



Workforce Development Framework

For English Language Instructors

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Workforce Development Framework for English Language Instructors

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INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS THIS FRAMEWORK?

The “Workforce Development Framework for English Language Instructors” is a comprehensive guide for instructors who teach in the workplace on behalf of the Centre of Excellence in Immigrant and Intercultural Advancement (CEIIA) at Bow Valley College. These instructors teach in an area traditionally known as English in the Workplace (EWP), now considered a part of workforce development. This framework highlights the *Principles* and *Protocols* that guide and inform these instructors. *Principles* refer to the facts that determine what instruction in the workplace looks like, and describe how it is different from teaching in a mainstream English language learner (ELL) classroom. *Protocols* refer to the rules which workforce development instructors and specialists abide by to ensure consistency and efficiency.

WHO IS THIS FRAMEWORK FOR?

This framework is written for:

- Instructors new to teaching in the workplace in general
- Instructors new to teaching in the workplace specifically for Bow Valley College as of May 2013
- Instructors who are experienced in teaching in the workplace but unfamiliar with intercultural communicative competence (ICC)
- Other individuals involved in workforce development including coordinators and workforce development specialists

WHY IS IT CALLED “WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT”?

Traditionally, language instruction in the workplace is known as “English in the Workplace” or EWP. However, it is becoming more common for language instructors to teach skills that go beyond the four strands and grammar; instructors in the workplace can be expected to teach presentation skills or intercultural communicative competence. The name “workforce development” also implies improvement in skills that are transferable to the workplace, positively impacting the workforce as a whole. “Workforce development” is a comprehensive title that captures the magnitude of what the instructor is striving to accomplish in the workplace. Since this is still a relatively new concept in the corporate world, the workforce development specialist still promotes this area of workforce development as English language training.

GENDER REFERENCES

For the sake of simplicity, female pronouns (she, her, herself) are used to refer to the workforce development instructor throughout this framework. This in no way reflects bias or gender preferentiality.

DISTINGUISHING PRINCIPLES:

HOW WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT DIFFERS FROM THE MAINSTREAM ELL CLASSROOM

The opportunity to teach in the workplace can be very exciting, challenging, and rewarding. For those new to teaching in the workplace, it may seem a bit daunting at the beginning. However, when they accept the challenge, they will enjoy their experience in this unique teaching context. This framework is designed to provide CEIIA ELL instructors the information and support they require for all aspects of instruction in the workplace from the beginning of the contract to the end.

There are many differences between teaching English in the workplace and teaching English in a mainstream ELL or English for academic purposes (EAP) classroom. In fact, an ELL teacher would be unwise to approach a workforce development course the way they would a mainstream ELL classroom. This section of this workforce development framework identifies the guiding principles that make workforce development instruction different from a mainstream ELL classroom.

WHO ARE THE STAKEHOLDERS?

■ Principle:

The stakeholders are the employer, the employees participating in the course, the instructor, the workforce development specialist and Bow Valley College.

Stakeholders are the individuals or organizations who have a vested interest in the results of the workforce development course. The stakeholders are the employer, the employees participating in the course, the instructor, the workforce development specialist and Bow Valley College. The workforce development instructor must meet the challenge of acknowledging and realistically accommodating the needs and wishes of all stakeholders to the best of her abilities.

THE EMPLOYER

■ Principle:

The employer is a customer and the instructor is providing a product.

The employer is a customer and the instructor is providing a product. Therefore, the instructor is responsible for first and foremost addressing the wishes of the employer. The "Needs Assessment" (page 8) section of this framework describes how to determine the wishes of the employer. In some situations, the instructor may find it tempting to address other needs of the employees not acknowledged by the employer. The "Course Development" (page 19) section describes the protocol for what to do in this situation.

Typically, the employer has requested language training because of inefficiencies in the company; communication issues are negatively affecting their business and their bottom line (Holmes, 2012a). It is serious enough to cause them to hire an instructor to provide language training that delivers results (Holmes, 2012a). The instructor participates

in a thorough needs assessment and maintains continual dialogue with the employer. The instructor discusses the progress of the class with the employer and continues to discover with help from the employer how the course can be made more effective. The class becomes a part of the organization, like an extension of the workplace, and shouldn't be delivered in isolation; open lines of communication are necessary (Belfiore & Burnaby, 1984). The instructor also ensures that the workforce development specialist is aware of issues, learner progress, and agreed upon curriculum changes between the employer and instructor.

THE EMPLOYEES

The employees' first priority is work. Because of this, the workforce development instructor should keep the following in mind:

- **Be flexible, and plan for irregular attendance.** Often workforce development training is offered during work hours. Depending on work obligations, attendance can be irregular. In one scenario, an employer occasionally cancelled class only an hour before it began because the employees were too busy with work orders. In another scenario, the employer asked at the last minute that specific lesson not be taught because one of the employees who needed the training could not make it. **The instructor should be prepared with a back-up lesson plan for these kinds of situations.** However, if it becomes a habit of the employer to ask the lesson plan to change at the last minute, the instructor should notify the workforce development specialist.
- **Employees work full-time and may be tired.** If classes are at the end of the day, learners are likely battling fatigue (Belfiore & Burnaby, 1984). It is important that lessons are engaging and interactive to maintain learner interest (Hammond & Associates Inc., 2009). Since employees are taking this course in addition to full-time work, they likely do not have the time to complete significant homework assignments after class. Discuss homework expectations with the employer (see Needs Assessment "Methods for Determining Outcomes", page 10)

Sometimes employees have been mandated to attend the course without having the opportunity to give consensus. The instructor should be aware that this may cause some employees to harbour negative attitudes toward the course. The instructor should strive to achieve buy-in from employees early on by providing meaningful instruction the employees can take away and apply immediately at work.

■ Protocol:

The Instructor maintains continual dialogue with the employer.

■ Protocol:

The instructor also ensures that the workforce development specialist is aware of issues, learner progress, and agreed upon curriculum changes between the employer and instructor.

■ Principle:

Sometimes employees have been mandated to attend the course.

■ **Principle:**

Issues in the workplace beyond the control of the instructor can find their way to the classroom.

■ **Protocol:**

The instructor should always keep a neutral stance and a healthy distance from work politics.

Issues in the workplace beyond the control of the instructor can find their way to the classroom. Every workplace has its issues, and the employees have existing relationships that often developed long before the workforce development course began. Tensions from the workplace may carry over into the classroom. The instructor should watch for these and avoid putting individuals in uncomfortable situations like partner work. In addition, learners quickly become comfortable with the instructor and may share their frustrations with their workplace during class; this has a risk of turning the class into a complaining session about their employer. The instructor should always keep a neutral stance and a healthy distance from work politics. She should use discretion to decide if anything should be shared with the employer. Sometimes learners may reveal ethical issues that are occurring in the workplace, such as racism or abuse. In these situations, the instructor should notify the employer after consulting with the CEIA coordinator.

■ **Principle:**

The learners in the class are faced with current communication challenges in the workplace.

The learners in the class are faced with current communication challenges in the workplace. Relevancy and immediacy of course content are of utmost importance. A consultative approach with the employer and employees should be ongoing. The instructor should encourage employees to ask questions in the class about communication issues in the workplace, and be prepared to adapt or even abandon a lesson plan to deal with questions at hand (Belfiore & Burnaby, 1984). It is not uncommon for an instructor to begin her planned lesson 30 minutes into the class because of questions that have arisen; it is even more uncommon for an instructor to complete her lesson as she planned. The instructor should also be sensitive to intercultural communication competence needs when employees discuss communication issues (see "Teaching Intercultural Communicative Competence in the Workplace " page 30).

■ **Protocol:**

The workforce development instructor will address almost any current communication challenges of employees.

The instructor should never underestimate the importance of the content they are teaching if the outcomes are based on the needs assessment results provided by the employees and employer. For instance, if language regarding safety in the workplace is identified in the needs assessment, it should be prioritized. The instructor may also find that the employee's language needs go beyond typical grammar and vocabulary instruction in mainstream ELL classrooms. The workforce development instructor will address almost any current communication challenges of employees. For example, she may find herself teaching presentation skills and e-mail writing, or reviewing corporate training videos with difficult vocabulary that exceeds the language level of the employees. Typically in the ELL classroom, there is a strong emphasis on linguistic features of language, such as grammar and writing mechanics. However, the workplace instructor

will likely find the need to spend more attention on the communicative functions and cultural implications of language. For example, task-based outcomes would include how to make requests of a supervisor, or demonstrate sympathy or remorse in a customer service role (see “Teaching Intercultural Communicative Competence in the Workplace” page 30).

THE COURSE OFFERING

Only one or two classes may be offered. Sometimes, within an organization, there are not enough employees requiring language training to warrant more than one or two classes; the result is a multilevel class. Another result of this is that employees of different ranks may be grouped together in the same class, which can affect the dynamics and participation of the employees, especially if they come from a cultural background where power distance is high. “Power distance” is the difference in authority and influence between supervisors and subordinates (Holmes, 2012b) (Refer to “Teaching Intercultural Communicative Competence in the Workplace, page 30 , and “Understand Power,” page 119). In the classroom, supervisors may be concerned about losing face in front of their subordinates, and vice versa, which can result in lower participation. The instructor may need to adapt activities to avoid this uncomfortable situation, such as eliminating role play or other activities that involve an element of public performance.

Typically the workforce development course is only offered for a short period of time each week. Therefore, what the employer and employees hope to accomplish in terms of level improvement and what is actually feasible in the time the instructor has may need to be reconciled. The employer may have unrealistic expectations for employee improvement, and the instructor may be discouraged by not seeing results come as quickly as a full-time ELL course. Both employer and instructor need to be aware that it can take an average of 300 – 350 hours of instruction to progress one benchmark level (Watt & Lake, 2004), also keeping in mind that a typical workforce development course length is 81 hours. For more information, review p. 16 of *Common Ground: A How-To Guide for Employers* (full reference listed in “References”, page 44). There is also evidence to suggest that learning in the workplace seems to improve proficiency and it is important that the content is as relevant and as closely integrated with the actual work environment as possible (Brooks, 2009). A study found that the return on investment for English training classes in a manufacturing company was an error reduction and productivity increase of as much as 30 percent (Chenven, 2004, as cited in Brooks, 2009). Principle: Employers will observe the greatest improvement in language skills when outcomes are directly related to the workplace.

Every ELL teacher should use classroom time effectively to meet outcomes;

■ Principle:

Only one or two classes may be offered, resulting in multilevel classes.

■ Principle:

Typically the workforce development course is only offered for a short period of time each week.

■ Principle:

Employers will observe the greatest improvement in language skills when outcomes are directly related to the workplace.

■ **Protocol:**

The instructor should avoid frivolous activities that demonstrate no relevance to concrete, worthwhile objectives

(Gnida, 2009) the workforce development instructor should be especially prudent of this given the time restraints. The instructor should avoid frivolous activities that demonstrate no relevance to concrete, worthwhile objectives (Hammond & Associates Inc., 2009).

■ **Principle:**

Sometimes what are known as best practices in teaching ELL are not feasible in the workplace classroom.

Sometimes what are known as best practices in teaching ELL are not feasible in the workplace classroom. Due to the constraints of the contract and the other principles mentioned above, the workforce development instructor may not be able to observe all best practices of ELL instruction. For example, in one workplace course, attendance was so irregular that the classes were treated more like mini workshops where one outcome was addressed each time. No review or building on previous classes could be incorporated into the class. Although this kind of concession is not pedagogically ideal, it is inventive and the workforce development instructor is often required to think “out-of-the-box.” Virginia Sauvé (1982) described the necessary characteristics of an EWP instructor as someone who has a warm personality, creativity, flexibility, and diplomacy. Paul Holmes indicated that the instructor should have a “...tolerance for ambiguity, tenacity to resolve uncertainty and complexity, [and] patience in building trust with clients and learners...” (2012a, p. 8) These characteristics will serve the instructor well to adapt to their situation.

■ **Principle:**

No two workplaces are the same, and neither is a workforce development course.

No two workplaces are the same, and neither is a workforce development course. Each course is highly customized for the individual workplace. The instructor must conduct a new needs assessment at each new worksite, and choose different learning objectives taught in a different order each time. This is the reality of the workforce development instructor, who can find satisfaction in the variety and the unexpected.

BOW VALLEY COLLEGE

■ **Principle:**

Bow Valley College wants to sustain business with employers.

Bow Valley College wants to sustain business with employers. The instructor should encourage sustainable business by identifying opportunities for further contracts. Only she can provide further course recommendations to the workforce development specialist. (See “Course Completion” page 41) Professionalism is critical in building a positive relationship with the employer. The instructor is the “face” of Bow Valley College in the workplace, and must dress and act the part. Standard business attire is required when teaching at worksites, unless the employer requests otherwise. Another way to encourage a positive relationship with the employer is to naturally build rapport with other employees at the worksite who are not involved with the course. As the instructor becomes a “regular” at the worksite, some people such as the receptionist, supervisors, or even the president of the company may be friendly and conversational. The

■ **Protocol:**

Standard business attire is required when teaching at worksites, unless the employer requests otherwise.

instructor should strive to remain professional, positive, and friendly with all those she comes in contact with.

