LITERATE CITIES 2002
MUNICIPAL EXCELLENCETHROUGH PARTNERSHIPS AND EDUCATION
CONFERENCE REPORTS

Richmond, BC September 29-October 2, 2002

Kingston, ON November 6-8, 2002

Conference Partners:

Canadian Association of Municipal Administrators
City of Richmond, BC
City of Kingston, ON
Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE)
National Literacy Secretariat, Human Resources Development Canada

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LITERATE CITIES 2002
MUNICIPAL EXCELLENCE THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS AND EDUCATION
CONFERENCE REPORTS

1.   Introduction

In 2002 the Canadian Association of Municipal Administrators Literate Cities
Project organized two Literate Cities Conferences. They were hosted by the City
of Richmond (BC) and the City of Kingston (ON). The British Columbia event
drew delegates from British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and the Yukon; the
Ontario event, Manitoba, Ontario and Nunavet. Approximately 65-70 delegates
attended the Conferences. They represented municipal managers and unions,
literacy non-profit agencies, workplace education/literacy learners, field program
organizers, practitioners and governments.

The Conferences had similar formats with the focus on the processes and
principles involved in planning and implementing workplace literacy initiatives in
municipal work sites. The presenters were encouraged to speak on the topics from
an 'experiential' perspective and to highlight the challenges/resolutions they
faced, and the impacts. The presentations were enhanced by interactive table
activities on related subjects to give the delegates further opportunities to
network, share information and experiences, and reflect on the subject matter.

For the purposes of this report, summaries of the presentations for the two
Conferences will be under the same heading and will indicate the event it was for.
Summaries of the contents of the interactive activities can be found in Appendix
B.

Literate Cities 2002 Conference Goals

The goals of the conferences were to:

➢ strengthen the current networks that are involved in workplace
   education/literacy programs in municipal workplaces;
➢ raise awareness about workplace education programs and their impacts, and
   encourage development of new programs;
➢ provide an opportunity and forum for communicating/networking, sharing
   information and experiences;
➢ highlight the joint labour-management process for developing a successful

workplace education/literacy program;
➢ provide information about key tools and resources to complement programs.

2.   Summary of Conference Presentations and Interactive Activities

Opening Receptions

Each Conference welcomed delegates and special guests at a reception prior the first day of workshops. The Master of Ceremonies (MC's) for the receptions were municipal workplace education/literacy learners. They spoke eloquently about their experiences in workplace education/literacy programs, and the impacts of the programs on their professional and personal lives.

Richmond Conference: Cheryl Beaton from the City of Vancouver was the Master of Ceremonies for the Richmond reception at City Hall. She has been employed by the City of Vancouver for the past 25 years. Cheryl had the opportunity to increase her literary skills through the City's "Workplace Language Program". The benefits to her were many, but the most effective benefit was the self confidence it gave her. In her conclusions she said "Look at me here today, Master of Ceremonies, which is something I would never have considered doing before."

Mayor Malcolm Brodie brought greetings from the City of Richmond; and the Honourable Greg Halsey-Brandt, Member of the Provincial Legislative Assembly for Richmond Centre and Minster of State for Intergovernmental Relations, brought greetings from the Province of British Columbia. The MC read a letter from the Member of Parliament for Richmond, Joe Peschisolido.

The MC introduced Brian Hamblin, member of the CAMA Board of Directors and Director of the City of Regina Corporate Services Department. Mr. Hamblin welcomed the delegates to the Conference on behalf of CAMA, spoke about CAMA's commitment to and history with the issue of workplace literacy, and the 'realities' and challenges of today's municipal workplaces. He introduced the new Literate Cities Project publication *After the Pilot Projects: Re-visiting the Process,* and encouraged delegates to take advantage of the lessons learned from the pilot projects when they are planning their programs.

Mr. Hamblin thanked the reception sponsors, the City of Richmond, City of Vancouver and the City of Port Moody. Lorna McCreath (City of Vancouver) and Richard Wells (City of Port Moody) brought greetings from their Mayor and

4

Canadian Association of Municipal Administrators
Literate Cities 2002: Municipal Excellence through Partnerships and Education
Conference Reports

Councils, spoke about their municipal corporations' commitment to workplace education and their partnership with the Literate Cities Project.

☞ **Kingston Conference:** The Town Crier for the City of Kingston escorted Mayor Isabel Turner and Bert Meunier, City Manager, into Memorial Hall. Mayor Turner welcomed the delegates to the Kingston and the conference. Mayor Turner introduced Ed Thomas, City of Hamilton, the MC.

Mr. Thomas is a tractor operator in the Parks Department, City of Hamilton. He spoke about his experiences in the school system and how he became a workplace education/literacy learner. Ed left public school at the age of 15 after numerous negative experiences in the system. He bounced around from job to job for three years before settling into full employment with the City of Hamilton in 1977. Determined to get his Grade 12, he eventually returned to the school system. In 1988 he enrolled in the Literacy in the Workplace Program to work on his vocabulary and spelling. The program was a 'springboard' for Ed. He has written three books on union issues with eight more in the planning stages. He has represented CUPE National with the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions at the United Nations. Ed received the Canada Post Literacy Award in 2001, and the CAMA Award of Excellence for Municipal Workplace Literacy Achievements in 2002. He is a longtime advocate for literacy training within his union and his workplace.

He said: "A lot of people feel ashamed to admit that they cannot read or write and have trouble understanding. People are more comfortable admitting that they are not good at math, than admitting that they can't read." He feels he has been instrumental in getting union members to take literacy programs. His accomplishments have made him a role model for the members to follow. "If I could do it and was not ashamed, then why not them."

Peter Clarke, Director of HRCC Ontario, brought greetings from the Honourable Jane Stewart, Minister of Human Resources Development Canada.

The MC read letters from Peter Milliken, Member of Parliament for Kingston and the Islands, and John Gerretsen, Member of the Provincial Parliament for Kingston and the Islands.

Mr. Thomas introduced Bert Meunier, member of the CAMA Board of Directors and City Manager for the City of Kingston. Mr. Meunier welcomed the delegates to the Conference on behalf of CAMA, spoke about CAMA's commitment to and history with the issue of workplace literacy, and the 'realities' and challenges of

today's municipal workplaces. He introduced the new Literate Cities Project publication *After the Pilot Projects: Re-visiting the Process,* and encouraged delegates to take advantage of the lessons learned from the pilot projects when they are planning their programs.

Workshop Presentations and Interactive Activities
Day One
Moderators   **Richmond: Sue Hopkins, City of Richmond and Geoff Lake, IAFF 1286, City of Richmond**

Kingston: Elizabeth Rideout, City of St. John's and Kathy Todd, CUPE Local 500, City of Winnipeg

The Conferences program structure was a balance of presentations and interactive activities. The presentations dealt generally with the processes and options that stakeholder committees need to consider. The activities were designed to challenge delegates about the value of and need for having workplace literacy programs. The interactive parts were, for the most part, table discussions followed by reports to the assembly. The summaries of the table discussions will be in Appendix B.

