

Futures Agenda

- Employment Service Transformation
- Inclusion
- Best Practices
- Innovation
- Policy

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Future Launch



Future Skills
Centre

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Compétences futures

Looking for registration support? Feel free to reach out to Ashley Allado at ashley@firstwork.org to help register multiple staff.

Day 1: Tuesday, October 5

10:00 - 10:45 AM

#Local

Opening Remarks
Keynote Speaker
Sector Reflections

10:45 - 11:00 AM

Break & Exhibitor Booths (15 mins)

Block 1

Session 1

#Government

Governments Role in recovery and the future of EO

David Carter-Whitney | Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development | Assistant Deputy Minister

An opportunity to discuss the governments role in recovery from a policy and programs perspective and looking forward towards the future of Employment Ontario.

1. How to best work with government in the world of recovery
2. Looking forward at our supports and services

11:00 - 12:15 PM

Session 2

#FWDDriven

FIRST WORK PRESENTS: Early Insights into Ontario's Employment Service Transformation

Anushka Shahjahan | Lead Researcher | First Work

Sophia Koukoulas Manager | Communications and Stakeholder Relations | First Work

This session, hosted by First Work, provides an overview of the employment services transformation thus far centred around the Early Insights Report.

As transformation is moving forward in Ontario, agencies and individual providers alike have the opportunity to learn from those experiencing transformation on the ground in the prototype regions. This session will help practitioners understand the core components of transformation, the learnings and challenges identified by providers in prototype regions, and give recommendations for how to best prepare for transformation. This session will also highlight various session tracks for additional EST preparation throughout the Futures Conference.

1. Implementing the foundation to create economic inclusion of underrepresented groups from an employer and client focused approach
2. Utilizing inclusion strategies to create economic equity and access to quality jobs
3. Communication tools to engage employers and explore opportunities to shift the employer narrative of engaging underrepresented groups

Session 3

#WorkforceDevelopment

A Roadmap to Hiring People with Disabilities

Lisa Kelly | Ontario Chamber of Commerce

Donald Guse Salah | Ontario Chamber of Commerce

Hiring people with disabilities is not difficult. But there are tools - in this case, a roadmap - on how to successfully hire and retain talent with a disability. Discover Ability Network suggests following the five key steps to hiring a person with a disability: Understand the benefits, Find talent, Interview and Hire, Onboard and Provide accommodations.

Tools, documents, and resources are provided for each step.

1. Understand the benefits of hiring people with disabilities
2. Identify alternate methods and best practices of interviewing and onboarding people with disabilities
3. Identify a list of tools and resources that can support employers in hiring people with disabilities

11:00 - 12:15 PM

Lunch & Exhibitor Booths (45 mins)

12:15 - 1:00 PM

Session 1

#WorkforceDevelopment

Shifting the Narrative: Championing an Inclusive Employer Engagement Strategy

Kerry Kettle | The Career Foundation

The recent pandemic laid bare the foundational and systemic biases that have frustrated inclusion efforts for far too long. It also provided an opportunity to shift the employer narrative of engaging young people, shorthand communication and generational gaps. The Career Foundation has been deploying creative workforce development initiatives to help employers build back better and tackle practices that have excluded diverse talent from the labour market. Cultivating economic equity and inclusion from a dual employer and client approach to implement system level change has positive results. Join these workforce development experts and learn about their employer engagement strategies that showcase proven results in increased employment outcomes for underrepresented groups.

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Session 2

#WorkforceDevelopment

Purposeful Practice: How to Measure your Program Performance

Sarah Delicate | Director | BBMD Consulting Inc.

It has never been more critical to tell your program performance stories. Highly competitive organizations understand the need to measure beyond the funder's 'compliance' targets. Since compliance alone does not set you apart, what else SHOULD you be measuring?

Join Sarah Delicate in a fast-paced crash course on how to build a competitive Performance Measurement Framework for your employment programs.

