

TRENDING JOBS FOR 2013

Choosing a solid educational and career path in Canada for this year and beyond

By Lisa Evans

You've made the choice to relocate to Canada, but the hardest decisions are still to come. Identifying employment prospects and evaluating the lifestyle they can afford you and your family are the most important steps toward achieving success and stability in your new country.

Canada is a vast country with many opportunities available in each of its provinces and territories. Daisy Wright, career adviser and author of the book *No Canadian Experience, Eh?*, advises newcomers to research job prospects in all of Canada's regions. "The competition for jobs in the larger cities is fierce. Looking at other areas around the country can reveal greater opportunities," says Wright, pointing to the federal government's Working in Canada online tool (workingincanada.gc.ca) as an excellent resource that allows jobseekers to identify wages, qualifications and educational requirements for various professions. It also allows you to compare how much you could earn in your chosen profession in different provinces.

While there are many opportunities across Canada in a variety of professions, three sectors — natural resources, construction and health care — stand out for their growth potential in the coming years.

1. NATURAL RESOURCES

Canada's "black gold" offers many opportunities to newcomers with experience in the oil and gas industry. The Petroleum Human Resources Council of Canada (PHRCC) projects Canada's petroleum industry will need at least 9,500 more workers by 2015. "Much of this growth will be driven by increased production in the oil sands," says John Santos, communications specialist,

PHRCC. The jobs that will be most in demand will include project engineers, steam-ticketed operators, mining engineers, electrical and instrumentation engineers, mechanical engineering technologists and heavy equipment operators.

Education and experience

Engineering positions require a four-year university degree and/or professional recognition from a provincial professional association of engineers. Foreign-trained engineers will typically have to go through a relicensing process including examinations with the engineering body in their province, but lots of experience may not be needed.

"The knowledge and skills needed to work in the oil and gas industry is quite specific, so companies like to build their engineers from the ground up," says Santos, meaning many new grads are hired and then trained by the company. "That's not to say experienced engineers are not hired, but if they don't have oil industry experience, they may be offered a lower position than what they have in their current industry," says Santos.

Equipment operators, low-level drill workers and other non-regulated professionals often don't require formal post-secondary training, but do require industry-specific training. Foreign training in the industry will be considered for these jobs.

Salaries

Base salaries for technicians and technologists range from \$67,990 for junior positions to \$156,972 for experienced senior managers or specialists. Engineers can earn between \$50,940 to \$215,000 per year depending on level of experience and responsibility. Drilling rig crews are paid on an

hourly basis and range from \$27 per hour for leasehands to \$42.40 per hour for drillers. Entry-level positions such as driller's helpers and line crews start at \$12.50 per hour.

2. CONSTRUCTION

The sky's the limit in Canada's construction industry — a \$168 billion industry representing 13 per cent of Canada's economy. "Construction has been strong for more than a decade and continues [to experience steady growth] out to 2021," says Rosemary Sparks, executive director of the Construction Sector Council.

Opportunities in construction exist across the country. "Although there is still a very strong construction market in the west, there are now resource-based construction projects across the country that are driving construction activity particularly in Northern B.C., Saskatchewan, Alberta, Northern Ontario, and Newfoundland and Labrador," says Sparks.

With a growing number of individuals ready to retire, the construction sector expects to lose approximately a quarter of its workforce over the next decade, leaving opportunity for newcomers, particularly in industrial and resource construction including boilermakers, crane and heavy equipment operators, electricians, ironworkers, plumbers and welders.

Education and experience

Many of these trades require apprenticeship training. "Apprenticeships vary, but generally take between three to five years to complete, but the individual can earn while they learn," says Sparks. In most cases, a high school diploma is required to enter an apprenticeship. If the high school diploma was obtained

outside Canada, it will need to be validated in order to enter the apprenticeship program.

Information on apprenticeships across the country can be found through the Canadian Apprenticeship Forum (caf-fca.org).

Immigrants who have already apprenticed and worked in the field in their country of origin may have to get recertified for positions such as electrician or plumber, but this varies across province.

