



LAUBACH LITERACY ONTARIO
Since 1981

Making Essential Skills WORK for You

A Guide to Marketing and Promotions for Literacy and Upgrading Education Programs



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How to Use this Guide

The intent of this guide is to give you a basic overview of marketing and promotions concepts, and an explanation of how to integrate this knowledge using essential skills.

If you feel comfortable with your skills and knowledge in marketing and promotions, skip to the section entitled "Marketing Tools and Strategies for Essential Skills" on page 15.

Before using this guide, it is recommended that you review the Essential Guides (Part 1) provided on PowerPoint. The information in that presentation is not duplicated in this manual, but supports what found in this guide.



What is Marketing?

Marketing is the process of informing your stakeholders about what you do in Literacy and Basic Skills. It is also the process of ensuring they are aware of the well-known concept of "WIIFM" or "What's In It For Me".

Well-published writer and economist Peter Drucker said that "Marketing is so basic that it cannot be considered a separate function. It is the whole business seen from the point of view of its final result, that is, from the customer's point of view."

There are three steps to "The Marketing Approach"

- Customer focus
- Integrated marketing
- External focus

Customer Focus

This means you need to listen to what your stakeholder needs instead of using a "canned" presentation.

Ask an employer questions about their current staffing issues:

- What skills do your current entry-level employees need to work on?
- Do you find that entry-level employees are having difficulty filling paperwork out correctly?
- Do employees have difficulty with punctuality?
- When interviewing for new positions, what do you find least satisfying about the applicants?
- What do you look for in a job application?
- What do you look for in a job interview?
- What are the different job titles you have difficulty in filling or maintaining staff?

Ask an employment counsellor (i.e. Job Connect workers) about what client needs they are unable to help with:

- What skills do your clients need to work on?
- Do you find your clients have some difficulty filling out paperwork correctly?
- Do clients have difficulty with punctuality?
- When holding training sessions for new clients, what are you unable to help them?
- Do you think that literacy skills are an issue for some of your clients?
- What type of client are you unable to serve?

- What skills do your clients need to have to be successful in a job placement?

To which other service agencies do you currently refer your clients?

Ask apprenticeship staff about the issues they have in meeting quotas:

- What problems do you have in meeting your current quotas?
- Why do you think there is a lack of certified journeymen?
- Do you think your clients have difficulty filling out paperwork on their own?
- Do you think that literacy skills are an issue for some of your clients?
- If clients fail their tests, do you think it's because they just did not know the content well enough?

These are just three example areas of questions that can be easily redesigned to deal with other potential stakeholders. The lists of questions are certainly not conclusive, but they should give you a good idea of the kinds of questions to ask. Later we will deal with how to respond to these questions and others on the marketing approach.

Integrated Marketing

This means that you must make your approach specific to the stakeholder you wish to attract. For example: much of the Saturn car's early advertising was targeted specifically to women, focusing on the seat design, and mirror and seatbelt placement, in addition to how women were treated comfortably when considering a Saturn.

Asking the questions outlined in the "Customer Focus" section will help ensure that you are focusing on the customer's needs.



External Focus

This means you are not selling your product (i.e. literacy training); you are finding out what the stakeholder needs and wants and then giving that to them. For example: Your business stakeholder says that many new employees are lacking teamwork skills. As a provider of literacy training you might explain how you can support new employees in their organization by providing specific training on working with others.

The Four P's of Marketing

A common term used in marketing is the Four P's. They stand for:

- Products
- Price
- Position
- Promotion

Products are any program, service, resource or other products that you produce at your agency.

Price is the price or fees you charge or the funding that you receive in order to keep the service or product "free", it can also be the cost of the program or service or product if you did charge; eligibility - what criteria, if there is one, is used to determine who can access the service or product.

Position refers to your program and/or agency in within the broader market. What competition do you have? What is your literacy niche amongst the other providers? What is your niche within the community service sector? How are you unique and how are your programs and services unique?

Promotion is the P most of us think of when what talk about marketing, outreach or public education. How do you promote your products and services? What media do you use? Personal or interpersonal strategies, how frequently?

The 4 P's are a framework for reviewing what you are presently doing and for planning what you will do in the future.

They help you go from Demands on the cycle to Delivery.

They help you to focus your efforts and resources. Example: you can look at any of your programs like a 1:1 tutor program and work through the P's in order to understand better how to market this program.

A new program that you are considering providing can be put through the 4 P's in order to see how well defined it is and if it meets a market need & demand. You can use it to target your promotions (the final P).

Where do the Essential Skills fit in?

Later on in this guide we will be detailing the Essential Skills. Right now we want to focus on how they can help you in each section.

When learning about what an employer needs, you need to find out about the jobs positions they hire for within in their company. The Essential Skills profiles http://srv108.services.gc.ca/english/general/ES_Profiles_e.shtml can then be researched for these jobs. It will give you a clear understanding of the various skills that are required for a position and the type of training they would need from your program.

