

Making the Business Case for Integration among Employment Ontario Program and Services

Academic Upgrading,
Job Connect, Apprenticeship, and
Employment Assistance Services



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Executive Summary

Introduction

The College Sector Committee (CSC) worked with seven colleges across Ontario to document the business case for and effective practices in partnership work among Academic Upgrading, Apprenticeship, Job Connect, and Employment Assistance Services. The CSC used a case study approach for the research. The CSC developed (a) seven detailed case studies, (b) an overall report which includes an analysis of the findings across the cases, and (c) two-page summaries of the findings for each college.

Participating colleges were Conestoga College, George Brown College, Georgian College, Midland Campus, Lambton College, Niagara College, Northern College, and St. Lawrence College. Altogether 129 college managers, faculty, staff, students, and community partners participated in the research.

Findings and Analysis

The findings show that there is a strong business case for partnership work. Results show increased student success and retention, and an increase in non-traditional students. As a result, colleges have an enhanced reputation in the community, raised profile within the college, and increased revenues for the skills training side of the college business. However, the collection of such results needs to be strengthened with more emphasis on quantitative data.

Generally, success factors and effective practices are consistent across the seven colleges. Management support, effective communication, clear roles in the partnership, and a team-based attitude are key. Other success factors include a common goal of student success, good relationships and knowledge of each other's areas. Effective practices include partnership and accountability protocols, regular meetings at all levels, ongoing effective communication, and integration of trades-related math and essential skills into pre-apprenticeship programs and apprenticeship training. Sharing of resources for cost savings is another effective practice. Key areas for strengthening include partnership and accountability protocols, more opportunities for faculty and staff from different areas to meet, and partnership development among Apprenticeship and Academic Upgrading faculty.

Future Directions

The CSC will examine the areas that need strengthening from the case study research findings. It will plan ways to address these areas through future projects.

I. Introduction

A. Background information

The need to document both the business case and effective practices for joint work among Academic Upgrading, Apprenticeship, Job Connect, and Employment Assistance Services came about as the result of previous College Sector Committee (CSC) work on integration. Through previous CSC projects, Ontario college personnel identified the need for provincial best practices on what works and protocols for working together, along with tools and templates based on what others have done successfully. These areas were identified as ones that would help colleges further their integration work.

To meet this need in the college sector, the CSC proposed to conduct case study research in 4–6 colleges in order to document the business case along with best practices and excellence in integration work. This applies to clients served by Academic Upgrading, Apprenticeship, Job Connect, and Employment Assistance Services in the college sector across Ontario. Effective practices would be geared to improving student success and opportunities.

In September 2008, the CSC sent a letter to all Ontario colleges inviting them to apply to be part of the case study research. In response to the letter, seven colleges applied and were accepted to be part of the project. These colleges represented a wide geographical distribution, a range of sizes, and a variety of different partnership examples among the areas being studied.

The participating colleges were:

- Conestoga College
- George Brown College
- Georgian College, Midland Campus
- Lambton College
- Niagara College
- Northern College
- St. Lawrence College

The CSC Executive Committee served as a working group for the project. As such, they provided feedback on the case study research at key junctures of the project.

B. Case study research objectives

The objectives of the case study research on integration were to:

- make the business case for integration
- document the results of integration work
- detail a variety of successful approaches and activities representing excellence in integration that lead to successful client outcomes
- identify best practice principles
- identify tools for successful integration

II. Research Methodology

A. Introduction

The researcher worked closely with contacts at each participating college to develop a research plan specific to that college, while using similar questions across each college for comparison purposes. College contacts were managers responsible for Academic Upgrading, or a combination of Academic Upgrading, Job Connect, and Employment Assistance Services. In one instance, the college contact was also responsible for Apprenticeship.

Working with each college, the researcher identified key documents to review, research participants, and appropriate data collection methods. A summary of the project was developed for each college which included:

- the purpose of the project
- how the research would take place
- consent practices (confidentiality and voluntary participation)
- honouraria amount for students
- when it would take place
- how it would be used

College contacts used this summary to provide information to stakeholders within and outside their college as appropriate. The research gave the summary to each participant at the beginning of an interview or focus group.

B. Research questions

The researcher developed questions according to the goals of the case study research project. She asked managers, staff, faculty, and students similar questions where appropriate.

The questions focused on the following areas:

Management

- how managers work collaboratively at the college
- what the role of each partner is
- what elements make the partnership work
- what the challenges are in doing joint work
- what partnership protocols are in place
- descriptions of partnership activities
- results of partnering
- the business case for partnering
- tools and resources developed
- lessons learned
- advice for other colleges

Staff and Faculty

- how staff and faculty work collaboratively to achieve a common goal
- what the role of each partner is
- what elements make the partnership work
- what the challenges are in doing joint work
- descriptions of partnership activities
- results of partnering
- tools and resources developed
- lessons learned
- advice for other colleges

Students (Pre-Apprentices and Apprentices)

- what program they are attending
- goals for themselves
- what is working well in the program
- challenges

- achievements
- future plans¹

External Partners

- involvement with the college
- role in the partnership
- what elements make the partnership work
- what the challenges are in doing joint work
- descriptions of partnership activities
- results of partnering

C. Data Collection process

The researcher used interviews and focus groups to collect most of the information for each case. The choice of interview or focus group was worked out with each college contact. She also reviewed and collected relevant documents including:

- pre-apprenticeship proposals
- pathways charts and descriptions
- referral processes
- partnership protocols
- pre-apprentice course schedules and outlines
- organizational charts

In addition, she reviewed college websites for overall information about colleges and the specific departments that were a focus for joint work.

The researcher spent one to three days at each college site to conduct interviews and focus groups from January to June 2009. Interviews were generally an hour in length with focus groups being an hour to two hours depending on the participants and the size of the group. Each college provided a note taker for the interviews and focus groups. Notes were given to the researcher on a memory stick at the end of the site visit.

At the beginning of each interview and focus group, the researcher provided an overview of the research case study project and issues of confidentiality. All information provided by research

¹ See Appendix A for questions.

participants was confidential unless participants agreed otherwise. In these cases, the researcher emailed the quotations in question to participants to get their written permission to use them.

Students participating in interviews and focus groups received a \$35 honourarium at the end of the session.

D. Research participants

The chart that follows articulates the research participants from each of the participating colleges. In total, 129 people participated in the research across the seven participating colleges.

Research Participants	Management	Faculty	Staff	Students	External Partners
Conestoga	7	6		14	
George Brown	4	2		13	2
Georgian, Midland Campus	6	2	2	8	3
Lambton	4	4	4	4	2
Niagara	11	3	5		
Northern	3	2	2	6	
St. Lawrence	3	1	1	3	2
Total	38	20	14	48	9

Table 1: Research participants, categorized based on college and role within the college.

F. Data analysis

The data for each case were analyzed for key themes relating to the objectives of the research. A summary of these themes, along with quotations from the participants, were included in each case. These same themes were then summarized and analyzed across the cases.

The researcher sent a draft of each case to her college contacts for feedback. The feedback was incorporated into each case. The case was then declared final in terms of content once the college signed off on the case.

The researcher had the opportunity to present preliminary research findings from across the cases at four CSC regional workshops in November 2009. These workshops were part of another CSC project: *Taking Action*. The goal of the workshops was to focus on strategies that work, as well as new tools to promote collaboration and better client/student outcomes.

This opportunity provided a chance to test out the findings with management and front line staff from Academic Upgrading, Job Connect, Apprenticeship, and EAS.

III. Findings across the Seven Participating Colleges

The findings present a summary of the common themes across the seven cases according to:

- the business case for joint work
- effective practices
- nature of and rationale for the joint work
- specific kinds of joint projects
- protocols and tools
- elements that make the partnership work
- challenges in the partnership
- results of joint work

A. The business case for joint work

The main objective of the case study research was to make the business case for partnership work among Academic Upgrading, Apprenticeship, Job Connect and Employment Assistance Services. The findings from across the seven colleges show that there is a strong and consistent business case to be made for internal partnership work and external partners.

Increased student retention and success

A key outcome of the partnership work was better student success and program completion. This was evident in pre-apprenticeship programs where Apprenticeship, Academic Upgrading, and Job Connect partnered on proposal development and subsequent programs. Having the Academic Upgrading as an integral component of pre-apprenticeship programming was essential to increased student retention and completion success along with the support of employment services through Job Connect.

In addition, increased student success was also evident in cases where colleges offer extra math and essential skills support to apprentices. This support is offered through a partnership between Academic Upgrading and Apprenticeship at no or minimal extra cost. A case in point is the St. Lawrence case study where 100% of apprentices who took extra math class were successful in passing their in-school math exam. This support was provided through Literacy and Basic Skills at no extra cost with no money exchanging hands between the partners.

Increased revenues

One of the main business cases for partnership work across the seven colleges is that it contributes to the growth of the college. More non-traditional students are attending college as a result of partnership work. This growth is creating increased revenues for colleges.

Community colleges seen as college of choice

As a result of internal partnership work, students are receiving enhanced customer service. This service includes prompt and correct information, clear pathways to determine or meet their goals, and ongoing support when they attend programs. They are more apt to come to the community college rather than going to a private college.

New programs and expansion of existing programs

New skills training programs were also identified as an important result of the partnership work. Some college proposals were successful because partners together could offer all the components and requirements of RFPs. In addition, college departments were able to expand existing programs because of the support of other college departments.

Increased efficiency

The partnership model creates efficiency while allowing each partner to concentrate on its core business. The results for the students are that they get the best of each partner. Everyone is working together to give the students the right tools for success. Working collaboratively with external partners also strengthens the overall work of meeting clients' needs. Partners are also able to respond quickly to new opportunities and new needs.

In addition, partners are able to save money or enhance their services by pooling resources in areas such as marketing and student retention.

Increased profile of skills training

Participating colleges indicate that because of greater student success and retention and the increase in numbers of non-traditional students coming to the college, the skills training side of the business is getting more profile and respect from within colleges and from the academic postsecondary side of the business.

Enhanced reputation and respect for colleges

From a business case perspective, enhanced college reputation and respect in the community are all important. Reputation and respect increases when multiple college stakeholders share work collectively to ensure student success.

Increased job satisfaction, productivity, and retention of front line staff

Some faculty and staff indicate they have greater job satisfaction and productivity now that they are working a team as opposed to working in isolation. They indicate there is great satisfaction from working with their peers to bring success for the student. Increased job satisfaction leads to better staff retention.

Increased economic benefit to communities

As a result of increased student success in programs, more people are getting employment. In the end, the whole community benefits when more people are employed.

B. Effective practices

This section outlines the effective practices used by participating colleges for partnership work.

1. One college has the partnership mandated with clear terms of reference through a college Standing Committee. This ensures that the partnership work continues when senior management personnel changes.
2. Integration work among Academic Upgrading, Job Connect, Apprenticeship, and other areas is supported through the College's strategic plan in two colleges. Each department has an operational plan and performance objectives related to this focus.
3. Management from the areas involved meet regularly to share information, share resources, solve problems, plan professional development for staff and faculty, and plan new initiatives.
4. In some colleges, the partnership includes external partners. They see that their own departments, the College as a whole, the students, and the community benefit from this partnership work.
5. Partnership work is task-oriented and action-oriented. There is always a rationale for working together. They work together in a spirit of creativity, problem solving, and continuous improvement.
6. In some colleges, the partnership has had, from the beginning, an identified champion who initiated and is the lead on the partnership work.
7. Faculty and staff communicate regularly and attend meetings and professional development sessions which assist them in building relationships with faculty and staff from other areas. Informal problem-solving to serve student needs results from the development of these relationships.

8. There is a formal description of roles and responsibility for Academic Upgrading, Job Connect, and Apprenticeship for the planning and implementation of pre-apprenticeship programs.
9. Flexible upgrading support in math and other subjects is provided to accommodate the needs of apprentices and pre-apprentices and to meet their timetables. This support is applied, practical, and trades-related.
10. Academic Upgrading is an integral component of pre-apprenticeship programs. The trades and upgrading faculty work together closely to make sure that academic upgrading and trades content are fully integrated in the curriculum. Academic Upgrading faculty test out many ideas to make sure that students understand math and English.
11. There is a Pre-Apprenticeship coordinator who works with all three areas to ensure effective communication, scheduling, troubleshooting, and coordination.

C. Nature of and rationale for the joint work

Collaboration among Academic Upgrading, Apprenticeship, Job Connect, and other areas in the college that focus on skills training came about over the last five or six years to deal with the increase in non-traditional learners coming into colleges. There was a great opportunity to improve student retention and success for these non-traditional learners. Non-traditional learners include youth and adults who do not come to college directly from high school, as well as under-represented groups. Under-represented groups include Aboriginal people, women and youth at risk, and adults on social assistance. The Ontario government launch of Employment Ontario in 2007 also facilitated the need for internal college departments focusing on skills training to work together.

Collaboration often began with different departments meeting to share information and find out what they did and how they could work together. In some cases, collaboration came about naturally because all the areas worked together at the same location or in the same building. In two cases, collaboration began as a more formal process with a directive from senior management. Frequently, the development of joint work began informally and developed organically as opportunities or specific challenges presented themselves. Frequently, collaboration began in earnest as a result of opportunities to apply for funding especially around pre-apprenticeship training programs. In other cases, specific needs or issues drove the partnership work. For example, one identified need in several colleges was to provide extra help

in math for apprentices during their in-school training. Another specific need was to offer ACE (Grade 12 equivalency) courses at night to serve the needs of community members and, at the same time, to keep them informed of apprenticeship opportunities through Job Connect.

In all cases, student success and retention through seamless, quality programming and services were the common goals of the partnership work. Colleges were continually looking for ways to support and assist students as a team in all the case studies. They learned and built on their previous experiences in an environment of continuous improvement. Their collaborative work benefitted students, the college, and the community as a whole.

In the seven featured colleges, the management team met regularly to share information and to solve problems, as well as to plan and monitor specific activities and projects. In some colleges, there was an identified champion for the joint work from the ranks of senior management. In two colleges, partnership goals were built into the college's strategic plans and the performance plans of the departments involved.

In the seven colleges, internal partners provided each other with information about others' work, referred from among their areas, shared resources and management joint initiatives. Two colleges had a formal referral protocol and tool. Faculty and staff worked together to make referrals and work together jointly on the ground. However, it was evident that on the front line, the joint work was more challenging.

In two cases, the partnership extended to other internal college partners such as EAS, corporate training, continuing education, community partnerships, the Registrar's office and finance. In four cases, external partners were identified as integral to the internal partnership. In one instance, the internal team included partners such as social services and other training and employment organizations to help them do their work. In another instance, the local The Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities (MTCU) employment and training consultant was an integral partner. All seven colleges worked closely with community organizations, employers, and others to successfully accomplish their work.

D. Specific kinds of joint projects

The majority of collaboration on specific projects across cases was related to pre-apprenticeship training. Across the board, pre-apprenticeship training included an Academic Upgrading component focusing on subjects like Math and Communications even though participants might already have their Grade 12. In other cases, participants had the opportunity to work towards

getting ACE credentials or the GED. One college offered a pre-pre-apprenticeship program that provided trades-related Academic Upgrading, trades exploration and some work experience. This combination allowed participants to make more informed career choices around pre-apprenticeship programs and the skilled trades. Job Connect also played an important role in the partnership in terms of program intake, testing, referrals, resume writing, interview, job search and work skills, and supporting students in securing work placements as part of their program.

The second type of joint project was between Academic Upgrading and Apprenticeship to offer extra math support to apprentices during their in-school training. There were a variety of ways that apprentices could get support including 1) one to three hour classes offered once a week through Academic Upgrading geared to the trades, 2) individual tutoring through college tutoring services or 3) entry into a regular Academic Upgrading program. The extent to which the math was geared to the trades depended on the background of the professor. For example, in some cases the math professor had a trades-related background. Ensuring that the extra math is practical and applied was an ongoing challenge.

Two colleges also offered apprentices workshops and support in getting ready to take their Certificate of Qualification exam.

E. Protocols and tools

Protocols and tools for joint work were at a minimum throughout the seven colleges. One college had terms of reference for its management committee which was a standing committee of the college. Two colleges had formal referral protocols. Other support materials developed for joint work included a binder with information on different EO programs and services, a pathways chart showing different routes to apprenticeship, and a roles and responsibilities chart.

Most colleges were collaborating informally to accomplish specific tasks, activities, and projects.

F. Elements that make the partnership work

The success factors in the partnership were generally consistent across the seven colleges. The main elements are described in the following pages.

Commitment to a common goal of student/client success

In all colleges there was a commitment on the part of the partners at all levels to the common goal of student success. This common goal was envisioned through a seamless system where students/clients would receive assistance quickly and would get support in identifying and finding the right pathway to meet their goals. Just as importantly, the internal team was committed to student success once they were in a program. Partners would work together to provide this support through Academic Upgrading, Job Connect, and Apprenticeship. Support such as counselling and tutoring was also provided through other college services. External community groups representing program participants, for example, native and immigrant community organizations, also provided support in some cases.

Vision and support from management

Vision and support from senior management for the management team was a key success factor. In two cases this support was formalized into the colleges' strategic plans and department plans. However, this support was mostly manifested informally rather than through formal processes. By the same token, management support for joint work was important to the work of faculty and staff. Part of the support for joint work from management was the freedom to work creatively to allow people to try new things and learn from their experiences.

Ability to share resources

Partners cite the ability to share resources as a success factor in their partnership. Ability to share resources includes Academic Upgrading support for apprentices, joint marketing, and space without money having to change hands. In addition, faculty may share curriculum, books, and materials. Similarly, Job Connect and Apprenticeship may share contact lists. External partners may provide staff resources that are integral to the support students receive while at college and their success in pre-apprenticeship programming.

Good relationships and common values among partners

Good relationships among partners were key. Management, faculty and staff share a common goal around student success, a similar passion, and common values. Values include honesty, trust, open communication, and a spirit of creativity and flexibility.

Generally, people like each other and enjoy working together. They are able to see the common good of working together over what they can get for their individual areas. They understand that partners bring a specialized component to the partnership that individuals working alone would

not be able to bring. They work in a spirit of cooperation rather than one of competition. They also have a good understanding of and a respect for each other's areas. They view themselves as a team, while at the same time understanding the role that each partner plays.

The relationship among partners tends not to be as well-developed at the level of Academic Upgrading and Apprenticeship faculty. Silos may still exist between these two areas where Apprenticeship faculty may not be aware of the benefits of Academic Upgrading. In colleges where Apprenticeship and Academic Upgrading faculty are working together, this relationship was one that was seen as "in development."

Opportunities for regular communication and formal networking

Ongoing communication and regular opportunities—both formal and informal—to meet colleagues were identified as key to joint work. Although the management team had opportunities to meet regularly, this happened less often for faculty and staff. Faculty and staff would appreciate more opportunities to network with their colleagues. They described the networking benefits of conferences and the session offered as part of the previous CSC project, *Engaging the Front Line*. Management also identified the need for more networking at this level.

Partnership extends to other departments and externally within the community

A key success factor was the external partnerships that connected with the internal joint work. The degree of the partnership work with external partners varied in the case studies. In some cases, government and community partners were seen as integral to the work of the internal team. In other cases, the internal partnership used external partners to leverage its work. The partner paid attention to community needs.

Partnership work seen as a process

There was an understanding among partners that partnership is a process that develops and evolves over time. The work of the partnership was constantly growing and evolving to address new needs that arose.

G. Challenges in the partnership

Common challenges identified by colleges are outlined below. Some challenges reside inside the partnership work, and others are more related to working in the college system.

Clear expectations around roles and timelines

One challenge was ensuring there was a common understanding of expectations among the partners. This challenge was related to workload and demands on people's time. In joint ventures, the work load needed to be shared and results delivered in a timely fashion.

Value of Academic Upgrading

Apprenticeship faculty and staff may not always see the value of Academic Upgrading because of traditional silos that existed between the two areas in the past. Apprentices and pre-apprentices may not see the value either in relation to the shop component of their trades training. In both cases, it was important to show the positive results of the Academic Upgrading to student success. It was also critical to make sure that the Academic Upgrading was practical and applied and was trades-related. Another challenge was finding a professor who was able to deliver upgrading in this fashion.

Student barriers

Financial, emotional, and academic barriers were identified as key challenges for students. It could be difficult to find the right support and solutions that will address these barriers.

Length of Pre-Apprenticeship programs

Faculty also indicated that it is becoming increasingly difficult to accomplish everything needed in Pre-Apprenticeship programs because there is so much to do in a short period of time. In addition, the number of students needing to get their GED has increased. Faculty indicated that if students started working on their GED earlier—even before they enter the program—this head start would increase the student success rate.

Academic Postsecondary

One major challenge was not in the partnership itself but more around how skills training fits with the academic postsecondary side of the college. Academic postsecondary can be viewed as the main business of colleges with skills training having a lesser profile. Within these issues are related challenges such as the scheduling and the fact that program cycle does not fit with the academic postsecondary side of the business.

These challenges are being overcome with the increase of non-traditional learners and the revenue they bring into the college system. More and more, addressing the needs of non-traditional students is being seen as an important role for the colleges.

H. Results of joint work

The results of the partnership work are consistent across the seven colleges. Results have been outlined below according to student, management, faculty and staff, and external partner perspectives

Students (pre-apprentices and apprentices)

Pre-apprentices find that they get a great deal of support from faculty and staff from the different areas of the partnership. They often remark that staff go the extra mile to help them. The most common result for pre-apprentices is that they are gaining confidence and a sense of pride about what they are accomplishing. They are working to meet their goals of employment, signing on as an apprentice, and getting credentials. The skills they are learning are helping at home as well as with their employment goals. They acknowledge the value of Academic Upgrading in helping them attain their goals, but they may not see this value until they are out on their work placement. They comment on the value of employment services such as resume help, interview skills, securing an employer for a work placement, and signing on as an apprentice.

Consistently, participants indicated that the fact the program is free, along with all the supports they get in the program, allows them to attend college and be successful. They viewed the opportunity to participate in Pre-Apprenticeship programs as challenging but positive in providing them with a successful career or trade with a good wage.

Apprentices benefitted from extra math help by being successful in the in-school component of their trade and on their trades math exam. This, in turn, contributed to their opportunity to become licensed journeypersons with increased opportunities for work and better paying jobs.

Management

From a management point of view, there were many results. Increased student success and retention were key outcomes across the board in Pre-Apprenticeship programs and apprenticeship training. More students were going on to employment, signing on for more training, or going on to an apprenticeship. The Academic Upgrading component is contributing

to student success in these programs. In part due to these successes, the population of non-traditional students is growing at colleges.

Working together also created more informed partners and more successful solutions to address common challenges. Better referrals and pathways for students were other outcomes. There was an understanding of each other's areas and where to refer students. In fact, there were many pathways.

Because partners were able to share resources and work jointly they got more "bang for the buck" and avoided duplication. They were also able to take on opportunities and apply for new programs that they could not have done were they not in a partnership.

Faculty and staff

From a faculty and staff perspective, one of the most important results of their partnership work was that students were successful and meeting their goals. As well, retention rates have increased. This increase is due to effective assessment and the selection of the appropriate option for the client. By working in a unified way, clients were provided with information about multiple options. These results occurred because there were more referrals among the group, and more knowledge about other areas which could be used to help the students.

Faculty and staff also noted that their own work was more satisfying by working as a team both in the process of working with a team and the kinds of result they were getting with students.

External partners

Through the success of Pre-Apprenticeship programs and Apprenticeship training, other external relationships were strengthened as well. For example, partnerships with Ontario Works and the Apprenticeship office were strengthened as these areas met their own outcomes through the success of the programs.

Employers also saw the results from the programs. Partnerships with employers were strengthened within college programs.

IV. Summary and Recommendations

A. Summary

The common findings across the seven colleges represented in this report show that there is a clear business case to be made for a team or partnership approach among Academic Upgrading, Apprenticeship, Job Connect and, in two colleges, Employment Assistance programs. In most cases, the core partnership extends to other internal college partners and external partners.

In terms of making a business case for integration work, all colleges report an increase in non-traditional student success and retention in skills training programs as a result of their partnership work. There is a growing number of non-traditional students coming to colleges who are staying in their programs and meeting their educational and employments goals, thus increasing colleges revenues. There are cost savings for these colleges due to being able to share resources and materials jointly. In terms of community impact, these colleges are enhancing their reputation in the community as well as contributing to the economic development of the communities they serve.

At the same time, the findings show that collection of data to show results and analysis of the value of those results from working in partnership needs to be strengthened. Colleges were able to provide a great deal of qualitative information on results but less on the quantitative side. Enhancing proof of results is essential to continuing to raise the profile of skills training and integration work in the college system. Better proof of results could also contribute to designing more flexibility in offering skills training. Easy-to-use templates for more effective ways to collect results of partnership work consistently across colleges would help.

It would be useful to have more detail on the cost savings of joint work through shared funding and joint efforts in marketing, planning, and implementing programs. This detailed analysis was beyond the scope of this project. Similarly, it would be helpful to make more explicit the different ways that colleges fund extra math and essential skills upgrading for both apprentices and pre-apprentices.

Generally, the findings across the college cases show similar and consistent effective practices. These effective practices focus on the importance of management support and direction, good relationships, regular opportunities to meet, and clear understandings of roles and responsibilities in the partnership. The importance of the partnership being task- and action-oriented was

underlined, as was the need to think beyond the results of one's own area in the partnership for the good of the whole team. The role of trades-related Academic Upgrading as an integral component of Pre-Apprenticeship programs and Apprenticeship training was emphasized across the partnerships

The need for senior management support first and that of department managers was clear. This support appeared to be strong throughout the cases and sets the stage for partnership work among faculty and staff on the ground. Although the partnership work is developing at the level of staff and faculty, this is an area that requires more strengthening. Faculty and staff overall want more opportunities to meet with their colleagues in other areas and locations. They applaud the work that has been done through the CSC project *Engaging the Front Line* and would like to have more opportunities like this to meet. In addition, more work to enhance the partnership between Apprenticeship and Academic Upgrading faculty is an ongoing need in order to break down silos that have traditionally existed in those areas. More documentation of effective practices and partnerships between Academic Upgrading and Apprenticeship faculty is necessary.

The majority of the partnership work, including the ways that referrals among the team were made, was ad hoc. Lack of formal protocols and accountability for joint work leaves colleges open and vulnerable should key leaders and champions leave. More formal committee and referral protocols, along with accountability for these protocols, will create a stronger partnership framework. Protocols will promote the continuance of the partnership work.