Opening Plenary Presentations

☞ **"Workforce Literacy in Canadian Municipalities: A Status Report in the Year 2002'** by Michelle O'Brien, Chair of the Literate Cities Project Steering Committee[1]

Ms. O'Brien spoke about the increasingly 'healthy' status of workplace literacy in Canadian municipal governments. There were early struggles and efforts fraught with the realities of municipal downsizing, amalgamations, and re-organizations. In the mid-1990's the 'magic' occurred. The CAMA literacy project brought together a group of people who cared about and could influence the growth of literacy programs in municipal governments. Tools and resources were developed; pilot projects were established; and the word began to spread about the advantages of bringing municipal stakeholders (municipal managers and unions) together to plan and implement workplace literacy initiatives.

---

[1] Ms. O'Brien gave the opening plenary presentation at both the Richmond and Kingston Conferences.

"Now, a decade or more later, it is clearly evident that those few seeds, planted by pioneers in workplace literacy, have grown from scrawny seedlings to young saplings, and in some cases, mature trees. ….the number of municipal workplace education programs that have been undertaken, are in-place, or are under consideration, number closer to 50. Given the future, those numbers cannot help but rise. The growing interest of municipalities in workplace literacy is evident by your presence here. You represent the visionaries who, in light of future changes to the labour force and the skills that will be needed, are prepared to look at all options."

☞ **RICHMOND: How do we know if we have a literacy issue in our workforce?** By Lorna McCreath, Director of the Equal Employment Opportunity Program, Hastings Institute, City of Vancouver.

Ms. McCreath spoke about how difficult it is for an employer to pinpoint that a literacy issue exists within their workplace. Much of the evidence is anecdotal but it does start to paint a picture of an emerging issue. The City of Vancouver did a needs assessment for a workplace literacy program in 1989. It confirmed that many workers had difficulty with verbal and written communications. They were experiencing feelings of isolation, frustration and exclusion as a result.

Literacy training became part of their longterm strategy to build on the strengths of employees. Gary Pharness worked with the City to design and implement the Vancouver Municipal Workplace Language Program. It was open to all employees in the corporation; it is learner-centred; and learner achievements are recognized in a ceremony in Council Chambers annually.

'The impact has not been measured in quantitative terms- in fact, it would be difficult to do this kind of assessment, because of how the program is structured to meet individual needs and not based on a set curriculum.' Changes have occurred in a more informal manner: workers are more self confident and communicative; they have skills and the confidence to take tests to meet requirements for other jobs; some have decided to continue with higher education levels; workplace conflicts are more easily resolved. The support of the unions and management for the program has been beneficial to both parties, and has contributed to a better working relationship between them.

7

Canadian Association of Municipal Administrators
Literate Cities 2002: Municipal Excellence through Partnerships and Education
Conference Reports

Vancouver has continued to build support for its program since 1990 throughout the organization and with the unions. Their 'aim has been to integrate the learning as part of their corporate culture, and to view literacy as one of the facets of diversity.'

☞ **KINGSTON: How do we know if we have a literacy issue in our workforce?** By Rhonda Tone (Manager of Human Resource Development) and Kathy Todd (CUPE Local 500), City of Winnipeg

Ms. Tone described the City of Winnipeg project as the *Learning Together:* experience for labour and management that became a 'win-win' for both. Faced with an aging workforce, and a projected 50% loss of municipal workers in five years, the City had to look at alternatives to prepare for the future. In 2000 they negotiated a Letter of Understanding for Education, Training and Staff Development with CUPE Local 500, which include $3 million to help prepare City employees for the future. A needs assessment indicated that 90% of CUPE members were interested in more training. The joint labour-management committee recommended three levels of programs: departmental (property assessor training, AutoCAD, etc.), individual (Bachelor of Arts, conflict resolution, programmer), and corporate (e-learning centre, essential skills, etc.).

Ms. Todd said the needs assessment confirmed that basic skills was an area that should be tackled. The Essential Skills sub-committee was formed to oversee the initiative. In the first year the program offered GED preparation, reading, writing and mathematics classes. In the second year the program was augmented by the addition of introduction to computers, study/test writing skills and academic essay writing. Their advice for successful ventures: listen to the learners; minimize/eliminate barriers; meet the learners and organization's needs, and hire experienced adult educators.

The joint union-management process has been a boost to employee confidence. It signaled that employees are valued by the corporation, and that training and development is important for everyone. The lessons learned overall are: cooperation with all the stakeholders is essential; establishment of guiding principles is the key to good decision making; maintenance of open lines of communication reduces anxiety; obtaining support from elected representatives, senior managers and unions sustains the initiative now and in the future; and all parties must be flexible.

8

Canadian Association of Municipal Administrators
Literate Cities 2002: Municipal Excellence through Partnerships and Education
Conference Reports

Interactive Activities: on clear communication and Vulcan rhymes facilitated by Sylvia Sioufi, Literacy Coordinator, CUPE National

Interactive Activity: **What skills did municipal workers need 20 years ago, and what skills do they need in today's knowledge-based municipal workplaces?** Facilitated in Richmond by Sue Hopkins (City of Richmond) and Gary Pharness (City of Vancouver); Kingston by Debbie Lavallee (City of Kingston). See Appendix B for summary.

Interactive Activity: **What would a 'literate municipal workplace' look like?** Facilitated by Michelle O'Brien. See Appendix B for summary.

Presentation: **What partners should be at the table to plan a workplace education/literacy initiative and why?**

☝ **RICHMOND: Chris Kelly, Superintendent of Schools and CEO for School District No. 38, Richmond, BC**

Mr. Kelly made reference to a key assumption that underpins this question. A workplace education/literacy initiative is, by nature, 'an intentional learning experience; thought through and designed in such a way as to meaningfully, as well as productively, engage people in an experience intended to be highly relevant and rewarding for them, both personally and professionally.' Such an initiative would try to surround people where they work and live, in a learning culture. That learning culture would be a 'place where learning is a way of life, where relationships are the primary medium for learning, and where a person's "by the way" learning is as significant as their formal studies.'

He gave the following reasons for why partners should be at the table:
- ✓ the initiative will function more effectively as an inclusive learning activity;
- ✓ partners can bring benefits of variety, resourcefulness, and sober second thought;
- ✓ partnerships can bring stability.

The partners should include those organizations or agencies with the most immediate interest and stake in the quality and relevance of the program. The partnerships initially should start small with the individuals and champions

that have the vision for the venture. The partnerships must be seen to be inclusive of all partners with a stake in the participation and success.

Maura Da Cruz, Human Resources, University of British Columbia (UBC); and Colleen Garbe, Vice-President of CUPE Local 116, UBC

Ms. Da Cruz and Ms. Garbe spoke about the UBC BEST (Basic Education and Skills Training Program). The key partners are unions, human resources department personnel, managers and training providers. The joint committee developed the terms of reference, looked at delivery models, and visited training sites. They wanted the program to be inclusive, accessible, and learner-centred.