This section has been a brief overview of the guiding principles for workforce development instruction. The remaining sections of this framework address the principles listed above in greater depth.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

■ Principle:

A strong needs assessment is paramount for the development and delivery of a successful workforce development course.

A strong needs assessment is paramount for the development and delivery of a successful workforce development course. The effectiveness of the needs assessment will be demonstrated by the outcomes chosen for the course and how successfully they address performance gaps in the workplace. When course outcomes are established, the workforce development instructor is held accountable to teach those outcomes. The needs assessment is also an opportunity for relationship building with the employer at different levels by encouraging input and participation from a variety of individuals (Belfiore & Burnaby, 1984).

During a needs assessment, a CEIIA coordinator, workforce development specialist, and workforce development instructor with the input from the employer and employees determine:

1. The required competencies of the positions that L2 speakers hold,
2. The actual performance gaps of individuals,
3. The business functions affected by the problem (time, cost, quality, productivity, attraction and retention, customer satisfaction)
(Holmes, 2012)

■ Principle:

The instructor must be flexible in their approach to needs assessment.

The needs assessment for workforce development is multi-layered, and more than one stakeholder will be involved. The instructor must be flexible in their approach to needs assessment, as every situation is different and not all of the recommendations below may be feasible in every situation.

PRE-CONTRACT MEETINGS

Typically, the CEIIA will be contacted by an employer seeking English language training for their employees. The workforce development specialist will ask a few initial questions to establish the need for language training and set up a meeting with the employer, preferably with the individual(s) who is requesting the course. This is important, since they have the best understanding of employee language needs, as opposed to HR personnel or assistants who may not work directly with the potential learners. Normally, a CEIIA coordinator will attend the first meeting with the employer and the workforce development specialist. At this initial meeting and possible additional meetings, the coordinator and specialist will ask questions to identify the needs of the employer and determine the stipulations of the contract. This includes additional pre- and post-assessment add-ons that go beyond a level assessment, which could include the following:

■ Protocol:

A CEIIA coordinator will attend the first meeting with the employer and the workforce development specialist.

1. Additional assessment

- Pronunciation
- Speaking
- Writing
- Language specific to workplace (Ex. workplace vocabulary, common speech acts)

2. Final anecdotal feedback for every employee

Typically, employers will be interested in these assessment add-ons if the employees' job continuation is dependent on success in the course.

EXTENSIVE ASSESSMENT

The workforce development specialist and the CEIIA coordinator will also consult with the employer to determine if more extensive pre- and post-course assessments should be included in the contract. This would be applicable when the employer wants the employees' success in the course to determine continuity or termination of employment. Extensive assessment requires significant time to develop and must be accounted for in the contract. Extensive assessment would also be required if the employer desires a thorough pronunciation assessment to track progress in the class (see page 14 for more information).

■ Protocol:

Extensive assessment requires significant time to develop and must be accounted for in the contract.

ENVIRONMENT ANALYSIS

The environment analysis is necessary to help identify criteria that will impact your outcome selection, lesson plans, and lesson delivery. Environment analysis (Tessmer, 1990, as cited in Nation & Macalister, 2010) involves looking at the factors that will have a major impact on "decisions about the goals of the course, what to include in the course, and how to teach and assess it" (p.2). These factors include the space the class will be taught in and if attendance in the course is mandatory or voluntary. See "General Questions for Employers" in the appendix (page 71) for a list of potential questions for the workforce development specialist to ask the employer.

POST-CONTRACT MEETINGS

After the stipulations of the contract have been agreed upon, the workforce development specialist will organize a meeting with the employer, specialist, and future instructor of the course. At the post-contract meeting(s), the instructor has the opportunity to ask questions to better understand the language needs of employees. This is also an opportunity to answer employer questions and provide education on realistic language

■ Protocol:

The workforce development specialist will arrange a time for level assessment with the learners, preferably before the start of the course.

acquisition rates/targets (see “Distinguishing Principles”, page 2). The workforce development specialist will arrange a time for level assessment with the learners, preferably before the start of the course.

■ **Principle:**

Employers will most likely not know what their employees need in terms of language or intercultural communicative competence (ICC) instruction.

Employers will most likely not know what their employees need in terms of language or intercultural communicative competence (ICC) instruction; they only know that there is a problem that needs to be fixed. The employer holds the expectation that the instructor will identify the language needs of the employees. The employer is usually very busy, and will not have the time or knowledge to answer detailed questionnaires regarding employee’s needs.

■ **Principle:**

The employer holds the expectation that the instructor will identify the language needs of the employees.

The instructor should consider preparing a short list of questions prior to the three-way meeting. Tools to assist the instructor are included in the appendix as follows:

- Example Interview Questions – Industry (page 65)
- Example Interview Questions – Professional Business (page 67)

Based on the context of the workplace, the instructor will decide which questions from the “General Questions for Employers” list are most relevant to the situation. The instructor could also use the following resources to give the instructor and the employer ideas of what skills employees may need:

- Course Content Topics - Industry (page 49)
- Course Content Topics - Intercultural Competence (page 53)
- Course Content Topics - Professional Business (page 55)

NEEDS ASSESSMENT METHODS FOR DETERMINING OUTCOMES

FURTHER INTERVIEWS WITH THE EMPLOYER

If it seems appropriate, the instructor may request to meet with more than one individual at the company or to work with the workforce development specialist to organize a focus group to answer questions about employee needs. The workforce development specialist and the instructor will consult together to determine the best approach.

INTERVIEW EMPLOYEES OR EXPERIENCED WORKERS

If possible and part of the contract, the instructor may meet with the employees who will be taking the course to discuss what they perceive as their needs. These meetings could be conducted 1-on-1 or in a group setting. This option is best for small classes.

EMPLOYEE SURVEY

Giving employees a survey to allow them to identify their needs can be very informative for the instructor. This is useful for large or small classes. See the following resources in the appendix for assistance in developing needs assessment surveys:

- Example – Employee Needs Assessment Survey (page 61)
- General Questions for Employee Needs Assessment (page 69)

The “Course Content Topics” lists in the appendix (pages 49-57) can also help provide ideas for survey questions. The workforce development specialist can administer the survey.

■ Protocol:

The workforce development specialist can administer the Employee Needs Assessment survey.

EMPLOYEE WORK SAMPLES

Another source to draw on for understanding learner needs is a sample of their performance gaps. For example, if the employer indicates that an employee has difficulty writing e-mails, request that they show an e-mail written by the employee, as long as it doesn't breach confidentiality.

REVIEW OF AUTHENTIC MATERIALS

An important way to assess the needs of employees in the workplace is to review authentic materials, like signs the employees might need to read or forms they may need to fill out. The instructor should ask the employer to provide them with examples (Chambers, Gnida, Messaros, Ilott, & Dawson, 2011; Holmes, 2012a). The instructor can benchmark the authentic materials to determine what knowledge and strategies may need to be addressed in the course (See the Canadian Language Benchmarks document, 2012). Other examples of authentic materials include:

- Company newsletters
- Shift schedules
- Manuals
- Bulletin boards
- Forms – time sheets, pay stubs, accident and injury forms
- Regulations and labels (Holmes & Parsons, 2010a)

JOB SHADOWING

Job shadowing provides an opportunity for the instructor to understand what kind of language is needed in the workplace, and to identify the employee gaps in using that language. This is one of the most useful tools for needs assessment, as it also provides the instructor the opportunity

to observe employee interaction with each other, supervisors, and clients. Jupp & Hodlin (1975) highly recommend that the instructor spend a day of observation in the workplace. "It is essential for the teacher to investigate and experience the social reality of a place of work before he can make choices about what language functions a learner in that situation needs and what linguistic skills these involve. The investigator's role is not one of a detached observer. He must develop a real 'feel' for the work place so that he can understand the experiences, tensions, and frustrations which affect communication there" (p.38). See "Job Shadowing Advice" in the appendix (page 73) for lists of things to look for when observing.

SEARCH ESSENTIAL SKILLS PROFILES

The Government of Canada analyzed what Essential Skills are required for over 350 occupations. If the workforce development instructor is teaching a group of individuals with the same occupation, like bakers or nurses, they can search for this occupation at the HRSDC website to determine what Essential Skills are required in the occupation and what could potentially be taught in their course. See <http://www10.hrsdc.gc.ca/es/English/SearchMain.aspx> to search Essential Skills profiles.

See <http://www.awes.ca/essential-skills-in-the-workplace.html> for more information on Essential Skills

SEARCH THE OCCUPATIONAL LANGUAGE ANALYSIS DATABASE

The Occupational Language Analysis (OLA) Database is a resource for determining what language skills are required for particular jobs, highlighting speaking, listening, reading, and writing and described in terms of the CLBs. Workforce development instructors can search the database to find the various occupations of the learners they will be teaching. Approximately 30 occupations have been profiled this way. http://www.itsessential.ca/itsessential/display_page.asp?page_id=202

LEVEL ASSESSMENT

"We assess workers' language competence in a workplace setting to select and place learners, to diagnose language problems and to evaluate progress" (Belfiore & Burnaby, 1984, p. 40). The workforce development instructor can choose level-appropriate assessment tasks based on information provided by the employer in the initial contact and further discussions. Language level assessment tools should be delivered prior to the start of the course, in the event that a case can be made for two or more classes differentiated by level.

The purpose of a level assessment for workforce development differs from a traditional ESL class where language skills are measured by Canadian

■ Protocol:

Language level assessment tools should be delivered prior to the start of the course, in the event that a case can be made for two or more classes differentiated by level.

Language Benchmarks (CLBs). Ideally, when an assessment tool is designed and used to determine the CLB of a learner, the goal is to then teach task-based outcomes that move the learner to a higher CLB. In the context of workforce development, the instructor may assess employee's CLBs, but they won't necessarily focus on teaching CLB outcomes. Nor is it realistic for the instructor to expect to teach "up" an entire CLB level given the short contact hours (see "Distinguishing Principles", page 5). The instructor may use CLBs as a reference point for learner levels, but should not attempt to teach "up" to the next CLB level, unless this is mandated by the employer.

If possible and practical, use assessment tools that reflect what is going to be taught in the course (Belfiore & Burnaby, 1984). The questions that the employer answers in the interviews will help the instructor decide which level assessment tools to use. For example, if the instructor knows that the employer wants the learners to improve e-mail writing skills, assess them on e-mail writing at the beginning. At the end of the course, you can then use the same assessment to track learner progress. Assess the employees in all skill areas in order to accurately inform contract negotiations, such as number of classes and class sizes.

Warning: Often, a level assessment is intimidating to employees (Belfiore & Burnaby, 1984) and can cause them to be anxious. Sometimes they incorrectly believe that the assessment is to measure their skills for their current job, and if they do "poorly," their job is at risk. Whenever a level assessment takes place, the assessor should make the purpose of the assessment clear to the employee and assure them that their results have no impact on their job security. If the employer would like to see the results of the assessment, this must be determined before the assessment and not after. If the employer wishes to see the results and this has been built into the contract, employees should be aware of this before taking the assessment.



■ **Protocol:**

If the employer would like to see the results of the assessment, this must be determined before the assessment and not after.

LEVEL ASSESSMENT TOOLS

- **Workplace English Language Proficiency Assessment: Based on the Canadian Language Benchmarks** by Bow Valley College. This tool has useful workplace themed tasks, but the scoring and rubrics provided are difficult to use, ineffective, and refer to the Canadian Language Benchmarks document published in 1996. Consider using the tasks and referring to the companion tables in the Canadian Language Benchmarks document (2010) to develop a rubric for the activities.
- **Workforce Development Writing Level Assessment** (page 85). This tool elicits a writing sample that can be used to benchmark

writing, gather information about the employee's goals and expectations for the course, and assess intercultural competence.

- **Versant.** This is a commercially produced speaking assessment that can be purchased for \$25.00 per individual assessment. The learner answers a series of questions over the telephone, and is assessed for fluency by a computer. The learner is given a final score out of 5. This tool may be used for placing students in "high" and "low" classes, but does not establish a CLB or provide information on pronunciation issues. The instructor may want to consider using her own assessment if it can be more cost effective to do so.
- **Simple conversation.** To place learners in levels, Belfiore & Burnaby (1984) indicate that sometimes an informal one-on-one talk with employees is sufficient. It also does not require sophisticated test-writing skills that other formal assessments demand. This is only possible in a program without insistence from the employer for a formal assessment to measure progress. Belfiore & Burnaby (1984) p. 43-44 suggest the following conversation topics:

COMMON WORK-SPECIFIC TASKS

- describe their jobs or one of the processes in their jobs
- give short instructions on how to perform one part of their job
- respond to instructions that draw on job-related vocabulary
- deliver messages
- perform a task requiring knowledge of company policy and/or social appropriateness

Examples of the latter would be:

- What do you do if you're sick and can't go to work?
- What would you say if your supervisor asked you to work overtime and you couldn't?
- What do you do if your pay cheque is wrong?

