



Career Navigation for Recent Indigenous Graduates



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Okanagan Campus | Syilx Okanagan Nation Territory
Vancouver Campus | Musqueam Traditional Territory

You're Graduating! Now What?

The completion of your degree is a major achievement that will open doors - congratulations! As an Indigenous graduate of UBC, you have gathered a unique set of experiences, skills and knowledge that together make you qualified and equipped to do many things. This includes your academic experience, community-based experience and personal hobbies and achievements. Employers will value what you have to offer.

Yet, we don't want to minimize that this is a tough time to be entering the job market. The global Covid-19 pandemic has drastically changed the world of work. Many of you are likely navigating worry and stress related to your future, and the livelihood of your families and other communities. This is a time to reach out for support if you need it. Connect with your Academic or Enrolment Services Advisor or to the team at the Longhouse and your peers for mutual support.

This health crisis will pass and new employment opportunities will arrive but it's hard to predict when that will occur. In the meantime, you might find yourself needing to take on different forms of work than you have been anticipating. We want to assure you that all experiences can be valuable opportunities for learning and skill development. Keep your eyes open, take care of yourself and your loved ones and do what you can to maintain a positive outlook on what's possible for you today and in the future. Uncertainty is a major contributor to many peoples' experiences of transitioning from school to work, meaning that some of what you are feeling probably would have been present regardless of the pandemic, but feelings of uncertainty have been heightened in light of our global circumstances. There is strength and opportunity in that collective experience. Look for it and use it to help yourself thrive. There are many supports available to you on campus, in your communities and in your circles of influence. At this time where we are being asked to stay safe at home, it is important for you to reach out via technology to access the services available to you. Build a support network and also ask advice from those you consider friends and mentors.

Also, remember to take time to celebrate your accomplishment - you are moving from student to alumni. Whatever is next for you in your journey - celebrate and honor the accomplishments you have achieved and the work you have put into the completion of your degree. Know that your UBC community - including *alumni UBC* services – is still available to you.

This workbook includes a set of tools and resources to help you navigate the job search process as smoothly as possible.

In the first half, you will find resources, applied learning opportunities and other information to help you strengthen your resumes, cover letters and interview performance in order to get a job. These are essential skills required to successfully find employment and are among the most frequently cited needs of Indigenous youth looking for employment.

In the second half, you will find information and resources to help you with your longer-term career exploration and planning. If you find yourself unemployed or underemployed with time on your hands, look there for ideas about how to set yourself up for success when the labour market expands again.

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This resource was created through collaborative efforts at the UBC Vancouver Campus between the Centre for Student Involvement & Careers, the First Nations House of Learning, the Indigenous Working Group, UBC and recent Indigenous graduates from UBC. We gratefully acknowledge traditional territories of both the Musqueam and Sylix people, on which we work and gather.

Find an Employer that Values Your Indigenous Identity

Many employers are interculturally fluent and will appreciate your Indigenous identity while respecting your individual preferences for how it connects with your work life, however, discrimination and ignorance continue to exist in some workplaces in Canada. Navigating the intersections between your identity and the world of work is unique to each individual. You get to decide whether you outwardly self-identify as Indigenous and how that aspect of your identity will influence your job search process. Consider these tips if you are looking for an interculturally fluent employer.

Do Your Research. Consider these questions:

- What policies exist at the organization that name the prohibition of discrimination in the workplace?
- What evidence can you find about the employer that indicates the organization is inclusive (e.g. equity statements on job postings?) Check out the employee profiles on the organization's website or check out LinkedIn profiles. Is the staff population diverse?
- Does the organization welcome feedback on their products and services (e.g., is there a customer service feedback tool on their websites?) This may signify the organization is open to feedback, change, and learning.
- Check out [Eluta.ca](https://www.eluta.ca), a job search engine that helps find jobs with employers recognized for diversity.

Talk to People. Conduct informational interviews. Access your networks, ask people you know, or people working at an organization what the company culture is like.

Here are some suggested questions:

- Is the company interculturally fluent?
- In what ways does the company celebrate diversity?
- What is the company's track record for hiring diverse peoples and practicing inclusion?
- Are diverse peoples promoted into leadership/executive positions at the company, and are there diverse peoples holding leadership/executive positions at the company, currently?
- Are there programs in place to recruit diverse workers at the organization?
- Is the organization open to learning (and unlearning) and implementing new inclusive practices?

Trust Your Decision-Making Practices

Your career journey is your own. Consider the ways you typically make decisions and incorporate those strategies into your career navigation. Trust yourself when gauging if an organization is the right fit for you, and whether the company values your contributions and identity.

Reach out to your Network

Networking refers to intentional relationship building with the hope, but not expectation, that meeting new people will help you gain exposure and access to opportunities or information that will help you grow professionally and personally. These connections may be strong such as friends or family or “weak”, meaning you may not interact with them on a regular basis. Reach out to those acquaintances who may be working in your desired field to ask questions and indicate interest in learning more about their organization – “weak” ties can be strong and valuable to you in your job search.¹

Because employers often reach out to their networks for recommendations for candidates for available positions, it is valuable for you to leverage your own networks by letting them know what kind of work you are interested in and able to perform.

Networking doesn't just happen at planned professional events. It also occurs in your daily interactions with classmates, faculty, family, friends, neighbors, acquaintances, supervisors and co-workers. The people you have met here at UBC are part of your network, too. They may be fellow students and peers now, but in five to ten years, they will be working professionals. A healthy network includes individuals that know enough about your interests and abilities to help you find out when opportunities of interest arise. They can also be a great resource to recommend you for available jobs.

Think back to those people in the UBC community you have interacted with who may be able to help you talk through your job search or access support during this time. This includes the instructional community, your academic advisors, and if you are graduating – Alumni Services. Also look to your current resume and job experience to ask yourself if there are former employers or colleagues you could approach for opportunities you may not be aware of.

