Student Resources](#)
- [Aboriginal Learning Links](#)
- [Guiding Your Educational Journey: A Handbook for First Nations Parents and Students](#)
(Source: First Nations Education Steering Committee and First Nations Schools Association, 2015)

High school courses and credits

The courses and the credits you have earned matter, regardless of whether you are still in high school, have not finished high school or have already graduated from high school.

Are you currently in high school?

If you are unsure of what courses and credits you have earned, speak to your school counsellor. It is very important that you understand how your choices in high school will affect your post-secondary training options. Some examples of course requirements include the following:

- Degree programs at most universities require at least the following for admissions: English 12 or English 12 First Peoples (not Communications 12), Foundations of Math or Pre-Calculus 11, and a Language 11. There are also program-specific admission requirements such as Chemistry 11 and Biology 12 for nursing.
- Certificate and diploma programs offered by colleges, universities and institutes have different admission requirements depending on the program and the institution.
- Trades training and apprenticeship programs also have admission requirements that you may want to consider if a career in trades is something you are interested in.

Check out admission requirements for various programs at [Education Planner](#)—click on the “Admissions Info” tab for your programs of interest.

Skills and certifications in high school

As a high school student, take advantage of opportunities such as:

- work experience courses to gain valuable skills and earn up to 8 credits
- job readiness courses that provide certificates such as First Aid, Fall Protection, WHIMIS and FoodSafe. These certificates are often required by employers.

Are you currently out of high school?

If you are an adult and did not complete high school you can complete your [Adult Dogwood Diploma](#). It is also sometimes possible to gain entrance to a post-secondary program through a [Prior Learning Assessment](#).

If you have completed high school, see the post-secondary education and training information in this section.

Transcripts

You will need a copy of your transcript to identify what courses and credits you already have. You can obtain a copy from your high school (free) or you can order the [transcript online](#) (\$10 per copy).

Select your program of study

Choose a program that will provide you with the training, education and credentials you need to reach your career goals. Use these tools to get started selecting a program of study:



[Education Planner](#)

This educational planning resource can help you make well-informed decisions about your education and career options.

[WorkBC.ca/Aboriginal](#)

Get the information and resources you need to lead you on the path to career success.

[CanLearn.ca](#)

Explore your options at Canadian universities and colleges and get detailed information on programs, requirements, and applications and admissions.

[Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy \(ASETS\)](#)

Contact [your nearest ASETS](#) agreement holder for support in finding a job and upgrading your skills. See Appendix 4 for a list of ASETS in B.C.

Choose a school that is right for you

Different institutions may offer programs leading to the same credential, but the programs will have slight variations. To choose an institution that is right for you, consider several factors including:

- entrance requirements
- course and program transfer options
- funding supports and affordability
- location in relation to your home
- class sizes
- supports available for Aboriginal students
- flexibility to study full- or part-time if needed

Here are some tools to help search for the right institution for you:

[Advanced Education Choosing the Right Institution](#)

Visit this webpage for information to help you choose an institution that is right for you.

[Prospective Students: Questions to Ask](#)

Look at suggested questions to ask when researching potential schools.

[BC Transfer Guide](#)

Check for transferability of course credits you may have earned previously.

[Advanced Education Find an Institution](#)

Find the right institution for you from among the many public and private institutions in B.C.

[Indigenous Adult and Higher Learning Association \(IAHLA\) Members](#)

Find an Aboriginal-controlled adult and post-secondary institute in or near your community that may allow you to study closer to home.

Apply for school

Check post-secondary institution websites or visit the institution admissions offices for application information. You can apply for all B.C. public post-secondary institutions and some private institutions online.

Apply for any B.C. public post-secondary institution through applybc.ca.



Pay for school

Education and training is an investment in your future. To successfully complete your program, it's a good idea to plan how you'll pay for your education or training. See section 2 of this guide for tools and information on planning your budget.

Here are some questions to consider when budgeting for school:

- How much will your tuition, books (new or used) and other required course material cost?
- How much are you willing to spend on a place to live? Can you afford to have a place on your own, or are you going to need a roommate?
- How much can you afford to spend on food?
- How much will you have to spend on childcare?
- Can you afford to have phone, Internet and cable TV?
- If you have a vehicle, is it cheaper to drive to school and pay for parking or to take the bus?
- If you are receiving support such as Band funding or a loan, when will you receive your payment?

Find financial supports

When you know your budget, consider the financial supports you may need such as awards, bursaries, scholarships, grants or loans. Here are some tools to help you start finding financial supports:

[Aboriginal Bursaries Search Tool](#)

Use this searchable list of more than 600 bursaries, scholarships and incentives across Canada.

