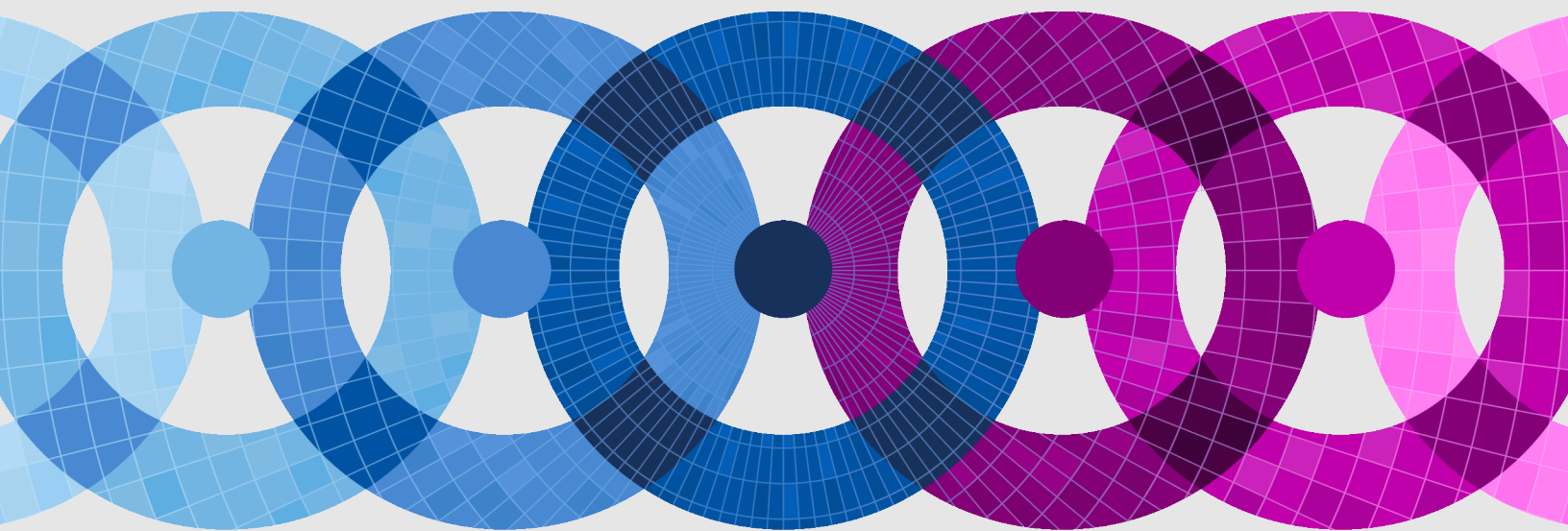




Mid-Career Transitions

Final Report

August 2026

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Acknowledgements

About the Future Skills Centre

The [Future Skills Centre](#) is a forward-thinking centre for research and collaboration dedicated to driving innovation in skills development so that everyone in Canada can be prepared for the future of work. We partner with policymakers, researchers, practitioners, employers and labour groups, and post-secondary institutions to solve pressing labour market challenges and ensure that everyone can benefit from relevant lifelong learning opportunities. We are founded by a consortium whose members are Toronto Metropolitan University, Blueprint, and Signal49 Research, and are funded by the Government of Canada's [Future Skills Program](#).

About Blueprint

[Blueprint](#) helps leaders use data and evidence to tackle complex public policy challenges across Canada.

We partner with government, community, philanthropic, and industry leaders to strengthen public systems and deliver better outcomes. We bring together policy analysts, evaluators, economists, data scientists, and implementation experts—people who know how to turn insight into action. Our work is grounded in deep subject-matter expertise, rigorous methods, and a real-world understanding of how systems operate and evolve. More than just an advisor, we're also partners in change. We provide key support at every stage of the policy and program lifecycle: from early strategy and design to implementation, evaluation, and continuous improvement.

As a consortium partner of FSC, Blueprint works with partners and stakeholders to collaboratively generate and use evidence to help solve pressing future skills challenges.

The Mid-Career Transitions *Final Report* is funded by the Government of Canada's [Future Skills Program](#).



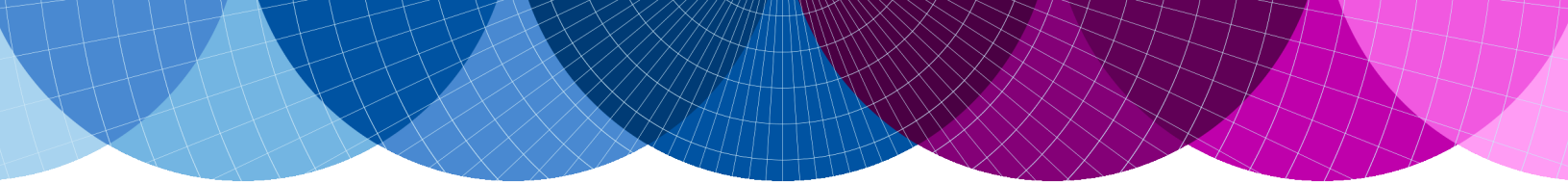
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About the Training Group at Douglas College (Douglas)

The [Training Group at Douglas College \(Douglas\)](#) in Greater Vancouver, British Columbia (B.C.), delivers government-funded training and employment programming for individuals and employers alongside a range of other services, including essential skills training, language services for newcomers, and self-employment training. The Training Group has significant experience and expertise in program development, implementation, and improvement within B.C.'s publicly funded employment services system, as well as in demonstrating new innovations outside of it.

About the Manitoba Institute of Trades and Technology (MITT)

The [Manitoba Institute of Trades and Technology \(MITT\)](#) is a post-secondary education provider based in Winnipeg, Manitoba, that provides technical training across several key industries, including skilled trades, manufacturing, and healthcare. The college works closely with industry to identify critical technical and Success@Work Skills gaps and address them through training programs, using practicums, mentorships, and career development to build connections between employers and learners.



Preface: **The *Reimagining Career Services* initiative**

Canada's world of work is shifting rapidly. Automation, the rise of gig work, climate change, an aging populace, and other forces are driving the need for new approaches to career development for workers and workforce development for employers. These shifts have exposed deep gaps in our employment ecosystem: services that no longer meet the needs of today's workers, employers struggling with inadequate support, and practitioners asked to do more without the tools and training to succeed.

Our current ecosystem fails to meet the needs of four key groups. Individuals facing complex barriers are often pushed into rapid job placements that overlook

underlying challenges, leading to cycles of precarious work. Mid-career workers receive little support to reskill or transition while still employed, limiting proactive adaptation to labour market shifts. Small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), despite employing most of the private-sector workforce, often lack the resources for effective recruitment, retention, and workforce planning. At the same time, career development practitioners in the public sector operate within a fragmented system and under-resourced profession. This constrains their ability to meet increasingly complex demands from both workers and employers.

Rethinking our approach to work and learning: A portfolio of innovation

In response, Blueprint launched the [*Re-imagining Career Services \(RCS\) initiative*](#) with funding from the Future Skills Centre (FSC). Rather than a single solution, RCS tests multiple models to serve various parts of the system: unemployed people with complex barriers, mid-career workers navigating transitions, SMEs addressing recruitment and retention, and practitioners guiding Canadians through disruption. Each project is co-designed with partners on the ground, piloted in real-world contexts, and evaluated to generate evidence on what works.

By experimenting across this range of challenges, RCS is helping to rebalance the employment ecosystem. The portfolio is building knowledge, capacity, and new service models that can inform how Canada better supports workers, employers, and practitioners in the years ahead. Our goal is to ensure our employment system is inclusive, responsive, and ready for the future of work.



1. Introduction

1.1. About the Mid-Career Transitions project

In early 2023, Douglas College (Douglas) and the Manitoba Institute of Trades and Technology (MITT) launched *Mid-Career Transitions* with support from the Future Skills Centre (FSC). This dual-client project designed and tested career and workforce development service models—for both mid-career workers and small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)—from April 2023 to June 2025.

[Blueprint's previous research](#) found that Canada's career and skills development system largely overlooks working mid-career adults. The system is also misaligned with the realities of SMEs,¹ which often lack dedicated human resources (HR) capacity

and career development expertise. In response, *Mid-Career Transitions* aimed to better understand the needs and services required to support these groups—to help workers navigate career transitions and employers identify promising workforce development supports.

The project launched through a [Needs Assessment](#) (2023) and rapid co-design and prototyping process. Blueprint's [Interim Report](#) (December 2024) documented service design decisions, implementation experiences, and user outcomes for early worker-stream cohorts (from April to November 2023).²

1 By "mid-career workers," this report refers to people with considerable work experience and who are still years from retirement. SMEs are those that employ fewer than 500 people.

2 See **Table B1** in **Appendix B** for an overview of model phases, participant cohorts, and their associated reports.

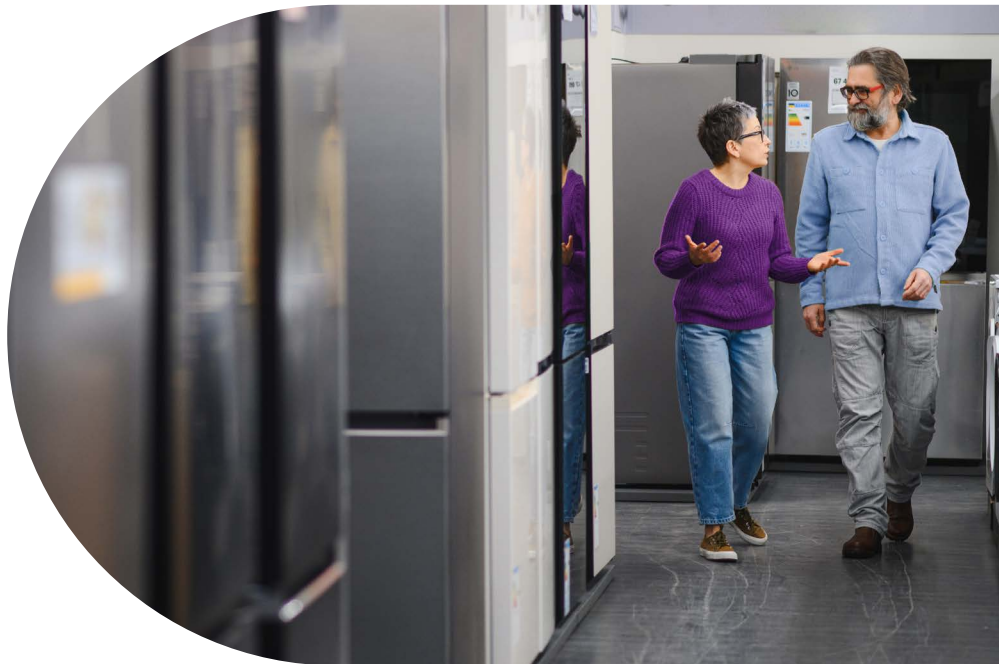
1.2. About this report

This *Final Report* builds on the *Interim*, presenting findings from a longer period of delivery and refinement (from April 2024 to July 2025). It includes additional worker-stream cohorts³ as well as findings from SME services, delivered from September 2023 to May 2025.⁴ It describes how service design and delivery evolved, and presents findings from user-testing, key lessons learned, and potential next steps for development in the following sections:

- 2. Context (pp. 8–9)** explains the labour market background and *Needs Assessment* findings motivating the dual-client service models.
- 3. The Mid-Career Transitions service models (pp. 10–22)** describes the models designed and tested by Douglas and MITT.
- 4. Methodology (pp. 23–27)** outlines our research methodology, learning agenda, data sources, and limitations.

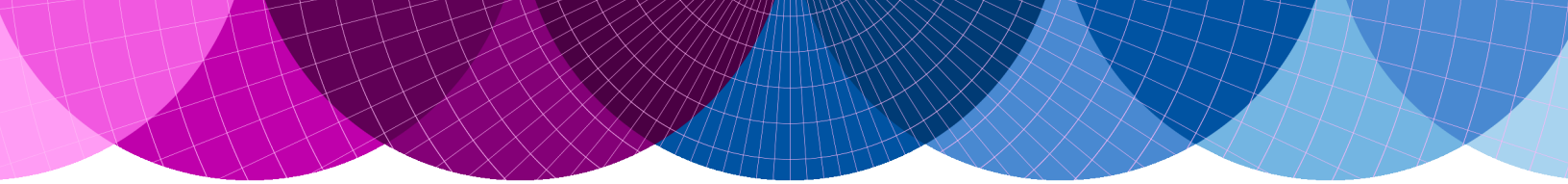
- 5. Worker-stream findings (pp. 28–49)** presents results for each model's **worker** stream.
- 6. Employer-stream findings (pp. 50–59)** presents results for each model's **employer** stream.
- 7. CDP and staff findings (pp. 60–64)** presents insights from the career development practitioners (CDPs) and Douglas and MITT staff delivering the services.
- 8. Discussion and conclusions (pp. 65–69)** explores implications for the design, funding, and scaling of mid-career support models, as well as areas for future research.

“Workers’ opportunities to grow or pivot depend heavily on employer practices, culture, and supports.”



3 Includes worker cohorts 3–6 at Douglas and 3–5 at MITT.

4 Includes employer cohorts 1–3 at Douglas and 1–4 at MITT.



2. Context

2.1. The need for career and workforce development supports

In rapidly evolving labour markets and periods of uncertainty and risk, workers and employers must make high-stakes decisions. These include whether to invest in new skills, change roles, or adjust workforce strategies. Economic downturns and disruptions heighten this uncertainty.

Pressures are especially acute for mid-career workers and SMEs. Mid-career workers represent a large share of the Canadian workforce and bring skills and experience shaped by prior learning and work. However, they often face barriers to transition, including financial and family constraints and skills tied to specific roles. Meanwhile, SMEs operate with limited HR capacity and career development expertise.

Mid-career workers face gaps in both access to and uptake of career services.

Career services in Canada⁵ aim to help workers navigate employment and career transition decisions.⁶ However, over 80% of adults aged 25–64 do not use them, with nearly half reporting no need and many relying on other informal supports,ⁱ such as online resources (53%) or friends and family (22%).ⁱⁱ Among those who do engage, use is typically short-term and reactive: job search assistance is the most common service (64%), including among those employed. Proactive engagement is limited. Although service use increases during crises (such as COVID-19), it is low among those in at-risk roles.

As a result, mid-career workers often navigate transitions with minimal expert guidance, increasing the risk of missed opportunities and poorer career outcomes. This challenge is compounded by the fact that many publicly funded career services prioritize unemployed jobseekers, leaving employed workers with limited access to proactive career support unless it is available through their employer or they can afford private services.

5 These services are also referred to as “career guidance” and “career counselling” services.

6 This report uses “career transition” to refer to any form of career development, including progressing in a current role or making a more substantial change of occupation or sector. “Workforce development” refers to processes ensuring organizations have the people and skills they need through recruitment, clear role expectations, performance management, and opportunities for learning and advancement.

SMEs encounter gaps in tailored, strategic HR support.

Constraints also exist on the employer side. Most SMEs rely on informal or hybrid approaches to HR management, largely due to limited capacity.^{iii,iv} Without dedicated HR specialists, responsibility for workforce decisions often falls to owner-managers, who may lack formal expertise.^{v,vi,vii} Globally, outsourcing HR functions is becoming more widespread, but SMEs typically do so only for routine tasks, such as payroll and benefits administration.^{viii}

More strategic supports, such as workforce planning or talent development, are less accessible. Customized services are often prohibitively expensive,^{ix} while affordable options are often not well-tailored to SMEs' needs.^x As a result, many SMEs are left without the expert support to make informed, long-term workforce decisions.

Taken together, current offerings fall short of what mid-career workers and SMEs require, creating an opportunity for a dual-service model better suited to their circumstances.

2.2. Learnings from the Needs Assessment phase

Blueprint partnered with two organizations to design and test services to respond to these challenges: the **Training Group at Douglas College (Douglas)** in Greater Vancouver, B.C. and the **Manitoba Institute of Trades and Technology (MITT)** in Winnipeg, Manitoba (see **Acknowledgements** on **p. 3** for information on Douglas and MITT). Both organizations have extensive experience in career and workforce development.

In 2023 and 2024, partners conducted needs assessments in their provinces to understand specific circumstances, motivations, and challenges facing mid-career workers and SMEs. They engaged working adults exploring career transitions and SME employers across a range of industries. Using mixed methods, the partners gathered insights on participants' characteristics, needs, and types of supports sought, captured in our [Needs Assessment](#) report and summarized in **Table A2** in **Appendix A**.

Three key insights emerged from the *Needs Assessment*:

- 1. Career transitions are shaped by workplace contexts, not just individual decisions.** Workers' opportunities to grow or pivot depend heavily on employer practices, culture, and supports. However, existing career services are generally delivered outside of one's workplace, are usually *worker-focused*, and do not address the workplace environment, organizational practices, or employer capacity.
- 2. Employers benefit when workers gain clarity, confidence, and direction**—but they often lack the tools or knowledge to support these conversations. No existing model meaningfully connects worker needs with employer capacity, leaving a gap that limits long-term impact.
- 3. Supporting workers and employers together may increase the likelihood of sustained change.** This has the potential to reduce misalignment and strengthen career and workforce development that supports organizational needs and individual growth.

These insights inspired the dual-client service models iterated and prototyped by our partners.



3. The Mid-Career Transitions service models

This section details the design and delivery of the service models tested by Douglas and MITT.

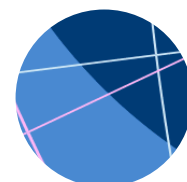
Douglas and MITT developed models to address gaps in the career and workforce development ecosystem related to limited services for employed workers and SMEs. Both models:

- adopted a dual focus on mid-career workers and SMEs,
- used a blended approach, combining workshops with individualized supports, and
- aimed to strengthen workers' readiness for career transitions while building employers' capacity for workforce development.

However, the models differed in implementation. Douglas treated worker and employer streams independently and emphasized a structured, time-bound model with standardized content and limited one-on-one support. MITT's model was flexible, allowing for joint or parallel engagement, offering more intensive and open-ended support, and tailoring delivery to participant needs. These differences reflected a more standardized approach in Douglas's model and a more adaptive, participant-driven approach in MITT's.

Each model is described below. See **Appendix B** for a more detailed comparison.

“Douglas emphasized a structured, standardized approach, while MITT adopted a more adaptive, participant-driven model.”



3.1. The Douglas service model

Douglas's dual-client service model adopted a group-based approach. It delivered content through cohort-based workshops, encouraging peer-to-peer learning and interactive environments. It was designed to be financially sustainable and resource-efficient at scale, with group work supplemented by individualized guidance as needed.

3.1.1. Douglas worker stream

Douglas's **worker stream**, called the *Mid-Career Transitions Program*, aimed to strengthen mid-career workers' abilities to navigate career transitions. It encouraged long-term career growth by building skills (e.g., financial management, networking), participant confidence, and clarity, and providing access to effective career development tools and supports.