For example, when someone applies for a job within your organization, if during the interview you have found that they have taken the time to research your organization, it provides the candidate with a bit of an edge on other competition that didn't prepare at all.

Why Market?

Marketing is important because you just cannot rely on your good name. Even if you are at capacity, it doesn't mean that in six months you will still be at capacity. For example: the latest version of PlayStation was sold out before the first day of release in North America. They continued to market this product extensively even though they could not meet the current demand. The reason? They needed to keep the interest high in the product, so that when it was available, people would still want it.

If you do not market, how will anyone know they even need your services? If no one told you anything about banking, your money would be hidden in your mattress. If you did not know what the banking services were, you would certainly not think you needed them. You would not go out looking for them, nor would you call them for help.

Literacy agencies should increase their referral base and their funding base if they are going to continue to thrive. Interagency referrals should expand beyond other literacy providers. The community needs to be engaged. This means the various employment and training agencies outside of LBS and business.

Even if it seems "fruitless" to start...the more your name is out there...the more your community sees your name/logo...the more your agency will start to come to mind when educational solutions are needed. This may eventually lead to more opportunities to diversify your funding. Partnerships, donations and grants seem to be more readily available when an agency is well-known in a community.

Who Do You Market To?

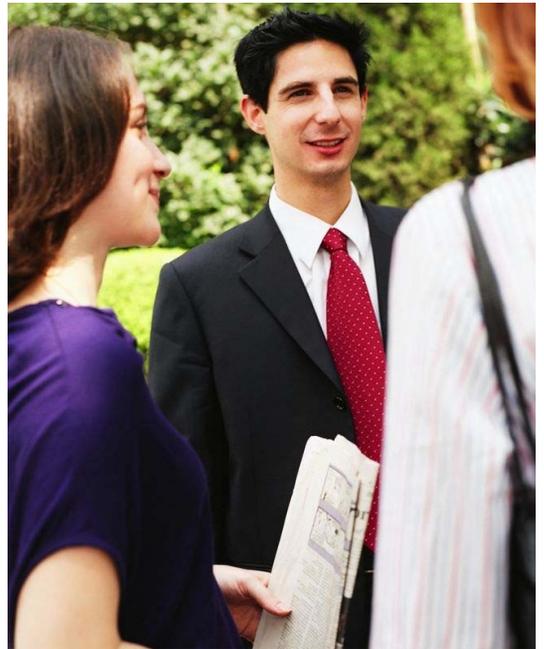
In this guide, we are only talking about marketing to employers and other community agencies outside of literacy.

Employers

Let's apply the theory of "six degrees of separation"...meaning you are always, at a maximum, only six steps or phone calls away from anyone. Your organization may have a Board of Directors or other volunteers or co-workers. These individuals have a connection to a number of other individuals in your community. Find out if they have friends, neighbours or family members who either run a business within your geographic area or work in the Human Resource's department of a business.

You may have a Chamber of Commerce in your region. Chambers always have a directory of members, with contact information. There will be a fee, which will vary by region. If cost is a worry, you can research the businesses in your area at your local libraries, but you need to take into consideration the cost of your time to do this.

Yellow pages in phone books can also be a useful resource to find potential businesses. It will require a "cold call" (a call made without having contacts/a name on the other end). The problem with this is you do not know how large a business is. A smaller company (for example with fewer than 25 employees) may not be worth your time to focus on.



Other Community Agencies

Marketing or promotions is sometimes just about knowing where to take that first leap. The first community agencies to focus on for marketing are our fellow MTCU agencies under Employment Ontario.

Go to: <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/tcu/search.html> to review what services are found in your region(s). You will find all the programs that are part of Employment Ontario. You will see Literacy and Job Connect programs, but if you start at the top at "Academic and Skills Upgrading" you will also find out more about programs that you may not be aware of within your region.



You could put together a one-page cover letter or e-mail along with a brochure or one of the HRSDC Essential Skills brochures and send it out to these agencies. The letter/e-mail should request a meeting to discuss how your organizations can work better together.

Do not forget your Literacy Service Planning Committees. Marketing as a group of literacy providers may have a stronger impact.

How Do You Market?

There are two approaches to how you market...direct or indirect. Direct involves the process discussed in the "What is Marketing" section. This is going directly to the source you wish to market to...the employer or other service provider. Indirect involves the process of being more generalized in your marketing through use of media to meet a larger market.

Indirect marketing can be seen in most television commercials. For example: Axe Body Spray for men, insinuates that all men want women throwing themselves at them everywhere they go. Now this may be true for some, but, it cannot be true for every male. This marketing would not directly relate to all married men, so for them this product would need to be marketed with a more subtle approach. So the marketers are hoping to reach the majority of males, but certainly not all of them. This is how indirect marketing works, since no company has the time to go out to each individual male and ask them their body fragrance needs or wants. Indirect marketing can work when you have a tangible product, but is more difficult with a service.

