

An Educator's Guide

CAREER DEVELOPMENT COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK

*Career development can help
“reduce high school drop-out rates,
increase student academic achievement, . . .
provide more motivated and intentional learners,
reduce demand for social programs and improve the standard of
living in urban and rural communities.”¹*

Youth stress levels are on the rise and, when asked why, a majority of young adults attribute that stress to uncertain and precarious career futures.² As educators, you are in a unique position to support your students' lifelong career development. Educators report that doing so leaves students feeling confident, prepared and equipped for their transitions into high school, post-secondary and beyond. Career education works and the good news is that supporting your students' career development doesn't need to add to your workload.

The career development competencies introduced in this guide support individuals to be successful in life, work and learning. Chances are you are already building these competencies through everyday classroom experiences; the Framework can help you to name the competencies, acknowledge your students' mastery of them, help students to strengthen their competence and celebrate their successes. Through awareness and ongoing evaluation of developing competencies you are contributing to building a solid foundation for students' current and future success.

Career development can look quite different for educators working with early years, middle/high school or post-secondary students. This guide will help you to identify age-appropriate strategies that will ensure that your students are well prepared for the next step on their career development journey.

Meet Julia

Julia is 7 years old. She enjoys quietly reading and drawing but tends to be quiet in groups, preferring to work on her own or with just one or two others. Her parents are proud that she has learned to speak English so well at school; at home, they have focussed on raising Julia to be fluently bilingual and continue to speak their own language with her.



Julia's teacher, Mrs. Hans, tries to create classroom activities where all students can succeed. She has created quiet spaces where children like Julia can reflect and re-energize and has managed to re-purpose another part of the classroom for students who prefer to talk through their work together. Mrs. Hans engages her students in activities that help them to become more self-aware and to make good decisions about how to solve problems. This year, she has focussed on helping them to become more aware of each other in a group, respecting each other's space and also checking in with others to see if someone needs help.

¹ Future in Focus (p. 2, <http://camef-camef.ca/images/eng/pdf/Future%20in%20Focus%20Framework%20English-FINAL.pdf>; citations removed)

² Sun Life Canadian Health Index™ (https://cdn.sunlife.com/static/ca/Learn%20and%20Plan/Market%20insights/Canadian%20Health%20index/Canadian_Health_Index_2012_en.pdf)

Framework at a Glance

This framework includes competencies that help navigate and propel learning, work and transitions across the lifespan. The framework is clustered into three categories: thinking, connecting and managing. Together, these competencies contribute to an individual's lifelong career development (i.e., capacity to know oneself, be aware of educational and labour market opportunities, make informed decisions, access and maintain work, balance life roles and resiliently manage transitions and unexpected events). Although these are all individual competencies, recognize that they are developed and nurtured in context, through partnerships with educators, employers, and parents.

Each of these competencies is described in more detail in the Appendix and in targeted toolkits. The toolkits (for high school students, post-secondary students, and workers/work seekers) include prompts for self-assessment, reflection and planning.



Thinking

This cluster of competencies relates to how you engage in self-reflection, think, make decisions and come up with creative approaches to solving problems.

This includes:

- Self-awareness
- Problem solving
- Creativity & innovation
- Entrepreneurial mindset
- Critical thinking
- Decision making

Connecting

This cluster of competencies supports relationships with others.

This includes:

- Social awareness
- Social support
- Communication
- Collaboration
- Global citizenship

