

CONSULTATION ON WORKPLACE LITERACY

June 11 - 12, 1997

A REPORT

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Preface

The federal government recently provided the National Literacy Secretariat with additional funding to tackle some key issues. One of those issues is the area of workplace literacy.

The National Literacy Secretariat, Human Resources Development Canada, has had successful partnership arrangements with business, labour, government and educators to promote workplace literacy across the country. Project grants assist in providing research, raising public awareness, improving access and outreach, sharing and coordinating information, developing learning materials and training practitioners. We are proud of these partnerships and the impact that has been made across the country.

With this additional funding, we have the opportunity to focus on workplace literacy in a way that had not been possible in the past. We will work with our partners to create significant projects that will make a difference in the area of workplace literacy.

As a first step, we convened a meeting of our partners who have experience in the area of workplace literacy. The objective of this meeting was to develop a list of priorities for workplace literacy practitioners, researchers in the area, workplace literacy coordinators and provincial/territorial government representatives. I want to thank the participants in the consultation for their hard work and for taking the time to help us to think things through.

This report attempts to capture the debate and discussion that took place on June 11 and 12, 1997 in Ottawa. We want to share with you the results of the consultation and to keep our conversations going. We hope that you will study the report and talk to us about project ideas that will make a significant contribution to the field of workplace literacy.

There is much to be done, but there are many hands here who can help us to accomplish the many tasks that do lie ahead.

Sincerely,

James E. Page
Executive Secretary

Introduction

In February of 1997 the government provided the National Literacy Secretariat (NLS) with additional funding to tackle some key issues. This funding created an opportunity to focus on significant projects that would make a difference in the area of workplace literacy.

As a first step, NLS convened a meeting of partners who had experience in workplace literacy and represented different sectors. The goals of the meeting were :

To develop a list of priorities for possible projects of interest to all sectors, that will make a difference in the area of workplace literacy.

To develop a list of priorities for possible projects of interest to each sector, i.e., business, labour, workplace literacy practitioners, researchers, workplace literacy coordinators and government representatives.

This report documents the process and outcomes of this meeting in terms of :

National priorities across all sectors :

- Issues to be addressed within each priority.

Individual sector priorities :

- Issues to be addressed within each sector priority; and,
- Analysis of the sector issues.

National Priorities Across All Sectors

Participants made two lists of needs which appear in Appendices A and B :

those needs that they believed had yet to be addressed across all sectors, that would make a difference in workplace literacy

those needs that had already been addressed across all sectors

From these two lists participants identified clusters of priorities across Canada, and then focused on the six that they deemed most important. Representatives of every sector had an opportunity to input on this discussion. The priorities included :

Marketing, Promotion (awareness, increased consciousness)

Vision and Accountability

Research, Standards, Measurement

Workforce, Learners, Learning Culture

Delivery, "Moving it out", Field Development

Partnerships (especially small business)

For each priority, participants generated three or four issues. The issues are in the form of questions that can generate results. The issues for each of the six priorities follow: (numbers do not indicate ranking)

1. Marketing, Promotion

How do we raise awareness of literacy as a priority for labour?

How do we raise awareness of literacy as a priority for business?

How do we foster and encourage sustainable commitment to workplace literacy by business and labour?

What will this look like?

2. Vision and Accountability

How do we develop an holistic vision for a learning culture in Canada?

- that respects the strategic needs of varied communities and stakeholders
- that provides for leadership and management

How do we develop standards and measure outcomes?

What yardsticks do we use to measure success?

3. Research, Standards, Measurement

How can we establish priorities and criteria for participatory applied research?

How can we facilitate input across sectors and among stakeholders?

How do we get official research bodies to include this issue on their agenda?
i.e., economic development, organizational and community development,
human capital factor, marry technical research with practitioner experience

4. Workforce, Learners, Learning Culture

What are the components of a learning culture in the workplace and in the broader community?

How can we demonstrate the benefits and barriers of a learning culture? i.e., costs

What role can each partner play in moving toward a learning culture?

5. Delivery, "Moving It Out", Field Development

How can we enhance and broaden the delivery of essential skills services?

These are specifically related to:

- new learning technologies/trends
- relevant work-related curricula
- learner involvement
- professional development for practitioners as consultants/marketers
- shifting "paradigms" of all stakeholders (to adapt to change)
- understanding "critical factors" of success
- communication infrastructure
- development of an academic field/support

6. Partnerships

What are the elements necessary for successful partnerships?

How does NLS achieve sustainable commitment to build genuine partnerships?

What role should NLS play to leverage #1 and #2?