If you are still studying or returning to UBC for Graduate Studies, in the upcoming terms, build relationships with those around you, including lab managers, practicum field supervisors, and instructional teams.

¹Deborah, W. B., & Konrad, A. M. (2001). Granovetter was right: The importance of weak ties to a contemporary job search. *Group & Organization Management*, 26(4), 434-462. Retrieved from <http://ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/docview/203377232?accountid=14656>

The Entrepreneurial Mindset

[Entrepreneurial mindset](#) is a way of thinking that enables you to overcome challenges, be decisive, and accept responsibility for your outcomes. It is a constant need to improve your skills, learn from your mistakes, and take continuous action on your ideas. Anyone willing to do the work can develop an entrepreneurial mindset.

Having an entrepreneurial mindset doesn't mean you have to be your own boss or start your own business. It just means utilizing your creativity, experience and emotional intelligence to solve problems, learn quickly and spearhead new ideas.

Even if you don't have a burning idea that could change the world, don't see yourself as an entrepreneur, or prefer the stability of a regular paycheck, learning and harnessing the entrepreneurial mindset – 'passion for an idea, perseverance, resourcefulness, open-mindedness, and a 'sponge-like nature,' according to [Nathan Resnick](#), CEO of Sourcify – will still benefit you tremendously. In the face of the growing 'gig economy' and the unpredictable, highly changeable nature of business, everyone needs to develop an entrepreneurial mindset.

According to [Osborne](#), this mindset can be broken down into eight key parts: Recognizing opportunity – can you see ways to make things better?

- Risk tolerance – you may not be comfortable with risk at the onset, but to be successful, you must learn to tolerate it.
- Creativity and innovation – Can you apply creative thinking and use 'unconventional tools and approaches' in order to succeed?
- Future orientation – Are you future-focused and always thinking about what will come next?
- Flexibility and adaptability – Are you prepared to cope with change, obstacles or setbacks without getting derailed?
- Initiative and self-direction – how motivated are you to start and stick with an idea or project?
- Critical thinking and problem solving — are you good at thinking analytically and 'outside the box' to solve problems?
- Communication and collaboration – are you effective at sharing, communicating and working with others?

With e-commerce becoming increasingly popular, starting a new business may be something you have had on your mind for a long time. According to the [UBC Sauder School of Business](#), "entrepreneurship involves disruptive thinking and action. Entrepreneurial thinking and methods are relevant not only to the creation of new ventures, but also to helping grow or fundamentally change existing companies." While this guide is primarily focused on new employment opportunities in existing companies, we have included resources in the end of this guide with programs to support your business venture.

Tell Your Story

Essential to every successful encounter with a potential employer is the ability to clearly articulate who you are, what you care about, and what you know how to do. This doesn't come easily to everyone. It often takes critical reflection to understand your story and practice to build the confidence to tell it clearly. Telling your story gets easier with tools and practice. Storytelling tools are information you acquire, mindsets you bring, places you go, or opportunities available to you. You can tell your story in your resumes, interviews, social media, and in formal and informal interactions with mentors, acquaintances, potential employers and peers. You'll gain confidence when you practice sharing your story and connecting with others.

What key approaches can I take to tell my story with confidence?

Confidence is all about your approach and mindset – shifting how you think about and try new experiences, meet people, visit places, and learn tools that can open up unexpected possibilities.

- Remember: knowledge + practice = **confidence**.
- Move from “I don't know what I am good at” to “What COULD I be good at?” using **curiosity**. Curiosity is closely connected with creativity and innovation. Its power lies in generating new perspectives, developing your mind's ability to anticipate and understand new ideas, so keep an open mind and ask questions!
- Move from stuck to unstuck with a **bias to action**.² We get stuck when we don't know what to do next, are overwhelmed with too many options, or are uncertain about stepping into unfamiliar territory. Small steps, whether successful or not, generate momentum, which in turn encourages you to take further action, and to experiment and explore, all the while moving you closer to your goal.
- Move from “I am not good at networking” to “I am not good at networking yet” by using a **growth mindset**. Believing that your skills and abilities can be developed with effort can help you see a challenge as an opportunity for growth, rather than an obstacle. Keep in mind, too, that sometimes the process is as important as the outcome, and that failing can be as critical to learning and ultimately the acquirement of success, as you define it.
- Move from seeing failure as a reflection to a means of self-improvement through **resilience**. Resilience is your inner ‘rubber ball’ that helps you to bounce back when inevitable challenges set you back. Build your resilience by gathering more information on why a particular door didn't open for you with the goal of learning what you can do to improve your chances of it opening for you the next time you knock on it. Resilience sometimes involves visualizing an alternative path to success (as you define it), as well as reaching out support, guidance, and feedback.

Healthy mindsets take practice and strong support systems. They can be harder to achieve when someone is challenged by illness or disability, but can also be strengthened through these challenges. Think about who your key supports are and reach out to them in times of stress and challenge to help you thrive. A support system can be anything from family, to friends, to an advisor, etc.

²Burnett, W & Evans, D. J. (2016). *Designing your life: how to build a well-lived, joyful life*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf

Applied Learning Opportunity: Identifying Your Strengths

Knowing what you're good at will help you communicate your value to potential employers. **Using the space below, reflect on a time when you felt like you were “in the flow”** (in other words, when you had a good combination of motivation, energy and focus) **and then write down: Where were you? What were you doing? What does this experience tell you about what you are good at and/or what's important to you?** Upon completion, use these and other notes from the following exercises to develop your resume and cover letter.

Technical Skills	Professional Skills	Traits	Attitudes
Editing and proofreading	Communication	Work ethic	Positive
Writing and researching	Critical Thinking	Passionate	Enthusiastic
Report Writing	Problem Solving	Hardworking	Honest
	Collaboration	Dedicated	

Having a hard time figuring out what you're good at? Think about what people in your life rely on you for. Still not sure? Ask someone you trust how they would describe you.