B. Recommendations

The following recommendations for future CSC work arise from an analysis of the research findings.

These recommendations are that the CSC work with the colleges to:

- design an easy-to-use tool for collecting and analysing quantitatively the results of their partnership work
- support those colleges that wish to strengthen protocols and accountability for their partnership work

- document the various ways that colleges fund extra math and essential skills classes for apprentices and pre-apprentices along with the advantages and disadvantages of different ways
- develop pilot projects and support resources that illustrate and promote ways that Apprenticeship and Academic Upgrading faculty can collaborate as a team; document results in terms of benefits for Apprenticeship

Making the Business Case for Integration among Employment Ontario Programs and Services

Case Study: Comprehensive Approach to Collaboration among EO Group Members at Conestoga Pays Off



This [integration work] is not done overnight. It is a process that takes a long time.

Andrea Leis

Dean, School of Career and Academic Access

I. About Conestoga College

Conestoga College began in 1967 and has five campuses: Doon (Kitchener), Waterloo, Guelph, Stratford and Cambridge. Conestoga's largest campus, Doon, is located in Kitchener and offers a full range of programming. Its Waterloo campus is a centre of excellence for skilled trades and culinary. The Guelph campus offers motive power trades. Conestoga also has smaller campuses in Stratford and Cambridge that offer academic upgrading and career-focused programs. Conestoga is also adding a brand new campus just south of the 401 across from the Doon campus.

Conestoga College has 7500 full-time students and 3800 part-time students. Forty percent of all adults in the Waterloo Region have taken at least one course at Conestoga. The College offers 102 full-time programs, 27 apprenticeship related programs, 5 applied degrees, 4 collaborative degrees, 29 post-graduate certificates, and 96 part-time programs.

II. Employment Ontario Programs and Services

Academic Upgrading, Employment Assistance Services and Job Connect are the three main programs and services forming the School of Career and Academic Access (CAA), lead by the Dean of the School. All managers meet regularly to plan and set the School's direction and work closely with each other in the day-to-day operations, including the college's Career Centres, and collaborate on various projects. All CAA staff meet regularly at the various campuses and collaborate to serve students/clients, attend CAA and cross-campus PD events together, and form a cohesive service unit.

The School of Career and Academic Access (Academic Upgrading, Job Connect, EAS) and the Apprenticeship Training area work very closely with each other across all campuses. At many campuses they are co-located and co-operate on a daily basis.

Doon: Academic Upgrading, Apprenticeship Training

Waterloo: Academic Upgrading, Apprenticeship Training, Job Connect

Guelph: Academic Upgrading, Apprenticeship Training, Job Connect

Stratford: Academic Upgrading, Apprenticeship Training, Job Connect
Employment Assistance Services

Employment Ontario programs and services are also located at the following sites:

Academic Upgrading: Cambridge, Listowel, Arthur

Job Connect: Fergus, Perth County (itinerant)

Employment Assistance Services: Kitchener (off campus)
Waterloo (off campus)

III. Background to the Case Study

Before Employment Ontario (EO) came into existence, Conestoga's EO programs worked closely together. With the establishment of EO, Conestoga made EO college program integration a major focus of its activities.

Academic Upgrading, Job Connect, and Employment Assistance Services (EAS) together form the School of Career and Academic Access (CAA). The Dean of the School, the Job Connect and EAS managers, and the Academic Upgrading chair meet at least monthly to co-ordinate activities and various projects.

The CAA management group has met at least monthly with the three apprenticeship chairs for almost three years to co-ordinate programs and activities. This group has now been expanded to include the Chair of Corporate Training with a view to co-ordinating those training activities as well as Second Career Strategy efforts.

Each year the EO programs hold a common PD day for staff and faculty to learn and work together. EO faculty and staff often meet in various groups and configurations to work on common projects or activities. One example of a project was reviewing the Academic Upgrading learning content to ensure it met the specific requirements of the various trades.

Job Connect, EAS, and Academic Upgrading have been collaborating on Essential Skills delivery in the workplace. Job Connect and Academic Upgrading often cross-refer and support common clients, including potential apprentices for the Scholarship/Signing Bonus program.

Job Connect works regularly with Apprenticeship with respect to “Trade Talks” and employer connections. Academic Upgrading is fully integrated in Pre-Apprenticeship and Apprenticeship programs, delivering math and communications support.

IV. Purpose of the Case Study

This case study describes and reports on promising practices in terms of:

- how the partnership worked and roles within the partnership
- elements contributing to the success of the partnership along with challenges
- needs the partnership served
- results of the partnership
- the business case for partnering
- advice to other colleges

V. Research Participants for the Case

- 7 managers: School of Career and Academic Access (2), Apprenticeship (3), Job Connect (1), EAS (1)
- 4 professors: Academic Upgrading
- 2 professors: Apprenticeship
- 7 students: Automotive (pre-apprentices and apprentices)
- 7 students: Construction (pre-apprentices and apprentices)

VI. How the Partnership Works

Overall partnership

How it started

Andrea Leis, Dean of the School of Career and Academic Access (CAA), explains that integration work between Academic Upgrading and Apprenticeship started in the summer of 2005. At that time, Andrea initiated a meeting with Greg White, one of the two Apprenticeship Chairs, over coffee to see how they could work together. As a result of this initial meeting, they kept talking. A few months later, Andrea and the Job Connect manager, Sherri Tryon, met with the other Apprenticeship Chair, Stephen Speers, to discuss a proposal for a Skills Trades Centre. During the meeting, it became clear that Apprenticeship was not aware of the services that Job Connect and Academic Upgrading could offer. Management from the School of CAA and Apprenticeship started out by getting to know each other and each other's programs. At that time, CAA had been just newly formed. The new school housed Employment Ontario (EO) programs of Academic Upgrading, Job Connect, and Employment Assistance Services (EAS).

Greg White, Chair of Apprenticeship and Trades, indicates that many apprentices needed to upgrade their math skills to be successful. He notes that originally, math upgrading was offered through the school board. He also acknowledges that Apprenticeship did not realize the extent to which Academic Upgrading could offer help. He says, "We were educated on what they can provide for us. Our faculty did not know all that Job Connect or Academic Upgrading could provide."

Employment Ontario Conestoga Group

By early 2006, all EO managers began to meet regularly with representation from Academic Upgrading, Job Connect, EAS, and Apprenticeship. Shortly after, the Chair of Corporate Training became a member of the group. There were also two new positions created within Skills Training (Chair, Hospitality Programs and Manager, Trades and Apprenticeship). The individuals in these two positions also joined the group. As of 2009, the group stood at nine members with others invited to meetings as was appropriate.

Management from the EO programs meet once a month. Andrea Leis, the Dean of CAA, chairs these meetings. The meetings include Chair updates, discussion about MTCU transformation, problem solving around common issues, and how the different areas will work together to share resources such as joint marketing to avoid duplication. PD sessions are also planned along with other meetings in the community. For example, the group hosted a Chamber of Commerce “After 5” meeting.

Brenda Gilmore, Manager of Trades and Apprenticeship, has led the EO Group in the development of a Pathways Chart that shows and explains all the routes to apprenticeship. This chart was launched on the College’s website in November 2009. The Pathways Chart serves as a roadmap for faculty and staff in EO services. This tool was something that faculty and staff had asked for to help them in their work.

The group has also developed a standardized referral form that is used by the EO partners. It is bright green so that no one will lose it and other partners know the client is coming from Conestoga College.

Initial Joint Work

In 2006, Academic Upgrading approached Apprenticeship to work together on a pre-apprenticeship proposal with Academic Upgrading taking the lead. Stephen Speers, Chair, Trades and Apprenticeship, indicated that Academic Upgrading was an important component of Pre-Apprenticeship programs. He noted that, by design, a percentage (about 20–25%) of students entering a Pre-Apprenticeship program would not have a Grade 12 diploma or equivalent. Partnering with Academic Upgrading was critical to the success of those students who required upgrading in order to move forward with their apprenticeship training goal. He acknowledged that Pre-Apprenticeship programs enhanced pathways for people to bridge into skilled trades.

Greg also acknowledged that even though students came into Pre-Apprenticeship programs with Grade 12, they may not have come in with math that is relevant. These students went into Academic Upgrading as part of the pre-apprenticeship program with the assumption that they were doing a trades math upgrade.

In early 2007, and then again in 2008 and 2009, PD days took place for faculty and staff from Academic Upgrading, Apprenticeship, Job Connect, and EAS. Front-line workers were able to meet each other and get to know each other and each other’s programs. One very important

result of the first PD session was that everyone left with a binder with essential information on each of the EO programs.

As a result of these early activities, people started working together. For example, Apprenticeship talked about Academic Upgrading in its newsletter. Apprenticeship faculty began to approach Academic Upgrading for assistance with students that needed extra help.

Approach to Integration Work

The CAA is the lead on the integration work with Andres Leis, Dean of CAA, as the champion.

The integration work at Conestoga is mostly *ad hoc* and informal, as the EO group has found that the best way to work together is when there is a task and a common interest. The student is the common interest. Dieter Klaus, Chair, Preparatory Programs notes, “It [our work] is organic and task oriented, following the modern theory of the corporation with work groups that change as the tasks change.”

Greg comments, “There is an agenda for our meeting but the work is more informal than formal. It is more ad hoc and driven by needs in one area or another with a rationale for working together.” Greg also notes the value of the varied background and perspectives of the group members. Sherri Tryon, Manager of Job Connect, adds that the most formal parts of the integration work are the referral process and the formal arrangements and staff supporting pre-apprenticeship programs. Brenda Gilmore emphasizes, “It is all about spreading the work out and who is the best person. We don’t all have to be everything all of the time. We save time through our joint efforts and through the partnership.”

Andrea reflects on the college’s integration work. “This is not done overnight. This is a process that takes a long time. Back then when we were talking to the trades, Job Connect was just getting off the ground. People didn’t know about each other. Apprenticeship knew they had a need but they didn’t know the solution was right on their door step!”

“Now,” says Andrea, “We have moved way beyond this.”

Partnership between Apprenticeship and Academic Upgrading

Academic Upgrading Component of Pre-Apprenticeship Programs

Students in Pre-Apprenticeship programs may need Academic Upgrading to be successful because they got through high school with very little math or they were pushed by their guidance counsellors to do a trade. As a result, they may need extra support with math skills like basic trigonometry, manipulating formulas, and fractions to keep up. Faculty from Academic Upgrading describe the profile of these students as mature, with a good number having left school early or taken courses that were not right for them, including easier courses. In addition, Academic Upgrading faculty indicate that there is a need for improved oral and written skills for these students because they may not have gotten the kind of communication skills needed even though they have Grade 12.

Since 2005, Conestoga has included an Academic Upgrading component in the following Pre-Apprenticeship programs:

- Welder
- Automotive Service Technician
- Truck and Coach Technician
- General Carpenter
- Brick and Stone Mason
- Truck Trailer Service Technician

In addition, all students are required to take the Test of Workplace Essential Skills (TOWES) which is administered through Job Connect. Over the years, the Academic Upgrading component has evolved and been refined in terms of both scheduling and how it is tailored to the trade.

Two new Pre-Apprenticeship programs began in February 2009: Brick and Stone Mason (Waterloo) and Truck Trailer Service Technician (Guelph). Each five-month program had an eight-week work placement component at the end of the school component. Each program had an Academic Upgrading component built into the students' weekly timetable. This independent study, individualized, one-on-one model is used for students working towards their GED or getting extra help with math, document use, or reading text.

For those coming into Academic Upgrading prior to starting their Pre-Apprenticeship program, Academic Upgrading uses a continuous intake, independent study model where students work at their own pace in the classroom with one-on-one assistance should they require it.

Academic Coordinators for Preparatory Programs, Jackie MacDonald and Frances Painter, describe how Academic Upgrading works with Pre-Apprenticeship programs. The coordinators indicate that in both Pre-Apprenticeship programs there are students who do not have their Grade 12. In both programs, students have the opportunity to work on their GED during their Pre-Apprenticeship program.

Frances talks about the Brick and Stone Mason program offered at the Waterloo campus. She notes that all students have to take the TOWES and all have to take upgrading. There is support for math, document use, and reading text within the program. Frances says, “We are assisting with the math component of the program. There is always something they need help with.”

The Truck Trailer Service Technician program was offered at the Guelph campus. The Academic Upgrading component started with 12 hours a week and then went to three. Brenda Gilmore, Program Manager for the School of Trades and Apprenticeship, adds that not everyone saw the value in participating in upgrading. She notes that in the future Academic Upgrading will be a mandatory component. She indicates that the upgrading is tailored to the trade by using real life materials and tools that faculty and staff have collected from employer partners.

In some cases, potential students for Pre-Apprenticeship are encouraged to come to Academic Upgrading before they take their test for the Pre-Apprenticeship program. The Academic Upgrading component included 9 hours of up-skilling a week. Jackie explains that for the Truck Trailer Technician Program, it was a trial year. She says that next time they hope to have the teaching capacity to offer upgrading for the entire Truck Trailer Pre-Apprenticeship class as the Waterloo campus did.

Academic Upgrading faculty indicate that they meet with program coordinators for the trades and other college programs to ensure that Academic Upgrading is tailored to the needs of the trade or program. These consultations have been very helpful. Brian Hofstetter, Academic Upgrading Math professor, provided support to the students in the Brick and Stone Mason Pre-Apprenticeship program. He notes that he used a relaxed approach and did not actually “teach” but tutored using the apprenticeship manual for the trade.

Anne Jones, Academic Upgrading professor, Communications, works with students including those from Pre-Apprenticeship programs who need to get their GED. Sometimes people come in to Academic Upgrading before they start their Pre-Apprenticeship program; Academic Upgrading can offer a scheduled component in conjunction with the Pre-Apprenticeship program. Anne explains that working one-on-one with students makes a big difference in getting a high success rate. She also indicates that even those Pre-Apprenticeship students with high

school diplomas are directed to Preparatory Math and Communications courses due to the fact that their functional skill levels in these subject areas tend to be weak as they have often been out of school for various periods of time.

Support and extra help for apprentices and pre-apprentices

Formal supports

There are a number of formal supports for apprentices and pre-apprentices who need help in areas such as Trades Math. Apprentices may get individual help from faculty, be referred to regular programs in Adult Upgrading, or join a trades-specific class.

All three Conestoga campuses offer Trades Math classes on an ongoing basis. These classes are offered three hours a week over and above the math that students take as part of Pre-Apprenticeship programs and Apprenticeship. Apprentices and pre-apprentices can opt to join these classes even before they come to school. Students get a letter from the Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities and their professor informing them of the availability of extra math classes which are offered through Academic Upgrading. Students are signed on as Academic Upgrading students. Because there is no Academic Upgrading exit, apprentices are counted manually as going on to Apprenticeship.

One support for electrical apprentices was a voluntary math upgrading program taught by a professor from the Electrical Apprenticeship through Academic Upgrading. Eric Van Andel, who taught the upgrading program, explains that there was a range of apprentices who came for help. He indicates that even though there are Electrical classes in which the students are expected to apply math skills, apprentices have specific questions. Eric indicates that the math class he taught was voluntary and offered three hours a week. He used a relaxed approach with more tutoring than stand-up teaching; his approach was more needs-based than curriculum-based. He notes that the apprentices who came needed to learn to apply math to their trade. The apprentices in the class benefited from one-on-one time as many would be afraid to put their hand up in the Trades class.

Academic Upgrading has also developed a workshop for apprentices to help them prepare and be successful when they take the Certificate of Qualification (C of Q) exam. This workshop is offered several times a year.

Informal consultations

Academic Upgrading coordinators indicate that the informal consultations with Apprenticeship faculty are working well to address the need of students and apprentices. They indicate that this usually takes the form of hallway talk with Apprenticeship faculty coming and asking for advice from Academic Upgrading seeking new solutions and ways to help the students. Frances notes, “They are looking for creative solutions through you.” One student from a trades diploma program was weak in math and his professor came to get some help. The student had free time and, as a result, came to the Academic Upgrading program. Many conversations with outcomes such as this are the result of contacts made at PD sessions.

Role of Job Connect and EAS in the partnership

Job Connect

Conestoga’s Job Connect covers both urban and rural settings through a number of different sites. Job Connect is also located at the Guelph, Waterloo, and Stratford campuses. It is in its fourth year. Job Connect used to just help people find jobs, but now it has expanded to offer a full range of services including long-range career planning and information and referral services to walk-in clients. People may be referred by Job Connect to Academic Upgrading and Apprenticeship. Job Connect also attends information sessions for Pre-Apprenticeship programs to outline the kind of support they can provide to students in these programs.

Job Connect organizes trades talks 3 or 4 times a year with Apprenticeship and Academic Upgrading - along with the Apprenticeship Branch, employers, and other employment agencies - participating. Trades talks started five years ago with the purpose of facilitating information flow and acting as a catalyst for further partnership work. Since then, they have evolved to take on a different level of collaboration.

Job Connect also works with pre-apprentices at the end of their program to find an employer and sign up for the Scholarship Signing Bonus. There is also a person from The School of Trades and Apprenticeship who works in Job Connect one day a week to help foster that relationship.

Job Connect may take the lead on joint delivery at community events where Apprenticeship, Academic Upgrading, and other areas within the College are represented.

Employment Assistance Services

Employment Assistance Services (EAS) at Conestoga College offer career development services to unemployed individuals through the “hub” model in Kitchener-Waterloo and Perth County.

Seven out of the 24 colleges (including Conestoga) offer EAS. This program was downloaded on Jan 1, 2008 from the federal government to the Ontario government through the Labour Market Partnership Agreement (LMPA).

Services under EAS operate under the “hub” model which is a Common Assessment and case management function to determine the best intervention for the client; then, referrals are made to Job Search Supports, Career Decision Making, or Self Employment to meet client career goals. For those who already have qualifications but need some help, interventions might include help in job search, marketing oneself, and attendance at a three-week long job funding club. There is also on-the-job training through Targeted Wage Subsidies. EAS also manages Ontario Skills Development and Second Career. Ontario Skills Development focuses on short-term training and is for clients who are eligible for employment insurance (EI) or have been in the last three years (referred to as “Reachback” clients). Second Career is a provincial government program for workers laid off since January 1, 2005 to receive financial support for skills training for high demand occupations.

Lil Premsookh Singh, Manager of EAS, explains that before Employment Ontario, EAS was already working informally with Academic Upgrading and Apprenticeship to better educate and refer clients. For example, EAS would help clients access Academic Upgrading or pick up the phone and work with Apprenticeship to make sure that clients had the right qualifications to get into a program.

When Employment Ontario came about, Job Connect, Academic Upgrading, and Apprenticeship were the focus. In 2006, EAS became part of the EO umbrella. EAS is able to provide the EO group with different labour market findings and make recommendations on training needs based on feedback from laid-off/unemployed individuals. Lil notes that private colleges were responding to these needs very well; however, Conestoga needed to get on board to respond to the demand of non-direct students looking for education from a publicly-funded college. This was not difficult for Conestoga to accomplish since it already had the resources. In some cases, it was a matter of repackaging combined with innovative solutions and alternate delivery options.

Job Connect and EAS working together

Both EAS and Job Connect are Employment Ontario funded programs. “The difference between Job Connect and EAS is that Job Connect is for non-EI individuals and EAS is for EI and Reachback individuals,” explains Lil Prem Sukh Singh. “But there are nuances and commonalities with each program.”

There are opportunities for Job Connect and EAS to work together including joint training for staff and referrals from one area to the other. Job Connect is able to offer resume and labour market workshops to EAS clients who are waiting to do a Common Assessment and see a counsellor. Job Connect can also help EI clients with research through its Information and Referral Services while these clients are waiting to see a counsellor.

In the future, EAS and Job Connect will provide more of a blended service under Employment Ontario.

Elements in the partnership that made it work
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According to management from all areas, one of the main elements that makes the partnership work is the common goal of commitment to the students. The fact that the group has a good working relationship and that there is trust and comfort within the group is also key. Another key ingredient is having a champion for this work to ensure consistency through the Dean of the School of CAA. “Andrea is the glue,” says Sherri Tryon. “There is also a clear focus, clear linkages, and we see the joint outcomes.” EO members agree that everyone sees value in each other’s work as a way of contributing to positive outcomes for the students. They emphasize the importance of good communication and honesty as key ingredients to the success of the group.

In addition, people work well together and have done important work together like charting pathways and developing referral processes. Now, they have a great deal of experience behind them to deal with any challenges that come up that they have to solve.

Another key success factor in the partnership is that all partners sit down to meet and plan together at the beginning of a project. Stephen Speers sums it up: “There are shared goals and a student-centred approach to all aspects of our work. This brings us together, and where we can integrate our services to the benefit of our students, it works well.”

According to faculty, what has worked well in the partnership is the opportunity to meet other faculty members from different areas. This has led to more collaboration and joint problem solving around student needs with respect to improving math and communication skills. Communication with program coordinators is also working well according to Academic Upgrading professors. They indicate that work with the trades is progressing at an acceptable level and that there has been positive feedback from trades professors. They note that their work with the trades is a “work in progress.” Communication with the students about extra classes has also gone well.

Challenges in the partnership

Management from the EO group outlines some of the challenges of integration. One challenge is ensuring there is a common understanding of expectations among the partners. Another is workload and demands on time in that people are very busy in their own areas of work. They emphasize that it is important to make sure that the work load is shared and results are delivered in a timely fashion when working on a joint venture.

Another challenge is making sure that faculty and staff know about each other’s work in the different areas and breaking down myths that one area might have about another. In the beginning, it was difficult to convince Apprenticeship faculty and staff that they should meet with Academic Upgrading faculty and Job Connect staff. This was due to previous silos that had been in operation.

In addition, management identified awareness-building about the work of the different areas in the partnership as an ongoing priority to address issues of staff turnover.

Academic Upgrading faculty members note that more work needs to be done to provide additional information to Apprenticeship on what is being included in the Academic Upgrading component of Pre-Apprenticeship programs and concomitant results for students. More information in these areas will create more buy-in from Apprenticeship.

Faculty also indicate that it is becoming increasingly difficult to accomplish everything needed in Pre-Apprenticeship programs because there is so much to do in a short period of time. In addition, the number of students needing to get their GED has increased. Faculty report that if students were to start working on their GED earlier - even before they enter the program - this head start would increase the student success rate.

Finally, students need to be sold on the value of Academic Upgrading and how it fits with their trade.

VII. Results of the Partnership

Student perspectives

Students and apprentices participated in two focus groups. One group was from Construction and the other was from Automotive.

Pre-Apprenticeship students participating were from the following programs:

- Brick and Stone Mason
- Women in Skilled Trades
- Truck Trailer Service Technician

There were also two apprentices (Carpentry and Truck and Coach) and one person working on his welding ticket.

Student goals

Students from Pre-Apprenticeship programs indicate that they took their program to (a) get a long lasting career that they like, (b) make more money, and (c) get into an apprenticeship. One student said, “I am in the Pre-Apprentice Brick and Stone Mason program. I could not work inside in an office or cubicle. I have family in the trade. I love the program.” Another student states, “I thought I would give the Women in Skilled Trades (WIST) program a try as I had been in a factory and the food industry. I like to work with my hands and I want to be appreciated for what I have done.”

For those who were already an apprentice, the importance of certification was stressed. Certification was seen as making a trade more professional and valuable and raising wages within the trade. The in-school component was seen as adding value back on the job.

What is working well

Participants commented on what they liked overall about their program. These aspects included the way their professors communicated with one another and built on each other's work and the opportunity to learn about a trade and get certified. In Pre-Apprenticeship programs, students particularly appreciated that the program was of no cost and that equipment was supplied to them.

The group in the Automotive Trades came up with the qualities that were important to them in a professor:

- relates to you on your own level
- doesn't use authority
- down to earth
- won't give up until you know what you are learning
- the class doesn't move until the entire class gets it
- has practical and crafts knowledge
- build confidence
- is a good listener

Challenges

Some people from the Brick and Stone Mason Pre-Apprenticeship program said that scheduling in their program was an issue. For example, one schedule had people finishing at 8:00 pm or having a two-hour gap between classes. These issues were eventually worked out.

Students in the Truck Trailer Service Technician would have preferred more hands-on work earlier in their program.

Academic Upgrading

Students getting their GED appreciated the Math and Communications courses and the fact that they could potentially leave the program with their GED. They suggested that those students working on the GED and those who were not needed to be separated. One pre-apprentice said that he took Trades Math three hours a week during the summer before he started his Pre-

Apprenticeship program. He noted that, “If I hadn’t done that, I would have been lost in the course. It [extra math] made me prepared for the course.” Others commented on how much the math was helping them—especially as a refresher for those who had been out of school a long time.

What students were achieving for themselves

Apprentices and pre-apprentices talked about the benefits for themselves. Those in Pre-Apprenticeship programs said that they were feeling good about themselves, getting better marks than in high school, and achieving their goals. One person said, “We are more focused and dedicated.” Another commented, “I feel a lot more pride and I have learned a lot.” A third person said, “The program is life-changing. I was jumping from job to job. I didn’t have any trade but lots of non employable skills.”

Supports and services used

People also talked about college services and supports they used. They used Job Connect for help getting employment, interviewing skills and résumé writing. “Employment Strategies is a great program. It covers everything and makes you go and look for the employer that you want,” acknowledged one student. “You have the whole semester to find an employer. They are working with you the whole way through,” said another.

One person used the counselling services when she felt down and wanted to give up. She noted the counselling helped immensely. Still others got help with note-taking and study skills.

Some students commented that the other students in their class were a great support. One student said that there was a lot of help from other people and that classmates make the course. “We can learn from each other,” he emphasized. In another case, a student described a classmate who was having a problem with computers. In that case, three people offered to help him.

Management perspectives

From the perspectives of management, there are many tangible results of their internal partnership. With all the departments working together, the College is getting “the biggest bang

for its buck” encompassing all the expertise of the group. Greg White remarks, “I like it [the partnership] because my faculty can concentrate on their core business. However, students are getting more within the program. It is more seamless.”

Student success and retention are key outcomes, especially noted in Pre-Apprenticeship programs and Apprenticeship. “There is a better chance of being successful if you come to Conestoga,” says Steve. For example in the Pre-Apprenticeship Truck and Coach program, 22 out of 24 students graduated and 1 person got the GED. Presently 21 are employed and 18 are in the Apprenticeship program. There are now better results with the apprenticeship signing bonus. The college is currently right on target with numbers.

