

APEGBC Handbook

Labour Market Research for Engineering Professions



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1. Introduction

This handbook has been prepared to assist individuals in understanding and accessing labour market information, particularly job seekers with an engineering background and training. This document provides an overview of the knowledge and skills required to research useful labour market information. It also describes various ways to enhance one's marketability in today's workforce. The primary objective of this handbook is to provide readers with insights for expanding and enhancing their approach to finding work and managing their careers.

2. Overview of Labour Market Information

2.1 What is the Labour Market?

The labour market is a forum or place where those in need of labour interact with those who can supply labour. The labour market can be thought of as a series of responses to ever changing needs of employers for skilled workers and demands of workers for positions to use their skills in exchange for some form of compensation.

2.2 What is Labour Market Information?

Labour market information, which is often referred to as LMI, is defined as information concerning conditions in, or the operation of, the labour market¹. This type of information can be characterized in the following manner:

- It can be statistical or narrative (descriptive) in nature.
- It can refer to historical, current or future circumstances or situations.
- It often includes data on employment and unemployment, job openings or vacancies, qualifications and skills for work, compensation (that is, salaries, wages, benefits, etc.), working conditions, potential growth, and working conditions.
- It forms an important component of career planning, decision-making, job search strategies, and job maintenance considerations.

Given the broad scope of labour market information and its relevance to career planning and decision-making, it is essential that job seekers gain an understanding of the structure of labour market information, as well as learning effective methods to obtain such information. This understanding will help people in their career planning, decision-making and job search efforts.

¹ Adapted from O'Reilly, Elaine. 2001. **Making Career Sense of the Labour Market Information**. Canadian Career Development Foundation. Ottawa, Ontario.

2.3 What Changes Have Occurred in the Labour Market?

A wide variety of significant changes have occurred in the labour market since the 1950s and 1960s. In particular, changes in the labour market over the last 10 years have had far reaching effects on the Canadian workforce. Such changes include:

- A change in the way that work is organized and conducted, which has reduced opportunities for long-term, secure jobs for many workers in Canada.
- The replacement of resource-based extraction and primary industry jobs by service sector jobs.
- Improvements and increased reliance on technology, which has forced workers to obtain more education and training.
- A very high rate of change in our economy and workforce due to technological and communication advancements, which has reduced the certainty of what work and jobs will look like in the future.

These and other major changes in our society and workplace have produced considerable feelings of uncertainty for many workers, as well as challenging their traditional assumptions about the workplace.

Many of our current assumptions regarding the labour market and the workforce are based on values, concepts, and attitudes that were developed from working conditions in earlier periods. For example, in the past the following conditions existed in the workforce:

- In a job, a worker was normally expected to continue doing the specific tasks that he or she was hired for until they were promoted.
- People expected to more or less automatically move up the career ladder through direct promotions from within a company.
- Workers had a clear sense of what type of job they would be doing next and throughout their career.
- Workers expected to receive training from their employers when and as needed.
- Workers were promoted on the basis on seniority.
- They would stay with a company during their entire career, so long as they worked consistently and were loyal to the company.
- In return, employers had considerable certainty in terms of the workforce.
- The economy was relatively stable, which produced considerable security in people's jobs and lives.

Today's labour market and economy has changed considerably from that of the 1950s to 1970s. Workers in this era face considerable challenges in trying to understand and adapt to dramatic

changes in the labour market and economy. Such challenges can arise from the following factors:

- Lack of job security.
- Fewer direct promotions from within a company.
- Radical and rapid changes in job descriptions and responsibilities.
- Greater incidences of layoffs, combined with changes in the structure of jobs from long-term single-purpose functional positions within one company to short-term employment with numerous companies.
- A movement away from long-term positions with benefits and security to short-term contract work with no job benefits.

Two of the key changes to the manner in which people access labour market information and go about their job search or transition are: (1) the need to expand their traditional technical work skills, and (2) the need for jobseekers to become adept at “self-marketing”. Effective job seekers have become aware of and expanded their technical job skill sets to include the following components:

- Life and employability skills (that is, generic skills desired in today’s workforce, such as communications, interpersonal relations, teambuilding, problem-solving, and conflict resolution).
- Enhanced technical skills beyond those traditionally associated with jobs.
- Research skills, which must include the ability to access, evaluate, interpret, and effectively use labour market information.
- Integration skills to ensure consideration and incorporation of the above skills as a proactive approach to lifetime career management.