Prefer using a tool that can help you come to the answer? Invest in the [StrengthsFinder](#)

Writing Job Applications

Large or busy employers may not have a lot of time to screen your resume in their first pass through job applications. [Ladders, Inc.](#) found that on average, recruiters take an average of 7.4 seconds in the initial screening of applicant's resume and cover letter. In this short time, they are looking for specific indicators related to fit and experience. In order to be successful, your job application needs to clearly demonstrate how your experience, education, and skills match what the employer is looking for. It is also recommended to ensure your documents have simple layouts with clearly marked sections for ease of reading. This is also why it's important to consider more active ways to expand your network as you search for a job.

For most jobs, you will need to submit at least a resume and cover letter. Here are a couple of simple things you can do to make these documents stand out.

- 1) Communicate your strengths and past successes, beginning with those that are most relevant to the position
- 2) Showcase a good fit with the employer that includes enthusiasm for the work they do and evidence that you have the skills they are looking for
- 3) Ensure your documents are clear, easy to read, error-free, and the formatting is consistent

Reading Job Descriptions

A successful job application starts with a careful reading of the job description. The job description should give you information about the employer's values and priorities, the skills and past experiences they are looking for and the duties of the role. You can use all of this information to help you tailor your application to the job description. It may also be worthwhile to look at the employers' website, their social media channels and the news to get an idea of their current priorities, recent successes and the way they live out their values. Showcasing that you have researched the employer will help you to stand out as a candidate with initiative and genuine interest in this employer and its success.



Applied Learning Opportunity: Matching Your Skills to the Employers' Needs

The table below is provided as a tool to use to help you think through what the employer is looking for and how your past experiences and skills connect. You may encounter employers looking for skills you feel you do not have. Try to think critically about what you have done in your past roles and be creative. Connections often exist, even though we don't see them at first.

They Want (List the key skills and experiences the employer is looking for)	I Have (Identify experiences you have had that can help you showcase the corresponding skill on the left-hand side of the chart)
e.g. Problem Solving	<i>Planned and carried out an event for the community with a small budget that helped showcase local youth talent through collection of donations from local businesses and support from dedicated volunteers.</i>

Want to make it to the interview stage? Ensure you tailor your applications to each job you apply for so that the employer understands what makes you a great candidate for this specific job. Some content might remain the same across your resumes but you'll want to highlight specific skills and organize your documents in strategic ways to maximize the time the employer spends reading your application. Always write a new cover letter focused on your fit for the particular role and the employer.

Developing Your Resume

In general, a resume can be 1 or 2 pages in length and should use standard margins. Maximize the space on the first page by ensuring your most relevant skills and experiences are easy to find. For this reason, we recommend using a section called “Highlights of Qualifications,” which is a bullet-form list of 5 or 6 key skills and experiences that help the employer get a quick overview of your qualifications for the job. This can be a great place to emphasize your values. It is possible, but not necessary to self-identify here as Indigenous, or, if you prefer, First Nations, Métis or Inuit.

With each new application you write, make sure the bullet points in your Highlights of Qualifications are connected to the qualifications noted in the job description. Add any experiences (paid or volunteer) that you think will help the employer understand what makes you a good fit for the role and organization or company. See students.ubc.ca/career for examples and more information and do research on sectors that interest you. Some sectors, such as technology, business and computer science, have standard practices that are specific to their fields. [Reddit](#) and [Glassdoor](#) are two great free online resources to get started with employer research.

Resume Dos and Don'ts

Do	Don't
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Include paid and volunteer experience• Highlight skills that match you to the position• Emphasize your accomplishments and/or areas of strengths• Add a url to your LinkedIn profile if you have one• Maximize the first page• Use bolding, italics and spacing to help organize your content in a pleasing way• Make headings interesting so they stand out (but keep them relevant)• If you have extra space, include hobbies that are related to the job or showcase skills that the employer will value. If you include them, be prepared to discuss them in your interview.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Include a picture of yourself• Provide any confidential information like your social insurance number, birthdate, or home address• Go over two pages in length• Reduce the size of your margins• Use more than two different font styles• Rely on graphics to communicate your skills unless you are applying for a design job• Include hobbies just for the sake of including them

It's okay to start by using a template but consider ways to make your documents unique and your name stand out.

This could include adding colour and other creative approaches to the layout but keep the intended employer in mind. For instance, if it's a more conservative employer, a simpler format is likely best. In all cases, however, your resume's format and design should complement the content not compete for attention.

Applied Learning Opportunity: Identifying Your Accomplishments

To take your resume to the next level make sure you express your accomplishments. The easiest way to do this is to create accomplishment statements that are included as bullet points underneath your past experiences. These statements describe your contributions to an organization, project or team by framing the results or outcomes of your efforts.

Results can be qualitative or quantitative and can even include things you have learned and feedback you have received. If possible, and when appropriate, use numbers strategically to help the reader understand the scope of your work.

To write an accomplishment statement, use this formula: **verb + task = result**.

Here are some examples:

- **Built relationships with local leadership and stakeholders by increasing the number of participants of the healthy eating campaign by 30%**
- **Planned, organized and executed a one-day event that connected community elders with healthcare practitioners providing support to alleviate physical and mental health concerns**

You can also invert the formula:

- **Successfully secured sponsorship for all major events by contacting potential sponsors in a professional manner via email, cold calling and in-person visits**



Notice in the last example that we get to see some details on how the person approached this task. Providing details shows a potential employer your understanding of and approach toward a task; however, you still need to be concise. Bullets on your resume should be no longer than two lines.

Exercise 1A: Reflect on one of your past experiences. Where did you excel? What did you do that you thought went particularly well? What impacts resulted from your activities? How did you approach your work? Jot down some notes in the space below.