Better referrals and pathways for students are another outcome. There is an understanding of each other’s areas and where to refer students. The partners have begun to use a referral form to ensure that the client has a name, and the person that they go to sees and understands who sent them. The client has a piece of paper and it is easier to understand why they were sent. Stephen adds, “It is better for customer service as we are able to provide them [clients] with a name and we are now responsible to the client and the person who sent them.”

VIII. The Business Case for Joint Work

One of the primary business cases for partnership work within the college is that it contributes to the growth of the college. There are tangible payoffs such as the increase in number of clients coming into Pre-Apprenticeship programs and apprenticeships and being successful. Working together also creates more informed partners and more successful solutions to address common challenges. Students are receiving enhanced customer service along with prompt and correct information. They are more apt to come to the college rather than going to a private college. Employers also see the results from the programs. Partnerships with employers are strengthened within college programs.

The EO partnership model also creates efficiency while allowing each partner to concentrate on its core business. The results for the students are that they get the best of each partner. Everyone is working together to give the students the right tools for success. Working collaboratively with external partners also strengthens the overall work of meeting client needs.

In the end, the whole community benefits when more people are employed.

IX. Advice for Other Colleges

Management's advice is to identify a champion, be persistent, and take the time to develop the partnership and show results. It is also important to be able to give something to the other programs that they need—not just sell one's program. It is also essential that making the internal partnership work be an expectation.

Support from senior management is also key, i.e. support to take the time to allow the partnership work to develop organically and build it into the college culture. In terms of advocacy, the group can have more force than an individual department.

Academic Upgrading faculty's advice to their colleagues in other colleges is to be extremely flexible and be able to think on one's feet to offer solutions. It is also important to be resourceful and to tailor and develop curriculum to meet the needs of the different trades. Open lines of communication with Apprenticeship faculty teaching Pre-Apprenticeship programs is also important as is being responsive to student needs.

X. What is Next?

The EO group at Conestoga has many future plans. One plan is to be more proactive in finding out the needs of apprentices and pre-apprentices before they come to the College. Apprenticeship management stressed the need for these students to feel comfortable at the College, to be focused on success, and to associate the College with apprenticeship. The College is working on getting more pre-apprentices through the partnership. Working in partnership makes this activity more cost-effective and maximizes all of the services.

There are also plans to duplicate a program used in the construction trades focusing on soft and hard skills that was popular with employers and students.

In the future, Job Connect and EAS will work together more closely. Once EO transformation happens, the two areas will look at submitting joint proposals. There is the potential for a great deal of growth in this partnership and in reaching the broader community.

A new initiative under development by Academic Upgrading is *Tool Up for Trades*. This program focuses on customized math and communications for the trades. Students would

complete an assessment and then examine what their next steps need to be to ensure they are successful in their program. It will be a customized program that is flexible and individualized.

There will also be an examination of Job Connect in terms of how it has facilitated career development to see how successful students have been.

XI. Success Factors and Effective Practices in the Partnership

This section of the case identifies the success factors and promising practises that make the partnership among Academic Upgrading, Apprenticeship, Job Connect, and EAS work.

1. Management from the four areas involved meet regularly (once a month) to share information, share resources, solve problems, plan professional development for staff and faculty, and plan new initiatives. They share a common goal of commitment to student success.
2. New internal partners are invited into the partnership when the need arises. The partnership work of the group extends into the community in terms of employers and other service providers.
3. The partnership is proactive. It is working to see how to assist and support adults through upgrading programs before they formally enter their program at the college.
4. Partners see that they can accomplish more collectively than individually. They see that they can maximize their services to the benefit of each of the areas by working together. They see that their own departments, the College as a whole, the students, and the community benefit from this partnership.
5. While the partnership has formal aspects, it works informally in an *ad hoc* and organic way to take advantage of opportunities and address issues that come up. The partnership is task-oriented and there is always a rationale for working together.
6. The partnership has an identified champion from the beginning who initiated and is the lead on the partnership work.

7. There is an understanding that the partnership is a process that is developed and evolves over time. The partners have developed good relationships with one another. The work of the partnership is constantly growing and evolving to address new needs that arise.
8. The partnership is based on an ethic of “give and take” on the part of the partners.
9. Apprentices and pre-apprentices have many different options available in different locations for getting Academic Upgrading support.
10. The EO group has developed tools such as a referral process, a binder with information on each EO service, and a Pathways Chart to help facilitate their joint work.
11. Faculty and staff attend regular professional development sessions which assist them in building relationships with faculty and staff from other areas. Informal problem solving to serve student needs results from the development of these relationships.

XII. Lessons Learned

There were a number of lessons learned through the partnership. These lessons can provide useful information and guidance for other colleges interested in embarking on a similar project.

1. It is important to be sensitive to the pressure points of the partners and to understand each other’s programs well.
2. Extra math support and other upgrading needs to be tailored to the needs of the trade to get buy-in from students. It can be helpful to have a Trades professor instruct Academic Upgrading for apprentices and pre-apprentices.
3. The partnership needs to be sharp and ready to take on new opportunities and challenges.
4. The professional development opportunities that bring faculty and staff together from the different areas are important to paving the ways for working together.
5. It is important to have an integrated referral process and good communication is essential.

6. It is helpful if pre-apprentices come in a month early to do Academic Upgrading before their program. Within the Pre-Apprenticeship program, all students need to take the upgrading.
7. There are many different options for students coming into EO program and services. It is important for everyone to understand all the pieces—especially around Academic Upgrading.

Making the Business Case for Integration among Employment Ontario Programs and Services

Case Study: George Brown College's Successful Internal Collaboration Extends to Community Partnerships



We all work towards greater student success.

Susan Toews, Chair of the School of Work and College Preparations

I. About George Brown College

George Brown College, located in the heart of Toronto, Ontario, was founded in 1967. The College has three main campuses in downtown Toronto at Casa Loma, St. James, and Ryerson University, along with 10 training facilities, from which it offers 150 full-time programs and 1,200 continuing education courses. Students can pursue their career goals by choosing from diplomas, degrees, and certificates.

There are 22,000 current full-time students and 68,000 continuing education students, along with 1,300 international students from more than 95 countries. George Brown also offers five degree programs in conjunction with Ryerson University and Bemidji State University in Minnesota.²

II. Background to the Case Study

The internal partners that are the focus of this case study are the School of Work and College Preparation, Apprenticeship, and the Community Partnerships Office. These internal partners work together with external community partners to serve under-represented, vulnerable groups and youth at risk to provide them with realistic opportunities to have successful careers in the skilled trades.

The School of Work and College Preparation is one of two schools housed within the Centre for Preparatory and Liberal Studies at George Brown. The School offers upgrading and specialized courses to facilitate successful outcomes in postsecondary programs and the workplace. Academic Upgrading is located in the School of Work and College Preparation and is offered at

² From George Brown College website at <http://www.georgebrown.ca/about.aspx>

St. James Campus. In 2008–2009, the School delivered full-time and remedial contracted upgrading to more than 1,100 students. It also supported five community partnerships.³

Apprenticeship training is offered for thirteen apprenticeship designations with approximately 2100 apprentices attending. Funding for apprenticeship training has increased from \$3.7 million to \$6 million. Apprenticeship training is located at the Casa Loma Campus. The Community Partnerships Office initiates connections and respond to requests from the community and the College to facilitate the social and economic development of Greater Toronto Area communities through project development, support, and consultation. Pre-Apprenticeship programs are offered through the Community Partnerships Office.⁴

George Brown does not have Job Connect or Employment Assistance Services.

III. Purpose of the Case Study

This case study describes and reports on promising practices in terms of:

- how the partnership worked and roles within the partnership
- elements contributing to the success of the partnership along with challenges
- results of the partnership
- the business case for partnering
- advice to other colleges
- success factors and effective practices

IV. Research Participants for the Case

- 4 managers: School of Work and College Preparation (2), Apprenticeship (1)
Community Partnerships Office (1)
- 1 professor: Academic Upgrading

³ See School of Work and College Preparation at <http://www.georgebrown.ca/centres/PLS/index.aspx>

⁴ See George Brown Community Partnerships Office at <http://www.georgebrown.ca/cpo/index.aspx>

- 1 professor: Apprenticeship
- 4 students: Pre-Apprenticeship Baking
- 9 students: Pre-Apprenticeship Carpentry
- 2 external partners: PTP Employment and Training Services and East Toronto Employment and Social Services

V. How the Partnership Works

The School of Work and College Preparation, Apprenticeship, and the Community Partnerships Office at George Brown have worked together over the last four years to serve the needs of at-risk students and those who have particular needs. The members of the George Brown management team are Rolf Priesnitz, Director of Apprenticeship; Susan Toews, Chair of the School of Work and College Preparation; Brenda Pipitone, Director of Special Projects and Community Partnerships; and Matt Foran, Program Manager, Academic Upgrading, School of Work and College Preparation.

Brenda Pipitone explains that the George Brown team makes a commitment to everyone who wants to move on to college and create a path for everyone—even if they do not fit the designated criteria for the programs the College is recruiting for at the time. Many people who apply to programs do not currently have the academic preparedness and would not manage to be successful in these programs. They have, however, expressed a desire to learn. The team will meet with people and ensure if they want to discuss a future through education, there is an advisor who will sit with them and jointly develop the plan. The team also works with other community partners to create these pathways. For example, East Toronto Employment & Social Services is a pivotal partner in terms of referring candidates to, and supporting candidates during, George Brown Pre-Apprenticeship and Upgrading programs. Other community-based literacy and employment organizations are also key partners.

The George Brown team shares a common goal: caring for at-risk students and helping them to address their learning challenges and achieve their goals. Matt Foran explains that there is a cultural philosophy of problem solving and an ethos of “Yes we can do that.” “We all agree on these goals and values,” says Susan Toews.

VI. How the Partnership Developed

Rolf Priesnitz indicates that work with Academic Upgrading began in 2004 as the result of extra funding for Math and English from the provincial government. He notes that apprentices often had difficulty with math in terms of reading an imperial ruler, understanding algebra, fractions and proportions. He explains, “Such math skills are important in the skilled trades. I saw a need for a specialized program for certain students who required upgrading in such fundamental skills.”

Susan Toews describes some of the changes that have been made over the last three years since she came on board as Chair of the School of Work and College Preparation in 2006. She notes that there was a need to strengthen the type of Academic Upgrading math support that was offered to those in the skilled trades through a stronger connection and collaboration between the two departments. She describes the need for math that is applied and practical and that the students can relate to their trade. The team describes this as the starting point for the partnership work among the three areas. Susan notes, “We were all working towards greater student success.”

Rolf also indicates that as a result of these changes, apprentices now see a direct value in the extra math upgrading offered in addition to apprenticeship training because it applies directly to their trade, and they know they need it.

Nasim Naji works as an Academic Upgrading professor at George Brown College. She teaches math upgrading for pre-apprenticeship programs and to apprentices. She explains that math is not the first interest for students. She stresses the importance of making math fun and relevant to the students and using the materials from their trade. To this end, she gets materials from apprentices and apprenticeship coordinators. She says, “I have to prove to the students that they need it [math]. Once it’s tailor-made to them, they see the relevance to their trade.” Nasim also notes that she copies the apprenticeship professor’s method which makes a big difference for the students.

Team members work together to plan initiatives such as expanded support for pre-apprenticeship programs and pre-apprenticeship programs themselves. They also collaborate to develop community partnerships, solve problems, and develop trades-focused upgrading. They share funding and resources.

VII. Role of the Internal Partners

Often Brenda Pipitone and Rolf Priesnitz will come to the School of Work and College Preparation with ideas for joint work. Brenda explains the role of her area as one of bridging the community to the College. She notes that she is always thinking about how to link the client from the community with the College, and how that fits with the work of this group.

Susan emphasizes the importance of collaboration between the School of Work and College Preparation and other internal partners in the College, such as Apprenticeship, to create bridges and meet student support needs. One particular event initiated by the School that worked well was the *Engaging the Front Line* session. Faculty and support staff from Academic Upgrading, Apprenticeship, and Community Partnerships participated. People who share a common group of students engaged in team-building and learned about each other's areas. Brenda emphasizes, "The more often we can bring people together that share common students, the better it is."

Representatives from all three departments meet regularly to share project ideas, resources, and support and to find new ways to meet the needs of under-represented students who face challenges succeeding at college.

"We work as a team but Susan's area does a lot of the heavy lifting," acknowledges Rolf.

Team members work together with the support of senior management but do not have formal procedures. They have not felt the need for formal procedures because they share a common vision and goals. They work with issues as they come up. This way of working has worked well because of the processes and strategies the team has in place along with the team's good communication and problem solving skills.

XIII. Role of the External Partners

External partners such as East Toronto Employment and Social Services and community-based employment and training organizations play a key role in George Brown's Pre-Apprenticeship and Upgrading programs.

East Toronto Employment and Social Services has had an ongoing partnership with George Brown College since 2004. East Toronto Employment and Social Services refers Ontario Works clients to George Brown's Pre-Apprenticeship and Upgrading Programs. There are specific staff assigned from the East Toronto office who work with George Brown staff to promote the programs; assess, recruit, and refer clients; and support clients during the programs. Supports include housing and additional financial support for equipment and clothing. Staff assigned to work with George Brown also advocate on behalf of the clients for daycare services and with other caseworkers whose participants are involved from across the city. They support clients with emotional issues that might prevent them from attending their program temporarily. Carol Ringwood, Manager, Community and Labour Market for East Toronto Employment and Social Services, emphasizes the importance of this support and coordination in terms of client success.

East Toronto Employment and Social Services has also established an Apprenticeship Committee with representation from Toronto's fourteen social services offices. One of the purposes of the committee is to educate social services staff about the skilled trades. With George Brown, the East Toronto office organizes forums so clients can see the value of apprenticeship training.

Community- based organizations representing and serving the targeted client groups for the programs work with George Brown to do outreach and also refer people to the programs. Organizations such as PTP Adult Learning and Employment Programs conduct assessments, do the intake, and may also offer the Upgrading component of the program or assist with the employment services side.

IX. Specific Examples of Partnership Work: Pre-Apprenticeship Support and Programs

Since 2005, George Brown's pre-apprenticeship programs have included an Upgrading component and focused on the following trades:

- Plumbing
- Assistant cook
- AIR/HVAC
- Carpentry
- Baker

These programs are targeted at under-represented youth and adults including immigrant women, youth at risk, early school leavers, and Aboriginal people.

George Brown's Pre-Apprenticeship programming helps prepare students to find work as apprentices. Potential entrants to the apprenticeship system develop their job skills and trade readiness at the college and in work placements.

Programs are up to 40 weeks in duration and include the Level 1 Apprenticeship in-school training, relevant safety training, and a minimum 8-week work placement. Programs may also include trade readiness, employment preparation, and upgrading.⁵

Pre-Pre-Apprenticeship Support for Heating, Ventilating and Air Conditioning (HVAC), Plumbing, and Carpentry⁶

George Brown offers a unique initiative through pre-Pre-Apprenticeship support enabling students to have realistic opportunities for a successful career in the skilled trades. In 2007–2008, this support was provided for Pre-Apprenticeship programs in HVAC, Plumbing, and Carpentry. The George Brown partnership worked with East Toronto Employment and Social Services and PTP Adult Learning and Employment Programs to conduct outreach, referrals and assessments; provide upgrading, and provide supports to learners. The initiative used a resource developed by PTP entitled *Building for the Future* to assist students in their exploration of the trades.

This initiative offered an extended period of upgrading before and after students commenced their Level 1 training. Thirty-seven adults participated in the pre-Pre-Apprenticeship program. Students received 22 hours a week of preliminary upgrading focusing on contextualized math and communications over eight weeks. Support focused on developing academic and social skills to assist them in their future trade, academic life, or career. The program also included additional curriculum that focused on student learning styles, essential employability skills, and trades exploration. Students also received employment search and preparation in the program. Students learned in a supportive environment where they could pursue featured trades or consider other trades, employment opportunities or further upgrading.

⁵ From Community Partnership Office, George Brown College website at <http://www.georgebrown.ca/cpo/pre-apprenticeship.aspx>

⁶ Information for this section comes from interview respondents for the case and the 2008 research report: *Filling the gap: Building communities to support the aspiring apprentice* at <http://www.ptp.ca/wp-content/uploads/2008/12/filling-the-gap-nov-08.pdf>

Those who went to a specific Pre-Apprenticeship program also received extended classroom and lab time before and during their Level 1 training (10 additional classroom hours and 6 additional lab hours during Level 1 training).

Students had the opportunity to visit local unions and had work days at Habitat for Humanity. Job coaches supported students' learning, social needs, and future job searching. Students got help securing a co-op work placement and paid employment opportunities which lead to successful Level 1 apprenticeship certification for many students.

The George Brown team coordinated joint outreach, interview and assessments to targeted high needs communities. Matt Foran explains that George Brown and its partners did outreach and invited community members to come to the College. This is important because often the people coming feel intimidated because they think that only "smart kids" come to college. This approach has been very successful. The College also held events at shelters and community centres.

The team advertised the upcoming Pre-Apprenticeship and Upgrading options. A common referral process was developed to and from Ontario Works offices, shelters, and literacy agencies.

George Brown works with a variety of community partners such as Regent Park, Miziwe Biik Aboriginal Employment and Training, and the Downtown East Community Collective. These partners work with George Brown on outreach and referrals and provide cultural and social support to learners. Community partners may conduct interviews and assessments with program candidates and instruct the upgrading and career exploration component of the Pre-Apprenticeship support.

The role of the East Toronto Employment and Social Services in this partnership is to refer clients and get the word out about George Brown programs. There are specific caseworkers who make referrals to programs. Information about programs is sent to the caseworkers who, in turn, provide their clients with the information. The East Toronto office also supported Ontario Works clients who attended the training.

The role of PTP in the partnership was to partner with George Brown to bring in a cohort of students to the pre-Pre-Apprenticeship initiative. PTP conducted the assessment using the Canadian Adult Achievement Test (CAAT) and the Communications and Math Employment Readiness Assessment (CAMERA), performed the program intake, and delivered math and communications upgrading and the trades exploration component. Students also had the

opportunity to work on goal setting. PTP's Job Solutions met with students to help them prepare résumés.

Students accepted in the pre-Pre-Apprenticeship program needed to score at or above a Grade 9 level in reading comprehension, a Grade 8 level in numeracy, and an LBS level of 4 or 5.

Those students who did not get into the pre-Pre-Apprenticeship program received an individual learning plan. They were referred to literacy upgrading at George Brown, PTP, or other agencies to help them work towards their goal of getting into the skilled trades. If they had employment as a goal they were referred to employment services agencies.

Twenty-nine students completed the initial 8-week upgrading. Twenty-one of these students were accepted into Pre-Apprenticeship programs at George Brown. Some students received more upgrading as part of their preparation for their Pre-Apprenticeship program.

The report *Filling the gap: Building communities to support the aspiring apprentice* isolates some of the contributing factors that determine student success or failure in a pre-apprenticeship program. Success factors include stable housing and income as well as a positive attitude. Strong communication skills and functional math are also important. Factors contributing to failure include unstable housing arrangements, difficulty with math, substance abuse problems, active criminal records, psychological issues, and not being sure about future goals.

Pre-Apprenticeship Baking

In 2008–2009, George Brown offered a Pre-Apprenticeship Baking program. The team worked with Toronto Social Services and community partner Downtown East Community Collective for outreach and referrals. George Brown created an integrated upgrading session that was 12 weeks long. Students received baking-related Communications and Math work and one day a week of practical Bakeshop training.

Like the 2007–2008 support for students, the program also included a focus on learning styles, essential employability skills, and trades exploration, along with employment search and preparation programming. George Brown secured co-ops and paid employment for students leading to successful Level 1 apprenticeship certification for many students.

Extra math support for apprentices

George Brown offers an extra math class for the skilled trades for an hour, once a week. Apprentices from different trades attend this class. All first level apprentices take the Evaluating Academic Readiness for Apprenticeship Training (EARAT) Math assessment.⁷ If the apprentice scores below 60%, the instructor advises that he or she attend the math classes.

The class is offered on a continuous intake basis throughout the 8-week block period of an apprentice's in-school training. The class covers whole numbers, decimals, fractions, ratio and proportion, measurement and calculation, geometry, algebra, and trigonometry. Students can bring in questions and trades material and go over areas in math they have found difficult.

As a result of the Math class, apprentices gain confidence and are more successful in their trades training. Nasim explains that these students come back to her and say that they have passed their trades math tests.

X. Elements in the Partnership that Make it Work

According to the George Brown team, one of the main elements that contributes to the effectiveness of the partnership is that they share a common vision and similar values in regards to serving the student. They want to accomplish the same goals and share the same students. There is a collaborative synergy in the group with all team members getting along well. The team describes their work together as fluid with the ability to react quickly to new opportunities. Team members trust each other and have a system and framework that works. They get each other involved and always know the work will get done. A key value of the group is flexibility which reduces barriers for potential program participants. The group also works well across two campuses.

Good communication among departments is a key to the partnership working well. Team members also work within a spirit of collaboration, not competition. Brenda emphasizes, "I think the thing that makes us work is the collaboration; we own the ownership. So often in other

⁷ EARAT is an assessment process designed to help apprentices and/or potential trainees to determine if they have the appropriate academic skills, i.e., mathematics, communications, and sciences needed for the in-school portion of their apprenticeship training.

situations, people are always competing for who's going to own this and get credit for it. We don't have that here."

From an external community partner perspective, the partnership with George Brown works well because there is a good working relationship among the partners. The roles of each partner are clear and written down. The partners meet regularly to plan, carry out, and monitor projects. The projects are mapped out and there is an overall project coordinator. Of great importance is the recognition that everyone is skilled whether he or she is from the college system or the community-based one. There is respect and a great deal that the partners learn from each other.

Barbara McFater, Executive Director of PTP, acknowledges the need for the people involved to be willing to risk trying something new and then go the extra mile to make it happen. She also notes that pre-planning among the partners is very important as is involving the people who will actually do the work.

Carol Ringwood comments on the elements that make the partnership work. She identifies a common commitment to the most vulnerable and marginalized groups of people who are moving back to the labour market. There is a common goal of working to support and encourage people and point them in the right direction. Like Barbara McFater, she emphasizes the importance of a good working partnership and open communication.

XI. Challenges of Joint Work

Team members articulated several challenges of joint work. One initial challenge was to find Academic Upgrading professors who could instruct math in a practical and applied way that was relevant to students in the skilled trades. The team addressed this challenge by hiring a professor who was able to work in this way and by working together to improve the curriculum. They indicated that there is still work to be done to make the general Academic Upgrading at George Brown more applied.

Another initial challenge that had to be addressed was the resistance to essential skills upgrading on both the part of Apprenticeship faculty and apprentices. This challenge was overcome when faculty and apprentices saw positive results from the upgrading. Rolf explained that all basic level apprentices take a math assessment on the first day of an intake. Those who do not demonstrate a mastery of simple math are required to attend one hour of extra Ontario Basic Skills math classes per week for the eight weeks that they are at trade school. At first,

apprentices did not feel it was important to learn these skills. However, later they saw the value of the upgrading in terms of their success in their in-school apprenticeship training.

Susan also explains that it is sometimes challenging to get new projects off the ground quickly within the college structure, where programs and full-time faculty workload plans need to be scheduled well in advance.

When projects involve external partners, it can be challenging to determine who is going to pay for what and to manage budgets across two or more organizations. In addition, there is a lot to consider in coordinating a project that involved a number of partners. Consideration must be given to partners' expectations, project goals, how the project is coordinated, and who is going to pay for what. Bumps have to do with lack of communication because people are busy.

Carol Ringwood acknowledges the biggest challenge in this work is the need for ongoing funding for pre-apprenticeship training and supports for clients. Another challenge is having two journeypersons to one apprentice. Working with and supporting a new apprentice can be too difficult for small companies.

XII. Results of the Partnership: Student Perspectives

Students participated in two focus groups. One group was from the Baker Pre-Apprenticeship program and the other group was from Carpentry.

Student goals

The students in the Baking Pre-Apprenticeship program said that they joined the program because (a) it was free, (b) they liked to bake, (c) they were transitioning from one occupation to another, and (d) they had tried the Baking program before and were not successful because they did not know how to be a mature student. They indicated that there were more opportunities in baking and they were interested in signing on as an apprentice. The certification was very important to some people. They liked the fact that in addition to getting certified for Level 1, they also got certified for First Aid and Food Handling.

Carpentry students had similar goals to the Baking students. They commented on the importance of the program being free, their love of carpentry, and the importance of certification in their trade. Everyone had the goal of signing on as an apprentice and becoming a certified

journey person. Many wanted opportunities to build on their skills to learn proper procedures and get better-paying jobs.

What is working well

Baking students noted that George Brown staff bent over backwards for them and went way out of their way to support them. One person said, “It’s challenging and you overcome it. They help you overcome every challenge.” Another person indicated that without this kind of program she would never be able to come to college. She acknowledges, “The program helps everyone raised poor. I would never be able to go to school. This program is for poor people and people who are new in the country.”

Participants commented on the remarkable diversity in their class. They felt that they had learned to work with their classmates as a team. They noted that when one person does not understand something, the class helps that person and waits until everyone gets it before they move on. One student emphasized, “Everyone moves together.”

Baking students also appreciated the networking in terms of the owners from the baking industry who came to the class to talk to them. One person said, “We could pick their brains. This also got us comfortable with employers. They would say what they were looking for.”

Carpentry students commented positively about the supports George Brown provide in computers and tutors for homework. They also indicated they have a lot of support from the Native community through three coordinators who help them with anything they need help with. They would like support from the Native community on the Casa Loma campus as it is available on the King campus.

Challenges

Baking students described some of the personal challenges they faced. One person said that, according to the George Brown team, he - as an older person - needed to learn patience working with younger students and tolerance for diversity in the class. He notes, “I am working with the world here. I have learned confidence in working with different groups. I am learning and becoming a better person.” Other challenges that people faced were integrating the program with intense family responsibilities, and dealing with personal anger management within the face of so many different personalities.

The group would like to see more Pre-Apprenticeship programs offered.

Academic Upgrading

Baking students spoke specifically about the math and English learning they received. One person said that she got tools to do math and the math she received fills in the gaps. Another said, “I was terrible in math. I understand it now.” People remarked that their Math professor would show them five different ways to illustrate a concept using objects and pictures. One person said, “She’s number one.” Another person indicated that she is using the English she learned. Even one person with Grade 12 emphasized the importance of going through the upgrading.