1. Understanding the importance of performance measurement
2. Understanding the key concepts of performance measurement
3. Utilizing the Logic Model as the foundation of your performance measurement framework

1:00 - 2:15 PM

Session 3

#FWDriven

First Work's Communities of Practice: Solving Common Challenges through the Power of Collaboration Report (PART 1)

Akosua Alagaratnam | First Work & Mela Pothier | Purpose Co

In this session, participants will learn about First Work's Communities of Practice (CoPs) program for Employment Service Providers (ESPs) led and designed in collaboration with Purpose Co.. This program ran from March-August 2021 with the goal of empowering ESPs to create innovative solutions to address pressing challenges in three programs: Youth Job Connection, Second Career and Canada Ontario Job Grant. The session will explore the methodology and rationale for using Communities of Practice and share highlights from First Work's CoPs for ESPs program.

1. Be able to describe the methodology and rationale beyond Communities of Practice (CoPs)
2. Be able to identify common program challenges and explain best practices based on CoP program highlights
3. Leave with practitioner-generated solutions to common program challenges

2:15 - 3:15 PM

Exhibitor Booths (60 mins)

10:00 - 10:45 AM

Keynote
Understanding the landscape of skills from a pan-canadian perspective in our road to recovery
Pedro Barata | Future Skills Centre

10:45 - 11:00 AM

Break & Exhibitor Booths (15 mins)

Block 1

Session 1

#Local

Organizational Change in Transformation: Reviewing Mergers and Amalgamations

Patricia Salmon | WoodGreen Community Services | Senior Vice President, Community Programs Unit
Karl Pelowich | TD Bank Financial Group | AVP Culture & Colleague Experience
Lidia Monaco | The Neighbourhood Group Community Services | VP Strategic Initiatives & Integration
Sonia Yung | The Neighbourhood Group Community Services | Co-Chair, Board of Directors
Carolyn Warkentin | South Essex Community Council | Executive Director

A panel discussion to learn from the The Neighbourhood Group (Central Neighbourhood House, Neighbourhood Link Support Services, and St. Stephen's Community House) and WoodGreen Community Services (WoodGreen and JobStart) merger. Insights from their perspectives, the why's and how that has benefited the organizations in the merger. Current state and what is the desired outcome.

1. Share experiences and learnings
2. Senior leader and board perspective
3. approaching changes for the future

11:00 - 12:15 PM

Session 2

#FWDriven

FIRST WORK PRESENTS: Digital Transformation -- Building Workforce Development Capacity

Jake Hirsch-Allen | North America PPP, Workforce Development and Skills Lead, LinkedIn Talent Solutions | LinkedIn
Derrick An | Manager, Projects and Strategic Initiatives | First Work

LinkedIn's partnership with First Work has given this sector access to the same modern digital tools used by the top private sector employers to train and recruit.

Join this session to learn leading practices for virtual workforce development, while exploring the power of real-time labour market information through LinkedIn & First Work's partnership to upskill Ontario.

1. Best practices for doing workforce development online
2. The power of real-time labour market information
3. Q&A on First Work and LinkedIn collaboration

Session 3

#Government

Common Assessment Overview

Cordelia Abankwa | Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development

The Ontario government is transforming Employment Services. The goal is an integrated system that provides better outcomes for job seekers and employers. An integral instrument that partners will use to support clients is the Common Assessment (CA) tool - a digital intake questionnaire for both Employment Ontario (EO) and Social Assistance (SA) systems. Staff will work with clients to gather information about their strengths, barriers to employment, and life stabilization needs. This digital tool is designed to facilitate important discussions and improve the ability to better serve clients and communities by enabling consistent and comprehensive data collection across Ontario, service integration and coordination, and the ability for staff to better align resources to client needs and outcomes.

12:15 - 1:00 PM

Lunch & Exhibitor Booths (45 mins)

Session 1

#WorkforceDevelopment

Social Media for Non-Profits: Best Practices

Kimberly Swartz | Taproot Foundation

Social media is the core of your organization's identity. As the pandemic has shifted every aspect of our lives online, social media has become one of the main avenues of promotion, raising awareness, and reaching new people in order to grow your audience - which can lead to positive outcomes such as a surge of new clients or an increase in funding.