Once the issues related to the national priorities were identified, the group was invited to express any questions or concerns about the priorities, or the process used to identify the priorities. A summary of this discussion follows :

When we talk about partnerships, we have included business and labour partnerships. I think we should include the education community with business and labour in a three way partnership. And perhaps government, the list goes on of important stakeholders.

When we talk about labour, we must remember that that's only 34 per cent of people in the workplace. We must say that community colleges and Boards of Education have a prime responsibility for working with the unorganized in a lot of communities across Canada.

Following the brief discussion, the group examined individual sector priorities.

Individual Sector Priorities

The individual sectors include Labour, Business, Government, Research, Joint/National Groups, and Practitioner/Coordinators. Each sector identified three or four priority issues that were specific to their sector. Once again, the issues are in the form of questions that can generate results.

Labour Sector :

How do we raise awareness of workplace literacy within labour in order to foster and secure organizational commitment?

How do we, as labour, define and articulate program goals to reflect workers' needs?

How can the range of financing models be explored, to achieve sustainable commitment to workplace literacy?

Government Sector :

How do we legitimize workplace literacy/education within government and education systems?

How can we build on our partnerships to strengthen regional/national, stakeholder and practitioner ties? What is the role of government in a collaborative relationship?

What is the role of government in the development of an articulated system?

Business Sector :

How do we deploy our resources to ensure a sustainable standard of living and growth potential while addressing the issue of continuous improvement?

How can we create a venue with the existing stakeholders to ensure a skilled future workforce?

How do we maintain a balance between technological change, the environment, and the social impact on the workforce?

Research Sector :

How do we identify and implement effective means of linking researchers, practitioners, consumers (including policy makers), making a broad collaborative team?

What are novel and innovative ways of dissemination?

How do we create a research agenda that integrates the knowledge base of literacy related research

Joint/National Groups Sector

What are the elements necessary to ensure adequate resources for basic skills?

What are the indicators of a genuine level of commitment by business and labour?

What is necessary to set a clear agenda, goals, planning and delivery?

Practitioner/Coordinators Sector

How can we improve the practice, professional development and networking opportunities for the workforce essential skills field?

What can we do to promote/re-position "literacy with all stakeholders", especially business and labour, and become industry problem solvers?

How can we develop and support conceptual changes to better respond to the essential skills needs of the workforce?

Once the individual sector priorities were identified, the group was invited to express any questions or concerns about the priorities, or about the process used to identify the priorities. A summary of this discussion follows :

How will these priorities be integrated into a big picture? For a lot of literacy stakeholders, there is a concern about a collapse of the infrastructure that supports what has been accomplished so far. The people that will drive this discussion further should have the opportunity to explore some of these issues.

If a holistic approach to workplace literacy is to be taken, funding is one of the issues that must have a concerted effort of approaches, rather than people leaving the room in separate silos.

At the end of the consultation, the national needs that were raised initially will be cross-checked against those needs that the individual sectors have identified, so that the priorities are all reflected in the report.

Although it was anticipated that the plans were made for one year out, it appears that there is work for at least two years here.

Following this discussion, the group completed an analysis of the sector issues, as outlined on the next pages.

Analysis of the Sector Issues

Each of the priority issues identified by the sectors was analyzed according to:

Why this is an issue;

Initial steps that would address this issue; and,

What might hinder, or get in the way of, the implementation of these steps.

The representatives of every sector contributed their ideas to this analysis. The following Danes reflect the results of these discussions.

Labour Sector Priority #1:

How do we raise awareness of workplace literacy within Labour in order to foster and secure organizational commitment?

Why this is an issue :

Workplace literacy is not seen as being in labour's traditional bailiwick
Education seen as neutral and not reflecting point of view
Some unions see training as management's prerogative and responsibility.

Initial steps that would address this issue :

Steps	Who	Start	Finish
1. Develop a promotional and educational strategy to increase Labour's awareness of workplace literacy	Central Labour Bodies - CLC	Fall 1997	Spring 1998
2. Use existing communications vehicles and forums to raise awareness by sharing success stories and impacts	Central Labour Bodies & Affiliates CLC	Spring 1998	Ongoing
3. Build a case for how workplace literacy can respond to needs of members while strengthening union		Ongoing	
4. Integrate literacy and plain language issues into union work including Labour Education			

What might hinder, or get in the way of, the implementation of these steps :

Nothing identified by the sector.

Labour Sector Priority #2 :

How do we, as Labour, define and articulate program goals to reflect workers' needs?

Why this is an issue :

There is no consensus within Labour as to what the goals are or should be Labour's mandate is to ensure that workers' needs and goals are reflected.