■ **Principle:**

It is important to choose or develop assessment material that is workplace focused

It is important to choose or develop assessment material that is workplace focussed.

The workforce development instructor can also use writing assessment as an opportunity to learn more about the employee's goals for English studies. See the "Workforce Development Writing Level Assessment" in the appendix (page 85) for an example of this.

PRONUNCIATION ASSESSMENT TOOLS

The following pronunciation tools are to be used with employees one-on-one. If the number of employees requiring assessment is large, you may be

able to arrange for them to attend Bow Valley College where they can be recorded in a language lab at one time if circumstances permit. Otherwise, arrangements will need to be made with the employer to assess one-on-one. Pronunciation assessment can be very time consuming, and if it is the wish of the employer to have individual pronunciation assessments, this will need to be noted in the contract between the employer and BVC. Pronunciation assessments must be noted in the contract

■ **Protocol:**

Pronunciation assessments must be noted in the contract.

When diagnosing pronunciation needs, it is best to obtain two types of spoken production samples: 1) a standardized sample of the employee reading aloud and 2) a sample of their free speech (Celce-Murcia, Brinton & Goodwin, 2010). This is best addressed by Pronunciation Tool 1, (see page 79). The following pronunciation tools assess pronunciation on an individual basis. It is up to the instructor to determine what commonalities of pronunciation needs exist among employees so as to select pronunciation outcomes for the course. If pronunciation needs exist but are too varied among employees, the workforce development specialist may recommend one-on-one or small group tutoring instruction. If required, the IT specialist can provide portable recording devices.

- Pronunciation Tool 1 (page 79) This tool is to be used in a one-on-one setting, and examines segmental and suprasegmental production. The tasks in this tool can be used as a pre-course assessment but also a post-course evaluation of learner progress.
- Pronunciation Tool 2 (page 83) This tool can be used in a more relaxed setting with more than one employee at a time, and focuses on suprasegmentals rather than segmentals.
- Language Assessment Test (LAT) (held by CEIIA). This is a 30-minute speaking test administered at Bow Valley College in the language lab by the IT specialist. The test asks questions and elicits free speech which can then be scored against a template. This test provides information on what segmental features may be interfering with listener comprehension. This requires the employees to come on-site, during a time when the language lab is free. The test takes 15 – 20 minutes per participant to score by the assessor.
- Pronunciation Clarity Guidelines, *Common Ground: A How-To Guide for Employers*, p. 58, (Holmes and Parsons, 2010a). This tool provides a quick assessment to gain a general picture of pronunciation difficulties. Elicit speech from learners through interview questions and assess on the spot or record for review later.
- Pronunciation Clarity: Company, *Common Ground: A How-To Guide for Employers*, p. 55, (Holmes and Parsons, 2010a). If the employer has strong opinions about the employees pronunciation needs, giving them this check sheet assessment may be effective.

INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE (ICC) ASSESSMENT TOOLS

The tools below can help the workforce development instructor determine the ICC needs of the employees, in addition to the questions already asked of the employers and employees in initial meetings.

In order to properly assess intercultural communicative competence needs, the workforce development instructor must have a working knowledge of intercultural communicative competence and pragmatics. The culture maps included in the appendix will help the instructor measure competence and identify gaps. **Before assessing for ICC, refer to the section of this framework on Teaching Intercultural Communicative Competence in the Workplace** (page 30).

The following are resources for assessing ICC

- Culture Maps (pages 107 -115).
- Workforce Development Writing Level Assessment (page 85). This tool is useful for benchmarking writing and also identifying where “culture maps” are not being followed. Refer to the culture maps (page 107 -115) to identify areas for improvement. (See *Culture and Language for Work*, Bow Valley College, 2011)
- Discourse Completion Task (See “Pragmatics Assessment DCT Task” (page 75) and “Pragmatics Assessment DCT Rubric” , (page 77). This tool can be administered prior to the beginning of the course and at the end of the course to measure employee improvement. Responses could be recorded on a one-on-one basis, employees could be invited to a language lab to record their response, or they can make their own recording using a computer or smart phone and submit it by e-mail to the instructor.
- For employers to assess intercultural communicative competence in employees, consider using pages 56 and 57 of *Common Ground English in the Workplace: A How-to Guide for Employers* (Holmes and Parsons, 2010a)

NEEDS ASSESSMENT DURING THE FIRST CLASSES

In the best-case scenario, the workforce development instructor would be able to use the tools listed above, have ample contact with the employees before the start of the course, and ask all the questions they can of the employer, giving them a well-rounded needs assessment. However, this is often not the case – access to the employer and employees may be limited, and the instructor must begin teaching the course with little knowledge of the employees' needs. In this situation, the instructor must gain a better understanding in the first two weeks. The following are tips for needs assessment during the first week or two of the course:

- If not already administered, deliver a survey in the first class asking employees what they want to learn (see "Employee Needs Assessment Survey, page 61)
- Create opportunities for employees to engage in small group discussion, and take notes on speech to assess level, grammar and pronunciation trends. For example, do the employees use perfect tenses to describe themselves?
- During introductions in the class, ask employees to identify three things they would like to learn or take away from the class.
- Encourage learner autonomy by asking them to become "observers" of language in the workplace. Have them bring questions about what they observed to class.
- Express to the employees that you (the instructor) are here to meet their needs, so the more they communicate what they would like to learn, the more successful the course can be.
- If there was no writing assessment completed prior to the course, have the learners complete a writing sample.

ORGANIZING AND PRESENTING ASSESSMENT RESULTS TO EMPLOYERS

The workforce development instructor should organize assessment results in a score sheet that can be given to the employer. See "Employee Level Assessment Results" (page 59) for an example of this score sheet. These results should accompany the Course Outline. See the section on "Course Development" (page 19) for more information on this.

■ **Protocol:**

The workforce development instructor should organize assessment results in a score sheet that can be given to the employer.

ON-GOING NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Needs assessment does not end after the initial course outcomes have been established. Needs continue to be identified for the duration of the course, usually in a more informal manner as learners willingly describe their needs, challenges, or confusion that they encounter in the workplace.

■ **Principle:**

Needs assessment does not end after the initial course outcomes have been established.

Employers may also address needs with the instructor as they see them arise in the workplace.

Regardless of the situation, “it is important that the planned [course] be adapted to meet the gaps, needs...that emerge” (Chambers, Gnida, Messaros, Ilott, & Dawson, 2011, p. S1-5).



■ **Protocol:**

If the instructor identifies new needs not addressed in the initial assessment, they should be brought to the attention of the employer and the workforce development specialist before significant instructional hours are dedicated to content not previously agreed upon.

Warning: The instructor should beware of adapting course content to the learners needs beyond what they've been mandated to teach by the employer. The workforce development instructor has a responsibility to the employer to help them meet their bottom line and instruct learners on areas that close productivity gaps in the workplace (Holmes, 2012a). If the instructor identifies new needs not addressed in the initial assessment, they should be brought to the attention of the employer and the workforce development specialist before significant instructional hours are dedicated to content not previously agreed upon.

TECHNICAL GAPS: BEYOND THE SCOPE OF THE COURSE

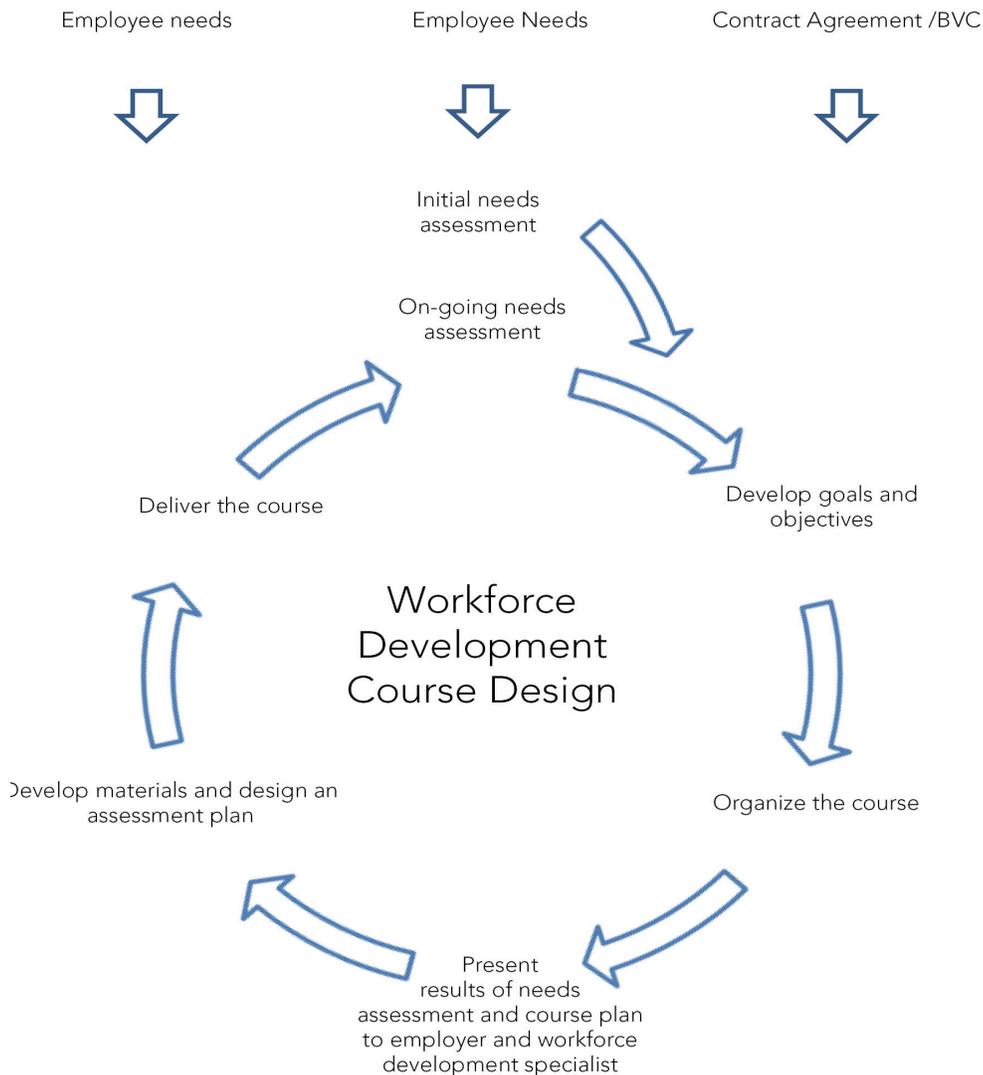
During the course of the needs assessment, the instructor may distinguish technical gaps rather than language gaps. For example, it may come to the attention of the instructor that a newly-hired foreign-trained economist may not understand key concepts discussed in meetings by their geologist colleagues. It is the responsibility of the instructor to identify technical gaps to the employer and the workforce development specialist and explain that instruction in this area is beyond the scope of the instructor's contract (Holmes, 2012a).

COURSE DEVELOPMENT

Because no two workplaces are the same, instructors can expect to build a new curriculum for every workforce development course they teach (Belfiore & Burnaby, 1984). The following model can help the instructor visualize how this process can take place (adapted from Graves, 2000, p. 3).

■ Principle:
No two workplaces are the same.

■ Protocol:
Instructors can expect to build a new curriculum for every workforce development course they teach.



This model demonstrates the steps that need to be taken prior to and during the delivery of the course. Upon the completion of initial needs assessment and during the first weeks of the course, the workforce development instructor will determine what outcomes will be addressed in the course. While planning course outcomes, the instructor will need to consider the wishes of stakeholders including the employer, the employees, and Bow Valley College. Ongoing needs assessment during the delivery of the course may have an impact on the course goals and objectives, which

■ Protocol:
The workforce development instructor will determine what outcomes will be addressed in the course.

need to be communicated to the employer and workforce development specialist (see the Needs Assessment section for more information, page 17).

■ **Principle:**

The instructor **should be flexible** to allow for changes in course outcomes as they become aware of new needs, either from the employees or from the employer.

Graves (2000) describes course development as “always a work in progress.” The instructor **should be flexible** to allow for changes in course outcomes as they become aware of new needs, either from the employees or from the employer.