Partners bring important value-added to the initiatives: promotion of the programs within their networks; credibility and trust; monitoring of the program; collaboration in other manners. The key learnings have been: it is a work in progress; you need to be flexible; and you should celebrate successes.

☝ **KINGSTON: Marilyn Lancaster, Systems and Training Coordinator, City of Moncton**

The City of Moncton Workplace Education Program has brought many partners to help them plan and implement their initiative since 1997. The core committee/group included municipal management, CUPE Local 51 and the City Hall Employees Association. Literacy New Brunswick Inc., the CAMA Literacy in the Municipal Workforce Project, and the New Brunswick Community College in Moncton were added. Ms. Lancaster spoke about the need at various points to ask other partners to join the Committee. For example, if the focus is on learners attaining their GED, you might want to approach curriculum developers, community colleges and other practitioners. Program funders can also dictate the composition of committees.

"Partners can provide expertise in their respective areas when required. Municipalities are not in the formal business of education but many of its citizens have that knowledge which can be of vital importance to the educational program. If the Province, the Community College, and the Canadian Association of Municipal Administrators work towards the same goals in literacy, then the raised literacy levels will have a direct impact on our social well-being—locally and nationally. Common Goals within these partnerships can get us there. There is strength in partnering as it focuses on the development of individuals by using all available resources and alleviates

10

Canadian Association of Municipal Administrators
Literate Cities 2002: Municipal Excellence through Partnerships and Education
Conference Reports

duplication of programs. Each partner communicates their needs to the others so that all may achieve the mandate 'open doors to all citizens for a literate community.'"

Karen Chandler, Field Officer with Workplace Education PEI, and Eleanor Gallant, Director of Human Resources, City of Charlottetown

The City of Charlottetown program has both internal and external partners. The external partners include the CAMA Project, Human Resources Development Canada, CUPE, and Workplace Education PEI. Ms. Chandler spoke about the close role that Workplace Education PEI has with the City program. It initiates partnerships, assesses the needs of the organization, coordinates program development and delivery, and evaluates. The principles of good practices are: employees have input into program decisions; participation is voluntary; class size is limited to 12; testing is not required; results are confidential; and it's free and fun.

"The secret to success in launching a workplace program is to identify an individual or a group of individuals who will champion the cause." Their committee of champions came from all five unions, human resources, managers and supervisors. Ms. Gallant described the City of Charlottetown workplace. She spoke about the challenges they encountered such as program funding; and the belief that education is an individual's responsibility. However, City Council, the unions and all departments saw the need for a workplace education program. The program delivers basic literacy and numeracy programs, GED Preparation, basic computer instruction, etc. The benefits of the programs have been felt by all partners in the corporation.

The City of Charlottetown program has had to develop innovative fund raising techniques to support the program. They had a donation from City Council; they receive the funds from the snack machines; have 50/50 draws; had donations of computers; and some HRDC funding. To-date 20 workers have completed the basic computer programs; nine, the introduction to GED program; and a learning centre has been set up in a former lunch room.

Presentation: **How do we start the planning process for a workplace education/literacy initiative?**

☝ **RICHMOND: Dawn Seabrook De Vargas, Project Manager for the AB Workforce Essential Skills Steering Committee, Norquest College, Edmonton, AB**

11

Canadian Association of Municipal Administrators
Literate Cities 2002: Municipal Excellence through Partnerships and Education
Conference Reports

"Successful literacy interventions don't just happen, they take a lot of work and commitment from many people. Successful literacy interventions are the result of good planning." Ms. Seabrook De Vargas spoke about the importance of conducting a needs assessment as a key step in the planning process. She described the needs assessments (ONA) that were conducted for the City of Edmonton beginning in 1997 by Norquest College. With an ONA it is important to 'know the sector you are dealing with'. What type of business does it do; what workforce demographics are happening; what are the trends and issues; and what recent activities have triggered the ONA? In the City of Edmonton, there was a re-structuring process underway; stricter standards were being implemented; some staff had limited English language skills; and other staff needed to upgrade their skills to handle the new standards.

The next step is to gain knowledge of essential skills research. This allows you to know what models are being used, etc. Then you need to know what resources are available (funding, space, time for courses, etc.) Armed with that information, the workplace stakeholders are ready to build 'contacts, trust and interest' in the process. In the City of Edmonton initiative, 'it was important to lay out a plan that would move slowly and build confidence with the workers who would benefit from the training.' The planning committee set up information sessions in the union halls. They made assurances that registration would be voluntary and progress kept confidential.

Now they were ready to design the ONA process. In the City of Edmonton, the goal was 'to build on the knowledge and skills people already have by providing opportunities for continuous learning and development'. The parameters of the ONA are determined by; the time and money available; the size of the survey population; language and literacy skills of the workplace population; and the methodology that will best build awareness, and a positive learning culture. "For the City of Edmonton we wanted the interview process so that we could do awareness building at the same time as gather information." 78 workers in the Asset Management and Public Works volunteered to be interviewed as part of the ONA study.

Jim Jensen, CUPE Local 825, City of Port Moody

Mr. Jensen spoke about the planning process that the City of Port Moody began in 1999. The stakeholder committee was comprised of equal representation from labour and management. They created a terms of

12

Canadian Association of Municipal Administrators
Literate Cities 2002: Municipal Excellence through Partnerships and Education
Conference Reports

reference for the committee and a mission statement. For the ONA, they developed a survey tool to identify areas of interest and need. The results indicated that workers wanted courses in writing skills, math and basic computer skills. When they offered courses in math and writing, the response was very low. The Committee decided to try courses in basic computers and spreadsheet programs. The response was tremendous. One of their key learnings was that through the spreadsheet program, they were also touching on basic math skills, one of the identified areas.

The City of Port Moody Committee learned that offering computer-based programs is a segue to basic skills upgrading. It is more easily accepted by workers with low literacy skills.

A second ONA survey has been done. "We believe it is necessary to do so from time to time to make sure you are on track and that the needs haven't changed." In the near future they plan of offer a public speaking course, as well as the computer based ones.

KINGSTON: Tracy Branch, Director of Administrative Services, City of Bathurst, New Brunswick

Mr. Branch took the delegates back in time to 1998 when the City administration attempted to start a workplace education program. The managers thought they should offer programs that would prepare workers for GED and courses for upgrading basic skills. No needs assessment was done; there was no consultation with employees to find out what they wanted; and the unions were not part of an organizing committee. The result was low enrolments and little support for the program.

After consultation with key stakeholders, the City decided to start over. Mr. Branch described the four steps that he saw as essential to follow when implementing a workplace education program. They are:

➢ Obtain support/endorsement for the program from the unions, employees, supervisors/managers/department heads, Mayor and Council;
➢ Form a workplace education committee with representatives from management and labour, and/or the program facilitator;
➢ Conduct a needs assessment to gain support from all levels of the workplace, to access information that could be vital to the success of the program, to identify internal and external expertise and resources

13

Canadian Association of Municipal Administrators
Literate Cities 2002: Municipal Excellence through Partnerships and Education
Conference Reports

for the program, and to identify motivating factors that would contribute to the success of the program;

➢ Follow the process, be adaptable and flexible to the needs of the workers.