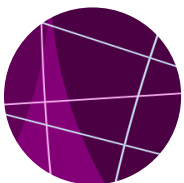
Target group and eligibility. The model targeted employed, mid-career workers who felt stuck in their current careers and wanted to change jobs. Participants needed to be employed, with at least five years of Canadian work experience (or a combination of at least three years of employment plus volunteer experience). Staff prioritized intakes based on years of work rather than age.

Recruitment and screening. Individuals completed an intake form and interviews. Candidates were screened to assess whether they felt stuck in their current careers, wanted to make a change, and were ready to do so. Participants needed to be able to attend all required model activities, actively participate, and complete assignments.⁷

Service components and participant journey.

The model was delivered over 12 weeks and involved nine workshops (one in-person and eight virtual, facilitated by experienced CDPs). Workshops were coupled with online resources and optional one-on-one career counselling sessions. Participants could exit at any time, although Douglas recommended that they complete at least seven workshops before doing so.

Table 1 (on the next page) summarizes components. **Figure 1** (on page 13) shows the participant service journey.



“The model targeted employed, mid-career workers who felt stuck in their current careers and wanted to change jobs.”

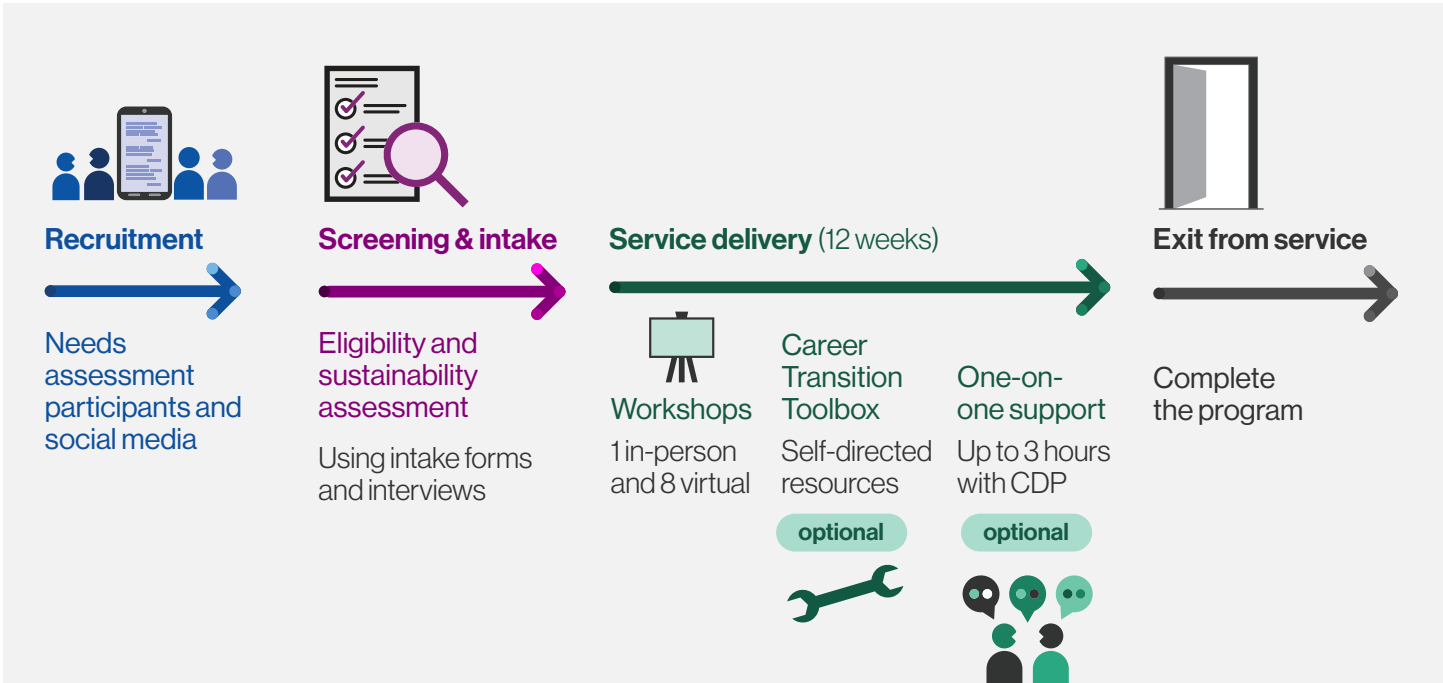
⁷ Participants were recruited from those involved in the needs assessment and through Douglas's social media platforms. Project participation was incentivized for cohorts 3 and 4 to support sustained engagement and enable iterative, user-centred refinement of the model; individuals received \$450 upon completing the model and exit survey.

Table 1 | Douglas worker-stream service components

Component	Description
Workshops (in order of delivery) Pre-workshop assignments (e.g., reading materials and reflection activities) helped participants prepare.	1. Personality Dimensions (in-person), helping participants understand their personalities, strengths, preferences, and careers or jobs aligned with them. 2. Managing Career Transitions (virtual), introducing life and work transitions that affect careers and strategies for navigating uncertainty during these periods. 3. Dependable Strengths (virtual), helping participants identify strengths and how to use them to advance their careers. 4. Financial Management (virtual), introducing financial planning and ways of navigating financial uncertainty during career transitions. 5. Presenting Your Value (virtual), helping participants recognize their transferable skills and how to articulate them in interactions with employers and mentors. 6. Networking and Mentorship (virtual), providing networking and mentorship skills and highlighting their value in creating meaningful career opportunities. 7. Thriving on the Job (virtual), helping participants identify how to thrive and actionable strategies for leveraging their current jobs for career growth. 8. Navigating Disruption in the Workplace (virtual), building awareness of workplace complexity and unpredictability and strategies to strengthen adaptability and resilience. 9. Generative AI (virtual), introducing emerging generative AI tools (e.g., Gemini, ChatGPT, Claude, DeepSeek, etc.) and how they can support career planning. For cohorts 5 and 6, the ‘Thriving on the Job’ and ‘Navigating Disruption in the Workplace’ workshops were combined into one (‘Navigating and Adapting to the Changing World of Work’). The ‘Generative AI’ workshop was also added to the curriculum.⁸
Career Transition Toolbox	Available during and after the model and hosted on Blackboard, ⁹ the Toolbox included mental health resources, tips on resume and cover letter writing, industry-specific skill information, and broader labour market information, featuring high-demand sectors. It also provided access to digital career guidance tools, such as Career Cruising and Opportunext , to help identify viable career transition pathways and encourage proactive career planning.
Optional, one-on-one career counselling	Participants had access to three one-hour counselling sessions with CDPs to ask questions and develop action plans, allowing for follow-up support tailored to participants’ levels of self-efficacy. Because worker-stream participants were employed, counselling was made available outside of work hours.

8 For an overview of the model’s evolution since its inception, see **Figure B2** in **Appendix B**.
9 Blackboard is a learning management system that allows for centralized access and participant tracking.

Figure 1 | Douglas worker-stream participant journey



3.1.2. Douglas employer stream

Douglas’s **employer stream**, called *Futureproofing Your Business*, was designed to build employers’ access and capacity to use workforce development tools. It aimed to strengthen employers’ recognition of the value of internal career pathways within their organizations and improve their ability to support employee career development.

Target group and eligibility. The model was targeted to SMEs with at least two employees.¹⁰ SMEs from any sector or status (for-profit or not-for-profit) could participate. Participants could be owners, HR specialists, or other senior representatives.

Recruitment and screening. Employers were recruited through an email newsletter (via Douglas’s mailing list); CDPs working with Douglas; social

media advertisements; and long-standing partner organizations (such as with the Tri-Cities Chamber of Commerce, Jelly Academy, and WorkBC) that provide training and employment opportunities for students. Employers completed an intake form and participated in a 15–30-minute interview, during which Douglas managers outlined the model’s structure, key topics, and expected takeaways.¹¹

Service components and participant journey. The model was delivered over five weeks and consisted of five, 90-minute workshops on workforce development and emerging trends and other pertinent resources. Staff recommended which workshops and resources participants should use based on their needs and goals. While attendance was flexible, participants were encouraged to attend at least three workshops.

10 Douglas made some allowances for self-employed individuals or businesses with only one employee as long as their needs aligned with the model offerings. See **section 6** for a breakdown of employer participants.

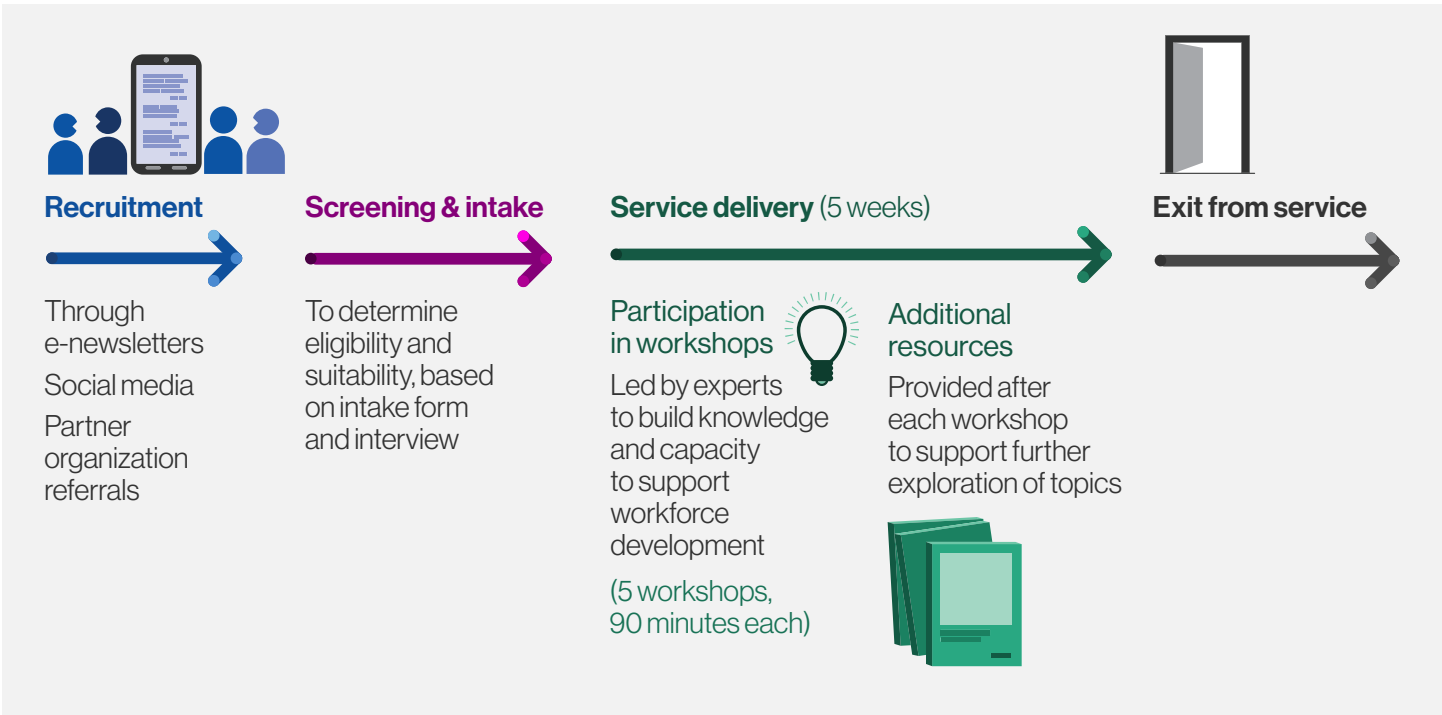
11 As part of screening, model managers also assessed employers’ availability to participate in the workshops and their comfort engaging in group settings. Most employers who expressed interest were accepted provided they met these criteria.

Table 2 summarizes components. **Figure 2** (on the next page) shows the employer service journey.

Table 2 | Douglas employer-stream service components

Component	Description
Workshops (in order of delivery) Led by a CDP, these 90-minute group workshops combined presentations with peer discussions.	1. Futureproofing Your Business, helping employers identify trends in business (e.g., evolving workplace environments, employee expectations, digital innovation, and workplace wellness and health). 2. Performance Management, exploring retention strategies to ensure employees receive the right training and support during onboarding, understand expectations, and are supported via coaching to perform tasks confidently and grow within the company. 3. Generative AI, providing foundational knowledge about how AI can help prepare their organizations for the changing world of work. Insights involved business proposals, marketing, and workflows. 4. Leading with Equity, introducing effective Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) practices and how embedding DEI can strengthen workforce performance and outcomes. 5. Leading Through Times of Change, exploring the value of change capability, with a focus on communicating change processes and ways employers and employees can adapt in business and/or workplace together. After feedback from cohort 1 and testing with cohorts 2 and 3, workshop curricula and online resources were revised to improve relevance. For example, B.C. SME cases and data were introduced to better resonate, and the additional information was organized to facilitate easier content navigation.
Additional resources	After each workshop, participants received resources to further explore the topics. These included a guide with advice on translating workshop discussions into summaries of key trends, including: • Emerging technological trends for businesses and practical steps for futureproofing. • Integrating wellness programs into business practices (concept, incentives, and examples). • Generational shifts and their impact on workplaces. • Effective communication with employees.
Optional, one-on-one counselling	After feedback from cohort 1 and testing with cohorts 2 and 3, a one-hour counselling session with a CDP was added for those needing further support.

Figure 2 | Douglas employer-stream participant journey

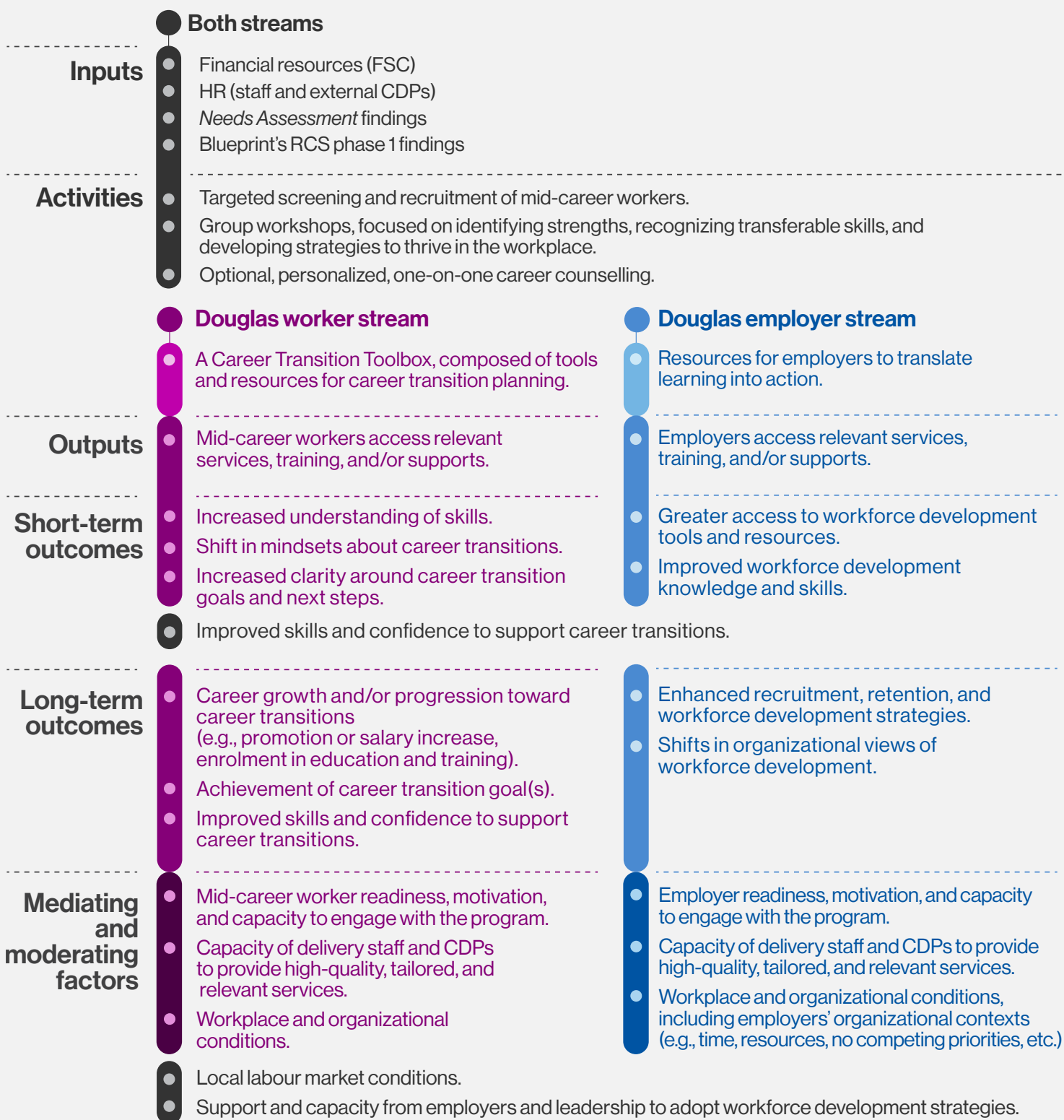


“Douglas’s model aimed to strengthen employers’ recognition of the value of internal career pathways within their organizations and improve their ability to support employee career development.”

3.1.3. Douglas logic models

Figure 3 illustrates logic models for each stream, conveying how program inputs and activities are expected to lead to outputs and outcomes.

Figure 3 | Douglas logic models



3.2. The MITT service model

MITT designed a dual-client model to help participants identify and address their needs using “career conversations.” This term refers to structured, collaborative dialogues between employees and employers focused on career goals, skill development, performance management, and opportunities for growth within the organization. Workers and employers could partake in services independently or as part of the same organization. In Manitoba, worker supports also involved employers, either directly or through sector councils and employer organizations, reflecting MITT’s emphasis on testing an employer-responsive approach. The central aim was to build participants’ capacity to conduct career conversations independently and navigate career and workforce transitions with light-touch supports.

Both streams followed a “rolling intake, individual delivery” approach: participants were recruited on an ongoing basis within a fixed period and progressed independently.¹² Initially, employer and individual participants were recruited from those who participated in the needs assessment. Additional participants were recruited through advertising, outreach, and connections through MITT and sector councils (noted below). Workers and employers worked closely with CDPs to build their skills and move from a fully supported to a self-directed, lower-intensity service, increasing their autonomy and self-efficacy.

3.2.1. MITT worker stream

Called **Career Services for Working Canadians**, MITT’s **worker stream** focused on strengthening participants’ abilities to articulate aspirations,

identify career development needs, and engage in productive conversations with employers about career direction and opportunities.

Target group and eligibility. The model targeted currently employed, mid-career individuals from any sector or profit status.¹³

Recruitment and screening. Participants were recruited through social media marketing, social networks, local marketing, and referrals from employers and employment assistance services. Applicants completed a screening form. Individuals were eligible if they could legally work in Canada and were living or working in Winnipeg upon enrolment. Selection followed a first-come, first-served approach.