Indirect marketing takes less time, but can require funds that we just don't have. In this case you can use Public Service Announcements (PSAs) as they are very cost effective, but it is key that they are not overused and are written for the highest impact. If you do not have time and money to professionally produce PSAs, it is difficult to guarantee their air play. You can also make partnerships with your local papers to negotiate annual "lineage" for ads. In addition, most papers also have free community events sections where you can list your services. News releases are also a way to market yourself in the media; however, to be truly effective they need to relate to an actual newsworthy topic.

An example of a PSA can be found in the appendices of this document.

Direct marketing concepts will not be discussed further here, as they are embedded throughout the sections of this guide.

When Do You Market?

When you are trying to set up times to market to different employers and service providers, you need to be aware of the ebb and flow of their schedules. For example: year end, plant shutdowns, grant times, regular closures and reporting deadlines. If you try to set up meetings at these times, individuals are either too busy or just not available to meet with you. You may also have created a "hostile" attitude towards you and your organization. To avoid this pitfall you need to do some research. You can find this information out on websites or talking to receptionists (they know a great deal about everything happening in the organization). Receptionists are also your key to getting into the right door.

You need to strategically plan when will be a good time for you to focus on marketing in your agency. For example, if March is year end, this is not a prime time for you to dedicate to marketing your services.

Now the question is are you **ready** to market your services? First ask yourself the following questions:

1. Is your office and staff ready to handle any marketing responses?

- Is there a knowledgeable person answering the phone?
- Can you provide immediate and informative responses to any questions about the services you provide?
- Can you provide your services in a timely manner to address the needs of the stakeholder?
- Can you provide the services that you say you can?

2. Do you follow through with all our service plans?

- Do you evaluate and make changes within your services?
- Do you have a good reputation in the community?
- Do you have client testimonials?

3. Are you an effective listener?

- Do you hear what your potential clients are really saying (can you read between the lines)?
- Are you able to market your services differently to each client by addressing their needs?



- Are you able to create new programs for your potential clients instead of trying to market them into current programs?

4. Does your staff work in a “teamwork” environment?

- Can all the staff be responsive to the needs of your marketing targets?
- Will your staff accept responsibility for mistakes without pointing fingers at individuals? Will the problem be solved to the customer’s satisfaction or are they scrambling to find out “who done it”?
- Is your staff creative in finding and carrying out solutions to problems?
- How effective are your internal communication lines? (Does only one person know information, while everyone else is in the dark?)



What Do You Market?

You're ready to head out the door and sell, sell, sell...but, WHOOPS...how the heck do you do this? How can you make your services interesting and necessary to these potential stakeholders?

There needs to be a common language to start and this is where Essential Skills can be used. Essential Skills are recognizable across Canada and have been endorsed by the Conference Board of Canada in correlation to their Employability Skills. Employability Skills were developed by only talking to employers and so, most employers recognize that terminology. The Essential Skills were developed by only talking to employees, so that is why they require the endorsement of the employer through the Conference Board if you are planning to market to businesses. The Employability Skills can be found at <http://www.conferenceboard.ca> .

Essential Skills are the skills needed for work, learning and life. They provide the foundation for learning all other skills and enable people to evolve with their jobs and adapt to workplace change.

There are nine Essential Skills:

Reading Text

Document Use

Numeracy

Writing

Oral Communication

Working with Others

Continuous Learning

Computer Use

Thinking Skills

- Problem Solving
- Decision Making
- Critical Thinking
- Job Task Planning and Organizing
- Significant Use of Memory
- Finding Information

Each job requires the use of all the Essential Skills. You can use the Essential Skills profiles as a starting point when researching a marketing strategy to use with employers and organizations with clients who have employment goals.

Marketing Tools and Strategies for the Essential Skills

Literacy and Basic Skills agencies often feel at a loss when it comes to marketing their program to potential partners and other referral agencies. The goal of marketing is to analyze what a customer needs so that your product or service fits for them and sells itself. ¹ In the not-for-profit sector marketing may seem overwhelming. However, marketing provides your agency with an opportunity to show others the services that your agency does well. By using a common language, the Essential Skills, your agency will have the credibility of using a nationally recognized system of skills.

Why is an Investment in Essential Skills Training necessary and a good use of resources for an Employer?

The money that employers invest in essential skills training will benefit the company in many direct and indirect ways. First, not only will workers who have essential skills training be skilled and adaptable to new jobs, but they will also have a higher rate of employment, a reduced transition time between jobs, support for job maintenance and promotion, and increased self-confidence. Directly, employers who invest in essential skills training improve productivity, improve health and safety, enhance communication and teamwork, and create a learning culture within their workplace.

Who Do I Market To or Who are My Target Audience?

As an LBS agency, you may want to consider developing marketing tools for different purposes. For example, who are your clients and stakeholders? Your clients and stakeholders may include:

- LBS students
- Other Service Providers
- Employers
- Job Connect
- Volunteers

¹ MacDonald and Cosburn. 2005. *Literacy Volunteers Value Added Toolkit*, Community Literacy of Ontario.