[Aboriginal Scholarship Guide](#)

Browse this list of scholarships and bursaries available to Aboriginal students (by Windspeaker and Aboriginal Multi-Media Society).

StudentScholarships.org

Check out this list of post-secondary student scholarships across North America.

[Canada Benefits](#)

Find resources for jobs and training, employment and skills development and apprenticeships, based on your personal situation.

Aboriginal student services at post-secondary institutions can help with your education and career planning and link you to resources and supports you may need. If you'd like to talk to someone directly, connect with the Aboriginal post-secondary coordinators, advisors and transition planners at B.C.'s public post-secondary institutions. See Appendix 3 for a list of public post-secondary institutions' Aboriginal services web pages and Aboriginal-controlled post-secondary institutes.



Here are some examples of sources of financial support for students:

[Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada \(INAC\) Post-Secondary Student Support Program](#)

Status First Nations or Inuit students may be eligible for funding from INAC.

[BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres \(BCAAFC\) Post-Secondary Student Support Program](#)

Aboriginal students who do not have Band membership can contact the BCAAFC for information about financial supports.

[First Citizens Fund for Aboriginal Students](#)

Aboriginal students can access the First Citizens Fund student bursary program which is funded by the Province of British Columbia and delivered by the BCAAFC.

[Métis Nation British Columbia \(MNBC\) Métis Employment & Training Program](#)

MNBC provides funding for education and training, including [ASETS](#) support through Métis Employment & Training Program offices throughout B.C.

[AgedOut.com](#)

Students who are or have been in foster care could be eligible for financial supports and tuition waivers.

[StudentAidBC](#)

You may want to consider student loans as another source for funding your education.

[B.C. Adult Upgrading Grant](#)

Grants are available to help adults in financial need who are enrolled in skills upgrading, education and training courses.

[New Relationship Trust \(NRT\) Student Funding](#)

First Nations students at recognized post-secondary institutions may be eligible for scholarships and bursaries through NRT.

[Irving K. Barber Aboriginal Scholarships](#)

Aboriginal post-secondary students may be eligible for these awards which are administered by the Victoria Foundation.

[Indspire](#)

Aboriginal students pursuing post-secondary education, apprenticeships, skilled trades, technology programs or a variety of other programs can apply for these bursaries, scholarships and awards, scholarships and awards.

Contact the financial aid office at your institution for a list of bursaries and awards. Also check with Aboriginal student services to learn about awards specifically for Aboriginal students.



Spend time reflecting before you choose

Write your top educational institution and/or program choices across the top of the table below and answer the questions to help you compare them and choose the best fit for you.



	Institution/Program Choice #1	Institution/Program Choice #2	Institution/Program Choice #3
What are the entrance requirements?			
Is it affordable? Are there funding supports available?			
Are there resources and supports for Aboriginal students?			
Does the location suit you?			
Is there flexibility (e.g., full- or part-time options)?			

Your thoughts and questions:

Education Planning Checklist:

Research schools and programs that interest you. Look online, talk to friends and review school brochures.

- ☐ Look for Aboriginal-specific supports at schools such as a webpage or an Aboriginal student advisor to support you. Contact Aboriginal student services to link you to supports.
- ☐ Select schools based on the programs offered, campus locations, flexibility and cost.
- ☐ Make a budget. Estimate the costs associated with your education including tuition, books, supplies and living expenses.
- ☐ Look into getting financial support including scholarships, bursaries, grants and student loans.
- ☐ Find out how to apply. Some institutions have online or in-person application processes. Apply to any B.C. public post-secondary institution through applybc.ca.
- ☐ Apply to more than one school to keep your options open.
- ☐ Identify personal and cultural supports that will assist you.
- ☐ If you are preparing to transition from an Aboriginal institute or community to a public post-secondary institution, consider how you will stay connected to your community and culture and plan for living in an urban setting.

Education Planning and Financial Resources –Additional Resources

- [Aboriginal Student Transition Handbook](#)
- [Finding Your Gifts](#)
- First Nations Education Steering Committee post-secondary education resources line:
Email: pse@fnesc.ca Toll-free: 1-877-280-4151
- [B.C. Post-secondary Education – Overview](#)
- [Advanced Education Private Post-secondary Education](#)
- [Congress of Aboriginal Peoples Skills and Employment Training](#)

5. Your job search

Are you ready to look for a job? There are many job search options including online job listings, recruiting services and events, job fairs, newspapers and leads from friends and family. Start your job search by contacting the following:

[WorkBC Employment Services Centres](#)

[Find your WorkBC Employment Services Centre](#) or call 1-877-952-6914 for support in finding a job.

[Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy \(ASETS\)](#)

ASETS will link your training needs to labour market demands, providing you with training or skills upgrading and with help finding a job. See Appendix 4 for a list of ASETS in B.C.

[WorkBC.ca/Aboriginal](#)

Use these online resources to explore your options, build your career and find a job.

[Service Canada Education and Training for Aboriginal Peoples](#)

Find Government of Canada programs for gaining experience through internship, summer employment and other work or training opportunities.

Job search on the Internet

Become familiar with searching for jobs on the Internet. Most employers use the Internet to post their job openings. If you don't have Internet access at home, look for public computer access at community centres and the library.

Start your online search on [WorkBC's Jobs in Demand](#) to discover thousands of jobs, check out career exploration resources and to learn what the Top 100 occupations are.

- Look for job openings in specific companies or organizations that interest you.
 - Visit the employment opportunities pages on companies' websites.
 - Take a look at [BC's top employers](#) for ideas.
 - Also check with First Nations communities, Aboriginal organizations and companies.
- Submit your resume to Aboriginal recruitment agencies such as [First Nations Jobs Online](#).
- Use job alerts on websites to be notified of new job listings that come up.
- Use networking sites like [LinkedIn.com](#) and make sure to post your updated resume regularly.

Job openings in B.C. can be found through:

- [WorkBC.ca](#)
- [Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy \(ASETS\)](#)
- [Craigslist.ca](#)
- [Kijiji.ca](#)
- [BCJobs.ca](#)
- [Aboriginal Careers](#)

Some popular websites that list jobs and events across Canada include:

- [Inclusion Network](#)
- [Workopolis Aboriginal](#)
- [Monster.ca](#)
- [indeedCanada.com/Aboriginal-jobs](#)
- [nationtalk.ca/jobs](#)
- [CivicJobs.ca](#)
- [Charityvillage.com](#)

Applying for jobs

When you have found a job that interests you, take note of the application process. Applying for some jobs will be as simple as filling in a one-page application and handing in a resume. For others, you may need to take tests or attend multiple interviews.

You will need a resume and a cover letter when applying for jobs. [WorkBC's Write Your Resume](#) provides resources, sample formats and tips for writing effective resumes and cover letters. You can also get assistance from staff at [WorkBC Centres](#) and B.C. [ASETS](#). Take a look at the resume and cover letter tips below to get started.



On-the-job training opportunities

Some employment opportunities offer on-the-job training that can further your career goals. Here are a couple of examples:

[Apprentice Job Match](#)

This service is in partnership with the ITA and connects apprentices and employers online.

[Aboriginal Youth Internship Program](#)

This internship program provides professional experience with the BC Government and Aboriginal organizations, cultural support and access to a professional, cultural and social network.

Do your homework on the company or organization you are applying to. Get to know the company or organization's culture and history, vision and core values. Look online or talk to someone who works at the company to see if they have any advice for you.

"While some of my friends were more focused on the freedom that finishing high school would bring, I was always looking forward to the opportunity to get my degree, get involved in community programs, and start my career in business."

- Janis Brooks, Sts'ailes First Nation (Aboriginal Human Resource Council Success Story)



Resumes

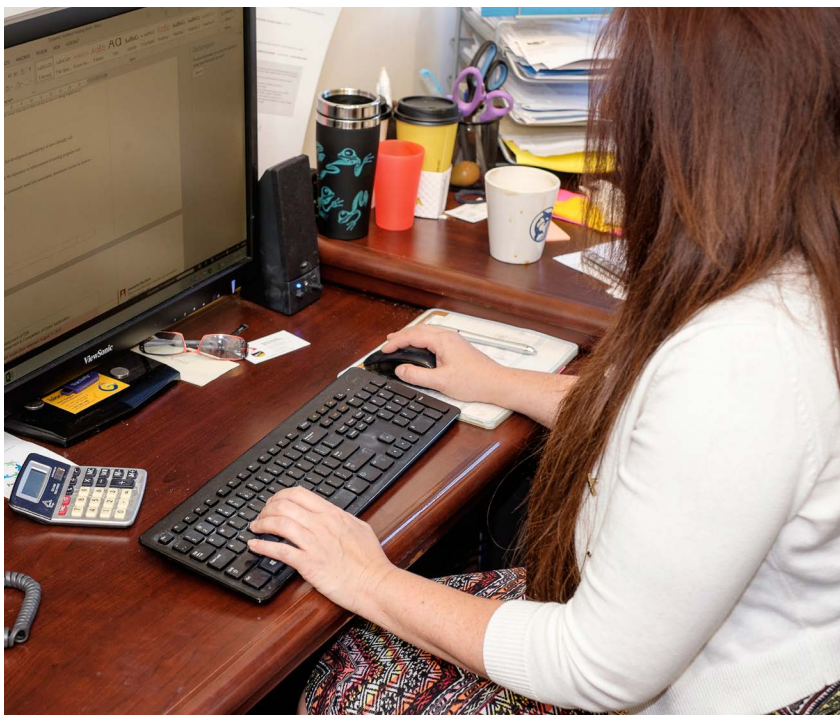
Your resume highlights the skills you have gained through education, on-the-job experience, volunteering or training. You can also include work experience such as planning, budgeting, coordinating and mediating that you may have had with your family and community. Here are some examples of different types of skills to include in your resume:

- personal skills: ability to be adaptable and motivated, demonstrate professionalism and initiative
- hands-on skills: ability to assemble, repair or operate equipment
- leadership skills: ability to resolve a conflict, motivate others and meet a deadline
- communication skills: ability to listen effectively, present your ideas and work well in a group

See Appendix 5 for a sample resume template.

Resume Checklist:

- ☐ Use headings such as: Employment Background, Work and Volunteer Experience, Related Skills, and Education.
- ☐ Use an easy-to-read format.
- ☐ Keep your resume to 2 pages or less. Employers will often have less than 30 seconds to scan it.
- ☐ Use action verbs such as collaborated, managed, led, achieved, surpassed, assisted, measured, planned, performed, scheduled, etc. See more examples at [WorkBC's Action Verbs for Resumes](#).
- ☐ Highlight your accomplishments. For example, "Achieved honour roll status in graduating year of high school" or "Surpassed supervisor's expectations by completing tasks ahead of schedule."
- ☐ List your experience from most recent to least recent.
- ☐ Tailor your resume for each job you are applying for.
- ☐ PROOFREAD, then ask someone else to review it.



Cover letters

Your cover letter accompanies your resume and tells the employer why they should consider you for an interview. It should be short and concise.

See Appendix 6 for a sample cover letter template.

Cover Letter Checklist:

- ☐ Be sure to include your name, current address, telephone number and email address.
- ☐ Mention the position you are applying for and why you are a good fit.
- ☐ Outline your experience, knowledge and skills you bring to the position.
- ☐ Include examples of how you have succeeded. For example, "When I worked at Company ABC, I was responsible for serving the public, handling cash and checking inventory. I consistently surpassed expectations on my performance reviews."
- ☐ Ask for an interview. For example, "Given the opportunity, I would be happy to discuss how my skills and experience would contribute to your organization."
- ☐ Tailor the letter to the job you are applying for.

Writing resumes and cover letters – Additional Resources

- [Youth.gc.ca – Writing a Cover Letter](#) and [Youth.gc.ca – Writing a Resume](#)

Preparing for an interview

Once your resume has caught the attention of an employer, you may be asked to meet for an interview. Congratulations! An interview is your chance to present yourself, highlight your experience and let the employer know that you are the right person for the job.



Visit [WorkBC's Prepare for Interviews](#) for tips, advice, resources and sample interview questions.

Before the interview

Research the organization to show your interest in working there.

Know the job requirements, including skills and education. By relating them to your own skills and experience, you can show how you can be of value.

At the interview

What to expect:

- There may be one or more interviewers.
- Interviewers will often sit at one side of a table to face you.
- Pen and paper are often provided for notes.
- Sometimes the questions will be given to you just before the interview.
- Interviewers will understand that you may be nervous. They want to learn more about you and why you are interested in the job.

Interview questions

- See Appendix 7 for some sample interview questions.
- Make sure you answer the interview questions completely. Ask for clarification if you don't understand a question.
- In your answers use examples of times when you have resolved problems, taken leadership or have produced positive outcomes.
- It is also expected that an interviewee will ask a few questions. For example:
 - Ask questions about the job expectations, start date and career opportunities to help you decide if the job and organization are right for you.
 - Ask when you may hear about the interview results.

Interview Tips:

- Arrive 10 minutes early.
- Wear something that is comfortable but that shows you are taking the interview seriously.
- Use confident body language during the interview. For example, sit up tall and avoid fidgeting. Also, it is important to smile because it can help you to relax and give you a boost of confidence.
- Bring a list of 3 references on a sheet of paper that you can hand to the interviewer if asked. Select references that can speak to your job skills, abilities and personal attributes. Provide each reference's name, address, title, phone number and email address.
- After the interview you might want to send a thank you note to the employer to express your appreciation, to mention anything you might not have had a chance to say in the interview, and to remind the employer of ways in which you are a particularly good fit for the job.
- Be yourself!