Service components and participant journey. The model included one-on-one support from CDPs, group workshops, and self-directed resources. Across these components, services were delivered using the career conversations approach to help participants identify and address their needs. The service also incorporated Labour Market Information (LMI) resources, including [Lightcast](#), to support career exploration and decision-making. Lightcast is a labour market analytics tool that provides compensation benchmarking, skills comparisons across job roles, and local hiring trends, among other insights.

Originally, the model was delivered over eight weeks, during which participants could access an unlimited number of one-on-one sessions with a CDP. Starting with cohort 4, participants could receive up to 10, one-hour sessions with a CDP. They could also exit

¹² The model was delivered over several such periods; for analysis purposes, participants who enrolled and completed the model within the same period are referred to as a cohort.

¹³ MITT allowed some select exceptions to its eligibility: three unemployed individuals participated because they had recently lost or left their jobs, and three individuals in the sample were below the age of 25, so not mid-career.

after using their allotted time or when they no longer needed support. Participants in cohort 3 engaged with services immediately. Those in cohorts 4 and 5 began with a group kick-off, followed by an intake

interview with their assigned CDP to select which components best met their needs.¹⁴

Table 3 summarizes components. **Figure 4** (on the next page) shows the worker service journey.

Table 3 | MITT worker-stream service components

Component	Description
One-on-one CDP support	All workers first met with a CDP to discuss their needs and clarify their employment goals. CDP support was designed to help participants build the skills, confidence, and action plans needed to engage in career conversations with employers. Participants could continue to meet with CDPs for guidance, activities, and assessments to explore their skills and aspirations and create an action plan to support career exploration and transitions. Early participants engaged with services immediately; cohorts 4 and 5 began with a group kick-off meeting and intake interview with assigned CDPs to determine which components best met their needs. Starting in cohort 4, all CDP support moved from unlimited over eight weeks to up to 10 one-hour sessions. Individuals exited when their identified, presenting needs were met. CDP support was delivered flexibly, with sessions available outside regular hours by agreement between CDPs and participants.
Group workshops	1. Confident Career Navigation, providing tools and strategies to support mid-career workers navigate career exploration. 2. Interviews, covering strategies for how to succeed in job interviews. 3. LinkedIn Set-up for Success, outlining best practices on how to set up a LinkedIn account and leverage it for networking and job searching. 4. Networking, covering strategies to engage effectively in networking. 5. Thrive at Work (Career Conversations), introducing career conversations and providing strategies on holding them with employers.
Self-directed resources	• Career conversations: An employee guide to conducting effective career conversations. • Career planning: Websites and guides to help workers explore their interests, values, and abilities when identifying potential future career opportunities. • Interview preparation: Tips for preparing for and excelling in job interviews. • Job search: Tips for conducting a job search, including key job boards and websites. • LinkedIn: Tips for setting up a LinkedIn account and leveraging the platform. • Resume writing: Tips for writing resumes for different audiences.

¹⁴ This change was introduced after noting that participants from earlier cohorts who started without guided support were less successful in using self-directed resources. For an overview of the model's evolution since its inception, see **Figure B2** in **Appendix B**.

Figure 4 | MITT worker-stream participant journey



3.2.2. MITT employer stream

Called the **Responsive Career Pathways Project**, MITT’s **employer stream** aimed to help participants clarify organizational needs, engage in conversations about employee development, and build practices for ongoing workforce planning and skill development.

Target group and eligibility. The model targeted SMEs with at least two employees. Eligible employers needed to show interest in integrating a career and workforce development approach within their organizations. The model also accepted some employers from larger organizations who were involved in the needs assessment and wanted to continue working with CDPs.¹⁵

Recruitment and screening. Employers were recruited through MITT’s employer network; referrals from sector council events; CDPs’ contacts; and a ‘Career Conversations’ information session led by

CDPs. Employers completed an expression of interest, collecting contact information. Each candidate was then interviewed to assess their needs and determine whether participation was a good fit.

Service components and participant journey.

Once enrolled, participants met with a CDP for a discovery and scoping session. This session determined which “pathway” was most appropriate based on their needs, challenges, size, sector, and years in operation. Pathways were called ‘Fully Supported’ and ‘Group Learning.’

As shown in **Table 4**, ‘Fully Supported’ involved one-one-one interactions with CDPs, and ‘Group Learning’ involved group-based seminars that occurred at participants’ workplaces to help start career conversations. Participants could switch between pathways. As the model evolved, online learning resources and tools were also

15 One participant was a representative from a sector council interested in supporting its career pathways.

made available. Across all pathways, the model emphasized career conversations to support employee development and retention. Within the Fully Supported pathway, CDPs also worked with employers and sector associations to identify occupational career pathways and develop career matrices that mapped potential progression opportunities and the competencies required for advancement. As in the worker-stream, CDPs also integrated Labour Market Information (LMI)

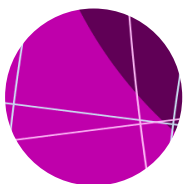
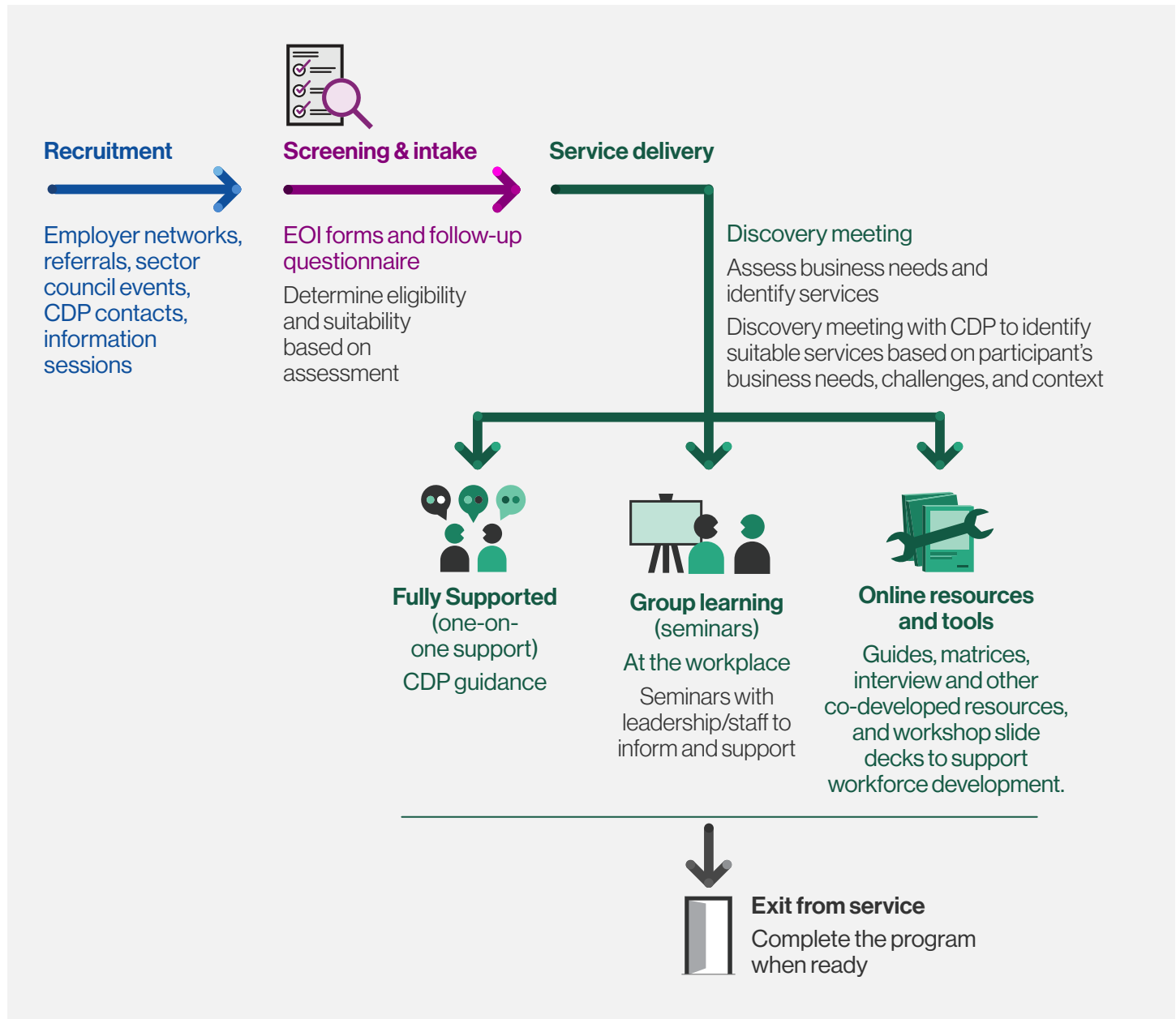
resources, including Lightcast, to support career exploration, identify in-demand occupations and skills, and inform workforce planning for both workers and employers. With no fixed endpoint, employer participants exited when their needs and outlined commitments were met.

Table 4 summarizes components. **Figure 5** (on the next page) shows the employer journey.

Table 4 | MITT employer-stream service components

Component	Description
Fully Supported	Provides one-on-one, individualized support from a CDP to identify workforce needs and provide the supports, tools, and services best suited to address them. Supports may include: • Assisting with job advertisements and interviews. • Implementing career conversations within the workplace by supporting employers and managers to conduct these conversations with staff and, where appropriate, working directly with employees to prepare for and participate in these conversations. • Supporting with identifying skills needs and workforce planning using LMI tools, including Lightcast. • Collaborating with employers and sector councils to develop sector-specific career pathways and career matrices that map progression opportunities and the competencies required for advancement. • Developing other tailored resources and approaches.
Group Learning	• ‘From Go to Grow’ Using Career Conversations: sessions designed for managers and leaders to equip participants with the knowledge and skills to conduct career conversations with their staff. • ‘Thrive at Work’ Using Career Conversations: sessions to provide staff with better understandings of the purpose of career conversations.
Online resources and tools	Online resources and tools included career matrices, interview guides, and workshop slide decks. By program end, five online guides were available for employers: • Career Conversations: Nurturing and Retaining Talent • Informational Interviews • Tips for Job Ads That Get Results • Successful Interviewing • Competency-Based Approach to Hiring and Growing Talent

Figure 5 | MITT employer-stream participant journey

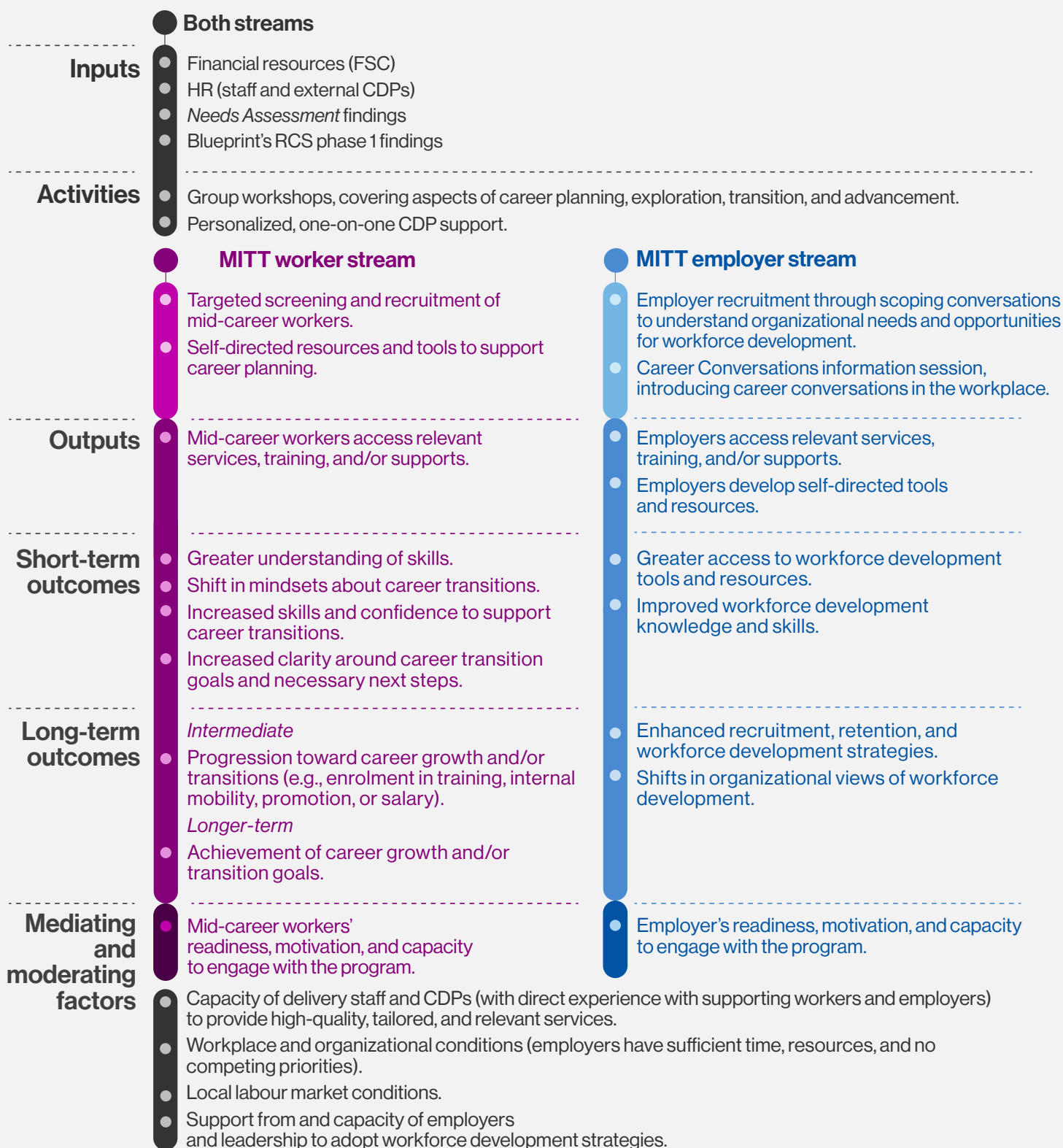


“MITT’s employer stream model emphasized career conversations to support employee development and retention.”

3.2.3. MITT logic models

Figure 6 illustrates logic models for both streams, conveying how program inputs and activities are expected to lead to outputs and outcomes.

Figure 6 | MITT logic models



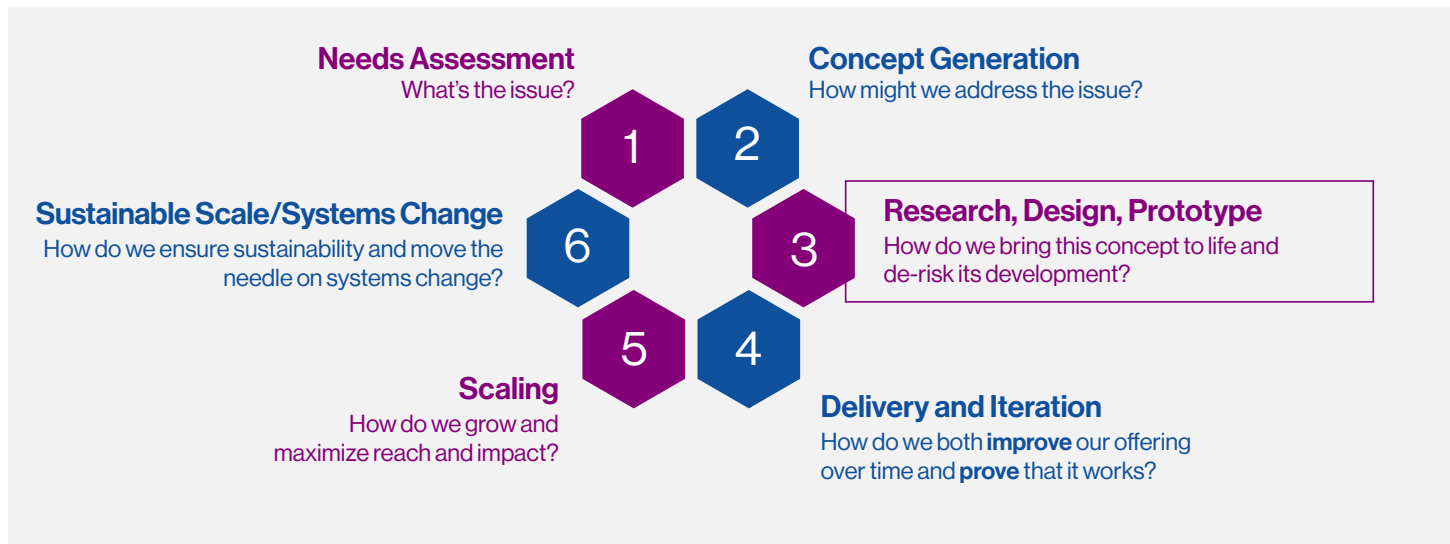


4. Methodology

4.1. Blueprint's evidence generation approach

The Mid-Career Transitions project is in Stage 3: Research, Design, and Prototype of our innovation cycle, shown in **Figure 7** (on the next page). This stage explores how we can bring the concept to life and de-risk its development. Our *Interim Report* documented the co-design and initial prototyping of worker-stream service elements through ongoing collaboration between participants and CDPs. Through this process, participants and CDPs worked alongside the project team to shape how the services were designed and delivered, drawing on their experiences to identify needs, test ideas, and recommend changes.

This report documents the next stage of work: testing and refining the prototypes based on what participants, CDPs, and delivery teams learned through implementation. It includes more robust insights into the worker streams as well as findings from the employer streams, launched in 2023 by MITT and 2024 by Douglas. Given the phase of the project, Blueprint's evidence generation focused on questions to support learning, improvement, and decision-making rather than summative assessments.

Figure 7 | Blueprint's six-stage innovation cycle

4.2. Learning agenda

Our learning agenda aims to understand who the models were reaching, how participants and employers experienced the services, and whether early outcomes were emerging as intended. Specifically, we address the following questions:

• Uptake and reach

- Who enrolled in the services?
- Why did participants enrol?

• Participant experience

- How satisfied were participants with the services?
- What did participants identify as opportunities for improvement?
- What specific service components did participants engage in? How satisfied were they with them?

• Preliminary outcomes

- Did worker-stream participants experience the following outcomes:
 - increased understanding of their skills;
 - improved skills and confidence to support

career transitions;

- increased clarity of career transition goals; and
- career growth and/or progression toward career transitions?

- Did employer-stream participants experience the following outcomes:

- greater access to tools and resources;
- improved workforce development knowledge and skills;
- enhanced recruitment, retention, and workforce development strategies; and
- shifts in organizational views of workforce development?

• Implementation

- What did CDPs and Douglas/MITT project staff see as the models' strengths?
- What challenges did CDPs face delivering the models? How could they be improved?
- What expertise and competencies are required by CDPs to deliver the models successfully?

