



Career Development
Association Australia

NAVIGATING LIFE'S CAREER TRANSITIONS: ESSENTIAL SUPPORT AND SERVICES

Primary school-secondary school

Secondary school-college

College-VET

University-work

Promotions

Unemployment-employment

Retrenchment

Redundancy

Restructures

Industry transitions

Retirement

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Acknowledgement of Country

In the spirit of reconciliation the CDAA acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea, and community. We pay our respect to their Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.

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CDAA acknowledges the work of Dr Ann Villiers FCDAA in researching and writing this document. Dr Villiers is a career coach, writer and author, specialising in the public sector. She was awarded Life Membership in 2019, and in 2015 was awarded the President's Award for Professional Leadership.

CDAA acknowledges the generous contributions to this document made by many CDAA members.

Disclaimer

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About the Association

The Career Development Association Australia (CDAA) is Australia's national, multi-sectoral professional association with more than 1300 members across Australia working in all sectors of the profession. The CDAA is a membership association of the Career Industry Council of Australia (CICA).

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President's Foreword

**R. Buckminster Fuller is credited with saying:
“We are called to be architects of the future,
not its victims.”**

With frequently concerning news about the changing face of employment, and the many challenges this creates for both individuals and employers, it can be difficult to see how we can design and construct our working lives so that we realise our full potential and attain sustainable and satisfying work.

In *Navigating Life's Career Transitions* the Career Development Association Australia (CDAA) explains the complexities and challenges of the various career transitions Australians face, outlines how Career Development Practitioners are essential for effective transitions, and puts forward ideas on how to ensure everyone builds a solid foundation in career management skills so they can be “architects of their own future”.

CDAA is committed to advocating for support for all Australians at all stages of their working lives. To handle career transitions effectively and build the career management skills that will support people lifelong, our members provide personalised, flexible, evidence-based services, based on skills, current knowledge, and expertise, that build insight, confidence, resilience, and hope.

CDAA supports the 2015 UN-GA Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goal 8: “Inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.”¹ CDAA and its members will continue to positively contribute, collaborate with stakeholders to address complex policy issues, and design, deliver and promote relevant and effective career services and programs

My sincere personal thanks to Dr Ann Villiers FCDAA for her enormous contribution in researching and writing this document, and to the many CDAA members who shared their subject matter and professional expertise and evidence-based understanding, to support accurate and current content.

Linda Jeffrey
National President
Career Development Association Australia



Executive Summary

Every Australian will experience multiple career transitions across their lifespan and some people may experience several simultaneously.

Career transitions fall along a continuum, varying in size, type and origin. Regardless of their character, a career transition is a process, not an event. As some are complex and messy, transitions require skilful management. This process nature of career transitions is one of the most critical qualities to appreciate.

Australians are expected to manage their own career and learning, but this expectation may be unrealistic given contemporary workforce challenges. Many people either don't know how to manage their career or feel they don't need to. While no one can literally protect their lives from any future disruption, what people can do is take steps to manage changes effectively.

The Career Development Association Australia (CDAA) is Australia's national, multi-sectoral professional association, with more than 1300 members across Australia working in all sectors of the profession. This broad membership means CDAA grasps the interconnections within Australia's careers ecosystem, speaks for career-related issues that impact Australians across their lifespan, and explains the connections between multiple policies and diverse programs.

The analysis in this report is based on a combination of desk research, a survey of CDAA members, and case studies drawn from CDAA award winners, whose work has been recognised for its excellence.

Given the multiple challenges facing Australians, this report aims to increase understanding of key aspects of career transitions:

- **The nature and complexities of career transitions.**
- **The difficulties people face during career transitions and what help they need.**
- **What Career Development Practitioners offer that is essential to successful career transitions.**
- **The effectiveness of Career Development Practitioners' work.**
- **What factors contribute to successful industry transition processes.**
- **How to further strengthen career transition support and services.**

A glossary of terms used by career practitioners is included to aid understanding, as some terms have meanings different from their use in other contexts. (Appendix C)

Appendix D sets out material recruiters, employers, and contractors can use when seeking to employ or contract professional Career Development Practitioners.

Investing in essential career transition support and services will help Australians meet workforce challenges. CDAA recommends seven actions to support this investment.



1.

Update and further implement the Australian government's National Career Development Strategy.

The 2013 National Career Development Strategy² takes an all-ages perspective and has fit-for-purpose goals. In consultation with stakeholders, including career development associations, the Australian government needs to quickly update the strategy, include specific outcomes to reflect current workforce and industry transition issues, and ensure that it is applied to relevant policies, including employment, education, training, regional development and industry.

2.

Increase awareness of career support and services by the National Careers Institute.

The National Careers Institute (NCI) needs to promote career development services by:

- conducting targeted public awareness campaigns about available career services, the importance of developing career management skills, and the value of consulting qualified Career Development Practitioners during any career transition process.
- building industry stakeholders' understanding of the economic and social benefits of designing quality transition processes that include career services delivered by qualified Career Development Practitioners.

3.

Establish a sound foundation in career management skills by all governments.

Governments across jurisdictions need to ensure that all Australians receive a sound foundation in career management skills by:

- embedding career education in the early education and primary school curriculum, making sure educators³ have the necessary skills, knowledge and support.⁴
- making career education in all schools, including distance education schools, and TAFE colleges a priority by embedding career education in the curriculum, and providing resources to employ qualified Career Development Practitioners.

4.

Evaluate all government career services.

All existing, and future, government-funded career services need to be evaluated, and evaluation reports made public.

² <https://www.dese.gov.au/school-work-transitions/resources/national-career-development-strategy>

³ The term 'educators' refers to pre-school and primary teachers, early childhood educators, and day-care workers.

⁴ Hooley, T. (2021). Career education in primary school. myfuture Insights series. Melbourne. Education Services Australia. Cahill, M. and Furey, E. (2017). *The Early Years: Career Development for Young Children. A Guide for Educators*. <https://ceric.ca/wpdm-package/early-years-career-development-young-children-guide-educators/>.



5.

Further adjust employers' recruiting and retention practices.

Employers need to respond to labour and skill shortages by further adjusting their recruiting practices to consider a combination of experience and transferable skills and willingness to learn new skills, and their retention practices by providing staff with development opportunities.

6.

Ensure regions affected by major transitions are supported with quality, long-term transition processes.

Regions and communities facing major transitions due to business and industry closures and structural adjustments must be supported with quality, long-term, transition processes. Stakeholders involved must:

- ensure any transition process is well-planned, locally-driven, orderly, fair, sufficiently and reliably funded, flexible in design, and where needed, phased-in over multiple years.
- provide holistic, worker-centric support that delivers a tailored, flexible approach to addressing all workers' needs, including career services delivered by qualified Career Development Practitioners. (Workers refers to employees, contractors, casual staff.)

7.

Ensure career services are provided by qualified Career Development Practitioners.

When recruiting staff for services that involve providing career guidance, including career information, advice and support, qualified Career Development Practitioners with the appropriate skills, knowledge and experience must be sought. (See Appendix D for guidance.)

And finally, whether you are:

- a person seeking help with understanding career transitions or with embarking on a transition
- an organisation recruiting, contracting, or procuring Career Development Practitioners or career services
- an organisation involved in researching transitions or
- an organisation collaborating on an industry transition process

You can search for suitably qualified and experienced Career Development Practitioners on CDAA's website.⁵

1.

Everyone experiences workforce changes

Summary: Australians will experience multiple workforce challenges. Understanding and navigating an unpredictable, changing labour market requires relevant and expert career guidance from qualified Career Development Practitioners.

Australians have been subject to major challenges in recent years, disrupting lives and livelihoods, impacting mental health and affecting career decisions. Change and uncertainty are ubiquitous.

Changes to the world of work affect all participants in the labour market. These changes are driven by multiple complex and interrelated national and international factors, including changes in technology, organisations, business models, demographics, employment arrangements, plus immigration, globalisation and climate change.

We are regularly reminded of workforce changes, skill gaps and shortages, and the need for upskilling and reskilling. Multiple industries are changing, such as forestry, transport, energy, infrastructure, mining and agriculture. It is widely accepted that Australia is moving to a carbon-neutral economy.

Much has been written about the future of work in the 21st century which is often presented as special, with overly optimistic or pessimistic overtones. While several factors, including technology, are affecting how we work and what jobs we do, many of the so-called 21st century skills, such as teamwork, problem solving, complex cognitive skills and social skills, including collaboration, communication and consultation, are not new. What does differ from the past is what level of skill is needed, how these skills are used, and to what work they are applied.⁶

Understanding what is actually happening to work and jobs is not simple or easy. The sheer volume of material is daunting. Deciding what information is relevant, accurate and credible takes insight and discernment. Distinguishing between chance events, informed guesses and speculation affects choices. Being able to repeatedly respond to changes takes adaptability, resilience, and hope for a positive outcome.

Career changes, whether they be changing jobs, professions, occupations, or unexpected changes like redundancies, business closures or restructures, may sound like events, but they can be complex transition processes requiring skills, knowledge and personal insight to effectively manage their impact. They can involve psychological factors, loss of identity, significant adjustments, shifts in direction and major investment of time and money.

Much is written about 'future-proofing' careers, making school-leavers and graduates 'job-ready', and ensuring workers have employability skills.⁷ While no one can literally protect their lives from any future disruption, what people can do is take steps to manage any changes so they will continue to be useful and successful. This may mean taking concrete steps to research work, enhance knowledge of employment trends, strengthen skills and networks, make plans and embrace lifelong learning.

People may have misconceptions about occupations, hold inaccurate beliefs about employment details, be reluctant to make a decision today for fear it won't match tomorrow's employment reality, and remain uncertain about how to tackle career transitions. It can be tempting to simply focus on lists of 'hot jobs' or 'most in-demand skills'. Some people may rely on the mountain of career information and advice online, but much of it is generic, and some of it is inaccurate, out-of-date, and unsuited to people's circumstances. Gaining career management skills is a long-lasting investment, providing a valuable asset when confronting transitions.

Understanding and navigating an unpredictable, changing labour market requires relevant and expert career guidance. Career Development Practitioners are professionals who help people build career management skills. Their work is far more complex and broad than people imagine. These professionals know what's involved in career transitions and where to find credible information. Most importantly, they have specialised skills to adapt information to a person's interests, skills, ambitions, age and circumstances, and foster the mindset to notice and respond to opportunities when they arise.

2.

Career transitions come in many shapes and sizes

Summary: Every Australian will experience multiple career transitions across their lifespan. Every career transition is a process, not an event, requiring skilful management by all those involved. 16 career transitions are described, with CDAA case studies illustrating the effectiveness of support and services.

Every Australian will experience multiple career transitions across their lifespan and some people may experience several simultaneously, such as changing career direction by taking up a promotion in an international role.

When career practitioners talk about a 'career', they are talking about how the various work and other life roles that a person has interact with each other, and influence their choices, decisions, and how they live their lives. Career includes paid and unpaid work, parenting, care work, volunteering, leisure activities, learning and education. Rather than focusing on specific jobs or occupations, career practitioners encourage people to examine the many influences in their lives, and how they affect each other and the choices made.

Career transitions fall along a continuum - some small, some large; some short, others longer-term; some self-imposed, some externally imposed; some expected, others unexpected. Most people will experience education-to-work transitions, job changes, organisational restructures, and transition to retirement. Some transitions are more specialised, such as moving from military to civilian life. Unexpected transitions include retrenchment, an accident or illness requiring rehabilitation, or major industry transitions that can take years to complete. Regardless of type and character, a career transition is a process, not an event, and it requires skilful management by all those involved.

This process nature of career transitions is one of the most critical qualities to appreciate. Even seemingly less consequential career changes will go better if some planning takes place and support is given.

This chapter provides a summary of various career transitions that Australians can potentially face across their lifespan. Illustrating the effectiveness of transition-related career services are several case studies from CDAA members whose work has been recognised in the association's annual awards. These case studies are referenced in this chapter, with the full details available in Chapter 9.

Some transitions are experienced by young people, while most affect adults. An OECD report *Strengthening Career Guidance for Mid-Career Adults in Australia* explains how career guidance for adults differs from services for young people.⁸

Given adults generally acquire skills through work experiences that are not formally validated, “effective career guidance ... supports them in identifying employment and training opportunities that leverage these existing skills”. Career guidance is sensitive to adults’ more complex needs and builds awareness of training opportunities. The case studies reflect these differences in how career guidance is delivered to young people and adults.

In describing the various career transitions, it is important to keep in mind that clients can represent a diverse range of people. A core competency of Career Development Practitioners concerns diversity and inclusion. Practitioners are expected to demonstrate

“respect for the diversity of Australian people and conduct their work in culturally sensitive ways. Diversity includes, but is not limited to, age, gender, disability, sexual orientation, geographic location, sporting prowess, culture, religion, Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders, neurodiversity, refugee and migrant backgrounds, socio-economic status, mental health, and exceptional ability e.g., in sport, the arts or academic achievement”.⁹ The case studies reflect some of this diversity.

