

Build Canada Exchange: Capturing Knowledge



To maximize value from a Build Canada Exchange (BCE) assignment, host organizations should **plan for knowledge capture and integration** to support long-term capacity building. To this effect, the following principles and questions are recommended for consideration in planning, structuring, and sustaining knowledge integration for each BCE assignment.

Principles for knowledge capture

1. Fit-for-purpose application

Knowledge capture methods must match the role. A delivery-focused participant might build capacity by co-authoring deliverables, while an advisor might lead formal seminars.

2. Continuous integration

Knowledge capture must be embedded as an ongoing practice throughout the assignment, rather than treated as an administrative offboarding task in the final weeks.

3. Multifaceted capture

While documented knowledge (e.g., frameworks) is easily collected, transferring experiential expertise (e.g., strategic judgement) requires active shadowing and dialogue.

Overarching questions to guide knowledge capture

Who will inherit this knowledge?

To ensure the expertise remains in the organization, has the organization identified staff to host, co-lead, shadow, or otherwise receive knowledge from the BCE participant?

How will integration be monitored?

Instead of only relying on a final offboarding interview, what regular milestones or checkpoints could be built into the assignment to ensure capacity-building is active?

How will insights be translated into assets?

What mechanisms could the organization use to embed the participant's knowledge into operations?

Using the knowledge capture tool

A spectrum of roles and knowledge capture strategies

BCE participants' roles will vary across organizations. For each assignment, knowledge capture strategies will be shaped by the nature of the role and operational context. This resource is designed as an **adaptable enabling tool for various scenarios**.

Here are a few scenarios to illustrate how knowledge transfer can play out across different types of roles:

- **Delivery-focused:** The role prioritizes operational delivery (e.g., leading a major project or strategy). Knowledge transfer occurs organically through daily workflows with collaborative structures in place (e.g., co-leading), and through new ways of working (e.g., updating standard operating procedures; streamlining existing processes).
- **Advisory:** The role focuses on the provision of expert advice, and knowledge transfer is at the core function of the assignment. Knowledge transfer occurs regularly through tailored verbal and written advice, for example: as a dedicated special advisor on a complex topic; holding regular open office hours; meeting with adjacent teams that are advancing a relevant priority.
- **Hybrid:** The role balances direct operational delivery with formal capacity-building activities (e.g., modernizing a service while actively training the permanent team on the new methodology). Knowledge transfer can also occur through practices like presentations to committees and communities of practice, and guiding demonstration projects to test new approaches in the public sector context.



This knowledge capture tool (KCT) guides planning and reflection conversations and accompanying documentation to maximize value from Build Canada Exchange (BCE) assignments.

As BCE participants enter the public service, **deliberate conversations** are required to help host organizations understand the expertise of each participant, and plan for ways to share it more widely. Given the time-limited tenure of BCE participants, these conversations should focus on **uncovering the perspectives** they bring from outside the public service, and on planning to **apply their expertise** to enhance public service performance and outcomes.



Conversations

Conversations should happen on an ongoing basis (e.g., biweekly, monthly) and at two distinct junctures (initial week and final week).



Documentation

Recording observations and insights before, during, and after conversations can prompt further investigation into challenges and opportunities, as well as concrete next steps.

Using the knowledge capture tool (KCT)

It is recommended that both the BCE participant and the BCE host use and adapt worksheets in this tool as needed.

Please download a copy of this knowledge capture tool (KCT), input information over the course of the BCE assignment, and seek ways to share the information, reflections, and potential action items.

Common terms used throughout this tool

BCE participant: individual on assignment in the public service.

BCE host(s): designated public servant(s) supporting the BCE participant in their assignment. BCE host(s) could include the person the BCE participant reports to (e.g., supervisor) and/or an individual tasked to support the BCE participant's knowledge transfer (e.g., analyst/officer).

BCE host organization: federal government organization to which the BCE participant is temporarily assigned.

BCE assignment: a finite duration (up to three years) during which the BCE participant is temporarily assigned to work for the host organization.

Start by documenting the main parties involved

Host organization	
Name:	
Branch or sector:	

BCE participant	
Name:	
Email:	
Role in the host organization:	

BCE host	
Name:	
Email:	
Relationship to the BCE participant:	

Structuring conversations: Planning, reflection and prioritization

To support the sharing of expertise by the BCE participant, the BCE participant and BCE host should hold a series of planning, reflection, and prioritization conversations over the duration of the assignment. Conversations should happen on an ongoing basis (e.g., biweekly, monthly) and at two distinct junctures (i.e., initial and final week).



Preparing for knowledge capture: Identifying areas of expertise

Ideally, this first conversation occurs in the first week of the BCE participant's assignment. Goals include validating and refining the host organization's understanding of the participant's breadth of expertise and knowledge, and setting plans to connect the BCE participant with relevant teams in the organization.

Please see more information in the [preparing for knowledge capture section](#).



Ongoing conversations: Understanding challenges and opportunities

Ongoing conversations increase the potential for effective knowledge capture and application. During these conversations, the BCE host should routinely (e.g., biweekly, monthly) ask for the BCE participant's reflections on opportunities and challenges in the organization and public service. These conversations can equally serve as a space for participants to ask their clarifying questions. In addition, consider dedicating conversations at key intervals for retrospection and prioritization.

Please see more information in the [ongoing conversations section](#).



Exit conversations: Providing an honest retrospective

These final conversations encourage the BCE participant and the public servants who have worked with them to think beyond their daily observations and to reflect on the totality of the assignment. These conversations also serve to discuss how the BCE participant's impact can endure in the public service.

Please see more information in the [exit conversations section](#).