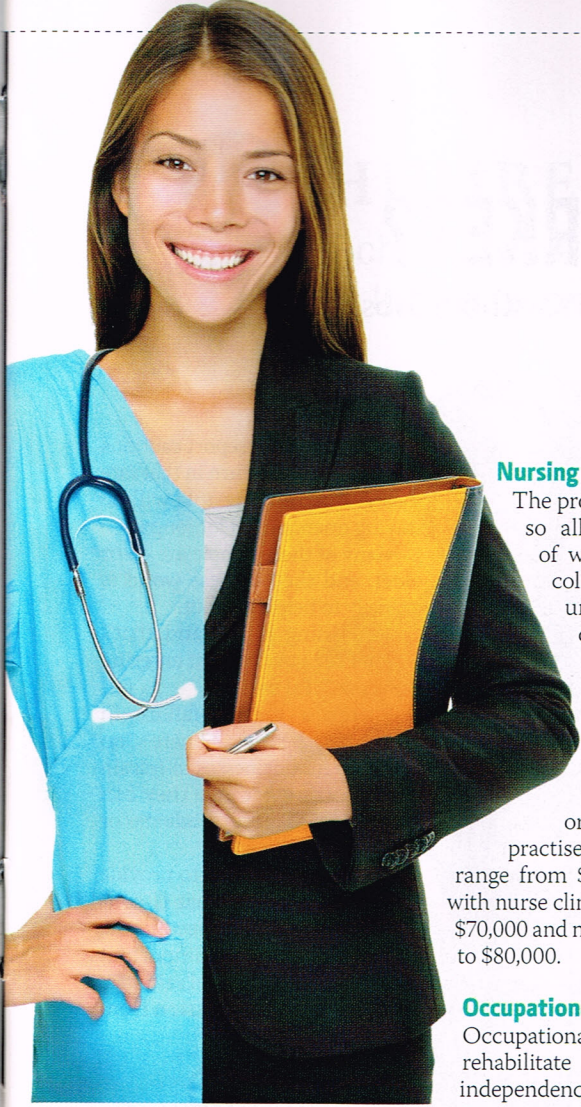
Salaries

Salaries in construction vary from province to province, and rise greatly as you progress from an apprentice to journeyperson. For example, an apprentice electrician might start with a salary of about \$15 to \$24 per hour, but then progress to \$22 to \$29 per hour as a journeyperson, and later, with more experience, reach \$28 to \$35 per hour. Wages are similar for pipefitters, welders and crane operators. At the lower end, a heavy equipment operator might start off at \$10 to \$16 per hour, but then eventually reach \$27 to \$33 per hour with several years' experience.

3. HEALTH CARE

By 2032, seniors (65+ years of age) are expected to account for one quarter of Canada's population. This aging population will mean greater demands for nurses, personal support workers, occupational therapists and medical technologists.





Nursing

The profession is regulated, so all nurses, regardless of whether they have a college diploma or a university bachelor's degree in nursing, or whether internationally or Canadian-trained, are required to pass a professional nursing order's exam order to practise. Salaries in this field range from \$38,000 to \$58,000, with nurse clinicians earning up to \$70,000 and nurse practitioners up to \$80,000.

Occupational therapy

Occupational therapists rehabilitate clients to regain independence after injury. Occupational therapists require a two-year degree in occupational

therapy and 1,000 hours of supervised fieldwork experience. An internationally trained occupational therapist must meet the requirements of the province or territory in which they would like to work. Salaries can also vary from one province to another, but a new qualified occupational therapist can earn from \$40,000 to \$45,000.

Personal support worker

Personal support workers are unregulated health professionals who act as companions or personal aids, assisting the elderly or disabled with their day-to-day activities. This profession is on the lower end of the salary spectrum, with wages from \$25,000 to \$35,000, but because it's unregulated, there are no formal education requirements, and could be a good entry into the health care field for newcomers. Volunteering for care facilities can be a good place to start in this career.

Medical technology

The ever-increasing use of technology has created a demand for those with a combination of IT skills and a knowledge of the health care industry. Skills and knowledge around newer technologies, such as systems for electronic medical records and electronic exam documentation, will become increasingly important as these technologies become more popular. Demand is high for diagnostics and medical imaging workers. Lab technologists require a college diploma in medical lab technology and a six-to-14 month assistant or technician course. Medical radiation technologists require a college diploma or university degree, a diploma in medical radiation studies and must pass the Canadian Association of Medical Radiation Technologists' national certification exam. Salaries range from \$40,000 to \$80,000, depending on the province and years of experience. 🍁



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