



# HOW TO ADVANCE IN YOUR ENVIRONMENTAL CAREER

Canada 

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## INTRODUCTION: WHAT THE ENVIRONMENTAL JOB MARKET LOOKS LIKE

There are **173,000** upcoming opportunities in the environmental sector.

It's true. We did the math and it's backed by research — check out our [environmental labour supply](#) and [environmental labour demand](#) reports.

Within the few years, over **172,000 roles** within the environmental sector will need to be filled. That's because close to 30% of environmental industry workers are retiring.

By 2025, there's expected to be an additional **74,400 new jobs** in the environmental sector.

**98,300 roles to be filled + 74,400 new roles = 172,700 opportunities awaiting you.**

Whether you're considering being an environmental business owner or progressing into a senior role, it's a perfect time to plan out your career advancement. We're going to walk you through a few steps to get you on your way.



# STEP 1: UNDERSTAND WHAT'S IN DEMAND



## Demain in Action: Clean Tech

Clean technology or cleantech is projected to become a trillion dollar industry. Canada is ranked #1 globally for cleantech research and innovation, but lags behind other countries and is ranked 16th in the world when it comes to commercializing on the ideas being developed here. There are plenty of opportunities for growth within this sector, and that's reflected in the number of jobs projected and workers needed to fill them within the cleantech space.

Each of these growing sectors have different requirements, offer different rewards and work environments, but they are unified in one aspect of their future: they need people like YOU.

## Looking for a senior role?

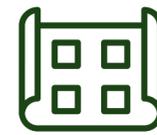
Below are the top five environmental roles anticipated to need senior employees in order to meet demand. These will need to be filled due to core environmental workers retiring, as well as the projected expansion of the environmental and sustainability sectors. Core environmental workers have specialized training in the environmental industry that can't be easily replaced.



**Mechanical engineers and life science professionals**



**Facility operation and maintenance managers**



**Landscape architects and urban and land use planners**



**Forest technologists and technicians and conservation and fishery officers**



**Utilities equipment operators and controllers**

## What Sectors are Most in Need?

Below are the top six economic subsectors that are anticipated to lead the demand for senior environmental professionals. There will be over 74,000 upcoming jobs in these and other areas.



**Clean and alternative energy**



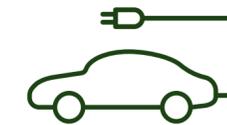
**Clean technology**



**Nature conservation**



**Utilities equipment operators and controllers**



**Sustainable transportation**



**Water quality**

If you were drawn to the environmental industry because you wanted to build your career and create a greener, more socially responsible, and more sustainable future, these emerging fields should validate that choice. These roles show the need for professionals who demonstrate a commitment to environmental best practice.

## STEP 2: DETERMINE THE SKILLS YOU NEED TO PROGRESS

TO PROGRESS IN ANY PROFESSION, YOU NEED SOFT SKILLS AND TECHNICAL SKILLS.



**Soft skills** are what you need to progress in your career. Leadership is an example of a soft skill.



**Technical skills** are what you need to get a position. Understanding environmental law is an example of a technical skill.

TOP 5 TECHNICAL SKILLS ENVIRONMENTAL EMPLOYERS NEED

### WHERE YOU ARE NOW

(Employees with 3-7 years of experience)

Policy and legislation: **50%**

Industry knowledge: **48%**

Communication and public awareness: **41%**

Education and training: **38%**

Research and development: **35%**

### WHAT YOU NEED FOR A SENIOR ROLE

(Employees with 8+ years of experience)

Policy and legislation: **42%**

Communication and public awareness: **30%**

Climate change: **27%**

Research and development: **27%**

Health and safety: **26%**

Source: [ECO Canada Essential Skills report](#)



TOP 5 SOFT SKILLS ENVIRONMENTAL EMPLOYERS NEED

### WHERE YOU ARE NOW

(Employees with 3-7 years of experience)

Project management: **71%**

Leadership: **70%**

Communication: **67%**

Negotiation and conflict resolution: **67%**

Problem solving: **61%**

### WHAT YOU NEED FOR A SENIOR ROLE

(Employees with 8+ years of experience)

Negotiation and conflict resolution: **62%**

Leadership: **55%**

Communication: **44%**

Project management: **42%**

Team work: **36%**

Source: [ECO Canada Essential Skills report](#)

Once you've identified a career or sectoral stream that you want to grow into, it is important to assess your current skillset, and identify any gaps in your education and experience that you'll need to fill in order to maximize not only your chances of securing a senior role, but also in optimizing your efficacy once you're through the door.

We offer a library of online learning opportunities that you can work through at home, on your own time, with little to no impact on your current career. We also offer online certificates that can help you build these senior-level technical skills. These certificates include:

- **Post-Graduate Certificate in Science and Policy of Climate Change;**
- and our **Canadian Environmental Law course.**
- **Project Management Bundle**

In addition, we host live virtual instructor-led workshops on a range of topics that equip you with the skills you need to support your career progression. Visit our website to learn more [www.eco.ca](http://www.eco.ca)

**Become an EPt** and get discounts on training as well as access to mentorship & networking opportunities!

# STEP 3: SHOW INITIATIVE

You've done your research and understand what skills you need to advance. It's time to show initiative. This could be to prospective clients or your boss.



## Learn and practice your soft skills

Mentioned earlier soft skills, like leadership, are what you need to progress.



## Practice being a leader and not just a manager

If you want to advance, being a leader is important. This means you understand the big picture; you can see and act on things from a 40,000-foot level while still relating and understanding the 1,000-foot level.



## Show your value

This means going beyond the expectations for your leaders or managers. It also shows you're able and willing to accept more responsibility.



## Build trust and relationships

Again, this goes back to building soft skills. For example, in order to be a leader, building trust is critical. One way you can build trust is to collaborate with other departments — you'll get the opportunity to learn more about what they do and also, help them with projects.



## Consider environmental designations

Environmental designations certify that you're competent in specific areas of the environmental industry. ECO Canada's **Environmental Professional (EP)** designation is one example. It's recognized across Canada and gives you access to potential speaking opportunities, networking events, professional development, and more.



## Do your research

If you're thinking about environmental designations or further training, go to our **guides** page. The guides are free resources that offer information about **environmental sector** designations, post-secondary education such as the **Masters in Environmental Practice**, and more.



## Stay Up to Date on Emerging Trends

You may be highly-educated in your field, but it cannot be stressed enough that, to ascend to the top of your field, that education should never end. Consider the ESG (Environmental, Social, Governance) movement as an example. According to an **Ernst and Young (EY) article**, 74% of investors factor non-financial reporting (which often come up for ESG) into their financing approval decision making.



If you aspire to a senior leadership position, or even as an independent consultant, you will need to be very knowledgeable of the importance of this emerging trend.

# STEP 4: CONNECT WITH EXPERTS

Connecting with other environmental professionals is a way to learn how you can progress in your career and also, meet potential clients.



Here are a few ways you can make connections:



## Do information interviews

That means asking a professional, or business owner that's in your area of interest how they got to where they are today. Information interviews can help you learn how to shape your own career path as well as what education and training you could need.



## Join professional associations

ECO's EP designation offers a variety of networking events where you can meet like-minded professionals. Use these events to talk about your interests, ask questions, and explore ways to collaborate with other professionals.



There's lots to think about when it comes to progressing in your environmental career; we're here to help!

Contact us at [info@eco.ca](mailto:info@eco.ca) if you have any questions.



# CONNECT WITH US

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