

LABOUR MARKET NEWS

Government of Alberta ■

CALGARY AND AREA



Careers that cook Jobs in the kitchen

IN THE HEAT of the Fairmont Hotel's kitchen, Jordan Clay carefully adds herbs to a fish dish. In the background, there's the clatter of dishes, a cleaner passes by with a mop, and the line cook chops vegetables.

As a cook (NOC 6242), Clay plays an important role in the kitchen (see page 5). But kitchens are team efforts. Dishwashers, prep cooks (both are NOC 6642), and experienced cooks all play a role.

The entry-level position in the kitchen is the dishwasher, and there are plenty of jobs available (see page 2). With experience, dishwashers move on to work as a prep cook (page 3), and may even become a cook if they like the work (page 4). But not everyone does.

Kitchens are hot and intense. The work is fast-paced and even stressful. For some it is too much. For others, the challenge and adrenaline rush is why they like the work.

If you think kitchen work may be for you, finding a job shouldn't be too hard. Plenty of jobs are advertised in the classified ads, and on Internet job boards (see page 7). But be sure to network (see page 9). Kitchens tend to hire by word of mouth. And once you do have a job in a kitchen, don't stop networking.

Turnover is expected in kitchens. A dishwasher, or prep cook, will learn what they can at one restaurant and move on to the next. It's how the business works, and it's how kitchens train a new generation.

On-the-job training is always part of the job in a kitchen, and a dishwasher with a good attitude can easily move into more demanding jobs, and even make a lifelong career in the kitchen.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



Kitchens are hot, but cook Jordan Clay says it's something you get used to. For more on Clay and the upcoming WorldSkills Competition see page 5.

In this issue

This publication has been prepared by Alberta Employment and Immigration with the support of the Government of Canada. Find us online at employment.alberta.ca/calgary.

PAGES 1-4
Working in kitchens

PAGES 5-6
World Skills 2009: Cook

PAGES 7-8
Working In... Food services

PAGE 9
Networking. An essential part of any job search

PAGE 10
Links & Resources/ New to Calgary?

NEXT ISSUE:
Painting and decorating

A clean start

working as a dishwasher

SEAN SPICER NEEDED a job, fast. And he found it working as a dishwasher (NOC 6641) at the *Muse* in Calgary.

Dishwashing is the entry-level position in most kitchens, and there are plenty of dishwashing jobs available, even after the recent economic slowdown.

But just because dishwashing jobs are plentiful doesn't mean the position is unimportant. In fact, the dishwasher is one of the most important positions in the kitchen.

"You want to see a kitchen crash, pull the dishwasher," says Spicer. "My job is as important as anyone else's on the (production) line."

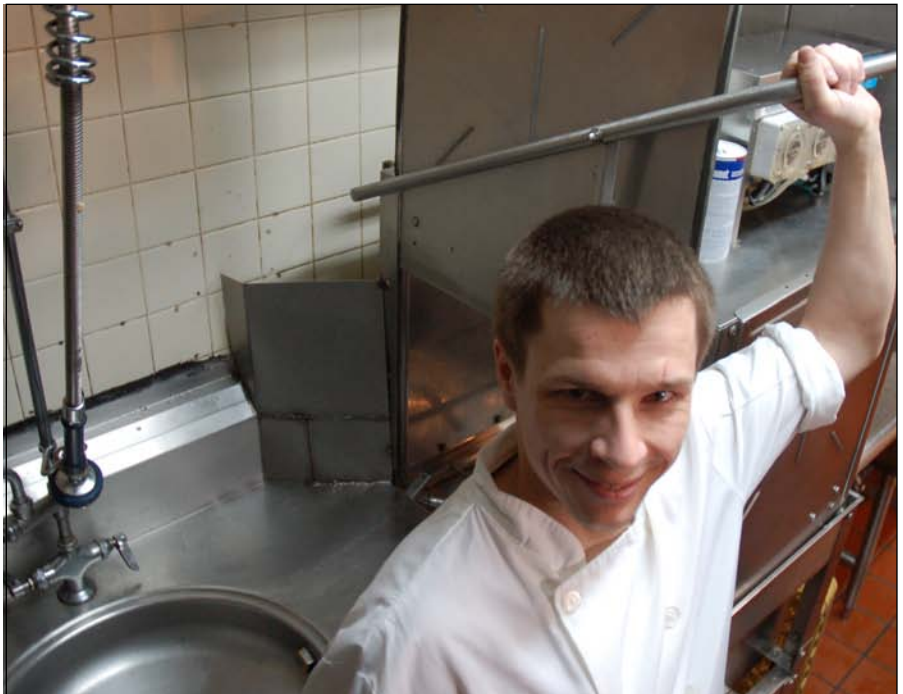
Like nearly all jobs in a kitchen, dishwashers have to move fast during rush times. "It's a high-speed, high-stress environment" says Spicer. "Some people thrive on it. But it's usually one or the other. Either you love the work, or you absolutely hate it."