The City offers courses such as introduction to computers, essential skills upgrading, interest courses, etc. The employees find the workshops fun and stimulating. They build confidence and are good for morale.

Tamara Levine, Coordinator of the Workplace Literacy Project, Canadian Labour Congress

Ms. Levine spoke about her work in the Kingston area when she was Coordinator of the Ontario Federation of Labour's BEST Program in the late 1980's. "In those days, trying to convince employers and sometimes unions was like trying to sell snake oil; there was no track record, there were no workplaces across town to whom you could refer people to others who had experience with it." In 1989 she became involved for the first time with a municipality—the City of Ottawa/CUPE 503 and the City of Kingston/CUPE 109. BEST staff tested employees to identify crew leaders and those who might benefit from basic skills training.

She spoke about the positive history that now exists, as well as the influence of the CAMA ad CUPE literacy projects. The keys to developing a workplace literacy program are;

➢ Raising awareness with all the municipal stakeholders;
➢ Make the program worker-centred (focused on the needs of the workers in their many roles as parents, citizens, union members and workers)
➢ Develop the terms of participation between unions and management (time for courses, accessibility, family responsibilities) and entrench them in a letter of agreement;
➢ Set a joint committee of unions and managers, with clarity on decision making, union participation time, etc.;
➢ Set the terms of reference and tasks they will undertake, such as doing a needs assessment, identifying barriers and resolutions, choosing a delivery model, working out the logistics, developing a communication, recruitment and evaluation plan, and celebrating the success of program participants.

The benefits to workers usually are increased self confidence and skills, better ability to communicate with co-workers and others, better understanding of written materials, and the ability to work independently more easily. These benefits have similar impacts in the learners homes, unions and communities. She ended by saying: "You have a challenge here to go back to your workplaces and your union to make a literate city project happen."

Interactive Activity: **What are the principles of good practice that support workplace education/literacy programs?** Facilitated in Richmond by Sylvia Sioufi, Literacy Coordinator, CUPE National; in Kingston by Bill Bishop, Commissioner of Human Resources, City of Kingston. See Appendix B for summary.

Presentation: **What role does technology play in helping adult learners to learn?**

RICHMOND AND KINGSTON:[2] Charles Ramsey, Executive Director of the National Adult Literacy Database (NALD), Fredericton, NB

Mr. Ramsey spoke about NALD's mission in relation to the literacy community in Canada. It is to provide information and resources to the adult literacy community (practitioners, learners, literacy agencies, governments, etc.). The NALD web site is a useful tool that offers tools and resources, summaries of related books and papers, and information on events and people. Information is available by province to allow easy access to users, and by topics. There are weekly features that highlight the achievements of adult learners. Mr. Ramsey demonstrated how to access and use some types of information on the NALD site.

He described an initiative that NALD has conjunction with the CAMA and CUPE literacy projects. It is an electronic discussion vehicle called Literate Cities Link (LCL). Participants share information on focused workplace education/literacy topics guided by a facilitator on the listserv. In Kingston a summary of the recent LCL discussion on the 'roles and responsibilities for coordinating committees' was circulated.

NALD's challenge continues to be to remain current and comprehensive, to keep the Canadian literacy community informed with up-to-date materials and information, and to respond to new 'realities' in the adult literacy field.

---

[2] Charles Ramsey gave presentations on the NALD mandate and the role of technology at both Literate Cities 2002 Conferences.

KINGSTON: Terry Bennett, CUPE Local 569, City of St. John's, NF

Mr. Bennett spoke about the role of technology from the perspective of both a workplace education learner, and a member of the City of St. John's Workplace Self Improvement Program Committee. He described the many challenges that municipal workers face in today's workplace. Giving workers the opportunity to learn new skills and upgrade others was a necessary move that managers and unions supported. While basic skills of reading and writing were the Committee's initial focus, they realized that 'computer literacy' was essential too.

The first courses offered were to help improve writing in the workplace. This was followed by two courses in 'basic' computer skills. Over 120 municipal employees signed up for the courses. "The needs assessment indicated that due to major technological changes in today's workplace, there is a greater need than ever for basic computer literacy. There are positions within the organization which never before involved computers, and workers are now expected to be able to perform their duties using computers, be it involving new work stations, running a camera through a water main, or operating Tandem trucks or heavy equipment, all of which these days involve some sort of computer operation." The benefits from the City's workplace education program have been felt in the workplace, homes and community. For example, improved reading skills, less supervisory time, more self confidence, better customer service, improved understanding of health and safety regulations.

Day Two
Moderators   **Richmond: Lorna McCreath, City of Vancouver, and Lorraine Bissett, CUPE Local 718, City of Richmond**

Kingston: Jim Grittner, City of Iqaluit, and Vivolyn Blair, CUPE Local 59, City of Toronto

Interactive Activity: **What impacts and benefits could management, unions and learners expect from a municipal workplace education/literacy program?** In Richmond facilitated by Patricia Nutter, CAMA Literate Cities Project; in Kingston, by Sue Folinsbee, Ontario Literacy Coalition, and Mary Ellen Belfiore, Adult Education and Workplace Consultant. See summaries in Appendix B.

Presentation: **How do we design appropriate learning approaches for municipal workers?**

RICHMOND: Ron Torgerson, Coordinator, Workers' Education for Skills Training Program (WEST), Saskatchewan Federation of Labour

Mr. Torgerson began by saying that he was going to present the union perspective and principles on workplace education. However, these should not conflict with the employer's perspective, since the 'workplace is run by the employer and the worker.' The principles that underline a good process are:
- ✓ Establish a fair, representative and equitable planning committee;
- ✓ Give the committee members some training in adult training principles, perceptions of literacy, and the benefits to management, labour and workers;
- ✓ Governance by consensus agreement.

Mr. Torgerson described the strengths and weaknesses of several delivery models:
- ✓ **Stand-up delivery:** This method is how most technical training is delivered. However, it can be intimidating for workers/adults who had negative school experiences.
- ✓ **Peer Facilitation:** This delivery process is used in the WEST program in Saskatchewan. Its advantages are: low cost, familiarity and co-identification between the leaner and the workplace facilitator, flexibility for access, class time, and type of instructional, materials used. The disadvantages can be: the peer tutors have to be well trained in delivery, evaluation and resource adaptation; the learning process may take longer.
- ✓ **Peer Facilitation with College back-up**: This method has the advantages of peer delivery with back-up from the college for the facilitators. Mr. Torgerson felt this was the 'best route' to take. The downside is the cost for the college services to the facilitators.
- ✓ **Computer Delivery**: It works but it is an individual effort rather than a group/team effort.

He said that 'what is most important is not necessarily the delivery style', it is the principles on which the program is based. They are:
- ✓ Group and individual responsibility for learning;
- ✓ Worker helping worker;
- ✓ Confidentiality;
- ✓ Continuous assessment;
- ✓ The class learns what it wants/needs to learn while learning it 'how ' it wants to;
- ✓ Start from where the worker is now.