Participants commented on the extra math class that was open for people to attend on Friday mornings. They remarked that the class helped people do well in math and the importance of math skills for baking. They also indicated that some students in the program were also using student tutors for math and English. They noted that the tutors were great and that people using tutors were getting good results.

Carpentry students also commented on the importance of the Upgrading component of their training. They noted that many people did not finish high school or do any schooling after they finished. They identified the importance of math upgrading, especially around fractions. They also pinpointed the importance of résumé writing. One person said, “When you’re on the job site you look at things from an artistic point of view. Then when you go to school to do upgrading and math, they teach you all the fractions and decimals. It’s very helpful and you can see how things actually are done.” Another student noted that if he had not done the upgrading, he would have been lost.

Nasim Naji, Math professor, echoes the student sentiments. She explains that many students in Pre-Apprenticeship programs have forgotten their math skills and need a refresher. Others lack the basics. One of the results of doing the Math course is that students feel more confident and determined about attending college and following their goals. Apprenticeship faculty also note that there is an improvement in trades classes when students have had math upgrading.

What students are achieving for themselves

Baking students indicated many different achievements from the program. They related that when they started the program, they were scared and did not know what to expect. The most important outcomes from the program for participants were gaining confidence, building on their skills, and learning how to be part of a team. One person said he got insight into how to work with diverse groups of people. Another person indicated that she has achieved the goals she had

a year ago. She relates, “I’m on Ontario Works but I am accomplishing something...doing something.” Some people have moved on to take other courses. One person is taking a Business Plans course. She exclaims, “My life has turned around. I have a path. I didn’t feel this way a year ago.” “I am getting credentials. It’s not impossible,” says another.

Students also commented on the remarkable changes in their peers through the program. They indicated that some people came out of their shells and others learned to write and were making slow progress. They noted how ecstatic people with little education were in achieving their goals. They said that some students had improved their lifestyles once they felt the pride of being a student. One student thought that immigrants who attended the program would get a completely new chance.

Carpentry students indicated that they were feeling good about themselves and were getting closer to achieving their goal of becoming a licensed carpenter. One student notes, “When I’m at my work I see these other guys getting their licence and getting a better job. I also have a family so this is a good opportunity to provide for family, and make better money.” Other students identified other benefits for themselves such as being on the way to opening their own business and being productive members of society. They talked about their own determination and sense of achievement. One person remarked, “I came out of jail. I’ve been in a lot of trouble growing up, but now I feel like I’m on a better path. I’m getting somewhere and I feel better about myself.”

Like some of the Baking students, some people reflected on how they had felt overwhelmed when they started the program but were now feeling that they were achieving their goals.

XIII. The Business Case for Joint Work

Management also outlines the results from their work together. One outcome is that perspective apprentices and pre-apprentices have a better appreciation and understanding of what they are getting in to. The Upgrading support for the construction trades has allowed people to look into apprenticeships and figure out their skills and interests. They start to take active steps to change things. Susan says, “Now, prospective students have a clearer orientation as to what a pre-apprenticeship or apprenticeship program can offer them.”

Brenda notes that from a community perspective, more community members are interested in education through the college because of the team’s collaborative work. More people are

applying for programs and they can come to the college through Upgrading programs. She adds that from a business case perspective, college reputation, respect, and retention are all important and are enhanced by multiple college stakeholders sharing work collectively.

Brenda adds, “In the beginning we had problems with retention in the Pre-Apprenticeship programs because they often required much more than one program could offer. This collaborative model was developed out of our early experiences and we now use this team to organize new projects and create innovative alternative programming for some of the most marginalized groups.” She indicates that in the Baking Pre-Apprenticeship program, retention numbers were higher, with more people completing Upgrading than they had seats for in the Level 1 training. This presented a new challenge but a much better one. She explains, “We had successfully retained 87% of the students. They all continued participating and we made seats available for all of them.”

Matt Foran indicates that by having an Upgrading component, students are getting better results in their Pre-Apprenticeship programs. He indicates that the model of the Upgrading program with four days of Upgrading and one day in the shop works well. Brenda adds, “In the beginning we had a huge drop-out with Pre-Apprenticeship programs. Now in Baking we have more people, they are all participating and we have seats for all of them.”

External partners echo the importance of the Upgrading component supporting pre-apprenticeship in terms of student retention and success in moving on to pre-apprenticeship, employment and other kinds of training. Students have the opportunity for better paying jobs and finding their own direction.

Carol Ringwood notes that working together to meet the needs of some of Toronto’s most vulnerable populations by supporting and investing in pre-apprenticeship training makes good economic sense for those looking for a career with a future. She says, “I take my hat off to George Brown. I am very impressed with their commitment towards individual success, community development, and collaborative partnerships.”

XIV. Advice for Other Colleges

The most important advice for other colleges from the George Brown management team is to think carefully about who is hired from front line staff to faculty. It is critical to hire staff and faculty who are problem solvers and truly believe in people. Everyone in the partnership needs

be committed to problem solving and creativity in terms of getting things done. In addition, the college must respond to the needs of the community in order to have the community engaged with college initiatives.

Flexibility is the key. The partnership should make a plan but be ready to change it.

XVI. Success Factors and Effective Practices in the Partnership

This section of the case identifies the success factors and promising practices that make the internal partnership at George Brown work.

1. The management team from the three areas of the college—Academic Upgrading, Apprenticeship, and Community Partnerships—meet regularly to plan projects, solve problems, and monitor project progress. They share a common goal of commitment to finding pathways for the most marginalized and vulnerable groups of students. This commitment is shared by external partners.
2. The internal College team recognizes the need to work with external partners such as social services and community-based training and employment agencies in order to recruit students, meet their needs, and make sure they are supported while attending programs. They recognize that to be successful, they cannot do it alone.
3. The partnership is action-oriented and creative. The team is committed to solving problems and finding solutions.
4. Partners see that they can accomplish more collectively than individually. They see that they can maximize their services to the benefit of each of the areas by working together. They see that their own departments, the college as a whole, the students, and the community benefit from this partnership work.
5. The partnership works informally to take advantage of opportunities and address issues that come up.
6. The partners have developed good relationships with one another. There is trust and respect for one another. This respect extends to external partners. Community-based

organizations are considered skilled and equal partners. There is an understanding that groups bring different skill sets and that everyone learns from each other.

7. Roles and responsibilities of each partner are clearly laid out on each project.
8. The pre-Pre-Apprenticeship support for students is instrumental in helping prepare them for Pre-Apprenticeship training and helping them make informed choices about their future in the skilled trades or elsewhere.
9. The Upgrading offered in Pre-Apprenticeship support must be practical, applied, and trades-related.
10. Faculty and staff have regular meetings and sessions which assist them in building relationships with faculty and staff from other areas to serve a common group of students.
12. The partnership owns the ownership of the work done together. The different areas in the college work together in a spirit of collaboration for the common good.

XVII. Lessons Learned

There were a number of lessons learned through the partnership. These lessons can provide useful information and guidance for other colleges interested in embarking on a similar project.

1. Truly successful projects come as a result of thoughtful planning from the perspective of the student.
2. Working collaboratively nets greater outcomes than one department working on its own.
3. Regular meetings to discuss progress and challenges are essential. Waiting to meet until there is a problem is often too late.
4. It's important to involve external agencies such as social services and other student stakeholder groups in the planning process. Continually leverage their support throughout projects.
5. It's critical to document all steps and summarize projects in a clear, honest, and convincing manner soon after the project timeline concludes.

6. Extending an “open-door” to past participants enables these students to meet with job coaches and staff to connect with student and social services in the community and college.

Making the Business Case for Integration among Employment Ontario Programs and Services

Case Study: Skilled Trades Centre Offers Optimal Conditions for Joint Work

Georgian College
Midland Campus



Barriers are taken down as our staff goes above and beyond the call of duty.

Gabrielle Koopmans

Associate Dean, Engineering, Technology and Apprenticeship

I. About Georgian College and Midland Campus

Established in 1967, Georgian College offers more than 100 programs with an enrolment of almost 10,000 full-time students and 27,000 continuing education students. Barrie is the largest of Georgian's three main campuses which include Orillia and Owen Sound. Regional campuses are located in Collingwood, Midland, Orangeville, and Muskoka.

More than 100 diploma programs cover a wide range of academic areas including health sciences, hospitality and tourism, engineering technology, design and visual arts, Aboriginal studies, and community studies. Many programs offer transfer agreements with a variety of universities in Canada and abroad. Georgian has more than 140 such agreements.

Georgian is also home to the University Partnership Centre. Its mission is to expand access to postsecondary programs at the degree and advanced study levels through groundbreaking partnerships with universities. Total current enrolment in degree programs is 1,500 full-time students. The majority of these programs offer students full-degree completion opportunities at the Barrie and Orillia campuses. Georgian also offers applied degrees of its own, including a Bachelor of Applied Business: Automotive Management and a Bachelor of Applied Human Services.⁸

Midland campus is one of seven campuses at Georgian College. Midland campus offers full-time postsecondary programs in Small and Marine Engine Technician-Bookkeeping, Office Administration-Medical Administration (pending approval), and all three levels for apprenticeship programs in Electrical, Plumbing, General Machinist, Mould Maker and Tool and Die, Recreational Vehicle Technician, and the Small Engine and Marine Engine apprenticeship programs. Midland campus also has a long standing and successful Adult Upgrading program (LBS/ACE) as well as a full suite of services provided through Job Connect. Through the campus, the college delivers part-time and full-time continuing educational courses and programs (i.e., Food Services Worker as well as the Animal Care Worker program). As well, contract training is delivered on site, at the place of work, or at the campus. The full-time Small

⁸ Adapted from *College Facts*, March 2009.

Engine and Marine Engine Technician program has the highest number of Second Career Strategy students within Georgian College.

The Midland campus has been in existence for thirty years, offering a variety of programs. In 2005, Georgian College, Midland campus moved to a new location and officially opened its first Skilled Trades Centre with 50 full-time apprentices. In 2010, it is anticipated that there will be over 800 students at the Midland campus.⁹

II. Background to the Case Study

Academic Upgrading, Apprenticeship, and Job Connect are all located in the same building along with Second Career Strategy. This co-location, along with the right leadership and vision, provides a good illustration of the kind of partnership work that can take place in a small community.

The program coordinators indicated that there were many crossovers, with coordinators, faculty, and staff having worked in more than one of these programs in their career. For example, Sharon Corrigan, the Second Career contact also provides Academic Upgrading support and has worked in Job Connect. Similarly, Denyse Wigglesworth, the lead for Pre-Apprenticeship also teaches Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) and Academic and Career Entrance (ACE) and started in Job Connect. People working in these areas know each other and each other's jobs and work well together. There is not a large turnover of staff. In addition, college staff see the students and employers. They work within the community outside of their college work.

Gabrielle Koopmans, Associate Dean, indicated that there is an interesting community partnership in that an advisory committee made of mayors from the local community, the college, employers, industry representatives and the Chamber of Commerce meet four times a year. Gabrielle notes that, "Their perspectives give us ideas on improvement."

This case focuses primarily on the partnership work between Academic Upgrading, the Pre-Apprenticeship and Apprenticeship programs, and Job Connect. This case examines the results of those partnerships.

⁹ Email from Gabrielle Koopmans, 2009.

III. Purpose of the Case Study

This case study describes and reports on promising practices in terms of:

- how the overall partnership works and roles within the partnership
- elements contributing to the success of the partnership along with challenges
- needs the partnership served
- results of the partnership
- the business case for partnering
- advice to other colleges

IV. Research Participants for the Case

- 1 manager of the Midland campus
- 5 coordinators: College and Career Preparation, Pre-Apprenticeship, Apprenticeship, Job Connect, Second Career
- 2 staff: Job Connect
- 1 professor: Apprenticeship
- 1 professor: Academic Upgrading
- 8 students: 2 Pre-apprentice Plumbing, 3 Electrical apprentices, 1 Pre-Apprentice Electrical, 1 Automotive Mechanic apprentice, and 1 Marine Engine mechanic
- 3 employers: Plumbing and Electrical

V. How the Partnership Works

Apprenticeship, Academic Upgrading, and Job Connect have always worked together; this partnership has been enhanced by the positive influence of the campus manager, combined with the cooperation of the staff and faculty. Second Career is also part of the partnership. The primary driver for these areas to work together is to help the students succeed. Students are the main priority and there is genuine care for them. College management indicated that students feel that the college is working for them.

The team works together to provide continuity and “one-stop shopping” for the students. They walk students over to the department that they need to go to, and they know where students are supposed to be at any given time. Working together, college staff can see the progress that students are making throughout the process.

Faculty and staff work together to meet the needs of students. They indicate they can serve the needs of students quickly. They can walk the student to the appropriate departments as needed. For example, if a person’s first contact is with Job Connect and they are interested in an apprenticeship but need upgrading first, they will be walked to Upgrading. Conversely, if they are in upgrading and interested in a trade, they will be directed to Job Connect.

Staff offer ongoing support through help with résumés, interviewing skills, and cover letters. They go into classrooms to provide an overview of what they can offer. Flexibility is a key value. One student who needed extra help with upgrading in math could not attend any of the day or night programs offered. A program of independent study was set up for the student to accommodate his needs. Comments indicated that it is easy to work together to help students because of the small campus.

Students need support from the team in a variety of ways. Those seeking apprenticeship may need to get their high school equivalency or certain courses to be eligible. Students in pre-apprenticeship programs will require an employer to complete their placement. They also need help with résumé writing. Other students need support in areas like math and English, both in Pre-Apprenticeship and Apprenticeship programs. Working as a team attuned to these needs helps ensure student success.

Job Connect, LBS, Apprenticeship, and Second Career work together in Pre-Apprenticeship programs

Pre-Apprenticeship programs have been offered in Electrical and currently are offered in Plumbing at the Midland campus.

Under the present leadership, there are more people from Apprenticeship, Academic Upgrading, Job Connect, and Second Career in the screening and selection process for Pre-Apprenticeship programs. This has allowed for a refining of the selection process and lining up employers.

Dan Keefe, Lead for Job Connect explains, “Before there were only two to three people on the screening team. Now there are seven to eight.” He explains that although there were 95 people who attended the information session for the Pre-Apprenticeship program, only 40 were

interviewed for 20 spots. He also indicated that some people needed to get their Grade 12 or finish their schooling. The team was able to show people how they could get help with upgrading.

Academic Upgrading is part of the Pre-Apprenticeship program. For example, the new Pre-Apprenticeship Plumbing program includes upgrading in math, physics, communications, and computers—knowledge and skills which will help students achieve success in their apprenticeship goals. In order to address the fact that some participants already have Grade 12, the team has implemented a mentoring program. They have made sure that students who had Grade 12 and showed leadership were used to mentor others. In addition, students in Pre-Apprenticeship programs who need extra upgrading over and above what the program offers can also get additional upgrading at night. There is an effort to ascertain early on which students will need extra help so programs can be accessible and tailored to their needs.

Tom Roberts, Coordinator, Electrical Apprenticeship, notes that participants are introduced to all the departments so they are familiar with staff, faculty, and their roles. “It gives them a sense that we are all working for them,” says Tom. He adds that they come to the different departments to see what they need help with. This includes résumé development, help with reading and math, and seeking potential employers. There is also a disability specialist, a learning strategist, and a counsellor available to provide support to students. Tom says this is a key to retaining students.

Importantly, management, faculty, and staff from each department debrief each other regarding what is working and what could be made better. Decisions are made as a group rather than by one person from one area. The team has the attitude that if something is not working, they will change the way they are doing it and try something else. Velda Parmenter, Academic Coach and Coordinator of the College and Career Preparation program, indicates that they work out solutions that work for the student and work for the employer. Velda gives the example of having students work with an employer one day a week is something that works for both. She explains, “Students like one day a week because it helps them make more sense out of in-class Level 1 materials. Employers like having the students on the job getting experience.” She also notes that having the remainder of the work placement at the end of the program provides more of a chance that employers will keep the students and sign them on as apprentices.

Management also notes that professors also communicate regularly and know each other’s ideas and how they work. This is particularly important because it means that students cannot create conflict among instructors. Faculty and staff also stress that they work together closely and are aware of each other’s goals and statistics.

Potential apprentices referred to Academic Upgrading by Job Connect

The partnership also works to help clients who want to sign up for an apprenticeship but need to obtain certain prerequisites first. Clients who wish to sign up as apprentices but need upgrading are referred from Job Connect to Academic Upgrading. Typically, a young person may have dropped out of school without completing Grade 12 or does not have the prerequisite courses for his/her apprenticeship. The young person will register with Job Connect and get help with a referral to the college upgrading program.

When the upgrading is complete, if the client is already employed with an appropriate employer, the Job Connect office will help with the referral to the Apprenticeship Branch. If not presently employed, then Job Connect will help the client source out potential employers and find employment. Once employed, Job Connect will then help with the referral to the Apprenticeship Branch. Once the apprenticeship signing is confirmed, Job Connect pays out the signing bonus to both the employer and the client/apprentice.

Apprentices take advantage of Academic Upgrading support

Apprentices can also get help through Academic Upgrading if they are struggling with math or English. Some groups of apprentices take assessments and then get tutorial sessions through upgrading to help with their low scores. This enables them to complete their apprenticeship course with more success. One of the apprenticeship professors said that she mentions to students that Academic Upgrading is available to them if they want to brush up on skills like math. She also tells apprentices who will be writing the Certificate of Qualification (C of Q) exam that they can get more math review through Academic Upgrading before writing the exam.

Those apprentices who participate in upgrading usually bring the trade-related material they need to work on. This is different from students who are full-time in the academic upgrading program. These students need a more broad-based math because they may be unsure of what trade or direction they will pursue in the future.

LBS students prepare for apprenticeship and other college programs

Currently in the Midland campus's LBS program, there are students who have indicated an interest in securing an apprenticeship. They are working toward achieving their grade 12 equivalency (GED) and will likely take appropriate ACE courses to prepare them for their area

of interest. In addition, there are other students taking ACE courses who have expressed interested in a skilled trade or the college's Marine program.

Elements in the partnership that make it work

Managers, faculty and staff indicate that the partnership works because they are on a small campus and they all work well together. Everyone is committed to the same goal of working together to help the students through one-stop shopping.

Each team member is an expert in his/her own area and also has the knowledge and awareness of what others do. On a small campus, it is easy to pass on knowledge. This usually happens informally in the halls or the lunchroom. Managers and coordinators troubleshoot as a team and make improvements to their programs and processes as a team. Faculty and staff also work together as a team to help the students. Students can get help right away. In one example, the college had a student who needed a job. The student lived in Barrie and his wife worked in Midland. The team helped him get a job and helped him get his math in preparation for signing on to an apprenticeship. There is always a spirit of continuous improvement in terms of always looking for ways to make things work better for the student.

Another aspect that supports the internal partnership is the external partnerships with the community, individual employers, and schools. The community is small and people know each other. The college takes part in these community partnerships. The Midland campus has a good relationship with employers and is well known in the community.

Challenges in the partnership

One challenge has been that postsecondary education has traditionally been seen as the priority and the major business of the college. More and more, addressing the needs of non-traditional students is being seen as an important role for the colleges. New clients are coming to the college. Often they are the first people in their families to attend a postsecondary institution. It is important to the business of the college to make sure these students are successful.

A challenge for staff and faculty is understanding and providing support to students with barriers. Addressing this challenge means gaining the students' trust and assisting them to seek the help they need.

Faculty and staff indicate that communication is a challenge—especially if people work part time, work at night, or are teaching in the classroom. They stress the importance of having

regularly scheduled meetings in order to be more aware of what other team members are doing, and to enable any concerns or issues to be addressed in a timely fashion.

Another challenge is that students waiting for re-training supports are sometimes unable to obtain approval on time to meet the starting date for their program of choice.

VI. Results of the Partnership

This section of the case identifies the results of the partnership among Academic Upgrading, Apprenticeship, and Job Connect from the perspectives of students, employers, and managers.

Student perspectives

Students representing both pre-apprentices and apprentices indicated that their main goals were getting signed as an apprentice and making a career change. They spoke positively about their own results from the programs. Comments showed the importance of the Academic Upgrading program. One person in the Electrical Pre-Apprenticeship program said that, “I took academic upgrading and loved it. It makes me feel better about myself.” Another person noted, “Job Connect helped me with resumes and job interviews. [This] gave me more confidence.” More confidence, security, and feeling better about oneself were key themes in terms of what people were getting from their programs and the services at the college.

Students also described a smooth transition from one area to another. For example, one student felt he did not have to transition back to school because he had math upgrading help before he went into Level 1 Electrical. Students emphasized that the college had gotten them “ready” for both programs and job sites. They commended instructors for always being willing to “go the extra mile” and said they were on a first-name basis with their instructors. Students like the fact that their trades instructors are from the field and have real life experiences and current knowledge. Comments also focused on the friendliness of staff and faculty and the community-based nature of the small campus.

In addition, students indicated that they were amazed with the quickness of the support. One person thought about upgrading and came to the college to talk about it. She was signed up and ready to go that day.

Some students indicated that what they were learning was helping in their family life too. One person said that he was using the letter writing skills he learned at home in his family life. One comment indicated that although academic upgrading had seemed irrelevant at first, he could now see the value of it in helping him later.

Students identified one challenge with respect to some students who are attending school because they have to, and, therefore, lack the commitment to complete the program. They said that these students lack maturity and sometimes left the class.

Students expressed great appreciation for their programs, the campus, and their instructors. They have recommended their program and the college to friends and family members. Their future plans include starting up a business, taking more courses and getting signed as an apprentice.

Employer perspectives

Employers who participated in the case represented three family businesses in electrical and plumbing services. They all had hired apprentices, pre-apprentices, or people from Job Connect through the college. They noted the importance of skilled and experienced apprentices. They also indicated that a lot of apprentices are young, so that maturity as well as skills is an issue.

The employers expressed appreciation for the services of the college. They said they appreciate those employees who have had pre-apprenticeship training over those who have not. Getting students who have had safety training and Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) training is also important. Overall, the employers would like to see more pre-apprenticeship programs offered by the college. Those from pre-apprenticeship programs take less time to train than others from Job Connect who have not had the training. Spending more time training people affects productivity. The employers also said that people coming from the college have a more realistic view of the money they will earn than those just coming from high school. Comments also expressed appreciation for having apprenticeship training by the college right in the community and indicated that apprentices are well trained. Appreciation was also expressed for Job Connect services. Employers note that there is a good understanding on the part of Job Connect as to whether or not a student will be a good fit with their business.

VII. The Business Case for Joint Work

The business case for partnership work is clear. The arguments for it are the number of students coming into programs, the high student and staff retention, and the good working team.

From a management perspective, there is excellent student and staff retention and the college's Midland campus is growing and expanding at an enormous rate. The results are directly tied to the internal teamwork and the excellent external relationships with employers, high schools, and others.

Students at the Skilled Trades Centre are moving from Academic Upgrading and ACE to apprenticeships, postsecondary college programs, and employment opportunities. Statistics show that students' success rates are high for those who have completed academic upgrading prior to going into postsecondary programs or apprenticeships.

Currently, statistics in the Pre-Apprenticeship Plumbing program indicate one student had been signed, two will be signed on completion of their work placements, and all others have found work placements in their trade. The college is optimistic that most students will be signed in the near future as apprentice plumbers.

The Pre-Apprenticeship Electrical program was run in Midland for two years. The last statistics of the second session indicate that of 18 students, 8 students are registered as apprentices—4 in skilled employment in their trade, and 4 in skilled employment in another sector.

Students in pre-apprenticeship programs take ACE courses and complete their ACE certificate ensuring high school equivalency.

Also important to note is that students in apprenticeship programs have taken advantage of the opportunity to seek help through academic upgrading if they are struggling with math or English. This enables them to be more successful in completing the apprenticeship programs.

Students in the college's LBS program are exposed to a variety of apprentice programs, postsecondary programs, and continuing education while they are studying at the college. This first-hand exposure generates interest in various programs, resulting in students completing ACE courses and moving on to higher education.

The group recently won the Board of Governors Team Award in 2009 and won the President's Award in 2008. This formal acknowledgement of the work of the partnership among departments is important. Other campus locations are using the teamwork of the Midland campus as a model to build their own teams.

VIII. Advice for Other Colleges

The college recommends servicing the needs of the students first by helping in any way with "everyone pitching in." This means being flexible and having a positive atmosphere and attitude. In the context of different areas working together, staff and faculty need to value each other's time and experience. It is important for staff to have a general understanding of the roles each of the areas play and the services they can provide. If a need is not being met, all areas need to work together to find a solution.

IX. What is Next?

Management indicates that as they grow and expand, there are several areas they are looking at for future development. These areas include protocols and flowcharts as numbers of students increase. Another area for future development is to make sure that curriculum for Academic Upgrading is trades-related. In addition, there are plans to arrange a GED testing date at the Midland campus so students can get their high school equivalency in preparation for apprenticeship. More feedback during courses is also planned to ascertain better what students need instead of evaluating courses at the end.

Management indicates it needs to market more effectively the value of achieving an ACE certificate through the college. Employers need to recognize the value of this certificate. It is recognized as a high school equivalency and provides a good foundation for student success in postsecondary and apprenticeship programs.

X. Success Factors and Effective Practices in the Partnership

This section of the case identifies the success factors and promising practices that makes the partnership among Academic Upgrading, Apprenticeship, and Job Connect work.

1. Management from the areas involved, including Second Career, see the value in knowing each other's areas well and working together as a team to ensure student satisfaction and success. This philosophy is also evident through the partnership work of faculty and staff.
2. The partners aim for a seamless system of "one-stop shopping" for students and clients. There is an overall atmosphere of ongoing support, friendliness, and informality which appeals to the students.
3. Partners see that they can accomplish more collectively than individually. They do not feel an ownership to a particular area. They see that the students benefit from this partnership work.
4. The partners meet regularly and informally. Because they are all located on a small campus in the same building, they are able to communicate easily. They work together for continuous improvement of their processes with the goal of improving processes for the student.
5. Flexible upgrading support in math and other subjects is provided to accommodate the needs of apprentices and pre-apprentices and to meet their timetables. This includes day-time programs, night-time programs and self study where needed.
6. Academic Upgrading is an integral component of the college's pre-apprenticeship programs. Upgrading support is also available to apprentices including for preparation of the C of Q once they finish their schooling.
7. The partners leverage their external partnerships in the community to enhance their own internal partnership work. They work in a small community where people know each other.
8. The partners are able to work quickly to get students into programs and serve other needs.

