

June 12, 2020

We applaud the Canadian Chamber of Commerce and Leah Nord, Senior Director of Workforce Strategies and Inclusive Growth, for recognizing the critical role that career and workforce development plays in Canada's COVID-19 recovery efforts.

The Chamber was an invaluable Knowledge Champion for [Retain and Gain: Career Management for Small Business](#), a playbook published by CERIC and authored by Challenge Factory, and we're excited that career and workforce development is becoming part of the [Canadian Business Resilience Network's](#) mandate.

The five key areas that the Chamber identifies, where we need labour market solutions designed for our national and community economies, are insightful and relevant. They effectively highlight the importance of a strong career and workforce development ecosystem that serves both individual Canadians and the small businesses that form the heart of our communities and economies.

1. Career guidance and awareness
2. Recruitment, onboarding, retention and career laddering
3. Inclusive growth outcomes
4. Identification and implication of training, upskilling and reskilling
5. Overall labour market data and workforce planning

This is a great start. Adding recovery and resilience efforts that are directly informed by these areas to the Chamber's [Roadmap to Recovery](#) is the next step forward.

Getting Canadians back to work, the smart way, will require a cohesive career and workforce development response that combines two key components:

1. supporting employers as they plan for workforce rebuilding and business growth; and,
2. working strategically with individuals (jobseekers, employees, managers, *and* business owners) to address the full range of their diverse career needs.

Our sector is keen to work with the Chamber on this front. Actionable, evidence-based, and meaningful recovery initiatives throughout our communities are already being readied for collaboration and implementation. These include:

- CCDF's evidence-based [research and recommendations](#) about the contributions that our sector can make in the lives of Canadians impacted by COVID-19 disruptions. This includes robust theories and models, strategies and tools, and deep experience in helping individuals successfully navigate difficult and complex transitions in their lives.
- CERIC's Career and Employment Services Recovery [Pulse Survey](#) about the actual and anticipated impacts of COVID-19 on career services across Canada, which is gathering intelligence vitally applicable to the key areas that the Chamber has identified.
- Challenge Factory's [Recovery Ready Canada](#), a main street business recovery program combined with a supercharged summer internship that integrates career guidance and planning directly into its activities, materials, and support tools.

Lifelong career development for Canadians of all ages, professional stages, and sectors is essential to building resiliency in the labour market and futureproofing workforce planning. It's also essential to the

success of the Chamber's mandate to design solutions for the recovery of Canada's small businesses. The Chamber's contributions to the [Retain and Gain](#) career management playbook for small businesses showed how important this topic really is, and we hope to continue to build our valuable and collaborative relationship.

Sincerely,



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Riz Ibrahim
Executive Director, CERIC



Lisa Taylor
President, Challenge Factory

About CCDF

The [Canadian Career Development Foundation \(CCDF\)](#) is an internationally recognized centre of excellence and innovation in career development. Established in 1980, CCDF provides thought leadership, rigorous research, policy consultation, and capacity-building to promote stronger education systems, lifelong learning, labour market efficiency, skills development, and socio-economic health of Canadians and our communities.

About CERIC

[CERIC](#) is a charitable organization that advances education and research in career counselling and career development, in order to increase the economic and social well-being of Canadians. It funds projects to develop innovative resources that build the knowledge and skills of diverse career professionals. CERIC also annually hosts [Cannexus](#), Canada's largest bilingual career development conference.

About Challenge Factory

Since our founding in 2011, [Challenge Factory](#) has been tracking changes to the world of work. Our systems-focused consulting, research, and learning services provide creative yet practical solutions to today's most pressing career and workforce challenges. We serve clients from a range of corporate, institutional, and government sectors—offering proven methodologies, expertise, and experience. Together, we shape the Future of Work.

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