Primary to Secondary School to college to further education and training and/or to work

Young people’s career aspirations are formed early, by age 7. They often follow traditional gender stereotypes, change little between age 7 and 18, and may not sync with labour market demands.¹⁰

Young children are hugely influenced by who they know, particularly parents and carers, and what they see on TV or in the media. Many young people are influenced by cultural messages, particularly from their families, who may encourage them to aspire to perceived prestigious or professional occupations.

This means that career education, as distinct from one-on-one career support, for primary school children is appropriate and essential.¹¹ As Tristram Hooley explains, this is not about making decisions about what job, course or career to pursue. Rather, the focus is on expanding children’s horizons and being curious about many possibilities.¹²

Children face several transition points across their education. Given the most powerful learning about careers is shaped by the adults in a child’s life, it is important to include parents in school career processes, to respond to their concerns, answer questions, build accurate knowledge and increase understanding of career guidance.

High school students are exploring career possibilities and need time to discover their values and interests, and receive assistance to plan for their future including, but not only, tertiary education. Schools need to be adequately resourced to deliver quality career education and career guidance.

9 Career Industry Council of Australia, Professional Standards for Australian Career Development Practitioners, 2019. <https://cica.org.au/wp-content/uploads/Professional-Standards-for-Australian-Career-Development-Practitioners-2019.pdf>

10 Walsh, L, Gleeson, J., Magyar, B & Gallo Cordoba, B., 2021, *Life, Disrupted: Young People, Education and Employment Before and After COVID-19*, Monash University, Melbourne

DOI: 10.26180/15580980

11 Mitchell Institute submission to the ‘Inquiry into career advice activities in Victorian schools’ December 2017. <https://www.vu.edu.au/mitchell-institute/schooling/submission-to-the-inquiry-into-career-advice-activities-in-victorian-schools>

12 Hooley, T. (2021). *Career education in primary school*. myfuture *Insights* series. Melbourne. Education Services Australia.

The Vocational Education and Training (VET) cohort comprises young people as well as older workers, some of whom are returning to the workforce, are retrenched, or have disabilities and/or injuries, may have multiple and complex needs and are interested in a career change. Career development services offered by VET/TAFE providers must have the capacity to engage with both students and prospective students, and with a diverse client group, have strong industry links and solid knowledge of labour market trends, and take an holistic approach to identify suitable fits between skills and employment.¹³

Case Study 1:

Helping Year 10 students transition to college

Case Study 1 describes how Deborah Winton, Career Counsellor at Guilford Young College, Tasmania, supports students transitioning from Year 10 in high school to Year 11 in college. Refer Chapter 9.

University to further study and/or work

Most Australian universities have dedicated organisational units providing career development services to students and recent graduates. These services help with career planning, job searching, writing applications and preparing for interviews, developing employability skills, networking, and personal branding. These services are delivered one-on-one as well as through workshops, short courses and events. Online resources and tools may be provided, such as videos and simulated recruitment processes. Special programs may be offered to international students, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and students with disability.

Career Development Practitioners work across their university to embed career education in faculty courses and to help staff and students to understand how to link course content to careers and identify employability skills gained.

Unemployment to employment

There are several public programs that offer employment services to people receiving income support, including those who are unemployed. A recent review of employment services highlighted the complexities of unemployment, barriers experienced by particular groups, the varying rate of employment across different regions, and inadequacies of employment services consultants.¹⁴

The Employment Services Expert Panel, appointed in 2018 to help shape the future design of employment services¹⁵, recommended a model that included a more sophisticated assessment system and more intensive and better-targeted face-to-face services delivered by increasingly professional and well-trained consultants to help job seekers address their vocational (work-readiness and capability) and non-vocational (homelessness, addiction, mental health) barriers.

¹³ Career Industry Council of Australia (CICA), (2012) *VET career development services: the way forward*. https://cica.org.au/wp-content/uploads/VET-Career-Development-Services_FINAL-June-20121.pdf

¹⁴ Commonwealth of Australia. (2019). *Jobactive: failing those it is intended to serve*. Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment. https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Education_and_Employment/JobActive2018/Report

¹⁵ <https://www.dese.gov.au/new-employment-services-model/resources/i-want-work>

The summary of consultation responses identified that services need to change in line with labour market changes and that a 'one-size-fits-all' approach doesn't work.¹⁶ Stakeholders wanted to see a more holistic, personalised, strengths-based case management approach which provides greater control and choice. Greater investment in ongoing professional development of consultants is needed, with communication, cultural awareness, and knowledge of the local labour market viewed as key areas of consultant competency. Issues concerning online services were explored, with agreement that self-assessment alone was inadequate and skills testing and assessment of transferable skills are needed.

These views align with the skills and services of professional Career Development Practitioners, as well as the evidence confirming what constitutes quality career services, explained in Chapters 5 and 6.

Case Study 2:

Helping job seekers at risk of long-term unemployment

Case Study 2 describes how Bridget Hogg's Next Steps program helped job seekers at risk of being on benefits long-term. Assessment of this program found the results far exceeded the government's minimum cost-effectiveness benchmark. Refer Chapter 9.

Job Promotions and role changes

Job promotions and role changes are more commonly experienced career changes. As well as moving up an organisational, occupational or professional hierarchy, people change roles, such as moving from a technical to a managerial position, or from a CEO to a board role. Such moves involve planning, making adjustments, learning and applying new skills, and adjusting to new relationships and responsibilities, all of which can be helped by advice from a Career Development Practitioner.

Rehabilitation

Rehabilitation counsellors are allied health professionals with tertiary qualifications in Rehabilitation Counselling. These professionals work with people experiencing disability, injury or social disadvantage, in partnership with their families, organisations and other health professionals, to deliver work, life and career solutions. Rehabilitation counsellors have specialised skills in workplace, occupational and vocational rehabilitation to assist injured workers to maintain, obtain and regain employment.¹⁷

¹⁶ Department of Jobs and Small Business. October 2018. *The Next Generation of Employment Services: summary of consultation responses*. <https://www.dese.gov.au/new-employment-services-model/resources/future-employment-services-report>

¹⁷ Rehabilitation Counselling Association of Australasia https://rcaa.org.au/page-about_rehabilitation_counsellors.html

Balancing carer roles and work

As the Australian Human Rights Commission points out, “everyone will be involved in care relationships at some point across their life course, either as care providers and/or care receivers”.¹⁸ Caring responsibilities include caring for young children, for children or adults with disability, mental illness, chronic illness, or for older people. Historically, unpaid care has been mainly undertaken by women. Currently 7 out of 10 women identify as primary carers, while a little over 9 percent of men identify as carers.¹⁹

The transition into parenthood is a pivotal moment that can impact career pathways. Factors associated with returning to work after maternity leave have not been extensively studied. Australian Institute of Family Studies research found several factors, including more planning during pregnancy, differentiated women who did return to work from those who did not. Like many other career transitions, women’s return to work after childbirth is a multifactorial issue, with varied sources of influence that need to be considered. And also similar to other transitions, the amount of support received, including from the workplace (the employer, managers and colleagues), is a factor predicting whether women return to work.²⁰

Case Study 3:

Helping women returning to work

Case Study 3 describes how Kendal Drew and Helen Holan’s *Flourish Return to Work* program will help women returning to work in Rockingham, a low socio-economic area in WA. Refer Chapter 9.

Australian Defence Force (ADF) to civilian careers

Transition from military to civilian life is unique and complex. Navigating civilian processes, such as training, education, job search, and workplace practices, can be overwhelming, confusing, and frustrating, impeding an effective transition.

CDA Professional Member Amanda McCue, stated in her submission to the parliamentary inquiry into transition from the Australian Defence Force, that ADF members need to receive career support throughout their career and not just when transition is imminent, otherwise they are just receiving discharge services rather than transition services.²¹ This is a critical point, of relevance across the spectrum of career transition experiences.

18 Australian Human Rights Commission. (2013). Supporting Carers in the Workplace. A Toolkit. https://humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/UnpaidCaringToolkit_2013.pdf

19 Workplace Gender Equality Agency. Gender equality and caring, <https://www.wgea.gov.au/gender-equality-and-caring>

20 Melissa Coulson, Helen Skouteris and Cheryl Dissanayake. (2012). Australian Institute of Family Studies. *The role of planning, support, and maternal and infant factors in women’s return to work after maternity leave.* <https://aifs.gov.au/publications/family-matters/issue-90/role-planning-support-and-maternal-and-infant-factors-womens>

21 Submission to parliamentary inquiry into transition from the Australian Defence Force, prepared by Amanda McCue <https://www.aph.gov.au/DocumentStore.ashx?id=dbbb0bf0-dd4f-4102-be76-54cf31ccd9c7&subId=613157>

In addition to assisting ADF members with practical career support, such as building an employment profile and resume, tailored career services means that career practitioners provide invaluable help with:

- articulating, at Service-equivalent rank levels, career and military skills in civilian language and how these meet civilian job needs.
- converting professional, educational, training and extra-curricular activity into recognised civilian accreditation.
- discovering what a person wants from work, tapping multiple sources of information and referral points, and opening the mind to careers and jobs not previously considered.

By providing these services, ADF members are better prepared for the cultural shift to civilian life.

Employment of partners of ADF members

Amanda McCue has a particular interest in the employment and career development of military spouses/partners, which are marked by unacceptable levels of unemployment, underemployment and career discontent. A 2017 Churchill Fellow, Ms McCue researched this interest both nationally and internationally.²²

Ms McCue explored the complex issues impacting military spouses, highlighting their strengths and the strong business case for their employment. She cautions that there is no one

simple solution, and that recruitment programs alone are insufficient as they ignore concerns like underemployment, family and household demands and lack of career progression. "Employment solutions need to include retention, flexible work practices, professional development opportunities and new, innovative approaches. Employment programs supporting military spouse employment and career development should include employer education and awareness efforts to ensure that companies (particularly HR staff) understand the military spouse community, how to support them and the benefits of doing so, and input from employers about possible employment solutions."²³

Case Study 4:

Working with ADF members, veterans, and their partners

Case Study 4 describes the services Amanda McCue provides to ADF members, veterans, and their partners, tailored to meet their unique circumstances. Refer Chapter 9.

²² Amanda L McCue 2017 Churchill Fellow, *Military (ADF) spouse employment & career development*. <https://www.churchilltrust.com.au/fellow/amanda-mccue-act-2017/>

²³ *ibid.* p. 89

Elite athlete to post-sport careers

Authors of a white paper exploring the importance of preparing for life after sport, point out that career transition is something that will happen to every athlete and it tends to occur at a relatively early age. Like some other career transitions, career transitions for athletes can be planned or unplanned (e.g. due to injury, illness or misadventure). The authors point out that: "Studies have shown that those athletes who planned their retirement in advance had higher cognitive, emotional and behavioural readiness for their career transition, compared with those who had unplanned or forced retirements."²⁴

Research points to the employability of athletes and the range of transferable skills their sporting career gives them, making them highly desirable employees. But like people facing other forms of career transition, athletes may have difficulty identifying what skills they have, how they fit with workplaces, and what career path they wish to pursue.

Australian sports are increasingly recognising the importance of providing athletes with career support. The National Rugby League (NRL) won CDAA's 2014 Employer of the Year Award for their Careerwise program. NRL clubs employ a qualified career coach to deliver this program, based on best practice in career development, and to help players make well-informed choices about their future career.²⁵

Community re-entry for offenders

Research suggests there is still much to learn about suitable education, employment and training programs for offenders. Reports identify that improved in-prison employment experience and preparation must be followed up with needs-based support to increase the likelihood of post-release employment. Successful post-release employment programs include a range of ex-prisoner-specific support and focus on job readiness not just job placement.²⁶

Migrant transition to Australia

There is a large variety of Australian visas.²⁷ Some are for permanent migrants (skilled and family migrants, humanitarian migrants and refugees), others are temporary, such as visitor, studying and training, and skilled worker visas. Navigating this complexity may mean using immigration assistance.²⁸

Temporary migrants comprise up to 11% of the Australian labour market, the majority of whom are international students and working holidaymakers. A review of the Working Holidaymaker Maker program identified how it benefits Australia's economy through tourism revenue, work undertaken, and associated job creation, of particular importance in regional communities.²⁹

International students and workers not only need to understand visa options, but also their workplace rights and entitlements to avoid potential exploitation and underpayment. TAFE and some universities provide support to international students. Some immigration services may also provide support.

²⁴ David Lavalley, Paul Wylleman, Mayi Cruz Blanco and Rick Echevarria Intel. Life after sport: Why athletes need to prepare.