17

Canadian Association of Municipal Administrators
Literate Cities 2002: Municipal Excellence through Partnerships and Education
Conference Reports

These principles are augmented by using real world activities and exercises; encouraging ownership of learning; holding regular meetings between the facilitator and the committee.

Gary Pharness, Consultant, Trainer and Manager, Workplace Language Program, Hastings Institute, City of Vancouver

Mr. Pharness reflected on some of the 'lessons learned' from his experiences with the Workplace Language Program. Literacy is about 'adjusting'; it is about respecting and building on the life experiences of the individual. Workplace literacy programs require a strong individual to see where the learner, and steer him/her there.

Municipal employers and unions have to remove the barriers in the workplace that surround workplace education and literacy. The Workplace Language Program has been designed to:
- ✓ Help learners explore and identify their needs;
- ✓ Give them time to learn the fundamentals of grammar, writing, etc. and put their ideas on paper.

He spoke about the importance of 'listening' to the learners. It helps the facilitator make program decisions that will have impacts for the worker, the work environment, and the family. He also noted that municipal workplaces should set aside a room to be used as a 'thinking centre'—a quiet place for reflection.

Sarah Evans and Robert Wedel, Workplace Educators, Capilano College, North Vancouver

Sarah Evans spoke about the 'hybrid' model—the use of trained peer instructors and the experience of college instructors. Their model depends on connecting with the unions; taking time to develop partnerships by sharing objectives; reaching consensus; and building relationships and trust. "The main objectives of our workplace education programs are:
- ✓ To facilitate access to basic education and to skill development for workers; and
- ✓ To encourage participants to see themselves as lifelong learners.

The key principles of practice used in this model are:
- ✓ **Use peer tutors**: They are a trusted resource and support that know the culture of the workplace;

18

- ✓ **Train the tutors**: The college and unions give four days of training in the principles of adult education, models of delivery, goal setting, tutoring strategies, resources, and evaluation.
- ✓ **Learner centre curricula:** "We support learners to achieve these goals (literacy, numeracy, communication, trade specific skills and GED) by bringing a big bag of tricks, by listening to what they need, and giving them the academic and personal support that they need."
- ✓ **Joint Coordination:** Programs are a collaborative effort of management and unions. The program champion is generally from the union.
- ✓ **Program Formula:** Each program is unique and meets the needs of the learners.

The college role is to interview learners and tutors; offer feedback to the coordinating committees; help learners set goals; provide on-going support to peer tutors; do the tutor training; assist the learners and committee with evaluations. "In this model, the College becomes part of the mechanism of workers helping workers."

KINGSTON: Gayle Constable, Instructor, Workplace Education Program, City of Moncton

Ms. Constable said she preferred to call her presentation "How to develop a comfort zone for learning." The principles that surround the 'comfort zone' are:
- o An accessible location for learners;
- o A variety of rooms to allow for small group instruction, one-to-one tutoring with computers and overheads and boards;
- o A schedule that accommodates the learners home and work life;
- o A program that is inclusive of adult family members;
- o Classes that run in modules or block times;
- o A program that can adapt to individual needs for remedial or upgrading skills;
- o The protection of individual confidentiality;
- o The respect for the learner and their progress;
- o A non-threatening atmosphere for learning.

Any program that is successful has good instructors. They are honest, approachable, sensitive, and flexible to the learners/workers needs. "These are the necessary ingredients for designing appropriate learning approaches for municipal workers. But even having the recipe and the right ingredients doesn't guarantee the cake will turn out. Insufficient funding will cause a program to flop as surely as turning the heat off while the cake is baking."

Janet Dassinger, Executive Director, Labour Education Centre, Toronto

Ms. Dassinger brought the labour perspective on learning approaches. She spoke about the compelling definition of literacy by the International Lbaour Organization (ILO). In this definition literacy is critical to the social inclusion and economic well-being of all citizens. ILO defines literacy in three categories:

➢ Basic skills of literacy, numeracy, critical reasoning and decision making;
➢ Core skills of reading, writing, math, communication skills, team playing, problem solving as well as computer literacy;
➢ Lifelong learning to acquire the range of skills necessary for the workplace and other life activities.

"Canadian unions have historically been involved in education, and by extension literacy since their first beginnings in the early 1800s. In the early trade unions, it was a way of reducing social inequality and providing working people with the tools they needed to understand the political and economic forces around them." She described the work of the Toronto Labour Council with the English in the Workplace (EWP) program in the 1970. By 1976 classes were in many sectors of the economy. The Metro Labour Education Centre was created in 1987, and entered into a formal relationship with George Brown College. An Adult Basic Education Program was designed. It supported the EWP.

Instructors were recruited from unions. They worked on a part time basis, after attending a two week training course and subsequent professional development sessions. Classes were in the workplace and could be offered anytime in the 24 hour period, be continuous intake, and multi-level. Success was celebrated annually in a ceremony at George Brown College.

"These programs were effective, flexible and completely responsive to the needs of the learners." Class time was share 50-50 with the employer and the workers up to four hours per week.

The principles the programs were built on are:

➢ Programs must respond to the needs of the learners;
➢ There has to be a needs assessment of some form;
➢ There must be joint authority and decision making by the unions and employer.

Presentation: **What role does evaluation play in sustaining workplace education/literacy programs?**

20

Canadian Association of Municipal Administrators
Literate Cities 2002: Municipal Excellence through Partnerships and Education
Conference Reports

RICHMOND: Dr. Kathryn Barker, President, FuturEd Consulting Education Futurists

Dr. Barker began her presentation by talking about what the term 'sustaining' means. It implies 'continuation; it includes 'improving'; it should be part of the 'planning' process or design; and it must allow for 'ending'. There are four reasons to do program evaluations: accountability, marketing, informed decision-making, and continuous improvement. Three types of evaluations are currently popular:

- ☝ quality audit or standards based, which measures outcomes, processes and resource standards in narrow ranges (Yes/No, etc.);
- ☝ impact analysis, which measures immediate and long term impacts for clients and providers. The impacts can be planned, systemic and unplanned;
- ☝ return on investment (ROI) which looks at the costs and benefits of the program to the users and program providers; the costs and benefits can be tangible and intangible.

She illustrated some pivotal questions that evaluations need to answer:

- ☝ Is the program effective: Does it do what it claims to do? Were the problems solved or change achieved?
- ☝ Is the program efficient: Does it make best use of the resources? Compared to what? What is the ROI costs and benefits?

The measures of success are: the overall satisfaction with the effectiveness and efficiency of the program; the quality of the processes and practices; the adequacy of the resources (money, time, people). Her advice when planning a workplace education program was to start doing evaluations at the beginning and establish benchmarks; allocate resources to do the evaluations; and keep the evaluation process simple.

Dr. Barker asked the delegates to participate in a round table discussion on evaluation. The framework of the activity was:

- ☝ The goals and barriers for program evaluation;
- ☝ Indicators of program success;
- ☝ Discussion of the principles of ROI;
- ☝ Advice for CAMA and next steps.