Managing

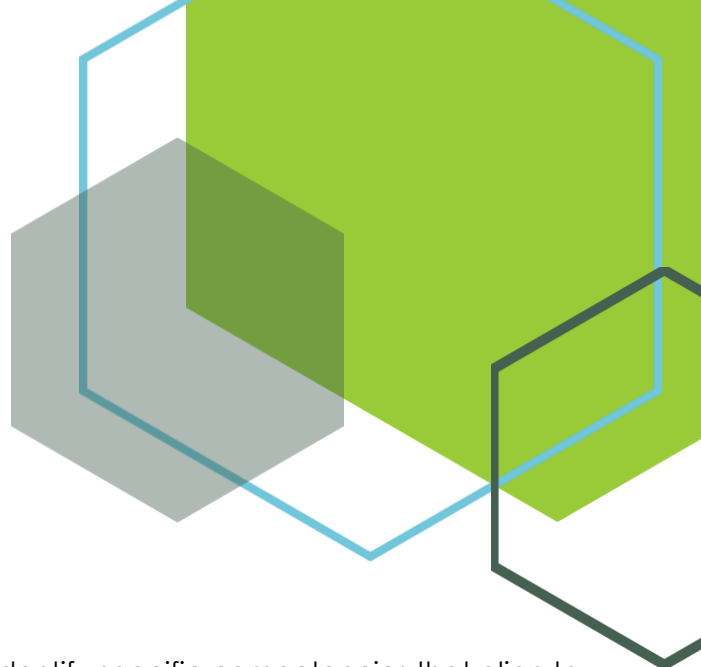
This cluster of competencies relates to how you take responsibility for your thoughts, feelings and behaviours to maintain health and wellbeing and how you navigate school, work and other life responsibilities.

This includes:

- Self-management
- Wellness
- Lifelong learning
- Career transition
- Work ethic
- Financial literacy
- Technological fluency

Tips & Strategies

The following tips and strategies will help you to support your students in building the competencies they need to make successful school-to-school and school-to-work transitions. Each subsequent section builds on work begun earlier – to avoid redundancy, tips have not been repeated.



Getting Started

- Use the career development competency framework to identify specific competencies that align to the learning outcomes for your course/program
- Recognize how existing curriculum and classroom practices already strengthen your students' relevant competencies
- Modify existing lessons or develop new ones to competently address gaps
- Use/adapt the appropriate *Competencies for Living, Learning and Working Well* toolkit
- Help students assess their competencies in an age-appropriate way
- Provide opportunities for students to recognize and strengthen the competencies they demonstrate
- Embrace experiential learning strategies to provide hands-on opportunities at all levels of education
- Keep in mind – the framework and toolkit were not designed to complete in one sitting; rather, focus on relevant competencies one at a time
- Competency development is lifelong; encourage students to use the framework and toolkit to assess new competency needs and to track changes over time

Primary

- Introduce young students to positive role models from diverse backgrounds
- Help students to recognize and strengthen competencies in themselves and in others
- Notice whether your lessons and resources represent diversity within a variety of work/life roles
- Draw links between students' current interests and future opportunities, enhancing self-awareness
- Encourage students to make contributions outside the classroom within families, communities or globally

Elementary

- Provide opportunities for students to develop and foster relationships with diverse, positive role models
- Support students to self-identify areas of strengths and opportunities for growth
- Provide opportunities for students to solve problems, make decisions and think creatively and critically
- Develop communication competencies through opportunities to read, write, listen, speak and view other ways of representing

Middle, Junior High and Intermediate

- Adopt a strengths-based approach that identifies, tracks and develops competencies
- Prompt self-awareness through discussions about values, interests, personal style and skills
- Facilitate projects that develop creativity, problem-solving, collaboration and social awareness
- Provide opportunities to develop technological skills and safe social media habits

Senior High

- Help your students to deepen their self and social awareness through reflective assignments
- Make links explicit between a good work ethic at school and what employers value
- Refer students to *Competencies for Living, Learning and Working Well: Toolkit for High School Students*

Post-Secondary

- Provide opportunities for students to develop their communication skills and to engage in creative/innovative projects, critical thinking, problem solving and decision making
- Facilitate opportunities, through experiential activities and assignments, for students to enhance their understanding of their roles as global citizens
- Through reflective and experiential activities, encourage students to value self-management, lifelong learning and wellness
- Be aware of, and consult with, the career services on campus or online (e.g., counselling, academic advising, resumé workshops, job postings); refer students as necessary

Julia

Julia continued to remain relatively quiet and independent in the classroom, but she always had a few close friends in class. In high school, her Art teacher, Mr. Fitz, offered a classroom collaboration project with the English class running during the same block. The students partnered up to write and illustrate a children's novel. Through this project, Mr. Fitz hoped to develop the students' competencies in creativity and innovation, collaboration, communication, and technological fluency.