A great place to start

Spicer isn't sure if he will continue working in kitchens, but he says that in this business there is no better place to start in a kitchen than as a dishwasher.

"If you want to work in a restaurant or kitchen, start with dishwashing," says Spicer. "You will learn how a kitchen works—even if you want to work out front as a waiter there is no better place to start." And the job is probably much more interesting than most people think.

Dishwashers like Spicer don't just wash dishes. They often help prepare ingredients, and cook simple parts of meals, learning new skills each time. In fact, teaching dishwashers on the job is one of the most important ways the industry trains new cooks. "In this



Sean Spicer isn't planning to become a cook but his job as a dishwasher is where many successful cooks start their careers.

job you're always picking up skills," says Spicer.

Handling low pay

Pay for dishwashing is low: many dishwashers earn around \$12/hr.

"The pay is a pain," says Spicer. "I was making an awful lot more money in my old job." Still, Spicer says there are ways to make a dishwashing job work.

"Dishwashing jobs are really common," says Spicer. "There's probably a pub that's hiring within walking distance, and if you don't need a car, that saves a lot of money. And there are benefits to the job. Where else would you get duck for dinner made by a Red Seal chef? The job has its perks."

Finding work

Spicer found his job by word of mouth and says it's by far the best way to look for a job in this industry. "There's always work out there," says Spicer. "Talk to your friends. Talk to the chef in a local restaurant. The work is there. This industry is pretty stable even in a

recession." (For other job hunting ideas see page 7.)

The hours

Working in kitchens means you're busy when everyone else wants to eat. Kitchens in hotels and restaurants can stay open into the early hours of the morning and because there is also a lunch and breakfast rush, split shifts are common in kitchens.

Satisfying

Right now, dishwashing solves Spicer's problems. "Having a job is way better than being out of work," says Spicer. "I'm just glad to have a job." But for Spicer, dishwashing isn't just something to fill the time and cover the rent. It's satisfying.

"When I get back there and see the pots and pans getting all nasty looking, I hate that. I keep everything as clean as I possibly can," says Spicer. "If I can't give the cooks the best tools to work with, they can't put out their best work. It really is a team effort in the kitchen."

A cut above: working as a prep cook



Pandyra always wanted to cook since he was a child. Today, he is helping make food at one of Calgary's finest restaurants and even had the chance to meet former President George Bush.

DID YOU KNOW?

Prep cooks and dishwashers are also called *kitchen helpers and food assemblers* (NOC 6641). In many restaurants, hotels, and cafeterias both jobs are considered entry-level positions, and you don't need anywhere near the level of education Pandyra (featured on this page) has. But for prep cooks, employers may be looking for some prior experience in a kitchen. As an entry-level job, pay is fairly low and is usually in the range of \$10 to \$14 an hour, but some positions have been posted for as high as \$15 an hour.

LUKAS PANDYRA LEARNED from the best. For a few weeks, Pandyra was taught by Gordon Ramsay.

Famous for driving new cooks to tears on his TV show *Hell's Kitchen*, Ramsay isn't that bad in reality, says Pandyra, "He not like that at all. He's quite nice."

The time with Ramsay was part of Pandyra's training to be a cook in Poland, a dream he's had since childhood. "I was always reaching up to the counter trying to help my mom," says Pandyra. "I've always wanted to work in the kitchen."