ANALYZING THE DATA

Once the information from the needs assessment and level assessment has been collected, the instructor should look for trends in needs from the employees and the employer involved in assessments. The instructor may ask themselves the following questions (Belfiore & Burnaby, 1984): “What problems are repeatedly mentioned by [employees and others] interviewed [or addressed in surveys]? What common language requirements are referred to? Does [my] personal observation in the workplace confirm these commonly stated concerns? Do the [employees and the employer] express similar needs? If not, it may be best to find the overlaps rather than consider the two points of view mutually exclusive” (p. 46).

DETERMINING GLOBAL AND SPECIFIC LEARNING OUTCOMES

■ **Protocol:**

The instructor will develop global learning outcomes (GLO) and specific learning outcomes (SLO) for the course.

Using the information gathered from the needs assessment and the first two weeks of instruction, the instructor will develop global learning outcomes (GLO) and specific learning outcomes (SLO) for the course. More information on GLOs and SLOs can be found in the *ATESL Adult ESL Curriculum Framework*, 2011, p. S2-11.

Examples

1. Perhaps during the needs assessment it was discovered that the employees require vocabulary to understand safety signs at work.
GLO: Employees will be able to identify and understand safety signs at work.
SLO: Employees will be able to understand the meaning of vocabulary “danger,” “caution,” and “notice”.
SLO: Employees will be able to comprehend the meaning of the symbol for “No...” (Ex. No Smoking symbol)
2. Perhaps in a different scenario, the instructor learned during the needs assessment that employees were not participating effectively in meetings.
GLO: Employees will contribute effectively in meetings.

SLO: Employees will be able to take initiation to present their progress in a meeting.

SLO: Employee will use appropriate body language to interrupt.

SLO: Employee will be able to determine what level of formality is necessary to use certain conversation gambits to disagree politely.

COURSE OUTLINE

Once the GLOs and SLOs are developed, the instructor can determine a logical sequence for addressing the outcomes in the course. The instructor can keep a list of SLOs and GLOs for her own purposes and decide on a rough order to address during the contract. She should keep in mind that, “A rigidly pre-planned syllabus does not allow for the flexibility needed to accommodate learners’ needs and interests as they emerge” (Belfiore & Burnaby, 1984, p. 128). For the employer, the instructor will develop a course outline to present basic needs assessment findings and proposed GLOs for the course, and confirm employer provisions that were determined during the environmental analysis. This course outline will be presented to the employer during the second week of the contract. Examples of this document for two very different scenarios can be found in the appendix as follows:

- Course Outline for Industry – Low-level English (CLB 1 – 5, page 89)
- Course Outline for Professional Business – High-level English (CLB 6 – 9 page 91)
- For more examples, see Belfiore & Burnaby, 1984, Chapter 4. At the time of writing this framework this book was not available in the CEIIA collection but could be borrowed through the BVC circulation desk (see page 27 about requesting books from the Bow Valley College Library).

The instructor will e-mail the needs assessment report and course outline to the workforce development specialist who will determine that the information is accurate. She will then submit to the employer. The specialist may wish to review the report to make sure it aligns with the contract between the employer and Bow Valley College. She may also want to meet with the employer and instructor to discuss the needs assessment report and course outline, depending on circumstances.

When it comes to determining outcomes for the course, the instructor needs to **remain flexible** as new needs will emerge during the course, as identified by the employees, the employer, or the instructor. When these needs are realized, the instructor will need to adapt course outcomes fittingly. See “On-Going Needs Assessment” (page 17).

■ Protocol:

The instructor will develop a course outline to present basic needs assessment findings and proposed GLOs for the course, and confirm employer provisions that were determined during the environmental analysis.

■ Protocol:

The instructor will e-mail the needs assessment report and course outline to the workforce development specialist who will determine that the information is accurate. She will then submit it to the employer.

■ Principle:

*The instructor needs to **remain flexible** as new needs will emerge during the course, as identified by the employees, the employer, or the instructor.*

DEVELOPING TEACHING MATERIALS AND LESSON PLANS

This section of the framework includes suggestions for developing teaching materials and lesson plans and a list of resources at Bow Valley College and online that could be helpful for different topic areas in workforce development.

Things to Consider for the Workplace

- **Employee Fatigue:** If employees are attending class at the end of a long work day, it will be difficult for them to concentrate. Make sure lessons are interesting and engaging to combat waning attention spans.
- **Irregular Attendance:** Often employees have work obligations that prevent them from attending class. Avoid planning learning activities that require attendance from the whole group, and be sure lesson plans are flexible to accommodate varying numbers of employees.
- **Unexpected Work Problems:** If an employee brings up a problem at work in the class and it needs to be addressed in the moment, the instructor may need to be flexible and table some of the prepared lesson plan for that day.
- **Mixed Levels:** Many workforce development courses of learners of different English levels. Be prepared to address the needs of a mixed level class.
- **Autonomy:** Although employees usually have a limited number of hours a week in class, they often have a great opportunity to continue practicing English in their workplace. Provide advice and input for how they can continue learning outside of the class. (Belfiore & Burnaby, 1984)

GATHER AUTHENTIC MATERIALS

According to Luft & Seabrook de Vargas (2005, p.16):

It is important to bring in authentic materials that represent actual tasks workers must carry out. It is important to gather authentic workplace materials for several reasons:

- They help instructors to identify what learners must know to be able to use the workplace materials
- They give instructors a context for how the tasks must be done
- They serve as a beginning point from which to develop instructional strategies

- They give learners the opportunity to practice skills they will use on the job
- They provide a direct application of learning

Examples of authentic materials include:

- manuals – repair manuals, safety manuals, procedure manuals
- telephone messages
- shift schedules
- forms – accident and injury, time sheets
- log books
- regulations and labels
- announcements from bulletin boards

Ask the employer for examples of authentic materials the employees use. It may also be useful to take pictures of signage around the workplace. When possible, include the logo for “Bow Valley College: Centre for Excellence in Intercultural and Immigrant Advancement” on handouts.

■ **Protocol:**

When possible, include the logo for “Bow Valley College: Centre for Excellence in Intercultural and Immigrant Advancement” on handouts.

RESOURCES

The workforce development instructor is encouraged to draw on resources they may typically use in the ESL classroom as applicable. However, the typical resources and lesson plans used will likely not be enough, since the needs of learners in the workplace are more specialized than the needs of learners in a typical ESL classroom. The following resources are meant as jumping off points to help the instructor design lesson plans to meet course objectives. Resources with hardcopies can be found in the ELL Resource Room at Bow Valley College. For complete references of non-internet sources, see References (page 44).

1. Pronunciation

- **Making it Clear: A Guide for Teaching Pronunciation** by Bow Valley College. This guide provides descriptions of the different aspects of pronunciation instruction for instructors new to pronunciation. It includes a useful materials list on page 31, which lists a few references that discuss pronunciation teaching theory.
- **Common Ground: English in the Workplace - Training Manual** by NorQuest College. Each module includes a section on pronunciation instruction as it relates to a topic. This can be found at <http://www.norquest.ca/norquest-centres/centre-for-intercultural-education/intercultural-resources-for-educators-trainers.aspx>

- **Working in the Canadian Workplace – A Handbook for Newcomers to Canada** by Paul Holmes. Pages 23 – 26 have tips for employees on clear speech in the workplace. This is found at http://www.regionalconnections.ca/asset_library/page/c815/PaulHolmes-Handbook-Working-in-the-Canadian-Workplace-a-Guide-for-Newc.pdf
- **Teaching Pronunciation: A Course Book and Reference Guide** by Celce-Murcia, Brinton, & Goodwin. This is a very comprehensive textbook that includes theory and tools for teaching segmentals and suprasegmentals.
- The instructor will have access to all the pronunciation textbooks available to part-time and full-time ELL instructors at Bow Valley College.

2. Essential Skills

- **How Do Your Skills Measure Up?** by TOWES. The PDF documents provided on this assessment offer authentic reading tasks. This is found at <http://measureup.towes.com/>.
- **Language for Work: CLB and Essential Skills Lesson Plans for ESL Instructors** by the Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks. 25 free, downloadable lesson plans referenced to both the CLB and Essential Skills. This is found at http://www.itsessential.ca/itsessential/display_page.asp?page_id=398
- **CLB/Essential Skills Lesson Plans: Assorted Lesson Plans** by the Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks. 23 free, downloadable ESL lesson plans related to a variety of occupations and referenced to both the CLB and Essential Skills. This is found at http://www.itsessential.ca/itsessential/display_page.asp?page_id=217
- **On the Job: ESL and Essential Skills for Work** by the Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks. Ideas and activities for incorporating each of the Essential Skills into ESL classroom activities. This is found at http://www.itsessential.ca/itsessential/display_page.asp?page_id=409

3. Workplace Vocabulary and Topics

- **The Learning Edge** by the Wellington County Learning Centre. These interactive web pages provide information on a number of workplace topics and issues, and also address workplace essential skills. This is found at <http://www.thewclc.ca/edge/>
- **Key Vocabulary for a Safe Workplace** by Harry Ringel. This text provides general vocabulary for beginner learners in the industrial workplace.

- **On-the-Job English** by Christy M. Newman. This text provides speech acts in a number of workplace situations for a variety of industries. For high-beginner.
- **Common Ground: English in the Workplace (Training Manual)** by NorQuest College. Each module offers lesson ideas on Safety topics and a section in the back on workplace specific vocabulary.

4. Speech Acts

- **On-the-Job English** by Christy M. Newman. This text provides speech acts in a number of workplace situations for a variety of industries. For high-beginner.

5. Business Writing

- **Business Communication: Process and Product** by Mary Ellen Guffey, Kathleen Rhodes, & Patricia Rogin.
- **Excellence in Business Communication** by John V. Thill, Courtland L. Bovée, & Eva Cross.
- **You're Hired...Now What?** by Lynda Goldman. See Chapter 8 for basic business writing.

6. Verbal Business Communication

- **You're Hired...Now What?** by Lynda Goldman. See Chapter 17 for information on presentations and meetings.
- **Online Workplace Integration Language Resources (OWLs)** by NorQuest College. These resources include videos and accompanying language study tables that address communication issues in the office and industry settings. This is found at <http://www.norquest.ca/norquest-centres/centre-for-intercultural-education/projects/completed-projects/online-workplace-integration-language-resources-%28o.aspx#resource1>
- **Success in the Workplace: Facilitator's Guide and Participant Materials** by Corporate Readiness Training Program. Skills addressed include presentations and participating in meetings. These materials can be obtained by contacting the CRTP at Bow Valley College.

7. Settlement Topics

- The instructor will have access to all the textbooks that are available to part-time ESL instructors at Bow Valley College.

8. Intercultural Competence and Pragmatics

- **Working in the Canadian Workplace: A Handbook for Newcomers to Canada** by Paul Holmes. This includes information on “Strategies to Help Your Team” and “Strategies to Work with Other Cultures”. It uses case studies to address a number of topics including taking initiative, power distance, and the concept of “Canadian” time. This is found at http://www.regionalconnections.ca/asset_library/page/c8l5/PaulHolmes-Handbook-Working-in-the-Canadian-Workplace-a-Guide-for-Newc.pdf
- **Workplace Integration - A Guide for Managers and Mentors** by Paul Holmes. This can be found at http://www.regionalconnections.ca/asset_library/page/c8l5/PaulHolmes-Manager-Mentor-Guide.pdf
- **Workplace Integration – A Desk Reference for Newcomers to Canada** by Paul Holmes. This can be found at http://www.regionalconnections.ca/asset_library/page/c8l5/PaulHolmes-Workplace-Integration-A-Desk-Reference-for-Newcomers-to-Can.pdf
- **Culture and Language for Work** by Bow Valley College. This very useful course package has excellent training materials for teaching intercultural competence and pragmatics, and is highly recommended to instructors new to this content area.
- **You’re Hired...Now What?** by Lynda Goldman. This is a comprehensive resource that assists new immigrants in understanding workplace culture, communication, working relationships and how to progress.
- **Roots and Connections Toolkit** by Norquest College, page 5. This can be found at http://www.nald.ca/library/learning/roots_connections/toolkit/toolkit.pdf
- **Pragmatics: Teaching Speech Acts** by Donna H. Tatsuki and Noël R. Houck, Eds. This book contains a series of lesson plans and tools for how to teach a variety of pragmatic speech acts, including requests, complaints and opinions, and refusal strategies.
- **Teaching and Learning Pragmatics: Where Language and Culture Meet** by Noriko Ishihara and Andrew D. Cohen. This book offers the theoretical background for teaching pragmatics, as well as lesson planning and instruction ideas. An explanation of discourse completion tasks (DCT) and role plays begins on page 39.
- **On-the-Job English** by Christy M. Newman. This text provides speech acts in a number of workplace situations for a variety of industries. For high-beginner.