Julia was partnered with Omar. The two developed a book about a young child who was very quiet, observant, and curious about the world around her. The book was a hit in the school and community. Together, Julia and Omar arranged for self-publishing and set up a website to sell the book, with profits going to new immigrant families. Mr. Fitz recognized that his project had also developed Julia and Omar's entrepreneurial mindset, decision-making and global citizenship competencies. He was thrilled with the outcome and promoted the book throughout his own network.



Notes

Appendix: Career Development Competency Framework

Thinking

This cluster of competencies relates to how you engage in self-reflection, think, make decisions and develop creative approaches to solving problems.

Self-Awareness

Recognize and articulate personal strengths, limitations, goals, biases and emotions and assess personal readiness for responsibilities and challenges in diverse life roles.

Performance Indicators:

- Engage in realistic self-appraisal: know what you're good at, care about and like to do; and know your limitations
- Be confident and positive about your identity
- Identify the skills, interests, talents and attitudes that you develop through diverse life/work/learning experiences
- Envision yourself in the future and take responsibility for getting there
- Describe necessary education/training and/or other experiences to prepare for your preferred future
- Invite, evaluate, reflect upon, and, when appropriate, integrate feedback from multiple sources
- Initiate discussions with others to expand your thinking on your preferred future
- Recognize the interconnectedness of your personal identity, life roles and community
- Confront your personal biases, recognizing their impact on self and others
- Recognize how your feelings, thoughts and actions influence each other
- Recognize when you are not ready for work, school or additional responsibilities

Problem Solving

Use a range of sources to gather, evaluate, organize and effectively use information to solve problems.

Performance Indicators:

- Understand that problems may be simple or complex
- Determine the specific problem that you need to solve
- Explore and integrate various sources of information (e.g., people, online, your past experience) to identify possible solutions, taking into consideration multiple perspectives
- Analyze information to assess its credibility and accuracy
- Examine the pros, cons, ethics and impact on others of potential solutions
- Try out solutions; reflect on how they work and how your approach might be improved next time
- Apply learning from one situation to other situations

Creativity and Innovation

Actively engage in, and demonstrate openness to and respect for imaginative, creative and innovative approaches.

Performance Indicators:

- Understand what it means to be creative and innovative
- Use your imagination and curiosity to look for new ways to think, do things and tackle problems
- Stretch beyond your comfort zone in imagining what's possible
- Persist through challenges and learn from mistakes
- Critically reflect on and refine creative and innovative works and processes

Entrepreneurial Mindset

Embrace the qualities of an entrepreneurial mindset in learning, work and life.

Performance Indicators:

- Recognize that an entrepreneurial mindset involves embracing change, being resilient and demonstrating grit
- Find ways to incorporate an entrepreneurial mindset into your learning, work and life
- Take calculated risks, validating ideas and accepting constructive feedback
- Reflect on, and learn from, successes, mistakes and failures

Critical Thinking

Think clearly and rationally about what to do and what to believe.

Performance Indicators:

- Reflect on your beliefs and values, and how they shape how you think and reason
- Analyze information to assess its credibility and accuracy
- Understand logical connections between ideas, information and arguments
- Recognize that various points of view may or may not be valid
- Ask questions that clarify various points of view
- Detect inconsistencies and common mistakes in reasoning
- Evaluate evidence, arguments, claims and beliefs
- Draw conclusions based on thorough analysis

Decision Making

Make decisions, evaluate outcomes, be accountable for choices and reflect on how personal priorities, beliefs and culture influence decisions.