Given the diverse and complex changes in the labour force and the increasing competition for suitable employment, it is also in a job-seeker’s best interest to learn about and effectively use self-marketing as an innovative and critical career management strategy. Job seekers in today’s competitive job market can no longer rely solely on traditional approaches to find suitable employment. Rather, effective job search strategies in today’s labour market involve proactive approaches to facilitate networking and help create opportunities for work. This involves a fundamental shift in how people look for work – an approach that moves away from traditional methods for seeking employment and embraces new and innovative career management strategies as highlighted in the following table.

<p style="text-align: center;">Traditional Job Search Techniques</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">New Career Management Strategies</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broadcast distribution of resumes with generic cover letters • Job interviews and selection process • Limited contact with and knowledge of potential employers • Specific search for long-term, secure jobs as employment • Expectation of stability and security in the workplace • Not overly concerned with future trends in the labour market and economy • Narrow focus for job searches and career management • Reliance on company to provide training and assist in professional development, as well as looking after retirement issues • Specific attention to workplace issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information and self-marketing meetings rather than job interviews • Preparation of proposals and concepts for work, self-marketing letters • Considerable research into potential employers and opportunities • Search for short-term work variety of work options • Creation of potential opportunities for work • Understand uncertainty in today's workplace and determine strategies to deal with this condition; proactive management of expectations regarding work • Careful consideration of current and future trends in the labour market and economy • Broad perspective to one's career management, particularly for a worker to manage one's own career • Greater self-reliance in terms of personal financial planning, lifelong learning and professional development, and skills upgrading • Greater consideration of a lifestyle that balances work, leisure and family

From this list of changes in today's workforce and labour market, one key principle emerges: job security is determined by a person's ability to be marketable and to be responsible for managing their own career.

3. LABOUR MARKET INFORMATION FOR CAREER PLANNING AND JOB SEARCHES²

There is an enormous amount of labour market information available to people interested in obtaining such information. Given the diversity and complexity of sources of labour market information, it is important for job seekers to learn effective methods for accessing and using such information. The more proficient job seekers become in finding suitable sources of labour market information, the better prepared they will be for taking advantage of and/or making opportunities for suitable work.

The effective use of labour market information for career planning and job searches involves three primary activities:

1. Identifying the type of information that you require. For example, you may need labour market information to resolve questions regarding suitable types of relevant occupations/industries for work; costs of education and training programs; salaries or wages in your intended field of work; standards and certifications required for work; or, specifics about working conditions in a particular type of job.
2. Determining suitable sources for the information that you require. Knowing suitable sources of labour market information will help make your research more effective and productive.
3. Evaluating the relevance and suitability of the information that you obtain. Much of the current labour market information is developed from projections or estimates on the basis of a representative sample of an entire population. Moreover, some of the labour market information can be quite dated, both of which can mislead or confuse the job seeker. Consequently, the ability to determine the relevancy, validity, and suitability of labour market information is important for effective career management and job search strategies.

Unfortunately, labour market information reports and information sources contain a lot of jargon and terminology that may be confusing to job seekers. However, with patience and with the use of tools such as glossaries, job seekers can become familiar with the necessary terms for efficient collection and understanding of labour market information. A sample glossary of labour market information terms is provided in **Appendix A**.

With today's information technology and easy access to considerable data, it is challenging even for employment counsellors to keep up with all the changes and innovations in labour market information. Moreover, in today's economy, labour market trends can change very

² Adapted from **Internet Resources for Self-Assessment**, received from <http://worksearch.gc.ca> on May 14, 2003.

quickly. Consequently, it becomes critical for individuals to take responsibility and become self-reliant in researching labour market information. The ability to become self-reliant in gathering, analyzing, and applying labour market information has become a key skill for successful career management. By learning how to research and access information about the labour market, one can gain considerable insights that can be directly applied to achieving specific career goals.

In summary, conducting research for labour market information comprises the following process:

- Identifying what type of labour market information required for one's particular career goals (for example, are you interested in finding work, doing career planning, changing occupations, considering training or education, etc.
- Looking for and finding the appropriate sources of labour market information
- Collecting relevant statistics and other information from those sources.
- Evaluating what these statistics and other information mean.
- Applying these insights to one's career planning process.

The following sub-sections of this handbook present common key areas and specific questions for conducting labour market information research, including:

- Occupational information.
- Education and training information.
- Industry and sector information.
- Community and local demographic information.