Initial steps that would address this issue :

Steps	Who	Start	Finish
1. Develop an approach to determine training needs of unionized workers, not just within the workplace but also within labour organizations.	Central Labour Bodies	Sept. 1997	January 1999
2. Develop and adapt assessment tools to accomplish this	"	"	"
3. Implement a representative needs assessment	"	"	"
4. Gather and disseminate information to built consensus on labour's goals	"	Spring 1999	Fall 1999

What might hinder, or get in the way of, the implementation of these steps :

Time constraints

Lack of money

Small "p" politics within Labour

Labour Sector Priority #3 :

How can the range of financing models be explored, to achieve sustainable commitment to workplace literacy?

Why this is an issue :

Government money is precarious

Resources = commitment.

We need finances/resources for infrastructure in order to deliver programs.

Some stakeholders see workplace literacy as a cost, not an investment.

Initial steps that would address this issue :

Steps	Who	Start	Finish
1. Form a representative working group to guide a project that would research current training and financing models within Labour in Canada and beyond.	CLC Co-ordinators	Fall 1997	Fall 1998
2. Develop a communication, advocacy and training strategy to implement financing models	Working groups with CLC	Fall 1998	May 1999
3. Create case studies and pilot projects	"	"	2000
4. Explore partnerships with other stakeholders	To be identified above	Concurrent to above	Concurrent to above

What might hinder, or get in the way of, the implementation of these steps :

Political will

Money and time

There is a problem with meeting in Ontario

Government Sector Priority #1:

How do we legitimize workplace literacy/education within government and education systems?

Why this is an issue :

It is not high on government agenda.

It is not embedded in the established educational system (and other systems, i.e., Health).

It is not part of public awareness.

It makes it vulnerable by being an add on.

Initial steps that would address this issue :

Steps	Who	Start	Finish
1. Recognize how we position workplace education in the context of what motivates the training.	Individual provinces/ jurisdictions	ASAP	December 1997
2. Identify internal/external champions (national, provincial, and business) who can speak to higher government.			
3. Identify research priorities that will impact public policy agenda.			
4. Enhance information exchange and support between/among provinces			
5. Organize meeting of political leaders responsible for workplace literacy/education across the nation.			

What might hinder, or get in the way of, the implementation of these steps :

Money being directed to unemployed workers

Government Sector Priority #2:

How can we build on our partnerships to strengthen regional/national, stakeholder and practitioner ties? What is the role of government in a collaborative relationship?

Why this is an issue :

Role needs to be defined

Issue of ownership

Accountability

Initial steps that would address this issue :

Steps	Who	Start	Finish
1. Define partnership roles - could be an extension of mapping provincial initiatives.	Federal/ provincial group		
2. Facilitate linkages - mediate when requested			
3. Provide human resources			

What might hinder, or get in the way of, the implementation of these steps :

Lack of trust

Preconceived notions

Government policy; "Are the structures in place for government to be a collaborative partner?"

Government Sector Priority #3:

What is the role of government in the development of an articulated system?

Why this is an issue :

For the learner, accountability

For deliverers, maximizing resources

Initial steps that would address this issue :

Steps	Who	Start	Finish
1. Complete a consultation process with stakeholders regarding needs.			
2. Develop PLA-based standards for learning outcomes - consider IALS, Essential Skills.			
3. Institute certification for practitioners			
4. Build a process for ongoing evaluation			

What might hinder, or get in the way of, the implementation of these steps :

Nothing identified by the sector.

Business Sector Priority #1:

How do we deploy our resources to ensure a sustainable standard of living and growth potential while addressing the issue of continuous improvement?

Why this is an issue :

Globalization

Initial steps that would address this issue :

Steps	Who	Start	Finish
1. Establish ISO standard for Workforce Training and Development	Collaborative international body for ISO	ASAP	2000+
2. Create IALS awareness at workforce level	Business/ Labour	ASAP	Ongoing

What might hinder, or get in the way of, the implementation of these steps :

Nothing identified by the sector.

Business Sector Priority #2:

How can we create a venue with the existing stakeholders to ensure a skilled future workforce?

Why this is an issue :

Globalization

Initial steps that would address this issue :

Steps	Who	Start	Finish
1. Promote inclusion of IALS data in high school curricula	Business sector, gov't, labour, education	ASAP	Ongoing
2. Provide local school boards and Department of Education with advisory panels on workplace education		ASAP	Ongoing

What might hinder, or get in the way of, the implementation of these steps :

Nothing identified by the sector.

Business Sector Priority #3:

How do we maintain a balance between technological change, the environment, and the social impact on the workforce?

