

External Relations Advisors

External relations advisors have a critical role in helping the energy industry build relationships with people and communities connected to resource development. Their role is unique. It takes skill and diplomacy to do this job well. They must build strong relationships both inside and outside of the company. This requires sound judgement about the business and relationship building.

The career will appeal to you if you have an interest in applying business acumen and communication skills. You will thrive on seeking out stakeholder and community perspectives. You will bring your learnings and curiosity about various stakeholder groups to your engagement plans. This may require specialist knowledge to manage all facets of engagement in areas such as Indigenous and community perspectives. As an advocate for the company, you seek to improve its external relationships and social responsibility practices. External relations advisors are committed to understanding diverse and complex points of view. They build strong relationships over time. They are socially perceptive, innovative and enterprising.

The energy industry provides diverse opportunities for external relations advisors across Canada. This career pathway is one way to contribute to social responsibility, sustainability, and environmental protection.

Established Energy Sectors:

Oil and Gas

Offshore Oil and Gas

Oil Sands

Energy Services

Pipelines

Refining

Emerging Energy Sectors:

Biofuels

Hydrogen

Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG)

Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS)

For energy sector definitions, go to [CareersinEnergy.ca](https://careersinenergy.ca)



What External Relations Advisors Do



Connect and Engage

External relations advisors connect with representatives of communities, rightsholders and stakeholder groups through meetings, conversations, social media, and writing. In this way, they inform the communities about company plans and activities. Through connecting, they develop understandings of local knowledge, issues, and concerns including those of Indigenous leaders and communities. External relations advisors continually work to understand community perspectives on company plans and activities. Over time, they build respectful and mutually beneficial relationships.



Develop Communication and Engagement Plans, Strategies, and Policies

External relations advisors develop engagement plans to help the company make informed and balanced decisions considering perspectives and interests of Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities. They work to understand and follow engagement protocols, traditions and culture for areas where the company operates. They respect these protocols and incorporate knowledge of traditions and culture into company programs. These programs help companies to be socially responsible. They inform and engage local Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities about company activities.



Document Public Engagement Activities

External relations advisors help to document consultations engagement activities and provide reports to government to meet their regulatory requirements. Other documentation will describe the company's engagement activities that contribute to sustainability goals and metrics. External relations advisors may lead larger engagement projects or surveys and follow up on the recommendations in these analyses.



Advise Internal Stakeholders

External relations advisors provide advice to internal teams and leaders about the types of engagement practices that will be effective. They provide regular updates regarding engagements and how they align with company business priorities. They find ways to enhance the company's reputation by improving their presence and impact in communities. They create innovative communications plans.



Conduct Research and Analyze Data

External relations advisors use research and data to support the company's development of engagement plans. Developing and tracking key metrics provides data to prioritize programs, budgets and develop policies and advise on company strategy.

Key Skills and Abilities External Relations Advisors Need

This chart shows the skills, abilities, and certifications needed as external relations advisors enter and advance their careers in the energy industry.

Core Knowledge

Company culture, services and projects

Regulations, policies, and protocols for stakeholder and Indigenous consultations

Current news events and their relevance to engagement plans

Internal and external communications and engagement planning

Developing community support initiatives

Familiarity with treaty, settlement, land and other rights and topics for Indigenous communities:

- Includes the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)

Technical Skills

Conduct community and stakeholder engagement and relationship building activities

Implementing consultation required by government

Identify engagement issues and problems and find solutions

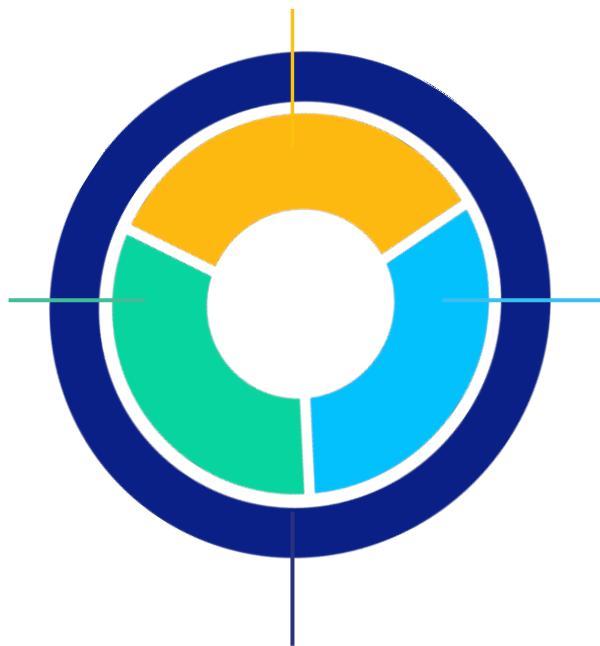
Help to develop engagement training for company personnel including Indigenous engagement