Coming up with a social media strategy can seem overwhelming - especially for first timers, but it doesn't have to be. Who is your audience? How can you best engage with them? What kind of content should you be creating? This session will take you on a deep dive of best practices and insights on each social media platform (Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn) and touch on the difference between paid, earned, and owned media in order to best equip you as you start off on your social media journeys.

1. Discover how you can tell your story to various audiences e.g. funders and jobseekers
2. Learn various social media platforms and their best practices, tips and tricks
3. Additional pro bono resources to bolster your social media strategy

Session 2

#Local

Using Mindfulness for Innovative Change Management

Wendy Quan | The Calm Monkey

How can mindfulness help you and your organizations through difficult change?

As a thought leader, Wendy Quan will share how she has combined mindfulness and change management and show you the compelling data she has collected. These results show extraordinary ways it is helping people boost their ability to mindfully deal with tough changes. The 'Dealing with Change Mindfulness Meditation Study' showed that 100% of the participants were able to create a better experience of their change through guidance by a specific change management mindfulness meditation.

In this session you will get to experience the meditation used in the study!

1. Understand how combining mindfulness with change management helps people through difficult change
2. Understand the Individual Change Journey a.k.a. the 'Valley of Despair'
3. Experiential practices to help you better deal with the uncertainty of change

Session 3

#FWDDriven

First Work's Communities of Practice: Solving Common Challenges through the Power of Collaboration Report (PART 2)

Akosua Alagaratnam | First Work | Executive Director

Mela Pothier | Purpose Co | Senior Researcher and Facilitator

First Work's Communities of Practice (CoP) were designed to harvest knowledge from practitioners with on-the-ground experience to create and test solutions to Ontario's workforce problems. These groups met on a bi-weekly basis to orient, build, grow, test and mobilize solutions for common program issues in the sector.

This session is hosted by First Work's Communities of Practice members who spent five months together leveraging their experiences to identify common problems in their work and to collaborate to trial innovative solutions to improve employment outcomes across Ontario.

Join the CoP members for this presentation where they will be sharing resources and highlighting best practices for these Employment Ontario Programs: Youth Job Connection/Summer, Second Career and Canada Ontario Job Grant.

1. Learn about best practices for Youth Job Connection, Second Career and Canada Ontario Job Grant
2. Discover solutions to problems practitioners experience when delivering employment programs
3. Gain access to shared, customizable resources developed by the Communities of Practice experts

1:00 - 2:15 PM

2:15 - 3:15 PM

Exhibitor Booths (60 mins)

Day 3: Tuesday, October 12

#Global

Keynote

It's Up To US: North American Perspective on Recovery

Ronald Painter | National Association of Workforce Boards USA

10:00 - 10:45 AM

10:45 - 11:00 AM

Break & Exhibitor Booths (15 mins)

Day 3

Block 1

Session 1

#Global

Ten Years of Transformation: Key Lessons from UK Employment Support Services

Sam Windett | Learning & Work Institute

As Ontario moves forward with phase two of Employment Services Transformation, this session shares key learnings and innovative approaches from UK transformations over the past 10 years. The session provides crucial insights on the successes and challenges of UK's transformations and how the integration of performance-based funding methods impacted service providers and barriered job seekers.

Samantha Windett, the Deputy Director of the Learning and Work Institute and Co-Founder of the Youth Employment Group in the UK, shares her insights on the past and ongoing transformations of the UK Employment Support Services.

1. Understand key elements of transformation in UK employment services from the Work Programme onwards
2. Deep dive on relevant learnings and parallels to developments in Ontario, such as impact on groups furthest from the labour market, commissioning structures, and performance-based funding
3. Focusing on the latest approaches in COVID-related programs for long term unemployed jobseekers and young people

Session 2

#Local

Smoke and Mirrors: The Illusion of the Employment Services Sector

Sarah Delicate and Angela Hoyt

Pulling back the curtain on outcome-based, government-funded employment services, Angela and Sarah provide an early view into their new book: Smoke and Mirrors.

