

Why Career Development Matters



What is career development?

The lifelong process of managing learning, work, leisure and transitions in order to move towards a personally determined and evolving future. It may be defined as the complex process of managing life, learning, and work over a lifespan.

What are career development services?

A wide range of programs and services provided in many different jurisdictions and delivery settings. Their object is to assist individuals to gain the knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours to manage their life, learning and work in self-directed ways

Career development services include: career information; career assessment and self-assessment tools; career counselling; career education and career management programmes; taster programmes; work integrated learning; mentoring; work search programmes; and transition services.

Why does career development matter for public policy?

Career development services benefit individuals, but they also have economic and social benefits for Australia:

- If individuals make decisions about what they are to learn in a well-informed and well-thought-through way, linked to their interests, their capacities and their aspirations, and informed realistically about the opportunities to which the learning can lead, then they are likely to be more successful learners with positive outcomes
- If people construct career paths and secure employment which utilise their potential and meet their own goals, they are likely to be more motivated and productive, and therefore contribute to enhancing national prosperity

Why is career development important for workforce development?

It is critical to Australia's future prosperity to support the inclusion of all people in society, their learning and skill development, and their transitions to maximum participation in the workforce. Career development is critical to workforce development in three respects;

- Preparation – supporting the career development of young people and others prior to entering the labour market
- Adaptability and sustainability – supporting the career development of employed workers to enhance their long-term prospects
- Reintegration – supporting the career development of adults in and out of the labour market, and between jobs in different enterprises.

Why does career development matter for individuals?

Individuals manage life roles, interests, resources, risks and opportunities in an ever-changing context throughout the lifespan.

High quality career development services can positively impact on individual transitions, motivation and productivity by assisting individuals to strengthen self-awareness and make effective career decisions.

What are career management skills?

Career management skills are required to find and secure employment and to proactively develop one's own career. They include: understanding one's own strengths and weaknesses and needs and wants; being able to identify relevant opportunities; access relevant information; making career-related decisions; self-marketing and managing transitions.

What support do individuals need to manage their career development?

Effective career development services are underpinned by up-to-date industry research and quality assurance mechanisms and may be provided through:

- Career development services
- Access to accurate and accessible information
- Personal support in reviewing options and converting information into personal action
- Teaching of career management skills through the education system.

While some personal support may be provided by family, peers, teachers or workplace colleagues it is important that individuals also have access to professional career development practitioners who are:

- Skilled in professional approaches to career development planning and management
- Knowledgeable about learning opportunities and labour markets
- Impartial, and able in an unbiased way to serve the individual's needs
- Comply with the minimum Professional Standards for Australian Career Development Practitioners.

What is the role of career information?

Information is necessary for good-quality career development, but many individuals will also need some form of personal support to find the information they need, to understand the information and relate it to their personal needs and circumstances, and to convert it into personal action.

Good quality career information informs career decision-making and needs to be available on topics including: education and training opportunities; occupations and their characteristics; how to better perform in education and work settings; labour market supply and demand; occupational implications of educational decisions; learning pathways leading to particular occupational destinations; the relationship between opportunities and the characteristics and preferences of individuals.

What frameworks are in place to achieve quality career development services?

The Career Industry Council of Australia, the National Peak Body for career development, supports several national frameworks that guide the development and provision of quality career development services. These include:

- [Professional Standards for Australian Career Development Practitioners](#)
- [CICA School Career Development Services Benchmarks](#)
- [The Australian Blueprint for Career Development](#)
- [Core Skills for Work Developmental Framework](#)

Summary

- Career development matters, both for individuals and for the country as a whole.
- Career Management Skills can be learned and developed.
- Individuals may need support and guidance in developing their career management skills. Schools, universities, training institutions, workplaces, and support services have an important role to play in this respect.
- High-quality information is essential for effective career development, and needs to be supplemented by professional support. This professional support needs to include access to individual advice and guidance from qualified practitioners.