- **Online Workplace Integration Language Resources (OWLs)** by NorQuest College. These resources include videos and accompanying language study tables that address communication issues in the office and industry settings. This is found at <http://www.norquest.ca/norquest-centres/centre-for-intercultural-education/projects/completed-projects/online-workplace-integration-language-resources-%28o.aspx#resource1>
- **Common Ground: English in the Workplace (Facilitator's Guide)** by NorQuest College, p.16 – 19. This is a brief and concise introductory to intercultural competence for the instructor new to the content area. This can be found at <http://www.norquest.ca/norquest-centres/centre-for-intercultural-education/intercultural-resources-for-educators-trainers.aspx>
- **Common Ground: English in the Workplace (Training Manual)** by NorQuest College. Each module offers lesson ideas on Intercultural Awareness and Conversation How-To. This can be found at <http://www.norquest.ca/norquest-centres/centre-for-intercultural-education/intercultural-resources-for-educators-trainers.aspx>
- **Success in the Workplace: Facilitator's Guide and Participant Materials** by Corporate Readiness Training Program. Skills addressed include clarifying, confirming, constructive feedback, small talk, discussion skills, being persuasive and using body language. These materials can be obtained by contacting the CRTP at Bow Valley College.

9. Requesting Books from the Bow Valley College Library

Another little known resource to most instructors is the circulation desk at Bow Valley College. The BVC library has access to books at many academic institutions in the province. If the instructor finds a book or article online that will be helpful for developing materials, they can simply e-mail <circulation@bowvalleycollege.ca> and make a request for a particular book. The staff at the library will search for the book or article and notify the instructor when it has been received. This was particularly useful when a workforce development instructor was teaching a class of Vietnamese speakers pronunciation. She found a resource using Google, and the BVC circulation desk was able to locate this at the University of Alberta library and loan it to the instructor.

FORMATIVE AND SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT

■ Principle:

The kinds of assessments in a workforce development course vary across different contexts and scenarios, and the employer generally dictates the kind of assessment required.

Formative assessment provides evidence of improvement of the employees in the SLOs, and summative assessment evaluates the achievement of the GLOs (Holmes, 2012). The kinds of assessments in a workforce development course vary across different contexts and scenarios, and the employer generally dictates the kind of assessment required. For example, in a situation where employees' job continuation relies on language improvement demonstrated in the course, summative assessment would be necessary. This kind of scenario is less typical; workforce development classes tend to be more flexible and more often than not, a variety of ongoing informal and formal assessment that best fits the outcomes will be determined by the instructor. Assessment expectations should be discussed with the employer and workforce development specialist before the commencement of the course.

■ Principle:

It's important to demonstrate to the employer how employees are progressing and have progressed during the course

It's important to demonstrate to the employer how employees are progressing and have progressed during the course. Because of the limited hours of contact with learners, the employer may not see the changes in their employees they were hoping for in their day-to-day encounters. However, they can more easily see the benefits and success of the training if the instructor can explicitly provide evidence of specific outcomes being accomplished. The instructor must find ways to demonstrate this to the employer. Another way to track progress is to make informal notes on student progress. The instructor should be able to report to the employer on the progress of the employees at any given time during the course. A progress reporting schedule will be determined by the workforce development specialist, and will depend on the length of the contract. The workforce development specialist will inform the instructor of when and how she should report learner progress to the employer.

■ Protocol:

The instructor should be able to report to the employer on the progress of the employees at any given time during the course.

■ Protocol:

The workforce development specialist will inform the instructor of when and how she should report learner progress to the employer.

All assessment can inform the next steps for a new contract. For more information on assessment in the workplace, see:

- *English for the Workplace: Best Practices for Trainers* by Paul A. Holmes, 2012.
- *Teaching English in the Workplace* by Mary Ellen Belfiore and Barbary Burnaby, 1984.

TAKING ATTENDANCE

■ Protocol:

The instructor must keep an accurate attendance record for the duration of the course.

Even if the employer does not require it initially, the instructor must keep an accurate attendance record for the duration of the course. A record of who attended can help inform future contract arrangements and also provide evidence of why some employees may not be successfully meeting course outcomes.

TIPS FOR THE FIRST DAY OF THE COURSE

An experienced workforce development instructor suggests the following tips for the first day of class:

- The instructor should mention their credentials and teaching experience. This will help the employees to have confidence in the instructor.
- Give employees an opportunity to introduce themselves.
- Include ice breaker activities, which will ease the tension and help employees get to know each other if they come from different areas of the company.
- On the first day, it's important to "sell" the course and that the instructor "sells" herself. Aim to teach something that appeals to the employees and that they can walk away with and implement immediately.
- If the instructor has not had the chance to listen to employees speak before the course, she should have them engage in small group discussion so she can circulate and informally assess speech.

EXAMPLE LESSON PLAN FOR FIRST DAY OF THE COURSE

The instructor new to workforce development may feel uncertain about how to approach the first day of class. The following resources located in the appendix offer an idea of the kinds of activities that could be planned and delivered on the first day in a higher level corporate setting.

- Example Lesson First Class (page 93)
- Example Lesson First Class PowerPoint (page 95)
- Example Lesson First Class – Idioms Handout (page 99)
- Example Lesson First Class – Speaking Assessment Discussion Questions (page 101)
- Example Lesson First Class – Two Syllable Nouns and Verbs Handout (page 103)

TEACHING INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE IN THE WORKPLACE

In Alberta, ESL classroom instructors are strongly encouraged to teach intercultural communicative competence (ATESL, 2011); in a workplace setting, it couldn't be more imperative.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED HERE?

Consider this example. A Canadian supervisor asked his Chinese employee to complete a report on a tight deadline. The Chinese employee smiled and said, "This is difficult for me, but I will do my best." The Canadian supervisor inferred that the employee committed to get the job done, but what the Chinese employee actually meant was, "This task is impossible to do." When the deadline came and went and the report was not complete, the Canadian supervisor was upset. "Why didn't you tell me that the report couldn't be done on time?" The Chinese employee felt terrible, but thought that he had told the supervisor exactly that and wondered why his supervisor didn't help make his load lighter. Throughout this section, we will return to this example to understand "what really happened here?"

■ Principle:

When employers request language training, what they typically require is ICC training for their employees.

Often, these kinds of situations prompt employers to seek language training for solutions, as they perceive these kinds of errors as a result of low listening comprehension or a lack of vocabulary. When employers request language training, what they typically require is ICC training for their employees, they just don't know how to identify it. Employers believe that vocabulary and grammar are at the root of the communication problems. When teaching workforce development, it's important to have a working knowledge of intercultural communicative competence (ICC) and an understanding of pragmatics in order to train employees to prevent situations like the one above. This section of the workforce development framework provides an introduction to this area of knowledge, some tips for teaching ICC and pragmatics, and recommendations for further study.

Every message we communicate as human beings is communicated within a cultural context; culture shapes the language choices we make (pragmatic norms) as well as our patterns of social interaction (interactional norms) (Newton et al., 2010 as cited in Bow Valley College, 2011).

c/CULTURE

In order to develop our intercultural communicative competence, we first need to have a basic understanding of culture. Sometimes culture is

represented with a big “C” or little “c”; Culture refers to aspects of culture that are easily visible, such as clothing, food, or traditional dance. Small “c” culture refers to the less visible aspects of culture that are beneath-the-surface such as beliefs, behaviours, and values (Hanley, 1999; Lázár, et al., 2007 as cited in Chambers, Gnida, Ilott, Messaros, & Dawson, 2011) Examples of this include the notion of time, leadership, education, and patterns of group decision-making (Liddicoat, 2002; Liddicoat, et al., 2003 as cited in Chambers, Gnida, Ilott, Messaros, & Dawson, 2011). For example, our language choice in words can reflect some of our hidden cultural beliefs. Speaking of “buying” time and “wasting” time reflect an attitude towards time as a commodity (Bow Valley College, 2011, Module 1 – Unit 1 p.1)

It is very difficult to uncover the small “c” culture of one’s own culture, but the aspects of daily interaction are governed by small “c” culture. When an employee is unfamiliar with the culture of the person they are interacting with, they have a high risk of offending or communicating in a way that does not seem socially appropriate.

WHAT IS INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE (IC) AND INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE (ICC)?

The cultural aspects of language and communication need to be made explicit and investigated as part of the language learning process. Further, intercultural communicative competence is more than intercultural competence (ATESL, 2011, p. 7-8). Bennett, Bennett, and Allen (2003 as cited in ATESL, 2011) define intercultural competence as “the general ability to transcend ethnocentrism, appreciate other cultures, and generate appropriate behaviour in one or more different cultures” (p. 237). The following table describes the different stages of intercultural competency.

THE THREE PARTS OF INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE

Intercultural Awareness	Intercultural Sensitivity	Intercultural Ability
Mindset <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Self awareness ■ Cultural awareness 	Heartset <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Empathy/ respect ■ Self-monitoring ■ Tolerance for ambiguity 	Skillset <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Interpersonal skills ■ Cultural adaptation strategies ■ Interaction management
 <p>ongoing reflective practice</p>		

Adapted from Fritz, W., Möllenberg, A., & Chen, GM. (2000). *Measuring Intercultural Sensitivity in a Different Cultural Context*, Technical University of Braunschweig.

The workforce development instructor recognizes that individual employees are at varying stages of intercultural competence. The goal of the instructor is to assist employees to move from the beginning stages of “Intercultural Awareness” to “Intercultural Ability” by teaching intercultural communicative competence.

According to the Chambers, Gnida, Ilott, Messaros, and Dawson (2011), “ICC encompasses intercultural competence and focuses attention on communicative competencies, especially the [social and cultural] element[s]...The intention of ICC is to blend understandings of linguistic and cultural knowledge, awareness, skills, and attitudes...” (p. 7-8). To summarize, when workforce development instructors teach ICC, they teach culturally appropriate language acts while explaining the cultural underpinnings for the language being taught.

WHAT IS PRAGMATICS?

Put simply, pragmatics is expressing what we mean to say using socially appropriate speech acts and body language. As indicated in the example above, telling your supervisor “It’s difficult for me, but I will do my best,” is a pragmatically correct way in someone’s culture to explain to your supervisor that a task is impossible. Another Canadian example would be the use of, “Hi, how are you?” as a simple greeting and not a genuine inquiry into one’s real mental and physical state. Likewise, in China the

phrase, “Have you eaten yet?” is considered to be merely a simple greeting, not a request for the details on someone’s breakfast (Tatsuki & Houck, 2010).

Intonation and **word stress** are also features of pragmatics. Consider the two sentences, with the line representing voice pitch:


You made it.

You made it?

In the first sentence, the intonation of rising and falling indicates the greeting of someone who was expected to arrive at the scene. In the second, the rising intonation indicates how impressed the speaker is at the handy work of someone else. An important part of teaching ICC is stressing to employees how intonation in speaking is critical in conveying the meaning of the words being spoken.

■ **Principle:**

An important part of teaching ICC is stressing to employees how intonation in speaking is critical in conveying the meaning of the words being spoken.

A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO UNDERSTANDING CULTURE DIFFERENCES

Consider the situation with the Canadian supervisor and Chinese employee at the beginning of this section. In order for the workforce development instructor to properly advise the employee, they need to have a background understanding of cultural differences. The instructor cannot expect to know everything about every world culture – that would be impossible. Instead, the instructor is expected to use tools, their personal experience and the experiences of the students to investigate cultural differences or “what really happened here?”

The following chart is one tool that can help the instructor investigate cultural differences in values and attitudes in the workplace. Using a chart like this, instructors and employees can identify how their personal culture compares to their workplace culture.

Warning: Avoid referring to or teaching “Canadian culture” as workplace cultures within Canada and even the same city can differ significantly. Always try to ask questions about and refer to the employee’s workplace culture. In addition, when discussing cultural differences with employees, avoid generalizing statements such as “in your country” or “people from your country.” Always discuss cultural differences in terms of the individual’s personal experience.



A Spectrum of Cultural Differences

	Hierarchy in the Workplace	Equality in the Workplace
Authority	<p>People are arranged in order of rank with some people (e.g. bosses or supervisors) considered to be of a higher rank than others (e.g. employee)</p> <p>Employees may expect to be told exactly what to do and how to do it.</p> <p>Workers are <i>less</i> likely to question the boss.</p>	<p>All people are considered to be of equal importance in the workplace. Managers and employees are dependent on each other.</p> <p>Employees expect to be consulted and to contribute ideas and opinions.</p> <p>Workers are <i>more</i> likely to question the boss.</p>
	High Power Distance in the Workplace	Low Power Distance in the Workplace
Power Distance	<p>People accept that some individuals (e.g. the boss or supervisor) naturally have more power and status in the workplace than others.</p> <p>Those with power emphasize their power and status. They do not delegate or share power.</p> <p>Interaction between a boss and an employee is formal.</p>	<p>People see differences in power and status as largely artificial and convenient but not natural.</p> <p>Those with power de-emphasize their power. They delegate and share power where possible.</p> <p>Interaction between a boss and an employee is more <i>informal</i>.</p>
	Face More Important	Face Less Important
Face	<p>It's important to preserve group harmony and save face at work.</p> <p>To prevent a loss of face, people may say what they think the other person wants to hear.</p> <p>It is not always proper to say no, disagree or confront others in the workplace.</p>	<p>People do not worry so much about saving face.</p> <p>Honesty (the truth) may be more important than concern for someone's feelings.</p> <p>It's okay to be direct and straightforward, to say no and to confront people if appropriate.</p>
	Indirect Communication Style	Direct Communication Style
Communication Style	<p>Meaning is conveyed through non-verbal behavior, stories, suggestions and implications.</p> <p>Indirectness is equated with politeness and respect for others.</p> <p>People are less likely to say what they're thinking and more likely to suggest and imply. Understanding is left up to the listener.</p>	<p>What one means is stated through words, using a straightforward, direct manner.</p> <p>Directness is equated with honesty and respect for the other person.</p> <p>People are more likely to say what they're thinking; there is no need to read between the lines.</p>

From *Culture and Language for Work* (2011), Bow Valley College.