Why this is an issue :

Globalization

Initial steps that would address this issue :

Steps	Who	Start	Finish
1. Research the impacts or taxation incentives for workforce development	HRDC Conference Board of Canada	ASAP	1 year
2. Increase business/education partnerships at the grass roots level	Sector Councils, Home & School Assocs., Chamber of Commerce	ASAP	Ongoing
3. Research the social costs of the jobs replaced by technology	HRDC Conference Board of Canada	ASAP	Ongoing

What might hinder, or get in the way of, the implementation of these steps :

Nothing identified by the sector.

Research Sector Priority #1:

How do we identify and implement effective means of linking researchers, practitioners, consumers (including policy makers), making a broad collaborative team?

Why this is an issue:

- Competition for funds
- Different knowledge bases
- Different methodological assumptions
- Geography and organization isolated
- Low expectation for the sharing of research

Initial steps that would address this issue:

Steps	Who	Start	Finish
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Build in the expectation that research collaboration is part of the research plan - participants have a real role rather than a token one2. Funders should assist in creating opportunities for researchers to meet practitioners3. Researchers should offer opportunities to share research skills; funders should include this in the funding budget as part of the professional development of practitioners. <i>(This is very important to practitioners in isolated areas who need research advice; will make practitioners "buffer readers" of research).</i>			

What might hinder, or get in the way of, the implementation of these steps:

Nothing identified by the sector.

Research Sector Priority #2:

What are novel and innovative ways of dissemination?

Why this is an issue:

- Organizational culture works against us
- Researchers often have different skill sets
- Trying to remain "current" in ways of dissemination
- Time consuming and costly
- Funders often do not cover dissemination

Initial steps that would address this issue:

Steps	Who	Start	Finish
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Require dissemination as part of NLS application - funding should be contingent on this2. Funders must also have dissemination plan templates; should also disseminate research3. Funder strikes an advisory committee of stakeholders to generate ideas for dissemination -a real role rather than token4. Keep utility of the research in mind i.e., proper language for audiences			

What might hinder, or get in the way of, the implementation of these steps:

- Provincial governments need to share information so they don't fund what is already been funded elsewhere
- Information overload
- Competition between funders
- Utility of the research
- Cost of software, printing, postage

Research Sector Priority #3:

How do we create a research agenda that integrates the knowledge base of literacy related research

Why this is an issue:

- Broader knowledge base, truncated view of field
- Duplication or gaps in research
- Differing perceptions of the utility of research
- To advance the field to new perceptions

Initial steps that would address this issue:

Steps	Who	Start	Finish
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Access, in an organized way, existing research - clearing house role; who else does it impact on2. Identify key words for Clearinghouse- usethesaurus, need usable, understandable work3. Involve researchers from outside of literacy field or vice versa - (got <i>rave reviews from other groups</i>)4. Brainstorm with stakeholders needs that are not being addressed5. NLS publishes a list of people they are going to fund; encourage others who may wish to add ideas to the process.			

What might hinder, or get in the way of, the implementation of these steps:

- Research culture, Terminology
- Stubbornness - tendency to create existing research "my way", elitism
- Practitioners don't write down what they do

Joint/National Groups Sector Priority #1:

What are the elements necessary to ensure adequate resources for basic skills?

Why this is an issue:

Resources are needed for commitment

Initial steps that would address this issue:

Steps	Who	Start	Finish
1. Ensure long-term funding for Councils in order to get basic skills strategies up, running and sustainable	NLS, HRDC, Sector Councils	Now	within 3 years
2. Forge partnerships between business, labour and government			
3. Communicate partnership agreement to address basic skills/literacy			
4. Establish a Sector Council Literacy Foundation to ensure sustainability			

What might hinder, or get in the way of, the implementation of these steps:

Whether councils will still be around and continue to function

Joint/National Groups Sector Priority #2:

What are the indicators of a genuine level of commitment by business and labour?

Why this is an issue:

Need to foster long-term commitment and sustainability of basic skills

Initial steps that would address this issue:

Steps	Who	Start	Finish
1. All parties have to give dollars and commitment to dollars.			
2. Negotiate partnership terms and measures of commitment to ensure sustainability.			
3. Ensure good communication among partners.			
4. Invite observation and establish linkages with provincial government.			

What might hinder, or get in the way of, the implementation of these steps:

Lack of knowledge and communication between sector councils

Joint/National Groups Sector Priority #3:

What is necessary to set a clear agenda, goals, planning and delivery.

Why this is an issue:

Need for clear, attainable, developed and agreed upon goals, objectives, milestones

Need for clear delineation of roles and responses

Initial steps that would address this issue:

Steps	Who	Start	Finish
1. Put in place priority #1 and #2.	Sector Councils		
2. Develop a framework for basic skills strategy including an action plan	NLS		
3. Web site with rooms including research data, networking and communications, i.e., projects			
4. Expand on research as necessary.			
5. Develop a process of evaluation for accountability.			