<https://olympics.com/athlete365/whitepaper/life-after-sport-why-athletes-need-to-prepare/>

²⁵ <https://www.nrl.com/wellbeing-and-education/careerwise/plan-for-life-after-sport/>

²⁶ Commonwealth of Australia, Australian Institute of Criminology, 2005. *Interventions for prisoners returning to the community*. <https://www.aic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-05/interventions-for-prisoners-returning-to-the-community.pdf>. Joe Graffam, Alison Shinkfield, Stephen Mihailides and Barb Lavelle. 2021. *Creating a Pathway to Reintegration: The Correctional Services Employment Pilot Program (CSEPP)*. <https://www.corrections.vic.gov.au/creating-a-pathway-to-reintegration-the-correctional-services-employment-pilot-program>.

²⁷ <https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/visas/getting-a-visa/visa-listing>

²⁸ <https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/help-support/who-can-help-with-your-application>

²⁹ Commonwealth of Australia. (2019). *Report of the Migrant Workers' Taskforce*. Department of Jobs and Small Business https://www.ag.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-03/mwt_final_report.pdf



Community organisations provide a range of employment programs, some government funded, that support refugees and people seeking asylum to find suitable and skilled employment opportunities. These programs are tailored to the special circumstances of participants, and include developing employable English levels, helping to be job ready, linking to training, resources and tools, and working to develop suitable career pathways. Research into what programs work identified several elements, including specialist employment services, collaboration and coordination, and building awareness of Australian career pathways.³⁰

Organisational changes

Organisations undergo a range of changes that affect employees, contractors, and casual staff. These changes include restructures, downsizing, amalgamations and closures, resulting in reappointments, relocations, redundancies, retrenchments and retirements. Human Resources (HR) staff or external outplacement organisations may drive these change processes and provide support services to help staff through the transition process and handle the personal impact.

Case Study 5: Supporting staff being made redundant

Case Study 5 describes how Anne Hutton's program supported more than 1000 employees through redundancy. Refer Chapter 9.

As the case studies show, two factors that have a significant impact on people's ability to handle transitions like organisational changes are their English language and literacy skills and computer literacy and/or access. The National Skills Commission points out that some of the most important and rapidly growing skill needs over coming years are computing and communication.³¹ Employers and recruiters seek strong communication skills to perform critical tasks such as talking to customers, writing emails, briefing notes, and reports, and building relationships with work colleagues. Higher literacy skills are associated with better labour market outcomes, such as gaining employment and higher wages.³² Digital inclusion remains a concern, particularly for those facing socio-economic barriers and/or affordability issues, and who live in regional locations.³³

30 Refugee Council of Australia (2010) *What Works: Employment strategies for refugee and humanitarian entrants* https://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/What-Works_Employment-report_2010.pdf

31 National Skills Commission. *State of Australia's Skills 2021: now and into the future*. <https://www.nationalskillscommission.gov.au/reports/state-of-australia-skills-2021>

32 Shomos, A. and Forbes, M. (2014) *Literacy and Numeracy Skills and Labour Market Outcomes in Australia*, Productivity Commission Staff Working Paper, Canberra.

<https://www.pc.gov.au/research/supporting/literacy-numeracy-skills>

33 Australian Digital Inclusion Index. <https://www.digitalinclusionindex.org.au/key-findings-and-next-steps/>



Case Study 6:

Supporting staff affected by a business closure

Case Study 6 describes how Gillian Kelly tailored a business closure program to cater for workforce challenges, including limited computer literacy and/or access and limited English literacy.

Refer Chapter 9.

Industry transitions

Whole industries are revising their workforce needs, developing workforce strategies to take account of structural and labour market changes, as well as the impact of technology and climate change. Industry examples are energy, mining, transportation, infrastructure, housing, manufacturing and agriculture.

Australia has a diverse agricultural, fisheries and forestry sector, with a gross value of \$75 billion in 2020-21.³⁴ The industry faces many challenges including a growing population and production demand, workforce shortages, climate change, and the rise of digital agriculture.

The National Agriculture Workforce Strategy points out that “in the 21st century the [AgriFood] sector needs to think of, and project, itself as encompassing primary, secondary and tertiary industries – farm production, value-adding in factories, and use of digital and automated production techniques, including robotics.”³⁵ The strategy discusses changes and transitions impacting AgriFood, the impact of COVID-19, sustainability, technological changes, upskilling needs and obstacles, problems with job market data, inadequate career pathways, attraction and retention issues, and issues concerning perceptions that agriculture is an unattractive career option.

Industries benefit from career development-based research that expands understanding of issues like the nature of job and career satisfaction, how career decisions are made, how technology affects how work is done, what career misconceptions exist, and what resources are needed to improve career information and advice.

Case Study 7:

Raising the profile of agriculture, a transitioning industry

Case Study 7 demonstrates the value of Dr Nicole McDonald's career-related research for Australian agriculture, for which she is an acknowledged leader. Refer Chapter 9.

³⁴ Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences. *Snapshot of Australian Agriculture 2022*. <https://www.awe.gov.au/abares/products/insights/snapshot-of-australian-agriculture-2022#agricultural-production-is-growing>

³⁵ Azarias, J, Nettle, R & Williams, J 2020, *National Agricultural Workforce Strategy: Learning to excel*, National Agricultural Labour Advisory Committee, Canberra. p. 1.

<https://www.awe.gov.au/agriculture-land/farm-food-drought/agricultural-workforce/news>

Transition to self-employment

In responding to other types of career transition, such as reassessing a current career path, or facing retrenchment or business closure, a person may decide to start their own business. This decision involves a range of new considerations, including understanding the relevant legal and regulatory requirements, the skills needed to operate a business, and the additional demands that do not concern employees.

Career Development Practitioners help people with this type of transition by exploring the full implications of this transition, including identifying skill gaps and how to fill them, making a realistic assessment of the risks, and referring to other relevant services, such as financial advice.

Managing career breaks

People take breaks from their working lives for a variety of reasons, including travel, caring roles, health treatment, bereavement, migration within Australia, and taking up or returning to study. Such breaks can be relatively short, or span several years.

These career breaks can raise multiple issues such as: loss of identity, relationships and status that work provides; financial challenges; emotional, physical and mental health impacts; increased uncertainty; and reduced confidence in the face of new circumstances. Managing these issues as people enter their break, as well as taking steps to smooth a path to return to work, takes career management skills, including maintaining a positive self-concept; being adaptable; managing stress; and identifying transferable skills.

Retirement

Retirement from the workforce may be a choice, or it may be imposed following injury, organisational and industry restructures and closures.

A KPMG report estimated that the expected length of retirement for women is 21.6 years and for men 17.3 years.³⁶ The report points out that: "In 2021, 39 percent of the labour force was aged over 45 years, compared to 32 percent in 2001. Over the next 20 years, an increasing number of people will start to transition into retirement."³⁷

People may choose to continue working part-time before full-time retirement. They may also retire, then choose to return to work, either part or full-time. Whichever option people choose, retirement is a significant period of time in a person's life, and warrants preparation and planning prior to embarking on it.

While there are differences between these various career transitions, there are several common threads. The next chapter identifies these common factors and their lessons for effective career transitions.

3.

Twelve lessons for effective career transitions

Summary: Despite differences amongst career transitions, there are commonalities. Twelve critical factors impact client support and career service design and delivery. People gain the most benefit from an holistic, personalised, tailored, flexible approach to career guidance.

Managing a career, with its ups and downs of job changes, upskilling and reskilling demands, workforce adjustments, business closures, and family demands, is both complex and unique to each person. Each person has their own set of values, interests and experiences, and is influenced by personal characteristics such as their age, gender, cultural background, family and community circumstances, as well as geographic, economic and political factors. People's careers develop in unexpected and unintended ways, as demonstrated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Despite there being significant differences amongst the career transitions explored in Chapter 2, there are commonalities. This chapter identifies twelve common factors that impact client support and career service design and delivery. While the type of client support people receive is part of service design, it is treated separately here to clarify the importance of qualified Career Development Practitioners providing this support. Combined, these twelve factors impact the effectiveness of career transition services.

Factors impacting client support

A multifactorial, holistic and tailored approach is essential

People experiencing career transitions bring a unique combination of social, emotional, economic, geographic, and cultural factors that affect how they approach their circumstances and what the potential outcome might be. Support services, including career services, therefore need to take a multifactorial and holistic perspective to each individual to ensure an effective outcome.

People facing career transitions, particularly those experiencing disadvantages, need access to tailored support, which may take a range of forms, but certainly needs to include career support services. Support may need to include language, literacy, and digital literacy programs and reasonable adjustments for those with one or more disabilities. For many people, job placement programs that focus on securing any job that's available regardless of fit, are too limited and fall short by not taking a multifactorial and holistic approach.

The importance of identity

When people have dedicated their career to a particular path, such as doctors, engineers, and ADF members, the effect of transitions on their sense of identity and mental health can be significant. The sense of identity for professional athletes can impact the way a career transition is experienced and can lead to potential issues when someone “stops being an ‘athlete’ and needs to become ‘something else’.”³⁸

Local community and geographical identity also need to be considered, particularly for transition processes in regional areas.

Building skills in anticipating biases

One of the challenges facing clients experiencing career transitions is bias – the unreasoned judgements, prejudices and stereotypes that result in negative, discriminatory practices. These biases may concern a person's circumstances, such as an ex-offender, a refugee, a person returning to work after a career break or parenthood. Recruiters and employers may carry biases about gaps in a person's resume or the relevance of types of experience, such as military or professional sporting experience.

As the case studies demonstrate, career services can help people respond more effectively to the actual and potential biases they may encounter. This support includes explaining a person's career record such as volunteering and time away from paid employment, and helping people to identify their transferable skills. As one of the common challenges faced by people, the ability to see and explain skills gained in one context and their application to another context, described in the relevant terms, is one of the most valuable contributions Career Development Practitioners make.

People need a strong support network

Effective career transitions are more likely if a person can draw on a strong support network of people who will stand by them no matter what happens. This network includes, depending on the situation, family, carers, teachers, friends, employers, work colleagues, mentors and members of a community, college and university.

Part of a Career Development Practitioner's holistic approach to people undergoing career transitions, is to assess their support needs and identify those who will listen when confided in about fears, doubts and insecurities and cheer them on to achieve their goals.

Practitioners also help people build skills in expanding their support network. This may involve building skills in networking, a process misunderstood by many people, and developing an appropriate social media presence.

Hooley and Dodd's paper *The Economic Benefits of Career Guidance* provides a conceptual model that traces how the economic benefits of career guidance work through the economy. One of the benefits is increases in social capital. Social capital refers to an individual's “ability to secure benefits through membership in networks and other social structures,” and includes the size of your social network, the relative social and economic power of your network and whether you are willing and able to persuade people to help you. There is clear research evidence which links social capital to both successful transitions to work and to longer term career success.³⁹

³⁸ David Lavalley, Paul Wylleman, Mayi Cruz Blanco and Rick Echevarria Intel. Life after sport: Why athletes need to prepare. <https://olympics.com/athlete365/whitepaper/life-after-sport-why-athletes-need-to-prepare/>

³⁹ Hooley, T & Dodd, V. (2015). *The Economic Benefits of Career Guidance*. Career England Research Paper. Paras. 22 & 23 <https://derby.openrepository.com/handle/10545/559030>

Factors impacting career service design and delivery

Recognising the value of work

Work is generally good for health and wellbeing. Underemployment, poor quality work and unemployment are risks to both physical and mental health.

The Rehabilitation Counselling Association of Australasia (RCAA) is a signatory to the Health Benefits of Good Work, an initiative from the Australasian Faculty of Occupational and Environmental Medicine ([AFOEM](#)) of The Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP).⁴⁰ This initiative is based on compelling Australasian and international evidence that good work is beneficial to people's health and wellbeing and that long term work absence, work disability and unemployment generally have a negative impact on health and wellbeing.⁴¹

Career Development theory and practice have long sought to understand the role of work in providing meaning in people's lives. The Psychology of Working Framework, for example, recognises the health benefits of work and its potential to fulfil basic human needs. Changes in the world of work have fostered discussions about the quality of work people *should* have access to, work that is fair, dignified, decent and satisfying.⁴²

There's a risk that people undergoing career transitions may not secure decent work. Transition processes need to recognise the value of work to people's lives and livelihoods, and provide career support that enables people to maximise their options and opportunities.

Collaboration essential amongst multiple service providers

Career support for many of the career transitions described in Chapter 2 is provided by multiple government agencies across jurisdictions, non-profit and private organisations. Examples are support for ADF members, veterans and families; unemployed people; migrants; and those receiving National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) support.