6. Success at work

When you are offered a job, congratulations on this exciting milestone! Here are some important first steps to take:



1. Make sure to get the job offer in writing.
2. Carefully look over the terms of employment, wages, benefits, responsibilities and schedule.
3. You can negotiate with your employer for an increased salary if think you are qualified.
4. Respond in writing to the job offer.

Once you have accepted the job, you will need to prepare yourself for success in the workplace. Here are some things to consider in preparing for your new job:

- **Transportation:** Line up reliable transportation to get to work. For example, make sure you have a valid driver's licence, gas money and insurance, a pass for public transportation or a ride share.
- **Childcare:** If you require childcare, take some time to find a safe, affordable and dependable caregiver who will provide care during your work hours and your commuting time.
- **Housing:** If you have had to relocate for work, make sure you find a safe, comfortable, convenient and affordable place to live. Your living conditions affect your mental and physical well-being and your ability to succeed in your job.
- **Healthy lifestyle:** To be successful at work, make sure you get enough rest, exercise and nutritious food. Make time for healthy activities that you enjoy outside of work hours.
- **Stress:** Starting a new job can be stressful. Plan some down time after each shift for the first few weeks. It may take some time to feel comfortable and confident in your new job. Be patient with yourself and don't be afraid to ask your colleagues for advice. Everyone was new once!
- **Work ethic:** Maintain a good work ethic by demonstrating responsibility, integrity, a good attitude, and teamwork. Also remember that it is ok to say no if you are asked to do something that makes you feel uncomfortable or is not in your job description.
- **Enjoy your new job!** Try to get to know the people you work with. This will make your work more enjoyable and will strengthen your network of contacts for your next career move.

Tips for Starting Your New Job

A few things you can do to get ready to start your new job include:

- Ask your new supervisor for the paperwork you will need to fill out to start your job.
- Make sure you know where to show up on your first day.
- Make sure you know how long it takes you to get to work from your house so you arrive on time. You might consider doing a test run before your first day.
- Find out if there is an orientation session for you to complete before you start work.
- Make sure you have the work gear or supplies you might need, e.g., work clothes or a uniform, notebook, tools, safety gear (e.g., hard hat and work boots) or a cell phone.

Cultural safety on the job

Cultural safety means feeling safe in the environment in which you work. You should feel respected, honoured and appreciated.

Be prepared for the possibility that some of your new colleagues may not understand your Aboriginal culture. This is a chance for them to learn more about your culture and community.



Find a friend or ally you trust and feel comfortable with at work who can support you. Once you have had an opportunity to build a relationship with co-workers you may want to open up a conversation about the following for example:

- activities such as smudging, prayers, and honouring special occasions such as National Aboriginal Day on June 21st,
- company policies on a respectful workplace,
- sharing or displaying only non-offensive images and appropriate cultural symbols, and
- working with your employer to hold education sessions on Indigenous issues.

If you experience something on the job that does not feel respectful or culturally safe, talk to the person you report to or someone you trust and feel comfortable with, for example, your supervisor, a human resources specialist, a health and safety officer, or your union representative.

“While at school, I started to reach out to the First Nations community and get involved. It was the first time that I felt ready to embrace my culture as I realized how amazingly educated, and successful our people are. Somehow, I hadn’t known about all the rich talents that were in the community and, as I had broadened my horizons, I saw the strength in Indigenous identity.”

– Lisa Charleyboy Tsi Del Del Nation (Aboriginal Human Resource Council Success Story)

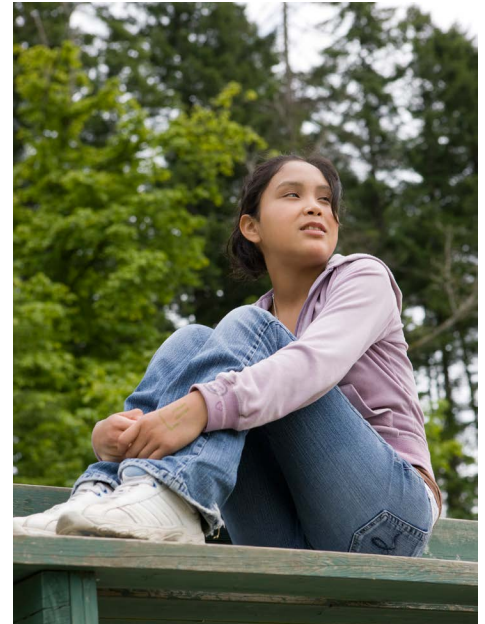
Your rights as an applicant or employee

The best way to protect yourself is to [know your rights as a job applicant](#) and your [workplace rights](#). Rules and regulations are designed to protect your rights and outline the obligations of employees and employers.

