

GLS10 Unit 3: Exploration of Opportunities

Activity 1: Identifying Trends and Opportunities

Overview

In this activity you will begin by identifying a broad range of social and economic trends and explain how they influence your learning opportunities. By acquiring a better sense of these trends, you will better understand the broad range of options for educational, career and community opportunities.

Lesson



Before examining the changing world of information technology, it is important to understand that **change is constant**. Ironic as it may sound, the most significant constant about life in the 21st century may be change itself.

We change constantly and so does the world around us, including the working world. A single occupation will no longer take many workers from the beginning to the end of their working lives. For the modern citizen, adaptability to change is the single most important skill to carry throughout life. The first job you obtain may become obsolete or change so much that you will either have to find a new job or re-train to upgrade your

experience. It is predicted that the average Canadian's job will change three to six times within her/his lifetime. So you must learn to accept change and adapt to the ever-increasing world of technology.

Trends

There are many different types of trends which define a direction for a significant number of people. Trends come and go or can be big or small. If you are aware of various trends, you will increase the information you need to make good decisions about your future. Sometimes, people can predict and prepare for change by knowing the history of certain trends. Understanding different trends may "make us or break us" when we are determining our career paths.

Trends in Technology

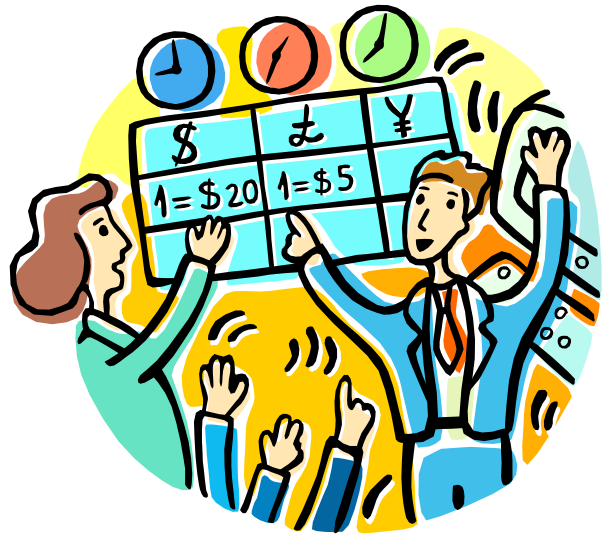
Technology is advancing rapidly. It has led to automation, which in turn has led to reduced human labour. These technology trends also affect how we work, no matter what we do. Think of all the different ways we can communicate with each other: cell phone, email, video conferencing, etc. People do not have to be in the same building or office to be part of a team; they can travel and still be in contact with one another.

Success in business is dependent upon technology. Technology know-how is now a requirement when competing for jobs. To find out how much of an impact emerging technologies have on the world of work, read the newspaper, magazines, watch TV, listen to the radio, go on-line; information is everywhere.

Economic Trends

Increased technology and the high-speed transfer of ideas, information, and capital have had a terrific impact on economics. Now, people all over the world are neighbours.

Globalization defines an economic trend toward international trade and competition. Globalization is the process of markets, politics, and legal systems moving beyond national borders, and the rise of the so-called global economy. As companies decide to take part in the emerging global economy and establish themselves in foreign markets, they will have to adapt their products or services to their customers' languages and cultures. They will also have to take advantage of the internet and establish a virtual presence on the international marketplace with a multilingual website or even as an e-business.



Canada is unique because not only is it a modern, developed country, but it also a multi-cultural country. Canadian citizens with knowledge of modern technologies as well as different cultures are better positioned to find opportunities in the global market.

Demographic Trends

Demography is the study of human populations. Demographic trends can help predict what our society will be like and how this will affect the world of work. Some of the things to consider would be:

- **Size of the Population:** birth rate, number of people between 20-30 years, immigration patterns
- **Territorial Distribution:** where do most people in Canada live? Urban or rural - how has it changed?
- **Composition of the Population:** age distribution in Canada, relevant values of each age group, income-range

The study of demographic trends can help us predict things about our social and economic lives and how the working world will change in the future.

How Will Trends Affect the World of Work?

"As recently as the 1960s, almost half of all workers in industrialized countries were involved in making things. By the year 2000, however, no developed country has more than one-sixth or one-eighth of its work force in the traditional roles of making and moving goods." --Peter F. Drucker

If people are no longer in manufacturing jobs, what type of jobs are they doing? Below is a chart that compares the traditional workplace with the new workplace.

The Traditional Workplace	The New Workplace
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • job that you keep for life • predictable salary with benefits and pension • hierarchical structure • larger organizations with thousands of employees • 9 - 5 schedule, with predictable routine • special skills required • services like answering phones and typing provided by support staff • community-based economy • education first, then work • work for someone else • most jobs in manufacturing and mass production 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • three to six major changes in a career • temporary and contract work • project-based structure • smaller organizations with specialty focuses • flexible schedule • transferable skills required • each person handles most of her/his own services - voice mail, e-mail, word processing • economy responsive to global pressures • life-long learning • work as an independent contractor, consultant, or entrepreneur • most jobs in information technology and the service industry

Emerging Jobs

When considering future careers, it is important to understand how modern trends have shaped and will continue to shape the workplace.

As proof that the world that lies before you will radically change, consider the shifting nature of occupations in the chart below:

The Shifting Nature of Occupations				
<i>Jobs That Have Disappeared</i>	<i>Jobs Currently Disappearing</i>	<i>Jobs That Changed A Little</i>	<i>Jobs That Changed A Lot</i>	<i>New Jobs</i>
elevator operator	secretary	bricklayer	printer	computer programmer
long distance operator	car assembly workers	teacher	accountant	computerized high tech security specialist
key punch operator	street sweeper	pharmacist	nurse	website designer
encyclopedia salesperson	door to door salesperson	gardener	clerk	computer graphic artist
telegraph operator	stock trader	carpenter	veterinarian	software engineer
typesetter	coal miner	firefighter	electrician	financial analyst
radio actor	bank teller	lawyer	bank manager	Information technologist

Assignment

1. Describe, in your own words, a trend. What do you think is the most significant trend of the 21st century? Explain in detail using examples.
2. What consequences has new technology had for both students and people in the workforce?
3. What is globalization and how has it changed the world of work?
4. What is demography and why is it helpful when thinking about jobs and careers?
5. Compare and contrast the traditional workplace with the new workplace.
6. Identify 3 emerging (new) job and explain how they have been influenced by economic or technological trends.