New Zealand's evaluation report of career services provided to support those who lost jobs during COVID-19, highlights four key service-design elements that helped improve access and outcomes for clients. One of these is building cross-sector capability and sharing expertise. Sharing expertise between all those involved in delivering services meant valuable skills were learnt and service delivery was better integrated.⁴³

Delivery of services by multiple providers reflects the complexities and interrelationships of Australia's careers ecosystem. (See Appendix E for a model of this ecosystem.) Essential for quality career transition services is continuing attention to improving service integration and accessibility. Collaboration and consultation with all those affected by transitions, by all those involved, are critical for ensuring effective career services.

40 <https://rcaa.org.au/page-hbgw.html>

41 Australian and New Zealand Consensus Statement on the Health Benefits of Work https://www.racp.edu.au/docs/default-source/advocacy-library/realising-the-health-benefits-of-work.pdf?sfvrsn=fca12fia_10

42 [David L. Blustein](#),^{Chad Olie}, Alice Connors-Kellgren and [A. J. Diamonti](#). *Decent Work: A Psychological Perspective*. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 24 March 2016. <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2016.00407/full>

Ryan D. Duffy, David L. Blustein, A. Diemer, Kelsey L. Autin. 2016. *The Psychology of Working Theory*. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*. Vol. 63, No2, 127-148. <https://www.apa.org/pubs/journals/features/cou-cou0000140.pdf>

43 Tertiary Education Commission. (2021). *Insights Report*. <https://www.tec.govt.nz/assets/Reports/TEC-Insights-Report-Oct-2021.pdf>

Services need to be planned

Evidence from across several types of career transitions confirms the need for organisations to plan their transition process, and that planning makes a difference to the outcome achieved.

Planning needs to start before a transition is imminent. For example, when a business is closing, such as a power station, significant advance notice is needed to develop an effective transition plan. Despite the predictability of ADF transitions (although not when they happen), official career development support is focused on key transition points, such as leaving the ADF. There is potential to enhance this support by providing a more lifelong, holistic program so that ADF members and families arrive at transition points better prepared.

Services need to be evaluated

Some of the case studies described in Chapter 9 refer to methods used to evaluate services. Without effective evaluation it's difficult to know if a program or service has achieved its goals, has been effective, and delivered the intended outcomes.

The need for more service evaluation is raised in the 2022 OECD report *Strengthening Career Guidance for Mid-Career Adults in Australia*.⁴⁴ In addition to participants obtaining employment, evaluation of career services can include how well services are used, such as the number of interactions that a person has with a Career Development Practitioner, whether there is a follow-up after a first consultation, and if there is continuity in service delivery. Data can be collected about training starts, completions and employment outcomes related to training undertaken. Participants can be asked about their growth in digital literacy, knowledge gained and increased self-understanding.

Offer in-person services, both live and online

While tailored, in-person career support is likely to deliver the most effective results (see Chapter 6), access to tailored, online in-person services is an important part of the support-mix. Funding and geographical constraints may mean those undertaking career transitions have access primarily to online in-person services. Ensuring digital literacy, affordability, and tailored resources are important considerations for effective results.

New Zealand's *Insights Report* provides evidence from the first eight months of a new career service initiated in 2020 as a response to COVID-19, designed to support New Zealanders back to work. The report demonstrates the value of quality evaluation of career services and makes the point that "digital is a tool, but people are the answer", finding that a multi-channel approach was the best solution for clients. Clients used digital tools as a support, while Career Development Practitioners helped them navigate the online tools.⁴⁵

The value of multidisciplinary research

Policies and programs supporting career transitions are informed by research from multiple disciplines, such as economics, psychology, sociology, career development and history. The Career Development profession provides research that informs evidence-based practice which needs to be considered along with other disciplines' input.

Several of the career transitions described in Chapter 2 identify the limited research available to inform practice and services. Career-related research needs to be encouraged and supported. An essential component of career programs and services is effective monitoring and evaluation so outcomes are clearly identified and limitations can be used to inform improvements.

'Lived experience' and career development expertise essential

Having 'lived experience' of a client's circumstances, such as being an ADF member, an ex-offender, a refugee, or long-term unemployed person, can be an advantage in building rapport and trust, being able to 'speak their language', understanding multiple challenges, and being able to refer people to other relevant services. By itself, it is insufficient to provide an accurate, comprehensive, evidence-based career service.

Career Development Practitioners may have 'lived experience' relevant to their clients. Many will not have 'lived experience' but have refined skills, diverse experience, and comprehensive knowledge and understanding of career-related theory and research. They can source credible labour market information and understand skills language, knowing how to interpret these terms in a client's context. Their advanced communication and interpersonal skills enable them to build rapport and trust, explore a person's circumstances, and help identify possibilities aligned with interests, strengths, values and commitments.

While 'lived experience' is valuable, it is not essential to delivering quality career services. What is essential is ensuring career services are informed by the Career Development discipline and its theory and practice.

A 'one-size-fits-all' approach doesn't work

While it is easier and cheaper to offer a standardised program or service to a group of people, such programs will fall short if they are not tailored to people's specific needs or lack the flexibility to cater for multiple factors affecting a person's ability to make an effective career transition. This is particularly the case with services for offenders and the long-term unemployed, but equally applies to any person facing a career transition.

These twelve lessons mean that to effectively undergo a career transition and to provide career services to support career transition processes, people gain the most benefit from an holistic, personalised, tailored, flexible approach.

The next chapter identifies eight categories of challenges people may experience during career transitions.



4.

Why people need professional help with career transitions

Summary: People facing career transitions encounter many challenges, often simultaneously. Eight groupings of challenges are described. Without professional help people will be disadvantaged in the labour market.

Australians are expected to manage their own career and learning, but this expectation may be unrealistic. Many people either don't know how to manage their career or feel they don't need to. Mastering career management competencies is not a once-only, childhood exercise. Making an informed career-related decision relies on having current, relevant information, and skills that evolve to meet the shifting demands of technology and employers.

Career transition processes can be complex and messy. When facing any type of career transition, people need to apply skills, knowledge and understanding, and behaviours based on their personal circumstances. The specifics may vary depending on the transition. For example, the needs of a teenager moving from school to work differ from a 45-year old facing retrenchment.

Making a career decision is not as simple as it may sound.⁴⁶ Decision-making can be difficult, complicated by a person's readiness to make a decision and the amount and quality of information available to assist. Without professional help, people grappling with a career transition may stall at making a decision, or make one that is flawed.

Lack of service awareness and responsibility demands may obstruct people from using career services. The OECD study examining career guidance services for Australian mid-career adults found that adults in part-time employment, low-educated adults, women, those living in rural areas, or foreign-born adults are much less likely to use career guidance than their counterparts. The main reasons given for not using career guidance services was not feeling the need, not knowing such services existed, and women are more likely than men to report lack of time due to family responsibilities as a significant barrier to career guidance.⁴⁷

People facing career transitions encounter many challenges, often simultaneously. For example, a person may experience low confidence, lack motivation, have outdated or aging skills, have been with one company for a long time and have a limited network.

⁴⁶ [Nguyen, Tam, Why career decision-making is so hard. Career Trends, Asia Pacific Career Development Association, 18 April, 2022. https://asiapacificdda.org/Career-Trends#Decision](https://asiapacificdda.org/Career-Trends#Decision)

⁴⁷ Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development. (2022). *Strengthening Career Guidance for Mid-Career Adults in Australia*. <https://www.oecd.org/publications/strengthening-career-guidance-for-mid-career-adults-in-australia-e08803ce-en.htm>. Mid-career adults are people who have been in the labour market for at least 10 years and have at least 10 years before retirement.

Eight categories of challenges make clear why people need professional help during career transitions.

Knowledge gaps:

What information is needed, where to find it, how to use it. Examples include what career direction to pursue, what careers would be satisfying or fulfilling, where to find useful career information, what employers expect, finding local information such as labour market details, identifying available services and information such as career events, free career services, scholarships, and financial support, navigating the myriad of courses on offer, the differences between offerings and study modes, and support programs available.

Lack of familiarity with processes:

How to: conduct a job search, present one's self online, change careers, use existing experience and skills, identify skills, show transferability of skills.

Fear and concerns:

Discomfort with change; stress; concern about loss (such as occupational identity, life as it is or was), finances, revealing medical and mental health conditions, burnout, anxiety and depression, wasting time in an unfulfilling career, regret at not doing something more meaningful or worthwhile; not knowing what to study after high school, feeling overwhelmed with leaving school and entering the tertiary sector or employment, fearing a wrong decision has been made.

Accessibility:

Lack of access to local training opportunities, to technology, or to reliable services.

Skills issues:

Not understanding skill terminology,⁴⁸ reluctance to learn new skills, low information literacy, maintaining employability in the face of changes in skill demands.

Lack of self-confidence:

Includes perceptions of being 'unemployable' and lack of faith in ability to take the next step.

Barriers due to diversity and life circumstances:

Includes insufficient English, having overseas qualifications and experience recognized by employers, not having local experience, lack of networks, low financial resources, managing study combined with work and family responsibilities.

Unhelpful beliefs:

Clinging to out-dated or inaccurate beliefs about employment, education and personal abilities.

In summary, what these challenges mean is that without professional help to explain, guide, counsel, explore, navigate, and encourage, people will be disadvantaged in the labour market. As explained in CDAA's *Career Development Works* report (referred to in Chapter 6), people make better career decisions when they "are confident of their own sense of career identity, know they are ready to make decisions, have the confidence to make decisions, and understand the supports and barriers that affect their decisions".⁴⁹

CDAA therefore makes these recommendations:

Ensure career services are provided by qualified Career Development Practitioners.

When recruiting staff for services that involve providing career guidance, including career information, advice and support, qualified Career Development Practitioners with the appropriate skills, knowledge and experience must be sought. (See Appendix D for guidance.)

Establish a sound foundation in career management skills by all governments.

Governments across jurisdictions need to ensure that all Australians receive a sound foundation in career management skills by:

- embedding career education in the early education and primary school curriculum, making sure educators⁵⁰ have the necessary skills, knowledge and support.⁵¹
- making career education in all schools, including distance education schools, and TAFE colleges a priority by embedding career education in the school curriculum, and providing resources to employ qualified Career Development Practitioners.

Evaluate all government career services.

All existing, and future, government-funded career services need to be evaluated, and evaluation reports made public.

Further adjust employers' recruiting and retention.

Employers need to respond to labour and skill shortages by further adjusting their recruiting practices to consider a combination of experience and transferable skills and willingness to learn new skills, and their retention practices by providing staff with development opportunities.

49 Career Development Association of Australia. *Career Development Works: Research Evidence and Case Examples*. P. 8. <https://cdaa.imiscloud.com/common/Uploaded%20files/About%20Career%20Development/CDAA%20Career%20Development%20Works.pdf>

50 The term 'educators' refers to pre-school and primary teachers, early childhood educators, and day-care workers.

51 Hooley, T. (2021). Career education in primary school. myfuture Insights series. Melbourne. Education Services Australia. Cahill, M. and Furey, E. (2017). *The Early Years: Career Development for Young Children. A Guide for Educators*. <https://ceric.ca/wpdm-package/early-years-career-development-young-children-guide-educators/>.



5.

CDAA members support all career transitions

Summary: People gain specific benefits from quality professional career support, including finding satisfying work, building hope and resilience, and understanding risk-taking.

The Career Development Association Australia (CDAA) is Australia's national, multi-sectoral professional association, with more than 1300 members across Australia working in all sectors of the profession. This broad membership means CDAA grasps the interconnections within the careers ecosystem, speaks for career-related issues that impact Australians across their lifespan, and explains the connections between multiple policies and diverse programs. The breadth of experience and professional capabilities of members is described in Appendix B.

CDAA members work in the full range of career transitions described in Chapter 2.

Many have experience of major industry changes, such as the closure of the automotive industry, and have helped clients in transition-affected regions, such as the Hunter Valley, Central Queensland, and parts of Tasmania and Victoria.

Regardless of the particular career transition, clients gain specific benefits from practitioners' work, two significant ones being:

- **Quality professional support that results in:** Relief at having someone to explain things and give personal support, who believes in them, who understands them and their context, who generates clarity about who they are and what they really need in their careers, who gives career counselling support to challenge, validate and build the confidence to make a change.
- **Explaining, navigating and applying the unknown that results in:** Short-cutting to quality information and help, identifying and explaining transferable skills and achievements, showing how to effectively job search and prepare job documents, coaching in current interview skills, networking, personal branding, using social media to make connections, finding a better job or career that fits values, skills, preferences.

Everyone deserves to find fulfilling, satisfying work, particularly when facing a major transition, such as a business closure or industry restructure. Career Development Practitioners understand that what decent work means differs for each person. By exploring a client's values, interests, strengths, and purpose, a practitioner helps to define what satisfying, fulfilling work means for them, what a good place to work means and how to identify such places. This ideal may need balancing with a person's situation and the relevant market, and giving help with navigating any trade-offs.