- Funding Organizations
- Government Agencies

How to Market to Potential Students?

There are many clients who need the services of an LBS agency however, if they don't know about your agency and the services it offers, or if they don't know how to find you, they will not come to your door.

To let these students know about your services, research tells us that word-of-mouth is the best advertisement. Because of this, you need to ensure that all students who are participating in your agency or who have left your agency are satisfied with your services. They will be the ones who will tell other potential students about your program.

At present, the Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities (MTCU) asks every agency to have students complete a Learner Satisfaction Survey. You need to make sure that the students involved with your agency are pleased with your service. If not, find out why and help them to achieve their goals and be happy while doing it. This Learner Satisfaction Survey is supposed to be a tool for you to ensure that your students are satisfied and that they tell others about your program.

How to Market to Employers or Other Service Providers

1. Begin by thinking about different agencies that you would like to approach and with whom you would like to market your services.
2. Create a list of agencies and the contacts at each agency to whom you would like to market your services.
3. Go online and find out the contact information that includes address, phone number, contact person. Sometimes you won't be able to get a contact person from an online search so when you call the receptionist, you can ask this information.
4. Make a list of potential questions to ask their receptionist so that you don't have to make more than one phone call to the company or service provider.

5. Create a fact sheet about your program that you can present to the contact when you have a face-to-face meeting. This is important as it may be your only chance for a visit so you want to present clear, concise facts that link you to the other employer or service provider.
6. Create a list of questions and answers to the questions that the employer or service provider may ask you. This will allow you to be responsive (on the spot) if the contact asks you specific questions. This is a way to be prepared. You need to know your program's potential parameters.
7. If you are trying to get them to refer clients to you (not to set up a workplace program), then you need to go in to the meeting with an attitude that this is no cost for the employer and that you can provide Essential Skills training to their employees who need it.



How to Research an Employer or Service Provider

1. Begin by thinking about different agencies and employers that you would like to approach to market your services.
2. Research all information that you can find. This includes online research and telephone research. You need to find out:
 - Who the contact person is?
 - What the contact address is including both telephone and fax numbers and record this information?
 - What types of clients does this agency have?
 - How will you help them? In other words, use **a discovery process**? In the discovery process, you need to ask yourself the following questions.
 - What other needs will their clients/employees have?

- What essential skills can you help their clients attain? For example, if you are trying to market to a Counselling Agency, think about how you would address their clients' non-counselling needs. For example, will their clients get handouts? (*essential skill – reading text*) Do they need to attend regularly? (*essential skill – thinking skills*) Do their clients need to fill out paperwork? (*essential skill – document use*) Do their clients need help getting to their appointments such as taking the bus? (*essential skill – reading text, numeracy, oral communication*) Do their clients get involved in group sessions? (*essential skill – working with others*). Undergoing this discovery process is essential for how you find a way that your program fits in with their needs. You might want to ask a potential employer what skills they are most looking for in new employees. **This is the secret to marketing your program – you find how it fits their needs so that your program sells itself.**

How to Market Essential Skills Training to Apprenticeship, Job Connect, and HRSDC?

In order to market the essential skills training that you can provide to these agencies, you need to figure out how you can help them. Remember that marketing is finding out how your program will fit with the other program so that you do not need to do any selling of your services. Your service must sell itself. In this case, you may be looking at partnering with these agencies, however you still need to market your services.

Apprenticeship

The Apprenticeship program helps people who want to get on-the-job training to work in a skilled trade or occupation. See www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/tch/apprentices/services/html for more information on Apprenticeship programs and to find the local offices in your area.

Apprenticeship is “hands on” training for people who like to learn by actually doing the tasks or the job. Approximately 90% of apprenticeship training is provided in the workplace by employers or sponsors. The rest of the training is provided in a classroom setting. Being an apprentice requires a mix of both classroom and on-the-job training. People, who want to become an apprentice, usually apply directly to an employer, union, or local apprenticing committee. For more information see www.edu.on.gov.on.ca/eng/training/Apprenticeship/Skills/training.html .

Apprenticeship programs need to be linked up with agencies that provide literacy and math instruction. In most cases, these agencies are college programs, however a niche for you might be to provide one-on-one instruction to students who require more help in specific areas. You could discuss how you could extend the service that they provide so that no apprentice loses out because of falling behind in literacy or math.

Job Connect

The Job Connect program helps people plan, prepare for and succeed in the job market. See www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/tch/apprentices/services/html for more information on the Job Connect programs and to find the local offices in your area.

The Job Connect Program not only helps employers find employees, but also helps prospective youth and adults find jobs. In order to be job ready, adults need to have the requisite basic skills. Unless the adult has his or her essential skills upgraded, retraining may not be effective. Therefore, as a literacy agency, you need to let Job Connect personnel know that you have trained staff able to assess adults and help these adults to learn the skills necessary for them to re-enter (or enter for the first time) the job market.