4.3. Data sources and sample sizes

As summarized in **Table 5**, we gathered quantitative and qualitative data using interviews, surveys, and focus groups. We also analyzed administrative data provided by delivery partners.¹⁶

Table 5 | Data sources and sample sizes

Data sources and descriptions	Dates	Sample sizes and response rates	
		Douglas	MITT
Worker-stream participant data			
Administrative data Record of the total number of people who enrolled in the models.	Douglas: Apr. 2024–2025 MITT: Apr. 2024–2025	90	61
Intake form (Douglas) and survey (MITT) Online surveys capturing socio-demographic information (i.e., age, gender, migration status, race, disability status, employment, education, and income). MITT’s survey also asked about reasons for enrolment.	Douglas: Apr. 2024–2025 MITT: Apr. 2024–2025	90 (100%)	61 (100%)
Micro-interviews Short interviews to understand participants’ expectations and reasons for joining.	Douglas: Jan.– Apr. 2025 ¹⁷ MITT: N/A ¹⁸	14	N/A
Exit survey Online survey collecting data on participants’ satisfaction with model components and perceived effectiveness.	Douglas: May 2024–June 2025 MITT: Apr. 2024–May 2025	86/90 ¹⁹ (96%)	58/61 (95%)
Focus groups Online discussions to capture participant feedback and insights into their experience with the models.	Douglas: May 2024–June 2025 MITT: July 2024–May 2025	19 participants across five focus groups	12 participants across three focus groups
Website analytics Tracker of user experience and engagement with the models’ websites, resources, and online workshops.	Douglas: Aug. 2025 MITT: July 2025	N/A	N/A

16 Further information on findings from earlier parts of the prototype are available in the [Interim Report](#).

17 Micro-interviews were introduced starting with cohort 5 to gain deeper insight into participants’ needs and reasons for joining the model.

18 This information was collected through the intake survey.

19 One person exited the survey before completing the outcomes section.

Data sources and descriptions	Dates	Sample sizes and response rates	
		Douglas	MITT
Employer-stream participant data			
Administrative data Record of the number of people enrolled in the models.	Douglas: Apr. 2024–2025 MITT: July 2023–June 2025	49	15
Intake survey Online survey capturing information about employers (i.e., firm size, sector, and profit model) and workforce challenges. Douglas's survey also included a question about reasons for enrolment.	Douglas: July 2024–Apr. 2025 MITT: Apr. 2024–Jan. 2025	49 (100%)	14 (93%)
Interim interviews Short online interviews to gain insights into employers' experience mid-way through the model; conducted only with cohort 3.	Douglas: N/A ²⁰ MITT: Apr. 2025 ²¹	N/A	5
Exit interviews Online interviews to capture employers' feedback and insights into their motivations to join the models, experience receiving the service, and outcomes.	Douglas: Feb.–June 2025 MITT: Nov. 2023; July 2025	13	12
Follow-up interviews Online interviews to follow up with employers about intermediate outcomes of the model; conducted only with employers from cohort 1 who continued service from 2024.	Douglas: N/A ²² MITT: Feb. 2025	N/A	3
Staff and CDP data			
Staff interviews Semi-structured interviews with model staff (managers and coordinators) to learn about the setup, adaptations, uniqueness, lessons learned, and scalability.	Douglas: May 2025 MITT: July 2025	2	2
CDP interviews Semi-structured interviews with CDPs to learn about their role and skills required, model content, and strengths and challenges of delivering the models.	Douglas and MITT: July 2025	3	4

20 Due to the model lasting only five weeks, micro-interviews were not conducted with Douglas employer-stream participants. Instead, exit interviews were conducted to understand outcomes and collect feedback.

21 Micro-interviews were conducted only with MITT employer-stream participants enrolled in 2025.

22 Douglas began iterating the employer stream of the model in 2025. Because it was implemented over a short period of time (five weeks), follow-up interviews were not conducted with Douglas employer-stream. Instead, exit interviews were used to understand outcomes and gather feedback.

Data sources and descriptions	Dates	Sample sizes and response rates	
		Douglas	MITT
Partner meetings Bi-weekly meetings with partners to discuss model adaptations and track progress.	Douglas and MITT: Apr. 2023 –June 2025	N/A	N/A
CDP case notes Highlighting CDPs’ interactions with participants (workers and employers), their observations, and progress related to each participant.	Douglas: Feb. –May 2025 MITT: Apr. 2024 –June 2025	Workers: 49 ²³ Employers: 11 ²⁴	Workers: 61 Employers: 14

4.4. Data limitations

Findings in this report should be interpreted within the context of certain limitations:

- **Limited generalizability due to small sample size, non-randomness, and attrition.** The study involved a modest number of participants, consistent with its early stage of development. Research participation was voluntary, leading to potential self-selection bias if only those most motivated and positioned to benefit participated. In some cohorts, attrition was high and likely non-random. Findings should be interpreted as exploratory rather than generalizable to all participants or the broader population of mid-career workers or employers.
- **Survey design and dataset inconsistencies.** Differences in the models resulted in variations in interview formats and survey instruments between Douglas and MITT. Where possible, survey questions were aligned to enable project-level analysis, but consistency was not achieved across all areas. These discrepancies limit direct comparability between partner results and constrain the scope of aggregate insights.

- **Incomplete data on service utilization.** There were gaps in data on the use of individual service components. For example, access to online resources was provided only for a limited time. CDP administrative data for Douglas employer-stream participants were limited to cohort 3. Some case notes were incomplete, resulting in minor data gaps. As a result, findings related to service utilization should be interpreted as indicative rather than comprehensive and may not fully capture patterns of engagement across all participants and cohorts.
- **Inconsistent data on participant motivations.** Baseline data on participant enrolment were collected in the intake survey by MITT only. For Douglas cohorts, interviews asking similar questions were held with cohorts 5 and 6. Baseline data on participant motivations are not consistently available across all cohorts, limiting our ability to compare motivations systematically between Douglas and MITT or across cohorts.

23 CDP case notes were recorded and shared for cohorts 5 and 6.
24 CDP case notes were recorded and shared for cohorts 2 and 3.

5. Worker-stream findings

5.1. Uptake and reach

5.1.1. Participant characteristics

Enrolment reflected strong uptake among the target demographic—mid-career workers with stable employment—with notable representation among highly educated, women-identifying, and foreign-born participants.

Since 2024, **151** participants enrolled in the worker streams: **90** in Douglas’s four cohorts and **61** in MITT’s three cohorts. As shown in **Table 6**, intake data reveal that participants were predominantly:

- women-identifying (**77%**),
- between the ages of 35 and 54 (**75%**),
- educated at the post-secondary level (**92%**), with many of those individuals possessing a

bachelor’s degree or higher (**67%**),

- working full-time (**83%**), and
- reporting earnings above the median income in their respective census metropolitan areas (**63%** of participants in Vancouver and **70%** in Winnipeg).²⁵

Additionally, **52%** were foreign-born, **39%** identified as a person of colour, and **8%** identified as Indigenous.

Table 6 | Participants’ sociodemographic characteristics²⁶

Sociodemographic characteristics		Douglas (N=90)	MITT (N=61)	Total (151)
Gender identification	Woman	80% (70/88)	74% (45/61)	77% (115/149)
	Man	18% (16/88)	26% (16/61)	21% (32/149)
	Other	2% (2/88)	0% (0/61)	1% (2/149)
Age	19 to 24 years	0% (0/89)	5% (3/61)	2% (3/150)
	25 to 34 years	9% (8/89)	28% (17/61)	17% (25/150)
	35 to 44 years	43% (38/89)	44% (27/61)	43% (65/150)
	45 to 54 years	42% (37/89)	18% (11/61)	32% (48/150)
	55 and above	7% (6/89)	5% (3/61)	6% (9/150)

25 Participants reported their incomes in brackets (e.g., \$40,000–\$60,000 and \$60,000–\$80,000). We counted only participants in brackets entirely above the local median as earning above it. The reported proportions are therefore conservative, since some participants in the \$40,000–\$60,000 bracket may also have earned more than the median. In 2023, the most recent year available, median employment income among 25- to 54-year-olds was \$57,600 in Vancouver and \$52,800 in Winnipeg. See: Statistics Canada. (2025). *Income of individuals by age group, sex and income source, Canada, provinces and selected census metropolitan areas* [Table 11-10-0239-01]. <https://doi.org/10.25318/1110023901-eng>

26 The table includes only valid responses, excluding those marked “not applicable,” “prefer not to answer,” and missing data.

Sociodemographic characteristics		Douglas (N=90)	MITT (N=61)	Total (151)
Indigenous identity	Yes	7% (6/88)	10% (6/60)	8% (12/148)
	First Nations	2% (2/88)	2% (1/60)	2% (3/148)
	Métis	2% (2/88)	8% (5/60)	5% (7/148)
	Other	2% (2/88)	0% (0/60)	1% (2/148)
	No	93% (82/88)	90% (54/60)	92% (136/148)
Persons with disability	Yes	18% (14/78)	15% (8/54)	17% (22/132)
	No	82% (64/78)	85% (46/54)	83% (110/132)
Persons of colour	Yes	40% (33/82)	38% (21/56)	39% (54/138)
	No	60% (49/82)	63% (35/56)	61% (84/138)
Primary caregiver of household members 17 years old and under	Yes	34% (30/89)	42% (25/60)	37% (55/149)
	No	66% (59/89)	58% (35/60)	63% (94/149)
Citizenship and immigration status	Canadian-born	51% (45/89)	45% (27/60)	48% (72/149)
	Naturalized citizen	33% (29/89)	25% (15/60)	30% (44/149)
	Permanent resident	17% (15/89)	17% (10/60)	17% (25/149)
	Other (non-resident, work permit, etc.)	0% (0/89)	13% (8/60)	5% (8/149)
Highest education level attained	No high school diploma	1% (1/89)	0% (0/61)	1% (1/150)
	High school diploma or equivalency certification	4% (4/89)	11% (7/61)	7% (11/150)
	College, non-university certificate, or diploma	24% (21/89)	21% (13/61)	23% (34/150)
	University degree (bachelor's)	34% (30/89)	33% (20/61)	33% (50/150)
	University degree, certificate, or diploma above bachelor's degree	34% (30/89)	34% (21/61)	34% (51/150)
	Registered apprenticeship or other trades	3% (3/89)	0% (0/61)	2% (3/150)
Employment status ²⁷	Working full-time for an employer	83% (75/90)	81% (48/59)	83% (123/149)
	Working part-time	10% (9/90)	8% (5/59)	9% (14/149)
	Freelance/on-call/temporary job(s)	1% (1/90)	2% (1/59)	1% (2/149)
	Has one or more additional job(s)	18% (16/90)	25% (15/59)	21% (31/149)
	Self-employed	3% (3/90)	0% (0/59)	2% (3/149)
	Unemployed	0% (0/90)	5% (3/59)	2% (3/149)
	Other	2% (2/90)	2% (1/59)	2% (3/149)

27 Respondents could select all options that applied to their situation; therefore, the percentages may not sum to 100%.

Sociodemographic characteristics		Douglas (N=90)	MITT (N=61)	Total (151)
Personal annual earnings ²⁸	Under \$20,000	2% (2/88)	0% (0/57)	1% (2/145)
	\$20,000–\$59,999	35% (31/88)	30% (17/57)	33% (48/145)
	\$60,000–\$79,999	30% (26/88)	7% (4/57)	21% (30/145)
	\$80,000–\$99,999	23% (20/88)	28% (16/57)	25% (36/145)
	\$100,000 or more	10% (9/88)	35% (20/57)	20% (29/145)
Most common sectors ^{29,30}	Non-profit and government sector	24% (18/75)	19% (11/55)	22% (29/130)
	Healthcare and social services	15% (11/75)	14% (8/55)	14% (19/130)
	Education and training	12% (9/75)	9% (5/55)	11% (14/130)
	Retail	4% (3/75)	12% (7/55)	8% (10/130)
	Accounting, finance, insurance, and business	5% (4/75)	9% (5/55)	7% (9/130)
	Human resources, administration, and staffing	0% (0/75)	9% (5/55)	4% (5/130)
	Engineering and technology	5% (4/75)	7% (4/55)	6% (8/130)
	Manufacturing	4% (3/75)	9% (5/55)	6% (8/130)
	Other (e.g., transportation, automation, food service, and aerospace)	31% (23/75)	9% (5/55)	21% (28/130)

Source. Douglas intake form and MITT intake survey

28 Questionnaires from Douglas and MITT used slightly different income ranges for this question. Those used by Douglas are shown in the table; those from MITT were \$20,001–\$60,000, etc. For reporting purposes, responses across the two questionnaires were combined by treating categories with minor boundary differences as equivalent under the assumption that these discrepancies would not materially affect the overall distribution. This approach may lead to minor limitations, such as reduced precision, small boundary bias, and lower comparability between surveys.

29 Although both questionnaires included an open-ended question about participants' jobs, the phrasing differed between Douglas and MITT. Douglas asked, "What industry is your job in?" whereas MITT asked, "What industry do you work in and what is your job?" Responses to these questions were then grouped by sector, consistent with the approach used in the *Interim Report*.

30 In the Douglas worker stream, the intake form included this question only for participants employed full-time (**N=75**). In the MITT worker stream, the intake survey included this question for all, but three participants who were unemployed could not indicate their current sector, and another three provided no response, resulting in **55** valid responses.

5.1.2. Reasons for enrolment

According to interviews, participants enrolled to make progress in their careers and improve their career-related clarity and confidence.

Douglas participants' reasons for enrolment

Douglas participants enrolled primarily to gain clarity, confidence, and tools to transition into more meaningful and better-aligned work.

As noted in **section 3**, Douglas's screening process selected participants who felt stuck in their careers and were willing to move past that stagnation. Micro-interviews with cohorts 5 and 6 unpacked how participants felt and their reasons for enrolling.

Consistent with the selection criteria, many described feeling capped in their current roles due to credential requirements or limited advancement opportunities. Several worked in the same positions for a decade or more, felt overlooked for promotions, or were confined to survival jobs taken out of necessity. Only a few interviewees shared an imminent need to seek new opportunities due to structural changes at their workplace, such as business closures or eliminated positions.

Most joined the model to step back and reflect critically on the next stage of their careers. They sought clarity, self-confidence, and alignment between their work and personal values. They wanted opportunities to network and access peer support to reduce the isolation they felt navigating career transitions. Many hoped to learn how to 'brand' themselves for new opportunities, identify transferable skills, and strengthen their resume-writing, communication, and networking skills.

"I've never had an active choice in pursuing something meaningful, that makes sense to my heart. I just want to find that thing that will make me feel like I accomplished something."

— Douglas worker-stream participant

MITT participants' reasons for enrolment

Most participants enrolled to gain clarity on career options and pathways, with strong interest in coaching support, skill development, and tools to advance in new or evolving careers.

As shown in **Table 7** (on the next page), most MITT intake survey respondents reported wanting a better understanding of available career options (**89%**) and to build skills to advance in their careers (**70%**). They were also interested in learning about skill development (**77%**) and career exploration tools (**75%**). To address these needs, most participants (**84%**) listed one-on-one coaching with a CDP as their preferred service support, with **57%** anticipating using online resources.

Table 7 | Career transition needs, topics, and preferred supports

Survey questions and response options	% (N=61)
Current career development and transition needs	
Better understand my career options and potential career moves	89%
Looking to build more skills to advance my career	70%
Build more confidence in myself and my value as a worker	64%
Feel more motivated to start navigating career transitions	61%
Need more clarity for my career direction	59%
Learn more about how to communicate with my employer	34%
My sector/occupation is facing disruption, and I need support to navigate future directions	21%
Other	3%
Career development topics of interest	
Skills development	77%
Career exploration tools and personality assessments	75%
Labour market information	69%
Managing career transitions	64%
Having career conversations with employers	64%
Interview skills	59%
Networking	56%
LinkedIn	44%
Preferred supports to meet career development goals	
One-on-one coaching with a career development professional	84%
Self-directed through online tools and videos	57%
Group sessions (attending two-hour in-person and/or online sessions facilitated by a CDP)	44%
Unsure	26%

Source: MITT intake survey; respondents could choose all options that applied

In focus groups, cohorts 4 and 5 respondents shared that they joined the model to receive career advice from CDPs. They noted a lack of clarity on their career direction and wanted to explore new opportunities. Some had clear career goals. Foreign-born participants sought to better understand the Canadian job market, networking, and career options.

“The fact that they could match you with an actual career consultant was something I haven’t had experience with before. That sounded very interesting to me.”

— MITT worker-stream participant

5.2. Participant experience

Participants in both models reported high satisfaction and clear value. Some saw value in a longer model with more CDP support, follow-ups, and practical tools.

5.2.1. Overall satisfaction

Participants reported high satisfaction and value; most said the models met their needs and supported their career transitions, and that they would recommend the models to others. Some would also be willing to pay for the services.

As shown in **Table 8** (on the next page), **95%** of exit surveys respondents indicated being “very” or “somewhat” satisfied. MITT participants were more likely to report being “very satisfied” (**79%** of MITT respondents versus **67%** of Douglas respondents). Nearly all respondents (**91%**) rated the models a

4 or 5 out of 5 on their overall value for their career transition, and **79%** said the models addressed their specific needs “very well” or “extremely well.” Moreover, when describing how their needs were addressed, **79%** of respondents said, “very well” or “extremely well” (**75%** for Douglas and **86%** for MITT).³¹

Additionally, **93%** had already recommended the models or were “very likely” or “likely” to do so. Overall, **24%** had already recommended the model to others and another **53%** were very likely to do so.

³¹ Several factors could explain this pattern, including differences in participants’ baseline expectations, how they interpreted survey response categories, the urgency or clarity of their needs, model framing, sample composition, and external circumstances at the time of participation.

Table 8 | Participant assessment of program satisfaction, value, and needs addressed

Response	Douglas (N=86)	MITT (N=58)	Total (N=144)	Total of favourable responses (N=144)
Overall satisfaction with the model:				
Very satisfied	67%	79%	72%	95%
Somewhat satisfied	29%	14%	23%	
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	2%	3%	3%	
Somewhat dissatisfied	1%	2%	1%	
Very dissatisfied	0%	2%	1%	
Overall value of the program for career transition:				
5 = Very valuable	44%	67%	53%	91%
4	47%	24%	38%	
3	9%	5%	8%	
2	0%	3%	1%	
1 = No value	0%	0%	0%	
How well the services addressed participants' specific needs:				
Extremely well	19%	41%	28%	79%
Very well	56%	45%	51%	
Moderately well	19%	12%	16%	
Slightly well	7%	0%	4%	
Not well at all	0%	2%	1%	
Likelihood of recommending the program to others:				
Already recommended	24%	22%	24%	93%
Very likely to recommend	45%	64%	53%	
Likely to recommend	23%	5%	16%	
Neutral	6%	7%	6%	
Unlikely to recommend	0%	2%	1%	
Very unlikely to recommend	1%	0%	1%	

Source: Douglas and MITT exit surveys

Douglas respondents expressed high satisfaction in focus groups, describing content as relevant and well-tailored. They valued pre-session homework for self-reflection, identifying transferable skills, and clarifying career goals, along with peer and CDP interactions that supported action planning.