Performance Indicators:

- Examine how you make decisions
- Understand ethical considerations when making decisions
- Recognize the influence of personal qualities, culture and context in making informed career, life and educational decisions
- Make an informed decision by evaluating ideas, solutions and opportunities
- Take responsibility for your actions and decisions
- Reflect on and refine your own decision-making process

Connecting

This cluster of competencies supports relationships with others.

Social Awareness

Demonstrate interactions with others that show respect for, openness to and appreciation of diversity.

Performance Indicators:

- Demonstrate acceptance of and respect for diverse ways of thinking and being
- Show understanding of, and empathy for, others
- Understand and value Indigenous traditions and knowledge, including the belief in the interconnectedness of everything
- Understand, value and take pride in the contributions of diverse cultural, ethnic and linguistic groups, including your own, to Canada
- Understand how culture, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, ability, language, national origin, race, ethnicity and religion affect personal identity and influence lives and opportunities
- Recognize that privilege, prejudice and oppression are widespread and damaging
- Promote and demonstrate fairness, social justice, human rights, equity and respect for all

Social Support

Establish, maintain and call upon healthy supportive relationships as needed.

Performance Indicators:

- Establish, maintain and nurture a supportive network of healthy relationships
- Seek support from others (e.g., friends, family, Elders, teachers, role models, mentors, coaches)
- Support others' learning by being a positive and encouraging role model, mentor, coach or tutor
- Identify and seek appropriate support to address harassment, bullying and mistreatment in all its forms
- Take appropriate steps to support others who are struggling with physical, emotional, mental, environmental, social and/or spiritual challenges

Communication

Demonstrate effective and positive communication and social skills.

Performance Indicators:

- Recognize non-verbal communication cues in yourself and others, including tone of voice, facial expressions, posture and use of hands
- Respectfully consider the ideas, thoughts and feelings of others through listening, reading, and viewing
- Know and ask for what you want in a reasonable and specific way
- Clearly express your ideas, thoughts and feelings through speaking, listening, writing, reading, viewing and other ways of representing
- Communicate clearly and confidently in public
- Recognize and respect that there are many languages used in Canada
- Continuously improve and refine English and/or French language skills
- Communicate respectfully and effectively across linguistic and cultural differences
- Recognize the advantages of being multi-lingual, continuing to practice languages to stay fluent
- Communicate using different forms of media
- Tailor communication, considering your purpose and audience
- Recognize that accepted terminology shifts over time

Collaboration

Embrace the benefits of working together, resolve conflicts, accept personal responsibility for your own behaviour and, respecting diversity, negotiate acceptable compromises and solutions.

Performance Indicators:

- Interact respectfully and purposefully with others, as part of a team/group in formal and informal environments
- Clearly share your own beliefs and values while respecting and appreciating those that differ
- Celebrate the benefits of working with others, recognizing the value of collaboration
- Understand and respect others' needs
- Recognize privilege and challenge discriminatory behaviour in self and others
- Compromise in working towards common goals
- Constructively negotiate and resolve conflicts with others, acknowledging and addressing biases
- Be prepared to reassess your position based on new information and/or the input of others
- Engage in collaboration using a variety of media/tools

Global Citizenship

Actively participate in and contribute to local, regional, national and/or international initiatives.

Performance Indicators:

- Volunteer, participate in and contribute to community-building activities and projects, locally, regionally, nationally and/or internationally
- Take environmental and social responsibility to make your learning or work environments, community and the world better
- Recognize the political, environmental, economic and social realities of living in a global world
- Engage with diverse cultures, places, experiences and people to learn about the world
- Use a global perspective to create opportunities and address challenges

Managing

This cluster of competencies relates to how you take responsibility for your thoughts, feelings and behaviours to maintain health and wellbeing and how you navigate school, work and other life responsibilities.

Self-Management

Manage thoughts, emotions and behaviours in a variety of circumstances and, when appropriate, advocate effectively for self.