Seeking out the employment stakeholders in your community such as Job Connect, HRSDC and Apprenticeship can allow you to provide literacy skills for their adults who need essential skill upgrading and they can then link these adults to employment following the essential skills training that your agency can provide.

What types of Marketing Tools Should I Develop to Market to Various Stakeholders?

- Cover Letters and Business Cards
- Brochures
- Fact Sheets
- Newspaper Articles
- Presentation folder or Power point presentation
- Public Service Announcements on Radio²

² Marges and Tuer. 2001. *Building Our Capacity A Workplace Literacy Coordination Model*. Project READ Literacy Network.

When and How would I Use Cover Letters and Business Cards?

A cover letter is a good option to use when sending out fact sheets, when following up on a telephone call, or when seeking out a first meeting with a potential partner or client. You include their contact information, your contact information, the date, and a small amount of information to spark their curiosity (so that they either want you to contact them or they want to contact you). Then you follow up with a meeting or a telephone call to determine a meeting date or to answer their questions. Business cards are a handy tool to have to provide information to people. For a sample cover letter, see appendices.

When and How Would I Use Brochures?

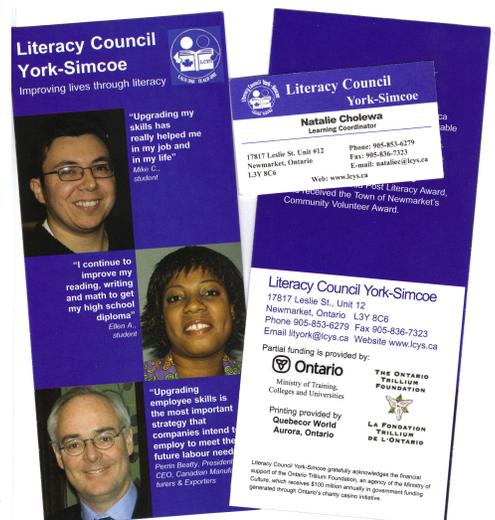
Brochures are an excellent marketing tool when leaving information with or for people. They can work hand-in-hand with a cover letter to provide clear information to potential clients, partners, and stakeholders.

When and How Would I Use Fact Sheets?

Fact Sheets are used in addition to a cover letter to provide more generalized information. This is the information that will plead your case and let others know about the issue – in your case, lack of literacy skills in many adults. This provides you with the means to build a case as to why an agency should refer clients to you and why specific adults should attend your program.

When and How Would I Use Newspaper Articles?

Newspaper articles are more of an awareness tool. They provide you with a venue to share your knowledge. It is not the best form of marketing if you are looking for a lot of referrals but it can go a long way (over the long haul) to provide you with clients in the future as possible referral agents may recognize either your name or your agency's name. This is more of a long-term strategy.



When and How Would I Use a Presentation Folder or a PowerPoint Presentation?

A Presentation Folder or a PowerPoint Presentation would be used when you have secured a face-to-face meeting with a potential agency who will be referring many adults to your agency. This is a costly form of marketing but can be effective and long lasting. You use this method by making the initial appointment, including your brochure, fact sheet, business card, and cover letter in the package. You can also include a sheet with "FAQ's" (Frequently Asked Questions). The PowerPoint Presentation is used more today as it is cheaper and can be e-mailed after giving a presentation. It can be quite effective when seeking out referrals and partners if done correctly. This would mean using correct facts, using clear language, and not putting too many words on each screen. You must be computer savvy and comfortable to use this technology because if you are uncomfortable, it will show through in your presentation.

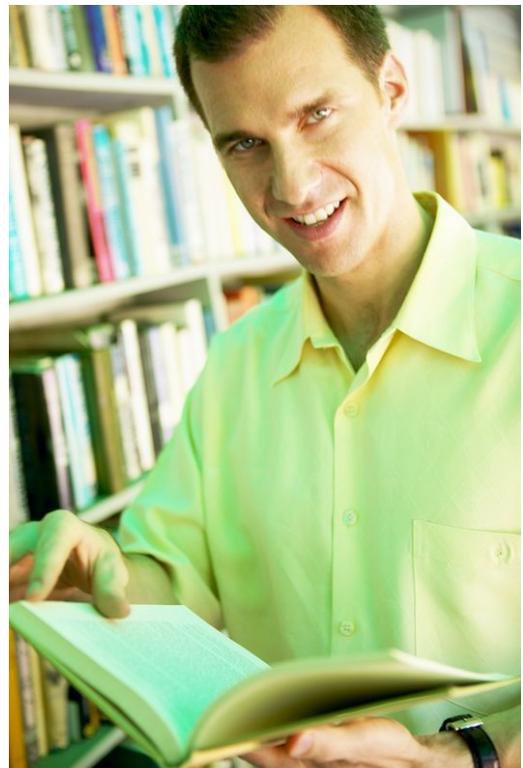
When and How Would I Use a Public Service Announcement (PSA) or a Radio Announcement?

