

CAREER INFORMATION BRIEF #34 Preparing to Become a Global Worker



The Centre for Career Education is excited to present the 34th monthly career information brief. The purpose of these career information briefs is to provide faculty and staff with timely information which they can use to assist students who are inquiring about more career specific information.

Introduction:

As national economies become increasingly interdependent, organizations are becoming dependent upon workers from different cultural backgrounds to work together. There are not only increasing opportunities in the global marketplace for work assignments to other countries, but workers may also find themselves assigned to an international project within their home country and working alongside people from other nations. Canada's participation in a global economy is an economic reality for organizations, and for Canada as a nation. Future global workers will need to be prepared for working across cultures, both within and beyond the borders of Canada. To be marketable in an international labour force, future global workers will need specialized skills, knowledge about cross-cultural work transitions, and strategies for developing effective cross-cultural work relationships. Along with the knowledge and skills, future global workers will also need to become globally minded and develop a view of themselves as active participants in a global economy.

Major Global Trends that are Driving the Change towards a Global Economy

Technology is the first trend that is changing how people participate in an international workforce. Employers can now seek qualified applicants across their country and between countries through job postings on the Internet. It is also now possible for an employee to live at home, but be employed in another country. Modern technology has developed to such an extent that it can now facilitate the transfer of work products to the employer and in the process, eliminate several expenses such as office facilities at the work site.

Increased opportunities for travel and the development of business partnerships between countries is the second element driving the global economy. Business relationships are now becoming more intercultural. Markets and economies have shifted as access to new countries and new consumer groups have opened up. However, exporting goods and services to new markets could have profound impacts on the local culture and the environment. Globally minded workers of the future will be needed who can see beyond the economic gain and understand the importance of considering human and ecological costs.

Cross Cultural Competencies Needed in the Global Marketplace

Beyond knowledge in a field of specialization future global workers will need to develop:

Attitudinal competencies: Attitudinal competencies are attitudes towards and beliefs about worker roles in a global economy. Future global workers will need to develop an understanding about how culture impacts everyone in the workforce. During interactions with people from culturally diverse backgrounds, future global workers will possess the understanding that their way of doing things represents only one way, and that there are many ways to approach work-related activities. Rather than seeing differences as wrong, they have the opportunity of approaching diversity with openness and the opportunity for increased learning.

Knowledge competencies: Knowledge of other cultures is increasingly becoming a foundation for success in the global workplace. Future global workers will need to extend their technical expertise to include cultural knowledge. This includes a general understanding of the major cultural groups with whom they work. Knowledge of other cultures is necessary not only to access markets but to also better understand the impact of business and educational practices within those markets. Knowledge competencies for global workers will not only include cultural ethics, but also a responsibility for behaviour across cultures. Workers who possess strong cultural knowledge are in a better position to advocate for members of cultural groups and to understand the potential hazards inherent in policies and practices.

Skills competencies: Language: The capacity to speak more than one language enhances employability in a global economy. However, an individual's language skills will need to be supplemented with cross cultural communication skills. Communication for cultural diversity requires competencies for interpreting meanings and responding in culturally appropriate ways. **Decision Making:** Future global workers will need to be equipped with decision-making skills that consider the impact of their choices for more than one cultural context. Decisions made in one cultural context can have profound implications in another context. **Conflict Management/Mediation:** There is greater potential for miscommunication and misunderstandings when people who hold different cultural values come together. Conflict management and mediation skills will be essential for global workers whose roles depend upon effective working relationships. **Culture Shock:** Surrounding all of these skills is the need for future global workers to develop

competencies for managing culture shock. Culture shock, like stress management, requires people to develop a repertoire of strategies that help them stay in situations and adapt in positive ways.

Summary

Future workers who develop a mindset that they are global workers, view cross-cultural interactions as the norm for participation in the labour force, and have the foresight to incorporate cross-cultural and international experience into their career development will have a tremendous advantage in the future workplace

Resources Available to University of Windsor Students

The Centre for Career Education offers a wide variety of programs and services that can assist students with career development including:

- a. Vocational assessments to help identify potential career paths and choices
- b. 1-1 Career Advising
- c. Experiential learning programs such as Volunteer Internship Program and EXCEL Leadership Program
- d. Assistance with resume and cover letter writing, job search planning, and interview preparation and practice through Mock Interview sessions

For a complete list of services visit our website at <http://www.uwindsor.ca/cce>

To help students prepare for work the Centre for Career Education offers the following resources:

- Resume Clinic – Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, 1:00 – 2:00PM Room 111 Dillon Hall
- Online resume critique – resume@uwindsor.ca
- Career/Vocational Advising (by appointment) Tuesday / Thursday 9:00 – 1:00PM, Room 111 Dillon Hall
To register for an appointment go to <https://career.uwindsor.ca> or click on **myCareer** via the student portal at <https://my.uwindsor.ca>, create an account and review and register for appointments on the events calendar.
- 1-1 resume, job search, mock interview with employment advisor. To register for an appointment go to <https://career.uwindsor.ca> or click on **myCareer** via the student portal at <https://my.uwindsor.ca>, create an account and review and register for appointments on the events calendar.
- Pathways to Success instructional workshops focusing on career planning and development of employment readiness skills. To register for workshops go to <https://career.uwindsor.ca> or click on **myCareer** via the student portal at <https://my.uwindsor.ca>, create an account and review and register for workshops on the events calendar.