3.1 Occupational Information

Anyone considering career decisions should be researching occupational labour market information, which will assist in making such decisions. By researching occupational information, one can obtain data regarding wages, working conditions, vacancy and employment opportunities in the area or region they wish to seek work.

When researching occupational information, key questions to consider include:

- What kind of work interests you?
- What qualifications, skills and education do you need for your selected occupation?
- What are the existing and expected employment opportunities for this occupation, such as electrical engineering?
- What are the wages and working conditions for this occupation?

- What are the skills and experience requirements expected by employers?
- What strategies can you use to help increase your chances to find work? For example, what opportunities exist for volunteer work or co-op work?
- What are the opportunities for self-employment or short-term contract work for this occupation or in this industry?

The following table presents a variety of website sources to assist your research in occupational labour market information.

Website	Internet Address
<p>A Guide to the B.C. Economy and Labour Market</p> <p>An excellent introduction to economic concepts and language as well as B.C. industry/sector information. Start with the "Introduction to the B.C. Economy" link.</p>	<p>http://www.guidetobceconomy.org/</p>
<p>A Labour Market Assessment in B. C. for Women in Engineering, Science and Technology</p>	<p>http://www.ccwest.org/english/word/labmkt.html</p>
<p>Alberta Occupational Profiles</p>	<p>http://www.alis.gov.ab.ca/occinfo/Content/RequestAction.asp?format=html&spAction=GetHomePage&Page=Home</p>
<p>B.C. Stats</p> <p>This provincial government site is an excellent source of statistics and research, including labour market information.</p>	<p>http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/</p>
<p>B.C. WorkInfoNet</p> <p>A "one-start" shop for provincial career and labour market information.</p>	<p>http://workinfonet.bc.ca/</p>
<p>CanadianCareer.Com</p> <p>Numerous links to labour market information sites</p>	<p>http://www.canadiancareers.com/lmi.html</p>
<p>Daily Prospects in Canada's Labour Market</p> <p>Daily information about occupations, industries and labour market trends across Canada.</p>	<p>http://prospects.skillnet.ca/</p>

Website	Internet Address
<p>Facilitator's Guide to the B.C. Economy and Work Futures</p> <p>This online resource helps career practitioners use these resources with clients.</p>	<p>http://workinfontet.bc.ca/lmisi/facguide/index.htm</p>
<p>Human Resources Development Canada – B.C. Regional Site</p> <p>HRDC's web site for the B.C./Yukon region offers provincial and regional labour market information. Click on "Research and Labour Market Information"</p>	<p>http://www.bc.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/</p>
<p>Job Futures National Occupation Outlook</p>	<p>http://jobfutures.ca/noc/browse-occupations-alphabet.shtml</p>
<p>Job Futures NOC Sample Report – Electrical and Electronic Engineers</p>	<p>http://jobfutures.ca/noc/2133.shtml</p>
<p>Job Futures Summary Table by NOC Categories</p>	<p>http://jobfutures.ca/en/brochure/table1.pdf</p>
<p>Job Futures World of Work</p>	<p>http://jobfutures.ca/en/brochure/table.html</p>
<p>Making Career Sense of Labour Market Information</p> <p>This site introduces labour market concepts, trends and issues. It also provides practical examples of researching labour market information and using it in the career development process.</p>	<p>http://makingcareersense.org/</p>
<p>Profiles of High Demand Occupations - World of Work Occupational Profiles</p>	<p>http://www.waytotonetwork.com/Profiles/worldofwork/wow.html</p>
<p>Statistics Canada</p> <p>This federal government sites contains numerous sources of information regarding statistics and labour market information.</p>	<p>http://www.statscan.ca/</p>

Website	Internet Address
<p>Worklink</p> <p>The Worklink site provides resources and information to enhance employment for persons with disabilities and employers.</p>	<p>http://www.worklink.com/</p>

3.2 Education and Training Information

Part of one’s career planning and decision-making may include considerations regarding the need for education and training. In today’s workplace, information about education and training opportunities is important for most people since most employers expect continuous learning. When choosing a training program, prospective students need to consider many issues.