What might hinder, or get in the way of, the implementation of these steps:

Lack of involvement of outside groups, i.e., literacy practitioners

Practitioner/Coordinators Sector Priority #1:

How can we improve the practice, professional development and networking opportunities for the workforce essential skills field.

Why this is an issue:

Isolation - no communication/infrastructure or academic home base; Variety of standards - lack of tools, time and funding

Problem with regional access to business/labour

Ethical issues and standards

Initial steps that would address this issue:

Steps	Who	Start	Finish
1. Develop inclusive needs assessment for practitioners/ consultants nationally, i.e. needs and job analyses, ethnographies,	Ad hoc committee		
2. Develop communication infrastructure web site/list serve/ newsletter and training on the same -> implementation workshop(i.e., internet)		Soon	
3. Face-to-face meetings, conference with mandatory presentations by people who get grants	NLS and other leaders	11/97 in Toronto	
4. International connections and meetings			
5."Accreditation", quality standards to follow from Needs Analysis	NLS Organizations	1998	

What might hinder, or get in the way of, the implementation of these steps:

Need for national/regional body to do needs assessment

Need special travel funds/bursary; need forums to communicate

Practitioner/Coordinators Sector Priority #2:

How can we develop and support conceptual changes to better respond to the essential skills needs of the workforce?

Why this is an issue:

Big picture/fragmented efforts.

We build the box. We need to challenge our own and others' notions of what it is.

Initial steps that would address this issue:

Steps	Who	Start	Finish
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Revisit and challenge existing models through think tanks and research 2. Develop policy and recommendations for funders/ gov't/ other bodies who make policy 3. Form a provincial/national group or join a group re professional standards/quality issues 4. Host a series of think tanks to develop/explore #1 and #2. 5. Develop appropriate and varied tools 	<p>Unclear- don't see leadership or sector here. Communication is a beginning key.</p>	<p>ASAP</p> <p>ASAP</p> <p>ASAP</p> <p>ASAP</p> <p>ASAP</p>	

What might hinder, or get in the way of, the implementation of these steps:

Conceptual framework of programs and funders (i.e., E.I. course = 80 hours)

Practitioner/Coordinators Sector Priority #3:

What can we do to promote/re-position "literacy with all stakeholders", especially business and labour, and become industry problem solvers?

Why this is an issue:

Hamstrung by outmoded notions of literacy
Role confusion regarding educator, trainer, consultant

Initial steps that would address this issue:

Steps	Who	Start	Finish
1. Agree on a common frame of reference - common terminology			
2. Get training in strategic positioning and empathy			
3. Synthesize current and existing frameworks with data IALS/Essential Skills			
4. NLS sponsor "papers" and dialogue in with response to IALS/Essential Skills studies implications to different stakeholders			

What might hinder, or get in the way of, the implementation of these steps:

Each group positions this differently
Since we don't own "literacy" we grope for new terms
Rapid change-> need to respond

Wrap-up Discussion

A summary of the Workplace Literacy Consultation's wrap-up discussion of outstanding issues and/or reflections follows:

- A web site is needed to help connect individual initiatives and support our collectivity. It would allow some interfacing through technology and would help people to talk more across the stakeholder groups.
- People feel very comfortable that if their workplace is functioning at a level three, that is acceptable. Research (Essential Skills Research Project) is coming out that verifies that certain jobs have different requirements for different levels. When tasks are more complex, people will need levels four and five and we need to strive for that in the workplace.
- At our table, we would have enjoyed a broader discussion of the potential interface of sectoral councils and workplace literacy. We need to understand the sectoral council system better and to find ways of interacting together.
- There is much that can be done and there are many hands here who can help to accomplish the many tasks that lie ahead. Thank you all for helping.