MITT focus group respondents praised the model's relevance and usefulness, noting that activities encouraged reflection and helped them move past 'feeling stuck.' The free access to expert CDPs, with their focus on mid-career professionals, added considerable value.

"The program gave me a lot of insights that I would not necessarily even think about, [including] sheets on how to reflect about your current career and what your goals are."

— MITT worker-stream participant

MITT cohort 5 participants were also asked about their willingness to pay for the model to inform discussions about future sustainability. Among respondents, **62% (13/21)** said they would pay, with an average payment response of **\$611** and a median response of **\$200**. This question was added only for the final cohort and not asked to Douglas participants.

5.2.2. Opportunities for improvement

Participants in both models often suggested extending their length and increasing access to practical supports, including one-on-one coaching, job search tools, and ongoing follow-up.

In the Douglas exit survey, **84%** of respondents suggested improvements, with **72%** of them recommending additional tools and **45%** wishing the model was longer. Of those who suggested improvements, **49%** preferred more one-on-one time with CDPs, post-program follow-ups, and sessions about job search support. Other, less common suggestions were for more in-person group sessions, time with peers, information on education and training opportunities, mock interviews, and networking opportunities with industry experts.

In the MITT exit survey, **70%** of respondents suggested program changes, and **67%** of them proposed additions to the program. These included extending the program's length or adding materials on networking (**26%**), training on how to use AI or other technologies in job searches and applications (**28%**), and further assistance with interview preparations (**21%**). In focus groups, participants expressed wanting a longer model and suggested regular check-ins for progress and guidance and more group reflections.

"I wish this was a longer program so I could implement more of the info and get feedback on it and try new things as needed."

— MITT worker-stream participant

5.2.3. Engagement and satisfaction with specific model components

Aligned with the model's design, Douglas participants primarily engaged in workshops. MITT participants primarily accessed one-on-one CDP support. Participants in both models noted CDP support as being the most useful component.

Douglas worker-stream component uptake and satisfaction

Douglas participants engaged widely across all components, finding the most value in one-on-one coaching and peer interaction. Resource use and workshop experiences varied in usefulness; most found interacting with CDPs and peers the most useful component and the Career Transition Toolbox the least.

According to the exit survey, most Douglas participants used all three components, with **97%** accessing the Career Transition Toolbox, **94%** attending a career counselling session, and **92%** attending a workshop.

Uptake of the Career Transition Toolbox

Blackboard analytics from January to March 2025 offer insights into participants' engagement and platform use (see **Table A3** in **Appendix A**). Download records show that the Career Transition Toolbox was the most accessed resource, with **616** downloads during this three-month period. In a focus group, participants reported that the Toolbox was particularly useful for updating their resumes and cover letters. Among all workshop resources, "Networking and Mentorship" had the highest number of downloads (**295**), and "Financial Management" had the lowest (**148**).

Uptake of one-on-one career counselling with CDPs

CDP attendance records show that most participants met with a CDP twice (**71%**) (see **Table A4** in **Appendix A**). In focus groups, participants noted that the sessions let them discuss lessons learned in the workshops, ask questions, and work on career action plans. Only **7%** did not meet with a CDP, citing personal commitments or workshops being sufficient in the exit survey.

"The sessions allowed me to have a more in-depth discussion with my career coach on navigating the courses. They gave me time and access to a coach to come up with action plans for my career."

— Douglas worker-stream participant

Uptake of group workshops

According to workshop attendance records, **81%** of participants completed at least seven workshops, as per program requirements, and **57%** completed eight (see **Table A5** in **Appendix A**).

While workshop attendance was consistently over **75%**, it was highest for "Managing Career Transitions" (**100%**), "Navigating Disruption in the Workplace"

(100%),³² and “Personality Dimensions” (97%) (see **Table A6** in **Appendix A**). As noted by some focus group respondents, meeting in person was valuable, but virtual delivery via Zoom facilitated participation given busy schedules and long travel distances.

Utility of specific model components

As shown in **Table 9** (on the next page), 31% of exit survey respondents found conversations with CDPs the most useful component. This component was followed by attending workshops on Zoom (26%) and interacting with peers (26%), which were appreciated for providing relevant information. In focus groups, respondents said CDPs created a safe space for reflections and provided mentorship, personalized guidance, and clarity on career direction. Participants noted that peer interaction was highly valuable. It allowed them to share their experiences, learn from others, and feel less isolated and more hopeful about their career paths.

In focus groups, some noted that the “Financial Management” workshop was less helpful than others. Participants either already knew the material, found it irrelevant, or wanted additional resources.

“The one workshop that wouldn’t necessarily be relevant to me specifically was the [one on] financial management. I found, you know, sure, some tidbits of information here and there, but not really useful for the time that I had.”

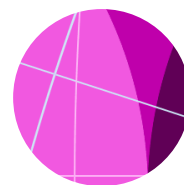
— Douglas worker-stream participant

Over half of exit survey respondents found the Career Transition Toolbox least useful (55%). However, some focus group respondents did find it practical, offering clear references and examples for updating LinkedIn profiles, resumes, and cover letters, and actionable next steps for career transitions.

This Career Transition Toolkit is the one that they have material for LinkedIn, for mental health, for networking. They provide you with session-related resources that relate to the action plan. It provides you with instructions to come up with kind of action plan for the next steps.”

— Douglas worker-stream participant

“Many participants described gaining the confidence to pursue opportunities they had previously delayed.”



³² This workshop was offered only to cohorts 3 and 4 (N=41).

Table 9 | Participants’ ranking of program activities in terms of their usefulness for their needs (N=86)

Response	1: Most useful	5: Least useful
“Having conversations with my career coach”	31%	8%
“Attending workshops on Zoom”	26%	6%
“Meeting peers like me in sessions on Zoom”	26%	13%
“Having Blackboard to access all the sessions and resources”	12%	19%
“Independent navigation of the Career Transition Toolbox”	6%	55%

Source. Douglas exit survey

MITT worker-stream component uptake and satisfaction

MITT participants engaged flexibly based on needs, with universal uptake of one-on-one coaching and varied use of other components. Many exited once they felt prepared for their next career steps. Most found CDP support to be the most beneficial component.

While Douglas offered a workshop series with a defined completion point, the MITT program provided a flexible model, allowing participants to exit once their needs were met. Of exit survey respondents, **53%** remained in the program for nine weeks.³³ Among those who exited early, **40%** remained engaged for at least six weeks (see **Table A7** in **Appendix A**). Of those who exited early and provided a reason, **75%** said they obtained everything needed for their next career steps. The remaining **25%** cited personal reasons or caregiving responsibilities (see **Table A8** in **Appendix A**).

Attendance records show that all participants accessed one-on-one CDP support (**100%**). Far fewer (**38%**) attended a workshop. Exit survey responses indicate that **45%** accessed online resources.

Uptake of one-on-one CDP support

According to attendance records, **100%** of participants had at least one CDP meeting, with **41%** having three to five meetings and **43%** having six to 15 meetings (see **Table A9** in **Appendix A**). Most meetings (**76%**) lasted one to two hours.

Uptake of online resources

Webpage analytics from April 15 to June 8, 2025 show usage of self-directed resources. Counts represent page views rather than individual participants, meaning some users visited resources multiple times.³⁴ **Table 10** (on the next page) shows the six available resources. “Career Planning” (**58** views), “LinkedIn Set up for Success” (**53** views), and “Career Conversations” (**52** views) were the most frequently accessed. The small difference in views (**32–58**) suggests that engagement was distributed across resources (i.e., participants accessed a range of resources based on their varied needs).

33 Some participants engaged with services beyond the intended eight-week duration, as permitted by program staff.

34 The 58 views of Career Planning, for example, came from 27 unique users.

Table 10 | Self-directed resources accessed (MITT)

Self-directed resources	Views	Unique users
Career Planning	58	27
LinkedIn Set up for Success	53	22
Career Conversations	52	25
Job Search	43	18
Resume Writing	37	13
Interview Preparation	32	14

Source. Website analytics

Uptake of workshops

Five workshops were delivered across three cohorts, with each topic offered between one and three times per cohort, for a total of **22** sessions. As shown in **Table 11**, attendance per workshop ranged from **seven** to **17** participants. “Thrive at Work,” the most popular workshop, introduced ‘career conversations’ and provided strategies on holding these conversations with employers.

Table 11 | Number of workshops offered and overall attendance

Workshops	Total sessions delivered	Total attendance
Career Navigation	5	13
Interview	4	8
LinkedIn	3	7
Networking	3	11
Thrive at Work	7	17

Source. Website analytics

Perceived benefits of model components

As shown in **Table 12**, **52%** of exit survey respondents preferred working with a CDP over

other service components, and **31%** found it beneficial to access all components.

Table 12 | Service component benefits³⁵

Response	% (N=29)
CDP support	52%
All components	31%
Group workshops	3%
Self-directed resources	3%
CDP support and group workshops	3%
CDP support and self-directed resources	3%
Group workshops and self-directed resources	3%

Source. MITT exit survey

In focus groups, participants reported valuing CDPs’ tailored guidance, personalized feedback, and encouragement to advance their careers. They also highlighted CDPs’ culturally sensitive support, practical tools, and confidence-building feedback, which encouraged them to take further steps. Focus group participants also highly valued all three components (CDPs, group workshops, and self-directed resources) for supporting different learning styles, appreciating their complementarity and range of supports.

“My favourite was meeting with the career development consultant, who clarified my thinking and gave me new ideas throughout the process—even after I had used the self-directed material.”

— MITT worker-stream participant

35 Survey respondents were asked, “Please tell us a bit more about your experience with multiple streams. Was there one stream that was more beneficial? Was there a benefit in being able to move between streams?”

5.3. Preliminary outcomes

Participants reported gains on most intended outcomes for skills, confidence, and clarity. Many began searching for a job and others reported increased satisfaction in their current roles. Foreign-born participants were more likely than Canadian-born to report gains in understanding workplace expectations, confidence, and proactive career steps.

5.3.1. Understanding of skills

Across both models, most participants reported improved ability to identify, understand, and confidently communicate their skills in relation to in-demand career opportunities.

As shown in **Table 13** (on the next page), **90%** of exit survey respondents across both models said they improved their ability to identify their skills and understand how they aligned with in-demand work opportunities. Another **78%** said they learned to identify relevant, in-demand skills for their careers.

In focus groups, Douglas participants noted that reflecting on their values and personalities helped them recognize and express their strengths and qualities more confidently. MITT participants credited assessments and CDP activities with boosting confidence and clarifying strengths.

“Where I gained more value was the focus on myself, learning about my skills, being able to better communicate and present my skills and understand my values.”

— Douglas worker-stream participant

“I’ve been actively assessing my current skills and interests, identifying roles and industries that align well with my strengths [through] self-assessment, researching job descriptions, and speaking with professionals in those fields.”

— MITT worker-stream participant

“Participants reported strongest gains in career-related skills and confidence.”



Table 13 | Self-reported improvements in skills awareness

Response	“Improved a lot” or “Improved somewhat” %		
	Douglas (N=85)	MITT (N=58)	Total (N=143)
Identifying skills	89%	90%	90%
Understanding skills alignment with work opportunities	88%	91%	90%
Identifying relevant skills in-demand for my career	75%	81%	78%

Source. Douglas exit survey and MITT exit survey

5.3.2. Career-related skills and confidence

Participants reported strong gains in career-related skills and confidence.

As shown in **Table 14**, exit survey respondents reported developing key skills to support their

careers. Skills included researching potential career options (**83%**), understanding employers’ needs (**69%**), and finding relevant information about potential employers (Douglas: **67%**) or to make effective career decisions (MITT: **86%**).

Table 14 | Self-reported improvements in skills awareness

Response	“Improved a lot” or “Improved somewhat” %		
	Douglas (N=85)	MITT (N=58)	Total (N=143)
Researching potential career options to inform job search	80%	86%	83%
Understanding what a potential or current employer needs	75%	66% ³⁶	N/A ³⁷
Finding information about potential employers to make good career decisions	67%	N/A	N/A
Finding information to make good career decisions	N/A	86%	N/A
Using career development resources and tools	N/A	84%	N/A

Source. Douglas exit survey and MITT exit survey

36 On the MITT survey, the question asked only about one’s current employer, and not about potential employers.

37 Given the differences in the survey question between the Douglas and MITT surveys, we do not report a total.

As shown in **Table 15**, across both models, most exit survey respondents reported improved confidence in marketing their skills to employers (**87%**), having clarity about their career direction (**86%**) and career options and potential career moves (**85%**), and asking for career advice (**85%**). Most (**84%**) also reported improved confidence in achieving a satisfying and fulfilling career thanks to the program, with slightly more MITT participants expressing that sentiment (**90%**) than Douglas participants (**80%**).³⁸

“The discussion around networking helped me realize it is just a conversation. There is nothing to be embarrassed or shy about, which makes me feel confident.”

— Douglas worker-stream participant

“The workshop about those conversations with employers ... was something important because I’ve been afraid of that.”

— MITT worker-stream participant

Table 15 | Self-reported improvements in confidence

Response	“Much more confident” or “Somewhat more confident” %		
	Douglas (N=85)	MITT (N=58)	Total (N=143)
Marketing skills and abilities to an employer	88%	84%	87%
Having clarity in the direction for career	86%	86%	86%
Having clarity in career options and potential career moves	85%	84%	85%
Asking for career advice and help from an established person in career of interest	86%	84%	85%
Achieving a satisfying and fulfilling career	80%	90%	84%
Finding information, resources, tools, and people to help achieve career goals	92%	N/A	N/A
Finding what’s needed to achieve career goals	N/A	83%	N/A

Source. Douglas exit survey and MITT exit survey

38 Caution should be exercised when interpreting this finding, as it concerns different *levels* rather than *changes* in confidence that may stem from differences in participants’ baseline confidence, which cannot be assessed due to data limitations.

5.3.3. Clarity on career goals

Participants reported increased clarity, motivation, and direction in their career goals.

As shown in **Table 16**, most exit survey respondents said the programs helped them feel motivated to

act (**90%**), know what to do to achieve career goals (**83%**), and form clear career goals (**76%**). Far more MITT participants reported this outcome (**93%**) than Douglas participants (**65%**).³⁹

Table 16 | Self-reported program contribution to career transition goal setting

Response	“Strongly agree” or “Agree” %		
	Douglas (N=85)	MITT (N=58)	Total (N=143)
Feeling motivated to work toward career goals	88%	93%	90%
Knowing what to do to reach career goals	80%	88%	83%
Having formed a clear career goal	65%	93%	76%
Having a clear idea of the type of job to have now	69%	N/A	N/A
Knowing where to be in one’s career in two years	61%	N/A	N/A
Having clarity in one’s career next steps	N/A	88%	N/A

Source: Douglas exit survey and MITT exit survey

39 Further research is needed to understand what drives this difference. For example, additional data would determine whether it reflects an improvement or baseline differences in participants’ stages in their career transitions. This finding may also reflect differences in programs’ goals and corresponding target populations and service model designs.

5.3.4. Career growth and/or progression toward career transition

Most participants reported that the service inspired them to take further steps to support their career growth and transitions.

As shown in **Table 17**, most exit survey respondents noted that the program inspired them to plan skill development or educational opportunities outside of work (**88%**) and network with others (**84%**). More Douglas participants reported these outcomes than MITT participants, as shown below.⁴⁰

Table 17 | Program-inspired actions toward career transition

Response	“Greatly inspired” or “Somewhat inspired” %		
	Douglas (N=85)	MITT (N=58)	Total (N=143)
Planning skills development or education outside of work	96%	76%	88%
Networking with others (e.g., experts in the industry, colleagues and mentors, going to networking events, etc.)	92%	72%	84%
Searching for a job opportunity with another employer	87%	67%	79%
Starting a career conversation with current employer	73%	71%	72%
Discussing opportunities for skills development and/or education with current employer	74%	62%	69% (N=99)
Setting up a LinkedIn profile to market oneself	67%	48%	59%
Negotiating a salary and/or promotion with current employer	54%	43%	50%
Exploring opportunities in line with own skill set and interests	N/A	88%	N/A

Source: Douglas exit survey and MITT exit survey

After completion, **29%** of exit survey respondents in both models reported being more satisfied with their current roles. In focus groups, participants recognized the benefits of their current positions and opportunities for career growth. In some cases, they were actively exploring advancement within their organizations.

“It gave me a lot of clarity as to what I’m achieving in my current role and what I actually want to achieve in the longer run. So I [understood] that I want to stay in this role.”

— Douglas worker-stream participant

40 Several factors could explain this pattern, including differences in participants’ baseline expectations, how they interpreted survey response categories, the urgency or clarity of their needs, model framing, sample composition, and external circumstances at the time of participation.

"I explored a job offer and decided to stay with my current employer. I'm working to renegotiate my contract to suit me better."

— MITT worker-stream participant

Over one-third of participants reported progress in their career transitions: pursuing education, improving employment conditions, and initiating advancement-related conversations with employers.

As shown in **Table 18**, **36%** of exit survey respondents reported changes in their situation. As shown, most reasons were related to education (**61%**), employment conditions (**43%**), and/or pay and benefits (**20%**). Changes in employment conditions were often related to promotions and role transitions (e.g., becoming specialists, managers, and directors). Changes in education included enrolling in training that aligned with participants' career goals (e.g., real estate courses, language courses, and obtaining a bachelor's degree).

"I've identified key areas where I need to improve my skills and have enrolled in online courses to enhance my knowledge in these areas. Additionally, I'm working on obtaining relevant certifications to bolster my credentials."

— Douglas worker-stream participant

"I'm currently working on completing my HRM certificate through the U of M with the company's financial support."

— MITT worker-stream participant

Table 18 | Self-reported changes in a work situation related to education, employment, or pay/benefits

Response	Douglas (N=85)	MITT (N=58)	Total (N=143)
No changes	68%	59%	64%
Reported changes	32%	41%	36%
Changes related to education (e.g., enrolled in a training or education program or on-the-job training)	78%	42%	61%
Changes related to employment conditions (e.g., changed jobs, started additional job, or changed from full-time to part-time)	30%	58%	43%
Changes related to pay and benefits (e.g., changed wage or salary)	26%	13%	20%

Source. Douglas exit survey and MITT exit survey; individual respondents could select more than one change.
Note. Percentages for types of change are calculated among participants who reported a change in employment or education status.