KINGSTON: Sue Folinsbee, Ontario Literacy Coalition and Mary Ellen Belfiore, Adult Education and Workplace Consultant

21

Canadian Association of Municipal Administrators
Literate Cities 2002: Municipal Excellence through Partnerships and Education
Conference Reports

Ms. Folinsbee and Ms. Belfiore presented a collaborative approach to program evaluation that should involve all the stakeholders in the process. They posed the question of "Why is evaluation important?" The reasons are:

- Information from an on-going program evaluation shows what is working and why;
- It shows the areas that need improvement;
- It documents results and how well the program is meeting its goals and objectives;
- It identifies unintended outcomes; and
- It can provide a justification for partners who are financially supporting the program to continue to do so.

The stakeholders that should have input to the evaluations are: program participants, supervisors and managers, union representatives, educational providers, funders, and other partners.

There are key steps at the beginning of the program planning process:

- Get the support of senior managers and union representatives;
- Ensure there is an evaluation committee that includes all stakeholders;
- Plan the evaluation strategy at the beginning of the program.

The speakers took the delegate through the seven steps to plan and implement a program evaluation:

Step 1: Revisit the program goals and objectives
Step 2: Determine the expectations and goals for the evaluation
Step 3: Plan the details of the evaluation strategy
Step 4: Create a timeline of activities
Step 5: Decide who will collect what information
Step 6: Develop a communication strategy
Step 7: Refine the program based on the evaluation results

Ms. Folinsbee and Ms. Belfiore then asked the delegates to participate in an interactive evaluation activity. It involved a case study of a municipal workplace that was planning to start a workplace education program. Using the CAMA manual *A Guide for Planning a Collaborative Evaluation for Municipal Workplace Literacy Programs,* the delegates looked at the expectations and goals for the evaluation; decided on the kind of information they need to collect; and who wants the information, and why.
See Appendix C for the activity framework.

Interactive Activity: **Re-Visiting the vision of a literate municipal workplace.**

22

Canadian Association of Municipal Administrators
Literate Cities 2002: Municipal Excellence through Partnerships and Education
Conference Reports

These sessions were facilitated by Michelle O'Brien in Richmond and Kingston. She summarized the content of the workshop the previous day, and asked the delegates to think about an action plan that they can develop when they return to their workplaces. The summaries of the two sessions are in Appendix B.

Closing Plenary

RICHMOND: Brian Hamblin, City of Regina and CAMA Board member

Mr. Hamblin thanked the delegates for attending the conference. He spoke about how much he had learned about workplace literacy over the course of the two days, the committed people he had met, and the wealth of information he is taking back to Regina to help get a program started there. He noted that it is very significant that so many of the delegates represented municipal managers and unions. They will return to their workplaces armed with the tools and information to start a new workplace education initiative. Viviane Antunes, National Literacy Secretariat of HRDC and Sylvia Sioufi, CUPE National echoed his comments in their remarks.

Mr. Hamblin asked the delegates to reflect what made the 'light bulbs go off' for them during the Conference. The following is a summary of the 'light bulbs':

- ☝ There is a vast amount of information on programs and models to consider;
- ☝ Strategic partnerships are the key to a successful program. They must include municipal managers and unions, as well as any other sectors that the planning committees feel need to be around the table. The partners should work together in a collaborative manner and leave their other agendas at the door. It is a 'win/win' for all the partners.
- ☝ An organizational needs assessment is a necessary step in the planning process to help the stakeholder committee plan a program that meets the needs of the workplace and the workers. It is the evidence that helps them define the parameters of a workplace education program.
- ☝ The definition of literacy is broader than basic/essential skills. It has to reflect the realities of a knowledge based workplace.
- ☝ Education and training can be a sensitive issue. The structure of a program has to overcome this. Programs have to be learner-centred.

KINGSTON: Brigid Hayes, National Literacy Secretariat, Human Resources Development Canada

Ms. Hayes spoke about the role of the National Literacy Secretariat in Canada and about what she had learned during the Conference. The 'threads' that are

connecting people and issues around the subject of municipal workplace literacy are:

- 🖎 the joint union-management process that allows stakeholders to come together to work collaboratively and also has the capacity for differences of opinion and perceptions;
- 🖎 the programs are embedded in proven principles;
- 🖎 the goals and objectives are the foundation for successful programs;
- 🖎 workplace education is not just about courses. It is about systemic and personal changes, partnerships to facilitate change in the workplace;
- 🖎 there are many ways to sustain and fund programs. They are negotiated with partners to embed and entrench workplace literacy programs. Many workplaces have persevered under great obstacles to sustain their programs against all odds.

She asked three delegates to describe their key learning from the two days:

- 🖎 **Ed Thomas** now sees an opportunity for unions and management to work together to move the literacy agenda forward.
- 🖎 **Karen Chandler** understands that they are doing a lot of things right. Now they can re-focus on the role of evaluation to understand more fully where they should be going in the future.
- 🖎 **Rhonda Tone** now realizes that the negotiated Letter of Understanding between management and CUPE 500 in the City of Winnipeg has reduced many of the barriers that other municipal workplaces face on an on-going basis.

Ms. Hayes said "We also have to learn from history. It grounds us in 'who we are'. At the time of the Literate Cities 2000 Conference in Bathurst, NB, labour, managers, governments and educators came together to explore possibilities. They were struggling with how to get involved with workplace literacy programs. In 2002 there has been significant progress. There is growth, maturity, and change. We have made a difference! We have come a long way! The future is bright for new initiatives in workplace education and literacy. This foundation needs to be nurtured and supported."

She spoke about the one thing she will take from back from the two days' sessions: "What we are talking about in all of the discussions is systemic change, institutional shifts, working jointly, ensuring that the control and the empowerment rests at the workplace, and that your providers and all of your supporting cast are actually in line with the movement from inside the workplace. And for many of you who are practitioners, who will be from the outside, I think this is a message that has come through really clearly here. It is that you will

never bring into the workplace something. Rather you will help to facilitate within the workplace something happening, but at the end of the day this is something that has grown inside a workplace."

Ms. Hayes described the role that CAMA and municipalities have to set an agenda for literacy in their communities. The networking must continue. Stakeholders must continue to share experiences and explore new initiatives and alternatives.

Closure

Mike Kirk, General Manager of Human Resources, City of Richmond, and Bill Bishop, Commissioner of Human Resources, City of Kingston, thanked the delegates for coming to the Literate Cities 2002 Conferences on behalf of the host municipality.

25

Canadian Association of Municipal Administrators
Literate Cities 2002: Municipal Excellence through Partnerships and Education
Conference Reports

APPENDIX A
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A special thank you must go to the following:

❧ **City of Richmond, BC and the City of Kingston, ON:** We want to express our gratitude and appreciation to these municipalities for their outstanding support to the Literate Cities 2002 Conferences. The on-going commitment of Sue Hopkins, Bill Bishop, Debbie Lavallée, Judith Pearse were evident throughout the planning stages and the three days of the conferences. Their contributions made all delegates feel welcome to their municipalities.