This can be an effective marketing tool when used on a regular basis but providing a different message. For example, if you are a literacy agency, using a PSA to promote Family Literacy Day in January, Writing a Note to a Loved One in February, Literacy Activities to do with Children in March, etc. will help people to know about your agency and its underlying message – literacy. However, with a new event each month, the interest should remain.

Notes:

Appendices

- Sample script for telephone call
- Sample followup telephone call
- Sample cover letter to employer
- Sample fact sheet
- Marketing materials and samples available from Human Resources and Skills Development Canada
- Brochure and business card examples
- Basic format for a public service announcement



Sample Phone Script for Telephone Call to Receptionist

Good morning/afternoon/evening (insert their name). I'm (insert your name) and I'm calling on behalf of (insert your agency name).

I was given your name by (insert name) OR

I found your name on your website

and I thought you might be interested in our services.

You may have heard about (insert your agency name). We are a not-for-profit literacy agency with over (insert number of years of service in community) experience in essential skills training and we are now offering this service to you.

What we would like to do is mail you an information package of our materials and then phone you back or set up a meeting to discuss any details or answer any questions that you may have. Would that work for you?

If yes.....

Thanks. I'll put that in the mail today for you and follow up in one week.

Thanks for your time and for reviewing our package. I'm sure you will be interested in learning more about how we can help your employees/clients (insert appropriate stakeholder group). Have a wonderful day.

If no.....

Would it be better if I hand delivered it?

If still no.....

I can understand if you don't want more paper to recycle in your agency/company (insert appropriate name) however, I do feel that your agency/company (insert appropriate name) would benefit from the services we are offering. Perhaps we could just provide more information about the free services we can offer you in the future.

This may aid you in meeting your ISO standards and will definitely help you in health and safety/productivity/etc. (insert something that will be important to the agency or company).

If still no.....

Thanks for your time. If we can be of assistance in the future, please do not hesitate to contact us.

(adapted from Building Our Capacity Workplace Literacy Coordination Pilot)

Sample Follow Up Telephone Call

Good morning/afternoon/evening (*insert their name*). It's (*insert your name*) from (*insert agency name*) following up as promised last week.

Did you receive the information package that I sent you? Have you had time to read it?

If yes....

Do you have any questions in regards to the materials in the package? Do you have time now to discuss them?

If yes....

Okay, ask away. (*make sure that you know your facts and are able to answer most questions. For those that you can't answer, let them know that you will find out and you will return the call with an answer. Give them a timeline.*)

If no....

When is a better time to call?

Great. I'll call you at (*repeat time of call and day*). I look forward to discussing this further.



(adapted from Building Our Capacity Workplace Literacy Coordination Pilot)

Sample Cover Letter to Employer that precedes Marketing Package

Name of Contact

Company Name

Address

Postal Code

Dear (*insert contact name*),

All companies have workers who may need help with their essential skills. Essential skills are the skills needed for work, learning, and life. They provide the foundation for learning all other skills and enable people to evolve with their jobs and adapt to workplace change.

We provide FREE essential skills training in our program. (*insert agency name*), a not-for-profit agency, is offering your employees an opportunity for essential skills training including:

- Reading
- Using Documents
- Math
- Writing
- Using Computers
- Speaking
- Working with Others
- Continuous Learning

Thinking Skills (Problem-Solving, Decision-Making, Critical Thinking, Job Task Planning and Organizing, Significant Use of Memory, Finding Information).

After reviewing the materials in this folder, you will be interested in discussing your company's needs further. I will call you in a few days to set up an appointment to meet with you or to telephone you.

Thanks in advance for your time.

(insert your name and title)

(adapted from Building Our Capacity Workplace Literacy Coordination Pilot)

Sample Fact Sheet

Did you know that

"In a recent survey of employers, 94% indicated that they would hire an employee who did not have a Grade 12 Diploma if that person could demonstrate the required skills?

In the same survey, over 75% reported that they were not familiar with programs in Ontario that prepare adults for specific jobs." The workplace preparation program in your area could be the answer to your employment needs.

---Hire Value, QUILL Learning Network---

22% of adults in Canada have difficulty with reading, writing and math and another 26% (1 in 4 adults) do not have the literacy skills necessary to function in the knowledge-based society.

---Literacy, Economy, and Society, International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS), OECD, 1995.---

Lower skilled jobs are disappearing as more jobs become knowledge-based. These jobs require stronger essential skills in workers.

---Closing the Skills Gap: A Report of the British Columbia Chamber of Commerce Skill Shortages initiative, April 2002.---

"Whether it is writing a memo or managing an office budget, employees use Essential Skills every day at work. Improving these skills helps to build a more confident, safe, and productive work force."

---Human Resources Services Development Canada, 2005---

www15.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca

In 2003, adults who used the computer frequently, scored higher on the prose literacy scale than those who didn't use the computer. This trend was found in all nations that participated in the ALLS.

---Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey, 2005.---

Marketing Materials from Human Resources and Skills Development Canada

How can I get copies of the Essential Skills brochure and other promotional material?

To order copies of the Essential Skills brochure or fact sheets, please mail or fax your request to:

Enquiries Centre

Human Resources and Skills Development Canada

140 Promenade du Portage

Phase IV, Level 0

Gatineau, QC

K1A 0J9

Fax: (819) 953-7260

Email: publications@hrsdc-rhdcc.gc.ca

Please include the publication number in your request:

[What are Essential Skills?](#)

HIP-005-07-04

[What are Essential Skills Profiles?](#)

HIP-010-07-04

[What is the Essential Skills Research Project?](#)

HIP-025-11-04

[Defining Essential Skills](#)

HIP-024-11-04

[Meeting the Challenge](#)

HIP-007-12-04

[Building Essential Skills in the Workplace](#)

HIP-028-03-05E

In this guide we have put copies of the “What are Essential Skills?”; “What are Essential Skills Profiles?” and “Defining Essential Skills” on the following pages. However, we highly recommend that you go to the website and look at the “Building Essential Skills in the Workplace” document before marketing to businesses. Go to: http://srv108.services.gc.ca/english/general/Faqs_e.shtml and then scroll to the bottom of the page for the above information.

What are Essential Skills?



What are Essential Skills?

Essential Skills are the skills people need for work, learning and life. They provide the foundation for learning all other skills and are the cornerstone of lifelong learning.

Through extensive research, the Government of Canada and other national and international agencies have identified and validated nine Essential Skills. These skills are used in virtually all occupations and throughout daily life in different forms and at different levels of complexity.

For example, writing skills are required in a broad range of occupations. Some workers write simple forms while others write complex monthly reports. Although the specific form and complexity level may vary for the workers, the Essential Skill "writing" is necessary to succeed in their occupations.

Nine Essential Skills

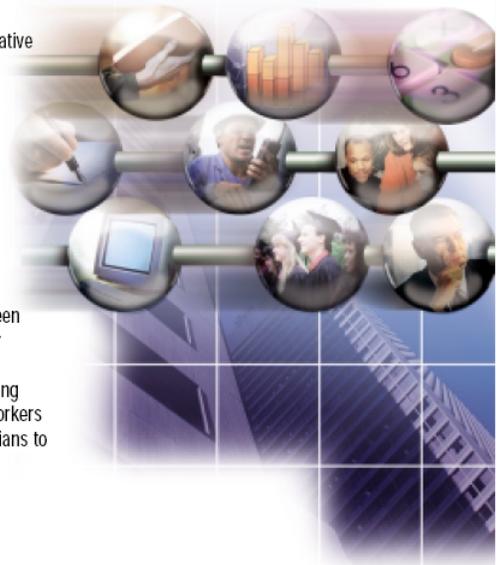
- Reading Text
- Document Use
- Numeracy
- Writing
- Oral Communication
- Working with Others
- Thinking Skills
- Computer Use
- Continuous Learning

Essential Skills and Workplace Literacy Initiative

Launched on April 1, 2003, the Essential Skills and Workplace Literacy Initiative helps to ensure Canadians have the right skills for changing work and life demands. Its goal is to enhance the skill levels of Canadians who are entering -or are already in - the workforce. The Initiative does this by increasing awareness and understanding of Essential Skills, supporting the development of tools and applications, building on existing research, and working with other Government of Canada programs.

Essential Skills Tools

An increasing number of Canadians are recognizing the importance of lifelong learning and workplace skills training as they are closely linked to productivity, adaptability and innovation. The Government of Canada has been working with businesses, labour groups, governments, educators and other stakeholders from across the country to develop a wide range of tools and applications that promote innovative approaches to assessing and developing skills. The ongoing development of these tools is helping employers and workers understand training requirements as well as improving the ability of Canadians to acquire and upgrade the skills they need to succeed in the workplace.



Visit www.hrsdc-rhdcc.gc.ca/essentialskills to learn more about Essential Skills.

What Are Essential Skills Profiles?



What are Essential Skills profiles?

Essential Skills profiles describe how each of the nine Essential Skills are used by workers in a particular occupation. Over the past several years, the Government of Canada has conducted extensive research examining the skills people use in the workplace. From this research and through interviews with workers, managers, practitioners and leading researchers, close to 200 Essential Skills profiles for various occupations of the National Occupational Classification have been developed. To date, profiles have been completed for all occupations requiring a high school education or less. Research is ongoing to complete occupations requiring university or college education, or apprenticeship training.



What do profiles include?

- A brief description of the occupation.
- A list of the most important Essential Skills.
- Example tasks that illustrate how each Essential Skill is applied.
- Complexity ratings that indicate the level of difficulty, from level 1 (basic) to levels 4/5 (advanced), of the example tasks.
- The physical aspects of performing the job and the attitudes that workers feel are needed to do the job well.
- Future trends affecting Essential Skills.