When researching education and training information, key questions to consider include:

- In relation to your desired occupation or work, what training, education, or fields of study interest you?
- What qualifications, skills and education do you need for your selected occupation?
- What training and education programs are available for that occupation?
- What occupation(s) does this field of study qualify you for?
- Do you want to obtain specific vocational training or obtain attend an education program?
- What is the difference between public and private post-secondary institutions?
- What is the difference between the various types of public post-secondary institutions in B.C.?
- What type of academic or educational institution is suitable for your requirements and budget?
- What kind of credential or certification will you receive from that institution?
- What programs and services are available to help you finance your education?
- Can you get credit for any prior learning (i.e., learning acquired in non-formal settings)?
- Can you work and study at the same time?
- Is the program available by distance education?

A list of useful Internet website addresses for finding training and education-related labour market information is provided as follows.

Website	Internet Address
<p>CanLearn</p> <p>A Canadian resource for the information and interactive planning tools to explore learning opportunities, research occupations, develop learning strategies, and create financial plans to achieve one's goals.</p>	<p>http://canlearn.ca/</p>
<p>Guide to British Columbia's Higher Education System (Public Post-Secondary Institutions)</p> <p>This site provides a brief overview of and links to the public education institutions in B.C. It also describes the different types of degrees, diplomas, and certificates offered at those institutions.</p>	<p>http://www.bccie.bc.ca/PSC/IntlStudies/BCHigherEdSys.asp</p>
<p>Ministry of Advanced Education - Industry Training</p> <p>Produced by the provincial government, this site provides information about the apprenticeship and trade certification system in B.C.</p>	<p>http://www.itac.gov.bc.ca/</p>
<p>Opening Doors – Guide to Post-secondary Education in B.C.</p> <p>A comprehensive education planning resource that contains comprehensive information on more than 1900 programs at B.C.'s 27 public post-secondary institutions.</p>	<p>http://www.openingdoorsbc.com/</p>
<p>Post-Secondary Application Service of B.C.</p> <p>PASBC is the province's online post-secondary application for admission system. Most of B.C.'s universities, university colleges, colleges, and institutions are now accepting applications through the Internet.</p>	<p>http://www.pas.bc.ca/</p>
<p>Public Libraries in BC</p> <p>Links to many of the public libraries throughout B.C.</p>	<p>http://www.bcpl.gov.bc.ca/</p>

3.3 Industry and Sector Information

Job seekers should recognize the value in understanding the concepts of industries and sectors, as well as that of occupational information. Such concepts provide an additional and important source of labour market information. An “industry” is as a group of businesses or establishments that produce similar products and/or services. A sector is a grouping of related industries. For example, key industries in the Lower Mainland include the Water Transportation Industry and the Rail Transportation Industry, which are major components of the Transportation and Storage Sector. According to categories developed by the federal and provincial government, there are 18 major industrial sectors in Canada, with a total of 76 industries.

When thinking of work in terms of industries instead of occupations, one must realize that an industry can include many different occupations. Moreover, one type of occupation can be found in a wide variety of industries. For example, an engineer as an occupation can be found in various industries, such as coal mining, metal mining, aircraft and parts manufacturing, chemical manufacturing, machinery manufacturing, shipbuilding industry, rail transportation industry, and electric power utilities industry.

The term “occupation” refers to what a person does in their work, while an industry refers to where that person performs that work. For example, engineering is the kind of work or (occupational area) that engineers do. However, engineers can perform their work in a wide variety of industries as noted above.

By considering the different types of industries that a person could perform their work will enable job seekers to examine far more opportunities for jobs than if they thought of their work only in terms of an occupation. In today’s labour market, workers should be able to obtain and apply a variety of skills sets to a variety of industries. For example, an electrical engineer working for a small consulting company, may also need to know about business development, sales and marketing, as well as technical writing and proposal preparation. By doing so, such an engineer could enhance their ability to cross a variety of occupational areas and become more valuable to an employer.

By learning about different industries, workers can consider transferring their skills from one industry to another, particularly if their current industries or sectors are on the decline. For example, an engineer in the resources sector, such as logging and forestry, would be in a better position to become aware of future opportunities in growth sectors, such as communications and other utilities. Knowing one’s skill sets and understanding how those skills could be used to find and maintain work is one of the most critical aspect in today’s labour market and career development.

When researching occupational information, key questions to consider include:

- What are the "sunrise" (growing) industries in the B.C. economy?