❧ **Conference Planning Committees:** The Committees drew on the guidance and expertise of our partners across the country. Their input to the conference theme and programs made the overall events a dynamic and motivating learning experience. The Richmond Conference Committee was composed of Sue Hopkins (City of Richmond), Gary Pharness (City of Vancouver), Jim Jensen (City of Port Moody), Stacey Huget (Literacy BC), Tracy Branch (City of Bathurst), Brigid Hayes (National Literacy Secretariat, HRDC), and Patricia Nutter (CAMA Literate Cities Project). The Kingston Conference Committee was composed of Bill Bishop/Debbie Lavallée/Judith Pearse (City of Kingston), Sue Folinsbee (Ontario Literacy Coalition), Tracy Branch (City of Bathurst), Brigid Hayes (National Literacy Secretariat, HRDC), and Patricia Nutter (CAMA Literate Cities Project).

❧ **Conference Sponsors:** The Literate Cities 2002 Conferences were very fortunate to have notable events sponsored by our partner organizations. We are grateful to the Cities of Richmond, Vancouver and Port Moody (BC) and the City of Kingston (ON) for their contributions to the opening receptions. We are grateful to the Canadian Association of Municipal Administrators and the Canadian Union of Public Employees for being the sponsors of the two Literate Cities 2002 Conference dinners.

❧ **National Literacy Secretariat, Human Resources Development Canada**: A very special word of appreciation must go to the National Literacy Secretariat, HRDC, for their financial assistance, and to Brigid Hayes and Viviane Antunes for their on-going support and advice to the Literate Cities Project.

SUMMARIES OF INTERACTIVE TABLE DISCUSSIONS

Interactive Activity: **What skills did municipal workers need 20 years ago, and what skills do they need in today's knowledge-based municipal workplaces?**

Conference Location	Skills needed 20 years ago in the municipal workplace	Skills needed in today's municipal workplace
Richmond, BC	**Lower educational requirements** **Trade specific skills** **Ability to take dictation and give dictation** **Switchboard operation** **More manual labour usage** **Many skills learned on-the-job** **Less competition for jobs** **Narrowly focused job description**	**Higher educational requirements (Grade 12 or more)** **Understanding business principles** **Use of technology** **Enhanced communication skills (written and verbal)** **Conflict resolution** **Team skills** **Planning skills** **Understanding the organizational culture** **Problem solving** **Multi-tasking, flexibility** **Joint decision making** **Increased health and safety requirements** **Customer to a diverse population** **Complex legislation for environmental concerns**
Kingston, ON * Participants were asked to look at municipal job categories.	**Water & Sewer Workers:** **Provide water to taps** **Hands on to install/repair equipment** **General knowledge; grade 8 education** **On-the-job training** **Verbal on-the-job instructions** **Cashier (retail/customer service)**	**Water & Sewer Workers:** **Provide CLEAN water to taps** **Machinery is more technical** **Specialized groups** **Grade 12 education & certification required** **WHMIS** **Written & oral on-the-job instructions** **Cashier (retail/customer**

☝ Count correct change	☝ Learn computerized cash systems
☝ Give handwritten receipts	☝ Learn inventory systems
☝ Stock & price merchandise	☝ Take extensive customer service training
☝ Have friendly attitude	☝ 24/7 operations
☝ Work on long shifts & for low pay	☝ take violence in the workplace training
	☝ minimum grade 12 and/or college training
	☝ previous computerized cash experience required
	☝ theft prevention
Clerical	**Clerical**
☝ Typing (transcribing/dictation	☝ word processing skills
☝ Reception & switchboard	☝ multi-media (triage/screening)
☝ Clearly defined narrow role	☝ integrated across operations
☝ Little decision making authority	☝ respect, higher stakes, stress
☝ Grade 12 commerce/business	☝ variety of software to learn and use
	☝ on-going education, transferable skills
	☝ team work
	☝ university or college diploma
	Recreation worker
Recreation worker	☝ Maintain database
☝ Scheduling by hand	☝ Need computer skills
☝ Maintain paper client files	☝ Responsible for scheduling & coordinating all programs
☝ Monitor staff & day to day activities	☝ Responsible for staff training & all daily activities
☝ Use punch cards & tick off lists to monitor customers	☝ Diploma from a recreational leadership college
☝ Grade 12 or equivalent	☝ CPR/First Aid course
☝ Red Cross instructors certificates	☝ WHMIS, and health and safety training
☝ 3-5 years experience	

	✎ **Good hand writing skills** ✎ **Apply for job in writing**	✎ **Bronze Cross certificate required** ✎ **Minimum 5 years experience**
	Truck Driver/Equipment Operator ✎ **Have driver's license & correct class** ✎ **Grade 8 entry requirement** ✎ **Take driver's exam orally** ✎ **Need basic mechanical knowledge** ✎ **Trained on-the-job** ✎ **Had minimal safety training**	**Truck Driver/Equipment Operator** ✎ **Need driver's license and # of hours of operation** ✎ **Must be certified and have grade 12 or equivalent** ✎ **Has written and computer skills** ✎ **Mandatory driver testing & monitoring** ✎ **Job opportunities are posted electronically** ✎ **The workplace is a computerized equipment operation**
	Mechanic Fuel Truck Driver ✎ **No certification or specific requirements except basic driver's license** ✎ **Basic experience with machinery & diesel engines** ✎ **No other skills sought** ✎ **Sent letter of application to a post office box**	**Mechanic Fuel Truck Driver** ✎ **May need data entry skills, engine maintenance knowledge** ✎ **More certifications & clear driving record** ✎ **Minimum Grade 12 education plus work experience**

Interactive Activity: **What would a 'literate municipal workplace' look like?**

This activity was positioned at the beginning of the conferences and at the end. The objective in the first sessions was to get the delegates to reflect on three topics related to the issues.

✎ Preparing the environment;
✎ Designing a successful workplace education program;

29

✎ Recognizing the impacts/benefits/successes of a workplace education program.

In the final sessions, the facilitator gave a summary of the three topics, and then asked the delegates to think about realistic action plans.

Richmond Summary of the discussions
➢ **Preparing the environment**
  ✎ Recognize that there is a literacy problem;
  ✎ Determine who will be responsible to take the initiative and move the issue forward;
  ✎ Establish a program coordinator to bring partners together;
  ✎ Identify and nourish a champion;
  ✎ Gain the support of decision makers. Get Council approval and/or a letter of understanding;
  ✎ Bring the partners together;
  ✎ Form a steering committee with the right people (employer, unions, learners, peer tutors, instructors);
  ✎ Identify a clear mandate and follow it. Identify sources of funding. Seek long term commitment/protection for the program;
  ✎ Plan realistic time frames.