Plan, coordinate, and support public events

Prepare reports and keep records

Ongoing learning about communities and their traditions, history and cultures

Presentation and writing skills



Beneficial Certifications

Negotiation and mediation

Cultural competency training

Specific health and safety certifications as determined by job requirements

Driver's Licence plus a clean abstract

Personal Attributes

Active learning

Collaboration

Adaptability

Independence

Analytical thinking

Social orientation

Attention to detail

Concern for others

External Relations Advisors Careers in the Energy Industry

There are different types of education requirements for the external relations advisor career. Entry to this career in energy can start with job experience, community knowledge, or relevant education and training, or a combination of these. Indigenous, community, and stakeholder engagement roles may be combined or specialized, depending on company needs.

The chart shows how roles and educational requirements change for each career level. As you advance in your career, your education and experience can help you move across the various sectors of the energy industry. Roles described below are generally consistent across all energy sectors.

Career Level	Entry	Mid	Senior
Types of Jobs	Assistant/ Coordinator/Liaison:	Specialist/Advisor:	Senior Advisor/Manager/ Director:
Minimum education and/or experience typically required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> External Engagement Indigenous Engagement Stakeholder Engagement Community Engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> External Engagement Indigenous Engagement Stakeholder Engagement Community Engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> External Engagement Indigenous Engagement Stakeholder Engagement Community Engagement
Helpful disciplines:			
Communications, Indigenous studies, business, social science, public relations	<p>Community or traditional knowledge or combination of education and experiential knowledge</p> <p>1-3-year college diploma</p> <p>4-year university degree</p> <p>Specialized micro-credential courses to supplement experience or community and traditional knowledge</p>	<p>Community or traditional knowledge or combination of education and experiential knowledge</p> <p>1-3-year college diploma</p> <p>4-year university degree</p> <p>Specialized micro-credential courses to supplement experience or community and traditional knowledge</p>	<p>Community or traditional knowledge or combination of education and experiential knowledge</p> <p>1-3-year college diploma</p> <p>4-year university degree</p> <p>Specialized micro-credential courses to supplement experience or community and traditional knowledge</p>

Transferring External Relations Advisor Skills from One Energy Sector to Another

There are core skills and knowledge that all external relations advisors need for their careers. These building blocks apply across all energy sectors and for all specializations.

The following flow charts present the core skills and knowledge as building blocks. Each energy sector uses the building blocks in similar ways.

New entrants to an external relations advisor career can use the diagrams to understand the building block skills needed to work in sectors across the energy industry. Experienced external relations advisors can use the diagrams to explore how each building block is applied across the energy sectors.

Skill: Knowledge of company business models, technologies, products, and operational processes and related impacts to external stakeholders and interest holders

Skill attributes

Sector

Familiarity with activities, products, and services of the sector

All sectors

Familiarity with potential impacts to external relations and engagement with communities and interest holders

All sectors

Skill: Desire to learn and build knowledge of local and First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities in areas where company conducts business

Skill attributes

Sector

Community knowledge including Indigenous history, cultures, and traditions

All sectors

Knowledge of UNDRIP, treaty, and settlement rights for regions and locations of operations

All sectors

Building and maintaining relationships with community members and leaders

All sectors

Skill: Government policies, programs and regulatory requirements for stakeholder and Indigenous consultation

Skill attributes

Sector

Provincial, federal, and First Nations, Métis, and Inuit regulations, policies, and protocols involving responsibility to consult and report

All sectors

Skill: Planning, implementing, and evaluating public engagement and consultation programs and integrating them into organizational culture and practices

Skill attributes

Sector

Designing and implementing public engagement and consultation programs	All sectors
Minimizing company risk	All sectors
Improving relations with communities and external stakeholders	All sectors
Knowledge of internal stakeholders and how to involve them in engagement programs	All sectors

Skill: Using communications and engagement tools, trends, measures and practices to develop internal and external strategies and activities

Skill attributes

Sector

Familiar with internal and external communications practices, including creating plans, writing key messages, developing content, organizing meetings, and events	All sectors
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Career Outlook for External Relations Advisors



Projected labour shortages

The demand for workers is projected to be greater than the supply of available workers.

Source: Careers in Energy, National Labour Market Outlook to 2035



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Funded in part by the Government of Canada's
Sectoral Workforce Solutions Program.