Performance Indicators:

- Identify and manage your emotions and actions
- Be adaptable, open to and ready for change
- Develop strategies to effectively manage transitions within learning, home, support communities, work and life
- Engage in self-advocacy by understanding your own needs for accommodations and requesting them as necessary
- Anticipate and prepare for challenges and potential barriers (e.g., transportation, finances, personal or family responsibilities, health, criminal record checks)

Wellness

Demonstrate personal resilience and the use of effective and safe self-care strategies in managing all dimensions of wellness throughout life transitions, including following health and safety policies.

Performance Indicators:

- Recognize that everyone faces challenges
- Care for your physical, emotional, mental, social, environmental and spiritual wellbeing, seeking help when needed
- Be resilient and persistent when faced with biases, disappointments, setbacks and pressure from others, understanding that they are a normal part of life
- Recognize that managing life transitions includes challenges, new learning, and sometimes, culture shock
- Follow appropriate health and safety policies and procedures

Lifelong Learning

Demonstrate the ability to be an independent learner, engaging in formal and informal learning to effectively navigate changes and transitions.

Performance Indicators:

- Approach every experience as a learning opportunity
- Continue to learn throughout your life
- Learn from diverse people and develop cross-cultural and cross-generational understanding
- Be open to feedback and see mistakes as opportunities for learning
- Use effective strategies to support lifelong learning

Career Transition

Combine self-knowledge and educational/labour market information to make informed career decisions and to navigate career transitions in today's ever-changing labour market.

Performance Indicators:

- Understand and leverage the influence of family, friends, culture, government policies and regional economic development on your career exploration and choices
- Use a variety of strategies and sources of information to explore options for learning and work
- Identify possible career paths through research (e.g., print, participation, online)
- Actively pursue and engage in work experience (e.g., job shadowing, co-ops, internships, youth apprenticeship, volunteering)
- Embrace opportunities to get, combine or create work (e.g., apprenticeship, part-time, full-time, self-employment, "gigs" and contracts)
- Recognize what impacts, and is impacted by, seasonal work
- Examine how rural and regional economies can impact career opportunities and decisions
- Create your own personal marketing strategy (e.g., write targeted resumés and cover letters, interview with confidence)
- Gather and evaluate detailed information resulting from your career exploration process
- Discuss, share and evaluate your career options with others
- Explain your reasons for choosing a career pathway based on who you are, the opportunities you have explored, and labour market information
- Be resilient and able to maneuver through transitions, always having a Plan B (and C and D...)

Work Ethic

Understand, explain and demonstrate ethics and follow the expectations, rules and policies where you live, learn and/or work.

Performance Indicators:

- Understand what is meant by, and demonstrate, integrity
- Be loyal, dependable and accountable so that others can count on you
- Prioritize commitments
- Observe, support and model expected attitudes and behaviours
- Meet or exceed reasonable expectations by doing the best you can in school, extracurricular activities, volunteering and work
- Show and take initiative when appropriate
- Respect those with whom you live, learn and/or work
- Demonstrate leadership skills

Financial Literacy

Demonstrate financial management knowledge, skills and awareness necessary to navigate school, work, transitions and other life responsibilities.

Performance Indicators:

- Understand what is meant by financial literacy and its importance
- Recognize that financial literacy is a lifelong endeavor
- Identify the costs and funding sources associated with various education and career pathways
- Develop a personal financial plan to support the achievement of education, life and career goals
- Evaluate and set short- and long-term financial goals to support making healthy financial decisions that lead to financial security (e.g., saving and investing money, debt financing and sources, contractual obligations)
- Know how to develop and manage a budget
- Know how to keep personal information safe and secure, to prevent and protect against fraud and financial abuse
- Maintain financial records, as required, to assist with calculating, submitting and supporting reports (e.g., income tax, loan applications, requests for financial assistance)

Technological Fluency

Integrate and apply technologies to work with others, communicate, learn and solve problems; manage social media presence responsibly and safely.

Performance Indicators:

- Use technology in a respectful, legal, safe and ethical way
- Access and critically evaluate online information and resources
- Manage social media presence responsibly and safely
- Create a positive digital footprint, recognizing the permanence of online data
- Recognize the benefits, limitations and challenges of using technologies