

To get more information or to contact us

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guidance co

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## Family Mediation Services

In 1993, guidance counsellors were designated by the Quebec Justice Department to practise family mediation. Their training, based on psychology, guidance and people's relationship to their environment, has prepared them to work effectively in this type of situation. Many guidance counsellors, after receiving additional training, are accredited by the *Ordre* as family mediators.

## Psychotherapy

Many guidance counsellors, after receiving additional training, are accredited by the *Ordre* as psychotherapists and offer psychotherapy.

## Where to Find Guidance Counsellors

Guidance counsellors work with people of all ages. They practise their profession in a variety of places, such as:

- ▶ **Education: Elementary and high schools, colleges (cegeps), universities, adult education centres and vocational training centres**
- ▶ **Employment: CLE [local employment centres], Carrefours Jeunesse-Emploi (CJE), and community job-assistance centres, many of them serving particular clientèles, such as immigrants, people with disabilities, ex-convicts or former drug addicts**
- ▶ **Private Practice**
- ▶ **Health and social services: Rehabilitation centres, the CSST (Quebec workers' compensation board), the SAAQ (Quebec automobile insurance corporation)**
- ▶ **Various organizations**

## Training

To be licensed as a guidance counsellor by the *Ordre des conseillers et conseillères d'orientation du Québec*, you must meet the requirements set out in the regulation adopted under the *Professional Code of Quebec*, which states that you must have a master's degree in guidance and counselling.

Training covers psychology; development of personality and intellectual, cognitive and affective functioning; psychometrics and assessment of psychological functioning; individual and group counselling; theories of vocational development; psychopathology; identity development; learning; interactions with the family, school and social environment; theoretical and practical knowledge of the dynamics of the individual; work and people's relationship to their work; statistics and research; information on education and careers; professional ethics; and theories and methods of guidance counselling. Training includes at least one 400-hour practicum.

Guidance and counselling programs are offered at these universities:

- ▶ **Université de Sherbrooke**
- ▶ **Université du Québec à Montréal**
- ▶ **Université Laval**
- ▶ **Université McGill**

# THE PROFESSION OF GUIDANCE COUNSELLOR



Ordre des conseillers et conseillères d'orientation du Québec

# The Profession of Guidance Counsellor

## A Short History

The foundations of guidance counselling were laid in the early twentieth century. Career decisions were originally seen as final and were generally made in adolescence. Beginning in the 1950s, finding direction in life became a continuous process of personal development, in relation with the working world, which was also changing. For several years now, there has been another shift due to the scope of adjustment disorders and suffering associated with work in all its forms: guidance counselling is no longer just an educational issue, but a mental health issue. The *Ordre des conseillers et conseillères d'orientation du Québec* was established in 1963.

## Mandate to Protect the Public

Governed by the Professional Code, the *Ordre des conseillers et conseillères d'orientation du Québec* protects the public by ensuring the quality of services provided by its members and guaranteeing the public the right to seek remedies provided by legislation regulating the professions. To this end, OCCOQ uses a number of means: reserved titles, regulations governing practice and a mechanism for handling complaints from the public.

## Guidance Counsellor: A Reserved Title

Only guidance counsellors licensed by the OCCOQ may use the titles of guidance counsellor, vocational guidance counsellor, *conseiller d'orientation*, *conseillère d'orientation*, *orienteur professionnel* and *orienteur*. The corresponding abbreviations are G.C., V.G.C., c.o., c.o.p. and o.p. These titles and abbreviations are reserved by law.

## What a Guidance Counsellor Does

Under the law, licensed guidance counsellors may engage in the following activities: providing vocational and professional development counselling, in particular by evaluating a person's psychological functioning and personal resources; using psychometric testing when required, to assess interests, skills, personality and intellectual, cognitive and affective functions; intervening for the purpose of clarifying the person's identity in *ordre* to develop the person's ability to make career choices and meet career objectives.

## A Clear Message to the Public

By training, guidance counsellors are the only practitioners specializing in guidance and career development who are members of a professional *ordre*. Anyone who consults a guidance counsellor can be sure that he or she has the required training and skills, and that his or her practice and integrity are monitored by the *Ordre*. In case of misconduct or incompetence, a member of the public can file a complaint with the *Ordre*.

## Guidance Services

### Individual Guidance Counselling

First of all, the particular expertise of guidance counsellors leads them to play a role of advisor on anything to do with career development, from childhood to retirement. They are concerned with the interrelationship of people and their surroundings, at school and at work. They are specifically concerned with difficulties in this area, which often take the form of chronic indecision, a lack of career goals or dysfunction at school, work or in life. As these difficulties often reflect identity problems, guidance counsellors are especially interested in the question of identity and the underlying psychological processes.

Assessment of psychological functioning and personal resources, along with counselling, is the primary means employed by guidance counsellors to help clients devise career plans that make sense to them.

Guidance counsellors assess, identify and express an opinion on the personal resources and psychological functioning of individuals. They administer psychological tests and interpret the scores to assess interests, aptitudes, personality, intellectual functioning and identity structure, among other things.

They examine areas of identity formation and clarification (self-knowledge) and how identity affects career goals (information on education and careers) and get involved preventively, educationally and curatively by establishing a meaningful helping relationship with the person.

They meet the needs of individuals in many areas:

- ▶ Academic and vocational guidance
- ▶ School-to-work transition and labour force re-entry
- ▶ Academic functioning and success
- ▶ Adjustment to work
- ▶ Major career changes
- ▶ Career planning and advanced training
- ▶ Career shifts
- ▶ Job hunting
- ▶ Information on education and careers
- ▶ Retirement planning

The primary objective is always to foster clients' personal and professional development, and develop their capacity to find direction and meaning in their lives.

## Advice to Other Professionals

Guidance counsellors also advise other professionals with regard to guidance and career development. For example, in schools, they provide support to teachers, principals and parents with regard to guidance and identity formation. In business, they may help employees balance work and family or provide counselling in employee assistance programs. In the fields of employability and rehabilitation, they play a similar role on a multidisciplinary team.

Guidance counsellors also design, apply and assess programs to create conditions favourable to adjustment, identity formation and career development in their respective settings.

## Guidance Services in Organizations

In addition to the services mentioned above, guidance counsellors may also offer services to organizations or to individuals working in organizations, such as:

- ▶ Recruiting and selecting employees
- ▶ Assessing potential
- ▶ Developing skills
- ▶ Employee assistance programs
- ▶ Career shifts
- ▶ Motivating executives
- ▶ Professional reassignment
- ▶ Skills inventories
- ▶ Managing training and change
- ▶ Managing coaching and mentoring programs
- ▶ Co-ordinating internships