



# Active work

## If Olympic-fever has inspired you, try out one of these “athletic” careers

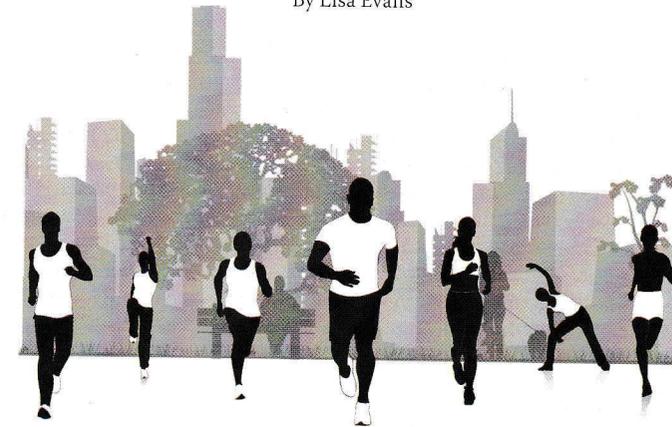
By Lisa Evans

**P**rofessional athletes don't get to the podium all on their own. Athletes surround themselves with a group of professionals who help them get in shape and ease their muscle aches and pains. The health and fitness industry is growing in Canada, providing opportunities in exciting fields.

### Coach

Community coaches encourage young athletes to improve their performance by developing skills, providing constructive criticism and creating a safe environment for participation in sports. Cyndie Flett of the Coaching Association of Canada (CAC) says while 80 per cent of coaches are still volunteers, there's a new trend toward paid coaches at the amateur level. One of the sports where coaches have been in high demand is soccer.

Soccer coach Mirco Schroff immigrated to Canada from Germany in 2007 and is currently the technical director of the York Region Soccer Association. Schroff says coaching can be a very rewarding career. "The best coaches understand how to engage kids, making



training sessions fun, interesting, interactive and purposeful," he says. Although Schroff says coaching is still undervalued in Canada, opportunities do exist and he believes the profession will continue to grow and see increased importance in the future.

### Education

To begin a career as a coach, the

CAC recommends taking the National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP). There are more than 850 workshops available at every level of sport, from three-hour online introductory workshops for beginner coaches, to weekend workshops for intermediate coaches to intensive two-year training programs for advanced coaches.

### Personal trainer

Personal trainers provide physical assessments and tailor exercise programs to meet individuals' needs. They ensure exercises are done correctly and provide motivation and encouragement to achieve goals, such as losing weight or training for a competition. They may work one-on-one with clients or in groups and can work in fitness centres or independently by providing at-home training in which they visit clients in their homes. Most train clients in the early morning, evenings and weekends, so it's not a 9-5 type career.

U.S.-born Heide Roston has been a personal trainer for 10 years in Toronto. She says the opportunities in the profession are growing. "Having a trainer isn't just for the super-wealthy anymore. People are realizing the importance of exercising properly and consistently," she says. To be successful, Roston says a trainer must be compassionate, a life-long learner, goal-oriented and proactive. An entrepreneurial spirit is also crucial as trainers need to constantly network to build their business and adapt to industry trends.

**ACCES**  
EMPLOYMENT  
*Making Connections*

**Are you looking for a job?**

**We offer a range of free employment services:**

- Specialized services for Internationally Trained Professionals
- Direct connections with employers
- Recruitment and mentorship events and programs
- Talk English Café™ – provides an interactive environment to practice workplace communication skills
- Career planning, Canadian labour market information and job trends
- Resume development, interview practice and coaching on how to market yourself to employers
- Access to computers, internet and telephones at each of our locations

EMPLOYMENT ONTARIO Ontario  
 Citizenship and Immigration Canada / Citoyenneté et Immigration Canada  
 United Way Toronto  
 416-921-1800  
 accesemployment.ca

While a trainer working in a gym can receive \$20 to \$45 an hour, independent trainers can receive up to \$75 an hour, with specialized trainers charging \$100 an hour and up.