- What are the "sunset" (declining) industries?
- What is causing the growth/decline?
- How are globalization and technology affecting the industry(s) you are interested in?
- What effect will demographic changes have on the industry?
- What are the historical, recent and predicated trends of that industry?
- What is the size of the industry in terms of establishments or businesses?
- What is the size of the industry in terms of workers?
- What is this industry’s projected growth in terms of its workforce and economic development?
- Who are the major companies or major employers in that industry?
- What proportion of the industry consists of small companies, that is with 20 or fewer employers?
- What occupations are in demand in this industry and its associated industrial sector?
- Who are the customers and clients that such an industry serves?
- What involvement does government have in the industry?

A list of useful Internet website addresses for finding industry and sector-related labour market information for BC is provided as follows.

Website	Internet Address
<p>BCWin Surfing for Work Tutorial – Sector Labour Market Information</p> <p>This module from BCWin's Surfing for Work tutorial offers an introduction to sectors in B.C. with links to specific sector resources related to career planning.</p>	<p>http://www.surfingforwork.com/topic.htm?chapterid=39&chapter=4</p>
<p>Human Resource Sector Councils</p> <p>Many of the 27 Sector Councils listed on this site have information about sectors such as professional development, career awareness, and online newsletters.</p>	<p>http://www.councils.org/</p>

Website	Internet Address
<p>Industry Canada – Strategis</p> <p>This is the federal government's one-stop database for economic, trade, and government information. For example, you can do a search for engineering companies in Canada, by using the “Company Directories” database</p>	<p>http://strategis.ic.gc.ca/</p>
<p>Lower Mainland/Southwest Region Industrial Profiles</p> <p>This website contains a summary document and detailed reports regarding 77 major industries, occupations and employment in the Lower Mainland/Southwest region of B.C.</p>	<p>http://www.kwantlen.ca/industrial-profiles</p> <p>Or</p> <p>http://plaza.kwantlen.bc.ca/sites/industrialprof.nsf/pages/welcome</p>
<p>Sector Studies</p> <p>The sector studies produced by the Sector Councils describe how changes in technology and the business environment affect the sectors' labour force, including future employment. For example, by clicking on Industry Profiles link, you can access a variety of reports regarding industries such as Electrical and Electronic Products.</p>	<p>http://www24.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/</p>
<p>UBC – Researching Sectors and Organizations</p>	<p>http://students.ubc.ca/careers/students/resources.cfm?page=6</p>

3.4 Community and Local Demographic Information

Job seekers can also benefit from knowing about the community and region in which they are seeking work. A good understanding of current and future trends and statistics for local areas will improve one’s chances in finding work, as well as assist in making other related career decisions. Information related to work at a local or regional level is referred to as "community labour market information." Such information typically includes local economic profiles, contacts and potential employers, growing and declining sectors, and local services and programs.

When researching community and local demographic information, key questions to consider include:

- What are the major industries and sectors conducting business in the community of your interest?
- Are these industries and sectors experiencing growth or decline?
- Who are the potential employers in the community and what sector are they in?
- What skills, education and training do employers in this community expect?
- What are the seasonal employment trends in this community?
- What are the demographic (e.g., population) trends in this community?
- What are the opportunities for self-employment and/or contract work within the community?
- What education and training opportunities are there available for you in this community?
- What is the cost of living in this community compared to other parts of the province or country?
- What is the rate of unemployment in this community?
- Are there major projects expected in the community that could offer work of interest to you?

A list of useful Internet website addresses for finding community labour market information for B.C. is provided as follows.

Websites	Internet Address
<p>BC CivicNet Members</p> <p>Quick links to websites for municipalities and communities throughout B.C.</p> <p>Example: Click on Greater Vancouver link, and then click on Careers to examine latest vacancies within the GVRD.</p>	<p>http://www.civicnet.bc.ca/members/municipalities/index.shtml</p>
<p>BC WorkInfoNet – BC Regional Websites</p> <p>The BC WorkInfoNet site provides a comprehensive set of links regarding regional and local labour market and career-related information.</p>	<p>http://bc.workinfont.ca/index.cfm?style=region</p>
<p>BC WorkInfoNet’ s online work search tutorial</p> <p>This section of the BC WorkInfoNet site contains a very useful tutorial on the Internet for job seekers.</p>	<p>http://surfingforwork.com/topic.htm?chapterid=26&chapter=1</p>