7. Take the next step

Your career planning and development journey is exciting, and it is a big process that will take time, commitment, self-motivation, and, most importantly, courage. Luckily, there are plenty of resources to assist you with career exploration and planning, finding your support system, education and training, finding a job and being successful at work.

Remember that along your career path you may revise your plan any time for even further advancement. Many people change careers several times throughout their lives until they find their ideal fit. You can reflect on your progress and adjust your goals until you are satisfied.



Think big. Make it happen. Live your dreams.

What are the next steps on your career journey?

"I am not exactly sure what the future holds. I have so many different possibilities in my head for a future career... But uncertainty is okay, because if I stay on my path I know I will end up being successful at a career that I enjoy that enriches my life and the lives of others."

-Nathan Sletten Recipient, 2015 Irving K. Barber Aboriginal Student Award

Appendix 1: Tools and Resources for Self-Employment

If you want to be self-employed and have an entrepreneurial spirit, creating your own business may be a good choice. You will need to translate your idea into a business plan and will likely need to find grants and loans to get it off the ground.

Factors to consider for self-employment:

- Starting a business is very time consuming and will require market research, business planning and ability to sell your goods and services.
- Your income can go up and down greatly and managing your finances could be complicated. Examine your options, from keeping your own accounts to hiring a bookkeeper.
- Networking and continued research will be an important part of maintaining your business.

Here are some resources that are a good starting point for growing your business skills and advancing your plans:

[WorkBC's Business Resources](#)

Get the resources, tools and information you need to support the success of your business, from developing a business plan and getting financing to marketing your product.

[Business Development Canada](#)

Access loans and grants for small Aboriginal businesses.

[Aboriginal Business Advisory Centres](#)

If you are in the Northeast, the Kootenay region or Prince George, get support for business start-up or expansion, partnerships and planning.

[Aboriginal Business and Entrepreneurship Skills Training \(BEST\)](#)

Nurture your entrepreneurial skills and spirit with free training in business skills and take the steps to start or grow a business.

[Aboriginal Business Mentorship Program](#)

Meet experienced mentors who can assist you in developing your business.

[Community Futures British Columbia](#)

Access small business loans, business counselling and specialized programs to help you start or grow a business.

[Aboriginal Financial Institutions](#)

Get support through business loans, business grants and business planning assistance for Aboriginal-owned businesses.

Business Development Resources - Additional Resources

- [Small Business BC](#)
- [Industry Council for Aboriginal Business](#)
- [Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business](#)
- [Canadian Centre for Aboriginal Entrepreneurship](#)
- [Aboriginal Tourism BC](#)
- [BC Aboriginal Economic Development](#)



Appendix 2: Sample Budget Template

How much do you need to budget for school? You will need to do some research on estimated costs depending on what part of the province you will be living or going to school in.

Living Expenses Amount

Housing	
Rent	
Electricity/Gas	
Cable/Internet	
Insurance	
Transportation	
Bus	
Car Payments	
Gas	
Insurance	
Parking	
Travel to & from home community	
Food	
Personal Care	
Toiletries	
Hair & skin products	
Clothing	
Laundry	
Entertainment	
Miscellaneous	
Travel home	
Gifts	
Other	
Total Living Expenses	

Education Expenses Amount

Rent	
Electricity/Gas	
Cable/Internet	
Insurance	
Total Education Expenses	
Add Living Expenses	
Total Yearly Expenses	
Income Amount	
Employment	
Scholarships/bursaries	
Band funding	
Savings	
Family contributions	
Student loans	
Other	
Total Income	

Budget Calculations

Total Income _____
minus
 Total Expenses _____
 =
 Balance _____

Source: *Guiding Your Educational Journey: A Handbook for First Nations Parents and Students*, First Nations Education Steering Committee and First Nations Schools Association. November 2015 Draft. <http://www.fnesc.ca/wp/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/61366-FNESC-Role-Model-NOV15-PARENTS-GUIDE-WEB-F1.pdf>

Appendix 3: Post-Secondary Institutions

Public Post-Secondary Colleges, Institutes and Universities in B.C.