Despite billions of tax dollars invested, there are issues within the employment services sector which have perpetuated over decades. In fact, some of these broken aspects of the system cause the employment service sector itself to be a barrier to employment for the under-represented groups they are funded to serve.

Although there is no silver bullet solution, there are things that can and must be done. Sarah and Angela present practical solutions - trivial practices - to nudge the employment service sector in the right direction.

1. Learn the practices that contribute to the pitfalls of employment services
2. Understand the root causes of the pitfalls of employment services
3. Learn practical principles to operate on the bright side

Session 3

#Local

Designing for Change: Digitizing Program Design and Implementation

Harleen Arora Educator | Researcher | Consultant, Arora Research & Consulting
Seema Taneja | Senior Research Consultant | Taneja Consulting Inc.

12:15 - 1:00 PM

Lunch & Exhibitor Booths (45 mins)

Session 1

#WorkforceDevelopment

Using the Resilience Scale in Employment Services: A Trauma-Informed framework to help you understand client resilience and offer services and supports that enhance it

Meg Saxby | Purpose Co | Lead, Learning and Development

Why do some of our clients recover from setbacks more easily? Can resilience be built, or is it inherent? How can we address the topic of resilience in our client work in an empowering and effective way? Come join your peers and the Purpose Co team that brought you Online, Together and LaunchPad to explore these questions and more in an interactive format. We'll be sharing the Resilience Scale, a simple and effective trauma-informed framework that helps us understand what creates resilience and some strategies for improving it. You'll hear from your peers and reflect on your own experience helping clients bolster their resilience and come away with a new trauma-informed tool that will help you and your clients achieve stronger outcomes more consistently.

1. Describe the Resilience Scale in lay terms
2. Explain what resilience is and some factors that create and strengthen resilience
3. Define protective factors and risk factors, and give some examples of each
4. Explain some applications of the Resilience Scale to employment services client work

Session 2

#WorkforceDevelopment

Balancing the teeter-totter: Motivational Interviewing - A Brief Introduction (Part 1)

Dale Kuehl | Centre for Addiction & Mental Health (CAMH) | Advanced Practice Clinical Leader/ Adjunct Professor Social Work

Motivational Interviewing is an evidence-based counselling approach working with individuals contemplating a change. This hands-on, client-centred yet worker directed approach will be described and applied. This interactive session will engage participants to apply the concepts in practice and opportunity to reflect in small and large group discussions.

1. Defining motivational interviewing
2. Describing the concepts and spirit of motivational interviewing
3. Applying the techniques through small group role play

1:00 - 2:15 PM

Session 3

#WorkforceDevelopment

Nurturing My Mental Health: Mental Health Strategies and Support for Service Providers

Dr. Christine Coleman | POC Thriving, LLC | Marriage and Family Therapist, Speaker, and Consultant

The mental health of employees, specifically service providers, is often impacted by stress, anxiety, and overwhelm that frequently surfaces as a result of the ongoing extension of care to others. Service providers are also not often granted the opportunity to pause and reflect on all of the emotional components of their roles. In addition, the global pandemic has exacerbated mental health conditions for many, especially those in service to others, leading to the increased need for safe and supportive spaces for employees to openly and candidly explore the condition of their mental health.

Licensed marriage and family therapist, Dr. Christine Coleman, PhD, LMFT will provide support to participants by offering helpful and practical tools to address and work through common mental health stressors. This interactive workshop will allow for reflective opportunities for clients to confidently walk away with tools needed to rise through potential mental health challenges.