Appendices

Appendix A: Needs Being Addressed

Participants identified a number of needs that they believed are already being addressed across all sectors, that have made a difference in workplace literacy. These included: (* = other participants mentioned the same need)

- A. Impact of Workplace Education*
- B. Data regarding impacts on employees*
- C. New Technologies*
- D. A good start *****
- E. Publicized usage of tools
- F. Awareness of connections with Workplace Literacy*
- G. Above points are a start
- H. Connection between family literacy and workplace literacy are closer
- I. Level of literacy determines the welfare of the individual in society
- J. Partnerships between employers and workers to increase workers' skills together; with government seed money *
- K. Promotion
- L. Trying different ways of delivery, support, etc. *
- M. Good promotion of initiatives
- N. Economic and social impacts*
- O. Worker delivery of training
- P. Tools for assessment

Appendix B: Needs Yet to be Met

Participants identified a number of needs that they believed had yet to be addressed across all sectors that would make a difference in workplace literacy. These included:

- A. Perception of literacy by learners, i.e., process not fear, benefits
- B. Increase data re impact for employers
- C. Increase programs for workplace literacy through employers
- D. Essential Skills research project
- E. Research in other fields includes Workplace Literacy
- F. Outcomes measures
- G. Understand experience of those in organizations and people
- H. Increase resources for small business access
- I. Numeracy
- J. Shared vision, principles and plan, measure effectiveness, multi-year accountability framework **
- K. Employers access dollars and understanding
- L. Transparent links between workforce development, family literacy - holistic continuum
- M. Practical linkage of practitioners
- N. Marketing, convincing public, broader audience, smaller centres, micro-businesses**
- O. Maximize experience, work, sectors
- P. Get small business together

Appendix B: Cont'd

- Q. Quality standards from consumers' view to make informed choices and marketing
- R. Approach based on technological changes, e.g., teaching materials and structure of work
- S. Partnership with funding programs rewarded
- T. Legitimacy - denial of need by stakeholders
- U. Explore factors contributing to culture of workplace reaming
- V. People with most need don't realize it - penetration
- W. High automation - literacy skills not being used ("dumbing down")
- X. Promote successful Canadian models, stories
- Y. Canadian ethnographical research
- Z. Focus of workforce/learners
- AA. Clear union vision for why involved in training
- BB. Buy-in from business needs development - involving framing information
- CC. Recognize literacy as part of training and daily business
- DD. Employers' social responsibility
- EE. Process of reaming transfer- barriers

Appendix C: Consultation Agenda

NATIONAL LITERACY SECRETARIAT WORKPLACE LITERACY CONSULTATION

Victoria Room, Ottawa Delta Hotel and Suites 361 Queen Street

GOALS: To develop a list of priorities for possible projects of interest to all sectors, that will make a difference in the area of workplace literacy.
To develop a list of priority for possible projects of interest to each sector, i.e., business, labour, workplace literacy practitioners, researchers, workplace literacy coordinators and government representatives.

Wednesday, June 11, 1997

- 9:00 Welcome
- David A. Good, Assistant Deputy Minister, Human Resources
Investment Branch, Human Resources Development Canada
- James E. Page, Executive Secretary, National Literacy
Secretariat, Human Resources Development Canada
- 9:15 Overview of Goals and Agenda
- Marian Pitters, Facilitator, Pitters Associates
- 9:30 Introduction of Participants
- Name, organization, one priority need that you believe has yet to
be addressed that will make a difference in workplace literacy
and one priority need that is already being addressed across all
sectors
- 10:15 Response: NLS past, present and anticipated future activities
- Brigid Hayes, Program Consultant, National Literacy Secretariat
- 10:30 Networking Break
- 11:00 Small Group Discussion of Priority National Needs
- 12:00 Lunch
- 1:30 Small Group Discussions - Establishing Priority National Needs

- 2:30 Networking Break
- 3:00 Small Group Discussions - Identifying Sector Needs
- 4:00 Plenary
- 4:30 Wrap-up
- 4:45 Reception

Thursday, June 12,1997

- 9:00 Review of Previous Day's Activities
- 9:30 Determining Priorities Among Sector Needs
- 10:30 Networking Break
- 11:00 Steps to Meeting Sector Needs
- 12:00 Lunch
- 1:30 Soliciting Feedback from Other Sectors
- 2:30 Networking Break
- 3:00 Small Group Discussion - continued
- 3:20 Plenary Report
- 4:15 Wrap-up and Evaluation
- 4:30 Adjournment

Appendix D: Evaluation Summary

Workplace Literacy Consultation Evaluation

June 11 -12, 1997

1. The goals of the consultation are listed below. Please rate how successful you think the group has been in achieving these goals, and explain your rating at the side.
 - a) To develop a list of priorities for possible projects of interest to all sectors, that will make a difference in the area of workplace literacy.
Not Successful at all Highly Successful Comments:

1 2 3 4 5
 - b) To develop a list of priorities for possible projects of interest to each sector, i.e., business, labour, workplace literacy practitioners, researchers, workplace literacy coordinators, and government representatives.

Not Successful at all Highly Successful Comments:

1 2 3 4 5
2. What did you find was the most useful about the consultation?
3. What did you find was the least useful about the consultation?
4. Your impressions of Marian's facilitation?
5. Other comments you would like to make?