Institution	Aboriginal Services	Location
British Columbia Institute of Technology	Aboriginal Services	Lower Mainland / Vancouver
Camosun College	Centre for Indigenous Education & Community Connections	Victoria
Capilano University	First Nations Student Services	North Vancouver
College of New Caledonia	Aboriginal Resource Centre	Quesnel / Fort St. James / Mackenzie
College of the Rockies	Aboriginal Services	Southeast B.C.
Douglas College	Aboriginal Student Services	New Westminster
Emily Carr University of Art + Design	Aboriginal Students	Vancouver
Justice Institute of British Columbia	Aboriginal Student Services	Victoria
Kwantlen Polytechnic University	Aboriginal Services	Lower Mainland
Langara College	Services for Aboriginal Students	Vancouver
North Island College	Aboriginal Education Services	Vancouver Island
Northern Lights College	Aboriginal Services	Peace Region
Northwest Community College	First Nations Access Coordinators	Terrace / Prince George / Prince Rupert
Okanagan College	Aboriginal Services	Interior
Royal Roads University	Indigenous Students	Victoria / Vancouver Island
Selkirk College	Aboriginal Services	Castlegar
Simon Fraser University	Indigenous Student Centre	Vancouver / Burnaby
Thompson Rivers University	Aboriginal Student Services	Kamloops / Williams Lake
University of British Columbia	Aboriginal Portal (UBC-Vancouver) First Nations House of Learning (UBC-Vancouver) Aboriginal Programs & Services (UBC-Okanagan)	Vancouver/Okanagan
University of the Fraser Valley	Indigenous@UFV	Fraser Valley
University of Victoria	Office of Indigenous Affairs	Victoria
Vancouver Community College	Aboriginal Services	Lower Mainland / Vancouver
Vancouver Island University	Aboriginal Education and Engagement	Vancouver Island
Nicola Valley Institute of Technology	nvit.ca	Merrit
University of Northern British Columbia	First Nations Centre	Prince George / Peace River-Liard / Terrace / Quesnel

Aboriginal-Controlled Adult and Post-Secondary Educational Institutes in B.C. (Indigenous Adult and Higher Learning Association Members)

Institution	Region
Blueberry River First Nation Adult Centre Fort Nelson First Nation Community Education Jean Marie Joseph Adult School Kwadacha Dune Tiyy – Aatse Davie School Muskoti Learning Centre – Saulteau First Nations Prince George Nechako Aboriginal Employment & Training Association Tsay Keh Dene	Kaska / Dene / Tahltan / Tagish / Inland Tlingit / Tsek'ene
Coastal Training Centre Kitimaat Village Council / Kitimat Valley Institute Wilp Wilxo'oskwhl Nisga'a	Haida / Tsimshian / Haisla / Nisga'a
Gitwangak Education Society Gitksan Wet'suwet'en Education Society Kyah Wiget Education Society	Gitksan / Wet'suwet'en
Ted Williams Memorial Learning Centre Tl'azt'en Adult Learning Centre	Tsilhqot'in / Carrier Tsekene
Heiltsuk College K'ak'otlats'i School Lip'alhayc Learning Centre (Nuxalk College)	Kwakwaka'wakw / Heiltsuk / Nuxalk / Oweekeno
Ahousaht Education Authority a-m'aa-sip Learning Place (Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council) Chemainus Native College Cowichan Tribes – Quw'utsun Syuw'entst Lelum Ittatsoo Learning Centre Native Education College Penelakut Island Learning Centre Saanich Adult Education Centre Seabird College Sechelt Indian Band Education Centre Snuneymuxw First Nation / House of Learning	Nuu-chah-nulth / Coast Salish
Community Futures Development Corporation of Central Interior First Nations Nicola Valley Institute of Technology Northern Shuswap Tribal Council – Weekend University Program Secwepemc Cultural Education Society Skeetchestn Department of Education Ts'zil Learning Centre (Mount Currie Band Council)	Secwepemc / St'atl'imc / Nlaka'pamux
En'owkin Centre Neskonlith Education Centre	Kootenay / Okanagan

Appendix 4: Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy Agreement Holders (ASETS) in B.C.

