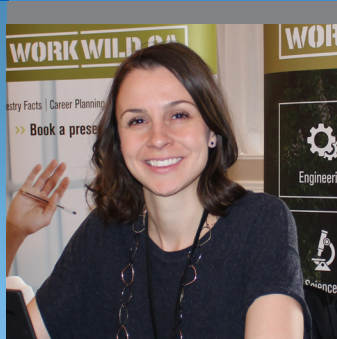




CAREER MOMENTUM

June 2023



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Career Momentum Member Focus Edition

*By Paula Wischoff Yerama, CCDP
Career Development Association of Alberta*

Welcome to our **Member Focus edition** of Career Momentum for June 2023!

Summer has officially begun, and I'm sure many of you are looking forward to a well-deserved vacation, be it a road trip, a faraway destination, or just some relaxed time in a place some (back in 2020) referred to as "Puerta Backyarda".

Whatever your plans include, we hope you enjoy them to the fullest and take advantage of summer's bounty in all its forms.

This issue we feature some important updates to our National Certification Program, and a thought-provoking article recently published in CareerWise by an Alberta member focusing on mental wellness for small business owners. We also include the latest update from Alis, now that the provincial election has concluded.

In addition, we are pleased to shine this month's Member Spotlight on one of our newer CCDPs, Chantel Friesen, whose career took an interesting turn from the oilfield to the Career Development field.

We hope you're enjoying the new format of Career Momentum with its wider distribution and monthly publication schedule. If you have received this message as a subscriber, please take a moment to explore all the benefits of membership. We welcome new members!

From the CDAA Board of Directors, Committee Members and Contractors, we wish everyone a warm and wonderful summer season!

Paula Wischoff Yerama, CCDP

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paula". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

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UPDATE: National Certification for Career Development Professionals (CDPs)

WHERE HAVE WE BEEN?

The *Supporting Canadians to Navigate Learning and Work* (2018-2021) project undertook to build on the foundation of the original Canadian Standards & Guidelines for Career Development Practitioners (launched in 2001) by co-creating the following bilingual assets with Career Development Professionals (CDPs) across the country:

- A new definition of Career Development Professional
- The Pan-Canadian Competency Framework for Career Development Professionals
- The National Competency Profile for Career Development Professionals
- The Code of Ethics for Career Development Professionals
- A piloted national certification program that includes a robust exam, a performance assessment tool, and supplementary study guide
- Three micro-credentials

The project was funded by the Government of Canada's Sectoral Initiatives Program, fueled by over 5,000 volunteer hours from hundreds of CDPs and subject matter experts, and coordinated and managed by the Canadian Career Development Foundation. Find out more about this project and access all of these assets at <https://ccdp-pcdc.ca/en/home>.

Long before this project began, and all along the way throughout, every provincial association and leadership body had been actively engaged in shaping the approach to national certification. All were on board to collaboratively launch one cohesive Canadian certification. At the conclusion of this project, our hope had been to move directly to implementation with the ongoing support of the Sectoral Initiatives Program. Instead, we have had to determine a way forward without federal support.

THE PLAN FORWARD

To launch a rigorous competency-based certification program responsibly, we know we need 3 things:

- ***A national certification program (including robust assessment tools and supporting systems) that is complete, having been rigorously tested, refined, and assessed to be ready to launch*** - At the conclusion of the project, we had developed and tested both a multiple-choice exam and structured interview as key elements of assessment. While both held up well, there were gaps and refinements still needed to be ready to launch.

- ***A competent body ready to administer the national certification program*** - The Nova Scotia Career Development Association (NSCDA) had been administering a similar competency-based program provincially for a number of years. They stepped forward with enthusiasm and resources, offering to administer the national program. Many (MANY!) meetings with provincial associations and leadership bodies and the National Stakeholder Committee were held to ensure the sector endorsed NSCDA assuming this role on our behalf.
- ***A body that is representative of our sector to govern the program*** – Normally, a dedicated incorporated body would be formed, comprised of representatives from the career development sector with expertise in competency-based certification to legally govern the program. Since we do not yet have such a body, the National Stakeholder Committee agreed to form an Advisory Committee to work with NSCDA and CCDF (as holder of the Standard) to shape the policies and protocols that will underpin national certification and to oversee its implementation. Until such time as this Committee is ready and legally able to assume full fiduciary and legal responsibility and liability for the national certification program, the NSCDA Board has agreed to do so.

WHAT'S NEXT?

The National Stakeholder Committee has formed a Working Group to draft Terms of Reference and suggest a process for creating this Advisory Committee. Our hope is to have the Advisory Committee in place and functioning by the end of summer 2023.

In the meantime, CCDF and NSCDA are negotiating a legal agreement to license NSCDA to use the standard and associated assets in the context of administering national certification. We anticipate that this agreement will be finalized in the coming month.