Thank you for participating!

Workplace Literacy Consultation Evaluation Summary

June 11 -12, 1997

1. The goals of the consultation are listed below. Please rate how successful you think the group has been in achieving these goals, and explain your rating at the side.

- a) To develop a list of priorities for possible projects of interest to all sectors, that will make a difference in the area of workplace literacy.

	Not successful at all				Highly successful	
	1	2	3	3.5	4	5
#			5	2	15	8
%			16.6	6.6	50	26.6

Comments:

- Collaborative, engaging, and value added.
- Incredible challenge. Good consultation process, broke down barriers around different groups.
- Good ideas/lack of leadership - who will lead?
- Not all-inclusive but an excellent overview/framework.
- Painful but fruitful experience.
- Workplace literacy has now been anchored in large industry and it is now time to bring small business into the vision.
- Please consult and re-consult with the field to be inclusive.
- Should identify elements for short and long term planning.
- As a fed, I can see the value of this process.
- Will have to see what projects actually take place.
- Need 2 people: one to listen, one to record - process would have been more accurate, quicker.
- Need more time to flush out ideas.
- Projects did not directly emerge, but lots of interesting directions to pursue.
- Some good ideas got weeded out early on.
- For a & b, there still remains a fair bit of work to do in identifying projects.
- Many sectors identified prioritizing their agendas as a priority. They did not get down to the business of saying what those priorities are.

- b) To develop a list of priorities for possible projects of interest to each sector, i.e., business, labour, workplace literacy practitioners, researchers, workplace literacy coordinators, and government representatives.

	Not successful at all				Highly successful	
	1	2	3	4	4.5	5
#		1	3	19	1	5
%		3.4	10.3	65.5	3.4	17.2

Comments:

Feedback in mixed groups acknowledged the diversity and commonality of issues.

Perhaps we could have achieved if we had more time. More a list of areas of interest than projects.

Some further work needs to be done on the topics/ideas.

The sector-focused approach ensured this would be the outcome.

Working with a goal in mind and projects to reach that goal is more realistic.

Broad questions can be translated into projects. Yes - develop a list priorities, no - develop a list of projects.

A lot of constructive ideas, however now there is a need to communicate to all parties.

Some groups suggested project ideas for other sectors, too.

A small sample without good geographic distribution.

Gave good opportunities to network and get feedback from how others would react.

Useful but I'm not clear about what happens next.

Not that specific, I don't believe.

Practitioner training, plan of action for the workplace, marketing.

2. What did you find was the most useful about the consultation?

The opportunity to network with individuals representing their respective provinces and territories.

Having a chance to hear/learn about priority expectations from other groups/stakeholders and that there were common perception upon which to work.

Sharing of ideas with reps from all sectors - resulted in expanding own ideas -broader vision.

The chance to discuss the issues in a small group across experiences and Interests

Spending 2 days with other stakeholders/regional differences are amazing/developing forum for exchange of ideas.

Networking, variety of points of view.

Opportunity to hear and network with other stakeholders.

There were lots of things...the most useful thing was the calibre and diversity of the people in the room - lots to learn from and draw on.

Cross sector discussion; national view; western/regional networking.

Contact with other stakeholders (from other sectors).

Networking opportunities were plentiful.

Realization that we as a country have issues which are similar, regardless of province. Having the national awareness structure helps formulate new thoughts which propel the process ahead.

Networking and hearing the thoughts of the other sectors and reacting to them.

An opportunity to have input.

Hearing the views, differences, and congruences between various sectors present.

A sense of what is happening with the various stakeholders - networking.

Exchange of perspectives, priorities and needs of each group.

Working with people in my area and group of people who I would not normally link with.

Wonderful opportunity to meet talk together. Good to have time to get into issues.

The networking.

Chance to work within my sector, hear from other sectors, hone our goals.

Gave different perspectives on priorities.

The fast pace, intellectual stretch, variety of enlightened and experienced practitioners involved.

Meeting people from across the country from all sectors - networking. Gaining a deeper understanding of issues facing the field from a variety of perspectives.

Multi-sector.

New ideas for priorities (projects) and advocacy issues.

Sectoral/jigsaw approach. The process itself was very effective.

Recognizing that there are some employers willing to accept and recognize legitimate need for Workplace Literacy.

Interaction in the sectors and the exchange of priorities among the sectors. Allowed to understand the different points of view from the various sectors and to see certain similarities.

3. What did you find was the least useful about the consultation?

N/A

Each element was integrated

Not applicable

The question about national issues - because they didn't go anywhere

Setting the priorities for projects.

The structure seemed to suppress brainstorming. The very first "main priority" had little thought or inspiration.