Websites	Internet Address
<p>Google – Discussion Group for B.C. Jobs</p>	<p>http://groups.google.ca/groups?hl=en&lr=&ie=UTF-8&group=bc.jobs</p>
<p>Google – Discussion Group for Vancouver Jobs</p>	<p>http://groups.google.ca/groups?hl=en&lr=&ie=UTF-8&group=van.jobs</p>
<p>Guide to Using Labour Market Information This comprehensive online guide can help people use provincial labour market information productively.</p>	<p>http://skills.bc.ca/lmiguide/guide.html</p>
<p>HRDC B.C. Region Labour Market Information – Community Profiles, Labour Market Reviews, and Occupational Profiles Information about demographics, current job market, education, facilities and services for many communities in B.C.</p>	<p>http://www.bc.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/59/jwtc-etfc/lmi-imt/index_e.shtml</p>
<p>Human Resources Development Canada HRDC's web site for the B.C./Yukon region, which includes links for online labour market information and other information.</p>	<p>http://www.bc.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/59/index_e.shtml</p>
<p>Surfing for Work – Community Labour Market Information on the Web</p>	<p>http://surfingforwork.com/topic.htm?chapterid=52&chapter=4</p>
<p>VCN Community Information – Employment and Labour Links</p>	<p>http://www.vcn.bc.ca/community/cicat.php?CatID=7</p>
<p>What's Key in Labour Market information in B.C. This online "brochure" lists many of the labour market information resources.</p>	<p>http://whatskey.org/</p>
<p>Work Destinations: A Guide to Relocation and Work in Canada This site is designed for Canadians who want to practice their trade or profession in other provinces and territories.</p>	<p>http://www.workdestinations.org/</p>
<p>Yahoo Mailing List for Immigrants Who Have Settled in Vancouver</p>	<p>http://groups.yahoo.com/group/van-immi/</p>

Websites	Internet Address
Yahoo Posting Regarding Resources for Immigrants in Vancouver	http://groups.yahoo.com/group/van-immi/message/3246

4. ACCESS TO LABOUR MARKET INFORMATION RESOURCES

In the previous section of this handbook, several key areas were described to assist the research of labour market information for one's career planning and work search. Accessing a wide variety of such sources will improve the quality of information that you collect, and therefore enhance your chances of finding suitable work opportunities.

Knowledgeable job seekers realize the value and importance of accessing and using labour market information. Becoming well informed about labour market information will do much to ensure that you follow a proactive approach to developing and managing your career. Even after one finds work, it is very helpful to remain informed and current about labour market information. One of the real keys to accessing labour market information is to be aware of such information and be prepared to take advantage of opportunities.

Important sources of labour market information include:

- Electronic or technological sources of information (e.g., company or contact databases). In particular, the Internet can be used to access up-to-date information about the economy, occupations, industries, job search strategies and potential work opportunities.
- Employers, industry representatives, and business owners.
- Staff and graduates of any education and training programs you are interested in.
- Documents, such as local, regional, and national newspapers and business publications. Such documents will provide useful labour market information about business or company start-ups or closures, upcoming projects, key economic and employment trends, and employment initiatives. Such information can offer valuable insights about what is happening in your community and potential work opportunities.

4.1 Researching Potential Employers

One of the most important uses of labour market information, particularly for people looking for work, is in researching of potential employers. Such information is critical for a variety of key components in searching for working, including:

- Preparing for information meetings.
- Putting together proposals for potential clients or employers.
- Preparing for job interviews or self-marketing meetings.

- Writing effective cover or introductory letters.
- Targeting your résumé and other related job search materials.
- Negotiating a job offer or contract.

There are numerous sources of labour market information to consider when researching potential employers. Some key information sources about potential employers include the following:

- Knowledgeable people – for example, someone who works for the organization or the industry can provide you with valuable insights about a company and its related industry.
- An organization's annual reports and newsletters, which can provide all sorts of insights into a company's performance and current or future affairs.
- An organization's public affairs or communications department, which can be used to obtain marketing information about a company. At the very least, a job seeker should obtain a brochure about a prospective company.
- A company's Web site, which can include information about careers and job vacancies within an organization.
- The local Chamber of Commerce.
- News stories in the media about an organization or its industry.
- Websites about an industry.
- Professional associations whose members work for the organization or its industry.
- Trade publications about an industry.