Learning to cook in schools like SAIT (sait.ca) is a great way to start a career in the kitchen. It can lead directly to a job as a cook. But not always. Even Pandyra's five years of training is not enough to take over the cooking at a restaurant like the *Osteria de Medici* where Pandyra was hired as a prep cook.

As a prep cook, Pandyra washes, peels, cuts, chops, and slices vegetables, and gets other ingredients ready for cooking. But like many kitchens, the Osteria trains prep cooks for more demanding work as a cook.

On most shifts, Pandyra gets a chance to work over the stove cooking. The experience is a chance to build his skills, learn from the head chef, and improve his palate. "Getting to know how it should taste takes time," says Pandyra. "It's a difficult skill to learn but it's very important."

Like most jobs in this industry, Pandyra's hours vary. Some days he will work a straight eight hour shift. On others he may work the lunch hour and then again in the evening. "That's just part of the work in restaurants," says Pandyra.

For anyone thinking about getting into the business, Pandyra's advice is to learn through experience.

"School is important, but getting some experience in the kitchen is the most important thing," says Pandyra. "You learn how a kitchen works and what the job is like. Even when you are washing the dishes, you learn how to work in a team atmosphere."

To find that first job in a kitchen, Pandyra suggests a little enthusiasm. "Even if you don't have any experience, the most important thing is showing a real interest. It's pretty easy to get a job in a restaurant, but restaurants want people who have an interest and want to be there."

Pandyra hasn't decided just where to take his career—he has been in Canada for less than a year, and is just beginning to learn English so that is a priority. But he probably won't leave the kitchen anytime soon.

"What I like about this job is the action," says Pandyra. "It's an exciting job, and Hell's Kitchen, that's just on TV."

Career du jour: cook

TREVOR DUNN HAD no idea he was taking his first steps in a new career when he started washing dishes. “Originally, I didn’t think I’d make the kitchen my career. When I started it was just a job to have some extra money,” says Dunn.

In a few months, the dishwashing job led to simple cooking like deep frying. The next step was preparing salads and doing prep work. But along the way something changed.

“I got a passion for it—it just kind of took off for me,” says Dunn.

Not every dishwasher finds a career in the kitchen. But Dunn found what he was looking for, even in the early days. “That first job probably isn’t that glorious. You’re scrubbing dishes and when you get on line at night you can be there until 2 a.m. You have to be able to cope with stress,” says Dunn. “But that’s kind of a turn-on. No other job will give that rush—knowing people are coming in usually all at once, placing their orders and you need to on top of it.”

Like many cooks in Alberta, Dunn learned everything he knows on the job.

“I didn’t go to school,” says Dunn. “It was always self-taught or growing within the industry—being under great chefs you always learn a lot. I also cook a lot at home, building up my skills by doing. It’s the way I’ve always learned the best.”

One big plus about working in the kitchen is choice. There are plenty of employers out there. Small restaurants need help, and big restaurants need help. There are positions available in chains offering great opportunities to move into managerial positions.

There are also institutional employers like hospitals offering excellent benefit packages and secure work (see page 7). But for Dunn the choice was simple. He wanted to work in a small kitchen.

“I really like the smaller places with 30 seats. You have a lot of say,” says Dunn. “In bigger places there’s less control, but there’s a great camaraderie in larger kitchens, and you learn a lot.”

For Dunn, the kitchen is his passion, his career and his future, as he plans for his own business. But even if the kitchen ends up being a temporary job, Dunn says it will still be worth it. “It teaches you organization and speed and timing, all those great skills you can take to other kitchens or anywhere.”



Working at a fairly small restaurant, Trevor Dunn does a lot of prep work himself. .

Chef or Cook?

In French, the word ‘chef’ means chief, and that’s a very good description of a chef’s job. Chefs not only cook and create new recipes, they organize all the employees in a kitchen and order supplies for the kitchen. It takes a passion for cooking, strong management skills and years of hands-on experience to become a chef.