Let's use this chart to examine what happened in the scenario of the Chinese employee and the Canadian supervisor. The Chinese employee comes from a cultural background of greater hierarchy and power distance. Therefore, the employee would not be able to directly disagree with the supervisor, and he wouldn't want to be seen as questioning the boss. In this cultural background, there is no need to question the supervisor, because the supervisor is expected to be wiser than his subordinates and would not ask something that's impossible. In addition, saving face is very important in this Chinese employee's cultural background. He believes that if he disagrees with his supervisor, he will cause the supervisor to lose face by questioning his intelligence and authority, which is unacceptable. Finally, the pragmatic meaning of the statement, "This is difficult for me, but I will do my best," would be understood by individuals from that cultural background, but individuals from another cultural background, like the Canadian supervisor, would not be able to decipher the implied meaning from the indirectness of the message. The Canadian supervisor, because of his familiarity with low power distance and hierarchy, expects his employee to directly inform him if the task is impossible. He also expects the employee to contribute opinions and provide solutions and ideas for how to solve the problem.

MORE ON POWER DISTANCE

Helping employees understand hierarchical differences in the workplace between cultures can be extremely beneficial to them. The culture of power distance is the reason for why we behave certain ways in supervisor-employee relationships. Therefore, employees need to understand first that most workplaces in Canada have a low power distance before they can learn how to effectively communicate with their superiors or the people they supervise in the workplace. See "Understand Power" (page 119) for more information from Paul Holmes and Geert Hofstede on power distance.

The following chart is another tool that the instructor can use to explain cultural differences at work.

Cultural Differences in Workplace Communication Norms

Typical Workplace Scenarios	Possible Canadian Expectations	Other Cultural Considerations
Meeting discussion	A prompt start and agenda-directed discussion. Underlying value: punctuality, task orientation	Relationships may be emphasized over tasks. Greetings come first in many cultures. Underlying value: relationship orientation
Group decision-making	Everybody has a say and group decisions are made by majority or consensus. Underlying value: equality	Many skilled immigrants are familiar with hierarchical leadership styles where authority is not questioned. Their input may have to be directly requested. Underlying value: hierarchy
Managing team conflicts	Team member deals with other team members Underlying value: equality, low power distance	Skilled immigrants may be accustomed to asking supervisors to deal with other team members. Underlying value: hierarchy, high power distance
Supervising and being supervised	Supervisor both delegates and expects staff to take initiative on the project. Underlying value: equality, risk tolerant	Many skilled immigrants expect firm direction from the boss. Skilled immigrant managers may be uncomfortable delegating to staff. Underlying value: hierarchy, risk adverse
Performance evaluations	Managers “sandwich” negative feedback between pieces of positive feedback, and expect frank feedback from staff. Underlying value: equality, indirect communication, relationships orientation	Skilled immigrants may appreciate frank direction to focus on key areas of improvement. Speak frankly, give praise as due, and solicit discussion. Skilled immigrants may find it inappropriate to challenge authority. Encourage critical feedback. Underlying value: hierarchy, direct communication.

Promotions	Employees wanting promotion let managers know, and work to demonstrate abilities. Underlying value: individualism	Skilled immigrants may think it inappropriate to self-promote and expect their good work is sufficient to communicate their intent. Underlying value: collectivism, hierarchy
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From *Developing Intercultural Communicative Competence for the Workplace: A Scenario Approach* by Clare Meyers (2011), Bow Valley College. Adapted from *Hiring and Retaining Skilled Immigrants: A Cultural Competence Toolkit*. Retrieved March 2013 from: <http://www.bchrma.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/itiguide.pdf>

Critical Incidents for Intercultural Communication in Health Care: Facilitator's Guide (2010) by NorQuest College describes ten different cultural orientations on pages 24 – 27 can also be helpful for understanding cultural differences. It can be found at the following website: <http://www.norquest.ca/NorquestCollege/media/pdf/centres/intercultural/CIICH_final_facilitatorsguide.pdf>

TEACHING THE LANGUAGE

Once the workforce development instructor and the employees have identified cultural differences, the instructor can teach the language necessary to navigate communication in the workplace. A very effective way to teach the language is through culture maps. Culture maps are extremely popular with learners, as it provides them the skills for successful communication that no one else can identify for them. The language in these maps can be learned quickly, and implemented immediately. Employees find that once they begin to implement these strategies, their workplace relationships improve and their interactions are successful. The culture maps provided in this framework in the appendix as follows:

- Culture Map for Clarifying and Confirming (page 107)
- Culture Map for Making a Request (page 109)
- Culture Map for Expressing Concerns (page 111)
- Cultural Map for Delivering a Good Presentation (page 113)
- Culture Map for Answering Questions During a Presentation (page 115)

Once an instructor is comfortable with the format, she can create her own culture maps for a variety of interactions. See “Example Lesson: Making Requests,” in the appendix (page 117) for an example lesson that incorporates the use of the Culture Map for Making a Request.

Consider again the scenario at the beginning of this section with the supervisor and the employee. The instructor of this employee could use

a culture map to teach him how to successfully raise his concern with his employer. Instead of saying, "This is difficult for me, but I will do my best," he could try:

Approach	Bridge	Communicate	Close
<p>Make eye contact. Address him/her by name.</p>	<p>Express your desire to complete the task:</p> <p>"I really want to finish this report on time..."</p>	<p>Express your concern:</p> <p>"...but I don't think it's possible..."</p> <p>Give a reason:</p> <p>"...because I depend on reports from other people and they haven't sent them to me yet."</p> <p>Give A Solution/Make a Request (a map within a map)</p> <p>"Would it be possible to have a few extra days so I can get their reports?"</p>	<p>Summarizing/ Action Plan</p> <p>"So I will light a fire under those guys to get there reports to me as soon as possible."</p> <p>Leave Taking</p> <p>"Thanks for understanding."</p>

Culture Map adapted from Grace Under Fire: Instructor Manual (2009), Vancouver Community College

TEACHING ICC AND “BUSINESS ENGLISH”

There is a place for culture to be addressed in all aspects of English for workforce development. ICC is necessary for writing effective business letters and e-mails. It is necessary for giving effective presentations and leaving telephone messages. Before approaching every task, the workforce development instructor should ask herself, “What are the cultural reasons for why this task is typically done this way in Canadian work culture?” The instructor should always confirm the office norms with employees, and never make assumptions about the employees’ current or previous workplace cultures.

CONTINUE LEARNING

The information that has been provided in this section of the Workforce Development Framework is merely an introduction to help the novice instructor become familiar with the concept and relevancy of intercultural communicative competence. If new to this content area, the instructor should take advantage of professional development where possible and read as much as she can to build her awareness and understanding. She should also look for mentors in the department who can provide insight into teaching in this area. As the instructor’s ICC teaching experience and personal knowledge grows, so does her depth of understanding of IC and ability to apply it in the classroom. The instructor need not worry about being an expert; she and the learner bring their collective knowledge to the table to explore and understand the cultural communication that happen in the workplace. The following resources are available in the Centre for Excellence in Immigrant and Intercultural Advancement, and will be useful for the workforce development instructor to build her intercultural competence and also gain ideas for instruction. A special mention should be made about *Culture and Language for Work* (2011) by Bow Valley College. Originally designed as a part-time course, this resource is rich in background culture information and activities for teaching ICC. The author of this framework strongly suggests that instructors new to this content area review this resource.

■ Principle:

As the instructor’s ICC teaching experience and personal knowledge grows, so does her depth of understanding of IC and ability to apply it in the classroom.

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COURSE COMPLETION

FINAL ASSESSMENT

Unless additional post-assessment was arranged at the time the contract was made (see “Needs Assessment,” page 8), the workforce development instructor may use her discretion to determine if and how to deliver a final assessment at the end of the course. If the employer desires a final assessment for learners, it must be specified in the contract before the course commences. A final assessment should not be unexpectedly delivered as neither learners nor instructor will have prepared for it. The instructor will assess the outcomes she teaches in a way that is practical for her and the employees’ situation. While the instructor has flexibility regarding assessment, She must be able to report on the employees’ progress upon course completion. See below for more information on reporting. For more information on assessment during the course, see “Formative and Summative Assessment ” (page 28).

■ **Protocol:**

If the employer desires a final assessment for learners, it must be specified in the contract before the course commences.

■ **Protocol:**

She must be able to report on the employees’ progress upon course completion.

FINAL COURSE EVALUATION

Course evaluations are helpful to determine if needs have been met and to improve the course for the future. The information collected from the final evaluation will help the instructor, future instructors, and the workforce development specialist know how to improve the course for the future. The most common method for course evaluations is questionnaires. Belfiore & Burnaby (1984) argue that questionnaires are more successful if they are also followed up with interviews with employees and employers. Interviews can provide anecdotes and information about critical incidents that a questionnaire could never provide, but they can also be time consuming and may not be realistic in every situation. The final evaluation will be prepared by the workforce development specialist after consultation with the instructor. The specialist will make arrangements with the employer for delivery. Course evaluations may be administered to both the employer and employee.

■ **Protocol:**

The final evaluation will be prepared by the workforce development specialist after consultation with the instructor. The specialist will make arrangements with the employer for delivery.

Belfiore & Burnaby (1984) explain the importance of evaluations, “Evaluations show us where we have been and help us determine where we want to go...Evaluations provide the opportunity to reflect, and in reflection to gain the insights we need to grow and improve” (p. 147).

■ **Protocol:**

Course evaluations may be administered to both the employer and employee.

FINAL REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

■ Protocol:

The instructor should prepare a final report as directed by the workforce development specialist.

■ Principle:

No two workforce development courses are alike; therefore, final reporting will need to be adapted every time, depending on the desires of the employer, size of the class and the outcomes taught in the course.

■ Protocol:

The instructor should consult with the workforce development specialist to determine how recommendations can best inform a contract renewal with the employer.

The instructor should prepare a final report as directed by the workforce development specialist. No two workforce development courses are alike; therefore, final reporting will need to be adapted every time, depending on the desires of the employer, size of the class and the outcomes taught in the course. This final report should include a list of outcomes addressed, as well as employees' scores on formal assessment (if applicable and appropriate) and anecdotal notes regarding their success.

The instructor should also make recommendations to the specialist for future workforce development training based on the formative and summative assessments and the final evaluations by employees and employers. The instructor should consult with the workforce development specialist to determine how recommendations can best inform a contract renewal with the employer. Recommendations should demonstrate a need for further training, so the instructor should list potential outcomes or course topics to be covered should the contract be renewed. If the course was successful and only administered to a small group of employees, the instructor and the specialist may recommend that the course be offered to a larger group of employees at the institution. This is also an opportune time to recommend intercultural competence training for native-speakers at the organization (Belfiore & Burnaby, 1984).

An example of an "Instructor's Final Report and Recommendations" can be found in the appendix (page 123).

RETURNING AND SHARING RESOURCES

If the instructor has signed out any textbooks or resources from the department resource room, they should be returned at the end of the contract. If the instructor has developed materials that they believe would be useful to other instructors in workforce development, they should upload them to the Workforce Development folder on the P Drive.

■ Protocol:

If the instructor has signed out any textbooks or resources from the department resource room, they should be returned at the end of the contract.

TRANSFERRING A CONTRACT TO ANOTHER INSTRUCTOR

Sometimes contracts span many months and the same instructor may not be able to teach for the entire contract. In this case, a new instructor will take over the course. The outgoing and incoming instructors should arrange to meet for at least one hour to review the results of the level and needs assessment, the outcomes covered to this point in the course, and descriptions of the employees in the course. See a "Check Sheet for Outgoing and Incoming Instructors" in the appendix (page 127) for a list of items to be addressed. The workforce development specialist will arrange a time for the incoming instructor to meet the employer.