In interviews, many participants from both models noted how the career conversations⁴¹ approach proved valuable. It helped them take on new responsibilities, pursue skill development opportunities, update their job titles to reflect their roles, and explore potential promotions.

“Since starting this program, I have had conversations with three leaders in my organization about my skills, opportunities to advance the organization’s goals, and my career goals and how they align.”

— Douglas worker-stream participant

“I have successfully had a career conversation with my employer that is leading me to a promotion in the next few months.”

— MITT worker-stream participant

“The services helped participants build confidence to navigate career transitions.”



41 As noted, MITT used career conversations as a core organizing principle and reflected this in its workshop titles and materials.

5.3.5. Outcomes for immigrant participants

Immigrant participants were more likely to report gains in understanding workplace expectations, confidence, and proactive career steps. They were less likely to report immediate changes in employment or earnings.

As shown in **section 5.1.1**, both models enrolled a large proportion of immigrants. Given the well-documented labour market barriers faced by immigrants in Canada, we compared their outcomes with those of Canadian-born participants using a difference-in-proportion test.⁴² Our results focus on outcomes where meaningful differences between the two groups were observed, as shown in **Table 19** (see **Table A10** in **Appendix A** for further details).

Immigrant participants were more likely to report:

- improved clarity about their employers' expectations;
- increased confidence in seeking career advice from experts in their target field;
- increased likelihood to take proactive steps toward a career goal; and
- changes in enrolment in education or training.

However, immigrant participants were less likely to report changes to employment and pay and benefits.

Table 19 | Select outcome differences, by participant origin

Expected outcome	Survey response	Canadian -born	Foreign -born	Difference, % points
Douglas exit survey (N=85)				
Improved skills and confidence to support career transition	"Ask for career advice and help from an established person in my career of interest" (N=81)	Answered yes: 79% (33/42)	Answered yes: 95% (37/39)	+16
	"My understanding of what my employer wants has improved as a result of Mid-Career Transitions" (N=79)	34% (14/41)	63% (24/38)	+29
MITT exit survey (N=58)				
Improved skills and confidence to support career transition	"My understanding of what my employer wants has improved as a result of Career Services for Working Canadians" (N=51)	50% (12/24)	78% (21/27)	+28

42 Differences between Canadian-born and foreign-born participants were identified using a difference-in-proportion test comparing the proportion of respondents in each group who answered "yes" to each outcome indicator. Differences with p-values below 0.05 were considered meaningful.

Expected outcome	Survey response	Canadian -born	Foreign -born	Difference, % points
Progression toward career transition /growth	“Negotiate a salary and/or promotion with my employer” (N=35)	47% (7/15)	85% (17/20)	+38
	“Search for a job opportunity with another employer” (N=44)	63% (12/19)	100% (25/25)	+37
Career growth and progression	“No, there have not been any notable changes to my employment, pay and benefits, and/or education” (N=56)	76% (19/25)	45% (14/31)	-31
	“Yes, my participation in education has changed (e.g., I enrolled in new training or education program, on-the-job training, language, etc.)” (N=56)	4% (1/25)	29% (9/31)	+25

Source. Douglas exit survey and MITT exit survey

“Participants consistently reported high levels of satisfaction with the services.”



6. Employer-stream findings

6.1. Uptake and reach

6.1.1. Employer characteristics

Participants were predominantly small employers from a mix of sectors who learned about the models primarily through referrals and newsletters.

The two models enrolled **64** employer-stream participants: **49** in Douglas and **15** in MITT. As shown in **Table 20** (on the next page), employer intake form data tell us that:

- Most participants were from small businesses with fewer than 100 employees (**63%**), predominantly represented in Douglas's model (with **32** small businesses in Douglas versus **seven** in MITT). More businesses were medium-sized (100–499 employees) or large (500+) in the MITT model than in Douglas's.
- Douglas participants were primarily not-for-profits (**73%**); most MITT participants were from for-profit organizations (**64%**).⁴³ Participants represented diverse industries: in Douglas, the largest proportion was from social services (**24%**); in MITT, the largest proportion was from construction (**21%**). Most came from organizations with over 10 years in operation (**66%**).
- All Douglas participants were in leadership roles (e.g., with titles such as president, VP, CFO, manager, and owner); in MITT, fewer held leadership roles (**43%**) and many held HR positions (**50%**).



“Employers appreciated flexible, relationship-based support tailored to their organizational needs.”

⁴³ One of the MITT participants was from a sector council looking to provide guidance and support to their members.

Table 20 | Employer-stream participant characteristics⁴⁴

Participant characteristics		Douglas	MITT ⁴⁵	Total
Business size (Douglas: N=48; MITT: N=14; Total: N=62)	Small business (<100 employees)	66%	50%	63%
	1 employee	19%	0%	15%
	2–49 employees	38%	21%	34%
	50–99 employees	10%	29%	15%
	Medium business (100–499 employees)	27%	29%	27%
	Large business (500+ employees)	6%	21%	10%
Organization type (Douglas: N=48; MITT: N=14; Total: N=62)	Not-for-profit	73%	36%	65%
	For-profit	17%	64%	27%
	Other	10%	0%	8%
Industry (10 most common responses) (Douglas: N=45; MITT: N=14; Total: N=59)	Other	20%	36%	24%
	Social services	24%	14%	22%
	Education	11%	7%	10%
	Manufacturing	9%	14%	10%
	Arts, entertainment, and recreation	11%	0%	8%
	Construction	2%	21%	7%
	Health and wellness	7%	7%	7%
	Accommodation and food services	7%	0%	5%
	Retail	4%	0%	3%
	Transportation	4%	0%	3%
Duration in business (Douglas: N=48; MITT: N=14; Total: N=62)	Fewer than 5 years	31%	0%	24%
	5–10 years	10%	7%	10%
	Over 10 years	58%	93%	66%
Employer role (Douglas: N=49; MITT: N=14; Total: N=63)	Leadership (president, VP, CFO, manager, owner)	100%	43%	87%
	HR role	0%	50%	11%
	Other (senior trainer)	0%	7%	2%

Source: Douglas intake form and MITT intake survey

⁴⁴ **Table 20** includes only valid responses, excluding those marked “not applicable” and “prefer not to answer,” as well as missing data.

⁴⁵ Out of **15** employers who consented to participate in MITT’s program, **14** completed the intake survey.

As shown in **Table 21**, intake respondents reported learning about the models through referrals (**60%**) and email newsletters (**22%**).

To increase enrolment, MITT hosted seven, three-hour workshops to introduce employers to career conversations and this research project. Following the session, MITT invited employers to participate if they had the capacity to integrate career conversations in their workplaces. Workshops engaged **53** employers. MITT also promoted the model via the [Manitoba Construction Sector Council](#)

and [Bioscience Association Manitoba](#)'s networks. CDPs leveraged their connections through LinkedIn, established relationships, or cold outreach. Douglas used employer-focused newsletters, CDP connections, and social media to reach approximately **2,700** employers during delivery. Through these efforts, **49** employers enrolled in Douglas's model and **15** enrolled in MITT's. The issue of low employer engagement is taken up in **section 7**.

Table 21 | How participants heard about the project (multiple options selected)

Source	Douglas (N=49)	MITT (N=14)	Total (N=63)
Referrals (e.g., emails from other organizations or networks/peers)	65%	43%	60%
Newsletters	29%	N/A	22%
Advertisements/social media	6%	14%	8%
Career Conversations workshops	N/A	29%	6%
<i>Needs Assessment</i> phase intake	N/A	14%	3%
From their company's human resources	4%	N/A	3%

Source: Douglas intake form and MITT intake survey

6.1.2. Reasons for enrolment

Employer-stream participants joined to strengthen workforce development practices and learn about emerging technologies in a free, accessible, and low-barrier environment.

Participants from both models acknowledged enrolling to force themselves to reflect on organizational challenges and address long-standing priorities. These priorities had often been deprioritized due to other immediate urgencies.

"I needed to step back and think about the business again. This gave me that space."
— Douglas employer-stream participant

"I'm a single-person department in a business of 65 staff, so I have to cover a lot of ground in my HR role. I need to do this one-day checklist item but just didn't have the resources or the capacity to take it on in the way that I wanted to."
— MITT employer-stream participant

Douglas exit interviewees were interested in emerging technologies, especially AI. Many were new to public employment services and aimed to improve employee retention and build workforce development capacity; others sought support with hiring or compensation. MITT exit interviewees noted they were drawn to the model to strengthen their workforce development strategies and stand out from competitors. Some saw it as particularly effective for retaining younger employees focused on building skills and growing careers.

As shown in **Table 22**, intake data show that participants' key business challenges were staff recruitment and the limitations of their organizational structures and HRM. Other notable challenges included mitigating the impact of new technologies and navigating skills gaps.

Table 22 | Self-reported challenges faced by participants' businesses (multiple options selected)

Challenge	Douglas (N=49)	MITT (N=14)	Total (N=63)
Organizational structure	18%	64%	29%
Staff recruitment	33%	7%	27%
Impact of new technology on business model (e.g., automation, AI)	22%	N/A	17%
Staff retention/attrition	10%	14%	11%
Staff performance	6%	21%	10%
New skills required in the workforce	6%	29%	10%
Diversity, equity, and inclusion	6%	N/A	5%
Other	6%	21%	10%

Source. Douglas intake form and MITT intake survey

6.2. Participant experience

6.2.1. Overall satisfaction

After model refinements addressed early concerns about clarity and fit, participants in both models reported high satisfaction, valuing flexibility, tailored support, and CDP expertise. They recommended increased peer exchange, clearer communication, sustained follow-up, and tailored cohorts. Willingness to pay for the model was mixed.

Interviewed Douglas participants from cohort 1 found some activities unclear and certain materials inapplicable.⁴⁶ This feedback informed key modifications to content and delivery discussed in **section 3**. These refinements led to notable improvements in satisfaction. Interviewed participants from cohorts 2 and 3 described the model as helpful and well-paced, with a good overall fit and balance of peer interaction and information. The short, focused workshops and practical facilitation were appreciated by participants with limited time.

Interviewed MITT participants expressed strong satisfaction, citing flexibility, CDP expertise, and tailored, practical tools. They valued access to both one-on-one and group support, as well as the model's responsiveness to their timelines, capacities, and evolving business needs. Engagement was described as highly customized. CDPs adjusted the intensity of support, offering both in-person and virtual options, and iteratively refined the scope and direction of work. Guides, matrices, and compensation reports were co-developed and customized to each organization's size, context, and culture, with language adapted as

needed. CDPs were consistently described as the program's greatest strength: responsive, adaptable, and skilled at translating ideas into high-quality, organization-specific tools.

"Yeah, so satisfied. If there's a scale, whatever the highest part of the scale. Without this project, these still would be ideas. We wouldn't be implementing anything."

— MITT employer-stream participant

"Career conversations helped employers think differently about employee development."



⁴⁶ As only two participants took part in exit interviews in cohort 1, their feedback may not represent the entire cohort. However, since they were among those few who completed all workshops, their perspectives offer useful insight into the experiences of others who exited the program earlier.

6.2.2. Opportunities for improvement

Although satisfaction was high for both models, interviewed participants recommended:

- greater peer exchange,
- more accessible digital materials,
- clearer pre-model communication about content and expectations,
- further and more sustained follow-up, and
- cohorts tailored by industry and organization size.

Employer views on potential pricing

Douglas exit interviewees from cohort 3 were unconvinced the model provided enough value to justify a paid service. Three said they would not pay due to insufficient value of the program, budgetary constraints, and lack of detail and industry-specific focus. Four said they would pay as they found the model helpful. One said they would pay up to \$50 per session.

Some MITT exit interviewees said they would pay for the model, though views on appropriate pricing varied. One suggested a fee of \$10,000 to \$20,000, and one proposed a tiered payment structure.

The other four opposed fees entirely, citing equity concerns, preference for government funding, or limited organizational budgets.

6.2.3. Engagement and satisfaction with specific model components

Douglas employer-stream component uptake and satisfaction

Reflecting the model's design, Douglas participants primarily engaged in group workshops. Fewer engaged in one-on-one CDP meetings and online resources.

Group workshops

Across three Douglas cohorts, **100%** of participants attended at least one workshop, and **54%** attended **one or two**⁴⁷ (see **Table A11** in **Appendix A**). Among workshops offered, “Futureproofing Your Business” and “Generative AI” (**59%** each) were most frequently attended due to their perceived relevance to participants’ businesses (see **Table A12** in **Appendix A**). In exit interviews, participants shared that “Generative AI” helped them understand how they can use AI in their work.

“The AI session blew my mind. Seeing an app built in real time showed me just how powerful these tools can be. That alone made it worthwhile.”

— Douglas employer-stream participant

⁴⁷ In response to decreasing workshop attendance in cohort 1, Douglas recommended that participants attend at least three workshops, which contributed to higher attendance in cohorts 2 and 3.

One-on-one meetings with CDPs

Due to data limitations, the frequency of one-on-one meetings with CDPs was captured only for cohort 3. Only **29%** used this support. In exit interviews, some said they were unaware of the sessions, but those who attended found them valuable for applying lessons to their business contexts.

“The consultation was the most impactful part. I left with a real plan.”

— Douglas employer-stream participant

Online resources

The use of online resources varied among exit interviewees. Some found them a helpful reference, while others, mostly in cohort 1, felt overwhelmed by the information and the lack of tailoring. Cohort 2 and 3 participants noted the helpfulness of the materials accompanying the “Generative AI” workshop, noting their clarity and practicality, which supported independent exploration and application to business needs.

MITT employer-stream component uptake and satisfaction

MITT participants primarily accessed the ‘Fully Supported’ service pathway (i.e., one-on-one CDP support) compared to the ‘Group Learning’ pathway and online resources and tools.

The ‘Fully Supported’ pathway

During the program, **14** participants met with CDPs **98** times, with **50%** having up to five meetings. Most sessions lasted one to two hours (**51%**) and were held virtually (**83%**); see **Table A13** in **Appendix A**. Interviewees noted that CDP support helped them learn about and apply best practices in their workplace. These included how to implement the ‘career conversations’ approach, tailor relevant materials to their context, refine job titles, and develop career matrices,⁴⁸ job ads, and sector competency lists. CDPs also worked directly with four employers to implement career conversations within their organizations (by supporting managers to conduct conversations with staff and, where appropriate, helping employees prepare for these discussions). In addition to career conversation resources, employers also used Lightcast and other labour market information tools throughout.

“I was connected with [a CDP]. She really took the time to learn about what we really need as an organization and what I need from an HR perspective and see how she could help me in any way.”

— MITT employer-stream participant

48 The competency matrix is a tool that maps the skills, behaviours, and knowledge areas required for specific job roles. It helps identify gaps in employee development, support career progression planning, and align roles with organizational needs.

The ‘Group Learning’ pathway

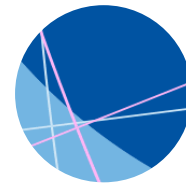
MITT delivered **14** ‘Group Learning’ sessions to leaders and staff, including **11** “Go to Grow: Career Conversations” and **three** “Thrive at Work: Career Conversations.” In interviews, respondents praised CDPs for their facilitation skills and expertise in delivering organization-relevant training to diverse audiences. One noted that their presence increased staff trust and program adoption. Those who did not attend group learnings cited time conflicts, lack of awareness, and that their needs were met by their one-on-one sessions with their CDP.

“Coming to this workshop, I felt they did a really good job in touching on our differences and how we can maybe leverage this program or this project.”

— MITT employer-stream participant

Resources and tools

As online resources were shared gradually, participants demonstrated limited awareness of them. They often recalled only the “Career Conversation Guide” and the accompanying slide deck. Most found them helpful, but they suggested further tailoring to organizational contexts.



“Participants reported improvements in workforce development knowledge and skills.”

6.3. Preliminary outcomes

Participants in both models described greater access to tools and resources, improved workforce development skills, knowledge, and strategies, and enhanced recruitment and retention strategies. MITT participants were also more likely to report shifts in organizational views of workforce development.

Greater access to tools and resources

In interviews across both models, participants reported gaining greater access to practical tools and tailored resources. These included leadership and performance review strategies, career conversation guides, and career matrices,

which provided actionable plans and accelerated workforce development efforts.

Through these resources, Douglas interviewees reported gaining access to information on AI, leadership, and performance management, which they felt improved their communication

and management practices. MITT interviewees appreciated receiving ready-to-use materials, including the career conversations slide deck and facilitator guide, which increased their confidence to engage staff. Participants also valued the career matrices, with one sector council representative planning to adapt them for industry-wide use. Some, especially in HR roles, noted they could have developed these tools on their own, but they said the model sped up their progress by months.

“And so now we have this matrix, and we can pare it down and provide it to industry to create and use for their own job assessments.”

— MITT employer-stream participant

Improved workforce development knowledge and skills

In interviews, most participants reported that the models strengthened their understanding of workforce development and revealed organizational gaps. They also equipped them with practical tools to sustain career transitions within their organizations.

Most Douglas interviewees reported a better understanding of how workforce development supports retention, team health, and sustainability. Some also recognized structural gaps and the need to establish foundational processes before progressing to more advanced approaches.

“I realized we weren’t ready for formal reviews, but we could start with check-ins.”

— Douglas employer-stream participant

Many MITT participants said the model clarified how they could implement workforce development. Some learned about change management and communication strategies. Others recognized the need for basic structures, like meetings and performance reviews. One noted the model broadened their views of career transitions to include education, work, and community experience. Four MITT participants who implemented career conversations with their staff reported improved staff understanding and skills in career transitions and managers becoming more aware of their role in supporting employee growth and feeling better equipped to do so.

“I think it was about building skill for managers, but also supporting employees and giving them the knowledge to take charge of their own career as well.”

— MITT employer-stream participant

MITT participants who received support with job postings and role definitions said they learned to write clearer ads and choose appropriate titles and salaries. All interviewees felt prepared to apply what they learned. Some developed concrete plans to strengthen career transitions in the future.

Enhanced recruitment, retention, and workforce development strategies

Thanks to improved access to tools and knowledge, some Douglas participants said they felt more equipped to talk about their employees' career transitions and growth paths. They shared plans to introduce new structures in their organizations to support staff growth and formalize HR processes, such as onboarding and performance reviews.

"I'm better at talking about growth paths now, even if we don't have a full HR structure yet."

— Douglas employer-stream participant

Some MITT participants reported already applying their learning to advance internal workforce development initiatives and retention. The four who had implemented career conversations described how this approach allowed them to track staff retirement plans, identify career and skill opportunities, and strengthen manager-staff relationships. This led to a better organizational culture and an anticipated increase in staff retention.

"We're looking to take what we can to build it in so when we have a more formal strategy."

— MITT employer-stream participant

Shifts in organizational views of workforce development

Only one Douglas interviewee reported increased organizational buy-in for workforce development, noting a mindset shift among leaders and staff, particularly in how growth and feedback were approached.

"We're putting more intention into how we support people through transition."