Some suitable sources of information on the Internet for researching potential employers are listed as follows:

Websites	Internet Address
BC Info-Job Links	http://www.infojob.net/bc/bc.html
BC Manufacturers Directory A searchable database listing of manufacturing companies in BC	http://www.made-in-bc.ca/
BC Work Futures	http://workfutures.bc.ca/EN/def/home_e1.html
BC Work info Net	http://workinfonet.bc.ca/

Websites	Internet Address
Company Search – Canadian Company Capabilities	http://strategis.ic.gc.ca/sc_coinf/ccc/en_gdoc/basicSearch.html
Guide to Researching Companies, Industries, and Countries	http://www.quintcareers.com/researching_companies.html
How to do Company Research	http://ilearn.senecac.on.ca/careers/research/how_to_company_research.html
How to Find Company Information (Guide from Vancouver Public Library)	http://www.vpl.vancouver.bc.ca/branches/LibrarySquare/bus/compan.html
HRDC Job Bank Search	http://www.jobbank.gc.ca/Search_en.asp
HRDC The Work Place	http://www.theworkplace.ca/
HRDC Work Search – Researching the Employer	http://worksearch.gc.ca/english/index.pl?tid=46
Industry Link – Comprehensive List of Industry Websites	http://www.industrylink.com/
Job Bus Canada Well-organized website of links to potential employers and companies, including engineering firms	http://www.jobbus.com/
Job Search Strategy Summary	http://www.quintcareers.com/job_search/plan.html
Job Searching for Engineers Comprehensive Internet resources and websites in the U.S.	http://www.enqlib.cornell.edu/instruction/jobsearch.html

Websites	Internet Address
Kwantlen University College – Local Job Postings	http://www.kwantlen.bc.ca/jobplace/joborder.htm
Kwantlen University College – Internet Job Search Links	http://plaza.kwantlen.ca/sites/employment.nsf/pages/searchlinks
Kwantlen University College – Job Search Sites	http://plaza.kwantlen.ca/sites/employment.nsf
MyTelus Canadian Business Finder	http://www.mytelus.com/phonebook/index.vm
Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of BC	http://www.apeg.bc.ca/index.html
Superpages Directory (Note Click on Browse Directory)	http://yp.superpages.ca/sform.phtml?SRC=mytelus
Superpages Directory Listing of Engineering Firms in BC	http://yp5.superpages.ca/listings.phtml?SRC=mytelus&STYPE=&PG=L&CB=1&C=Engineers&E=&T=Vancouver&K=&S=BC&Z=&R=N&A=&X=&P=&search=Find+lt&rtd=yp4.superpages.ca-100055 (Note 331 companies listed in all engineering categories)
Sympatico Canada Careers Job search engine for work across Canada	http://www.bc.sympatico.ca/Contents/Careers/
T.R.A.D.E.S. – Employment and Community Resources	http://www.tradesbc.org/links.html
The Institute – Career Guidance Articles for Engineers	http://www.theinstitute.ieee.org/inst_arch.jsp?isno=05031&section=1
Tri-continental Global Services for Immigrants Seeking Jobs in Canada	http://jobsearch-in-canada.com/services.html - jobs

Websites	Internet Address
<p>UBC Career Services – Researching Sectors and Organizations</p> <p>A comprehensive list of Internet links for information about company directories, labour market information, professional associations, and research methods and advice</p>	<p>http://students.ubc.ca/careers/students/resources.cfm?page=6</p>
<p>Vancouver Province newspaper</p> <p>Direct access to job advertisements in daily classifieds</p>	<p>http://www.canada.com/vancouver/</p>
<p>Vancouver Public Library – Business and Economics Division</p> <p>Information and resources for researching potential employers or clients. This website lists the print and electronic resources available at the library, as well as containing many links to online databases. Note: to access many of the online databases, you will need a library card number from the Vancouver Public Library.</p>	<p>http://www.vpl.vancouver.bc.ca/branches/LibrarySquare/bus/home.html</p>
<p>VFS Job Search Tips</p>	<p>http://www.myvfs.com/career/links.html</p>
<p>Wetfeet – Company Profiles</p>	<p>http://www.wetfeet.com/research/companies.asp</p>

4.2 Networking for Labour Market Information

While it is relatively easy to access information about many companies through the Internet, the best source of labour market information about organizations or industries is often found through direct contact, networking, and information interviews.

"People do business with people they know and trust or with people known and trusted by people they know and trust."