■ Protocol:

The instructor should upload useful materials to the Workforce Development folder on the P Drive.

■ Protocol:

The outgoing and incoming instructors should arrange to meet to review the results of the level and needs assessment, the outcomes covered to this point and descriptions of the employees .

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Appendix I

Needs Assessment

COURSE CONTENT TOPICS – INDUSTRY

The following is a list of topics or content areas that the employer may suggest as necessary areas of instruction for their employees. These lists can also provide ideas for instructors on what content to address in the course. Do not give these lists of ideas to the employer as a checklist for them to determine what the employees need.

WORKPLACE ESSENTIAL SKILLS

Reading on the job

- Memos
- Safety information
- Manuals
- Policies and procedures
- Reports
- Others: describe

Reading and filling in documents

- Forms
- Tables and schedules
- Graphs or charts
- Drawings, diagrams
- Others: describe

Writing on the job

- Notes to others
- Comments on forms
- Log book entries
- Reports
- Others: describe

Speaking and listening to others at work, including supervisors and other workers

Math at work

- Money math: handling cash, preparing bills, making payments
- Scheduling or budgeting time and money
- Measuring and calculating
- Analyzing data
- Estimating

Solving problems that happen at work

Making decisions at work

- Using computers at work
- Word processing
- Email
- Internet
- Entering data
- Other: describe

Working with others

(Luft & Seabrook de Vargas, 2005)

GENERAL ESL TOPICS (FOR BEGINNERS)

- Weather (for small talk)
- Body parts and health (for calling in sick)
- Colours and shapes
- Family and relationships
- Food
- Clothing
- Describing feelings
- Hobbies and recreational activities

VOCABULARY INSTRUCTION

- Job specific vocabulary (Ex. Hotel: bed sheets, cleaning products; Mechanic: names of auto parts)
- Personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Understanding bulletins
- Safety signs, warnings, labels
- Safety equipment (Ex. fire extinguisher)
- First aid items
- First aid labels/information
- Hand tools/ power tools and safety features of these tools
- Heavy machinery
- Operating parts of machines (ex. cord, switch, blade)
- Health hazards (ex. poor ventilation, eye strain)

- Lockouts and Tagouts
- Reading MSDS and WHMIS

(Ideas from "Key Vocabulary for a Safe Workplace" by Harry Ringel, 2000, New Readers Press, New York)

PRONUNCIATION TRAINING

- Language training to be familiar/comfortable with:
- Company policy
- Training videos or workshops
- Reading and writing work orders
- Other: _____

SPEECH ACTS

- Greetings, introduce self, small talk, take leave
- Introduce another person
- Giving and listening to instructions
- Asking for, offer, and accept assistance
- Advise of danger
- Call for emergency assistance
- Clarify and confirm instructions
- Express opinions
- Answer the phone, take and leave telephone messages

(Some ideas from "On-the-Job English" by Christy M. Newman, 2000, New Readers Press, New York)

The following are adapted from the Occupational Language Analysis (OLA) for Food Service Counter Attendants (NOC 6641) and could likely be applicable to other service related occupations:

- Express/respond to apology, regrets and excuses. (CLB 6)
- Express immediate and future needs, wants, plans. (CLB 3)
- Give simple informal advice. (CLB 5)
- Make a verbal request for an item. (CLB 6)
- Participate in a small group discussion/meeting: express opinions and feelings; qualify opinion, express reservations, approval and disapproval. (CLB 7)
- Express and respond to gratitude, appreciation, complaint, disappointment, dissatisfaction, satisfaction and hope. (CLB 7)

- Respond to a minor conflict or complaint. (CLB 8)
- Comfort and reassure a person in distress. (CLB 8) Give/pass on instructions about an established familiar process or procedure (technical and non-technical). (CLB 8)
- Request, accept or reject goods or services, assistance or offer in a service or sales situation. (CLB 4)
- Express and respond to expressions of respect, friendliness, distance and indifference. (CLB 9)

(Some ideas from "OLA: Food Service Counter Attendant," by Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks, November 2005. Retrieved from: http://www.itsessential.ca/itsessential/itsessential_files/document_library/OLA_Food_Service_Counter_Attendant_FINAL_Decv2.pdf)

SOFTWARE APPLICATIONS

If the employer identifies any of the following as a need, recommend that they look at further training options through Continuing Education at Bow Valley College.

- MS Outlook e-mail
- MS PowerPoint
- MS Word
- MS Excel
- Google and internet search applications
- MS Windows file management

SETTLEMENT TOPICS

- Housing
- Banking
- Canadian History
- Canadian Culture
- Canadian Law
- Culture Shock
- Community Services
- Visiting the doctor
- Travel and transportation
- Other: _____

COURSE CONTENT TOPICS - INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE

The following is a list of topics or content areas that the employer may suggest as necessary areas of instruction for their employees. These lists can also provide ideas for instructors on what content to address in the course. Do not give these lists of ideas to the employer as a checklist for them to determine what the employees need.

WORKPLACE RELATIONSHIPS

- How to talk to superiors, subordinates, and co-workers
- Getting along with co-workers and work relationships
- Developing a positive relationship with managers/supervisors

WORKPLACE CULTURE

- Being direct and open
- Taking individual responsibility
- Showing initiative
- Being self-directed
- Working in teams
- Supervising and being supervised
- Group decision making
- Company work values compared with values in other cultures or workplaces
- Being aware of individual workplace culture
- Norms regarding breaks
- Getting feedback from managers
- Understanding performance reviews/evaluations
- How to ask for a raise
- Understanding promotions
- Time management and understanding the western time culture
- Participating in meetings
- Active listening skills (appropriate behaviour to demonstrate listening)
- Giving opinions (using softened language)

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Initiating social contact
- Networking, small talk, and relationship building
- Client relations and etiquette
- Goal setting
- Business outside of the office (Ex. attending conferences, holiday parties)

(Some ideas from "You're Hired...Now What?" by Lynda Goldman, 2010, Oxford University Press.)

SPEECH ACTS

- Clarifying and confirming
- Using softened directives (politely asking people to do things)
- Making suggestions
- Making requests/ accepting and refusing requests
- Understanding feedback
- Raising concerns
- Expressing disagreement
- Expressing understanding/empathy
- Resolving conflict

(Some ideas from "Culture and Language for Work," by Bow Valley College, 2011.)

COURSE CONTENT TOPICS – PROFESSIONAL BUSINESS

The following is a list of topics or content areas that the employer may suggest as necessary areas of instruction for their employees. These lists can also provide ideas for instructors on what content to address in the course. Do not give these lists of ideas to the employer as a checklist for them to determine what the employees need.

BUSINESS WRITING

- Professionalism in writing (being concise)
- Writing an e-mail (low-stakes to high-stakes)
- Writing a memo
- Writing a fax
- Writing a business letter (for internal or external purposes)
- Persuasive writing
- How to write a thank-you note
- Recording and preparing meeting minutes
- Research and writing reports
- Interpreting and organizing data
- Writing proposals
- Writing specifications
- Proofreading
- Resume writing

(Ideas from "Business Communication: Process and Product," by Mary Ellen Guffey, Kathleen Rhodes, & Patricia Rogin, 2003, Thomson Nelson.)

READING SKILLS

- Skimming (quickly reading the title and glancing over a text to understand the main idea or gist)
- Scanning (quickly searching a text for specific information, not reading everything on the page)
- Reading all text for detail
- Charts, drawings, graphs, figures
- Document use (understanding page headings, lists, tables, entry forms)

WORKPLACE SPECIFIC CONTENT

- Language training to understand company policy and notifications
- Language training to understand HR policy and notifications
- Language training to understand training videos or workshops

SOFTWARE APPLICATIONS

If the employer identifies any of the following as a need, recommend that they look at further training options through Continuing Education at Bow Valley College.

- MS Outlook e-mail
- MS PowerPoint
- MS Word
- MS Excel
- Google and internet search applications
- MS Windows file management

VERBAL BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

- Giving presentations
- Participating in meetings
- Chairing a meeting
- Participating in discussions
- Presenting information in meetings
- Leading discussions
- Conducting interviews
- Taking and leaving telephone messages (administrative assistant)
- Telephone conversation skills (advanced)

SPEECH ACTS

- Greetings, introduce self, small talk, take leave
- Introducing another person
- Giving and listening to instructions
- Making requests
- Making persuasive requests (sales)
- Accepting and refusing requests
- Delivering negative messages (breaking bad news to stakeholders)
- Asking for, offering, and accepting assistance

- Clarifying and confirming instructions
- Apologizing or expressing regret
- Negotiating
- Interrupting
- Expressing opinions in a professional manner
- Understanding and giving feedback
- Problem solving/conflict resolution

PRONUNCIATION TRAINING

- Segmentals
- Suprasegmentals

VOCABULARY TRAINING

- Job specific vocabulary (Ex. Accounting: P/O, common acronyms)
- Communicating complex job-related ideas
- Completing forms, routine letters or other communication
- Data entry
- Understanding bulletins
- Describing data, results
- Using forms to submit claims, place orders, other: _____
- Business/office buzz words (Ex. inform, synergy, socialize)
- Idioms for business (Ex. Think outside the box)
- Top 10 most commonly used words in the office/industry

SETTLEMENT TOPICS

- Housing
- Banking
- Canadian History
- Canadian Culture
- Canadian Law
- Culture Shock
- Community Services
- Visiting the doctor
- Travel and transportation
- Other: _____

EMPLOYEE LEVEL ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Oil and Gas Company - February 1, 2013

	First Name	Last Name	Role at Company	Writing CLB***	Comments on E-mail Writing	Reading 1	Reading 2	Reading 3	Versant Score
1.			Director of Finance & Budget Department	8	missing language to make a request for compensation expresses regret well	13	5	4	N/A
2.			Senior Economic Analyst	+5, 6	missing softeners, doesn't express regret	9	3	5	2
3.			Geologist	8	missing language to make request for compensation expresses regret well	7	0	0	2
4.			HR Administration	8	has language to make request for compensation, could use more softeners, expresses regret appropriately	9.5	8	5	3
5.			Director, Upgrading & Pipeline	9	expresses regret well Concisely describes meeting details Note: refers to participants of meeting as Mr. Li, Mr. Zhang, and Chris.	11.5	5	5	3
6.			Exploration Department	7	expresses regret well missing language to politely request compensation, a little too much thankfulness	11	2	0	2
7.			Drilling Engineer	8	expresses regret well, when making request missing explanation Note: Can't make a Friday night party b/c of work	11	5	1	3
8.			Production Engineer	8	awkward expression of regret "your forgiveness is appreciated" Concisely identifies meeting details	11.5	0	3	4
9.			Manager	7	uses "it is my honor" – missing language to politely request compensation expresses regret well	10.5	1	2	3

10.			Admin & HR	6	missing softeners, missing explanation for request	10.5	5	5	3
11.			HR & Admin Assistant	+6	expresses regret well, uses softeners	10.5	5	4	4
12.			Engineer	-7	difficult to read, very wordy, not concise	10	0	4	3
	TOTAL					13	9	6	6

***The Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLBs) were used for the purposes of assessment and placement for this course. **The CLBs assigned to each individual are not an official CLB score and should not be referred to or relied on for entrance to education programs, work placements, visa applications, etc.** If an individual wishes to know their CLBs in reading, writing, speaking, and listening, they can go to ILVARC for an official assessment.

EMPLOYEE NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY

Please answer the following questions as best you can. If you don't have an answer for a question, just leave it blank. These questions are to help your instructor decide what to teach in this course. **These answers will be kept confidential and will not be shared with your employer or anyone else.**

First Name: _____ **Last Name:** _____

Role in your company: _____

Length of time with this company: _____

Length of time in Canada: _____

Part A: About You

1. What do you like about working in Canada?

2. What do you find difficult about working in Canada?

3. What are your greatest challenges in speaking?

4. What are your greatest challenges in writing?

5. Which **two** language skills do you think are the most important for your job?
 - Reading
 - Writing
 - Speaking
 - Listening

6. Has a co-worker or another individual commented on your English skills? What did they say?

7. Check (✓) the following items that apply to you. At work, do you...

- work on projects in a team
- work on projects alone
- participate in meetings
- chair (lead) meetings
- present informally in meetings (Example: report on your day-to-day progress, sitting down)
- present formally in meetings (Example: with PowerPoint presentations, standing up)
- present formally to stakeholders outside of the company
- report to a supervisor from China
- report to a supervisor who is Canadian-born
- report to a supervisor from another country other than China or Canada
- supervise an employee(s) from China
- supervise an employee(s) who is Canadian-born
- supervise an employee(s) from another country other than China or Canada
- visit off-site industry locations, such as a mine, oil field or processing plant.

8. List the typical things you do in a day at work.

9. At work, what percentage do you speak your native language, English, or another language?

_____ % Native Language

_____ % English

_____ % Another language

Part B: What would you like to learn about?