CALGARY COMPETES: World Skills 2009 series

Event info: worldskills2009.com

Calgary cook in the heat of competition



JORDAN CLAY'S FIRST taste of working in a kitchen was seven years ago when he was 14. "I got lucky," says Clay. "I just talked to the chef. He liked me. And I got to help out here and there."

At first the job was just a job, and Clay thought he had left behind cooking for good when he went to college.

The change of course wasn't a success. "After a year, I just said, 'What am I doing here? I belong in the kitchen and that's where I need to be.'"

It was time to get serious about cooking, and Clay enrolled in SAIT's culinary arts program. "It was fantastic," says Clay. "The two-year diploma was a great experience for me." It was also an opportunity to test his skills in competition.

While studying at SAIT, Clay brought home gold at the Skills Canada-Alberta Provincial competition and went on to the Canadian Skills Competition, where his cooking skills earned silver—a great result, but it was just short of what Clay needed to represent Canada this September at the World Skills competition in Calgary.

The final match between Clay and a cook from Québec came down to a two-day culinary match. It was close. Unfortunately, Clay came in second by the slimmest of margins. "That was disappointing," sighs the Fairmont Hotel cook working at Calgary's Palliser Hotel.

Held every two years, the World Skills Competition brings together more than 900 of the best young professionals from trades, service and vocational programs from around the world. During four days, competitors will get the chance to showcase their talents and abilities. This year's competition will be held in Calgary from September 1-7 at Stampede Park.

A chance to cook for Canada at World Skills would have been the icing on the cake, not that his career needed much help. Clay was already cooking at Calgary's Fairmont Palliser Hotel, one of Calgary's finest hotels with a great restaurant.



Jordan Clay's first taste of working in a kitchen was seven years ago at his first job. He was 14.

Surrounded by creative and experienced chefs, Clay has learned a phenomenal amount in a short time, and expects to throughout his career. "The thing I enjoy most about the job is you can try your entire life to know everything about cooking and you'll never reach that pinnacle. But it's sure fun to try. You're constantly learning."

Education for cooks

Many cooks in Alberta learned their job at work, moving from entry-level positions to ones that require more and more skills. But cooks are a trade in Alberta, which means you can learn how to become a cook under an apprenticeship program which mixes education in a school with work experience. Finishing an apprenticeship program and becoming a journeyman cook often gives you a better chance to get the job you want, and many certified cooks are better paid.

In Calgary, technical training to become a cook is arranged by Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training (tradesecrets.gov.ab.ca) and is offered through SAIT (SAIT.ca).



DID YOU KNOW?

Cooking jobs can be extremely well paid.

While wages for cooks can vary enormously depending on the employer and style of cooking, talented cooks who work hard at their career can easily earn over \$100,000 a year. “When you start the wages are fairly low,” says Clay. “But you can really make a good living as a top level chef, once you pay your dues.”

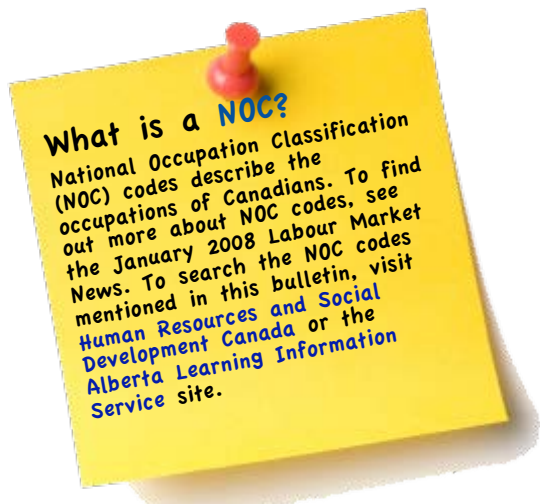
For anyone thinking of getting into cooking as a career, Clay has just one word of advice. “Work in a kitchen before going to school,” he urges. “Kitchens aren’t for everyone. I love it, but many people don’t like the hours, the working conditions, and the stress. Even if it’s at the entry-level position like dishwashing, you’re exposed to everyone, to the atmosphere—you’ll understand it’s a lifestyle choice more than a job.”