Aboriginal Community Career Employment Services Society

108 - 100 Park Royal
West Vancouver, B.C. V7T 1A2
(604) 913-7933

Cariboo Chilcotin Training Employment Centre Society

205 - 197 North 2nd Avenue
Williams Lake, B.C. V2G 1Z5
(250) 392-2510

Coast Salish Employment & Training Society

201-5462 Trans Canada Hwy
Duncan, B.C. V9L 6W4
(250) 746-0183

Ktunaxa Nation Council

7468 Mission Road
Cranbrook, B.C. V1C 7E5
(250) 489-2464

Métis Nation British Columbia

Unit 103-5668 192nd Street
Surrey, B.C. V3S 2V7
1-800-940-1150

Mid Coast First Nations Training Society

Box 941
Bella Bella, B.C. V0T 1Z0
(250) 957-2225

Nisga'a Employment Skills & Training

P.O. Box 231 2000 Lisims Drive
New Aiyansh, B.C. V0J 1A0
(250) 633-3000

North East Native Advancing Society

10328 101st Avenue
Fort St. John, B.C. V1J 2B5
(250) 785-0887

North Vancouver Island Aboriginal Training Society

Southern Office
1211 Cypress Street
Campbell River, B.C. V9W 2Z3
(250) 286-3455

Northern Office

Box 28
Alert Bay, B.C. V0N 1A0
(250) 974-2908

Nuu-chah-nulth Employment & Training Program

4090 8th Avenue
Port Alberni, B.C. V9Y 4S4
(250) 723-1331

Okanagan Training & Development Council

339, 101 - 1865 Dilworth Drive
Kelowna, B.C. V1Y 9T1
(250) 769-1977

Prince George Nechako Aboriginal Employment & Training Association

198 Kingston Street
Prince George, B.C. V2L 1C3
(250) 561-1199

Shuswap Nation Tribal Council

680 Athabasca Street W
Kamloops, B.C. V2H 1C4
(778) 471-8206

Stó:Lō Aboriginal Skills & Employment Training

Bldg. 8A - 7201 Vedder Road
Chilliwack, B.C. V2R 4G3
(604) 858-3691

Tribal Resources Investment Corporation

344 West 2nd Avenue
Prince Rupert, BC V8J 1G6
(250) 624-3535

Appendix 5: Sample Resume Template

YOUR NAME

Your Address

Your Email Address

Your Telephone #

OBJECTIVE

Name the job you are applying for, for example: A sales position using communication, management, and analytical skills.

EDUCATION AND CREDENTIALS

List your certificates, diplomas, degrees, etc. here, for example:

- *Diploma*
- *Certificate*
- *Bachelor's Degree ABC*
- *Level 1 First Aid*

SUMMARY OF EXPERIENCE

List the different types of experience you have and provide examples of work activities using action verbs that demonstrate your experience, for example:

Communications

- *Assisted customers in ABC*
- *Interacted with ABC*
- *Motivated more than X# of customers to buy ABC*

Initiative

- *Maintained ABC and repaired ABC*
- *Reorganized process for updating ABC*
- *Designed signage for ABC*

EMPLOYMENT

List the jobs that you have had from most recent to least recent. Include the job title, the company or organization and the dates you were employed there.

OTHER RELATED ACTIVITIES

List other activities that you are involved in that show the employer that you are a good candidate for the job, for example:

- *Extensive experience on the ABC Committee*

Appendix 6: Sample Cover Letter Template

Your name
Your address
Your telephone #

Date

Employer's Name
Company Name and Department Name
Company Address

Dear Employer's Name,

In the first paragraph introduce yourself and state your reason for writing.

Use the next paragraphs to highlight your skills and qualifications. Use words and phrases from the job advertisement or job description, ensuring you include skills, duties, responsibilities and relevant personal qualities.

Include real examples of accomplishments to tell the employer why your experience makes you a good fit for the position and how the company would benefit from hiring you. Include any relevant qualifications you have such as certificates, diplomas and training courses.

Use the closing paragraph to finish up the cover letter. Mention the following:

your appreciation for their time and attention
your interest in meeting the employer
the best way to contact you

Close the letter with your name and signature.

Appendix 7: Sample Interview Questions

Qualifications

- Please tell us about yourself (This question is to help the employer learn about your past experience, personal interests and what motivates you).
- What was your school experience like?
- What has been your most rewarding work experience?
- What strengths do you bring to this job?
- How would you describe any weaknesses you may have?
- Why do you feel you are qualified for this position?

Ability to be Effective in the Work Environment

- What do you know about this company?
- Why are you applying for this job?
- What kind of work environment makes you the most comfortable?
- Are you a team player? If so, can you provide examples of how you work with others?
- Do you work well under pressure?
- How do you handle conflict on the job?
- Describe a difficult situation and how you dealt with it.

Career Goals

- Where would you like to be in five years?
- What are you looking to achieve in your career?
- Are you willing to relocate?
- What are your salary expectations?
- What do you like to do in your spare time?



WorkBC

BC's Career Guide for Aboriginal People

To access this
guide online visit

WorkBC.ca/Aboriginal