XI. Lessons Learned

There were a number of lessons learned through the partnership. These lessons can provide useful information and guidance for other colleges interested in embarking on a similar project.

1. Each student has unique needs that must be addressed.
2. Working as a team with competent and passionate staff makes everyone's work easier.
3. It is important to have support for students with mental health and disability issues as there is a high ratio of students with these issues.
4. Because all three services are available under one roof, student retention is maximized. There is a higher risk that students will not follow through if they have to go to another location or agency.
5. It is important for all partners to be aware of the role each of the partners play to support the work they do. Partners need to be able to apply that knowledge to each student's needs in order to be able to provide the best support resulting in student success and satisfaction.
6. Staff must have a keen sense for the needs of their students in order to guide them in the best direction.

Making the Business Case for Integration among Employment Ontario Programs and Services

Case Study: Lambton College Excels at an Integrated Approach to Pre-Apprenticeship Programming



We have a mentality of access and success, and an “all people are welcome” philosophy. We believe in developing partnerships and customer service. These values are promoted throughout the college.

Judy Morris

Vice-President Academic and Student Success

I. About Lambton College

Lambton College of Applied Arts and Technology was established in 1967 in Sarnia, Ontario. In September 2009, total full-time student enrolment was just over 3000 students, while the college serves in excess of 2500 part-time and continuing education students.

Lambton College employs 270 full-time and 300 part-time staff. The college offers postsecondary education with 20 Ontario College and Ontario College Graduate certificate programs, 7 Board of Governors certificate programs, 34 diploma and advanced diploma programs, and 2 degree programs offered in collaboration with the University of Windsor. In addition, the college offers apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs. The college offers apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs as well as School to College Work Programs opportunities through partnerships with high schools. Lambton College offers Employment and Training Services such as Job Connect and Academic Upgrading at the downtown Bayside Campus and main campus which are described in this business case. Enhanced referral processes are in place to integrate all Employment Ontario services delivered by Lambton College (i.e., Job Connect, Academic Upgrading, and Apprenticeship) to ensure seamless client service.

II. Background to the Case Study

For the past several years, Academic Upgrading, Job Connect, and Apprenticeship programming at Lambton College have delivered integrated services to clients. Examples of integrated work completed to date include the following: Community Apprenticeship Information Nights, shared curriculum for pre-apprenticeship programming, academic upgrading programming on site at the Job Connect office, program cost sharing, and

ongoing internal referrals between all three programs. Much of the success of this current integration is due to cross-trained staff within the three programs and a concentrated effort by all staff and management to maintain the momentum of program integration through communication and the sharing of best practices.

The focus of this case is the integration work of these three areas—particularly as it applies to pre-apprenticeship programming.

III. Purpose of the Case Study

This case study describes and reports on promising practices in terms of the following:

- how the overall partnership works and roles within the partnership
- elements contributing to the success of the partnership along with challenges
- needs the partnership serves
- results of the partnership
- the business case for partnering
- advice to other colleges

IV. Research Participants for the Case

- 1 Vice President: Academic and Student Success
- 3 managers: Government Access Programs, Skilled Trades Centre, and Student Success
- 2 coordinators: Pre-Apprenticeship and Apprenticeship programs
- 3 staff: Job Connect
- 1 professor: Apprenticeship
- 2 professors: Academic Upgrading
- 4 students: Pre-Apprentice Cook program
- 1 employer
- 1 MTCU Employment and Training Consultant

V. How the Partnership Works

Overall, according to Dave Gotts, Director of Student Success, partnership work among Academic Upgrading, Job Connect, and Apprenticeship has been a long-standing arrangement. Dave explains that the partnership began with collaboration between Academic Upgrading and Job Connect to meet the needs of employers. “People are looking for education that assists them with obtaining credentials required by employers,” he emphasizes. “We help them reach that goal.” He explains that a Literacy and Job Connect partnership was a natural fit at the college. He adds that Apprenticeship is a newer anomaly in the partnership. He notes that when the Academic and Career Entrance program (ACE) was accepted by the Apprenticeship Branch as high school equivalent, this opened doors to integration work with Apprenticeship. With ACE, the college can provide credits so that people have opportunities to move on to apprenticeships. The role of Job Connect is to work with clients to prepare them for, and help them find employment.

The Apprenticeship Program at the Skilled Trades Centre at Lambton College has grown astronomically over the years from three trades to twelve trades.

Coordination among these three programs makes perfect sense according to Judy Morris, VP of Academic and Student Success. Speaking from a senior management perspective, she explains that the students tend to be non-direct entrants and that partnerships among the programs is part of better customer service and a better way of meeting the needs of these students. She further explains that senior management supports this program integration through the college’s three-year strategic plan that was developed with the Board of Directors and the community. The strategic plan emphasizes the core values of access and success. Each department’s operational plan and performance goals relate to this focus. Lambton College’s belief is that “people, given a chance, can be extremely successful”. Judy adds that along with these core values, the need to be efficient and effective also supports the need for integration.

The philosophy of access, success, and “all people are welcome” is promoted widely throughout the college. There is the need for understanding among all college personnel that people can be extremely successful if they are given the chance. Lambton College has won two partnership awards through Colleges Ontario for its work with industrial partners. These kinds of awards emphasize that the college is doing well in the area of partnerships.

Partnership among Academic Upgrading, Job Connect, and Apprenticeship for Pre-Apprenticeship programs

Since 2006, Lambton College has offered pre-apprenticeship programs that meet skills shortages and community needs. The first program was the Pre-Horticulture program in 2006–2007, followed by the Pre-Cook program in 2007–2008; the 2008–2009 Pre-Arborist program is near completion.

Horticulture Pre-Apprenticeship Program, 2006–2007

The Pre-Horticulture Program entailed a partnership between Lambton College and Kettle Point First Nations. The program built on the college's successful apprenticeship program in Horticulture and was aimed at individuals from First Nations communities who needed to get their Grade 12 equivalent and who were interested in the horticulture trade. The pre-apprenticeship program provided another pathway for apprentices into the advanced level of the Horticulture apprenticeship. A skills shortage had been identified in Horticulture. At the same time, the Lambton College First Nations Council identified the Horticulture Trade as one that would interest members of First Nations communities.

The program began with eight to ten weeks of full-time Academic Upgrading using ACE where students were required to successfully complete four courses (English, Mathematics, and two electives). The next component of the program continued the ACE Academic Upgrading and integrated Horticulture Apprenticeship components essential for the work placement such as workplace and equipment safety. This section was followed by preparation for the work placement and then a four-week work placement.

Cook Pre-Apprenticeship Program, 2007–2008

The Horticulture Pre-apprenticeship program was followed by the Pre-Cook program. This program targeted underemployed and unemployed women with Ontario Secondary School Diplomas (OSSD) in need of employment readiness skills and credentials in the food service industry. The program has met a need for skilled cooks in the hospitality and food services industries.

The program began with a full-time Upgrading component geared to the cook apprenticeship curriculum, and was followed by Level 1 Cook training combined with Academic Upgrading geared to the trade. This was followed by a component designed to prepare participants for work through Job Connect and then an 8-week work placement.

Arborist Pre-Apprenticeship Program, 2008–2009

Lambton College partnered informally with a number of First Nations communities and organizations to offer the Pre-Apprenticeship Arborist Program. The program responded to a need in the Sarnia-Lambton area for qualified arborists to support tree companies, utility companies, public departments, and recreational businesses. Lambton College has offered an Arborist Apprenticeship program for the last 12 years. The Pre-Apprenticeship program was targeted at First Nations community members who did not have a grade 12. The Arborist Pre-Apprenticeship program followed a similar format to the Horticulture program but had an eight-week work placement. This program was just beginning at the time of the data collection for this case study.

Management and coordinator perspectives on how the partnership works

Managers involved in the pre-apprenticeship programs note that everyone on the team has a great deal of knowledge about what others do. This knowledge allows them to refer clients to the right program when they need assistance. For example, Victor Alderson, Chair of Apprenticeship and Skilled Trades, acknowledges a strong partnership with Job Connect, referring people there when they need help with resumes or safety training. In addition to this knowledge, communication is facilitated by the fact that Lambton is a small college where everyone knows everyone else.

Anne Marie Cosford, Manager of Government Access Programs is responsible for both Academic Upgrading and Job Connect. She explains that with the support of senior management, a team with shared responsibility applied for and took on the first pre-apprenticeship program for Horticulture. The team included Job Connect, Academic Upgrading, the Trades Centre, and the Director of Student Success. The partnership is important in terms of shared resources, greater expertise, and outcomes that can be reported for both Job Connect and Academic Upgrading.

Victor Alderson agrees with Anne Marie. He explains that many of the clients need a great deal of help and that in order to accommodate these needs, a team effort is required. He notes that a lot of flexibility and sensitivity is needed to meet these needs. He gives the example of the women in the Pre-Apprenticeship Cook program. He notes that many participants come with multiple challenges. Some have a history of abuse; others are single mothers. He must consider issues around daycare and transportation when he works with the Pre-Apprenticeship coordinator to put together the schedules.

The team learned a lot during the first pre-apprenticeship program. “Pre-Horticulture was the first for everything and everyone. We found that the best way to bring clients into the classroom was to use Job Connect,” says Anne Marie. She notes that by the time the Pre-Cook program came about, the team had a much better vision about what such a program should look like.

In the first pre-apprenticeship program, the ACE curriculum was incorporated to ensure students would complete the program with the necessary prerequisites for apprenticeship registration. However, in the Pre-Cook program, the team decided to use Academic Upgrading because it targeted a wider audience. Participants with a Grade 12 were recruited for the Pre-Cook program; however, many participants needed upgrading to be successful in Level 1 and beyond.

Upgrading that was relevant to the cook’s training was built into the program. The Upgrading component included a focus on English, math, biology, and self management. Victor Alderson also comments on the importance of Academic Upgrading for clients interested in apprenticeship but without Gr.12. He explains that the first question he asks is whether potential students have a Grade 12. If they do not, he refers them to a specific person in Academic Upgrading.

Anne Marie notes that participants in the Pre-Cook program initially found school scary and did not see the relevance of the Academic Upgrading component. However, she emphasizes that later on they saw it was helpful—especially when they went out on their placements where they were given a lot of responsibility. She notes that the upgrading contributed to the success of participants in both Level 1 and Level 2 of the cook’s training.

She also acknowledges that the process for completing the ACE certificate in the pre-apprenticeship programs is rigorous and can be difficult for those students who have been out of school for a while. She notes that the ACE certificate has been included in the Horticulture and Arborist Pre-Apprenticeship programs at the request of the college’s community partners to ensure that the students had the necessary academic qualifications to become registered apprentices.

Jennifer Watson, coordinator for the Pre-Cook and Pre-Arborist programs, explains that her role in the partnership is to work with team members, to advocate for the students, and to act as a resource for both students and team members. She notes that one way she

works with team members is to organize program schedules with the faculty who will do the teaching. She also mediates among students when there has been a conflict.

Jennifer explains that the partnership work among Academic Upgrading, Job Connect, and Apprenticeship starts with the management team. She also indicates that staff and faculty have played dual roles. She uses herself as an example in that in addition to coordinating pre-apprenticeship programs, she has also done contract work with the Academic Upgrading Program and provided information sessions out in the community. She says, “A lot of us have stepped out of one role and into another. As a result, we have a better understanding of other roles.”

She acknowledges the role of Job Connect in the program including job preparation, safety training, résumé workshops, and information sessions on apprenticeship. Job Connect is also responsible for the work placements. In terms of Academic Upgrading, the days of textbooks are gone. “The Academic Upgrading faculty are just great about tailoring their upgrading to the needs of students to make it trade specific,” says Jennifer.

Dave Chamberlain, coordinator of the Horticulture and Arborist programs, notes that at first, the partnership among Apprenticeship, Academic Upgrading, and Job Connect progressed timidly, but once there was more understanding about what the team was doing, there was more support for the partnership. Dave explains that he sat down with the Academic Upgrading faculty to discuss how to integrate English and math into the program and make it more appealing. He says, “We tried to make it all work together so it was a seamless transition.”

Faculty perspectives on how the partnership works

Faculty from both Academic Upgrading and Apprenticeship emphasize the importance of working together for the success of the students in Pre-Apprenticeship programs.

Mike Mansfield, professor and chef from the Pre-Apprenticeship Cook program, is excited about the partnership. He notes that Academic Upgrading provides a good refresher for the students, builds their confidence, and gives them the chance to prove what they can do. He notes that Job Connect does a lot of work to help the students with their résumés and to find employment.

Faculty for the Academic Upgrading component of the Pre-Cook program explain that they start by looking at the Pre-Cook curriculum. “Victor sent us copies of his curriculum

and what needed to be covered. I scanned through that to identify what math skill apprentices would need,” says Stephanie Lobsinger, Math professor. English professor Angela Harris comments similarly. She explains that first she talked to Victor about the whole Cook program and got materials for the program. Victor then connected her with the professor in the Pre-Cook program with whom she met to develop the program. She notes, “We communicated well to keep each other informed about what we were doing in the classroom. We tested out many ideas.” An example of their work was the design of a dream kitchen. The content professor in the Pre-Cook program gave out the assignment and Angela supported the assignment by building on it in a way that would help the students. She acknowledges that if something was not working, they tried something else because they wanted the women in the program to be successful. They kept in mind what skills the students would need for their work placement.

Both professors indicate that they “go the extra mile” to make sure that the students succeed and that they understand what is being taught. Stephanie uses many different ways and tools to make sure that the students understand the math they are learning based on the students’ learning styles and the trade. She may even use Smarties® to demonstrate fractions and make a visual representation so students can understand better. She acknowledges that she loves teaching the Math course and gets great satisfaction from it.

Job Connect staff perspectives on how the partnership works

Job Connect staff members explain their role in the pre-apprenticeship partnership. This role includes the following:

- registering pre-apprenticeship students
- doing community outreach
- conducting résumé and other workshops
- working with employers to take on apprentices
- working with individuals who want to be apprentices
- providing funding for equipment, transportation, etc. for students who are in financial need

They indicate that they work closely with the program coordinator and faculty depending on the information needed. They brainstorm new ideas with these colleagues. The partnership is a close one, with all partners working together to identify and meet the needs of the different circumstances of each student.

Provincial government perspectives on how the partnership works

As an external partner, the provincial government has the same goals as the internal college partners in terms of serving the needs of the client and getting them back in the workforce. The Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities (MTCU) works with the college to identify needs for pre-apprenticeship programs. Since Sarnia is a closely knit community, all the partners are well-connected and have developed a close professional relationship

Elements in the partnership that made it work

Management, faculty, and staff identify some core elements that contribute to the partnership working well. These elements are the following:

- a common vision
- a common goal
- close-knit community and college
- a formal description of roles and responsibilities
- good understanding of each other's areas
- ability to share resources
- respect for the work and for each other
- regular communication and meetings

Common vision

The college's senior management has set a common vision and built the need for integration and partnership work right into its three-year strategic plan. This focus, in turn, is built into each department's operations plan and performance objectives.

Common goal

The team has a common goal of doing everything possible to make sure the students are successful and that their needs are being met. The team views working together as an opportunity to realize students' unique learning styles and help them succeed. This goal is shared and understood by both internal and external stakeholders.

“Clients feel they are cared for because they are recognized and not just a number. We know the clients well and what they are doing,” says Stacy Morgado, Job Connect Information Resource Specialist.

Close-knit community and college

People tend to know each other which facilitates good relationships and effective referrals. They have easy access to each other so they can communicate easily and as often as needed. Since they are part of the same institution and a small community, they do not want to let each other down. David Chamberlain, professor in both the Pre-Apprenticeship Arborist and Horticulture programs says, “A school the size of Lambton reminds us that we are all part of the same institution and most of us know each other by name. Since we know each other, we don’t want to let each other down or drop the ball. There is accountability.”

Referrals tend to work better informally because people know each other. The team has attempted to implement a formal referral process.

Formal description of roles and responsibilities

Management has developed a checklist for roles and responsibilities for Pre-Apprenticeship programs. The checklist includes which manager has the lead responsibility for each task. People have respect for other people’s roles.

Good understanding of each other’s areas

Certain managers and staff have experience in more than one area and the Manager of Government Access is responsible for both Academic Upgrading and Job Connect. Team members have a good understanding of each other’s roles and jobs.

Ability to share resources

Working together allows for sharing resources. Sharing resources allows for economizing and expedites the work of all three areas. The Academic Upgrading program shares the curriculum with the Pre-Apprenticeship teachers. Faculty also share books and assessment tools.

Job Connect and the Pre-Apprenticeship coordinator share employer contact lists for the placement component. Job Connect also shares workshop materials with the pre-apprenticeship programs.

Office space is also shared. The Pre-Apprenticeship coordinator has two offices. One office is at Job Connect and the other in the Skilled Trades Centre.

Respect for the work and for each other

Those interviewed acknowledge there is respect and pride for the work they do and a great respect of each other's role and contribution. "We are all respectful and careful that we understand each other's role," says Jennifer Watson, Coordinator of the Cook and Arborist Pre-Apprenticeship programs.

Regular communication and meetings

Team members in the internal partnership communicate regularly and informally to do their work and problem solve as needed. There are regular meetings among team members.

Challenges in the partnership

One of the main challenges in the partnership indicated by college personnel across the board is coordinating schedules for meetings with team members. Having a coordinator who passes on information to the team helps to address this challenge. Coordinating schedules for students and faculty is also a challenge because some faculty members work part-time and students may have daycare and transportation issues.

Another challenge is finding solutions to address student needs and barriers. These needs could be financial, emotional, academic, or employment-related. For example, one challenge is related to supporting students' families. The College used to offer grocery vouchers but it was not enough. Another challenge was initially that students' work placements were near the beginning of the pre-apprenticeship program. The team found it was better to have the placements at the end of the program when students had more knowledge and when employers were more likely to hire them. Having ACE as part of the Pre-Apprenticeship program so students could obtain their academic credentials at the same time was also a challenge. Many people found it difficult because they had been away from school for a significant amount of time.

A final challenge is educating the rest of the college that this group of non-traditional or non-direct entrants is a viable client group.

VI. Results of the Partnership

This section of the case outlines the results of the partnership among Academic Upgrading, Job Connect, and Apprenticeship for different stakeholders.

Student perspectives

Four women who took the Pre-Apprenticeship Cook program were interviewed. All four are presently working as cooks: three in day cares and one in a nursing home. In addition, two have moved on to Level 2 Cook training.

All four women came to the program in different ways. One woman found out about the program from a family member. Another saw the flyer for the program at a grocery store and a third person saw the flyer at a job bank. All the women liked to cook but did not feel they had the confidence or opportunities to get the education they needed to do it. One person had previously applied to the College's Culinary program but did not get in because her math mark was not good enough. Another had wanted to be a chef since she was nine years old.

The elements of the program that they liked were the hands-on cooking, trying out new food, the patience and helpfulness of instructors, and how their instructors broke everything down. They noticed that the faculty and staff worked as a team to help them and that they got extra help with upgrading whenever they needed it. One person noted, "Job Connect and Apprenticeship staff complimented each other and worked together to make sure scheduling worked well."

They also commented on help they got from Job Connect in terms of food vouchers, bus tickets, equipment, help with résumés, and preparation for job interviews.

They liked the fact that the program was just for women and hoped that more programs of this nature will be offered. They said it was important that the program was free. They all thought the program should have been longer with more hands-on cooking and more math and English. One person would like to see smaller classes and better advertising of such programs.

The four former participants derived many benefits as result of the program.

Confidence and pride

Confidence was a big outcome for the former students. Comments indicated that when they started their program, some felt scared because they had not had a good experience in school or had been out of school for years. One person said, “I feel so thankful because I am proud of myself and glad about what I have achieved.” Another person indicated that she learned a lot about herself and that she could do more than she thought she could. She also learned not to accept what other say about her. She now feels confident to work with other people and make her own decisions.

Essential skills

Although students indicated they prefer the hands on aspects of cooking, they acknowledged that they got a lot out of the Academic Upgrading. One person noted that for the first time she did well in math and English and was at the top of her class. She said that the math and English helped her with converting recipes, costing recipes, and looking at food costs. Similarly, another student indicated the math component helped her with converting big recipes to small ones and measuring portions. Comments indicated that the English component helped with reading documents such as orders.

It is important to note that one woman indicated that she was now able to help her young son with his math and English as a result of the Academic Upgrading portion of the program. She said, “I was motivated to do the course to help my six-year old son.”

Skills and knowledge for the job and further training

Former students gained skills for the job and further training through the program. This included health and safety knowledge, time management, and new techniques for cooking and tenderizing.

Employer Perspective

One employer was interviewed. The employer has hired three of the students from the Pre-Apprenticeship Cook program. She indicates that when hiring, she looks for basic skills in home cooking, good time management skills, and a laid-back personality. She also notes the importance of basic writing and math skills in that the cooks need to be able to calculate portions as well as write menus and maintain a log book.

She notes that the women she has hired from the program are very self-sufficient and that she did not have to train them as much as expected. The cooks were able to prepare meals with limited resources and prepare the meals on their own only after a month. In addition, they were self-motivated and possessed safety skills that they did not need to be taught.

“Before, it was difficult to hire experienced cooks. The program has filled a gap for what we were looking for. The cooks were well-trained and needed mentoring rather than training. I would definitely recommend graduates and say that they are self-sufficient and have knowledge about nutrition,” says the employer.

Management perspectives

From a management perspective, there have been great results from the partnership work among Academic Upgrading, Job Connect, and Apprenticeship. One of the best results is that non-traditional students, some of them high risk, are getting jobs, moving to Level 2 of their apprenticeship or entering other post secondary college programs. For example, the Pre-Cook program had 15 participants, all single mothers. All fifteen went on work placements. Eight signed on as apprentices and two went on to Cook Level 2. One woman who was on social assistance for years is now working in a nursing home. Only two people left the program—one for health reasons and another for personal reasons.

Through the success of Pre-Apprenticeship programs, other relationships are strengthened as well. For example, partnerships with Ontario Works and the Apprenticeship office are strengthened as these areas meet their own outcomes through the success of the programs.

Dave Gotts emphasizes, “The results for the students are graduation, employment, and the ability to choose an appropriate career path. Lambton connects the dots well which helps contribute to success for students.” He indicates that the population of non-traditional learners is growing tremendously and that this group of students contributes to the bottom line of the College. He states that because of this growth, the Job Connect, literacy, apprenticeship bar is being raised.

Victor Alderson adds that another result of the partnership work is the positive image and good reputation of the college, particularly with industry.

Faculty and staff perspectives

From a faculty and staff perspective, one of the most important results of their partnership work is that students are successful and are meeting their goals. These results occur because there are more referrals among the group and more knowledge about other areas which can be used to help the students. In addition, students feel part of something special and that staff and faculty know and recognize them, and work as a team to help them. “It’s rewarding to see the change in people and how you can turn around their lives,” says Mike Mansfield, professor in the Pre-Apprenticeship Cook program. Carlos Fermin, Employment Apprenticeship Consultant with Job Connect, agrees. “I enjoy assisting people and see the benefits in how they change,” he says.

Government perspective

From a government perspective, there is client satisfaction and more registered apprentices. This would not happen without the approach taken in the Pre-Apprenticeship program. The success of the program is empowering which encourages the partners to do more and strengthens the partnership.

VII. The Business Case for Joint Work

The business case for joint work is that the clients have the opportunity to access a number of programs with lots of connections and expertise. This ensures more resources available to students to support their personal success; the result is successful and satisfied students. In addition, resources are shared and people are working together for a common goal. Working together in partnership is more efficient and effective and eliminates redundancies. The partnership work, both inside and outside Lambton College, has enhanced the College’s reputation.

VIII. Advice for Other Colleges

The main advice for other colleges is to start with senior management support for integration and then work down through staff. A spirit of continuous improvement is also

critical, i.e., learning from mistakes to improve things and make changes for the next time. Creativity is also key. It is important to be clear on roles and responsibilities.

It is also important to build rapport among the three areas and establish a good communication process. It is best to start small and it helps to have one manager who oversees more than one of the areas. It is also crucial to build a relationship with the Registrar's office because they operate differently.

It is important to acknowledge successes and the front-line staff who make the partnership work. Another piece of advice is to make sure that all parts of the Pre-Apprenticeship curriculum are tailored to what people will need on the job. The upgrading component is particularly important.

From a faculty and staff perspective, it is important to see working together not as a "turf" issue, but a way to help learners have a chance to be successful, given that for some, failure has been a constant.

Staff note the importance of "Engaging the Frontline" a scheduled day with people from Apprenticeship, Academic Upgrading, and Job Connect. This event allows people from the different areas to meet and get to know about each other's areas. The day helps to build relationships and is very helpful.

IX. What is Next?

One area that the college is working on for the future is to continue its work with the five First Nations communities in the area. The college will continue to offer Pre-Apprenticeship and Pre-Degree programs to support adult learners in an academic environment.

X. Analysis of the Success Factors and Effective Practices in the Partnership

Lambton College's integrated approach to partnerships in its Pre-Apprenticeship programming has resulted in identifiable success factors and effective practices.

Success factors and effective practices in the overall partnership

1. Integration work among Academic Upgrading, Job Connect, and Apprenticeship is supported through the College's strategic plan. Each department has an operational plan and performance objectives related to this focus.
2. There is a formal description of roles and responsibility for Academic Upgrading, Job Connect, and Apprenticeship for the planning and implementation of Pre-Apprenticeship programs.
3. Partners see that they can accomplish more collectively than individually. They understand that by working collectively they can better ensure student success for non-traditional learners who may have multiple barriers. They also reduce redundancies through sharing resources.
4. The partners share a common goal: student success and retention.
5. The partners aim for a seamless system transition in pre-apprenticeship programs for students. Academic Upgrading is an integral component of the College's Pre-Apprenticeship programs. The trades and upgrading faculty work together closely to make sure that academic upgrading and trades content are fully integrated in the curriculum. Academic Upgrading faculty test out many ideas to make sure that students understand math and English.
6. There is a Pre-Apprenticeship coordinator who works with all three areas to ensure effective communication, scheduling, troubleshooting, and coordination.
7. The partners communicate regularly and informally. Because they are all located on a small campus and know each other, they are able to communicate easily. A spirit of continuous improvement with the goal of improving processes for the student is a core value. Staff and faculty are encouraged to try out different ideas.
8. The partnership includes external partners such as MTCU, First Nations, and industry partners. Through these partnerships, the goals of both the partners and the College are met. The integration work is strengthened through these partnerships and the image of the college is enhanced.
9. The internal partners have a good knowledge of, understanding, and respect for each other's areas. Some managers and staff have had experience in more than one area.