At just 21, Clay sees a long career ahead for himself in a growing industry. “More people are eating out more often,” says Clay. “And they’re budgeting that into their regular wages.” Even the recent slowdown doesn’t worry Clay. “Eating out has become part of a normal lifestyle. With this recession I don’t think you’ll see the same dent in eating out that you saw last time.”

After several years with the Palliser, Clay is starting to think about new opportunities and new challenges. “In September, I’m planning to go to France,” says Clay. And oddly his employer doesn’t mind at all.

“In this business you always move around looking for new experience,” says Clay. “If you feel you’ve learned all you can at a place, and it’s time to move on, you can go to your employer and ask about a new place that might be suitable. Cooks migrate, that’s just the way it is. In the culinary industry it’s expected.”

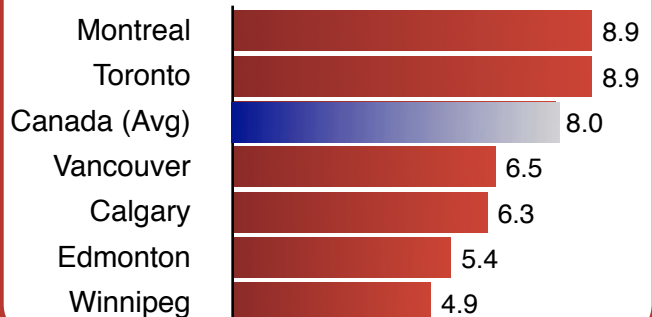
In time, Clay says he might settle in one place but right now he’s gaining experience from as many places, competitions and people as he possibly can. He may even return to Calgary someday, but he’s already left a mark. On the menu at the Palliser, a section is reserved for Clay’s creations, a rare honour for a cook so young.



Employment checkup

Like many parts of the country, Alberta’s unemployment rate continues to rise. It edged up 0.2 per cent from March to April reaching 6.0 per cent. But there’s also good news. The number of people working in Alberta actually rose in April by 5,700.

Unemployment Rates
Major cities and Canada-April 2009





Working in...

Kitchens



DESPITE A DOWNTURN in the economy, people are always going to have to eat. Even as other industries cut back, restaurants are still hiring, and jobs are posted by the hundreds in the classifieds. But if you are looking for work in a kitchen, food service outlets like restaurants or catering companies are just some of the options available.

Kitchen staff are needed for summer camps, hospitals, schools, remote work camps, bars and hotels. Job seekers should consider various options because each has advantages.

The industry

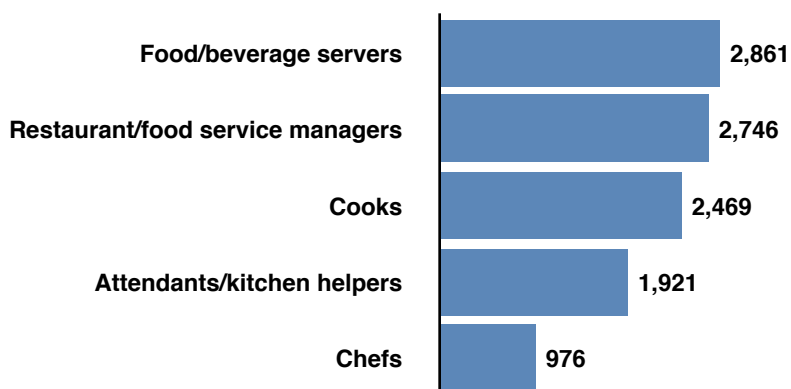
Food services falls into the larger category of accommodation and food services, but interestingly enough, the five occupations that will need the most workers in this category are all food service-related (see right). In January 2008, Calgary Economic Development reported nearly 29,000 food servers, food service managers, or chefs in the Calgary region. That number continues to grow, with CED's 2007-2017 forecast predicting thousands in this industry (see chart at right).

DID YOU KNOW?

Canadians like their fast-food fix!

The most popular items ordered at Canadian restaurants are french fries and regular coffee. The average cheque amount at a restaurant is \$6.73, before tips.