➢ **Designing a successful workplace education program**
  ✎ Research other program models;
  ✎ Set program goals: reduce the stigma by making the program scope broader than basic skills; design a communication plan to keep all stakeholders informed; customize the program to meet the needs/culture of the organization; link the program to the overall corporate goals/vision/mission; recognize the need for family involvement; build people/accessibility/productivity; model literate behavior throughout the organization;
  ✎ Create an environment of trust (safe, welcoming, respectful, comfortable, confidential);
  ✎ Identify skills/education in-place and the gaps between old skills and new ones needed;
  ✎ Do a needs assessment;
  ✎ Choose a program name that invites participation;
  ✎ Design a recruitment and resource plan;
  ✎ Plan a reward/recognition celebration;
  ✎ Use an approach that promotes 'clear language' in the organization.

➢ **Recognizing the impacts/benefits/successes of a workplace education program**

- Do a program evaluation;
- Do follow-up interviews and supervisor survey;
- Identify positive changes as a result of the program (increased confidence/empowerment, reading and writing on-the-job, morale);
- Keep records of increases in cross departmental training, internal job applications, promotions and transfers;
- Keep records of health and safety improvements.

- **Delegates Action Plan**
  - **Partnership Development:** Create a joint union-management committee to assess the need for a workplace education/literacy program;
  - **Needs Assessment:** Plan and conduct a needs assessment;
  - **Identify gaps;**
  - **Reach consensus:** define literacy for your organization. Design a plan that will be supported throughout the municipal corporation;
  - **Seek allies:** Talk to colleagues and networks to gain their support for the initiative.

Kingston summary of discussions
- **Preparing the environment**
  - Recognize that there is a literacy problem;
  - Determine who the champions will be to move the issue forward;
  - Get the support of senior decision makers and Council;
  - Bring the partners (management, unions, etc) together to plan the initiative;
  - Identify the goals and mandate, funding sources;
  - Seek long term commitment for the program;
  - Develop time frames.

- **Designing a successful workplace education program**
  - Set program goals that will steer clear of the 'silo' of workplace education programs; reduce stigma; create reasonable expectations for everyone; link the program to the overall corporate goals, vision, mandate; build people, accessibility, and productivity;
  - Create a safe, welcoming, respectful and confidential environment;
  - Do a needs assessment;
  - Design a program to meet the needs of the learners and employer;
  - Do a marketing/recruitment plan;
  - Promote the use of 'clear language'.

- **Recognizing the impacts/benefits/successes of a workplace education program**
  - Design and use an evaluation process that is inclusive of all groups;

- ✍ Measure success based on the recommendations from the needs assessment;
- ✍ Record impacts to the learners, identified by the learners, unions and supervisors;
- ✍ Identify systemic changes in the organization as a result of the program;
- ✍ Keep records of enrolments, promotions, allocations, etc. by workers.

➢ **Delegates Action Plan**
   - ✍ **See the steps identified in the Richmond event.** Additional suggestions;
   - ✍ **Tools and resources:** The CAMA and CUPE Literacy Projects should develop marketing tools that would highlight successful models;
   - ✍ **Follow-up needs assessment:** After a couple of years do another needs assessment to determine if the program needs to be re-focused.

Interactive Activity: **What are the principles of good practice that will support workplace education/literacy programs?**

Richmond:
- ✍ Workplace education/literacy programs should be tailor-made to each municipal workplace;
- ✍ The stakeholder committee should include all partners and organizations that can help develop a long term commitment to the initiative;
- ✍ The program should set clear goals and terms of reference;
- ✍ Programs should be accessible (location, financial costs to learners; time sharing for the courses);
- ✍ Learner progress must be confidential;
- ✍ Create an organizational inclusive learning culture;
- ✍ Integrate the needs of the learners and the employer.

Kingston:
- ✍ The principles should be written down, committed to, and understood by all;
- ✍ Discussion of the barriers that they might encounter and what resolutions might be possible;
- ✍ Support the principle of confidentiality;
- ✍ Support a corporate philosophy of lifelong learning by making the program sustainable in the longterm;
- ✍ Make it an inclusive process and program;
- ✍ Support the principles for adult learning;
- ✍ Celebrate the learners' success;
- ✍ Make the initiative honest, transparent and holistic.

32

Canadian Association of Municipal Administrators
Literate Cities 2002: Municipal Excellence through Partnerships and Education
Conference Reports

Interactive Activity: **What impacts and benefits could management, unions and learners expect from a municipal workplace education/literacy program?**

Location	Management	Unions	Learners
Richmond	☝ Improved health & safety in the workplace; ☝ A more adaptable workforce; ☝ Improved communications with unions; ☝ Employees better able to take training programs; ☝ Less supervisory time needed; ☝ Better succession planning; ☝ Better customer service to the public; ☝ More able to work effectively in teams.	☝ More effective members of the unions; ☝ Workers are more able to take union training; ☝ Collective agreements will be more widely understood; ☝ Better relationships with management.	☝ Increased self confidence in the workplace and home; ☝ More chances for promotions and transfers; ☝ Potential for higher salaries; ☝ Better communication skills (written and oral); ☝ More access to training from the employer and unions.
Kingston	☝ The investment pays off by better job skills; ☝ There is a positive impact on the work environment; ☝ There is less supervisory time required.	☝ There are improved reading & writing skills; ☝ There is more participation in the unions; ☝ There are positive impacts that are felt in the workplace, home and community,.	☝ The program was a valuable learning experience; ☝ They now have transferable skills, & opportunities to use them; ☝ They have buy-in to the concept of lifelong learning.

APPENDIX C
EVALUATION ACTIVITY FRAMEWORK
KINGSTON CONFERENCE

Literate Cities: 2002
Municipal Excellence through
Partnerships and Education

Case Study for Evaluation Discussion

In one municipal government, three departments and the union representing the workers are collaborating on a workplace education project. After the organizational needs assessment (ONA) identified the educational interests and needs in all levels of the departments, the joint labour-management committee set the following goals for the program:

- ❋ provide opportunities for people to gain knowledge and skills to deal with changes in workplace tasks and activities
- ❋ enhance people's personal lives and their involvement in the union and their communities
- ❋ create a comfortable and non-threatening learning environment
- ❋ increase people's opportunities for participating in future training and education

The local college as well as a community literacy agency are designing and delivering a variety of programs on a shared time basis. In the first year, the committee plans to offer courses in basic computer skills and communication (written and oral). There will also be short sessions on clear language and report writing. The committee may also consider offering short programs on people's own time on using the internet and parenting.

Discussion

Everyone at your table is part of the joint committee for this workplace education project. Use the CAMA manual, *A Guide for Planning a Collaborative Evaluation for Municipal Workplace Literacy Programs*, in your discussion.

1. Considering the goals you have already set for the program, what are your expectations and goals for the evaluation? (See page 10 of the *Guide,* Step 1: Establish Expectations and Goals for the Evaluation).

2. Decide what kind of information you need to collect. Use the chart on page 17 of the *Guide* to discuss what each stakeholder wants to get out of the evaluation. **Who** wants **What Information** for what purposes or **Why**.

Under the **Who** category, consider the following and add others if necessary:

union   management   participants   educational providers   funders