XI. Lessons Learned

There were a number of lessons learned through the partnership. These lessons can provide useful information and guidance for other colleges interested in embarking on a similar project.

1. Students may have multiple barriers and unique learning styles that must be attended to. Flexibility in program scheduling is key.
2. Academic Upgrading works best when integrated seamlessly into the trades content of the program. This requires a team effort working together among Apprenticeship and Academic Upgrading faculty and takes more time.
3. Using Academic Upgrading rather than ACE helps to target clients for pre-apprenticeship programs more broadly.
4. It is essential to outline the roles and responsibilities of each partner in the Pre-Apprenticeship program from the outset.

Making the Business Case for Integration among Employment Ontario Programs and Services

Case Study: Niagara College's Successful Skills Training Council Sets the Direction for Joint Work



The success factor in [integration work] is having people who are flexible in the program areas who analyze client needs and find new ways to meet these needs by reshaping the product and through new delivery models.

Dr. Steve Hudson

Vice President, Academic

I. About Niagara College

Niagara College serves over 7,500 full-time students in post secondary, post-graduate and apprenticeship programs with 270 International students coming from more than fifty different countries. In addition, Continuing Education has 15,000 registrants and there are approximately 450 courses per term. It offers programs in the schools of Academic and General Studies; Business and Entrepreneurship; Information and Media Studies; Environment, Horticulture and Agribusiness; Health and Community Studies; Hospitality and Tourism; and Technology. It also offers two Bachelor of Applied Business degrees in (a) Hospitality Operations and Management and (b) International Commerce and Global Development.

For five years in a row Niagara College has been ranked number 1 in student satisfaction among all 24 community colleges in Ontario.¹⁰

There are three campuses located in Welland, Niagara-on-the Lake, Niagara Falls, and a satellite site in St. Catharines. Currently, there are 245 faculty, 73 administration and 208 support staff. Niagara College has Canada's first commercial teaching winery.¹¹

Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS), Apprenticeship and Technical Training, and Job Connect will all report to Workforce and Business Development under a recent college reorganization to integrate these areas into an Employment Ontario Model. LBS has its main site and manager at the Niagara-on-the-Lake campus. LBS is also offered at the Welland campus and the Niagara Falls campuses as well as at partnership locations in Port Colborne and Fort Erie. The Technology Division operates out of the Welland campus in the Technology Skills Centre. Job Connect's main site and manager are located in downtown St. Catharines with the Employment Help Centre. There is a second site at

¹⁰ See <http://niagaracollegenews.niagaracollege.ca/2009/04/07/niagara-college-remains-1-in-student-satisfaction/>

¹¹ See *Fast Facts* on the Niagara College website at <http://www.niagaracollege.ca/corporate/fastfacts.pdf>

the Maid of the Mist campus in Niagara Falls. The Hospitality and Tourism Division operates out of the Niagara-on-the-Lake campus. Business Development operates out of Workforce and Business Development and also is responsible for Employment Assistance Services/Self-employment training.¹²

II. Background to the Case Study

For many years, Niagara College has recognized the importance of relationship building among its Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS), Apprenticeship, and Job Connect partners. The partnerships have allowed the college to serve its non-traditional clients and learners more effectively.

The most evident manifestation of this partnership building is in the College's *Skills Training Council* which brings management from LBS, Apprenticeship, and Job Connect together monthly with other important program and service areas. The *Skills Training Council* allows these areas to build their own program relationships and to raise the profile of their programs in the college community. The *Skills Training Council* has been especially helpful as a discussion and planning forum for Second Career Strategy.

The *Skills Training Council* is a Standing Committee of Niagara College. In its terms of reference the committee's authority is stated as, "Coordinate and provide a forum for discussion and development of skills training solutions which may result in recommendations for training programs and services." The committee operates out of the College's Workforce and Business Development and is chaired by the department's director. The committee meets monthly and reports to the Council of Deans and Directors. Committee membership includes managers from Workforce and Business Development (LBS, Apprentice and Technical Training, and Job Connect), Hospitality and Tourism, Continuing Education, English as a Second Language, Academic Studies, Tourism Industry Development Centre, Financial Services, and Enrolment and Registration Services.¹³

¹² E-mail communication with Sue Reinhart, Manager of Literacy and Basic Skills, Niagara College

¹³ See Standing Committee: Skills Training Council *Terms of Reference* and Niagara College Organizational Chart for Academic.

This case focuses on the development of the *Skills Training Council*. The case documents how the Council works to promote integration work among LBS, Apprenticeship, Job Connect, and other program and service areas of the college.

III. Purpose of the Case Study

This case study describes and reports on promising practices in terms of the following:

- the need for the Skills Training Council and how it works
- how the partnership works on the front lines
- elements in the partnership that make it work
- challenges in the partnership
- making the business case for integration: results of the partnership
- advice to other colleges
- what's next

IV. Research Participants for the Case

- 11 managers, members of the Skills Training Council: Adult Upgrading, Apprenticeship, Job Connect, Workforce and Business Development, Continuing Education, Corporate Training, Registrar's Office, Business Development, Finance, and Academic
- 1 former manager of Workforce and Business Development
- 1 support staff: Adult Upgrading
- 3 professors: 2 Apprenticeship and 1 Adult Upgrading
- 3 staff: 2 Job Connect, 1 Adult Upgrading, and 1 Business Development Centre

V. The Need for the Skills Training Council and How it Works

According to former and current members of the *Skills Training Council*, the need for such a body came about because of the necessity for college divisions involved in skills training to have more information about each other and more information sharing with other parts of the college in order to serve its non-traditional learners better. The *Council* was also put in place to assist in the coordination of program delivery and the development of new programs.

Bea Clark, former Director of Workforce and Business Development and instrumental in putting the *Skills Training Council* together, explains that the Council was modeled after a successful task force that was put together in the 1990s. At that time, different areas of the college came together to develop re-training programs from government funding.

Based on their success, some of these early training programs led to postsecondary programs. Partnership work in the college also continued informally with the Skilled Trades Centre with Pre-Apprenticeship, Job Connect, and LBS. These informal partnerships provided the foundation for the development of the Skills Training Council. The purpose of the Council was to coordinate training offerings for the community, serve non-traditional students better, and strengthen the college. The Council also became a place to share best practices and take advantage of the talents within the college.

The more formalized Skills Training Council came about in 2004 as the result of the vision and leadership of Allan Davis, former Vice President, Academic, who was new to the position at that time. Bea Clark notes that Allan Davis was strongly interested in integration work as a way of focusing on apprentices and non-traditional learners with an emphasis on skills and apprenticeship training. The college's strategic plan had a goal to increase numbers of these learners. In order to increase these numbers it was clear that there was a need for more formalized cross-functional discussions. There was the recognition that everyone needed to be at the table to discuss the needs of non-traditional learners, take advantage of opportunities in the external environment, and make collective decisions. The decision was made to formalize the task force model used in the 1990s by making the Council a standing committee of the college.

Steve Hudson, Vice President of Academic explains, “We were really trying to coordinate the access and the program offerings from the college to the community recognizing that traditional silos often left clients and ourselves not understanding the services the college offered.”

“When the Council was created, a lot of different people in the college had little bits of information about skills training, but no one knew the whole picture. We recognized that we didn’t know what the entire Skills Training Program entailed,” adds Teresa Quinlan, Acting Vice-President, Corporate Services. She also indicates that the Council allowed for an understanding of what everyone did and the ability to see how they could all work together more effectively.

Council members indicate that before the Council was put in place, there were lost opportunities that the college did not take advantage of. One example of a lost opportunity was the inability to quickly respond to labour market and community needs with new training programs. In addition, not all apprenticeships were part of new developments and growth because the Skills Training Centre, which focuses on automotive and tool and die, was the primary contact with the provincial ministry responsible for apprenticeship. In some cases, different divisions of the college would respond to Requests for Proposals (RFPs) for pre-apprenticeship programs, sometimes contradicting each other and with different costs, and without full information. Sometimes the proposal with the lowest costing would get the funding.

Faculty and staff indicate that before the Council, departments would refer clients outside the college because there was not an understanding about the connections between divisions and departments with the college. LBS decided to focus internally when its numbers were down because it was getting very few referrals from inside the college.

Now the decision making for Pre-Apprenticeship priorities and which proposals are submitted comes from the Council. Everyone who is a member of the Council is a part of the discussion and decision-making. The members decide which RFPs are a priority for the college and its strategic direction and which will go forward. They also discuss related issues such as space, registration and money. By having all the players sitting at the Council table, everyone knows “who’s doing what.” Having a representative from the Registrar’s Office on the Council means there is more staff awareness about how to serve non-traditional learners or students who are in apprenticeship better, and how to get ready for or change a process for a new intake of students.

Overall, Council members come to the table to share their ideas, what they are doing, and how they are doing things. Members also bring information about new initiatives outside the college to the table. This allows for synergies in ways that people can work together. Furthermore, the Council is able to respond collectively and quickly to these new initiatives. For example, Council members indicate the provincial government's Second Career strategy has been a big topic at the Council table.

The college has recently gone through a re-organization. As a result of this reorganization, Apprenticeship, Job Connect, and LBS will all fall under Workforce Development. Most Council members believe that this reorganization will strengthen the work of the Council. For example, Skills Training will be able to build on its success and experience to deliver and develop programs for the government's Second Career Strategy based on what exists as opposed to adding a greater workload to the post secondary side of the business.

VI. How the Partnership Works on the Front Line

Faculty and staff from Literacy and Basic Skills, Job Connect, and Apprenticeship describe the different ways that they work together on the ground. They indicate that they have learned about each other's programs through a concerted effort by the college to bring front line people together. In the words of one professor, "Everyone is committed to the learner...to do whatever you can to make that individual successful. It's really about helping the client."

Referrals from Job Connect to Adult Upgrading

Job Connect refers clients who need adult upgrading to LBS for an assessment. Job Connect uses a consent form and includes the client application form along with the client's résumé. LBS then has all the information about the client. This partnership also allows for follow up in that if a client does not show up for the assessment, Job Connect staff can follow up.

In other cases, Job Connect apprenticeship scholarship candidate clients may need their Grade 12 level and are referred to LBS for upgrading to get the Grade 12 level required. There is communication back and forth to find out how the client is doing. A new LBS program that offers English, math and computers two times a week to accommodate the

needs of working adults in Niagara Falls is in the same building as the Job Connect office. Job Connect and LBS also work together on Pre-Apprenticeship programs.

Apprenticeship referrals to Job Connect

Job Connect and the Hair Styling apprenticeship program work together with Job Connect helping apprentices access employment. Apprenticeship sees this as value-added service to apprentices. The process of working together is confidential and informal with the onus on the apprentice to seek assistance with Job Connect.

Job Connect, LBS, and Apprenticeship work together in Pre-Apprenticeship programs

Job Connect and LBS are involved with Apprenticeship throughout the development and delivery of Pre-Apprenticeship programs. In this partnership, Apprenticeship submits the proposal with a request for funding to cover some of the academic upgrading. LBS contributes from its budget for the assessments. These programs include Auto Service Technician, Metal Fabrication Worker, Welder and Cook. LBS presents on academic upgrading during information sessions for each Pre-Apprenticeship program. LBS also does an assessment with each applicant. Students get academic upgrading at the front end of their program. The curriculum in the Pre-Apprenticeship program is tailored to each trade and developed through LBS. Job Connect works with Pre-Apprenticeship students to prepare them for their job placement and works to secure employers for the placements. Job Connect also monitors the eight-week co-op placement and builds a relationship with the employer. Once the placement is over, the job developer from Job Connect sees if there is a good fit between the student and the employer, and whether the employer wishes to hire the student.

Adult Upgrading support for apprentices

LBS also offers service to apprentices who are having difficulty with the academic portion of their program. They may need extra help in math, reading, writing, or test taking. Through the Council, LBS is developing a workshop and refresher course for those apprentices who will be taking their Certificate of Qualification.

Business development refers clients to Pre-Apprenticeship programs and LBS

Potential clients come to the Business Development Centre to be assessed for self employment. If these clients are not suitable for self-employment, the business advisor will refer them to other skills training programs within the college.

VII. Elements in the Partnership that Make it Work

Members along with faculty and staff indicate that are several factors that make the *Council* work successfully. These factors include the following:

- support from senior management
- a clear and formal mandate and terms of reference
- a clear vision and the right leadership
- the right people at the table
- early successes
- commitment from all members

Support from senior management

Council members, faculty and staff indicate that a major element that makes the Council work is the fact that there is support for it from senior management, including the president. Knowing that the president of the college will be reading the minutes ensures commitment to being effective.

A clear and formal mandate and terms of reference

The fact that the Council is mandated with clear terms of reference also contributes to its success. Since the early days of the Council, some members have had their own performance objectives tied to the college's strategic objective of increasing non-traditional learners, thus ensuring they had a stake in participating. The Council has a clear mandate, and its terms of reference were developed cooperatively by Council members. The formalized nature of the Council -- on par with other college Standing

Committees -- has given the Council influence and raised the profile of skills training within the college.

Bea Clark indicates that integration work can work both formally and informally. However, she stresses that unless the process is formalized it is seen as “nice to do” rather than a “must do.” She adds that the danger of doing the work informally is that if the players change, the informal process might dissolve.

A clear vision, the right leadership, and the right people at the table

The Council also had a clear vision and the right leadership to put the right people together when the Council started up. The more formalized Skills Training Council came about in 2004 as the result of the vision and leadership of former Vice President, Academic Allan Davis who was new to the position at that time. The right people were also at the table, each with the common goal of providing training to the community.

Early successes

Fiona Allan, Director of Workforce and Business Development and Council Chair states, “We’re future oriented and very community connected. The Skills Training Council had some early successes in getting things done. This action inspired people round the table.”

Bea Clark describes some of those early successes. One early win was the development of a program for internationally trained immigrants that crossed all functional lines. With government funding, the college built on an existing English as a Second Language (ESL) program to develop a one-year diploma General Arts and Science program that combined ESL training and post secondary courses in the person’s area of speciality. Through the program, participants were able to improve their language skills and receive a Canadian credential relevant to their own specialized area. The Council also pursued many RFPs for Co-op Diploma and Pre-Apprenticeship programs with high quality submissions. The college became very successful in obtaining programs in these areas. As a result, the college raised its profile in the area of skills training, increased its numbers of non-traditional learners, and increased its capacity to offer service in this area.

Commitment from all members

All the Council members were willing to be at the table. Mike Bauer, Manager, Job Connect, emphasizes, “It was this willingness that really made it work. There were always discussions, sometimes differences of opinion, but in the end we all reached consensus.” Comments from Council members indicate that there is an established culture of sharing at the college.

VIII. Challenges in the Partnership

The major challenges identified in this case centre mostly around college priorities and structures. Challenges include:

- the primary business of colleges seen as academic post secondary programs
- academic programs have a consistent cycle while skills training programs do not
- skill training being considered additional work by the academic side of the college
- lack of a central place to get information about all college programs
- lack of opportunities to meet

The primary business of colleges seen as academic postsecondary programs

One challenge is that skills training and programs for non-traditional learners always compete for attention with academic programs, the primary business of the college system. This means that skills training needs to work hard to be understood. “You are always the one swimming upstream when you are working in this [skills training] area,” says Bea Clark.

Academic programs have a consistent cycle while skills training programs do not

A second challenge is that start up, closure, turn around times and new opportunities for skills training are out of sync with the regular academic cycle. Proposal due dates for

prospective training programs or related services may mean that there is no time to go through regular approval processes.

Bea Clarke indicates that, initially, there was a lack of understanding about this different cycle for skills training along with what the government guidelines for funding were. Sometimes proposals might have a three-week turn-around-time which did not fit with the regular college program approval process. As a result, program approval had to be obtained through an alternative process rather than normal approval channels. Those working with academic programs did not fully understand these differences and government sponsorship requirements.

Skills training seen as additional work by academic side of the college

A third challenge is that the annual plan of the Council means additional work beyond the normal academic business of the college. In the college system where academic programs are the top priority, some people may not see the relevance of this extra work for skills training.

Lack of a central place to get information about all college programs

A fourth challenge is that as yet there is no “one stop place” that adults who have been out of school for some time can come and find out about everything they might do through Niagara College. One Council member comments that front line staff may know about postsecondary programs, but may not know about apprenticeship or preparatory programs.

Lack of opportunities to meet

Faculty and staff indicate that they need more face-to-face meetings and conferences to strengthen their connections because they are all on different campuses. They indicate that email and web meetings are not enough to allow them to keep up with what others are doing. They speak highly of the professional development that focused on the front line, and conferences that bring together Employment Ontario providers.

IX. Making the Business Case for Integration: Results of the Partnership

Members of the Council, along with faculty and staff, clearly articulate the results of the partnership work that has stemmed from the Skills Training Council. The major results of the partnership are identified as the following:

- an understanding of what other divisions do
- the development of new programs
- an increase in the number of students in skills training programs
- better and more streamlined information and services
- raised profile of skills training
- ability to respond to government initiatives
- cost savings and avoidance of duplication

An understanding of what other divisions do

One of the major results of the partnership through the Skills Training Council is an understanding on the part of Council members of what other areas of the college do. This understanding leads to more effective referrals and intakes, new partnerships at the program level, and the ability to act quickly and strategically to new initiatives.

In other cases, Council members identify the support they get from knowing what their colleagues are doing. They indicate that members focus on the common good of the college serving the community rather than what is best for their individual program areas.

New programs and new opportunities

Council members, faculty, and staff indicate there are new opportunities for the college by working together.

Council members indicate that, because of working together, they get ideas for new programs and are able to develop new programs in both skills training and post secondary.

New skills training programs were identified as a major result of the work of the Skills Training Council. These programs include pre-apprenticeship programs, short-term training programs, and additional adult upgrading programs. Comments from Council members indicate that their proposals were successful because they could offer all the components and requirements of RFPs when they worked together.

In addition, college departments were able to expand existing programs because of the support of other college departments. One example of this expansion occurred with the English as a Second Language Department. Initially, the department only served international students. Through the Council, the department was able to get support for writing a proposal for domestic ESL training which got funded as a result.

LBS and Job Connect play an integral part in pre-apprenticeship training programs. For example, in short-term Pre-Apprenticeship Cook programs for youth at risk and newcomers offered through Contract Training, adult upgrading was a key component of program so that participants could get their grade 12 equivalent before they began the culinary portion of the program. LBS and Job Connect are also an integral part of Pre-Apprenticeship programs offered through the Skills Training Centre

Council members explain that a program may start in contract training and later move to Continuing Education because it is more effective to have it in Continuing Education. It may also start in Continuing Education and then move to postsecondary. Some of these short-term programs develop into apprenticeship or post secondary programs based on their success and labour market needs. The Council, rather than individual divisions, decides where programs are best situated.

Faculty and staff also comment that there are many pathways for student success and that their own departments are not the only way to go. They stress the advantage of having many pathways and that college business increases because of these various pathways.

An increase in the number of students in skills training programs

When the Council was originally developed, the strategic objective of the college was to increase the numbers of non-traditional learners coming into the college. Since the Council came into being, the number of non-traditional learners has increased significantly with the college continuing to increase its capacity to serve these learners. One faculty member indicates that 400 people signed up for 25 seats in the Pre-

Apprenticeship Welder program. In addition, he notes that a dozen people have signed up for the Pre-Apprenticeship Automotive program even though it has not been advertised yet. He emphasizes that student and employer satisfaction is high and that there is a growing interest in these types of programs.

More successful students

Faculty and staff indicate that as a result of working together, there is greater student success and retention because everyone is committed to helping non-traditional learners who did not have a good experience in school find their place. Student success includes people getting the information they need in one place, finishing a program, and getting employment.

Better and more streamlined information and referral services

Council members, faculty, and staff indicate that students get a better menu of options, better pathways, and more information as a result of the Council. People coming to the college have clearer pathways for finding what they need. In the words of one member, “They don’t have to chase around five different locations to get what they need.” Other comments indicate that clients can move around easily from one area to another. For example, a person can attend a program to see if self-employment is for them. When they are finished, they can go back to Job Connect or choose a program in another area of the college.

Raised profile of skills training

Council members, faculty, and staff report that there is more recognition of the importance of skills training. There is also a better understanding of what different departments can offer. Members explain that there is support from senior management and the college board of directors for this area of college business. Sue Reinhart, Manager of Literacy and Basic Skills, recalls the positive response of the college’s Board of Directors to the skills training side of the business when they heard about the numbers of students and dollars generated from skills training.

The profile of skills training is also raised because there is more knowledge about what the college offers in the community. Some Council members and faculty report their

business has increased because of collaboration with their peers. “We are busier than we have ever been,” emphasizes one member. Another member indicates that there is the recognition that skill training is just as important as postsecondary and has exactly the same rigor.

Faculty and staff say that with a greater percentage of non-traditional learners, this profile is now more respected and valued. In the words of one professor, “We were this nice little secret department having great success. At one point if you didn’t work postsecondary, you shouldn’t work here.” Other comments indicate that faculty and staff see an increased support for skills training and working together from senior management because there is more of push for this kind of training and integration from the provincial government.

Ability to respond to government initiatives

One provincial government initiative that the Council has been able to respond to quickly and effectively is Second Career. Teresa Quinlan explains that right away there were two or three people on the Council who were identified as the ones to work together. As a result of one department not being burdened by having to do the work alone, the college was able to respond to Second Career successfully and in a well-organized manner.

Council members indicate that skills training will become more important over the next few years with the number of adult learners returning to the college for further training and education. These adults may experience difficulty entering postsecondary or may be interested in shorter term training. The college is working with the provincial government to develop new shorter term training programs. Through the Council, the college can respond to these needs and issues quickly and effectively and “come up with different delivery models to suit these learners.” Council members indicate that one of the strategies that can address the needs of adults who have been out of school for many years is to add preparatory programs in skills development before people start in a full-time program. Alternatively, skills training may be integrated into a program and delivered slightly differently.

Cost savings and avoidance of duplication

Council members, faculty, and staff report cost savings and avoidance of duplication from working together. For example, areas that fall under the same umbrella are able to

combine their marketing efforts in one package. This is also helpful for the client in terms of seeing different offerings in one place.

In other cases, time is not wasted and duplication avoided when members are working together on a proposal rather than independently. As well, by consulting with other Council members, people get new information which may influence new programs or initiatives they were planning on introducing.

Greater job satisfaction and productivity

Faculty and staff indicate they have greater job satisfaction and productivity now that they are working a team as opposed to working in isolation. They indicate there is great satisfaction from working with their peers to bring success for the student. One staff member commented that she could more easily phone people to get information for students quickly and efficiently. Faculty and staff also say that they can do more because they can rely on colleagues in other departments.

X. Advice for Other Colleges

Present and former Council members, faculty, and staff offer advice to other colleges interested in starting a similar council to promote integration work among different areas of the college. Their advice includes the following points:

- Make sure the right people are at the table—including all academic areas, Finance, Marketing, and the Registrar's Office.
- Make the Council a formal, mandated committee with senior management support.
- Have a common goal that focuses on student success.
- Understand that it is about benefits for the whole—seeing the bigger picture—rather than the results for a particular division.
- Have a service mentality in terms of helping all potential students and clients but also other departments so that those who come to the college have a positive experience and will tell others to come to the college.
- Make sure that program offerings are based on client needs and that the programs are offered in new and flexible ways to meet these needs.

- Map out in writing all the different skills training activities in your college.
- Ensure the information sharing among different departments is built into regular meetings.
- Allow faculty and staff the flexibility and autonomy to make decisions and be creative in their focus on student success.
- Provide opportunities for front line employees to get together to learn about what each other does.
- Start small and build on your successes.

XI. What is Next?

From a senior management point of view, the college and the Council will be continuing to build on its successes to look at how to make its program delivery more flexible. This includes looking at start times, assessments, and serving the needs of those students who have been out of school a long time.

Council members also note that they will be working with frontline staff in the college to make sure that they have the same networks that they do. This will mean additional professional development for frontline staff.

XII. Analysis of the Success Factors and Effective Practices in the Partnership

This section of the case identifies the success factors and promising practices that make the partnership among LBS, Apprenticeship, Job Connect, and other colleges programs and services work.

Success factors and effective practices in the overall partnership

1. It is important to have the support of senior management and have the partnership mandated with a clear terms of reference through a college Standing Committee.

This ensures that the partnership work continues when senior management personnel changes.

2. Council members are engaged in regular information sharing about internal college and external initiatives, as well as engaging in collaborative action. Both of these components of its work are instrumental to its success.
3. The Council is linked to both the college's strategic plan in terms of increasing the numbers of non-traditional learners and the performance objectives of some of the Council members.
4. The Council working as a formal college entity has raised the profile of skills training as important to the business of the college.
5. The Council includes members from areas such as the Registrar's office and Finance. These members have a big impact on the success of serving non-traditional clients and ensuring the success of skills training at the college.
6. Council members are working with a common goal of service to students and clients. The success of the whole over what each department or program gets is seen as paramount.
7. Through working collectively, Council members have had more success with RFPs, increasing numbers of non-traditional learners and responding quickly to new initiatives than had they worked alone.
8. The Council acts as a role model for faculty and staff to work together on the front line.
9. The Council used processes that were helpful to its development such as documenting what all the different areas of skills training do and having an annual planning cycle.

XIII. Lessons Learned

There were a number of lessons learned through the partnership of the Skills Training Council. These lessons can provide useful information and guidance for other colleges interested in embarking on a similar partnership.

1. Having a formal mandated college committee tied to the college's strategic plan and performance objectives of some of its members ensures commitment to the objectives of partnership and integration.
2. Serving the needs of traditional learners and the skills training side of the business is a continuous improvement process. There is always more to be done.
3. It is very important to have college divisions such as Finance and the Registrar's office represented on the Council to ensure the success of the skills training side of college business.
4. While the importance of a formal network for management is paramount, the development of a similar network is also important for the front line.