People facing major career transitions may have lost hope, become stuck in a role, organisation or industry, and become fearful of change. Young people may be overwhelmed, with a negative outlook regarding health, employment, and financial pressures. Dealing with hopelessness precedes attending to career-related issues.



Hope implies that a person has a feeling of expectation and a desire for things to happen that will improve their situation. Career Development Practitioners focus on possibility, making hope practical and tangible by:

- helping people to believe in themselves and their ability to secure new roles.
- reminding people of their past successes and giving examples of others who have walked a similar path with successful outcomes.
- helping people see that what looks hopeless has layers that need exploring.
- normalising anxiety concerning uncertainty about the future.
- helping people to identify and articulate their individual character and skill strengths in ways that meet market expectations.
- identifying pathways that help people to feel freedom rather than feeling trapped.

Career Development Practitioners draw on a range of theories, tools and skills that build clients' resilience in the face of challenging career transitions. People can be crippled by what has happened, unable to see a way forward. Practitioners' resilience-building support includes:

- encouraging people to persevere and explore alternatives as sometimes a direct route through a transition is not always possible.
- helping people to set goals and make a plan that includes small steps towards a new outcome, recognising successes, discussing roadblocks and activating contingency plans.
- learning from past successes in overcoming adversity and identifying the techniques used.
- providing additional counselling around unfavourable events and referring to other professionals and services when needed.
- helping people develop coping strategies and managing their wellbeing, remaining engaged with positive and pleasurable aspects of their lives (e.g. family, recreational and social activities).

Understanding risk-taking is another part of managing career transitions. Risk-taking varies widely and is very personal. For some people changing jobs is a major risk and for others creating a new export business is no big deal. Some people understand risk management yet don't apply it to their own career. Others mix real and imagined risks, or confuse uncertainty or not knowing, with risk.

Career Development Practitioners work with clients to understand their risk tolerance, showing them where they have taken successful risks in the past, building their confidence and giving them strategies to overcome any catastrophising that may occur. They help people understand risk-taking by:

- providing educated insights that may challenge assumptions and worldview, helping people to see their own patterns around risk-taking, assessing their costs and benefits, and enabling them to make informed decisions about stepping into the unknown or untried.
- helping people identify motivating goals and build a picture of what is possible that they are willing to take risks for.

As described in this chapter, Career Development Practitioners provide a wide range of services. Some services are easily identifiable, such as help with resumes and job searching. This practical help is but one part of what these professionals offer. Much of what they do lies in the 'how' and 'why' as well as the 'what'. As this report on career transitions across the lifespan shows, managing transition processes takes skill, knowledge and understanding.

CDAA therefore makes this recommendation⁵²:

Increase awareness of career support and services by the National Careers Institute.

The National Careers Institute (NCI) needs to promote career development services by:

- conducting targeted public awareness campaigns about available career services, the importance of developing career management skills, and the value of consulting qualified Career Development Practitioners during any career transition process.
- building industry stakeholders' understanding of the economic and social benefits of designing quality transition processes that include career services delivered by qualified Career Development Practitioners.

6. Qualified Career Development Practitioners' work is effective

Summary: Australian and international research evidence shows that quality career services deliver individual, social and economic outcomes.

The Australian and international research evidence is clear: the work of Career Development Practitioners is effective.

CDAA evidence

The *Career Development Works* report commissioned by CDAA, summarises empirical research and case examples of the effectiveness and benefits from investing in qualified, professional career development practices.⁵³

Making an effective career transition is much more than scanning online job sites and submitting mountains of resumes. When workers feel under threat, depression and anxiety increase, negatively affecting decisions, and potentially resulting in unsatisfying work choices.

People make better decisions when they are partnered with a Career Development Practitioner who helps them to understand themselves and what meaningful work means for them, what supports and barriers affect their decisions, how to maintain their health and wellbeing, how to access support programs and how to manage any career transition process. Research shows that personalised, one-on-one support is most beneficial, and can be combined with group exercises.

Personalised support means authoritative, reliable tools and resources are tailored to the client and interpreted in the context of the client's circumstances. While computer-based tools may well be used during this process, research shows that their use is less effective if a client relies on such tools unaided by any support.

This finding means that when it comes to establishing career transition programs, a balance needs to be found between the most effective one-on-one, personalised services which are resource-intensive, and low-resource but least effective services like self-directed online services.⁵⁴ This balance is found in one-on-one and group personalised, online services.

CDAA members use a range of online delivery tools to deliver personalised career services.⁵⁵ Table 1 lists the benefits and limitations of this approach. While there are some limitations, the case studies in Chapter 9 show that these can be accommodated so as not to disadvantage clients.

⁵³ Career Development Association of Australia. *Career Development Works: Research Evidence and Case Examples*. <https://cdaa.imiscloud.com/common/Uploaded%20files/About%20Career%20Development/CDAA%20Career%20Development%20Works.pdf>

⁵⁴ *ibid.* p. 11.

⁵⁵ Tools include Zoom, WebEx, Skype, Facetime, GoToMeeting, Microsoft Teams, Google Meet



Table 1: BENEFITS AND LIMITATIONS OF PERSONALISED, ONLINE CAREER SERVICES

Benefits of personalised, online career services

- More time-efficient than meeting in person.
- Outcomes are much the same as when meeting in person.
- Flexibility in scheduling, particularly when people are interstate or overseas.
- Flexibility in length of meeting.
- Easier to include a wider range of people when needed.
- More cost-effective.
- Physically safer.
- Meeting can be recorded for future reference.
- More inclusive for people outside a city centre or who have special needs.
- Can readily involve other people such as interpreters, parents.

Limitations of personalised, online career services

- Unreliable internet services
- Lack of digital literacy or lack of resources
- Less appropriate for some clients with special needs
- Interaction can be more difficult, such as reading non-verbal cues, responding with appropriate expressions of empathy, exploring emotional concerns, energising clients
- Accommodating different time zones
- Concerns about privacy and security
- Removes the opportunity to use more tangible career resources, some of which may not be available online or may be difficult to share, demonstrate and discuss
- Client preference to work face-to-face and the sense of connection this gives them
- Identifying sensitive issues such as use of personal space, body odour, that may affect client efforts

New Zealand evidence

The evaluation of New Zealand's career service initiated in 2020 as a response to COVID-19, provides evidence of effectiveness-supporting factors. Career development professionals (CDPs) who are members of the Career Development Association of New Zealand (CDANZ) deliver this service. They were specifically chosen to ensure a high level of quality and customer service.

Survey data and qualitative feedback shows that New Zealanders received the knowledge, skills and confidence to take the next step in their work and learning journey. This was particularly true for New Zealanders:

- "whose work and learning trajectory has been disrupted or thrown a curve ball.
- feeling without direction or hope.
- struggling with finding their next step.
- searching for a change in their work or learning.
- planning their future and looking for specific work and learning opportunities."⁵⁶

A key finding in the report is that very short interventions (up to 1.5 hours) led by career development professionals resulted in considerable change for clients, with three main categories of impact:

- "Guided, strength-based conversations get to the heart of the matter.
- Building job-seeking knowledge and skills supports self-management.
- Motivation and confidence are key to moving forward and taking the next steps."⁵⁷

This research also provides evidence of the value of using online tools with the support of an experienced career practitioner. Clients stated the real value for them lay in the relationship-based approach to identifying their work and learning pathways from this information. The report concludes that: "Given the CDPs' skill level and experience, this was not a protracted process, but targeted, focused and cost-effective."⁵⁸

United Kingdom evidence

Hooley and Dodd's paper *The Economic Benefits of Career Guidance* provides a conceptual model that traces how the economic benefits of career guidance work through the economy from the individual to macroeconomic benefits. Three main categories of individual outcomes of guidance are: increases in human and social capital, and support for individuals to make smooth and purposeful transitions. These three outcomes influence an individual's overall capability to earn and contribute economically over the life course.⁵⁹

56 Tertiary Education Commission. (2021). Insights Report. p. 12. <https://www.tec.govt.nz/assets/Reports/TEC-Insights-Report-Oct-2021.pdf>

57 *ibid.* p. 13

58 *ibid.* p. 28

59 Hooley, T. & Dodd, V. (2015). *The Economic Benefits of Career Guidance*. Career England Research Paper. Para. 15. <https://derby.openrepository.com/handle/10545/559030>

Primary economic outcomes of career guidance are: increased labour market participation, decreased unemployment, an enhanced skill and knowledge base and a flexible and mobile labour market. Potential secondary economic benefits include: improved health, decreased crime, increased tax revenue; and decreased cost of benefits.⁶⁰

Career guidance work is not a 'soft' option. At its heart is the idea of an active, engaged person who is guided to determine their own direction and choices. The person-centred focus of this work, whether delivered live or online, taps highly sophisticated social skills, informed knowledge, and evidence-based resources.

CDAA therefore makes this recommendation:

Ensure career services are provided by qualified Career Development Practitioners.

When recruiting staff for services that involve providing career guidance, including career information, advice and support, qualified Career Development Practitioners with the appropriate skills, knowledge and experience must be sought. (See Appendix D for guidance.)

7.

Designing effective industry transition programs

Summary: Sixteen success factors show how to design just, effective, and well managed industry transition processes.

As outlined in Chapter 2, Australians face multiple changes and transitions. Moving to a carbon-neutral economy is a profound societal challenge and means many workers may face significant transitions that affect them, their families, and their communities.

Multiple reports support the need for well-planned, long-term transition processes, that include providing all workers – employees, contractors, and casuals - with skilled pathways into alternative, quality employment, that provides certainty, security and stability.

Some of the industry transition literature recommends taking a 'just transition' approach that ensures that those people affected are involved in decision making, are involved early, and transition to quality or decent jobs. This context-based approach is based on collaboration to design a process agreed by workers, industry, and governments, one that is designed to treat people with justice and dignity, see that no one is left behind, provide policy, support and services for the benefit of all those affected, and ensure comprehensive information is provided.⁶¹

The Sydney Environment Institute investigated how the idea of 'just transition' is currently understood in Australia. The authors clarify the intended meaning of 'just transition', a concept that recognises that any significant change will impact people and communities in different ways, that aims to ensure there is some level of fairness and equity for those affected, and means paying attention to the many aspects of the process, including the social and the technical.⁶²

The report points out that while the concept of just transition was developed in a "positive, well-meaning sense", in Australia, the phrase is tarnished. But as the authors point out, "the alternative to a 'just transition' is a disorderly transition".⁶³

Recognising the value of work was identified in Chapter 3 as one of the factors common to career transition processes. By taking an holistic view, Career Development Practitioners are skilled at understanding the role of work in people's lives, and how a person's background and life experiences affect their career decisions and choices. This understanding applies across the spectrum of life's career transitions but has particular relevance to industry transitions. Understanding a career transition as a process that involves thought, planning, skills and information, may help with finding a common language that is comfortable, and corrects misunderstandings.

⁶¹ The WA government has been working to deliver a Just Transition for Collie since 2017.

<https://www.wa.gov.au/organisation/department-of-the-premier-and-cabinet/collie-just-transition>

⁶² Dr. Gareth A. S. Edwards, Dr. Clare Hanmer, Prof. Susan Park, Dr. Robert MacNeil, Milena Bojovic, Jan Kucic-Riker, Dan Musil, Gemma Viney. (2022) Towards a just transition for coal in Australia? Sydney Environment Institute. P. 6

⁶³ *ibid.* p. 5

Major transition processes are complex and messy. Yet much is already known⁶⁴ and regions are identifying their specific needs.⁶⁵

Experience of structural adjustments has delivered valuable lessons about how to design just, effective, and well managed transition processes. Success factors include:

- Early notification of business or industry closure with extensive lead time.
- A process that is well-planned, orderly, fair, sufficiently and reliably funded, flexible in design, and where needed, is phased-in over multiple years.
- A focus on all parts of an industry, including its supply chain, and the wider community.
- Inclusion of First Nations communities, ensuring they have resources to fully participate in transition processes.
- Holistic, worker-centric support that provides a tailored, flexible approach to addressing workers' needs. Workers include employees, contractors and casuals.
- Where needed, a local coordinating authority is established to ensure solutions reflect a community's needs, skills and opportunities.
- Expanding opportunities for all workers and community members, including young people, women, people with disabilities, older people, and other vulnerable and marginalised groups.
- Affected people have a voice, are heard, and participate in decision-making.
- A strong partnership and widespread, continuous, respectful and inclusive collaboration between all stakeholders.
- A detailed and ongoing communication strategy.
- Access to expert support on career advice, labour markets, retraining, financial advice, and counselling that is easily accessible, unrestricted, high quality, tailored to specific sectors and made accessible to families, supporting them to plan ahead.
- For people facing multiple challenges, use of a case management model.
- Liaison between service providers to reduce overlap, duplication, confusion, and provide a more seamless worker-centric service.
- Resources for technical and vocational education to help with upskilling and reskilling.
- Ongoing research and evaluation throughout any transition process.
- Ongoing worker career support post-transition process, including job search support and information on available government and community support.