How can profiles be used?

- Develop workplace training programs, learning plans, and job descriptions.
- Check the skills needed for occupations.
- Investigate career options.
- Create educational tools to enhance Essential Skills development.

Who uses these profiles?

- Curriculum Developers
- Trainers and Teachers
- Guidance/Career Counsellors
- Employers/Employees
- Parents/Mentors
- Learners (Adults, Youth)
- Workplace Researchers

Search for a profile by:

- Occupation
- Key Words
- Most Important Skills
- Skill Levels
- Advanced Searches

To view the Essential Skills profiles, visit www.hrsdc-rhdcc.gc.ca/essentialskills.



Human Resources and
Skills Development Canada

Ressources humaines et
Développement des compétences Canada

Canada

HIP-010-07-04

Essential Skill

Typical Applications

Workplace Example



Oral Communication
Using speech to give and exchange thoughts and information

- Greet people or take messages
- Reassure, comfort or persuade
- Seek or obtain information
- Resolve conflicts
- Facilitate or lead a group

General office clerks take messages and relay information, by phone or in person, to other workers.



Working with Others
Employees working with others to carry out their tasks

- Work independently
- Work jointly with a partner or helper
- Work as a member of a team
- Participate in supervisory or leadership activities

A municipal engineer works collaboratively with other departments, as well as with technicians, inspectors, suppliers and others to complete construction projects.



Thinking Skills
The process of evaluating ideas or information to reach a rational decision

- Problem solving
- Decision making
- Critical thinking
- Job task planning and organizing
- Significant use of memory
- Finding information

Paramedics make a working diagnosis of a patient's condition based on notes, patient charts and their own observations. If information on the charts is inconsistent with their observations, they use their judgement to initiate an appropriate treatment plan.



Computer Use
Using different kinds of computer applications and other related technical tools

- Operate a computerized cash register
- Use word processing software to produce letters or memos
- Send e-mails with attachments to multiple users
- Create and modify spreadsheets for data entry

Telephone information operators use customized software to scan several databases for telephone numbers and long distance rates.



Continuous Learning
Workers participating in an ongoing process of acquiring skills and knowledge

- As part of regular work activity
- From co-workers
- Through training offered in the workplace
- Through off-site training

Retail sales associates upgrade their product knowledge by communicating with suppliers and manufacturers as well as by viewing videos on product lines.

Visit www.hrsdc-rhdcc.gc.ca/essentialskills to learn more about Essential Skills.

Brochure and Business Card Samples

Literacy Council York-Simcoe

Improving lives through literacy

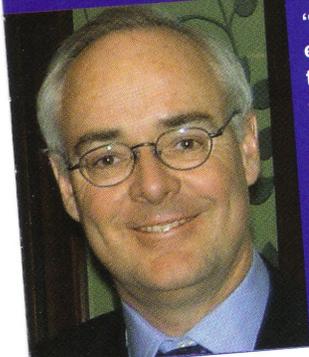




"Upgrading my skills has really helped me in my job and in my life"
Mike C., student

"I continue to improve my reading, writing and math to get my high school diploma"
Ellen A., student





"Upgrading employee skills is the most important strategy that companies intend to employ to meet the future labour need"
Perrin Beatty, President CEO, Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters



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How to Format a Public Service Announcement (PSA)

Basic guidelines for PSA format:

- Most stations prefer 30-second spots. If you're writing a television PSA, you'll want to keep the announcer's copy 2 or 3 seconds shorter than the entire length of the PSA. Television stations run on a much tighter, more rigid schedule than radio stations, and you may find that if your PSA runs exactly 30 seconds, for example, the station may sometimes cut off the end.

Length of PSA	10 seconds	15 seconds	20 seconds	30 seconds
Number of Words	20-25 words	30-35 words	40-50 words	60-75 words

Your copy should be typed, double or triple-spaced.

You can put more than one spot per page for the shorter ones, but with 30 and 60 second spots, put them on separate pages.

The top of the sheet should list:

- how long the PSA should run (i.e. "FOR USE: November 18 - December 20" or "IMMEDIATE : TFN" [til further notice])
- length of the PSA
- what agency or group the PSA is for, and
- title of the PSA.

The script itself should be split into two columns; the left column will list all directions, camera angles, sound effects, etc. and the right column lists all dialogue.

Don't use hyphenations or abbreviations.

The bottom of the sheet should be marked with "###"? the standard ending used in releases to the media to let the media outlet know there are no further pages to the script or story.

Your script can be sent as "live copy"— a simple script that's ready to be read by a live on-air announcer — or as a pre-recorded tape. While live copy is inexpensive and is used extensively in radio, television stations rarely use live copy scripts.

Here's a great website for more information:

http://ctb.ku.edu/tools/en/sub_section_main_1065.htm



Laubach Literacy Ontario
Since 1981

Making Essential Skills WORK for You

A Guide to Marketing and Promotions for Literacy and Upgrading Education Programs

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