NSCDA is working with an expert consulting firm to ensure the assessment tools are complete and integrated into systems to support the launch of national certification. We are working toward a gradual and sequenced implementation plan, starting with the program to legacy all who have been certified by an existing provincial CDP certification program, conducting a limited pilot of the newly refined assessments and systems, opening the doors to new applicants, and ultimately offering the full spectrum of services including recertification. Our hope is to be fully launched and functional by March 2024.

QUESTIONS? SUGGESTIONS?

Please don't hesitate to reach out. You can contact NSCDA's Registrar, Lindsay Guitard, at lguitard@nscda.ca or CCDF at information@ccdf.ca

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Web: www.ccdf.ca

Living with and managing mental illness as a business owner

by Robert Manolson, BA, CCDP

Throughout my 16-year journey as an entrepreneur, I have often found myself feeling anxious, overwhelmed, even challenged by the expectations that I put on myself to make sure Powerful Play Experiences is a successful business. I'm not alone in these feelings. A 2019 study by the [Canadian Mental Health Association \(CMHA\)](#) found that 62% of business owners feel depressed at least once a week. Nearly half of the entrepreneurs surveyed (46%) said that mental health issues interfere with their ability to work.

Mental illness has affected both my work life and my personal life. In fact, there are at least four generations of mental illness both in my immediate and extended family members. So, it should come as no surprise to anyone when I say that I've experienced many episodes of depression and high anxiety over the past 20 years of my life, and well before becoming a business owner.

As a male, I have had to learn and get comfortable with the simple act of talking about my depression and anxiety and reaching out for help. My bigger goal? To be a role model for men everywhere, especially men who are entrepreneurs, who really need to get comfortable with talking about their daily mental health and to get the help and support they need.

Strategies for optimism

My day wouldn't be complete without a conversation with myself about the simple fact that the work I need to do requires positive mental health. Negative thoughts and false beliefs about myself – "I'm a failure" – get in the way of moving forward and affect my mood.

Conversations with myself are quite insightful and result in heightened self-awareness. I always draw strength from knowing that if I continue to demonstrate self-care and compassion toward myself, and don't beat up on myself, I'm in a much healthier place of positive mental health for me and my family.

Fill your own cup first, I say to myself. I am not my worries. I am not my overwhelm. My work contributes to something bigger than me through the services that I deliver. My work is meaningful and important. I follow my heart and give full attention and energy to being the most positive and enthusiastic person I know.

Be your own Mental Health Champion

Needless to say, I'm committed to being a Mental Health Champion for friends, family and professional colleagues. But what about YOU? No matter what you do for work, if you're like most people, you hope and do your best to make a difference with your work and your co-workers. To do this in your workplace, you need to feel that your workplace is supporting you, welcoming you, appreciating you, wanting you to succeed and grow, with everyone working together toward a greater common goal.

*"I am not my worries. I am not my overwhelm.
My work contributes to something bigger than me through the services that I deliver."*

How would you describe the quality of positive mental health in your workplace? Does your workplace make you feel safe? Accept you? Support you? Does it make you feel like you are walking on eggshells? Reject and criticize you? Make you feel like you are not good enough? Do you feel at ease or are you waiting for someone to catch you make your next mistake? Our workplace culture has a great influence on whether we flourish or fail. Our workplace culture impacts our mental health.

Everything starts with a conversation

People have come to know me as someone who is comfortable starting a conversation about my own personal story of living with and managing depression and anxiety. But I can also appreciate that each of us has our own capacity and our own abilities to manage and cope with the normal stressors of life. It's reasonable to assume that, on occasion, we may find ourselves stressed by the diverse situations that affect us at home or at work. Maintaining positive mental health is a life journey.

All of us can start conversations. The simple act of starting a conversation about your own mental health is a clear demonstration that you care about you! And you also care about the mental health of other people in different parts of your life.

Never forget: You matter! Positive workplace mental health matters, even when up against "work to be done" or "We have a lot going on" and "We just don't have the budget for this."

Be someone who is authentic and real, and who wants to contribute to something bigger than yourself by helping people get comfortable and talk about their many mental health challenges, daily.

Be someone who "GETS IT"!

Be someone who starts the conversation.



ROBERT MANOLSON

As the owner of Powerful Play Experiences, Positive Workplace Mental Health... For Teams, Robert Manolson BA, CCDP, has travelled throughout Alberta for over 16 years, facilitating amazing play-based, team building/positive mental health at work workshop experiences. His goal? To be a role model for men everywhere who need to get comfortable with talking about their daily mental health challenges in order to get the help and support they need.

<http://www.powerfulplay.ca>



Alis Update (alis.alberta.ca)

Alis publications system is decommissioned

The alis team's multi-year effort to migrate the information and exercises from its print publications is now complete. The publications are no longer available to order or download from alis.alberta.ca. Instead, visit the [Alis Publications Archive](#), which directs you to the new home of the publication's information on the alis website. Also, archived PDFs of many of the publications can be found by searching the title on the [Alberta open government portal](#). However, these archived versions no longer have the most current information.