Preparing for knowledge capture: Identifying areas of expertise

An initial conversation helps clarify and validate the BCE participant's expertise, ensuring it is accurately understood by the host organization. For BCE assignments to be effective, there must be a clear understanding of both the participant's expertise and the organization's capacity for integration.

When using the table below, information can be pre-populated based on interviews and recruitment material. To complement this information, the BCE host should ask for the participant to confirm their breadth of expertise, in their own words.

An important subsequent step in this exercise is to determine the people, systems, and processes of the host organization that would benefit from the participant's expertise. Potential groups that may benefit could include, but are not limited to: home teams, executives, other teams in the organization, committees/groups, networks, communities of practice (COPS), corporate functions, and other government organizations.



The two major questions to guide an initial conversation include:

- What practices, tools, and/or approaches have you used in your previous roles and how could they be applied to your current host organization?
- In what areas of the host organization's work are you most interested to share your expertise?

No.	Areas of expertise (e.g., tools, practices, approaches, systems)	Potential audience or collaborator (e.g., direct team, branch, network)	Next steps
e.g.	AI and emerging privacy mechanisms	Chief Information Officer; Service Branch ADM	Arrange bilats with each leader and the BCE participant
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			

Job aid: LPL1-J05

Ongoing conversations: Understanding challenges and opportunities

Throughout a BCE assignment, it is important to invite the participant's perspectives on both:



Challenges

These may be barriers or gaps that BCE participants have recognized in the host organization that hinder the effectiveness or efficiency of their work.

Challenges may include but are not limited to: obstacles, areas of unmanaged risk, areas of risk aversion, outdated practices and processes, and areas of confusion or ambiguity.



Opportunities

These may be methods, practices, or approaches to increase effectiveness or efficiency in the host organization

Opportunities may include but are not limited to: acquisition or application of practices, processes, workflows, professional networks, training, and skills development.

In addition to routine ongoing conversations, it is recommended to organize conversations at key intervals for dedicated retrospection and prioritization (e.g., three months into the assignment, six months into the assignment). These interval discussions could invite reflections on the participant's experiences to date, as well as areas of knowledge transfer that they would like to prioritize.

Both the BCE participant and the host may coordinate on the observations that require further action. This may include identifying considerations and next steps, as well as managing necessary engagements with implicated individuals, teams, or organizations to determine the best course of action.

Please refer to the table below for an illustrative example. Blank worksheets are included for your use over the next three pages.

Observation		Relevant practices	Next steps	Considerations	Date
No.	What challenge or opportunity have you observed in your daily work?	With respect to this observation, what has worked well in a different context? Are there best practices?	Any suggestions for potential courses of action (e.g., what and who)?	What else is important to note for clarity or nuance?	When was this observed?
e.g.	AI literacy is inconsistent across the organization.	Pairing employees with varying degrees of AI proficiency to answer questions.	Peer mentoring or pairing system; BCE host to action with DG of HR.	Requires internal capacity and management support.	2026-09-25

Ongoing Conversations: Understanding Challenges and Opportunities

Recording observations



The BCE participant and/or the BCE host is invited to document the participant's insights over the course of the assignment. Maintaining a record of observations will inform ongoing conversations and support a cohesive retrospective of the BCE participant's experience.

Observation		Relevant practices	Next steps	Considerations	Date
No.	What challenge or opportunity have you observed in your daily work?	With respect to this observation, what has worked well in a different context? Are there best practices?	Any suggestions for potential courses of action (e.g., what and who?)	What else is important to note for clarity or nuance?	When was this observed?
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					

Observation		Relevant practices	Next steps	Considerations	Date
No.	What challenge or opportunity have you observed in your daily work?	With respect to this observation, what has worked well in a different context? Are there best practices?	Any suggestions for potential courses of action (e.g., what and who?)	What else is important to note for clarity or nuance?	When was this observed?
9					
10					
11					
12					
13					
14					
15					
16					

Observation		Relevant practices	Next steps	Considerations	Date
No.	What challenge or opportunity have you observed in your daily work?	With respect to this observation, what has worked well in a different context? Are there best practices?	Any suggestions for potential courses of action (e.g., what and who?)	What else is important to note for clarity or nuance?	When was this observed?
17					
18					
19					
20					
21					
22					
23					
24					

Job aid: LPL1-J05

Exit conversations: Providing an honest retrospective with questions for the BCE host(s)

Near the end of the assignment, the BCE participant and the public servant(s) who have worked closely with them will have had a range of experiences to inform a deeper retrospective.

In cases where BCE assignments exceed one year, this set of questions is also designed as a basis for an annual summative reflection exercise.

Pursuant to the working context and with the aim of promoting an honest retrospective, it is recommended to identify a third party to facilitate conversations with the BCE participant and the BCE host.



Experience of the host organization

These questions are for the public servant(s) who were involved in the knowledge capture from the BCE participant.

1. Where in your organization has the BCE participant had the most impact?

2. What were the most successful examples of knowledge transfer?

3. What work must continue beyond this BCE assignment?

4. What were missed opportunities for knowledge transfer? What lessons have been learned from this BCE assignment?

Exit conversations: Providing an honest retrospective with questions for the BCE participant

Experience of the BCE participant

These questions are for the BCE participant to support reflection on their assignment, and to offer parting insights.

1. Reflecting on your overall experience, what have been your most impactful contributions? What skills and knowledge have been successfully transferred?

2. What have been the most significant challenges in imparting your expertise within this organization?

3. What skills or knowledge should this organization continue to build on?

4. Without further change, which issues remain a risk to the organization?

5. Have you come across any practices that you find useful and effective, and that should endure?