Think about other unpaid or volunteer activities and responsibilities you participate in with your community. Do you organize cultural events such as feasts and ceremony? Do you tutor or volunteer with the youth in your community? These activities and others like them require skills and leadership competencies that can be highlighted in your application in order to outline the skills an employer is looking for. **Example: successfully created an organizing committee for a community cultural event, this included chairing bi-weekly meetings to ensure the event was delivered on time and within budget**

Exercise 1B: Write some of your own accomplishment statements using the formula: verb + task + result.

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RESUME WRITING TIP: When writing your highlights of qualifications, include a bullet for your languages and another for the technological tools that you are comfortable using (for example, Microsoft Office Suite, social media, any databases you have used, etc). If you are in a field that is focused on hard skills, you can use a separate section called “Technical Skills” where you highlight all the skills you’ve learned so far that apply to the role. This often looks like lab skills, computer language programs and data analysis tools. In this complex time, remote working is becoming very common. Familiarize yourself with tools like Skype for Business and Zoom and highlight your willingness and ability to productively work from home.

Writing Cover Letters

Your cover letter is the place where you go into more depth about your fit for the role. With this in mind, one of the most common errors people make is to try to say too much. Focus on describing **two key skills or experiences** and share about them in depth while drawing connections to the role you are interested in.

Try to **clearly describe how these skills and experiences have prepared you to succeed** in the new potential role. Your letter should be about 5 paragraphs and no longer than one page with standard margins. Start it off with a compelling statement that gets your reader excited to learn more about you.

Try to achieve these three things:

- A. Tell a story – Show you have the relevant skills and experience while also showcasing a bit of your personality and who you are. Avoid overly neutral language.
- B. Target & tailor – Look at the job description and use it to help write your cover letter (remember to focus on key skills & competencies that the employer has identified they are looking for in candidates)
- C. Focus – The focus of a cover letter is not on you and what you can gain from the role or company; the focus should be on how your skills and experience can benefit the employer and on what they will gain from having you in the role

Cover Letter Samples

Various sample cover letters and resumes can be found online at the Centre for Student Involvement and Careers [here](#).

Cover Letter Template

On the next page you will find a document that offers an example of a common structure of a cover letter. It walks you through what to include in each paragraph and showcases the formal letter structure. Use it to guide your own writing.

You can also view a fictional sample of a cover letter and resume for an Indigenous graduate at the following links:

[RESUME SAMPLE](#)

[COVER LETTER SAMPLE](#)

Note that the header of the applicant's cover letter matches her resume. This helps communicate your professionalism.

YOUR NAME

Your Phone

Your email

Date

HR Staff Name (if provided)

Company Name

Company Address

Re: (Job Title, including Job ID # when relevant)

Dear (Ms/Mr/First Name Smith) or (Hiring Manager),

Begin with a unique and memorable self-statement that immediately engages the reader. Then say something about the employer to convey your knowledge about them and your interest in working for them. Finish with a comment that highlights your skills, experience and/or interests that fit well with them or the position – your potential contribution to their goals.

Optional: Include a sentence in the first couple of paragraphs indicating your Indigenous community affiliation. Example of Self-ID: I self-identify as an Indigenous applicant and am a proud member of xxyy Nation/Band

Use this next paragraph to describe in detail your most relevant experience. Describe your role, your duties, the skills and methods you have used, how you worked on or led a team along with notable results, outcomes or applications of the work you did. Include adjectives that give a sense of your personal qualities and attributes.

Transition into a next paragraph and describe additional or more diverse experiences and skills you have to offer. Use this paragraph to give a larger sense of scope to your skills, interests, past experience and capabilities.

Close your letter with one more comment on your good “fit” for the position. Thank them for their consideration. End with a closure (e.g.): “I look forward to meeting with you in person.”

Sincerely,

Your Name

Applied Learning Opportunity: Capturing Your Audience's Attention

Practice writing an introductory statement for your cover letter. While this statement should be revised for each application, usually it expresses core strengths that you bring to any environment. Start by trying to fill in the blanks below, and then write something more unique afterward.

Exercise 1: Fill in the following blanks with your own details.

As a _____ with skills

in _____, _____, and

_____ I submit this application to your available role. The work of your

organization aligns closely with my value of _____ and interest in

_____.

Exercise 2: Try to write something from scratch. You can use the same skills, values and interests as above but try to frame the sentences differently. See which one you prefer.

Interviews: What to expect

An interview is an opportunity to exchange information with a potential employer, which may involve one or more people from the company/organization, where you expand upon the skills, interests, and qualifications you highlighted on your cover letter and resume by way of a conversation and more commonly through a question and answer format. Here you can learn more about the organization and the position to determine whether the job is in line with your personal goals and interests. And the employer uses this opportunity to determine factors such as skills and abilities, experience, company fit, personal qualities, and interests.

Keep in mind if you have gotten to this stage, be confident in the fact that you already have the basic skills and qualifications an employer is seeking – otherwise they would not be spending time interviewing you. Definitely use this first and perhaps only in-person opportunity to demonstrate your personal presentation skills and ability to tell your story in a different environment.