64 Examples: Phelan, L., and Crofts, K. (2022). 3 local solutions to replace coal jobs and ensure a just transition for mining communities. The Conversation. January 17. <https://theconversation.com/3-local-solutions-to-replace-coal-jobs-and-ensure-a-just-transition-for-mining-communities-174883>

Sartor O. (2018). Implementing coal transitions: Insights from case studies of major coal-consuming economies. IDDRI and Climate Strategies. <https://www.iddri.org/en/publications-and-events/report/implementing-coal-transition-insights-case-studies-major-coal>. Wiseman, J. and Wollersheim, L. (2021) Building prosperous, just and resilient zero-carbon regions: Learning from recent Australian and international experience, Melbourne Climate Futures, University of Melbourne.

https://www.unimelb.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0009/3934404/Wiseman-and-Wollersheim,-2021_MCF-Discussion-Paper_final.pdf. Department of Education, Skills and Employment. (2020) The transition of the Australian car manufacturing sector, Outcomes and best practice.

<https://www.dese.gov.au/whats-next/resources/transition-australian-car-manufacturing-sector-outcomes-and-best-practice-summary-report>

65 For example, the Hunter Jobs Alliance has documented the needs of the Hunter Region in multiple publications. <https://www.hunterjobsalliance.org.au/publications>

Essential ingredients for effective career services offered during transition processes include:

- Delivery by qualified, Career Development Professionals who build a trusting working relationship, have the required level of knowledge and expertise, use valid and reliable assessments, access current and accurate information, and use an evidence-based approach.
- Taking a structured, outcome-focused, personalised, flexible, encouraging approach that builds insight, confidence, resilience and hope.
- Acknowledgment by organisational leaders and the wider community of the importance of building career management skills across the lifespan so young people establish a solid foundation and workers use career services when needed.

CDAA therefore makes these recommendations:

Update and further implement the Australian government's National Career Development Strategy.

The 2013 National Career Development Strategy⁶⁶ takes an all-ages perspective and has fit-for-purpose goals. In consultation with stakeholders, including career development associations, the Australian government needs to quickly update the strategy to reflect current workforce and industry transition issues, include specific outcomes, and ensure that it is applied to relevant policies, including employment, education, training, regional development and industry.

Ensure regions affected by major transitions are supported with quality, long-term transition processes.

Regions and communities facing major transitions due to business and industry closures and structural adjustments must be supported with quality, long-term, transition processes. Stakeholders involved must:

- ensure any transition process is well-planned, locally-driven, orderly, fair, sufficiently and reliably funded, flexible in design, and where needed, phased-in over multiple years.
- provide holistic, worker-centric support that delivers a tailored, flexible approach to addressing all workers' needs, including career services delivered by qualified Career Development Practitioners. (Workers refers to employees, contractors, casual staff.)

8.

Strengthening career transition support and services

Summary: CDAA offers seven recommendations to further invest in quality career transition support and services.

Australians need a solid foundation in career management skills and access to qualified Career Development Practitioners when facing critical career transitions. As explained in this report, people need tailored, holistic, personalised support to guide their choices and decisions. Industry structural adjustments need well-planned transition processes that are just, effective, and well-managed and include quality career services.

Australia's careers ecosystem – the collective, interdependent components (individuals and organisations at the local, regional, national and international levels) that contribute to and influence people's careers – is complex, multi-layered, and impacts people's social, psychological, and economic wellbeing.

There are many players in Australia's careers ecosystem. As modelled in Appendix E, players include all parts of the education system, employers, governments across all jurisdictions, industry, recruiters, employment service providers, researchers, various peak bodies, unions, and professional associations like CDAA, to name only some of them. This complexity is confusing and the boundaries and relationships are not always obvious.

Career Development Practitioners help Australians navigate this ecosystem by, for example, sourcing accurate labour market information, identifying relevant training courses, and sourcing engaging opportunities. This support makes engaging a Career Development Practitioner to assist a person's career journey like seeking advice from a medical professional for a condition, compared to consulting 'Dr Google'. Or, engaging a qualified tradesperson to undertake certain repairs, compared to DIY. Yet many people are unaware of this ecosystem and/or lack the skills to navigate it, and hence opt for Dr Google or DIY, with unsatisfactory results.

But navigating this ecosystem is not enough. By helping Australians make work decisions tailored to their interests, values, strengths and needs, practitioners contribute significant value to Australia's social wellbeing and economy. These benefits extend to:

- individuals across the lifespan, seeking to manage their careers effectively, including any transitions they encounter.
- employers seeking to recruit and retain talented staff, provide rewarding careers, and provide training opportunities.
- disadvantaged groups who use government services to access career services that would otherwise be denied to them, and thereby find fulfilling work.
- organisations that need to support staff affected by changes, such as restructures, downsizing, and closures.
- industries and sectors that seek to restructure or revise workforce requirements.

As documented in this report, Australians will face several career transitions during their lifetime. To handle these transitions effectively and build the career management skills that will sustain people throughout their lives, Australia's careers ecosystem needs to be highly visible, coordinated, accessible, holistic, tailored, lifelong, and one that delivers a strong foundation for life. This means all stakeholders must collaborate and consult to address policy interrelationships and design and develop effective programs. This is an essential, not a discretionary, investment.

There is 'no one-size-fits-all' approach to transition processes. Every industry has its own characteristics, challenges and opportunities. Regions across Australia differ by geography, geology, climate and population. Strategies to create more and better jobs can only work if workers have the opportunity to develop skills, know about new jobs, are helped to adjust to changing labour market demands, and have access to education and training programs. Young people will only know about their options if career education and guidance continue to be a top priority, delivered across the full spectrum of the education sector.

Whether it's at the micro (individual) level, the meso (business or organisational) level, or macro (community, region, national) level, designing, implementing, and evaluating career services is a vital part of transition processes. If they are not included, or are ineffective, people will suffer, along with their families and communities.

Recommendations

Investing in essential career transition support and services will help Australians meet workforce challenges. CDAA recommends seven actions to support this investment.

1.

Update and further implement the Australian government's National Career Development Strategy.

The 2013 National Career Development Strategy⁶⁷ takes an all-ages perspective and has fit-for-purpose goals. In consultation with stakeholders, including career development associations, the Australian government needs to quickly update the strategy to reflect current workforce and industry transition issues, include specific outcomes, and ensure that it is applied to relevant policies, including employment, education, training, regional development and industry.

2.

Increase awareness of career support and services by the National Careers Institute.

The National Careers Institute (NCI) needs to promote career development services by:

- conducting targeted public awareness campaigns about available career services, the importance of developing career management skills, and the value of consulting qualified Career Development Practitioners during any career transition process.
- building industry stakeholders' understanding of the economic and social benefits of designing quality transition processes that include career services delivered by qualified Career Development Practitioners.



3.

Establish a sound foundation in career management skills by all governments.

Governments across jurisdictions need to ensure that all Australians receive a sound foundation in career management skills by:

- embedding career education in the early education and primary school curriculum, making sure educators⁶⁸ have the necessary skills, knowledge and support.⁶⁹
- making career education in all schools, including distance education schools, and TAFE colleges a priority by embedding career education in the curriculum, and providing resources to employ qualified Career Development Practitioners.

4.

Evaluate all government career services.

All existing, and future, government-funded career services need to be evaluated, and evaluation reports made public.

5.

Further adjust employers' recruiting and retention practices.

Employers need to respond to labour and skill shortages by further adjusting their recruiting practices to consider a combination of experience and transferable skills and willingness to learn new skills, and their retention practices by providing staff with development opportunities.

6.

Ensure regions affected by major transitions are supported with quality, long-term transition processes.

Regions and communities facing major transitions due to business and industry closures and structural adjustments must be supported with quality, long-term, transition processes. Stakeholders involved must:

- ensure any transition process is well-planned, locally-driven, orderly, fair, sufficiently and reliably funded, flexible in design, and where needed, phased-in over multiple years.
- provide holistic, worker-centric support that delivers a tailored, flexible approach to addressing all workers' needs, including career services delivered by qualified Career Development Practitioners. (Workers refers to employees, contractors, casual staff.)

68 The term 'educators' refers to pre-school and primary teachers, early childhood educators, and day-care workers.

69 Hooley, T. (2021). Career education in primary school. myfuture Insights series. Melbourne. Education Services Australia. Cahill, M. and Furey, E. (2017). The Early Years: Career Development for Young Children. A Guide for Educators. <https://ceric.ca/wpdm-package/early-years-career-development-young-children-guide-educators/>.

7.

Ensure career services are provided by qualified Career Development Practitioners.

When recruiting staff for services that involve providing career guidance, including career information, advice and support, qualified Career Development Practitioners with the appropriate skills, knowledge and experience must be sought. (See Appendix D for guidance.)

CDAA wants every person, no matter what their background is and no matter where they live, to be able to build a rewarding career. By working together to provide quality careers guidance that builds essential career management skills, young Australians can look forward to their futures with hope and confidence, and those already in work can access career support and services that open up other opportunities. Let's seize this chance to lead change and make the most of everyone's skills and talents.



9. CDAA case studies illustrating career transition processes

Summary: Seven case studies illustrate career transition processes described in Chapter 2, drawn from CDAA excellence award winners.

Case Study 1:

Helping Year 10 students transition to college

Deborah Winton PCDA.
Guilford Young College:
CDAA Excellence in Practice Award 2022

In Tasmania, most students from high schools and feeder catchment schools transition from Year 10 into college (senior secondary) to complete two years of either Australian Tertiary Admissions Rank (ATAR) subjects and/or undertake a VET pathway.

Students and their families experience high anxiety around transitioning between Year 10 and Year 11. Many rural students have higher anxiety due to having to transit in from our rural catchment to attend a Year 11 and 12 college.

As the Career Counsellor I am available to students who enrol at our college to assist them with their transition and give them an understanding about ATAR, VET and how to attain the Tasmania Certificate of Education (TCE). Throughout the year I attend our feeder high schools to meet, and chat with, most Year 10 students and try to alleviate their concerns or fears.

Guilford Young College offers a specialised week at the conclusion of Year 10 so students can sample college life and try their selected subjects. This helps them feel comfortable with the new expectations of college and Year 11.

Some of the key challenges facing students are:

- leaving a familiar high school environment to transition to a new senior secondary college in a new location, and possibly involving a lengthy bus trip.
- meeting and making friends with a new cohort of students from many high schools.
- understanding new ways of selecting subjects and courses and mapping them to career pathways.
- relying on parents' advice when they may have limited understanding about all the pathway options available and of the particular Year 11 & 12 education system.



The value of including a College Career Counsellor in this process means students (and where appropriate, their parents) receive:

- assistance in selecting a college program that aligns with their career ideas.
- personalised conversations about career ideas, aspirations and alternative pathways which may not have been provided at high school.
- career education sessions to assist students' thinking before they arrive at college.
- attendance and support at parent and information nights to help parents understand and navigate the ATAR, VET and college systems.
- personalised career counselling for Year 10 students whose intention is to transition to Guilford Young College.

Case Study 2:

Helping job seekers at risk of long-term unemployment

Bridget Hogg PCDA.
Development at Work Australia:
CDA Excellence in Practice Award 2020

Development at Work Australia received a Federal government grant in 2019 to help 350 SA job seekers aged 50+ to find work. The Next Steps program targeted job seekers at risk of being on benefits long-term, with many referred by a Disability Employment Service Provider. More than a simple employment program, Next Steps provided a full set of services for rethinking career, professional and personal goals.

The Next Steps program consisted of 12 workshops (each run in 3 locations) and approximately 8 individual coaching sessions for the participants.

Participants needed help with deciding what jobs to apply for, improving confidence and hope, improving resumes and interview skills, and overcoming limiting beliefs. By teaching employment skills and techniques as well as fostering resilience, optimism, confidence and hope, participants not only gained improvements in their knowledge, skills and job search behaviour, they were also motivated, and inspired to see themselves as employable.

Staying on government benefits long-term carries significant cost to tax payers. The government calculated that if just 2% (N = 7) of the proposed 350 job seekers assisted, found work and stayed off benefits, then the program would more than pay for itself. So far 172 participants have found work (more than 20 times the number costed to create an economic benefit).

Career Development Practitioners' support to participants included providing:



- guidance on tailoring resumes and assistance with applying for jobs.
- knowledge about how to find hidden jobs, applying for jobs online, and targeting organisations.
- networking events at which participants met employers.
- connections to organisations and individuals to freely support their entrepreneurship aspirations.
- help with assessing their business readiness and building a sustainable small business.
- help with seeing new things, seeing things in more effective ways and creating thought patterns and beliefs that support them to create their future.
- a team of coaches, counsellors, peer mentors and digital literacy mentors to listen to their needs and support them.