Top 5 occupations hiring, 2007-2017



Source: Calgary Economic Development

Resources for job hunters

Organization	Services	Contact
Alberta Hotel & Lodging Association	This voluntary association represents more than 850 members across Alberta in the tourism and hospitality industry. Its website features a classified ads page with job postings.	ahla.ca
Hcareers	This job board focuses on jobs in the hospitality industry, but lists several food service-related positions.	hcareers.ca
National Restaurant Association	An American association, the National Restaurant Association's website also lists several jobs in Calgary.	restaurant.org
Alberta Camping Association	On this association's website, job seekers can see job opportunities and upload their resumés for employers to view.	albertacamping.com
Alberta Health Services	The "Careers" section of the Alberta Health Services' website allows job seekers to search by city and occupation.	albertahealthservices.ca

Working in... Food Services

When you think of jobs in food services, restaurant jobs might be the first that come to mind. While restaurants are popular places for food service workers to find employment, they are far from the only option out there. Below are a few alternatives to check out if you're interested in a food services job.

Camps

Summer camps hire food service workers to prepare food for campers and other employees. The work is seasonal, so it's well-suited to students and those who have other work lined up for the winter months. YMCA Calgary (ymcacalgary.org) offers summer camps, and the City of Calgary (calgary.ca) lists other camps on its website. Just enter "day camp" in the City website's search bar. You could also try the Alberta Camping Association's website at albertacamping.com.

Work camps may also have seasonal food service workers onsite. Forestry, mining and oil and gas companies all use contractors like Travers or PTI Group to run their camps.

Health care facilities

Hospitals hire food service workers to prepare food in their cafeterias, as well as to prepare food for patients. Retirement homes and long-term care facilities also hire these workers. There are also private companies that manage long-term care facilities (see 'Nursing homes' in the Yellow Page). Food service jobs in Calgary's health care facilities are posted on the Alberta Health Services website (albertahealthservices.ca) under "Careers."

Catering companies

Catering companies need workers to prepare food for events like weddings and company parties. Because these companies are often small compared to others that hire food service workers, they might require a wider range of job responsibilities.

The online Yellow Pages (yellowpages.ca) lists more than 200 catering companies in the Calgary area, so call around and find out who needs some extra help.

Mobile food service companies

You've likely seen those food service trucks around the city, doling out fries and hamburgers to hungry customers. They're parked on busy streets, feeding employees on their lunch breaks, and at festivals where there are sure to be crowds. The work, again, is seasonal, but will keep you busy and help you gain experience.

Check out local job listings on the Service Canada Job Bank (jobbank.gc.ca), or drop by one of these mobile concessions with a resumé.

Food service contractors

Have you ever wondered where the food you order on an airplane comes from? Food service contractors can have short- or long-term contracts to provide food for airlines, government or other institutions.

Cara Operations Ltd. has been Air Canada's primary food service contractor since 2000, expanding its service in recent years to provide food from its restaurant chains. Call Cara's Calgary location at 403-291-4533 to find out about job opportunities. Chartwells is another contractor, having a longstanding agreement with the University of Calgary. Find available jobs on its parent company's website, Compass Group Canada, at compass-canada.com.

Best sources of job ads by Industry

Not all sources are the same! Here's a quick guide to the best sources for newspaper and online ads for the job you want.	Calgary Herald Working	Calgary Herald Classifieds	Calgary Sun Classifieds	Workopolis	Monster	Job Bank	Post-secondary job boards
	Accommodation & Food Services		✓	✓			✓
Administration & Support			✓	✓		✓	
Arts and Recreation		✓				✓	✓
Construction		✓	✓			✓	
Education	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓
Finance and Insurance	✓	✓		✓			
Health Care	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Information (IT) and Culture			✓	✓	✓		
Manufacturing		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Mining, Oil and Gas	✓			✓	✓		✓
Other Services		✓	✓			✓	✓
Professional Services	✓			✓	✓		✓
Real Estate	✓	✓					
Retail Trade		✓	✓		✓	✓	
Transportation & Warehousing		✓	✓		✓	✓	
Wholesale Trade			✓			✓	

Networking

An essential part of the job search

WHEN SEAN SPICER needed work, he found it in his apartment building. “I knew someone in the building who worked at the restaurant,” says Spicer. “When the dishwashing job came up, they mentioned it to me.”