Making the Business Case for Integration among Employment Ontario Programs and Services

Case Study: One College Lead for Employment Ontario Services with Cross-over Roles Facilitates Joint Work



Effective partnerships are the key to success for all programs and services we offer; each partner brings a special service or component that simply wouldn't be there if the program/service were offered alone.

Bob Mack, VP Community, Business Development, and Employment Services

I. About Northern College

Northern College of Applied Arts and Technology was established in 1967 and comprises four main campuses located in Porcupine, Kirkland Lake, Haileybury, and Moosonee, Ontario. Northern College serves 66 communities and 17 First Nation communities in a region that covers over 160,000 square kilometers and a population of 123,043 residents. Total full-time student enrolment tops 1,500 students, while the College serves in excess of 9,000 part-time and continuing education students.

Northern College employs 225 full-time and 60 part-time staff, with approximately 100 full-time and 20 part-time employees located at the Porcupine Campus in Timmins. The college offers postsecondary education with 25 certificate programs, 34 diploma programs, and 1 degree program offered in collaboration with Laurentian University. In addition, the College offers Apprenticeship and Pre-Apprenticeship programs as well as Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program opportunities through the School College Work Initiative Regional Planning Team and partnerships with high schools. Northern College also provides Community Employment Services including Job Connect, Summer Jobs Services, Subsidies-NOW, Community Disability Support Program, and Enhanced Employment Placement Initiative.

Partners described in this case, Job Connect and the ACE (Grade 12 equivalency) evening program are located in downtown Timmins, while the Apprenticeship and Academic Upgrading departments are located at the Porcupine Campus just a short distance away. Additional Employment Ontario Programs—Job Connect, TWS/EAS Services, Apprenticeship, and Academic Upgrading—are also located at the Kirkland Lake, Haileybury, and New Liskeard campuses and provide services throughout the college catchment area.

II. Background to the Case Study

Johanne Recoskie, Manager, Employment Services and Academic Upgrading, explains that it became apparent that as Employment Ontario evolved, it would be desirable to have one person internally as the College Lead for all Employment Ontario (EO) programs. She states that the College shares in the Ministry's goal that "Ontario will have the most educated people and highly skilled workforce in North America in order to build the province's competitive advantage." As such, the College wanted to ensure a single point of access for employment and training programs and services, maintain service excellence, and meet the needs of job seekers, apprentices, employers and upgrading students.

Johanne is now the primary internal contact for EO programs and services. As the recently appointed lead manager for all EO programs and services, she can facilitate internal relationships and partnership work for optimum quality service.

This case highlights the successful partnership between Job Connect and the Academic Upgrading Department at Northern College. The two programs have partnered to offer the ACE program at the Timmins Job Connect site off-campus. Both the Job Connect Information and Resource Services (IRS) and the ACE program are offered simultaneously on Wednesday evenings. One of the instructors in the ACE program is also the Job Connect Apprenticeship Consultant. Because of this dual role, she is able to assist clients from the ACE program who meet the requirements of the Apprenticeship/Scholarship/Signing Bonus Incentive. Clients—who may have otherwise been overlooked—have been able to take advantage of this opportunity because of the collaboration between ACE and Job Connect.

The other area this case focuses on is the partnership among Job Connect, Academic Upgrading, and Apprenticeship to plan and carry out Pre-Apprenticeship programs.

III. Purpose of Case Study

This case study describes and reports on promising practices in terms of the following:

- how the overall partnership worked and roles within the partnership
- elements contributing to the success of the partnership along with challenges

- needs the partnership served
- results of the partnership
- the business case for partnering
- advice to other colleges

IV. Research Participants for the Case

- 1 VP: Community, Business Development and Employment Services
- 1 Director: Trades and Technology
- 1 Manager: Employment Services and Academic Upgrading
- 2 Coordinators: AU and Job Connect
- 1 Staff / Professor: Job Connect Consultant, Apprenticeship, and ACE instructor
- 1 Professor: ACE
- 6 Students: 4 pre-apprentice ECE and 2 ACE students

V. How the Partnership Works

Both management and the front line staff indicate that serving the client's needs is key for effective partnerships. As a small college, senior management is more involved with the front line, and personal relationships are well-developed. Partnership work is based on these relationships. Good relationships allow for the easy sharing of information among staff, faculty, and management from Academic Upgrading, Job Connect, and Apprenticeship. "Service to the client based on client needs is an absolute priority," emphasizes Tori Hanson, Director of Trades and Technology. "We do whatever it takes," Barb Charbonneau, Coordinator of the Academic Upgrading Department adds, "The ultimate goal is to assist each learner with no delays or gaps in service."

At the management level, there are regular monthly meetings where EO updates are a standing item on the agenda. When there are specific EO projects that need the support of various departments, Johanne Recoskie, College Lead for EO, will gather support of other internal partners. Johanne comments, "Working within a small college allows you the opportunity to do a walk about and talk personally with faculty and staff from different areas. Together, as partners, projects are planned as required."

In addition to internal partnerships among the three areas, there are also external partners for various programs. Bob Mack, VP Community, Business Development, and Employment Services comments that “Community partnerships provide the practical application to College programs to ensure that students attain the necessary skills that are required for employment.”

Johanne also adds, “Sometimes you have to let others be the lead in the community and you become the partner. You still benefit in so many other ways because the end result is the clients’ needs are met and you gain greater respect from your community partners.”

Job Connect and AU partnership

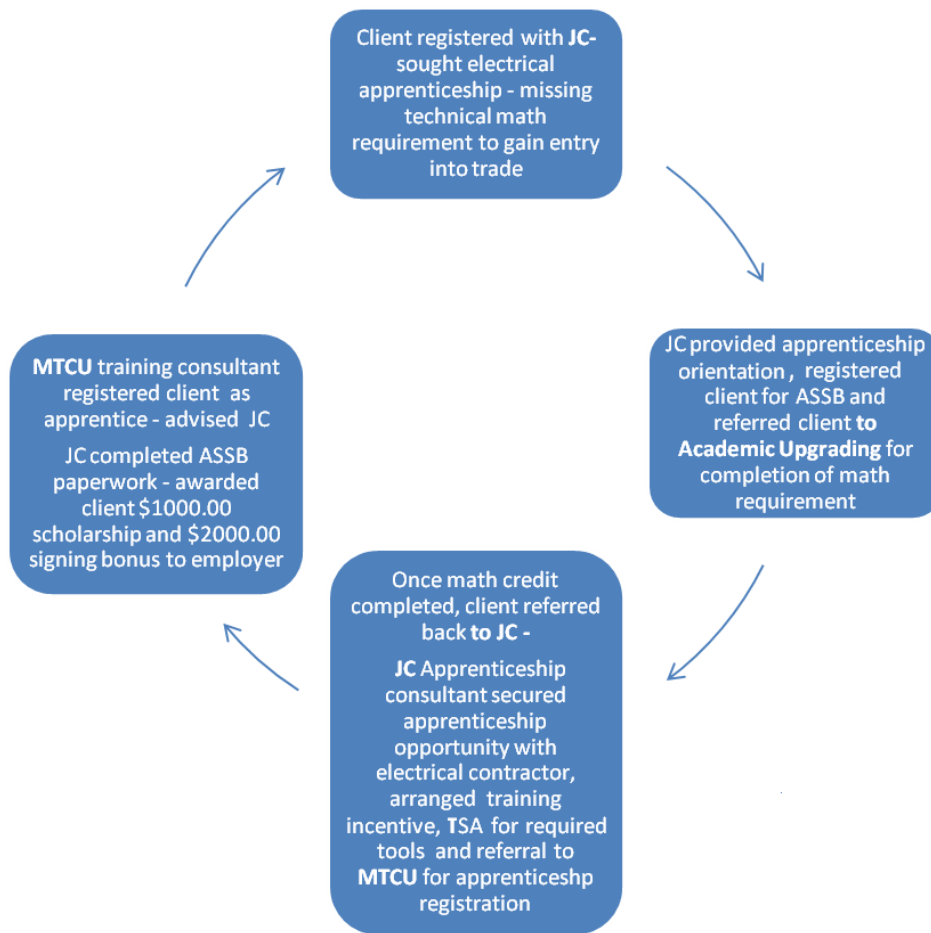
The idea to offer Academic Upgrading in the evening came about because it was clear there was a need for those adults who could not attend daytime programming due to work or family commitments. The ACE Evening Program, a partnership between AU and Job Connect, is offered two nights a week at the Job Connect office in Timmins, i.e., Mondays and Wednesdays from 4:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. There are two part-time faculty who work in the ACE evening program. Both the Job Connect Information and Resource Services (IRS) and the ACE program are offered simultaneously on Wednesday evenings.

Jocelyn Vlasschaert brings the three areas of Academic Upgrading, Job Connect, and Apprenticeship together in this partnership. She is a full-time Employment Consultant at the Timmins Job Connect site and the Apprenticeship Consultant for Job Connect. She is also a part-time ACE instructor in the evening program at the Job Connect site.

As the Apprenticeship Consultant for Job Connect, Jocelyn provides apprenticeship information to clients who use the Information and Resource Services of Job Connect to college staff and high schools. Jocelyn also works in partnership with the apprenticeship division at the college to assist with the development of apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship RFPs. She collects information from employers for the RFP process and garners letters of support from them. She liaises with employers and MTCU’s Apprenticeship Branch. She provides information on apprenticeship to Pre-Apprenticeship students and helps them transition to employment. She also markets new Pre-Apprenticeship programs to both Job Connect and ACE clientele. Clients who visit the Timmins Job Connect office during the day can also get information from her on Academic Upgrading. Jocelyn notes that as part of the partnership’s work to meet collective goals and serve client needs, she has established and implemented a referral process between Northern College (Academic Upgrading, Student Services, and Job Connect) and the Apprenticeship Branch of MTCU.

Aline Camirand, Employment Services Coordinator for Job Connect, explains that it is the Ministry's strategic direction to assign responsibility for apprenticeship placements to Job Connect and other Employment Ontario services. She indicates that one of the academic upgrading pieces was driven by the need for clients to be eligible for apprenticeships. For example, some clients might need courses such as Apprenticeship Math or Physics or to get a grade 12 equivalency. She adds, "A common link has been established by having an individual who is a good resource person for both ACE and Job Connect apprenticeship. If clients have applied for an apprenticeship job which requires the math component, they can be referred to ACE to obtain that component. Similarly, if ACE students are interested in a Pre-Apprenticeship program or an apprenticeship and meet the requirements, they can be referred to the Job Connect program." This particular situation is critical for the success of the Job Connect Apprenticeship Scholarship/Signing Bonus initiative.

Partnership Case Study: *The referral process between AU, JC and MTCU apprenticeship facilitated this client's entry into a trade.* ¹⁴



A local student left grade 12 without completing grade 12 apprenticeship/technical math. A year later, he discovered he wanted to pursue an electrical apprenticeship. Since technical math is a requirement for the trade, he was directed to academic (ACE) upgrading by the apprenticeship consultant at Job Connect and advised of his eligibility for the Apprenticeship Scholarship Signing Bonus (ASSB). After completing his math credit, he was referred back to Job Connect. The apprenticeship consultant at Job Connect marketed the client to electrical contractors in the area. A 24 week training placement was secured with a local electrical contractor. The JC apprenticeship consultant sent a referral form to MTCU apprenticeship branch advising them of the employer and candidate's intention to register. MTCU's training consultant confirmed the registration. Since the candidate met all the ASSB requirements, he received a \$1,000 apprenticeship scholarship and \$400 of training support for tools. His employer received a \$2,000 signing bonus and a \$4,000 wage incentive over 25 weeks.

¹⁴ Case submitted by Jocelyn Vlasschaert, Northern College

Job Connect, Academic Upgrading, and Apprenticeship work together in Pre-Apprenticeship programs

Northern College Pre-Apprenticeship programs combine the expertise of partners to deliver a full and well-rounded service to the client.

Academic Upgrading is the first component of a Pre-Apprenticeship program delivered in the first 10 to 12 weeks. Curriculum content is tailored to the needs of the group, leading to apprenticeship in a specific trade, while allowing individuals to achieve ACE (Grade 12 equivalency).

At the end of the Academic Upgrading component, individuals who require but have not achieved the ACE level to register as apprentices are supported through an individual learning plan. The individual learning plan involves a close partnership between the Academic Upgrading and Apprenticeship departments. Accommodations and arrangements are made to allow the student the opportunity to go on with the Pre-Apprenticeship components while persisting to work on and eventually meet and achieve the ACE requirements.

Job Connect is also a very active partner in the delivery of Pre-Apprenticeship programs at Northern College. During the Employability Skills component of the program, Job Connect is crucial in preparing the students for the job market by teaching résumé writing, job search, and interview skills to the group. At the end of the program, Job Connect becomes an active and supportive link to the students by providing employers with incentives to hire and register the apprentices.

Elements in the partnership that made it work

Managers, faculty, and staff all agree that the core elements that allow them to work together well are the effective relationships they have built and the mutual commitment to client service. They work together to meet targets, to exchange ideas and best practices, and to resolve issues. From a faculty perspective, quarterly meetings with colleagues at different sites, case studies, and networking with others are important elements of the partnership work.

“You can’t always put a dollar value to a feeling of accomplishment among partners. If you don’t have partners, you won’t move forward,” says Johanne Recoskie. “Our philosophy is to ensure that clients move efficiently and effectively through the process and that we are as

responsive as we can be.” Tori Hanson also states, “You can’t be overly protective of your work. The clients’ needs supersede everything.”

The partnership works because there is an effort to make sure that everyone is involved in the planning stages at the beginning of a program. Attention is given to collective communication, valuing each partner, and addressing challenges such as finances, accessibility, and the role of each partner. Bob Mack remarks, “Effective partnerships are the key to success for all programs and services we offer; each partner brings a special service or component that simply wouldn’t be there if the program/service is offered alone.”

Jocelyn Vlasschaert indicates that working in the Apprenticeship department as a professional development assignment was a valuable experience in understanding the perspective of that department. This experience has provided her with a broader understanding of the different programs and enabled her to facilitate recruitment.

Challenges in the partnership

One challenge indicated by management is changing the personal ownership philosophy to one of common ownership when a new program joins the pool of programs. The college has overcome this challenge by developing partnerships. A trade-off for all partners is sometimes the best solution for the client, employer, community, or region. The benefits of common ownership are a community focus, service learning mentality, and the ability to build community networks.

For Academic Upgrading, it can be challenging having the ACE program off-site in the evening. However, having an individual there who is connected to all the programs eliminates this challenge. A related issue was offering Resource Centre services once a week in the evening. This meant scheduling Job Connect staff to work on Wednesday evenings on a rotational basis once every six to eight weeks. At the onset, there was some resistance to the evening shift change; however, it did not take long before it was no longer an issue and there was total staff buy-in. In accordance with the Support Staff Collective Agreement, notice of shift changes also had to be sent well in advance to the Human Resources Department to be discussed at the Union College Committee level.

Challenges in the referral process were addressed by having an informal referral process between the Academic Upgrading Department and Job Connect ACE evening program. Partners agreed to enhance communication to ensure all instructors were informed of any new processes for student exits.

Another challenge is the downturn in the economy, making it hard to find placements, get employer involvement, and receive donations of equipment. Geography between campuses can also be a challenge in terms of not knowing faculty and other colleagues at the college. This challenge can be overcome by providing more opportunities for front line staff to meet.

VI. Results of the Partnership

Student perspectives

Pre-apprentices in the ECE program noted that their goals were to make an adjustment back to school, complete the course, and go on to further education at the college. One person noted that family issues and obstacles in one's personal life can make it difficult to achieve goals. These students indicated their pre-apprentice course is a building block to other careers, continuing in the field, and a stepping-stone for future goals.

Other students in the ACE program had goals to complete their Grade 12 equivalency through ACE and go on into other programs such as the ECE Pre-Apprenticeship program or Office Administration. In the future, these students would like to take more courses at the college. One person would like to open her own childcare business.

The Pre-Apprenticeship students in the ECE program commented on the usefulness of the ACE component of their program. They indicated it was a good refresher and it prepared them well for college-level entrance into ECE. They were proud to have successfully completed the ACE component of the ECE Pre-Apprenticeship program and to be able to continue to achieve in other areas of the program. The ACE students felt they had gained better confidence, determination, and knowledge.

All students reported that they had received a lot of support from the college. One person said, "The program coordinator [ECE Pre-Apprenticeship] is a support system and is very aware of personal situations." The student noted that there was open communication, and email and phone support, along with opportunities for counselling and tutoring. Other students said that no problem went unresolved. One person indicated that the ECE Pre-Apprenticeship course was scheduled in a way to allow students with children to manage school and home; otherwise, they would not have been able to attend. She noted there was a good success rate in the course with 11 out of 12 completing the ACE component.

Students found their instructors approachable, encouraging, and supportive. They appreciated the college personnel who came in from different areas to explain the requirements of apprenticeship. They also received help and support in finding employment. One student had support from the college to complete her upgrading in time so she could register for the ECE program starting in the fall semester.

Students suggested that more Pre-Apprenticeship programs should be offered through the College. They emphasized the importance of these free programs. They also suggested that upgrading be available during the summer so people could be ready to enrol in courses in the fall.

Management perspectives

Management indicated that there has been more collaboration and increased partnerships in the community. For instance, a community networking group to provide opportunities for front line staff to network and share information has been revived. This group, entitled “Timmins Agency Networking Group” (TANG), meets on a monthly basis and rotates meeting locations between service providers.

There is increased enrollment in Academic Upgrading and numbers and referrals to the college have increased—thanks in part to the Second Career Strategy Program.

In apprenticeship and workforce training, set targets have been met and there is an increase in the numbers of mature students who are successful (7 out of 10 get employment). Students are successful because of internal and external partnerships. More programs have been offered through different sources of funding. Over seven years, the Department has expanded from one apprenticeship program to fourteen.

Faculty and staff perspectives

From a faculty perspective, retention rates for students have increased. This increase is due to effective assessment and the selection of the appropriate option for the client. By working in a unified way, clients are provided with information about resources in the community based on their needs. The numbers in the ACE evening program have increased and more students are completing their upgrading. The Apprenticeship Branch is also referring more clients who need upgrading before they can take a course or register for apprenticeship.

There have been an increased number of clients registered in apprenticeships. The integration of Job Connect, Apprenticeship, and Academic Upgrading has resulted in an increase in candidates accessing the Apprenticeship Signing Bonus Initiative. “An interlinked relationship is developed as each program is aware of what the clients’ needs are and in the best interests of the client where they should be referred”, says Aline Camirand.

VII. The Business Case for Joint Work

At the centre of the business case for joint work is optimal service to the client. One formal intake assessment determines the best pathway for the client. Successful client service sustains effective programs and translates into good financial return. Joint work has resulted in increased enrolments in apprenticeships, more Job Connect clients, and overall college growth.

VIII. Advice for Other Colleges

Management’s key advice for other colleges is to build relationships within their college. It is important to get to know people beyond one’s own programs. This relationship building is important at management and staff levels. Relationships lead to partnerships. Other advice is to hire people who have a passion for what they do and will keep the focus on the student. It is also important to look for opportunities that address community needs and build a culture of cooperation.

Comments from staff and faculty echo Management’s sentiments. They emphasize open communication, eagerness to deliver a program, and the interlinking of the three programs through a common staff person. They also stress the importance of making students feel comfortable.

Some specific recommendations are to:

- meet with partners: invite all project partners to an informal planning session to get to know each other and build relationships
- make sure everyone understand the big picture
- develop referral forms and protocols

- have a partnership networking group to review what is working and what is not
- be flexible in adapting programs to meet new needs and increased numbers

IX. What is Next?

Northern College is a strong proponent of building relationships and partnerships that inevitably lead to offering better products and services to clients. Most recently, the college has been developing a new partnership with the Monteith Correctional Centre and the Iroquois Falls Learning Centre to deliver much-needed Academic Upgrading at all levels for inmates at the correctional centre. The program is intended to provide a rehabilitative and constructive aspect to the facility.

There are several future plans in terms of partnership work. One plan is to expand on the existing relationship with local school boards and to develop one hub for an intake assessment process to establish clear paths to education.

Another plan is to build on what has been developed in the areas of apprenticeship and workforce training—especially with Aboriginal groups and remote communities.

Last, but not least, four more Academic Upgrading sites are pending for the James Bay Coastal area. Northern College has responded to the Call for Proposals under the “Workplace and Community Workforce Literacy & Essential Skills Project” and is awaiting a response from the Ministry.

X. Analysis of the Success Factors and Effective Practices in the Partnership

This section of the case identifies the success factors and promising practices that make the partnership among Academic Upgrading, Apprenticeship, and Job Connect work.

Success factors and effective practices in the overall partnership

1. Management, faculty and staff have developed personal relationships that facilitate the partnership work they do. The needs of the client/student and client access and success are paramount to the process.
2. The partners aim for a seamless system of “one stop shopping” for students and clients. There is an overall atmosphere of ongoing support, encouragement, and flexibility which appeals to the students.
3. Partners see that they can accomplish more collectively than individually. They do not feel an ownership to a particular area. They see that the students benefit from this partnership work.
4. Management meets once a month with an EO update as a standing item. The manager, who is now the EO lead, facilitates partnerships for projects by visiting each partner personally to get their buy-in. Project partners work together from the beginning to plan and implement these projects.
5. Flexible ACE upgrading support is provided to accommodate the needs of students and to meet their timetables. This includes evening programs at a convenient location.
6. Academic Upgrading is an integral component of the College’s Pre-Apprenticeship programs.
7. The College partners leverage their external partnerships in the community to enhance their own internal partnership work. The return is a benefit for the whole community.
8. The partners are able to work quickly to get students into programs and serve other needs.

XI. Lessons Learned

There were a number of lessons learned through the partnership. These lessons can provide useful information and guidance for other colleges interested in embarking on a similar project.

1. Everyone wins from partnership work and with partnerships comes success that could not be achieved through independent action alone. There is much to gain such as new colleagues, more contacts, more college visibility, and greater professional satisfaction.
2. All decisions should be student-focused.
3. It is critical to understand each person's role in the partnership with the ultimate goal of assisting each learner with no delays or gaps in service.
4. Open communication in the partnership is important as is a mentality of continuous improvement.
5. Open communication and a supportive environment for clients are also essential.

Making the Business Case for Integration among Employment Ontario Programs and Services

Case Study: Partnerships to Address Plumber Math Results in 100% Success Rate at St. Lawrence College



The investment needed is small, there is a big bang for the buck, and it's all about student success.

Nancy Scovil, Associate Dean, Justice Studies and Applied Arts

I. About St. Lawrence College

St. Lawrence College serves over 6,000 full-time students in 80 academic programs through its School of Business, Computer, and Engineering Technology; Health Sciences; Human Studies/Applied Arts; and Skilled Trades programs. The College has approximately 20,000 part-time registrants in on-campus, online, correspondence, and contract training courses each year. There are three campuses located in Kingston, Brockville, and Cornwall. Currently, 829 full time and part time staff works at the college, including 130 students who work part time.¹⁵

Project partners from College Preparation, Apprenticeship, and Job Connect are located at the Kingston campus.

II. Background to the Case Study

In 2006, three leaders—Nancy Scovil, Associate Dean, Justice Studies and Applied Arts (including College Preparation); Russ Phin, Associate Dean, Apprenticeship; and Janet Ashford, Coordinator, Job Connect—formed a working committee at St. Lawrence College in Kingston, Ontario. Management from these three areas began to meet regularly, usually on a monthly basis. The initial purpose was to share information in terms of what was going on in each of the three areas. The meetings were informal but regular.

In one of the meetings, Apprenticeship indicated that there was a group of plumber apprentices struggling with Math. The manager from College Preparation indicated that the apprentices who needed help with math could join an upgrading course specific to their needs for apprenticeship math, and that the program could be scheduled during the lunch hour for approximately two hours a week over six weeks to accommodate the apprentices who would attend. All students

¹⁵ See St. Lawrence College website at <http://www.sl.on.ca/index.aspx?iPageID=3453&iMenuID=2&iCurrID=149>

enrolled in the upgrading project successfully completed their apprenticeship math course. The project ran a second time with the same results. Nancy Scovil explains, “It was an immediate problem with an available solution.”

III. Purpose of the Case Study

This case study describes and reports on promising practices in terms of:

- how the partnership worked and roles within the partnership
- elements contributing to the success of the partnership along with challenges
- needs the partnership served
- results of the partnership
- the business case for partnering
- advice to other colleges

IV. Research Participants for the Case

- 3 managers: College Preparation, Apprenticeship, Job Connect
- 1 support staff: College Preparation
- 1 professor: Apprenticeship
- 3 plumber apprentices
- 2 employers: Plumbing

V. How the Partnership Works

Management from the three areas—College Preparation (the College’s adult upgrading program), Apprenticeship, and Job Connect—explain that that they formed their partnership so they could meet regularly to talk about common interests and issues and how they could all work together. “It was not a big committee. We set our own agenda and it was very informal,” says Nancy Scovil. Russ Phin adds, “The secret to our success is that Nancy, Janet, and I meet regularly to talk about common interests or issues in the context of how we can work together for

a common goal to increase student success.” Janet Ashford also notes, “The partners feel comfortable to offer input; no one feels threatened and we want to share. We are serving the needs of the clients without ownership.”

Student and client success is the overall goal of the partnership. Each area plays a different role in the overall partnership. For example, from an Apprenticeship perspective, the overall role is to prepare students for a career that they choose and help them succeed. College Preparation, on the other hand, was interested in ways it could work with Apprenticeship to help students be more successful. Job Connect provides information about apprenticeship opportunities to its employment clients and goes into adult upgrading classes to tell students about the resources of Job Connect around employment services. Job Connect also refers people to the adult upgrading program. College Preparation also comes to Job Connect and does assessments with Job Connect clients who may need upgrading.

St. Lawrence College has also been involved in the College Sector project *Engaging the Front Line*. The college is now looking at the next step for engaging the front line.

Specific partnerships to offer extra math classes to plumber apprentices

Russ Phin explains how the specific partnership to offer extra math classes to plumber apprentices came about. “At one of our meetings I happened to mention a problem with math for some of the plumbing apprentices. Nancy said that she could help. We started with six students and then approximately fifteen started attending.”

He explains that College Preparation was able to offer and provide funding for an extra math class specific to the needs of the apprentices. Apprenticeship supplied the instructor because their plumber math instructor was available to teach the course. The instructor met with the Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) instructor to determine what level of math to put the apprentices in. The apprentices fit into LBS 3 and were registered accordingly.