### Education

A degree in kinesiology or life sciences isn't required to become a personal trainer. Those interested in the career can receive a personal training specialist (PTS) certification. CanFitPro is the leading provider of personal training and fitness instructor certification in Canada. Its program includes an online preparatory course and a 25-hour live course followed by a theory exam in which an 80 per cent pass mark is required. Candidates must also complete a practical exam with a pro trainer within six months of their theory exam.

The PTS certification is renewed on a yearly basis. To recertify, candidates need to show a valid CPR certificate and must have obtained four continuing education credits completed through online training or at conferences. Internationally trained personal trainers may immediately be awarded accreditation or may have to complete a written

or practical exam. Nathalie Lacombe, CanFit Pro membership and certification director, recommends non-English speakers to go through the certification process to learn the terminology.

### Physiotherapist

Physiotherapists treat patients with physical difficulties resulting from injuries or disabilities. They combine manual therapy, exercise and equipment such as ultrasound to repair muscular-skeletal systems. Sharon Switzer-McIntyre of the Canadian Physiotherapy Association says physiotherapists have great career potential. "There will be a huge need as baby boomers are starting to move out of the profession," she says.

Entry-level physiotherapists can earn \$50,000 to \$60,000. Experienced physiotherapists in a hospital environment may earn \$75,000 to \$80,000, while those in private practice can earn upward to \$100,000.

### Education

Physiotherapists are required to complete a two-year master's of science in physiotherapy, which includes 25 weeks of clinical practice,

followed by a licensing exam. Internationally educated physiotherapists can have their credentials evaluated by the Canadian Alliance of Physiotherapy Regulators, which determines whether their education is substantially equivalent to Canadian standards.

If deemed equivalent, the physiotherapist would be permitted to take the licensing exam. Ten-month bridging programs offered through the University of Toronto and the University of British Columbia provide an opportunity for individuals who have been credentialed by the Alliance, but who may have some gaps in their knowledge. Aziz Nabki is a physiotherapist who emigrated from Syria in 2005 and received his licence to practise in Canada after completing the bridging program at the University of Toronto. Nabki says the program not only provides knowledge and an opportunity to practise skills that may have been lost after time spent out of the field, but also networking opportunities that are invaluable in a tight-knit field.

### Massage therapist

Massage therapy involves tech-

niques to manipulate soft tissues and joints to rehabilitate or relieve pain. Registered massage therapists (RMTs) may work in health clubs, sports clinics, hospitals or in their own practice. The average national salary for RMTs is about \$51,000, but varies on the number of hours a therapist works.

### Education

Massage therapy is a regulated health profession in British Columbia, Ontario and Newfoundland. Diploma programs in massage therapy are offered in a number of colleges across Canada. Most are two to three years in length and include studies of anatomy, physiology, physical assessment and neurology. Prospective RMTs must complete 150 clinical hours and an exam prepared by the provincial College of Massage Therapists.

Massage therapists who are internationally trained undergo a credential and prior learning assessment before taking the certification examinations. If knowledge and skills are assessed as not equivalent to the educational standards of the province, they will be referred to a bridging program. ★

## Skills Connect for Immigrants

- ▶ Meet employers in your field
- ▶ Free job search assistance
- ▶ Work one-to-one with an employment specialist
- ▶ Qualify for work in your profession
- ▶ Receive training subsidies
- ▶ Delivered in partnership with Abbotsford Community Services

### Call Today!

Burnaby	604 438 3045
Coquitlam	604 588 7772
Surrey/Langley	604 588 7772
Fraser Valley	604 866 1645
or	604 866 0257
skillsconnect@douglascollege.ca	

Canada



WelcomeBC

This project is made possible through funding from the Government of Canada and the Province of British Columbia

DOUGLAS

DOUGLAS COLLEGE  
TRAINING GROUP

douglascollege.ca/skillsconnect