When Lukas Pandyra first came to Calgary his uncle had a friend working in a local kitchen. The restaurant needed help. Pandyra applied, and he’s been working there ever since.

Both these cases are great examples of how networking works. Instead of just relying on what you know, networking lets you tap into the knowledge and connections of friends, family and acquaintances. And it is a critical part of any job search.

According to surveys done for the [Calgary and Area Labour Market Report](#), employers consistently use word of mouth to find new workers, no matter what industry they are in, or the size of the company. But for many job seekers, networking isn’t easy.

Networking can be uncomfortable. And a lot of people say it feels way too much like selling yourself. But with practice, the awkward feeling tends to disappear.

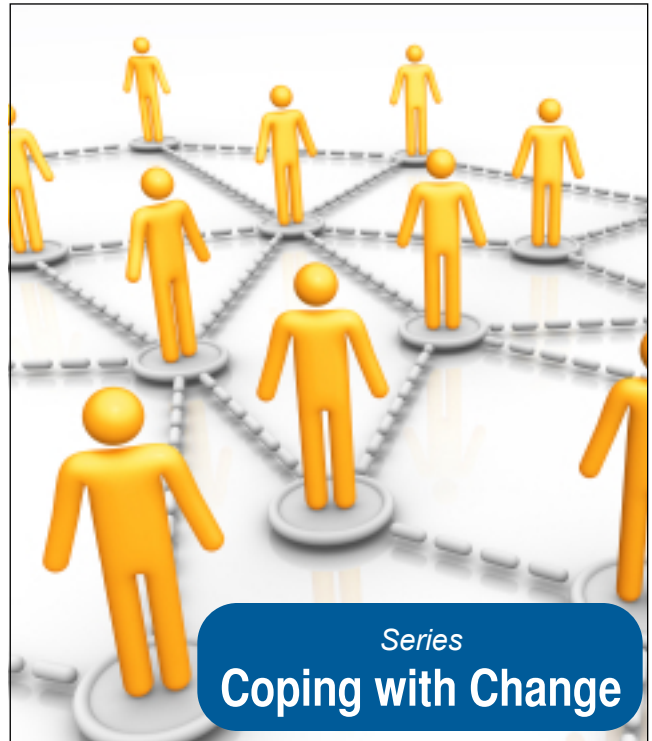
To ease yourself into networking, you may want to start close to home. Chatting with friends and family about your work and where you want to go is often a safe place to practice networking.

Networking isn’t just about selling yourself. Like any good conversation with a friend, networking should be a discussion. The conversation may have a purpose—finding work—but this isn’t a hard sell to a reluctant buyer. It’s a chance to learn and share.

Make a plan

Networking is part of the job search, and should be approached professionally. A good place to start is by making a list of some of the questions you’d like answered. While you want to be relaxed and approachable when networking, you also want to have very clear goals about the information you need.

It also helps to make a list of some of the people you would like to talk to. They could be people you know or people you’d like to know. It’s also helpful to think of different ways to add to your list. In the age of the Internet, there are more and more ways to find and talk to people in your field. Internet-based discussion boards, for example, are great places to meet people, and ask for help. And you can always find new contacts through more traditional opportunities like job fairs, professional associations or networking clubs. You may even want to phone up someone with your dream job



Finding a job is much easier if you can tap into the knowledge of others through networking.

and ask for an informational interview. Many people are more than willing to share their experience and knowledge with anyone who is interested. And informational interviews are excellent opportunities to find out exactly what the job is like and how to get it. Here are a few questions you may want to consider.

- What is the best part of your job?
- What type of education or training is necessary to do this type of job?
- How did you get your position?
- What other types of jobs are there at this company?
- Can you look at my resumé and provide feedback?

Once you get used to networking, keep it up. You’ll find opportunities start popping up in the most unlikely places. You never know when you might meet the perfect contact in a grocery store lineup.

It’s also important to track your efforts. By keeping notes and business cards, valuable contacts will be available when you need them. Or better yet, stay in touch on a regular basis. And always send a ‘thank you’ note when appropriate—everyone likes to feel appreciated.