— Douglas employer-stream participant

At MITT, several participants described a broader shift in their organizations' perspectives on workforce development, especially among those who implemented career conversations. Participants reported staff originally viewed the exercise as having little value or benefit. However, since implementing it, they came to see it as a valuable tool for strengthening culture and workforce planning. Some began to align their performance management, career matrices, and succession planning with career conversations, as the process creates space to discuss current performance and future aspirations. The model also helped build leadership and manager buy-in for future workforce development strategies.

"Even that exposure to this topic from an outside party helped spark some of the willingness to explore this topic."

— MITT employer-stream participant



7. CDP and staff findings

7.1. Perceived strengths of the models

CDPs and staff emphasized that the blended one-on-one and group-based model—grounded in early needs assessment, structured reflection, self-exploration, action planning, and labour market insights—was a core strength. It enabled tailored support, trust-building, and informed next steps for both workers and employers.

On mixing one-on-one and group-based support

Similar to worker and employer participants, CDPs from Douglas and MITT, as well as MITT staff, noted in interviews that core components (i.e., workshops, online resources, and one-on-one sessions) were effective in supporting workers and employers. They highlighted the value of combining individual with group-based support to balance tailored guidance and reflection with peer interaction.

“Either one [group or one-on-one support] in isolation would not have worked. The one-on-one really helped [and provided] ‘a-ha’ moments.”

— Douglas CDP respondent

On space for self-discovery, career exploration, and action planning

Both CDPs and MITT staff identified core strengths as dedicated space for reflection, self-discovery, and individualized planning. The models' systematic, early focus on understanding participant needs fostered trust and enabled tailored, relevant support. Interviewees emphasized that this reflective approach strengthened participants' understanding of their skills and goals, built capacity, encouraged ownership of next steps, and was supported by guided assessments, advice, and structured planning. Two strategies supported this reflective approach:

- **Assessment tools and guided conversations.**

Self-reflection tools (such as the Myers-Briggs personality test) helped assess worker-stream participants' needs, skills, and career directions. Paired with informal discussions, CDPs and staff felt they helped participants interpret and use assessment results to support their career planning.

"People thought they had to quit their job or get another degree, but they didn't know they had transferable skills. So those assessments were really critical to anchor the conversations."

— Douglas CDP respondent

"That facilitated reflection to me is very, very critical."

— MITT staff respondent

- **Action planning.** MITT CDPs and staff found action plans helpful for charting a path forward and supporting continued progress, independently or with scaffolded support. They noted how worker-stream participants mapped steps for self-discovery, skills development, and job search. Employer-stream participants developed communication strategies or change management plans. Douglas CDPs used action planning less frequently, as the capped number of sessions (up to three) limited progression to this stage.

"I learned that [having a] communication strategy [for] their employees is of the utmost importance. We learned having champion and leadership buy-in is so important."

— MITT staff respondent

On providing labour market information to support next steps for workers and better HRM practices among employers

CDPs and staff shared that educating participants about sector trends and labour market information was vital in helping them develop realistic, informed next steps. Benchmarking against skills in demand and industry norms let worker-stream participants assess their skill gaps and employer-stream participants evaluate their HRM practices.

7.2. Perceived challenges and suggestions for improvement

CDPs recommended earlier counselling sessions and structured follow-ups for worker-stream participants. To address employer engagement challenges, they suggested better tailoring delivery, pacing, and workshop content to employers' capacity and readiness for deeper organizational change.

Structured, post-program follow-ups and earlier counselling sessions can support workers.

CDPs emphasized that mid-career transitions usually unfold over time. The current dual-client models offer short-term support that assumes participants can complete action plans on their own. CDPs suggested adding structured, post-program follow-ups to help maintain momentum. Douglas CDPs also recommended placing counselling sessions with worker-stream participants earlier.

"I think maybe starting the one-on-ones a little bit earlier [and] usually we have a three-month follow-up. I think the follow-up would be really important."

— Douglas CDP respondent

"It's like talking to a financial advisor; you don't just go once; you go back again. Career development should be more of an ongoing relationship."

— MITT CDP respondent

Clearer marketing materials and strong sector partnerships can boost employer enrolment.

Based on their experience, CDPs suggested that employers' limited capacity has been a long-standing issue, which may help explain low enrolment. At Douglas, this may have contributed to lower workshop attendance and low uptake of one-on-one counselling. At MITT, some employer-stream participants asked for more time between sessions due to their workloads. In response, MITT delivered workshops online and allowed CDPs to offer weekend support to employer-stream participants if both agreed. CDPs suggested that unclear employer-focused messaging limited uptake and recommended clearer marketing materials and stronger partnerships with chambers of commerce and boards of trade to improve recruitment.

"We really had a hard time having employers engage, which is quite surprising because they said they were going to do it. My overall impression is the engaging of employers in these employment programs consistently is a challenge to this day."

— Douglas CDP respondent

CDPs made further recommendations to fine-tune workshops for different needs.

Douglas CDPs noted that the “Generative AI” and “Leading with Equity” workshops were sometimes either too generic or too advanced and recommended a stepped approach: from

awareness to application to strategy. MITT’s CDPs highlighted challenges recruiting participants due to time constraints among the target group. In the case of employers, they noted difficulties with leadership buy-in, as some employers preferred quick, one-off workshops over deeper organizational change.

7.3. Expertise and competencies required by CDPs to deliver the models

CDPs and staff noted career transition, business advisory, communication, critical thinking, and relationship-building skills, along with a responsive, tailored, and solutions-based consultative approach, were important for CDPs to deliver the models.

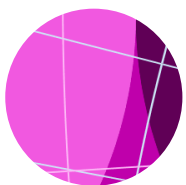
Table 23 describes the core skill areas CDPs identified as relevant for their colleagues to best serve both worker and employer participants.

Table 23 | Core CDP areas of expertise and stream-specific competencies

CDP skill area	For workers	For employers
Career transitions and business advisory skills		
Knowledge of HR-related and labour market trends as well as labour market information-related tools and resources.	✓	✓
Experience supporting individuals through career transitions and in-demand career opportunities.	✓	
Business acumen, knowledge of business operations, change management, and economic development; able to provide expert guidance on all aspects of career and workforce development based on industry best practices.		✓
Understanding of how to implement workforce development strategies in an organization, including developing talent strategies to attract, retain, and develop employees.		✓
Well-connected and resourceful, able to refer clients to other services to support career transitions and organizational development.	✓	✓

CDP skill area	For workers	For employers
Communication skills		
Active listener, able to understand participants' unique situations and use language and terms that resonate with clients.	✓	✓
Able to influence senior-level decision-making by articulating value and shifting perspectives.		✓
Critical thinking skills		
Able to identify, collect, and analyze information required to diagnose the issue and test ideas to address it, draw conclusions, and generate relevant insights.	✓	✓
Relationship-building skills		
Supportive, encouraging, empathetic, and able to create a trusting environment and see the client's perspective.	✓	✓
Adaptability and responsiveness-related skills		
Adaptable, flexible, and able to adjust services and approach based on immediate needs.	✓	✓
Able to propose solutions that are both relevant and feasible; can help the client understand short- vs. long-term goals and develop solutions that fit the client's current stage.	✓	✓
Able to propose outcomes that are mutually beneficial for the employer and the employee.		✓
Demonstrates a holistic understanding of an organization's current needs and able to engage with all levels of management; able to recommend and tailor strategies to employer-specific needs and environments that resonate with leadership and staff.		✓

Source. Employer-stream participant interviews from both programs (N=13); interviews with CDPs from both programs (N=6); MITT program staff interviews (N=2).



“Flexibility was one of the defining strengths of the services.”

8. Discussion and conclusions

8.1. Summary of findings

Both models achieved their intended short-term outcomes. Across worker and employer streams, participants reported high satisfaction, value, and gains in skills, confidence, and career clarity. Many took concrete steps toward career advancement or improved workforce practices. Longer-term outcomes (e.g., sustained employment or organizational change) were less consistently observed. However, results suggest progress and a strong foundation for future impact.

Worker-stream findings

Models enrolled the target populations of mid-career workers with stable employment.

Participants joined to advance their careers and improve clarity and confidence. Douglas participants were selected because they felt stuck in their careers and enrolled to gain clarity, confidence, and tools to transition into more meaningful, better-aligned work. MITT participants primarily sought clarity on career options and pathways, coaching support, skill development, and tools to navigate new or evolving careers.

Participants in both models reported high satisfaction and value. Most said the models met their needs, supported their career transitions, and were worth recommending. Common suggestions included extending model length and expanding access to practical supports, such as one-on-one coaching, job search tools, and ongoing follow-up from CDPs.

Consistent with model design, Douglas participants primarily engaged in workshops, while MITT participants primarily used one-on-one CDP support.

Douglas participants engaged broadly across components, placing greatest value on coaching and peer interaction. Experiences with workshops and resources varied. MITT participants engaged flexibly according to their needs, with universal uptake of one-on-one coaching, varied use of other components, and many exiting once prepared for their next career steps. Participants in both models noted CDP support as the most useful component.

Participants reported gains in short-term and intermediate outcomes related to skills, confidence, and clarity. Many began job searches; others reported greater satisfaction in their current roles. Most improved their ability to identify and confidently communicate their skills in relation to in-demand opportunities. They also reported gains in career-related skills and confidence. These included researching opportunities, understanding employer needs, navigating and advancing career paths, clarifying and pursuing goals, and exploring training,

networking, and new or improved opportunities. More than one-third reported progress in career transitions, including education, employment conditions, and advancement-related discussions with employers.

Immigrant participants were more likely than Canadian-born participants to report certain outcomes. Immigrant participants more often reported gains in understanding workplace expectations, confidence, and proactive career steps, but were less likely to report immediate changes in employment or earnings.

Employer-stream findings

Participants were mostly SMEs from a range of sectors. They joined to strengthen workforce development and learn about new technologies in a free, low-barrier environment. Consistent with model design, Douglas participants primarily engaged in group workshops. Fewer used one-on-one CDP support or online resources. MITT participants primarily accessed the Fully Supported pathway (i.e., one-on-one CDP support) rather than the Group Learning pathway.

Following refinements that addressed early concerns about model clarity and fit, participants reported high satisfaction.

Employers valued the flexibility, tailored support, and expertise provided by CDPs. Suggestions for improvement included more peer exchange, clearer communication, sustained follow-up, and further tailoring to cohorts. Willingness to pay for the model was mixed.

Participants reported progress toward their goals. Goals included greater access to tools and resources, improved workforce development knowledge and skills, and stronger recruitment, retention, and workforce development strategies.



“Career development should become a proactive rather than reactive service.”

MITT participants were also more likely to report changes in organizational perspectives on workforce development.

Findings from CDPs and staff

CDPs and staff noted strengths in the blend of one-on-one and group-based support. Needs assessments, structured reflection, self-exploration, action planning, and labour market insights enabled tailored support, trust-building, and informed decision-making for both workers and employers.

CDPs recommended adjustments to both streams. For workers, CDPs suggested earlier

counselling sessions and more structured follow-up. To address employer engagement challenges, they recommended better tailoring of delivery, pacing, and workshop content to employers' capacity for organizational change.

CDPs and staff identified skills and approach needed for delivery. They noted career transition and business advisory expertise, communication, critical thinking, and relationship-building skills as important for delivery. They emphasized the need for a responsive, tailored, consultative, and solutions-focused approach.

8.2. Implications

Insights point to considerations for designing, funding, and scaling mid-career support programs.

Demand remains uncertain, especially among employers.

Workers expressed interest in career development supports. However, it is unclear whether this interest would translate into sustained uptake under real-world conditions, where services may not be free or incentivized. Employer engagement was more limited, even when services were no-cost, suggesting barriers extend beyond price. Research participation may also underestimate demand, as workers and employers often engage when a specific need arises and may require greater flexibility than study timelines allow. This highlights the need to better understand the factors that drive participation and the mix of incentives, outreach, flexibility, and timing needed to support sustained uptake.

Tailoring improves relevance but affects scalability and cost.

Participants consistently valued supports tailored to their individual or organizational context, including their stage of development and future goals. Highly standardized models may be less effective, but tailored approaches are typically more resource-intensive. Findings therefore highlight the trade-off between customization and scalability, which should be considered in design and funding decisions.

Multiple delivery models may be most effective.

Despite differing structures and delivery approaches, both models generated positive value for participants. This suggests there is no single optimal model; effectiveness likely depends on alignment with target populations and contexts. Allowing variation within a broader framework, rather than prescribing a single approach, may better support diverse needs.

Service models that blend one-on-one and peer-based support may add value.

Workers and employers benefited from combining one-on-one and peer-based supports, with differences in preferences. Workers emphasized individual counselling to address specific challenges, while peer interactions supported motivation and confidence. Employers valued both approaches, with smaller firms benefiting more from peer exchange and larger placing greater emphasis on tailored advisory support. Findings suggest flexible models, which can adjust the mix of supports based on participant type and context.

Sustained engagement with participants may be needed.

Participants and CDPs described the model ended abruptly, limiting opportunities to consolidate gains and maintain momentum. Light-touch, ongoing supports (e.g., check-ins, continued access to resources) may help sustain and extend outcomes without greatly increasing intensity or cost.

Early outcomes show promising but preliminary findings.

Findings suggest workers experienced improvements in clarity, confidence, and readiness for career transitions. Employers reported more intentional workforce practices. However, these results are exploratory and based on small, non-random samples and should be interpreted as early signals. Further testing, using more rigorous and scalable designs, can assess effectiveness and inform decisions about broader implementation.

CDP workforce capacity may limit scaling.

Model effectiveness was closely tied to CDP capabilities, including tailoring supports, building trust, and engaging individuals and organizations. Delivering these services requires a high level of expertise. Although this study did not assess CDP supply directly, Blueprint's broader experience suggests there may be constraints in the availability of sufficiently trained and experienced CDPs. This highlights the importance of expanding capacity while maintaining quality as programs scale.

8.3. Opportunities for future development

Building on these exploratory findings, future work could address the following evidence gaps:

Examine the durability of outcomes over time.

Mid-career transitions and workforce development evolve gradually. It is most important to understand whether short-term gains persist and when further support may be most valuable. Longer-term follow-ups would improve program design and inform decisions about the timing and intensity of supports.

Investigate differential outcomes for priority populations.

Stronger gains among foreign-born participants highlight the need to examine how different groups benefit, and why. Seeing improved clarity for immigrants is notable as it reflects progress on a commonly cited labour market integration barrier: understanding implicit employer expectations. Seeing increased confidence in seeking career advice reflects progress on another well-documented barrier: building and using professional

networks. Research should explore outcomes for populations facing structural barriers to advance equity goals and inform resource targeting.

Test adaptations for workers experiencing labour market disruption.

Neither model was designed for workers undergoing or anticipating job disruption. Future work should explore how the approach can be adapted for workers at risk of job loss or major role changes due to external forces. These include automation, economic shocks, and restructuring. This is also relevant to emerging federal priorities, such as [Workforce Alliances](#) and other [Budget 2025 measures](#), which focus on resilience, skills development, and sectoral responses to labour market change.

Examine drivers of employer engagement and sustained participation.

Employer uptake was limited and varied across contexts. Findings suggest a need to better understand what influences participation, retention, and perceived value. Research might explore how factors such as firm size, sector, service model, and cost-sharing affect engagement, as well as which approaches are most effective for supporting different types of employers.

8.4. Conclusions

Exploratory findings suggest that when tailored to context, delivered flexibly, and supported by skilled CDPs, a dual-client service model *can* create early momentum for both workers and employers.

The findings offer a strong foundation for refining the models and exploring their relevance to different labour market contexts. For example, these can include urban versus rural regions and high-demand versus low-demand sectors. Findings also prepare

the way for testing the models' applicability to broader workforce challenges, including labour market disruption.

Building on these insights through future research and longer-term evaluation will be essential for determining the models' potential effectiveness, scalability, and roles within Canada's evolving skills and workforce development landscape.



“Career and workforce development are most effective when workers and employers are supported together.”

Appendix A: Supplementary tables

Table A1 | Mid-Career Transitions project phases and reports

Project phase	Timeline	Number of cohorts		Related report
		Worker stream	Employer stream	
Needs assessment	Feb.–Apr. 2023	Not applicable	Not applicable	Needs Assessment Report
Co-design and prototyping	Apr.–Nov. 2023	Douglas: 2 MITT: 2	Douglas: 0 MITT: 1 ⁴⁹	Interim Report (worker-stream findings)
Prototyping and refinement	Apr. 2024 –June 2025	Douglas: 4 MITT: 3	Douglas: 3 MITT: 3	<i>Final Report</i> (worker- and employer-stream findings)

Table A2 | Summary of findings from the *Needs Assessment Report*

	Workers	Employers
Barriers	• Difficulty finding optimal work-life balance, growth, fulfillment, and values-alignment. • Amplified barriers for foreign-born workers, which are often distinct from those of Canadian-born (e.g., lack of recognition of non-Canadian education and experience).	• Vulnerable to economic disruptions: hard to anticipate, react to, or understand. • Limited by capacity to engage in proactive workforce planning. • Difficulty competing with large firms for experienced employees, especially in industries with labour shortages. • Persistent gaps among staff in core soft skills (e.g., communication) and role-specific skills (e.g., empathy in care roles).
Attitudes	• Internally motivated to change; less motivated by external factors (such as industry decline, automation, recessions, etc.). • Over half were curious and open to exploring alternative roles but taking little action due to uncertain outcomes.	• Embraced alternative approaches to staffing and employee retention but had limited resources available for skills development. • Open to hiring for soft skills and right attitudes (e.g., adaptability), hoping to teach technical skills later.

⁴⁹ Findings from this single employer cohort were combined with those from the subsequent phase to present employer-stream results more holistically in this *Final Report*, and maintain coherence in the *Interim Report*, which primarily focused on the worker stream.

	Workers	Employers
Supports needed to ...	• Build confidence, explore career interests through self-reflections, and rediscover the motivation for change. • Articulate specific career goals and map pathways to achieve them through informed decision-making. • Help with concrete actions, such as refining career transition plans and building the skills, resources, and tools to accomplish them.	• Identify and articulate requirements to fill immediate workforce gaps and build greater capacity for longer-term workforce planning and development. • Help with short-term, targeted training opportunities and processes and tools to identify development potential among staff.
Resources needed	• Labour-market information. • Self-assessment tools. • Performance feedback and career pathway maps. • Information on training opportunities.	• Labour market information. • Best HR practices guidelines. • Information on training options.
Cross-cutting opportunities	• Improve employee retention and build long-term employment relationships. • Develop greater capacities for skills development and career advancement. • De-risk investments in upskilling and development activities. • Establish proactive communication between workers and employers to align workforce and career transition goals.	