Case Study 3:

Helping women
returning to work

**Kendal Drew PCDA and
Helen Holan PCDA.**

**Strategic Career Management:
CDAA Excellence in Practice Awards
2020 and 2021**

Strategic Career Management has developed and delivered multiple programs that incorporate a values-centred approach to career conversations, job applications and careers reflection. Drawing on experience with organisations undergoing restructures and other changes, a grant-funded program, *Flourish Return to Work*, will deliver a combination of workshops and 1-1 sessions with women returning to work (parents of school-aged children) in Rockingham, a low socio-economic area in WA. The program will deliver group sessions covering personal confidence, skills assessments, motivation and opportunity awareness.

Each program will run twice and take up to 30 participants. The program runs over 8 weeks. The contact hours are one (school hours) day per week with 6 group sessions and two 1-1 sessions with an experienced career coach (each 1.5-2 hours).

We'll be bringing in local businesses, training organisations and mentors to reduce fear around the transition and build local networks. We're working with a voice and impact coach as part of the program to help participants gain confidence presenting themselves in the market. We'll provide the entire process from self-reflection, through to identifying motivated interests, to tying this to career exploration and building networks. We're also undertaking research with the University of Western Australia to ascertain the benefits of high-quality career interventions for women.

Key challenges participants face are:

- lack of awareness of jobs and careers available and opportunities in the local jobs market.
- limited awareness of training options and how to access and apply for them.
- unclear direction concerning their own motivated career interests and the difference between a job, career and vocation and how this is a unique, personal choice.
- lack of confidence about re-entering the jobs market, which may be due to a sense that their skills are out of date, lack of attachment to local networks or uncertainty about what is possible for them.
- inability to present themselves to others during the job search process.
- financial barriers (or perceived financial barriers).
- limited access to quality career assistance.

The value to participants of including career services delivered by Career Development Practitioners are:

- building personal awareness and developing a strong 'motivating why' for both the possibility of a return to study or work, and the particular option they focus on.
- building confidence in their capacity and ability to achieve their goals.
- developing clarity regarding what they have to offer future employers.
- a sound plan that has been developed with the person at the centre, utilising a strengths-based approach that builds action through hope.
- access to high quality contacts and information so that their research is relevant and productive and the participants feel supported in their choices and actions.
- assistance with the preparation of resumes, LinkedIn profiles (if required) and study applications.
- connection with tertiary providers and local employers to build networks and reduce stigma about entering the adult education environment or fear of being 'too old' to start a new career, and fear of unknowns.



Case Study 4:

Working with ADF members, veterans, and their partners

Amanda McCue PCDA.

Career Swag:

CDA Excellence in Policy Award 2019

Transitions are common within Australia's defence community. ADF members change jobs within the ADF frequently, and face significant transition when the time comes to leave. Partners of ADF members frequently transition between jobs, and in and out of employment, as a result of military relocations and caregiving responsibilities.

To deliver services that meet the needs of defence and veteran clients, Career Development Practitioners need an awareness and understanding of military culture, skills to identify individuals' unique experiences and needs, and an ability to apply evidence-informed, holistic career services.

As many ADF clients are unaware of what's needed for a successful transition to civilian employment, Ms McCue provides assistance with:

- identifying and understanding skills, interests, needs, and values.
- exploring a variety of possibilities to identify post-ADF options.
- understanding the job search and recruitment process.
- building and utilising networks.
- translating military skills and experience to civilian jobs.
- understanding and adapting to civilian workplace environments and cultures.

This support builds understanding of the different aspects of transition planning and the areas clients need to address, based on their individual circumstances.

ADF partner clients have distinct needs. Ms McCue's services include providing assistance with:

- identifying their 'unique value proposition'.
- understanding and articulating how their skills, attributes and experience apply in different jobs, industries and geographic locations.
- articulating their contributions and achievements in job applications.
- finding work (including flexible work options) in new labour markets.
- addressing gaps in employment.
- maintaining confidence and positivity.
- balancing personal goals with family and military needs.

This support helps clients to build their career knowledge and skills and navigate systemic barriers to employment.

Career support for ADF members, veterans and families is provided by multiple agencies within government, ex-service, non-profit and private sectors. As part of the careers ecosystem, greater integration, consistency, accessibility and quality are essential for successful career transitions.

Case Study 5:

Supporting staff
being made redundant

Anne Hutton PCDA.

Career Money Life:

CDAA Excellence in Practice Award 2021

Career Money Life (CML) supported over 1000 employees from Dnata Catering whose positions were being made redundant on Christmas Eve 2020. As most employees had limited English, and many did not have access to a computer or were technically challenged, the usual process was modified to accommodate these needs. Employees were long-serving, were diverse in age, and some were also facing harsh circumstances in their personal lives.

With the help of linguistic experts, brochures and instruction emails were translated into a range of languages including Filipino, Thai, Hindi, Chinese, Vietnamese. The CML team provided employees with personal assistance to access services and specially curated onboarding webinars to help the transitioning employees feel more comfortable with the process and platform.

Suppliers with different language expertise were sought and onboarded onto CML's supplier community to help the Dnata employees. The CML team sourced some low-cost resume and interview suppliers to provide value for money.

Post service delivery, we tracked employees' job outcomes, and whenever any employee needed more assistance, we recommended suppliers and shared e-books, videos and interactive tools to support them further.

In August 2021, we reconnected with 403 people via phone or text. As a result of this we were able to connect directly with 66 of the former Dnata catering employees. At that time 31 were in work, 2 were studying, 4 had retired, 15 were looking for work, and most had roles or contracts.

CML demonstrates how a mix of online, face-to-face and virtual services gives clients a designed service that meets individual needs with plenty of choice and control, backed by professional support. As a self-service benefits platform, it taps diverse service providers, a wide range of digital tools and resources, while providing the human touch of a support team.

Case Study 6:

Supporting staff affected
by a business closure

Gillian Kelly FCDA.

Outplacement Australia:

CDAA Excellence in Practice Award 2020

Outplacement Australia supported a metropolitan warehouse for a global fashion brand that was closing due to a restructure. The organisation had a reputation for caring for its people and felt strongly about providing qualified care during the transition process.

Within the planning phase, several workforce challenges were identified:

- numerous staff with limited computer literacy and/or access.
- multiple staff with literacy issues; and some with English as a Second Language.
- numerous staff with no online job search experience.

With more application processes moving online, and the growing use of virtual interviewing, this lack of knowledge and skills presented substantial potential barriers to job opportunities. The aim was to create a program that built staff's confidence to navigate modern job search processes.

To achieve this, a hybrid program of individual support and onsite workshops was created and delivered by qualified Career Development Practitioners. This included 6 hours of training across resume, modern job search and interview skills, along with 2 hours of individualised support. Workshops were kept small and practical. Tailored templates and resume samples were provided, along with access to an online tool to assist with Applicant Tracking System (ATS) application optimisation. The organisation reinforced comprehension of online recruitment processes by sharing insights of their own use of recruitment technology.

For those with English as a Second Language, limited literacy or technology access, career practitioners provided invaluable assistance in the creation of resumes, online profiles, and application materials. Others used their time to refine interview skills or explore new career paths, retirement, or study.

Through intensive training on modern job search, the program boosted participants' confidence, including those with limited technical or job search literacy. More than 88% of people indicated they felt confident that what they had learnt would assist their careers and the program was successful in aiding people to transition positively whilst delivering on the organisation's commitment to quality care.



Case Study 7:

Raising the profile of agriculture,
a transitioning industry

Dr Nicole McDonald PCDA.

CQUniversity:

CDAA Excellence in Research Award 2019

Dr McDonald is acknowledged in the agricultural sector for her leadership in raising the profile of careers in agriculture. The National Farmers Federation, for example, accepted Dr McDonald to its prestigious NFF 2030 Leaders, a group of emerging leaders influencing the future of agriculture.

Dr McDonald began her career contributing to the Australian Collaboratory for Career Employment and Learning for Living (ACCELL)'s research and development (R&D) on the Vocational Psychology of Agriculture. Since 2020, she has been the Senior Research Officer in CQUniversity's Agricultural Education and Extension research cluster where she aims to position Australian career development as the international source of authority in the field. Her work has now expanded to include career development action research projects through all stages of the lifespan from prep through to older workers. Specifically, she is leading R&D to enhance the attraction and retention of workers in agriculture and to promote agriculture as a career of choice.

Little research exists on the vocational psychology of agriculture, including how career decisions are made, how work adjustment occurs, and what is needed to ensure individuals can build a meaningful and satisfying career in this industry.

Dr McDonald's has contributed to projects including:

- Exploring cotton farm workers' job satisfaction by adapting Social Cognitive Career Theory to the farm work context, creating an evidence-based model of farm workers' job and career satisfaction.
- Investigating backpackers' experiences of farm work using the Job Demands-Resources model.
- An exploration of career decisions, work adjustment, and employability skills required for new entrants to the cotton industry.
- Technology acceptance and impacts of digital agriculture on the careers of farm workers.
- The Excited 4 Careers in Agriculture program, funded by the National Careers Institute and working with education networks and multiple agricultural industry bodies to deliver RIASEC-based⁷⁰ career exploration activities for rural and regional students K-10.



Dr McDonald's current R&D is creating a comprehensive workforce development framework for the future of work in the cotton industry. This program is funded by the Cotton Research and Development Corporation. This work will enable growers to not only better recruit staff but also to better engage their current staff in their work to increase job and career satisfaction.

Dr McDonald's submissions have been featured in the National Agricultural Workforce Strategy report and her work supports farmers, policy makers, and career practitioners. The evidence from her research activities has the potential for widespread social, economic, and environmental impacts on society through meaningful, decent work opportunities in regional and rural Australia, improved productivity of a vital industry, and an ongoing sustainable source of food and fibre for our future.



Appendix A:

Acronyms

Some of the acronyms listed here relate to Appendix E: **Model of Australia's careers ecosystem.**

ACTU	Australian Council of Trade Unions
ADF	Australian Defence Force
AFOEM	Australasian Faculty of Occupational and Environmental Medicine
APCDA	Asia Pacific Career Development Association
ATAR	Australian Tertiary Admissions Rank
CDAA	Career Development Association Australia
CDANZ	Career Development Association of New Zealand
CEDEFOP	European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training
CERIC	Canadian Education and Research Institute for Counselling
CICA	Career Industry Council of Australia
FCDA	Fellow Member, Career Development Association of Australia
HR	Human Resources
IAEVG	International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance
ICDDPP	International Centre for Career Development and Public Policy
ILO	International Labour Organization
NAGCAS	National Association of Graduate Career Advisory Services
NCDA	National Career Development Association (USA)
NDIS	National Disability Insurance Scheme
NRL	National Rugby League
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PCDAA	Professional Member, Career Development Association of Australia
RACP	Royal Australasian College of Physicians
RCAA	Rehabilitation Counselling Association of Australasia
TAFE	Technical and Further Education
VET	Vocational Education and Training



Appendix B:

Career Development Association of Australia and its members

The Career Development Association Australia (CDAA) is Australia's national, multi-sectoral professional association, with more than 1300 members across Australia working in all sectors of the profession. This broad membership means CDAA grasps the interconnections within the careers ecosystem, speaks for career-related issues that impact Australians across their lifespan, and explains the connections between multiple policies and diverse programs.

CDAA members are recognised Career Development Practitioners who conform to a Professional Standards Framework and a Code of Practice. Members are governed by ethical standards, require substantiated, industry-related qualifications, and are obliged to complete a minimum number of professional development hours every year.

Career Development is a specific discipline underpinned by accredited qualifications, proven theory and recognised practice. Career Development Practitioners have a set of core competencies that provide essential skills, knowledge and attitudes regardless of their work setting. Some practitioners undertake additional training to acquire specialised competencies suited to specific roles or specific client needs.

Career practitioners work in a range of settings including schools, TAFEs, universities, corporate organisations, government agencies, the community sector and private practice.

Job titles used by practitioners include career educator, career counsellor, performance management consultant, rehabilitation consultant, researcher, human resources officer, work experience coordinator, employment services advisor, career coach, psychologist and youth worker.

Career Development focuses on enabling people to understand and develop their skills and preferences to manage the work-related challenges they face, make good decisions about their working lives, and maximise their contribution to the communities in which they live and work. They assist individuals and organisations to prepare for their futures by making informed decisions about career and workforce development.



In addition to their CDAA membership, many members belong to other career development associations, both Australian and international, as well as a range of other professional bodies.⁷¹ This enhances their knowledge of Career Development theory and practice, maintains currency in related professions, and builds extended networks to benefit their clients.

