



EDITORS  
CANADA

# Career Builder

This guide was created by experienced editors to help you build your career. It's intended to help aspiring editors become successful editors.

It provides a generic path that shows you most of the places you should visit along the way (and it's just one of many possible paths to a career in editing). As with most paths, it may lead you to unexpected places or to another destination. Note our disclaimer at the bottom.

## How to use this guide

Do be open to various possibilities. Some new editors discover that they're more drawn to some kinds of editing than to others. Some become interested in related careers (such as indexing or communications and marketing). And some discover that they just weren't cut out to be editors, while others drift into unrelated fields. To find the best path for you, be curious and be open.

You should also adapt some of the suggestions to your own circumstances and preferences.

- For example, we suggest taking part in X, formerly Twitter, chats. If X just isn't your thing, consider finding editors on Facebook or LinkedIn.
- You may also already have experience in some of the areas we suggest before you even start down this path, so you may skip those.
- You don't have to do everything listed, or you may do the items in a different order.

## Objectives

This guide contains a three-step plan designed to help you with the following objectives.

### Become part of the community

- Expand your network.
- Become part of the community of editors.

### Learn to edit

- Augment your previous education and enhance your skills.
- Learn to think like an editor.

### Find work

- Build your resumé.
- Establish yourself in the editorial profession.

# Step 1

As the first step, you should meet editors and learn about the editing profession, editing tasks and editing standards (such as the *Professional Editorial Standards* that Editors Canada publishes).

## Network



|  |  |
|--|--|
| Go to local meetings of editors.   |  |
| Join editing Facebook groups connected to membership in editing associations, as well as free groups like the <a href="#">Editors' Association of Earth</a> .      |  |
| Participate in X chats.  |  |
| Follow the hashtags across social media platforms where editors connect.   |  |
| Follow some editing blogs (ask your fellow editors what they read).  |  |
| Volunteer with your local editing association.   |  |
| Join editors' email forums (many associations have members-only email forums).   |  |
| Join an editing association to get these and other benefits (including discounts on training and conferences, and access to a job board and a business directory). |  |

## Attend a conference



|   |  |
|---|--|
| Editing conferences offer one to two solid days of professional development and networking. Find editing conferences in the Conferences for Editors Facebook group. If you specialize in a particular subject area, watch for conferences that are specific to that subject. For example, if fantasy is what you edit, you should attend the Ad Astra convention. |  |
|---|--|

## Take courses on these topics



### Editing

|             |  |
|-------------|--|
| Punctuation |  |
| Grammar     |  |
| Style       |  |

### Tools and techniques

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Querying  |  |
| Grammar   |  |
| Style   |  |
| Electronic editing  |  |
| Word styles   |  |
| <a href="#">Professional Editorial Standards: How do they work for you?</a> (Editors Canada free webinar) |  |



## Business

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Freelance editing   |  |
| Estimates and rates   |  |
| <a href="#">Getting work with the online directory of editors</a> (Editors Canada free webinar) |  |

## Step 2

In the **second step**, you should explore to find out what you are good at (and what you are not good at), as well as what you enjoy doing (and what you do not enjoy doing).

### Network



|   |  |
|---|--|
| By this point, you should not just be following blogs and observing (in social media and at in-person networking events).   |  |
| You should also be actively participating in social media, including answering some questions. Consciously try to find your niche, so that people think of you when they have a question on a particular topic. |  |

### Focus on improving your skills in one or more of the four editorial disciplines (as defined by Editors Canada)



|                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| Copy editing       |  |
| Structural editing |  |
| Stylistic editing  |  |
| Proofreading       |  |

### Take courses on some more advanced topics



#### General editing

|                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| Editing for the web |  |
| Plain language      |  |
| Fact checking       |  |
| Syntax              |  |
| Usage               |  |

#### Tools and techniques

|                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| Advanced Word functions |  |
| Design for editors      |  |
| Editing PDFs            |  |
| Style guides            |  |

#### Business

|                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| Getting government work |  |
| Marketing               |  |
| Social media            |  |
| Taxes                   |  |

## Other forms of training



Follow more editing blogs.

Consider participating in a mentorship program (formally, through an association, or informally).

## Step 3

**In the third step**, you should establish your niche and go about becoming that expert.

## Network



Volunteer with an editing association to get experience in an area you do not have training in, such as leading a team or managing a project.

If you're seeing gaps in your network, consider creating new online groups, hashtags or perhaps an in-person committee.

Look for ways you can help build the editorial community.

## Focus on improving your skills or knowledge by taking specialized training



Citation

Macros

Manuscript evaluation

Search engine optimization (SEO)

Medical, government, other specialty areas

## Do some self-study or set up study groups



Buy workbooks and study books and do the exercises.

Find more editing blogs to follow.

## Long-term

**In the long term**, you may go through a similar cycle again. You might also consider getting an editing certification, which tests for excellence, not proficiency.

## Long-term plan



### General editing

Board of Editors in the Life Sciences (BELS) [certification](#)

Editors Canada [professional certification](#)

# Disclaimer

Note the following information and responsibilities:

- Not all organizations have the same seminars or webinars.
- Not all seminars or webinars are always available.
- Some of the best assets available are free and informal (such as meetings and social media).
- Following these guidelines does not provide guarantees of any sort, including that you will find work, make a certain salary or gain certain editing skills.
- You are responsible for finding work and building your skills.