Interview Preparation Checklist

- **Research:** research the employer, common salary ranges for similar work in your area (check [glassdoor.ca](https://www.glassdoor.ca), [payscale.com](https://www.payscale.com), [salaryexpert.com](https://www.salaryexpert.com))
- **Dress:** dress one step above what you think you would wear on the job, e.g. If you think you should wear business-casual in the job, attend the interview in slightly more business-like attire.
- **Location:** allow extra transit time, arrive on site 10 minutes early. If Interview is virtual from home, test out the platform and ensure your software is working.
- **Anticipate:** interview formats, e.g. phone screen, group interview, 1-1, panel, and Q&A questions, conversation-style approach
- **Bring:** water, extra copies of your resume, something to take notes with
- **Memorize:** job description, easy-to-recall descriptions of your skills, experience and “fit” for the position, a “thank you” script
- **Prepare:** questions to ask the employer at the end of the interview. This is an opportunity for you to gather information that is not publicly available to help you decide if this is the right place for you to work. Asking thoughtful questions also shows that you have prepared and are taking the opportunity seriously. *E.g. after six months of working in this company/organization, what skills would you hope I would gain and be able to build upon?*

Types of Interview Questions

Behavioural-Based Questions: Employers ask these questions to help them gather evidence about how you have performed in the past. They use that information to predict how you will perform in the future. **They usually sound like,** *“Tell me about a time when...”*

See the applied learning opportunity on page 20 for more information about how to answer these questions.

Situational Questions: Employers ask these questions to help them understand how you would perform a common task in the role. **They usually sound like,** *“Imagine you are doing x duty and y happens. What would you do?”*

To prepare for these questions, plan in advance. Think about common experiences you would have in the role in order to predict what kind of situational questions you might be asked. When answering, include your rationale and try to highlight specific skills and values that you think the employer is looking for.

Out of the Box Questions: These questions assess your creativity and problem solving. Try to show your personality while talking through your rationale. There is no right or wrong answer.

E.g. if you were an animal, what animal would you be?

E.g. If you have a bus full of tennis balls how would you determine how many balls are inside?

Technical Questions: An employer may ask you how you would perform a specific task that is common to the role. They may also have you perform an activity that showcases your abilities in a technical skill.

Other Common Interview Questions worth preparing for:

Why are you interested in this position?
What do you know about our organization/
company?

What is your greatest strength/weakness?
What are your long-term/short-term goals?

Video conference interviews will be common right now. Get comfortable using tools like Zoom and Skype. When you set yourself up for an interview by video chat, make sure your background is appropriate and find a space where the lighting and background sound work well. Be careful not to get distracted by the video of yourself or to be overly focused on watching other people’s videos, as this will make you look away from your own camera. It’s important to look directly at your camera in order give the person(s) on the other end a chance to make “eye-contact” with you. When possible, avoid using headphones (ear buds are okay).

Applied Learning Opportunity: Introducing yourself

Employers often begin an interview by asking you to say something about yourself. Plan out a compelling introduction using the PAWS formula. Keep it to about 2 minutes.

Personal: Share who you are and why you're interested in this position

Academic: Communicate your academic interests and how your education/training relates to the position

Work: Touch briefly on how your previous work or volunteer experiences have prepared you for the role

Skills: Consider emphasizing one or two key skills that are particularly important for this position.

Try it yourself! Consider a job or employer you are interested in working with and frame these attributes in an introduction that emphasizes why you are a good fit for the available role. Write them down and say them out aloud (it may be good not to hear yourself saying them for the first time during an actual interview).

P -

A -

W -

S -

Applied Learning Opportunity: Answering Behavioural-based Questions

These questions require you to tell a “story” from your past experience to demonstrate how you handled a particular situation. Employers ask these questions to assess how you might act in similar situations in the future. Prepare stories in advance of your interview to ensure your responses highlight the skills the employer is looking for. Here are some examples of common behavior-based questions:

Q: Describe a time you made a difficult decision in the absence of your supervisor? (Judgment, Independence, Decision-making)

Q: Tell me about a time you had to work as part of a team. What was your role in the team? What did you do to ensure that the group functioned effectively? (Teamwork, Leadership)

Answer behavioural-based questions by using the STARR formula:

Situation: Background on the scenario, with enough detail for the interviewer to imagine the scenario in his or her mind and understand that the event did actually occur

Task: The task you had to complete or the problem you faced

Action: The steps you took to deal with the task or problem

Result: The impact of your work. Was the problem solved? How did others react? What feedback did you get from your supervisor? What did you learn or accomplish?

Relevance: How the skills you showed or gained from the experience relates to the position you’re applying for

Let’s Practice! Using the STARR formula, craft a story below in response to the question: **Tell me about a time you had to work as part of a team. What was your role in the team? What did you do to ensure that the group functioned effectively?**

S-

T-

A-

R-

R-

Self-Identification

Employers who are seeking out Indigenous applicants for their open positions will often indicate this in the job posting and ask applicants to self-identify. Some organizations even have a hiring policy where they can move Indigenous applications to the top of the pile for consideration. On the other hand, many places (including UBC) may ask for knowledge about Indigenous peoples, history and current context, as a way to seek information without asking people to self-identify. If you see a line like that in a job posting you can, if you choose, speak to that experience without self-identifying.

In any case, it is up to you to ensure the employer has the information necessary to consider you under their hiring policy. In order to ensure your application is properly considered, it is often important to self-identify in your application, which most commonly takes place in your cover letter.

At the end of the day, the decision is yours. You do not have to disclose this aspect of your identity if, for any reason, you do not want to. In the chart below, you will find some suggestions for what to think about as you consider your options. We also recommend you connect with important people in your life to help you think this through.

Examples of statements in job postings

Eg. 1. *The First Nations Health Authority is committed to respecting diversity within our workforce; preference will be given to individuals with Indigenous ancestry (First Nations, Inuit, Métis).*

Eg. 2. *Equity and diversity are essential to academic excellence. An open and diverse community fosters the inclusion of voices that have been underrepresented or discouraged. We encourage applications from members of groups that have been marginalized on any grounds enumerated under the B.C. Human Rights Code, including sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, racialization, disability, political belief, religion, marital or family status, age, and/or status as a First Nation, Metis, Inuit, or Indigenous person.*

	On an online application form	In your resume or cover letter	At the interview
Possible Impacts of Self-Identifying	If the employer is committed to hiring Indigenous candidates, this may help the computer system flag your application for the employer to prioritize.	If the employer is committed to hiring Indigenous candidates and does not have a computer assisted application review process, this will be their first opportunity to see that you align with this value. Suggestion: self-disclose in the cover letter.	If the employer is interested in hiring an Indigenous candidate this may help you stand out against others being interviewed.
Questions to consider	Is the employer actively seeking to hire Indigenous candidates? Are you ok with your identity being tracked to assess employment equity statistics?	Is the employer actively seeking to hire Indigenous candidates? Are there ways that your Indigenous identity can be a strength in the role?	Do you have stories you want to share that are related to your Indigenous identity? For example, about roles or experiences you have had in your home community?