1. Identify and define common mental health impacts such as stress and anxiety
2. Explore how these impacts affect employees in and out of the workplace
3. Gain practical tools to help employees manage and thrive in their mental health

2:15 - 3:15 PM

Exhibitor Booths (60 mins)

Day 4: Thursday, October 14

#Local

KEYNOTE

The Power of Lived Experience: The Road to Prosperity with Diversity

Gopal Bansal | RBC | Vice President, Diversity & Inclusion

10:00 - 10:45 AM

10:45 - 11:00 AM

Break & Exhibitor Booths (15 mins)

Day 4

Block 1

Session 1

#Global

Lessons Learned from British Columbia's Employment Services Transformation

Carolyn Neilson | YWCA Metro Vancouver | VP Employment and Training Services

In this session, Carolyn Neilson, VP Employment and Training Services from YWCA Metro Vancouver will discuss her experiences and perspective as a leader in the employment field, transitioning the legacy programs and services to the Employment Program of BC in 2012 and then to the current WorkBC Employment Services Model in 2019. Working as both a contract holder (the equivalent of SSM in Ontario) and a subcontractor provider, she will discuss several lessons learned during this time, and how to prepare teams and organizations for this transition. This session will provide time for audience questions.

1. Understand the importance of preparing your organization and staff for transition
2. Learn tips for identifying strengths and areas of development in your own organization
3. Increase knowledge and insight into business transformation

11:00 - 12:15 PM

Session 2

#WorkforceDevelopment

Intersectional Allyship in the Workplace

Christine Hsu | Director Of Business Development & Diversity & Inclusion Consultant | Challenge Accepted

This session provides an understanding of our individual role in dismantling the many forms of systemic oppression, while recognizing the power of influence which leaders have. Participants are offered an accessible, non-judgemental overview of some simple tools to identify the position of their own social location, and understand how it impacts their approach to equity, diversity and inclusion at work and in community. Participants will leave this session with an increased confidence to practice allyship further in their everyday work as leaders.

1. Identify valuable tools to shift and complicate ideas of allyship
2. Learn actionable steps to support participants in effective allyship
3. Explore real life examples to supplement the work of implementing equitable practices organizationally

Session 3

#Global

Insights from International Experience: Preparing Youth and Adults for a Changing Labour Market

Patricia Mangeol | Nora Brüning | Veerle Miranda | OECD

Discussion with Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) on what governments and post-secondary institutions do internationally to guide and support young people and adults in acquiring the right skills as well as find their way in a fast-changing labour market, and what insights could help drive an inclusive recovery in Canada.

1. Skill trends and the value of labour market signals
2. Policy recommendations to align education and training provision to labour market needs
3. Practices to guide youth and adults in their skills acquisition pathways

12:15 - 1:00 PM

Lunch & Exhibitor Booths (45 mins)

Session 1

#WorkforceDevelopment

Cultivating the Four R's to Support Indigenous Youth in Education and Employment

Victoria Herrera | Seridan College

How might we support Indigenous youth in reaching their employment and life goals? How might we become accomplices in challenging the barriers facing Indigenous peoples today? What are the ingredients for better relationships amongst Indigenous and non-Indigenous folks alike?

Join us in conversation, as we discuss the Four Rs of Indigenous education - respect, relevance, reciprocity, responsibility - as they relate to education and employment service provision. In this process, we will move away from notions of cultural competency and focus on anti-racist, anti-colonial relationship building.

1. Reflect on your own worldview, biases, and practices
2. Identify potential barriers facing Indigenous peoples and communities in regards to education and employment
3. Discuss strategies for active allyship that centre Indigenous ways of knowing and doing.

12:45 - 2:15 PM

Session 2

#WorkforceDevelopment

Balancing the teeter-totter: Motivational Interviewing - A Brief Introduction (Part 2)

Dale Kuehl | Centre for Addiction & Mental Health (CAMH)

Motivational Interviewing is an evidence-based counselling approach working with individuals contemplating a change. This hands-on, client-centred yet worker directed approach will be described and applied. This interactive session will engage participants to apply the concepts in practice and opportunity to reflect in small and large group discussions.

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1:00 - 2:15 PM

Session 3

#WorkforceDevelopment

Leadership and Succession Planning

Molly Rosen | Co-CEO | ProjectNext Leadership

2:15 - 3:15 PM

Closing Ceremonies | Gamification Awards