Because the College Preparation math curriculum was not geared to plumbers, the apprenticeship and LBS math instructors looked at math resources in order to develop the course for plumber apprentices. The plumber math instructor looked at several math books, and “put his own spin on it” using materials from each book to tailor the class to exactly what the apprentices needed.

The first class ran once a week for an hour and a half before the regular math class over a period of five weeks. The second time the class was run it was over six weeks.

David Lemmon, the apprenticeship math instructor, emphasizes that students get a lot more attention in the smaller classes and that they are less afraid to ask questions because everyone attending is “in the same boat.” He reports the value of having a math instructor from the trade is that the instructor knows the terminology, the industry, and the apprentices, and is comfortable with the materials. In addition, instructors working in the trade have more credibility with apprentices over instructors outside the trade because they can relate to the job situation.

Elements in the partnership that make it work

Management from College Preparation, Apprenticeship, and Job Connect agree that there are common elements that make their partnership work. One of the main elements is the common goal of student success. Other elements include common interests, regular meetings, mutual respect, and the ability to share resources. Janet Ashford puts it this way: “We’re really passionate about what we do.” She adds that the partnership represents a global way of thinking and that each partner gains information and resources.

Challenges in the partnership

No specific overall challenges were identified in the partnership by managers from the three areas. However, from a College Preparation perspective, there were some challenges that occurred when putting together the math course for plumber apprentices. These challenges centred on paperwork and registering apprentices in the extra math classes.

One challenge was that there was a lot of paperwork. Another challenge was that after the initial enrolment, more apprentices began attending the math class without enrolling. As a result, College Preparation did not get the credit for these learners. In addition, because these apprentices were functioning at an LBS level and registered as such, their exit status “to Apprenticeship” was not captured on the internal information management system (IMS). IMS records only the (OBS) students who proceed to apprenticeship. “The Ministry should recognize all upgrading students who have prepared for and proceed to apprenticeships. Not all apprenticeships require full grade 12 math skills,” says Nancy Scovil.

Another potential challenge had to do with the students who were enrolled in the math class. Because they were not going to finish the class, this would leave an ungraded course on their file. The solution was to withdraw them. It is important to ensure that all apprentices are registered in the class and that they complete exit forms.

VI. Needs the Partnership Serves

Overall, the partnership among the three areas of Apprenticeship, College Preparation, and Job Connect serves the need of ensuring student and client success. Russ Phin puts it this way: “The common goal of student success drives everything we do.” He goes to say that retention is a problem in that if students fail their first semester, they may not come back. He emphasizes the importance of both apprentices and their employers realizing that they got good value for their money and, most importantly, their time.

The partnership between College Preparation and Apprenticeship served specific needs. Apprenticeship indicated that there were twelve to fifteen plumber apprentices who were probably going to fail math. Plumber math classes are large, with approximately 40 students. As a result, apprentices may not feel comfortable answering questions in front of their peers. They may also feel that math is not important. David Lemmon, the plumbing math instructor, notes “The level of math I am teaching is about Grade 8 or 9 in the apprenticeship program. Probably two-thirds of the people in my classes are not able to function at that level, particularly in geometry, algebra, and trigonometry. They have either forgotten it or were just squeaking by to begin with.” He also states that apprentices have to pass math to continue in the apprenticeship. He indicates that the importance of math on the job will depend on what apprentices are doing on the job. He says, “Are they going to be an estimator costing a job or just using a measuring tape running pipe?” For the average apprentice, parts of the math we are teaching will be crucial. Most of the math will be more relevant to someone aspiring to be more than a labourer on the job site.”

VII. Results of the Partnership

The extra math classes for plumber apprentices were offered twice, once in 2006, and then again in 2007. All 13 apprentices from the two classes who took their plumber math exam passed it.

Student perspectives

The three former students interviewed for this case who took the extra math class attest to its success in helping them reach their goals. They found that extra time and the individual help in the class helped build their confidence and learn the math they needed for their apprenticeship.

One former apprentice is now a licensed plumber. He took the extra classes when he was in Level 2 training. He attended the extra math class because he wanted extra time to learn the math. He wanted “to get a better grade, know how to do the work, use the math in the field, and apply formulas on the job.” He notes the extra math classes broke everything down and the instructor could address individual difficulties—a challenging task in the main math class with 40 people. He emphasizes the importance of the math in terms of the bigger picture. He says, “If you don’t get your math, you don’t get your licence. There’s the bigger picture to apply. When you have a family and kids, you’re thinking about your career and more money.” He also notes that he appreciates the fact that the instructor was from the industry and knew plumbing; he also notes that the instructor was a good math teacher. He concludes, “It was a lot [of math] to have in one day. When it comes down to it, if the instructor is willing to help you, you have to make the sacrifice.”

Another apprentice who took extra math classes is currently attending Level 2 schooling. He took the extra math classes two years ago while attending Level 1. He explains that he has always had trouble with math and that the math he learned was not geared to the trade. When he started his trade schooling, he had been out of school for six years. He indicates that he needed a refresher and extra time to learn the math. He says “It’s not hard but [you] need extra time and attention.” He also notes that he needed extra time to prepare for the exam because he does not like tests. He emphasizes that he would not have passed the final math exam without the pre-tests provided in the extra math class.

Similarly, a third apprentice also indicates that he has always had trouble with math and felt he needed extra help. His goal is to get above an 80 percent for the Red Seal. He found the individual help from the instructor very good as was the opportunity to go over the basics. He learned all the formulas for calculating 90s (angles), pipe lengths and fitting allowances, and increased his confidence. He explains that in the beginning, he was frustrated, but the extra math helped to break things down. “It was perfect,” he says. “I got all the help I needed.”

Management perspectives

From a management perspective, the partnership among the three areas of College Preparation, Apprenticeship, and Job Connect has many results. One result is that together, as partners, they can find easy ways to solve problems. They can also share resources, learn more about each other’s programs, and make programs and services more accessible. More awareness in the community about the College’s programs and services and credibility in the community are also results of the overall partnership.

In the case of the partnership between College Preparation and Apprenticeship for extra math classes for plumber apprentices, there were many results. The partnership built a better relationship and had actual results with the apprentices being able to pass their plumber math exam. As well, the partnership served as role model to other parts of the college as to how to be non-partisan in one's approach to problem solving. Another result from the partnership was increased retention, student satisfaction, and, importantly, student success.

In addition, it is important that employers feel that there is good value for the time the apprentice was attending school and that apprentices have learned tangible skills. Russ Phin explains, "The faculty and our programs are well respected in the community. The employers encourage their apprentices to attend; they realize that we will do whatever it takes to help their employees—our students—to acquire the skills they need to succeed in the program. They care about how skilled the apprentices are on the job after graduation. If we teach a good course, [and] provide the skills and knowledge required for the apprenticeship program, the students will be a greater asset to the employer and have a higher rate of success when challenging their Certificate of Qualification exam."

Faculty perspectives

The professor teaching the extra class felt that the class gave the apprentices more confidence when they attended the main math class. He found that some people who had previously been a disturbance in the class or sitting in the back began to sit in the front and be more attentive. "At least one student who had been a problem, [the] class clown, who took the extra math, is now behaving calmly in the intermediate level," he says. He also notes that these students would probably have more confidence when they moved from basic to intermediate and advanced levels of school. He also indicates that he heard from the students that they were glad they had the extra help because they would not have passed otherwise.

One of the challenges this professor identifies is the difficulty in keeping the attention of these students for both the regular math class and the extra math (because they were offered back to back). He addresses this challenge by observing their attention levels and giving them breaks when needed.

Employer perspectives

Two employers from two different plumbing and heating businesses who have hired apprentices attending school at St. Lawrence College provided input into this case. One employer

participates in the college's Job Connect program. The employers indicate that they are looking for certain qualities in apprentices they hire. These qualities include the following:

- punctuality
- intelligence
- good work ethic
- good mechanical skills and previous use of tools
- willingness to learn the trade
- flexibility in terms of working hours
- good math and English skills

Both employers speak about the importance of good math and reading and writing skills. They notice that there are issues when it comes to grammar, spelling, and penmanship in writing—especially work orders. They also note that a grade 12 completion is not necessarily a guarantee of these skills.

The employers note positive changes when an apprentice comes back from an in school portion of their apprenticeship training at St. Lawrence College. One employer observes, “You see more confidence and knowledge after they complete their schooling and come back to work.” The other notes, “The apprentices seem to be learning. They bring back new knowledge and apply it to their work.”

VIII. The Business Case for Joint Work

Management describes the business case for joint work. The joint approach to problem solving, information sharing, and sharing resources among College Preparation, Apprenticeship, and Job Connect means all the resources are available to create better access to programs for students and to increase success. The college has a good reputation in the community as a result. Employers and students believe they are getting good value in sending apprentices to school. The partnership contributes to improved student retention. The apprentices are successful and, subsequently, return to the college for their Level 2 and 3.

“The college needs students ... students who successfully complete their programs. Education is like a business. If we don't have students and employers who are satisfied, can demonstrate that they have the skills required to compete in this economy or provide a valuable contribution to their employer, we will quickly lose market share, credibility, and future business. Without

students and their need to learn we wouldn't have a college," stresses Russ Phin. "It is important that we all work together to achieve this goal." Janet Ashford agrees. She says, "Think of it as a business. How do I grow my business and think differently to make things work for the customer?" Nancy Scovil adds, "The investment needed is small, there is a big bang for the buck, and it's all about student success. The students can then go on to further studies because of this investment."

IX. Advice for Other Colleges

Management emphasizes how not working together impacts negatively on the whole community. Nancy Scovil recommends, "Keep it simple, focus on what's best for the students, and consider the instructor's credibility as well as the relevance of the material to the students."

From an apprenticeship perspective, understanding what each department is doing across the college is particularly important because of the differences in how the trades programs and postsecondary programs operate at the college. In the past, there has been a stigma in the community about how the trades were viewed. Although this is getting better, the stigma is still there.

In addition, the trades do not fit with the semester system or the postsecondary collective agreement. "Skilled trades are a different and a unique component of postsecondary education and the need for skills training is growing exponentially. It is very important that the college system in Ontario provide the flexibility and accessibility to accommodate the needs of this rapidly increasing segment of the student population. It is our responsibility to help the employers succeed by providing their employees with the necessary skills required to compete in today's global economy," states Russ Phin.

"Working together, knowing each other's programs, and sharing resources just makes life easier for everyone," says Janet Ashford.

David Lemmon also comments, "The partnership was beneficial to the college because it keeps the students coming back; it's good for the reputation of the College, and there was no charge to the students who were getting extra help to become a plumber." He also indicates that it might be a consideration to look at offering the extra math class at a different time rather than just before the regular math class. He also recommends that extra math classes be offered within regular school times.

X. What is Next?

Management indicates that they will continue to meet regularly and work together to solve problems as they arise. Looking forward, an information session is planned for front line college staff. This future session is a follow-up to the sessions offered through *Engaging the Front Line*, another College Sector project focused on the integration of college services from the point of view of the front line. The importance of students who work in the Information Kiosk at the College understanding Apprenticeship, College Preparation, and Job Connect was emphasized.

The possibility of supporting other trades through the College's adult upgrading program on an as-needed basis was also brought forward as a possibility.

XI. Analysis of the Success Factors and Effective Practices in the Partnership

This section of the case identifies the success factors and promising practices that make the partnership among College Preparation, Apprenticeship, and Job Connect work.

Success factors and effective practices in the overall partnership

1. Management from the three areas involved see the value in meeting to share information, share resources, and solve problems together as they come up. They share a common goal of student/client success.
2. Partners see that they can accomplish more collectively rather than individually. They do not feel an ownership to a particular area. They see that their own departments, the College as a whole, and students benefit from this partnership work. The partners meet regularly (i.e., once a month). They are able to identify problem areas and work to solve problems quickly as they arise.
3. The partnership work is informal.

4. The relationship among partners has grown stronger over time as the partnership has experienced tangible results. The relationship process developed over time is seen as a normal course of events.
5. The partners are all located at the same campus.
6. The partners are expanding their work to include and influence others at their college

Success factors and effective practices in the Plumber Math Project

1. Apprenticeship and College Preparation worked together to solve a practical need for plumber apprentices. Apprenticeship had the need for extra classes and College Preparation had the resources and funding to do it.
2. The extra math classes were offered within the time frame of the Plumber Apprenticeship program, making it convenient for those apprentices who needed to access it.
3. The math professor had credibility with the students as both a licensed plumber in the trade and their regular math instructor in their program.
5. The math professor understood the needs of the students attending the math classes. He tailored the course to their needs using examples, situations, and materials relevant to the plumber trade. He broke the math to be taught into manageable pieces and focused on individual needs. He provided pre-tests for practice to prepare students for the plumber math exam. These strategies enabled all the apprentices in the math class to pass their plumber math exam.
6. The partnership results had countable, tangible results.

XII. Lessons Learned

There were a number of lessons learned through the partnership to develop extra math classes for the plumber apprentices. These lessons provide useful information and guidance for other colleges interested in embarking on a similar project.

1. All college personnel involved in such a project need to meet at the beginning of the project to ensure effective and accurate communication—especially around the adult upgrading requirements with respect to student registration and student exits. This will ensure that College Preparation gets the maximum benefit from its role in the partnership in being able to “count” all apprentices who attended the class.
2. There needs to be a systems change to allow College Preparation to record that those students who are functionally at an LBS Level are going on to Apprenticeship programs when they exit.
3. It is important to exit the apprentices out of the extra classes before they are finished so they do not show up as an “incomplete.”
4. Extra math classes must be offered at a time convenient to apprentices during their time on campus; many have to travel and can not come back to the college to attend an extra class.

APPENDIX A: Focus Group and Interview Questions



Making the Business Case for Integration (Academic Upgrading, Apprenticeship, Pre-Apprenticeship and Job Connect)

Focus group and Interview Questions

Questions for Management

1. How do Academic Upgrading, Job Connect and Apprenticeship work together?
2. What are your common goals? How do you actually work together to achieve these common goals? What role does each partner play?
3. What protocols do you have in place for working together, if any?
4. What elements are in place to make the partnership work?
5. What, if anything is challenging in the partnership? How did you overcome any challenges?
6. What were the results of working together—for students, departments, the community and the college as a whole?
7. What is the business case for partnering like this?
8. What advice would you have for other colleges who want to work together in the way you do?
9. What tools and resources have you developed that could be shared with other colleges?
10. What plans do you have for further integration work in the future?
11. What have you learned from working together?

Questions for Faculty and Staff

1. What is your role in partnership?
2. How do you work together to achieve collective goals?
3. What has worked well in partnership? What has been challenging?
4. What have students/clients achieved as a result of the partnership?
5. What have you achieved?
6. What have you learned from working together?
7. What advice would you have for other colleges who want to work together in the way you did?
8. What new tools or resources did you develop?
9. What would you do differently?

Questions for Students

1. What programs are you attending/did you attend at [this] campus?
2. What are you doing now (if finished)?
3. What were your goals?
4. What have you achieved for yourself?
5. What has worked well about the services and programs you have received the college?
6. What would you tell your friends about them?
7. Is there anything you would change?
8. What are your future goals?

Questions for Employers

1. What is your business—what do you do and how many people work in your organization?
2. How many people have you hired from the pre-apprenticeship program or have as apprentices?
3. What are you looking for when you hire? What kind of Math/Computer/English skills are you looking for?
4. How well do you get these skills when your employees have attended the college?
5. How is the relationship with the college and programs like these important to your business?

Questions for Community Partners

1. What does your organization do and what is your role?
2. What is your role in the partnership?
3. What makes the partnership work?
4. What is challenging in the partnership?
5. What are the results of the partnership?
6. What have you learned?

Appendix B: Sample Tools to Further Integration Work

The following documents represent samples of how the participating colleges in this study have worked to integrate programs and services:

- Pre-Apprenticeship Checklist, Lambton College
- Job Connect Referral Form, Northern College
- Referral Form, Conestoga College
- Pathways to Apprenticeship, Conestoga College
- Applying the Apprenticeship Advantage
- College Practices: Skills Training Council, Niagara College of Applied Arts and Technology

Pre-Apprenticeship Checklist

<u>Role/Responsibility</u>	<u>Primary Responsibility</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Hire Coordinator <input type="checkbox"/> Advertising <input type="checkbox"/> Interview team <input type="checkbox"/> Hire/paperwork	Manager, Gov. and Access Manager, Gov. and Access Manager, Gov. and Access
<input type="checkbox"/> Schedule <input type="checkbox"/> Set draft schedule <input type="checkbox"/> Course codes to registrar <input type="checkbox"/> Determine/secure room <input type="checkbox"/> Determine/secure labs <input type="checkbox"/> Develop finalized student schedule ensure all students registered in college information system	Director, Student Success Manager, Gov. and Access Manager, Gov. and Access Manager, Gov. and Access Coordinator
<input type="checkbox"/> Ace Instructors <input type="checkbox"/> Advertise for instructors <input type="checkbox"/> Interview team <input type="checkbox"/> Hire/paperwork	Manager, Gov. and Access Manager, Gov. and Access Manager, Gov. and Access
<input type="checkbox"/> Arborist Instructors <input type="checkbox"/> Advertising for instructors <input type="checkbox"/> Interview team <input type="checkbox"/> Hire/paperwork <input type="checkbox"/> Order texts for ACE <input type="checkbox"/> Order lab equipment for ACE <input type="checkbox"/> Order texts for Arborist <input type="checkbox"/> Order lab equipment for Arborist	Manager, Skilled Trades Centre Manager, Skilled Trades Centre Manager, Skilled Trades Centre Manager, Gov. and Access/Coordinator Manager, Gov. and Access/Coordinator Manager, Skilled Trades Centre Manager, Skilled Trades Center
<input type="checkbox"/> Communication <input type="checkbox"/> Program communication <input type="checkbox"/> Ministry liaison <input type="checkbox"/> Brochure <input type="checkbox"/> Liaison with Faculty/Program <input type="checkbox"/> Sponsors/students regarding progress/attendance/supports required Reports to MTCU	All Manager, Gov. and Access Manager, Gov. and Access/Coordinator Coordinator Coordinator/Manager, Gov. and Access
<input type="checkbox"/> Job Readiness Training/Job Placements/Follow up	Coordinator/Job Connect Employment Consultants
<input type="checkbox"/> Graduation <input type="checkbox"/> Details for ceremony <input type="checkbox"/> Guest list <input type="checkbox"/> Lunch <input type="checkbox"/> Certificates <input type="checkbox"/> Recognition gifts for employers <input type="checkbox"/> Submission and review of grades	Coordinator/Manager, Skilled Trades Centre/Admin Staff



Referral Form from Northern College

"If you want to work, we want to help"

330 Second Ave Suite 102. Timmins, ON 268-3033(tel.) 268-3035 (fax)

To be eligible for Job Connect, individual must be:

☐ between 16-24 ☐ over 24 ☐ unemployed ☐ not in school ☐ not eligible for E.I.

If student meets all of the above criteria, complete and fax us this form if :

- i) *Student leaving school early*
- ii) *Student has completed course and looking for work*
- iii) *Student has completed placement & employer may hire*
- iv) *Student is a potential apprenticeship scholarship candidate*

Name of Student:	
Telephone Number:	()
Name of Program:	
Name of Referring Teacher:	
Student Status:	<input type="checkbox"/> Early-leaver <input type="checkbox"/> Completing course this semester <input type="checkbox"/> Completing placement this semester <input type="checkbox"/> Registered as apprentice, in school for: <input type="checkbox"/> basic <input type="checkbox"/> intermediate <input type="checkbox"/> advanced <input type="checkbox"/> Not registered apprentice, completing school this semester
Employer Info:	
Company Name	
Contact person	
Contact info	

Fax to: Job Connect

Fax # 268-3035

Date: _____

of pages - _____

REFERRAL Form



FROM:

Date: / /
Day Month Year

- ☐ Conestoga Career Centre - Location _____
- ☐ Academic Upgrading - Location _____
- ☐ Apprenticeship - Location _____
- ☐ Career Development Services _____
- ☐ Perth Career Counselling _____
- ☐ Second Career/Skills Development Program Contact _____
- ☐ Other _____

Name of Conestoga Staff: _____

Phone#: _____ Email: _____

Client's Name: _____

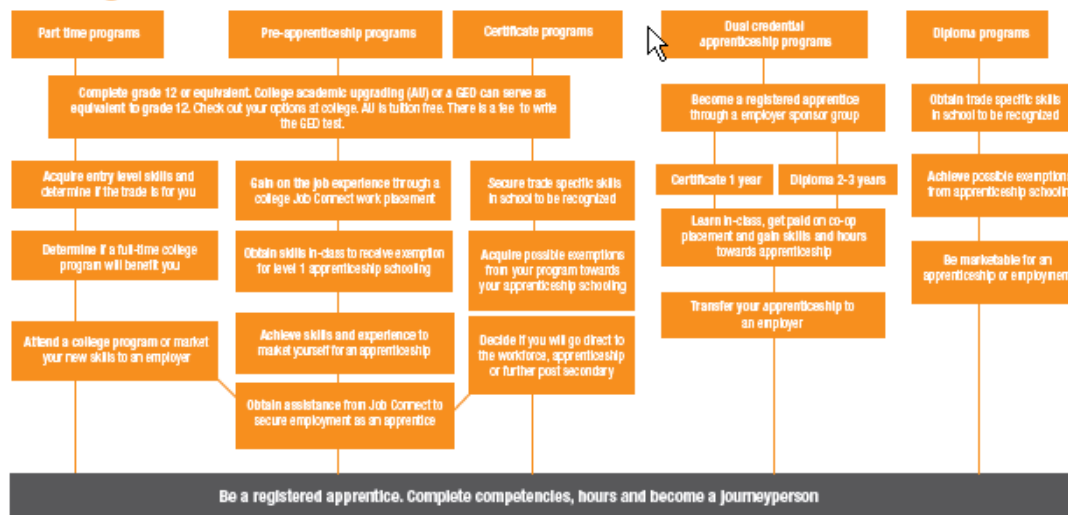
Phone#: _____ Email: _____

TO: _____

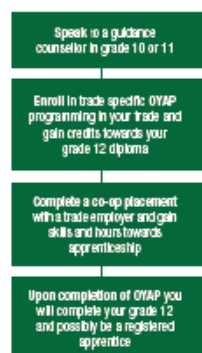
Purpose: _____

Pathways to Apprenticeship.

College

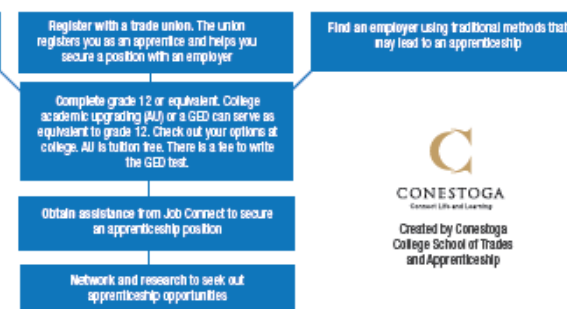


OYAP



TRADES & APPRENTICESHIP
= **SMART Choice!**

Traditional Route



CONESTOGA
Connect Life and Learning
Created by Conestoga College School of Trades and Apprenticeship

www.conestogac.on.ca/trades

trades@conestogac.on.ca

Session 204: How our model worked

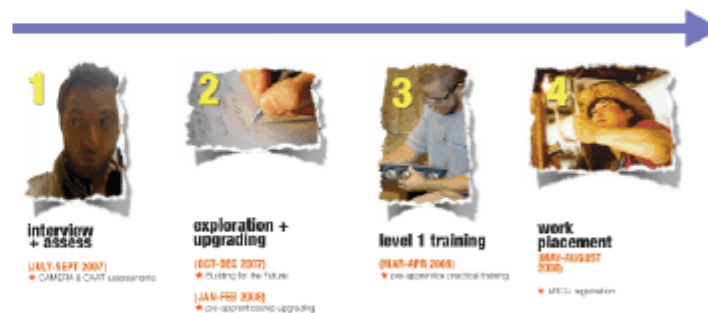
One Goal.

How we worked together

Timeline



To provide under-represented individuals with realistic opportunities for successful careers in the skilled trades.



APPLYING THE APPRENTICESHIP ADVANTAGE Success Through Partnerships



NIAGARA COLLEGE OF APPLIED ARTS AND TECHNOLOGY

College Practices

Approved: February 10, 2006
Responsibility: VP, Academic & Learner Services

PRACTICE TYPE: Committees

PRACTICE TITLE: Standing Committee: Skills Training Council

There shall be a Standing Committee of the College known as the **Skills Training Council** comprised of the following members and having the following duties and responsibilities.

Terms of Reference:

Authority:

Coordinate and provide a forum for the discussion and development of skills training solutions which may result in recommendations for training programs and services.

Advisory:

1. Recommends and plans apprenticeship, pre-apprenticeship, skills training and workforce development programs and forwards recommendations to the Council of Deans and Directors and/or the VP-ALS, as appropriate.
2. Carries out environmental scans to ensure prompt response to emerging trends and opportunities.
3. Recommends and plans advocacy and promotional strategies to support skills training trainees, programs and services.
4. Develops new program concepts, as required to meet emerging needs.
5. Prioritizes and recommends submissions for capital funding related to such.
6. Recommends targets for activities in apprenticeship and skills training that are consistent with the College's long-term goals.

Membership:

Director, Workforce and Business Development
Dean, Hospitality and Tourism
Dean, Continuing Education
Chair, Academic Studies
Manager, Educational Pathways Development and Quality
Manager, Youth Employment Services
Chair, Technology Skills Centre
Chair, English as a Second Language
Manager, Tourism Industry Development Centre
Director, Financial Services
Vice-President, Academic and Learner Services
Associate Registrar, Enrolment and Registration Services

NIAGARA COLLEGE OF APPLIED ARTS AND TECHNOLOGY

PRACTICE TITLE: Standing Committee: Skills Training Council

Non-voting member: Consultant, Workforce and Business Development

Chair: Director, Workforce and Business Development

Reports to: Council of Deans and Directors

Meetings: Monthly, fourth Monday of each month, September to June, 10 am - 12 pm (or as determined by the Chair)

Quorum: 50%+1

Other Committees: Liaison, Contract Training Services Network Committee
Minutes to Al Vaughan for Recruitment & Retention Committee

Budget/Expenses: Budgets for Committee operations shall be the responsibility of the Chair, except expenses for attendance shall remain the responsibility of each member.