Job Offers

Here are a few things to keep in mind when you receive a job offer:

1. Make sure you get a contract or offer in writing
2. Your contract should include the number of hours of work expected, the salary, duration of employment, and information about entitled benefits (including vacation time and information about sick days)
3. Before accepting a job offer it can be worthwhile to research common rates for similar work and negotiate the salary. Use free tools like [Glassdoor](#) and [Payscale](#) to learn more about the rates of similar positions in your area.
4. If you are moving in order to take the position consider asking for a relocation package. Moving is expensive and this can help offset the costs.
5. Follow instructions in your job offer. There may be tasks you need to complete before your first day (e.g. filling out paperwork, signing up for benefits)

Getting Started on the Job

Starting a new job can be both exciting and nerve racking. Here are some tips to help settle your nerves and ensure you make a great first impression.

1. After accepting the position, ask your new employer if there is documentation or training you need to complete before your first day.
2. If your employer has not given you information about the length of your day, if there is a refrigerator on site to store your lunch, or other things that will help you feel settled, feel free to ask.
3. Excellent communication, independence and a proactive attitude help you to stand out in your first days and weeks on the job. Have open conversations with your supervisor about how and when they prefer you interrupt them when you have a question and do what you can to maximize the time that you do have with them. For example, if you have a few questions that aren't urgent and know you will meet with them later in the day, consider waiting to ask those questions until you meet.
4. When possible, observe your coworkers behaviours and lean on them when it seems appropriate. This can help you build collegial relationships and ensure you are not concerning your manager with items that can be addressed by other means. A great example of this would be to seek help about a technical or computer related challenge from a coworker first.

Planning for the Longer Term

The global response to the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in dramatic shifts to the economy and to our ways of working. During this precarious time, you might find yourself taking on work that isn't quite in line with what you'd hoped to be doing. It might be that you need to prioritize family or that you are restricted to remaining in a specific location and working remotely. It's a complex time with employment opportunities shifting significantly to adapt to this global experience.

If you find yourself longing for things to be different than they are, channel that energy into setting yourself up for more opportunities in the future. This section is all about using spare time you might have now to set yourself on a path towards meaningful work in the longer term. In it you'll learn about important career planning steps that are often under considered and overlooked but can lead to significant improvement in career satisfaction.

Career Planning

Good career planning comes when we pay attention to who we are and what we value, while making use of the opportunities, communities, and tools available to us. It requires knowledge about the world around us and an awareness of where our strengths, skills and interests align with what the world is looking for.

In order to look forward, it can be worthwhile to look back at your experiences to date and use them to set a compass for your next steps.

Applied Learning Opportunity: Looking Ahead

Choose a few of the questions below and try a 10-minute free write activity or do some doodling – whatever works for you! Once you've jotted down some thoughts, share them with someone you trust. You might be surprised by how unique your view and needs are.

- What did you like most and least about your area of study?
- When have you felt energized? What about de-energized?
- Who do you want to include in your decision-making process? What role do you want them to have?
- What else is important to you to think about? Location?
- Where do you see yourself working? Private Sector? Public Service? Community/Nation? Indigenous Organizations?
- What skills have you been developing that you are excited to try out?
- What else is important to you to think about? Location? Commute?

Find space to write on the next page!

Applied Learning Opportunity: Looking Ahead

Research Potential Employers

Career navigation requires exploring what's out there - what opportunities exist and which employers are hiring? Start with one or more research questions, then develop an approach to find answers. You'll probably benefit from more passive research practices like internet research and more active research practices like informational interviews. Think back to the career compass questions we asked you above. Keep these in mind as you grow your knowledge about the world of work.

Applied Learning Opportunity: Identifying Your Research Strategies

Exercise 1A: What current questions do you have about your career? Brainstorm in the space below.

Exercise 1B: Get started finding answers to those questions by identifying some passive strategies. Take it to the next level by pursuing some more active approaches. **What strategies will you try?**

Passive Strategies	Make it active!
Check out top Canadian Employers on Eluta: https://www.eluta.ca/search_top_employers	Reach out to HR departments, share your resume and ask if they have advice for recent graduates looking to break into the field. If you do so, make sure you let them know what makes you excited to work for them. If you don't they may think you are spam emailing all companies and ignore your email.
Use LinkedIn's alumni tool to explore employee profiles for companies that interest you.	Identify 3 people to reach out to for an informational interview. Send them a message with a brief introduction and let them know why you'd like to talk to them. Request a telephone conversation.
Gather labour market data for industries in BC through WorkBC https://www.workbc.ca/Labour-Market-Industry/Labour-Market-Outlook.aspx	Share your learning with your important influencers, ask them what they think you should take away from this data and if they have suggestions for industries that would be a good fit for you.
Research requirements for specific positions through Career Cruising https://public.careercruising.com/en/ Login: UBC Password: careers	Once you've found a couple of jobs that you think are interesting, explore professional associations relevant to that work. Are there any online events taking place that you could join in on in order to learn more or meet people in the field?

Learn About the World of Work

Even before the Covid-19 pandemic, the 21st century has dramatically changed the how, when, and where of professional workplaces. Here are the top things you need to know about how work and workplaces are evolving.