Table A3 | Resources downloaded (Douglas)

Resource	Downloads
Career Transition Toolbox	616
Workshop supplemental materials:	
Networking and Mentorship	295
Generative AI	270
Managing Career Transitions	245
Dependable Strengths	245
Presenting Your Value	219
Navigating and Adapting to the Changing World of Work	195
Financial Management	148

Source. Douglas Blackboard website analytics

Table A4 | Counselling sessions with CDPs (Douglas)

Number of sessions attended	% (N)
1	18% (16)
2	71% (64)
3	4% (4)
0	7% (6)

Source. Douglas attendance record (N=90)

Table A5 | Workshop attendance, by number of sessions (Douglas)

Number of workshops attended	% (N)
8	57% (51)
7	24% (22)
6	14% (13)
5 or fewer	4% (4)

Source. Douglas attendance record (N=90)

Table A6 | Workshop attendance, by workshop (Douglas)

Workshop	% (N)
Offered to cohorts 3–6	N=90
Managing Career Transitions	100% (90)
Personality Dimensions	97% (87)
Dependable Strengths	94% (85)
Presenting Your Value	92% (83)
Networking and Mentorship	86% (77)
Financial Management	84% (76)
Generative AI	77% (69)
Offered only to cohorts 3 and 4	N=41
Navigating Disruption in the Workplace	100% (41)
Thriving on the Job	85% (35)
Offered only to cohorts 5 and 6	N=49
Navigating and Adapting to the Changing World of Work	76% (37)

Source. Douglas attendance record (N=90)

Table A7 | Program participation duration (MITT)

Number of weeks	% (N)
2	2% (1)
3	3% (2)
4	2% (1)
5	0% (0)
6	19% (11)
7	12% (7)
8	9% (5)
9	53% (31)

Source. MITT exit survey (N=58)

Table A8 | Reasons for leaving the program (MITT)

Reason	% (N)
Obtained everything I needed to inform career next steps in under 8 weeks	75% (12)
Lack of time or availability due to personal reasons or caregiving responsibilities	25% (4)
Content and materials of the program were not very useful to me	6% (1)
Found another program or service that better met my needs	6% (1)
Lack of time or availability due to being too busy at work	6% (1)

Source. MITT exit survey (N=16)

Note. Participants could select multiple responses.

Table A9 | Key attendance statistics on CDP meetings (MITT)

Attendance characteristics	% (N)
Number of meetings per participant	
1–2	16% (10)
3–5	41% (25)
6–7	23% (14)
8–9	5% (3)
10–15 ⁵⁰	15% (9)

Source. MITT CDP case notes (N=61)

⁵⁰ While the model provided up to 10 meetings per participant, additional meetings were offered in a few cases.

Table A10 | Select outcome comparisons, by origin⁵¹

Expected outcome	Survey response	Canadian -born	Foreign -born	Difference, % points	95% confidence intervals	
					Lower bound	Upper bound
Douglas						
Improved skills and confidence to support career transitions	“Ask for career advice and help from an established person in my career of interest.”	79% (33/42)	95% (37/39)	16	2.09	30.51
	“My understanding of what my employer wants has improved as a result of Mid-Career Transitions.”	34% (14/41)	63% (24/38)	29	7.89	50.12
MITT						
Improved skills and confidence to support career transitions	“My understanding of what my employer wants has improved as a result of Career Services for Working Canadians.”	50% (12/24)	78% (21/27)	28	2.36	53.2
Progression toward career transitions /growth	“Negotiate a salary and/or promotion with my employer.”	47% (7/15)	85% (17/20)	38	8.63	68.04
	“Search for a job opportunity with another employer.”	63% (12/19)	100% (25/25)	37	15.15	58.53
Career growth and progression	“No, there have not been any notable changes to my employment, pay and benefits, and/or education.”	76% (19/25)	45% (14/31)	-31	-55.07	-6.61
	“Yes, my participation in education has changed (e.g., enrolled in new training or education program, on-the-job training, language, etc.).”	4% (1/25)	29% (9/31)	25	7.3	42.76

51 A test of difference in proportions was conducted to compare outcomes between foreign-born and Canadian-born participants.

Table A11 | Workshop attendance, per participant (Douglas)

Sessions attended, per participant	Cohort 1 (N=26)	Cohort 2 (N=9)	Cohort 3 (N=14)	% (n, total)
1	10	2	1	27% (13)
2	5	3	5	27% (13)
3	4	1	5	20% (10)
4	4	2	2	16% (8)
5	3	1	1	10% (5)

Source. Douglas attendance record (N=49)

Table A12 | Workshop attendance, by workshop (Douglas)

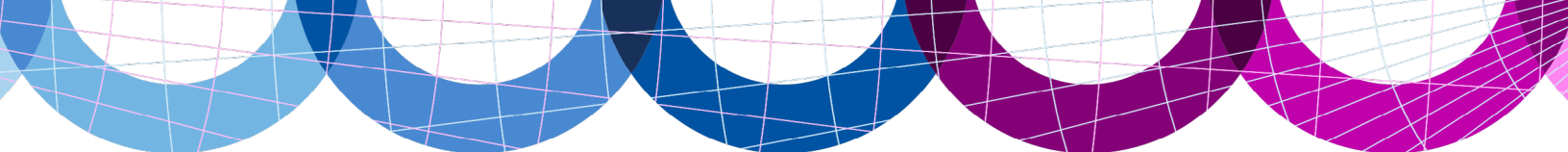
Workshop	Cohort 1	Cohort 2	Cohort 3
Futureproofing Your Business	20	5	4
Generative AI	11	6	12
Leadership Performance Management	9	6	6
Leading Through Times of Change	14	1	6
Leading with Equity	9	4	7

Source. Douglas attendance record (N=49)

Table A13 | CDP engagements per participant (MITT)

Category	Cohort 1	Cohort 2	Cohort 3	Total
Number of engagements				
1–2	50% (2)	0% (0)	14% (1)	21% (3)
3–5	0% (0)	0% (0)	57% (4)	29% (4)
6–9	25% (1)	33% (1)	14% (1)	21% (3)
10–15	25% (1)	67% (2)	14% (1)	29% (4)
Meeting duration				
Less than 1 hour	50% (12)	44% (16)	39% (15)	44% (43)
1–2 hours	50% (12)	56% (20)	47% (18)	51% (50)
2 hours or more	0% (0)	0% (0)	13% (5)	5% (5)
Meeting format				
Online	88% (21)	94% (34)	68% (26)	83% (81)
In-person	8% (2)	3% (1)	32% (12)	15% (15)
Phone	4% (1)	3% (1)	0% (0)	2% (2)

Source. MITT CDP case notes cohort 1 (N=24); cohort 2 (N=36); cohort 3 (N=38); total (N=98)



Appendix B:

Model comparison and evolution charts

Model comparison

Douglas and MITT developed models with the shared goal of addressing key gaps in Canada's career and workforce development ecosystem. Design differences reflected their unique visions: Douglas aimed to serve employers and workers independently, and MITT envisioned a model that could flexibly serve them independently or jointly. This subsection explores how their objectives were implemented through distinct delivery designs, levels of support, and structures, with a summary presented in **Table B1** (on the next page).

Model similarities

The two models aligned along key dimensions, namely:

- **Dual focus on workers and employers.** Both models targeted mid-career workers (typically those feeling stuck) and employers, primarily SMEs.
- **Blended learning structure.** Each includes group-based learning (through workshops) and individualized learning (through CDP meetings and self-directed resources).
- **Both had similar intended outcomes.** Both partners aimed to help worker-stream participants identify their needs and build skills and confidence to support career transitions. Both sought to increase employer-stream participants' understanding of and capacity for workforce development best practices, thereby promoting long-term career growth for workers and workforce development for employers.

Model differences

Some notable variations in their approaches included the following:

- **Integration between worker and employer streams.** Douglas treated both streams independently, aiming to increase the individual capacity of workers and employers to address their career transition and workforce development needs. MITT held group learning workshops, designed to help employers and employees build the skills to engage in effective career conversations, either together or separately. Insights from employers were also used to inform worker supports, and vice versa, fostering alignment between components.
- **Intensity and flexibility of CDP support.** Douglas offered limited one-on-one CDP support (up to three hours for workers and one hour for employers), whereas MITT provided substantially more or unlimited support (up to 10 hours for workers and open-ended support for employers).
- **Program duration, progression, and customization.** Douglas used a group-based intake and service delivery approach and offered a fixed-duration program (12 weeks for workers and five for employers), with standardized workshop content. MITT used rolling intake with individualized service delivery, a flexible duration (workers participated until they exhausted CDP support or no longer needed services, and employers had no set limit), and customized workshop content.

Table B1 | Model comparison⁵²

Aspect	Stream	Douglas	MITT
Intake approach	Workers	Group-based	Rolling
	Employers		
Service delivery	Workers	Group-based	Individualized
	Employers		
Modality	Workers	Blended (in-person and virtual)	In-person or virtual, based on participant availability
	Employers	Virtual only	
Target population	Workers	Mid-career workers feeling stuck	Employed individuals
	Employers	SMEs	
Program duration	Workers	12 weeks	Until 10 hours of CDP hours are used, or services are no longer needed
	Employers	Five weeks	Unrestricted
Focus	Workers	Focus on self-discovery (i.e., values, skills, and career goals) and communicating professional value (i.e., branding and networking).	Support and resources tailored to participants' needs, with a strong focus on capacity building and foundational skills to support life-long career transition.
	Employers	Focus on emerging trends, leadership, DEI, performance management, and AI.	Support and resources tailored to employers' needs; for many, this focused on career conversations.
Intended outcomes	Workers	Short-term outcomes focus on improved awareness, skills, confidence, and clarity for career transition	
	Employers	Short-term outcomes focus on improved access to resources and increased knowledge and awareness of their capacity for workforce development. ⁵³	
Amount of one-on-one CDP support	Workers	Up to three meetings (three hours in total)	Up to 10 meetings (10 hours in total)
	Employers	One meeting (one hour in total)	Unlimited, based on need and availability
Independent vs. group engagement	Workers	Available through supplemental resources and CDP counselling.	Key component through additional resources and CDP counselling in both streams.
	Employers	Core workshops were the key component in both streams.	Recommended workshops available in both streams.

52 The table reflects the service models after all current phase modifications were implemented.

53 Douglas's participants are also intended to gain increased understanding of the value of workforce development, while MITT's participants gain enhanced workforce development strategies.

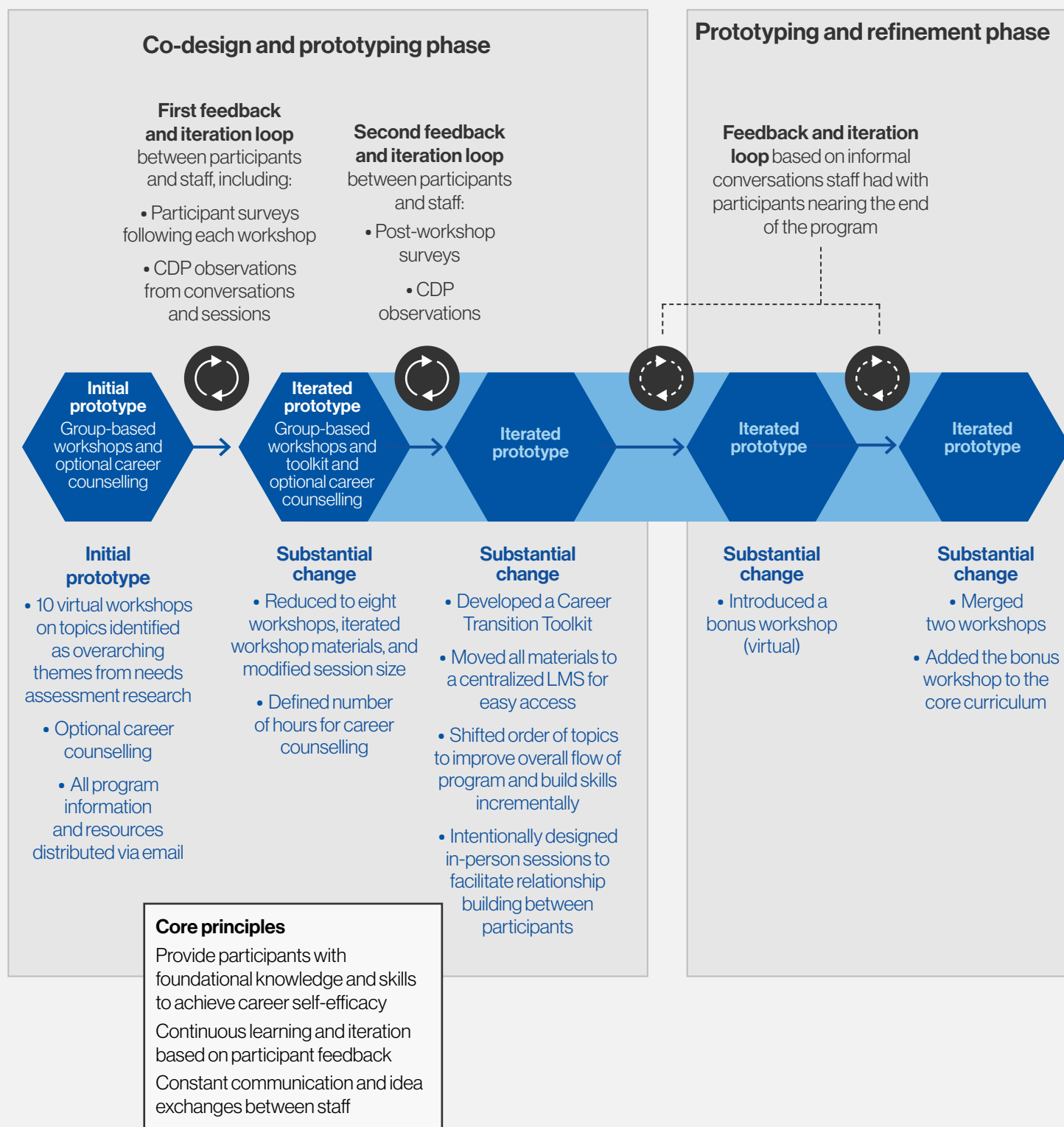
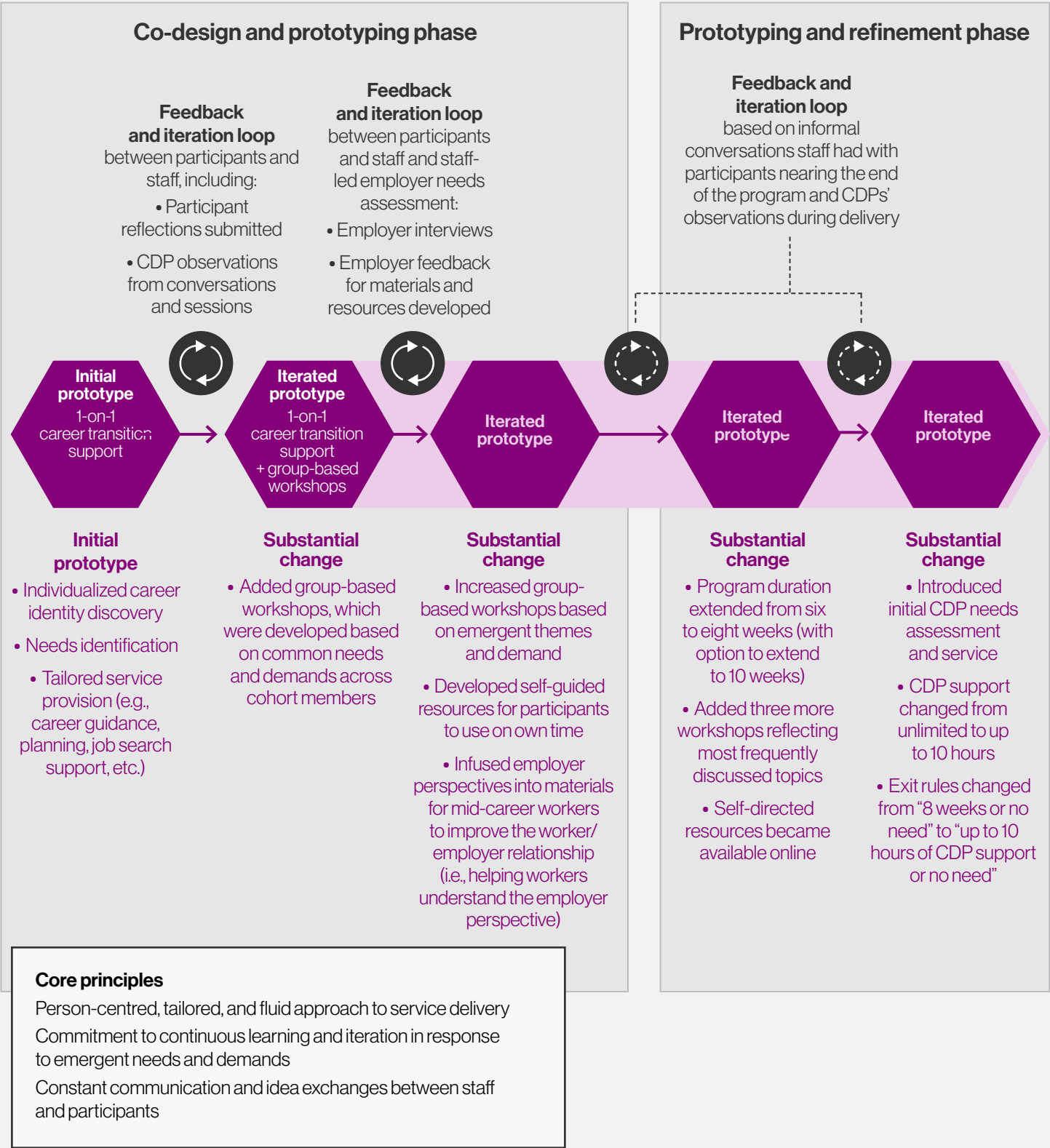
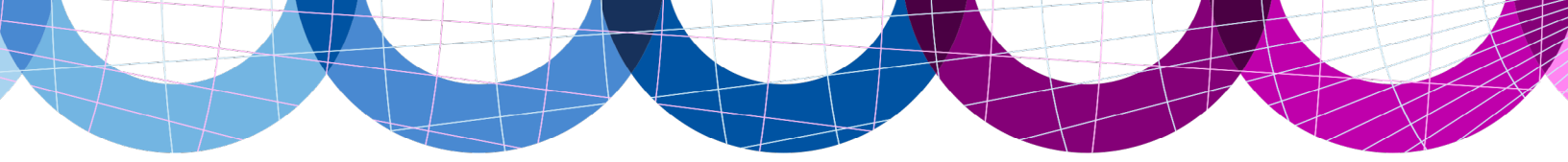
Figure B1 | Douglas worker-stream evolution

Figure B2 | MITT worker-stream evolution





Endnotes

- i OECD. (2022). *Career guidance for adults in Canada: Getting skills right*. OECD Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.1787/Oe596882-en>.
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