Felt rushed - under time pressures - but I understand why we work under time constraints.

Nothing "wasn't" useful - what would have been great (no surprise!) was to have had MORE TIME.

We may have benefitted from more full plenary - esp. on day 2.

We still don't have buy-ins from all sectors, the belief is not 100% by all. We need to spread more change and we are so few.

First day - timing and breaking things down into minute bits -- disturbed what could be a richer conversation.

The only stakeholders not present were actual learners. May have been useful to have representation from employees who have gone through a literacy program to find out what worked/what could be improved.

Nothing, the process flowed logically.

Group memory (flip charts on walls) is limiting. Please don't write in all capitals. Allow feedback as we go along. Would like to reflect on process/learnings.

The frustration level caused by a poor explanation of the process.

Push towards homogenization, consensus, lack of recognition of differences and imbalances of power between sectors.

Appears to be a drive towards standardization and one way for all.

Nothing.

The jigsaw activity was challenging but ultimately very helpful in sharing points of view.

Not being able to spend enough time with other "constituency" groups (therefore, same "group think").

Time (enough of it) is always a factor.

Posturing of Academics.

Nothing

4. Your impressions of Marian's facilitation?

Great job. Marian allowed the process to evolve yet kept us on task.

Good/very good. A challenging group to work with.

Very good on first day. Excellent on second.

Excellent.

Excellent - good combination of humour and focus, well-organized, well-prepared

Fine - fairly neutral which is good.

Very good - kept us on task; especially with large number of people in the room.

Excellent balance of accommodating the group but also driving it through the process.

Okay.

Somewhat controlling but understandable under the circumstances and time restrictions.

Excellent! I appreciated her sense of humour and her desire to meet group's needs.

If the structure was explained with examples in the onset maybe some people would have trusted the process and given more freely'.

Excellent.

Did a very good job.

Excellent.

Excellent.

Very casual yet effective. Good appreciation of issues being addressed.

Excellent, was very impressed and will recommend her. She was wonderful in her inter-personal skills with participants.

Group fought against timed "consensus", distillation of issues into words. Too bad she doesn't speak French - did Francophones feel marginal?

Very overbearing. I felt negative feeling about the process, we were treated in a fashion opposite to how we would treat people in a class.

I felt railroaded in terms of time several times. Facilitator should be more knowledgeable about workplace literacy issues and should be bilingual.

Overall it was well done, however on day one she did allow the business group to spend 10 minutes lecturing (about a truck) re business needs.

Excellent!

Excellent. I appreciated her humour, ability to keep the group on task (a mammoth undertaking!) and clear focus.

Great.

Great!

Marian did a wonderful job. She was flexible, responsive and demonstrated good adult education practice, ie. ensuring that the group took ownership and responsibility for the experience.

Very good, did a terrific job considering diversity of group re: focus.

A very good facilitator but the program was too full to have in-depth conversations.

Excellent.

5. Other comments you would like to make?

Well organized - thanks for including me in this valuable exercise.

Thank you for the opportunity.

Sometimes it would be helpful to have in depth think tanks with sector focus -just practitioners, just researchers etc. within these "sectors" we are very diverse.

I appreciate the opportunity to participate in the consultation. It is a privilege to be invited to this kind of event. Keep up the good work, NLS.

Thank you!

A somewhat more generous timeframe would have allowed for discussions (and mutual education) on arising issues.

Two days well spent. Highly productive.

I believe that this NLS consultation has been more of a benefit to me and my objectives at the local level than on a national level. But I hope that the two align further down the road. Thank you.

Thank you.

Breaks were possibly a little too long.

Felt honoured to be invited and thoroughly enjoyed the conference - got some good information and ideas to take back to Manitoba. Thanks!

Thank you for the opportunity to participate. I reamed a lot!

As a model of process, this was excellent for government R&D programs.

Thank you for the opportunity to come.

Brigid and Jim P. did (and do!) a great job here.

Great opportunity! Thanks.

Fear that workplace literacy is moving too far away from learner-centred towards labour market - centred.

Good concept. Really important to keep the 2-day format. The first day was good for getting people's brains going, 2nd day was great because it brought forth "The Common Ground" issues.

Thank you for making this possible.

Please build in some future accountability for this group/activity and please make a monetary allowance for those who are not on a 'salary.'

Brigid, thanks for your personal approach. Large gatherings such as this one often lose their 'human' side. You are great as always.

Quite enjoyed it, look forward to be invited again.

I am aware that New Brunswick has a lot to do in this area and I fear that if this question is not addressed quickly we will be left behind. Meeting the coordinators was a great experience.

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