3 C's rule for workplace culture. Communication, collaboration and connectivity skills are of increasing importance in successfully navigating workplaces.

Big data and 'human' skills are trending. Analytical skills such as identifying patterns, interpreting data, and making unexpected connections, and human skills such as creativity, initiative, critical thinking, emotional intelligence, and leadership and social influence, are in demand skills from today's employers across all industries.

Technology is setting the pace. New digital tools – specifically high-speed mobile internet, artificial intelligence, widespread adoption of big analytics, and cloud technology (WEF, 2018) – are changing what, when, how and why we communicate, placing an emphasis on digital literacy skills of those entering the workforce.

A freelance economy. The gig economy continues to rise, transforming careers into short-term contracts with different employers. Gig workers develop highly specialized skills as they move from gig to gig.

To learn more about the world of work in BC spend some time on [WorkBC's website](#). They have extensive data and statistics about unemployment rates in various industries and top employable categories in each region of BC. If you are interested in leaving BC see if you can find similar resources for the areas that interest you.

Practice Telling Your Story

How does my story match what employers are looking for?

Across private and public, small and large organizations from all over the globe, employers are looking to hire employees who will be successful, make positive contributions to workplaces, and help advance their organization's mission and vision. What have you done that is an example or evidence of these skills? Think back to your course work, extra-curricular roles, and part time or summer jobs. It all counts.

Here are some examples of highly employable skills from [LinkedIn Learning](#):

- o [Working effectively in teams](#)
- o [Problem-solving](#)
- o [Oral communication](#)
- o [Digital literacy](#)
- o [Critical thinking](#)
- o [Creativity](#)
- o [Resiliency](#)
- o [Leadership and social influence](#)
- o [Emotional intelligence](#)
- o [Ethical judgement and decision making](#)

Learn from Others' Experiences

You can learn a lot by exploring the stories of others. For example, you can learn

What is out there - There are new roles, companies, and approaches to work emerging all the time. Individuals that are in the industry have the most informed insights.

Where current opportunities exist - Learn about the industry/field you're interested in – what are the trends? Who are the experts? Who has funding? Look up an organizations' online profiles to get an understanding of their focus and vision. This knowledge is your gateway to the hidden job market.

What you need to succeed - Identify what skills, knowledge, and attitudes help people succeed in this industry/field.

How do I find people to meet?

LinkedIn, the UBC Hub of 10,000 coffees, and industry specific professional associations can help you find the people and places you want to learn more about.

Check out the Indigenous Professional Association of Canada (IPAC) Group on UBC's Hub on 10,000 Coffees

Who can you reach out to that you already know?

Who else might be helpful to talk to? Are there people in professions of interest to you that have experiences you'd like to learn from?

Know Your Rights

As you embark on your career journey, it's important that you understand your rights and are familiar with the legal policies in place that protect you as a citizen, employee, and throughout the recruitment and hiring process. Below we've included general information on Canadian laws and legal bodies that protect equity-seeking groups. Verify which types of anti-discrimination labour legislation/laws exist in your region or the jurisdiction where you are pursuing work, as legal protections can vary substantially.

National and Provincial Policies

In Canada, there are several legal entities that protect individuals from discrimination. The Canadian Human Rights Act currently provides human rights protections for individuals based on the following grounds: race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, family status, genetic characteristics, disability or conviction for an offence for which a pardon has been granted or in respect of which a record suspension has been ordered.

Each province in Canada has a Human Rights Code which provides legal protections to protected groups. In British Columbia, for example, the BC Human Rights Code establishes legal protections to employees and individuals seeking employment to be free from discrimination and harassment in all areas of recruitment, hiring, and employment, including discrimination based on race, colour, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, disability, creed, and age.

Employers' Obligations

The Employment Equity Act requires employers to establish equality within their organizations by ensuring representation from women, Aboriginal peoples, persons with disabilities, and members of visible minorities.

Additionally, each province in Canada has employment standards, laws, and labour codes that set out minimum standards for working conditions and wages. British Columbia's Employment Standards Act is one such example.

Typically, organizations will have policies in place that prohibit discrimination on the basis of protected grounds listed in its provincial Human Rights Codes. If an organization does not have policies in place, all workers are protected from workplace discrimination on the basis of prohibited grounds under the governing Human Rights Codes enacted in their province.

For more information visit [The Canadian Human Rights Commissions' Employer Obligations webpage](#).

Unionized Positions

Unionized positions will also be bound by collective agreements which set out workplace-specific working conditions, duties, wages, and other working terms. In these cases, collective agreements are bargained for between a trade union representing employees and the employer. Employment standards, labour codes, and collective agreements are designed to ensure employees receive fair treatment for their work, and establish guidelines for employers to ensure a fair working environment.

Illegal Interview Questions

Under the *Employment Standards Act of BC*, questions asked during the recruitment process pertaining to age, race, ancestry, religion, colour, sex, gender identity, marital status, physical/mental disability, place of origin, political beliefs, family status, and sexual orientation are illegal. All hiring decisions must be made on the basis of skills and qualifications related to the position.

During the recruitment phase, if an employer or hiring manager asks you a question about your Indigenous identity or a question related to a protected ground (e.g., your marital status, age, religion, etc.), get curious. Consider asking the employer what they hope to know about your candidacy as it relates to your strengths and the skills you bring to the position. Connect with a coach or advisor if you have questions to help you navigate these situations.

Find more resources related to your job search and career exploration in the following pages

Resources Related to Your Rights as an Employee and Job Applicant

Guide to the Employment Standards Act
<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/employment-business/employment-standards-advice/employment-standards>

Bullying and Harassment
www.worksafebc.com/en/health-safety/hazards-exposures/bullying-harassment

WorkBC.ca Call Centre
www.workbc.ca/Contact-Us.aspx

BC Human Rights Tribunal
www.bchrt.bc.ca/

Additional Resources

The following resources provide additional information on what this workbook has covered and much more. Refer to them for further details on career planning, resume building, interview skills, networking, job leads, and related opportunities. They are offered with your success in mind.