- Walter Donald, Executive Network

Networking is one of the most important career management skills in looking for work, in maintaining your job, and in building your career. Contrary to common belief, effective networking is not about using people or taking advantage of them. Rather, proper networking involves the establishment of meaningful building relationships with people you know both on a

personal level (such as family and friends) and a professional level (key contacts, such as members of associations that you belong to). Proper networking is all about getting to know people in the context of a long-term professional relationship and building trust within that relationship. As your networking relationships build, they become a source of valuable information and support, which will help you in your career development.

"Real networking is carefully tended give-and-take. It's the favour bank into which you make regular deposits as well as take out withdrawals."

- Joyce Lain Kennedy

Developing and maintaining a supportive and extensive network of contacts is essential if you are to find and keep work. Since the labour market is becoming more complex and fragmented, a personal network of contacts that can support your career development is more important than it ever was before.

In addition to obtaining valuable labour market information, networking can be used for the following objectives:

- To learn about occupations and industries.
- To find work.
- To meet people who currently work in a career field of your interest.
- To consider and create new business opportunities, if you are self-employed or wish to be employed on a contract basis.
- To obtain information about target industries or companies, actual job openings or employment trends.
- To develop rapport with prospective employers.
- To obtain additional names to expand your network.
- To establish new and beneficial connections that can help you in both your professional and personal life, such as a mentor.

Networking contacts can help you locate job opportunities in both the visible and hidden job markets. Various estimates suggest that between 65 to 90% of jobs are found through networking. As well, if you choose to be self-employed, much of your business will likely come from referrals and contacts made through your network. Referrals are an essential component of finding new contracts and work.

Networking is a work search skill that can be learned and improved through practice and skill development. Learning to network takes time and practice, but one can learn how to be very effective in networking. Several ways to learn and practice your networking include the following methods:

- By reading through reading books on networking skills. Most libraries and career centres have books on developing networking skills.
- Accessing information about networking events and effective networking skills via the Internet.
- Using local Career Resources Agencies.

Note: for example, the Network To Work Agency in Vancouver is designed specifically for job club graduates. This agency provides a variety of services (at no cost to job seekers), including networking seminars, other job search workshops, computer and fax resources, career books and documents. For more information go the Network To Work website at <http://www.networktowork.com/index.html>

- Attending networking functions. Two such functions are listed as follows:

Extreme Networking - One of the best networking functions in the Lower Mainland is the “Extreme Networking” meeting held on a regular basis in the Surrey area. At this function, facilitators teach people about suitable networking methods and then participants have a chance to practice their networking skills with potential employers and other meeting attendees. Near the end of the morning meeting, various guest speakers provide direct insights into job search skills. In addition, a variety of agencies have booths at the event for information about education, training, career development, and potential employment opportunities.

Extreme Networking is described as a workshop event offering jobseekers an opportunity to practice their networking skills in a large and safe environment where everyone can have fun as they go about gathering job leads. Employers, who participate as mystery guests in the networking activities, later give information about the job market and hiring process from their perspective. It is important to note that the event is not a job fair.

For more information about this event, or to find out when the next Extreme Networking meeting will be hold, call Ms. Donna Cottell at 604-598-1400.

Business Networks International (BNI) - For individuals interested in entrepreneurial opportunities, you may wish to find out more about Business Networks International (BNI) – website <http://www.bnicanada.ca/index.asp>. This organization has a variety of chapters in the Lower Mainland. A list of local chapters in the Lower Mainland can be accessed via the BNI website.

The purpose of the organization is to "help members increase their business through a structured, and professional "word-of-mouth" referral program. The BNI

program encourages long-term, meaningful relationships with quality business professionals."

Some suitable sources of networking information on the Internet are listed as follows.

Websites	Internet Address
BC Associations and Trade Groups	http://bc.workinfolnet.ca/index.cfm?cat=6&sub=77
Business in Vancouver Datebook (Association Meetings, Upcoming Events, etc.)	http://www.biv.com/datebook.html
Canadian Careers Com – Industry Information and Professional Associations	http://www.canadiancareers.com/sector.html
Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of BC	http://www.apeg.bc.ca/index.html
Tasty Tips for Job Seekers – Networking Ideas at Regular Meetings in Vancouver	http://www.fwt.bc.ca/tastytips.htm
Women in Science, Technology, Trades and Engineering (Associate Organizations)	http://taz.cs.ubc.ca/wistte/associate.html

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Appendix A – Glossary of Labour Market Information Terms