But whatever else, remember this is not a sales job. Networking is about communication, and just like friends and family, it’s important to listen as well as talk. You never know what you might hear.

Need more info? Visit a Calgary LMIC!

Labour Market Information Centres (LMICs) can provide you with information to help you make career, learning and work decisions. LMICs have books, magazines, newspapers, software and videos about all kinds of employment related topics.



Calgary Locations

Downtown 5th Floor, Century Park Place, 855 - 8 Avenue SW
Phone: 403-297-6344

South 100 Fisher Park II, 6712 Fisher Street SE
Phone: 403-297-4024

East 1520 Marlborough Mall, 515 Marlborough Way NE Phone:
403-297-7570

North One Executive Place, 1816 Crowchild Tr NW Phone:
403-297-3951

South/Central Third floor, 10th & 10th, 1021-10 Ave SW
Phone: 403-297-2094

For further contact information and office hours:
employment.alberta.ca/calgary

Finding work in Calgary

Job search and career websites

alis.gov.ab.ca (Alberta Learning Information Service)

jobbank.gc.ca (Job listings)

workopolis.ca (Job listings)

monster.ca (Job listings)

nextsteps.org (Job resources for youth)

albertajobs.com (Job listings)

hgcareers.com (Job listings)

healthjobs.ab.ca (Health care job listings)

wowjobs.ca (Job listings)

Job search and career information by phone

Alberta Career Information Hotline: 1-800-661-3753

Fax: 780-422-0372 TDD: 780-422-5283

Sources of Labour Market Information

These websites offer a wealth of labour market information on Alberta and specific communities

employment.alberta.ca/lmi

employment.alberta.ca/calgary

(Alberta Employment and Immigration)

alis.gov.ab.ca (Alberta Learning Information Service)

albertacanada.com (Business and economic information)

calgaryeconomicdevelopment.com

(Calgary Economic Development)

[Alberta Employment and Industry's Calgary Region](http://AlbertaEmploymentandIndustry'sCalgaryRegion) site offers labour market information, employer connections, career and employment workshops, a training and career services directory and more.

Where to find us

This publication and other labour market information products can be found at
employment.alberta.ca/calgary

We welcome your feedback! Send comments or suggestions to EI.Webmaster@gov.ab.ca.

New to Calgary?

A new website, calgarypedia.com, is driven by people who work and live in Calgary. Here, you will find information on housing, living, working and playing in Calgary.

Calgary Economic Development (CED) is a great source of potential **employment**, with a comprehensive list of employers organized by industry. For more information, call CED at 403-221-7831 or click on the Calgary Business Directory at calgaryeconomicdevelopment.com

The City of Calgary's website provides a wealth of **information**, such as the history of the city, traffic reports and cameras, bylaw issues, parks and recreation and events going on year round. For more information call 403-268-CITY or visit calgary.ca. For **transit** route information call 403-262-1000 or visit calgarytransit.com

There are more than 25 hospitals, medical clinics, home care, outpatient clinics and long term care centres in the **Calgary Health Region**. Visit calgaryhealthregion.ca or call 403-943-1111 or You can also contact Health Link at 403-943-LINK or online at calgaryhealthregion.ca/yourhealth.

Calgary has a thriving **cultural** scene. Visit calgaryplus.ca, ffwdweekly.com or discovercalgary.com.

The **Calgary Real Estate Board** and the **Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation** are excellent sources for **housing market** information in Calgary including valuable information on information for homebuyers, homeowners, renovators and renters. Calgary's current rental vacancy rate is 2.1 per cent. In October 2008 the average monthly rental price for a two-bedroom apartment was \$1,148. For rentals in Calgary, visit albertarent.com, calgary.kijiji.ca, craigslist.ca, places4rent.ca, lowcostrent.org or the **Calgary Housing Company**.

The 2007 Alberta Wage and Salary Survey covers more than 400 occupations and provides information on **wages and salaries** for full-time and part-time employees in Alberta by occupation, geographic area and industry group. To find out more information about your career, visit alis.alberta.ca