Skill Development and Training:

First Nations Public Service Secretariat

Access to webinars, and other training opportunities for skills to work in First Nations governments and community administration

Indigenous Works Conference

An annual conference focused on growing the Indigenous economy, talent, innovation and partnerships.

Indigenous Skills and Employment Training Strategy (ISETS)

The Indigenous Skills and Employment Training (ISET) Program is designed to help Indigenous people improve their skills and find employment.

See WorkBC for [more](#).

Employment Opportunities and Internships

ACCESS Skills and Training (Aboriginal Community Career Employment Services Society):

ACCESS offers education, training, counselling, support and financial services designed to help members of the urban Aboriginal community overcome barriers that may stand in the way of success and self-sufficiency. They develop partnerships with organizations and companies that match their needs to the needs of their Aboriginal clients.

Indigenous Internship Leadership Program

Ongoing recruitment. To be eligible to apply for an internship through this initiative, internship candidates must:

- Be 35 years or younger at the start of employment
- Graduated / graduating from a trades / technical program, diploma, degree or higher level of education program from a recognized post-secondary institution
- Self-identify as Indigenous
- Be a BC resident
- Hold a valid Social Insurance Number and be able to work for a period of two years

Indigenous Youth Internship Program

Recruitment in April-May each year.

To be eligible to apply for an internship, candidates must:

- Be Indigenous (First Nations status or non-status, Métis, Inuit).
- Be 29 years of age or under as of Sept 5, 2020.
- Reside in B.C.
- Have your Grade 12 education (you must possess your GED or Dogwood at the time of application) and some post-secondary education, or an equivalent combination of education and work/life experience.
- Demonstrate leadership potential through your work or volunteer experience.
- Have knowledge of Indigenous governments and organizations, such as First Nations Band Councils, BC Assembly of First Nations, First Nations Summit, Union of BC Indian Chiefs, Métis Nation BC, or other provincial and urban organizations, such as the BC Association of Friendship Centres, youth councils, or associations.

First Nations Health Authority (FNHA)

BC Indigenous Health Job Board

First Nations Technology Council

Spirit Staffing and Consulting

Vancouver Aboriginal Child and Family Services Society (VACFSS)

Apprentice Job Match

Industry Training Authority (ITA) Trade Programs

Industry Training Authority (ITA) Youth Programs

Aboriginal Business Mentorship Program

B.C. Government Job Postings – Indigenous Applicant Advisor

The Indigenous Applicant Advisory Service is available to Indigenous applicants (First Nation status or non-status, Métis or Inuit) seeking to work in the BC Public Service. The Indigenous Applicant Advisory Service includes advice on: the hiring process, resumes, cover letters, questionnaires, oral interview preparation.

The Indigenous Applicant Advisor can be reached by e-mail: IndigenousApplicants@gov.bc.ca or by phone: 778-676-3546.

Federal Public Service Indigenous Applicant Inventories:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-service-commission/jobs/services/gc-jobs/jobs-indigenous-people.html>

Job Search Resources

Find your WorkBC Employment Services Centre
www.workbc.ca/WorkBCCentres

First Nations Jobs Online www.firstnationsjobsonline.com/

BCjobs www.bcjobs.ca/

Careers.Indigenous.Link <https://careers.indigenous.link/>

For the following resources, consider using the search function and searching the terms “Indigenous”, “First Nations”, “Métis”, “Inuit” or “Aboriginal”.

Monster.ca - www.monster.ca/

Indeed – www.indeed.ca

Workopolis – Aboriginal www.workopolis.com/jobsearch/aboriginal-jobs

NationTalk – Jobs <http://nationtalk.ca/jobs>

CivicJobs www.civicjobs.ca/index

Charity Village <https://charityvillage.com/app>

Career Exploration Resources

Indigenous Careers www.indigenouscareers.org/

Business Development Council Entrepreneurial Potential Self-assessment
<https://www.bdc.ca/en/articles-tools/entrepreneur-toolkit/business-assessments/pages/self-assessment-test-your-entrepreneurial-potential.aspx>

First Nations Health Authority Health Careers Guidebook
www.fnha.ca/what-we-do/health-humanresources/health-careers-guidebook

Community Futures British Columbia www.communityfutures.ca/

Canadian Centre for Aboriginal Entrepreneurship <http://ccae.ca/> Aboriginal Tourism BC
www.indigenousbc.com/

Career Journeys First Nations Career Role Model Program www.fnesc.ca/careerjourneys/

Indigenous Peoples in Trades www.itabc.ca/indigenous-peoples-trades/overview

WorkBC.ca/Indigenous www.workbc.ca/indigenous

Labour Market Outlook Resources

WorkBC Labour Market Information: www.workbc.ca/economy

WorkBC Regional Profiles: www.workbc.ca/regional

BC Indigenous Economic Development: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/indigenous-people/economic-development>

WorkBC.ca's High Demand Occupations: www.workbc.ca/highdemandjobs

Entrepreneurship and Self-Employment

Aboriginal Business and Entrepreneurship Skills Training (BEST): www.ccae.ca/aboriginal-best

BEST benefits people in all stages of business development who want to turn their dreams into reality. Some people are looking for a part-time business opportunity, others have a solid idea to research, and some are eager to write a plan that will help them launch or grow their venture.

UBC Entrepreneurship: <https://www.start.entrepreneurship.ubc.ca/>

Indigenous Business Advisory Centres
<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/indigenous-people/economic-development/business-advisory-centres>

Business Development Canada: www.bdc.ca/en/pages/home.aspx

Aboriginal Business www.ccab.com/tfab/

Indigenous Business and Investment Council: www.bcibic.ca/