Note that you can still [order alis outreach materials](#), including bookmarks, postcards, and posters.

New Core Skills Exercise in alis' CAREERinsite

The alis team recently launched the first phase of its latest interactive career planning tool: The [Core Skills Exercise](#). This quiz complements the Interests and Abilities Exercises in the [Know Yourself](#) section of CAREERinsite. Based on the federal [Skills for Success](#) model, the exercise scores your skill level across 9 different skills:

1. Adaptability
2. Collaboration
3. Communication
4. Creativity and innovation
5. Digital
6. Numeracy
7. Problem solving
8. Reading
9. Writing

Currently, the exercise only compares the user's score against their initial quick assessment. This allows them to identify skills they may be overestimating or underestimating their strength in, and to identify areas to improve on. In the coming months, we'll implement Phase 2 of the exercise and begin using the user's scores to recommend occupations based on the newly released NOC OaSIS occupational data.

Contact Us

If you have a suggestion for future content on alis, or questions or comments about other parts of the alis website, let us know by contacting the team directly:

- Email—alis.info@gov.ab.ca
- Phone—780-422-1794 (for toll-free access in Alberta, first dial 310-0000)
- Online—through our [feedback form](#)

Classification: Protected A





Member Profile: Chantal Friesen, CCDP

by Paula Wischoff Yerama

This month we spoke with CDAA member Chantal Friesen. As one of our newest CCDPs we wanted to get to know more about Chantal and what drew her to the career development profession. Thank you for sharing your story with us, Chantal!

Tell us about your entry into and progression in the career development profession.

It was a complete fluke on how I ended up and progressed in the career development profession. I was working in the oilfield, pipelining, and doing facility work but was tired from the long hours/days and being away from home. I moved to Medicine Hat in January 2020. I applied for the Career and Employment Counsellor position that I currently hold, but COVID struck. I initially completed my first interview in March 2020, in which I thought went horribly terrible. I never heard anything back until July 2020, where I ended up obtaining my position as a career and employment counsellor.

I had previously completed 2 years in University Arts and Sciences, working towards my Bachelor of Education, but unfortunately due to circumstances at the time, I did not finish. I ended up returning to work where I was an Education Coordinator for a First Nations in northern BC. I enjoyed working with all ages and assisting individuals in career development.

I have attended and completed many different careers development training since starting in my role as a career and employment counsellor. I always take valuable information away from each session and use it to better serve the clients I work closely with.

I was fortunate enough to receive my Certification of Completion as a Career Development Practitioner through Career Professionals of Canada in June 2022. I am continuing to remain a member to the Career Professionals of Canada.

I was able to complete some training through Life Strategies in January and February 2023, where I was able to have more training in Job Development and Career/Course Services.

I will look forward to continuing my journey as a Career and Employment Counsellor and keeping my skill set current.

As a relatively new CCDP can you share your motivation for obtaining your certification and how it has enhanced your work as a career development practitioner?

I want to be able to provide the best service possible to the clients within my community. Everyone comes in with their unique stories and skills, I want to be able to aid them in finding a career they enjoy as much as I enjoy mine.

Obtaining my certification has enhanced my work as a career development practitioner in allowing me to gain more skills in assisting our diverse network of clients. Being able to provide the necessary assistance in aiding those clients in getting the most out of their experiences and future career goals.

What might you say to someone to encourage them to get involved with their professional association?

It is a community of like-minded individuals that have the same goals/focus as you to better serve their clients. There are lots of resources within your own professional associations to be utilized. It offers some extra guidance and support for those days you just need it. Being able to access firsthand resources and opportunities that may not always be readily available, it keeps you up to date on the latest news/information.

The past couple of years have been full of challenges and opportunities. What have been the most significant challenges and opportunities for you and your clients this past couple of years?

I came into my position in the middle of the COVID 19 Pandemic, so to say how things were before that, I would probably not be accurate as all the information I have is second and third hand.

The firsthand information was working with individuals that were struggling financially and emotionally with everything happening around them. I found I was looking for more outside resources to assist the client to get some stability for them to be successful in maintaining employment.

How does your career development experience impact other areas of your life?

My career development experiences have impacted most areas of my life. I find I am applying training through different developmental programs into my life outside of a career and employment counsellor. Changing my way of thinking, speaking, acting, and even presenting. I am finding myself more comfortable being in front of people.

Tell us something interesting about you (personal or professional), your goals / dreams for the future (personal or professional), your vision for career development in Alberta, etc.

Something personal about me outside of my profession, is I have a love of horses. I spend most weekends on the road, travelling to different rodeos and barrel racing jackpots. When I am not behind my desk working with clients, I am out with my horses and dogs.

My goal for the future is to continue learning and gaining knowledge in both my personal and professional life, knowledge is power.