Some members are published authors, and many contribute articles to reputable national and international journals. Members also contribute to international career development conferences and policy forums.

Broadly, the context of Career Development Practitioners' work can be grouped into five categories, which are not mutually exclusive. Members may deliver their services in several of these categories.

Working with clients: most practitioners provide career services, including career advice and information, to individual people, both singly and in groups.

Within or for organisations: many practitioners are employed or contracted by organisations to provide career services to staff or students. Organisations include schools, colleges, universities, government departments, businesses, companies and councils.

Government services: many practitioners are contracted to deliver career services funded by governments. These services may be targeted at specific groups, such as the long-term unemployed, young people, mature-age people, or support industry transitions, such as the closure of the automotive industry.

Researchers and academics: some practitioners work, either independently or within research organisations or universities, teaching future career practitioners, improving services, expanding knowledge, and delivering services.

Major transition processes and programs: some industry transition programs, including company closures, have included career services offered by qualified career practitioners. Funded by companies and/or governments, these vital services support affected workers to manage their transition.



Appendix C:

Glossary of some career development terms

Sources of some terms:

*Career Industry Council of Australia, Professional Standards for Australian Career Development Practitioners, 2019, <https://cica.org.au/wp-content/uploads/Professional-Standards-for-Australian-Career-Development-Practitioners-2019.pdf>

**CERIC and the Canadian Council for Career Development (CCCD). Glossary of Career Development. <https://ceric.ca/glossary-of-career-development/>

Career*

A lifestyle concept that involves work, learning and leisure activities across the lifespan. Careers are dynamic, unique to each person, and involve balancing paid and unpaid work and personal life roles.

Career Adviser*

Career Advisers hold Professional Qualifications in Career Development and provide a service that facilitates career decision making. They provide timely and authoritative advice and information to students, parents and colleagues in educational settings.

Career Assessment*

A process that gives meaning to quantitative test results and informal qualitative career assessment instruments.

Career Coaching**

Career coaching is the process of working with people to help them assess their skills and make critical and informed career development decisions, as well as helping them to use various tools—résumés, cover letters, LinkedIn profiles—to accomplish their career goals. In general, career coaching tends to be a solution-oriented approach, which involves working with clients to see what concrete steps they can take to achieve their career objectives.

It helps people to assess their professional situations with a greater degree of honesty.



Career Counselling*

A process that assists people by emphasising self-awareness and understanding in order to develop a satisfying and meaningful career direction that guides learning, work and transition decisions and manage changing work and learning environments over the lifespan. Career counselling may be conducted individually or in small groups. Career Counsellors hold Professional Qualifications in Career Development as well as Specialised Qualifications in career counselling and/or psychology.

Career Development*

The process of managing life, learning, work, leisure, and transitions across the lifespan in order to move towards a personally determined future.

Career Development Practitioner*

Career Development Practitioners provide a wide variety of services to diverse client groups in order to foster their career development. Career Development Practitioners may deliver services in settings such as, but not limited to, schools, higher education (e.g., TAFE and universities), business organisations, government agencies and private practice in a range of formats including one-to-one, small groups, via the web, large classes and self-help materials. Such services may include, but are not limited to, career counselling, career advice, career education, job placement, employment services, recruitment, career coaching, training, mentoring and coordinating work experience or internships programs. Career Development Practitioners may work at either a Professional or Associate level.

Career Development Services*

A wide range of programs and services provided in many different jurisdictions and delivery settings to stimulate career development learning in order that clients gain the knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours to manage their life, learning and work in self-directed ways.

Careers ecosystem

Australia's careers ecosystem is the collective, interdependent components (individuals and organisations at the local, regional, national and international levels) that contribute to and influence people's careers.

Career Education*

The development of knowledge, skills and attitudes through a planned program of learning experiences in education and training settings to assist students make informed decisions about their life, learning and work options and enable their effective participation in working life.



Career Exploration**

Career exploration is the process of reflecting on self and learning about the world of work, identifying and exploring potentially satisfying occupations and their corresponding training and educational requirements, and developing an effective strategy to realize your goals, as a basis for making career-life choices over the lifespan.

Career Guidance*

An umbrella term for the services provided by Professional Career Development Practitioners, intended to assist individuals, of any age and at any point throughout their lives, to make educational, training and occupational choices and to manage their careers.

Career Information*

Occupational and industry information, education and training information and social information related to the world of work sourced from resources such as computer-based career information delivery systems, the Internet, print and media materials, informational interviews, and workplace speakers.

Career Management Skills*

The knowledge, skills and behaviours required by all citizens to manage and develop their learning and employment across their working lives. These skills include gathering, analysing, synthesising and organising self, educational and occupational information as well as the skills for making and implementing career decisions and transitions.

Career Path**

Career path refers to the series of any combination of work roles, occupations, or jobs that a person moves through by design and coincidence as their career unfolds. This route starts with the first job and continues to encompass the roles throughout the entire career. From the company or industry perspective, a career path is a route that may be taken by workers within a matrix of positions that are connected by increased and new acquisition of skills and knowledge.

Career Planning**

Career planning is an ongoing process through which a person sets career goals and identifies ways of achieving them. Through career planning, a person identifies and evaluates his or her own abilities and interests, objectives, marketable skills, strengths, and weaknesses, etc., and considers alternative career opportunities, establishes career goals, and plans practical developmental activities. Career planning is not an event or end in itself, but a continuous process.



Community Capacity Building**

Community capacity building refers to the processes and procedures whereby long-term strategies are developed and implemented which connect community, career and economic development in the interests of unemployment reduction and economic growth at the community level. It is an approach to identify, strengthen and link a community's tangible resources, such as local service groups, and intangible resources like community spirit, with the goal to strengthen the skills and abilities of people and groups to empower them to contribute effectively in the development of their communities.

Employability Skills*

Generic skills and attributes that are required to gain employment and may be transferred from one situation to another.



Appendix D:

Crafting a Career Development Practitioner role description

When recruiting or contracting Career Development Practitioners and staff who deliver any form of career advice, either individually or via a tender process for outplacement, employment, or career-related services, consider the following information about role and requirements (skills, experience, qualifications), based on what you want people in the role to do.

Role title: what will you call this job?

Career Development Practitioners use a range of job titles, depending on the context and nature of the role. Titles include: *career coach, career consultant, career educator, career counsellor, rehabilitation consultant, researcher, human resources officer, work experience coordinator, employment services advisor, youth worker, psychologist.*

Target market: are you seeking someone to work with a specific group of people?

Career Development Practitioners may work with specific groups of people, such as university graduates, unemployed people, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, migrants and refugees, executives, victims of crime or abuse, neurodiverse people, people on probation or parole, and they may work with people who vary in age, occupation, seniority, background and circumstances.

Qualifications: what professional background is needed?

The generally recognised qualification for Career Development Practitioners is a nationally accredited Graduate Certificate. Depending on the target audience, a relevant qualification may also include for example, psychology, social work, youth work, or counselling.

Membership or eligibility for membership, of a career development professional association like CDAA or other CICA-member organisation is essential.

Willingness to maintain professional standing with a career development professional organisation and undertake professional development activities is essential.



Knowledge: what knowledge is essential or desirable for performing the role?

Examples are:

- Knowledge and understanding of career development theory.
- Knowledge and understanding of the needs of specific target markets.
- Knowledge and understanding of specific occupations, industries, sectors.
- Knowledge and understanding of specific regions.
- Knowledge of government support programs.
- An understanding of employability skills expected by employers.
- Understanding of [particular or diverse] labour markets, industries, sectors or contexts.
- Knowledge of policies and procedures related to equal opportunity, health and safety, and cultural awareness.
- An awareness or understanding of relevant contextual information, such as issues and trends

Experience and skills: what experience and associated skills, are essential or desirable for performing the role?

Examples are:

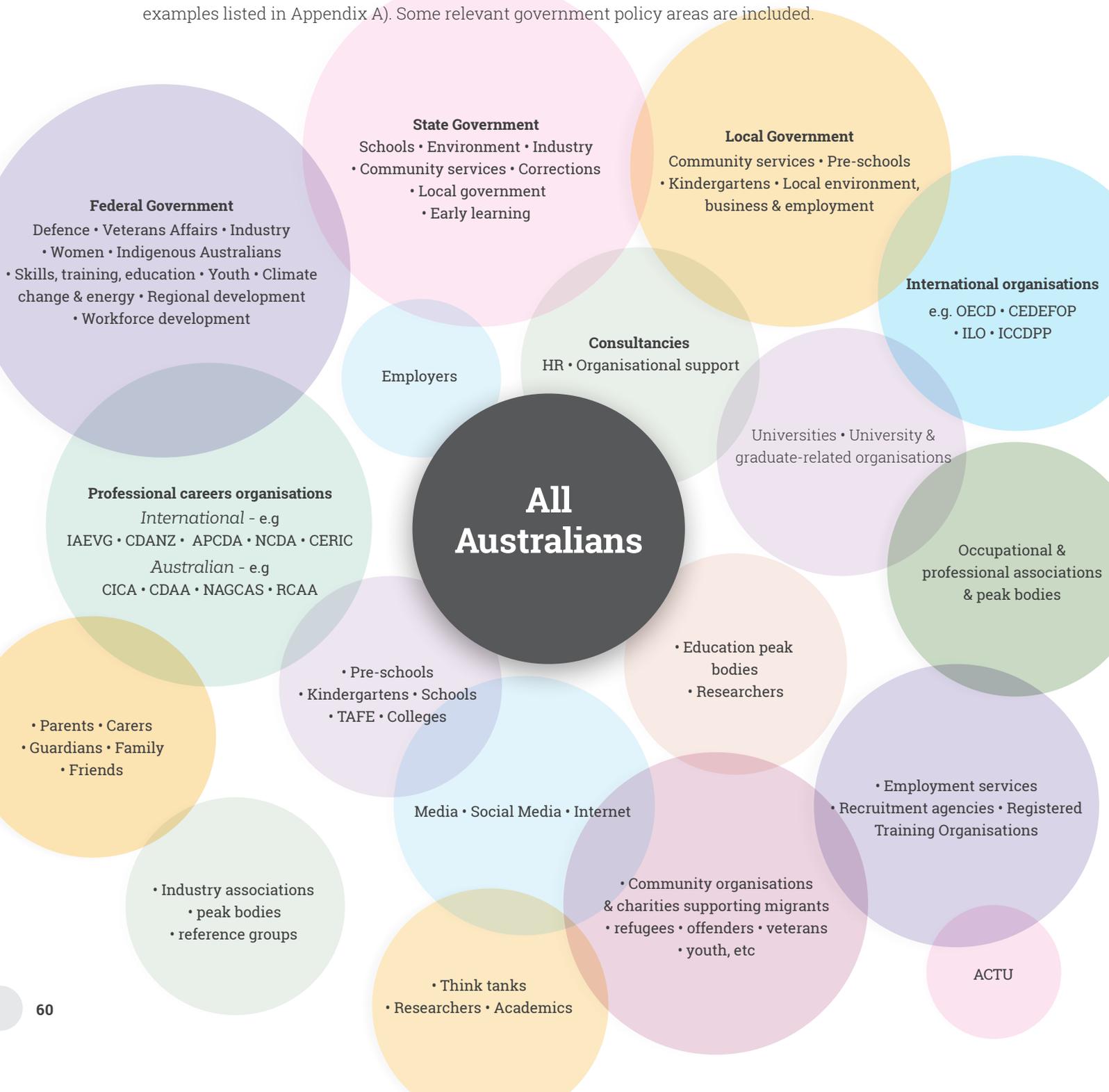
- Working with specific target markets.
- Relevant career transition processes, programs, or projects.
- The development, implementation and evaluation of career-related programs and services.
- Developing and delivering training programs.
- Building industry and employer networks and collaborations.
- Providing career guidance through one-to-one career consultations both in-person and online.
- Designing, developing, delivering and evaluating career development resources, seminars, workshops, and programs.
- Communicating effectively with a range of stakeholders, including [specific groups].
- Working effectively, both independently and as part of a team, to deliver high quality outcomes.
- Planning and analytical skills.
- Investigating issues, analysing data, solving problems, recommending solutions.
- Using standard office desktop software, and internet-based applications.
- Establishing industry contacts and ascertaining and meeting their needs.



Appendix E:

Model of Australia's careers ecosystem

Australia's careers ecosystem – the collective, interdependent components (individuals and organisations at the local, regional, national and international levels) that contribute to and influence people's careers – is complex, multi-layered, and impacts people's social, mental, and economic wellbeing. This model represents key players who impact Australians' career journey across their lifespan (with acronyms for illustrative examples listed in Appendix A). Some relevant government policy areas are included.





Career Development
Association Australia