1. Check (✓) the items that you would like to learn more about in this course.

- Writing e-mail
- Writing a business letter
- How to write a thank-you note
- Writing reports
- Writing proposals
- Giving formal presentations
- Participating in meeting discussions
- Presenting information in meetings
- Leading discussions
- Taking and leaving telephone messages
- Telephone conversation skills
- Conversation management (Examples: greetings, how to interrupt, how to make a request, how to apologize, how to give feedback, how to disagree politely)
- Making conversation with Canadian co-workers
- Pronunciation (Clear Speech) training

2. Is there anything else not mentioned above that you would like to learn in this course?

3. What area that you checked off or mentioned above is your first priority for learning in this course?

Thank you for completing this survey!

EXAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS - INDUSTRY

Date: February 12, 2013

Company: Superior Windows Manufacturer

Interviewee: Mike

Part A

1. Are you the one who has decided that your employees need this course? If not, who requested this course? Do you know if it would be possible to meet with him or her eventually? If not, do you know why that person requested the course?
2. What workplace challenges does your organization face with regards to the employees that require training?
3. What jobs are performed onsite by workers with limited communication skills?
4. Can you think of a specific example or situation where there have been communication challenges?
5. Are your employees required to do any writing at work? If yes, what kind or how much? Can I see examples of the forms they need to complete?
6. Are your employees required to do any reading at work? What kind of reading?
7. Is there a need for general ESL instruction, or more work related English? Or both?
8. What action (if any) has the company taken in the past to address communication challenges? If yes, please explain.
9. What would be the best skill(s) (reading, writing, speaking, and/or listening) for your employees to do better, or that will improve their efforts on the job? (Reading, writing, speaking, or listening? – set a priority)
10. Are there any other specific topics that you know of that you would like to be addressed?

Part B

1. What kind of room will the class be held in?
2. Does the instructor have access to wifi, a laptop, a projector, and speakers?
3. Does the instructor have access to a whiteboard, flip chart, and markers?
4. Does the instructor have access to authentic materials from the workplace? (We can provide a confidentiality waiver)
5. What is the expectation for homework and do the learners have time for homework?
6. Are there added incentives for the employees for taking this training? If yes, what? (Certificates of achievement, meals, recognition in company newsletter, etc.)
7. Will attendance be mandatory or voluntary?
8. The employees will need some kind of binder or folder to keep handouts in. Will the company be providing these or the employees?
9. Can the instructor have access to an employee organization chart that includes the learners in the class?

EXAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS – PROFESSIONAL BUSINESS

Date: February 13, 2013

Company: Oil and Gas

Interviewee: John Smith

Part A

1. Are you the one who has decided that your business needed this course? If not, who requested this course? Do you know if it would be possible to meet with them eventually? If not, do you know why that person requested the course?
2. What workplace challenges has your organization faced since hiring these employees that require training?
3. Can you think of a specific example or situation where there have been communication challenges?
4. What kind of writing do these employees need to do?
5. Do the employees need to communicate with people outside of the company, like with customers, or just within?
6. Do the employees need help with presentation skills?
7. Are there any specific topics that you know of that you would like to be addressed? (Ex. E-mail skills, presentations)

Part B

1. What kind of room will the class be held in?
2. Does the instructor have access to wifi, a laptop, a projector, and speakers?
3. Does the instructor have access to a whiteboard, flip chart, and markers?
4. Does the instructor have access to authentic materials from the workplace? (We can provide a confidentiality waiver)
5. What is the expectation for homework and do the learners have time for homework?
6. Are there added incentives for the employees for taking this training? If yes, what? (Certificates of achievement, meals, recognition in company newsletter, etc.)

7. Will attendance be mandatory or voluntary?
8. The employees will need some kind of binder or folder to keep handouts in. Will the company be providing these or the employees?
9. Is there storage space on site for supplies and equipment?
10. Can the instructor have access to an employee organization chart that includes the learners in the class?

GENERAL QUESTIONS FOR EMPLOYEE NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The following questions can be used in an employee needs assessment survey, a one-on-one interview questions or focus groups. Choose what seems most appropriate for the situation.

- What is your home country?
- How long have you been in Canada?
- What is your native language(s)?
- How many years did you study English?
- How much time do you use English each day? At work:_____ At home:_____
- What is your job?
- What do you like about working in Canada?
- What do you find difficult about working in Canada?
- Why do you want to improve your English? (Perhaps a sensitive question if the employee is resistant to language training)
- What specifically would you like to improve?
- What are the things you do on an average work day?
- What do your managers say to you so you know you have done a good job?
- What do your managers say to you so you know you have done a poor job?

(Adapted from "Common Ground: A How-To Guide for Employers," NorQuest College, 2010.)

CHECKLIST FOR EMPLOYEES

Refer to the "Needs Assessment and Goal Setting" on pages 5 - 6 of *On-the-Job English* by Christy M. Newman (New Readers Press, 2000) for a great example of a needs assessment to help employees identify what they want to learn. This book can be found in the CEIIA resource room for full-time instructors.

GENERAL QUESTIONS FOR EMPLOYERS

These are general questions for the CEIIA coordinator and workforce development specialist to ask employers in the early stages of contract negotiation. Do not ask all these questions but choose a few questions appropriate to the context.

- What are your goals in offering workforce development training at the worksite?
- What workplace challenges has your organization faced since hiring these employees who require training?
- How is communication between employer and employee currently conducted?
- How has language affected the newcomers' interaction with Canadian-born employees?
- Do you find that pronunciation affects the newcomers' communication abilities with other employees?
- What jobs are performed onsite by workers with limited communication skills?
- What skills are required for these jobs?
- What are some specific examples of language or intercultural challenges facing your employees?
- Can you give me an example of a misunderstanding that happened?
- Has the employee demonstrated any behaviours that are affecting the employees' work negatively?
- Has there been a loss of time, productivity and cost due to communication challenges? If yes, please explain.
- What action (if any) has the company taken in the past to address communication challenges? If yes, please explain.
- Are there particular topics that you know of that you want to be addressed in the classroom?
- What are the most important characteristics of a worker who does his or her job well?
- What would be the best skill for your employees to do better, that will improve their efforts on the job? (Reading, writing, speaking, or listening? – set a priority)

(Adapted from *Common Ground English in the Workplace: A How-to Guide for Employers*, NorQuest College, 2010)

- What are the lines of communication for the proposed learners?
- Who do they communicate with on a regular basis?
- What are the priority lines of communication? (Ex. "Restaurant hostess → Customer" line of communication is a priority over "Restaurant Hostess → Dishwasher")

(Adapted from *Teaching English in the Workplace*, Mary Ellen Belfiore and Barbara Burnaby, 1984, OISE Press)

The CEIIA coordinator, workforce development specialist, or instructor can ask the employer to describe situations in the workplace to help identify intercultural competence gaps. The questions below are examples that could be used.

- Take me through a meeting in which you tell someone they are doing a good job. What words are used? What body language is given?
- Take me through a meeting in which you tell someone they are in need of improvement. What words are used? What body language is given?
- How do you know when your employees understand the directions/instructions you have given them?

(Adapted from Common Ground English in the Workplace: A How-to Guide for Employers, NorQuest College, 2010)

The following questions are necessary to inform the environmental analysis for the instructor (see “Needs Assessment”, page 8). The workforce development specialist should adapt these questions as appropriate to the situation and add any additional questions as they see fit. They can inform the instructor of the answers.

Questions to Inform the Environment Analysis

1. How many students are in the course?
2. How long and how frequently will classes be held?
3. How many weeks is the contract?
4. Will the classes be held on company time, employees’ time, or both?
5. What kind of room will the class be held in?
6. Does the instructor have access to wifi, a laptop, a projector, and speakers?
7. Does the instructor have access to a whiteboard, flip chart, and markers?
8. Does the instructor have access to authentic materials from the workplace?
9. Do the learners have time for homework?
10. Will this course be using a textbook?
11. Will the class be multi-level?
12. Will the class take place on company time or learner time?
13. Will the instructor have the opportunity for a worksite tour?
14. Are there added incentives for the employees for taking this training? If yes, what? (Certificates of achievement, meals, recognition in company newsletter, etc.)
15. Will attendance be mandatory or voluntary? If mandatory, do you require an attendance report?
16. Will the employees, employer, or Bow Valley College be responsible for providing binders and other stationary for the course?
17. Is there storage space on site for supplies and equipment?
18. Can the instructor have access to an employee organization chart that includes the learners in the class?

Some questions adapted from Common Ground English in the Workplace: A How-To Guide for Employers, NorQuest College, 2010)

JOB SHADOWING ADVICE

Job shadowing provides an opportunity for the instructor to understand what kind of language is needed in the workplace, and to identify the employee gaps in using that language. This is one of the most useful tools for needs assessment, as it also provides the instructor the opportunity to observe employee interaction with each other, supervisors, and clients. Job shadowing should take place in an industry or retail context. Shadowing in a professional office is less common, but if the employer allows it, it can be very beneficial for the instructor to shadow meetings and/or presentations.

When becoming familiar with the workplace of the employees who will be entering the class, Luft and Seabrook de Vargas (2005) make the following suggestions:

- Tour the worksite and observe the workers at their tasks.
- Talk to the workers and ask them what skills they feel are needed to do the job well.
- Look at the bulletin boards for print materials workers should read.
- Listen to the communication between workers and supervisors.

Belfiore & Burnaby (1985) speak in depth on the experience of job shadowing. They recommend that teachers accompany the employees through their daily routines in an industrial setting. The instructor can observe the occurrence of social language and other required spoken language for the workplace, as well as who the employees communicate with, or communication network diagram. They can also identify the kind of texts that the employee deals with. Belfiore & Burnaby also suggest, if possible, observing employees incognito, to see employees behaving as naturally as possible. When observing, it's important to take anecdotal notes.

Jupp and Hodlin (1975) developed a course for factory workers in the United Kingdom in 1975. Based on their experience, they believe that the workforce development instructor should move around the space of the company and observe language that is used in the main categories of work, as follows (adapted):

SOCIAL INTERACTION

Arrival at work
Cloakroom, sitting, and chatting
Interaction on the assembly line
Assignment to job
Coffee breaks and lunchtime
Machine breakdowns
Working close to other people
Clean up at the end of the day
Leaving the workplace
Travelling home and to work
Shift change-overs

LANGUAGE OF THE IMMEDIATE JOB SITUATION

Language used in the normal routine of the job
Language required for regular interruptions
Explaining a difficulty arising in the course of the job
Requesting assistance from a supervisor
Recognizing codes, labels, names, packets, etc. used on the job.
Understanding verbal instructions
Carrying out verbal instructions
Understanding workplace regulations
Keeping written records
Emergencies

LANGUAGE FOR FLEXIBILITY AND INCREASED RESPONSIBILITY

Understanding verbally the manufacturing process of the whole plant
Some understanding of all operations on the whole site
Ability to carry out and give accurate instructions relating to any part of the department
Using English with a wide variety of people
Intelligible pronunciation
Ability to read essential written matter in the workplace
Keeping written records
Simple arithmetic required

LANGUAGE FOR SIMPLE SOCIAL CONTACT

Correct forms of greeting, parting, and address
English for routine situations (Ex. going off to breaks, request for things, playing cards)
Discussing current affairs in the workplace
Families, jobs, clothes, health

LANGUAGE FOR FORMAL PERSONAL SITUATIONS

Procedures for welfare, discipline, and grievances
Explaining absence or lateness
Contact with shop stewards
Union meetings
Contact with supervisors – wages, holidays, leave
Contact with management

ATTITUDINAL FACTORS AFFECTING THE USE OF ENGLISH

Behaviour of supervisors towards employees
Behaviour of co-workers towards non-native speaker employees
Ethnic or national composition of working groups
Ratio of native speakers to non-native speakers
Length of time in Canada and at the company
Age
Physical arrangement of machinery and working positions
Cultural behaviour

DISCOURSE COMPLETION TASK

A discourse completion task can be used as an assessment tool and a teaching tool for the use of appropriate pragmatics. It provides a scenario to which the employee orally responds to successfully perform some kind of communication function (the example below is measuring appropriateness in making requests). The assessor can create a scenario to measure a number of communication functions, such as accepting or deferring requests, giving bad news, etc.

For assessment, this task should be used prior to the start of the course, and again at the end of the course to measure learner progress.

INSTRUCTIONS

Have the employee read the workplace context and scenario (below) carefully and record their response. This can be done in person with the assessor, in a language lab, or remotely with their own personal recording device. If the employee records on their own, they must be able to upload their recording and e-mail to the assessor.

The assessor will use the DCT Assessment Rubric (page 77) to assess. The Culture Maps will help inform the assessor's decisions for scoring on the DCT Assessment Rubric.

SCENARIO

Workplace Context:

You work in a multicultural office. Your supervisor is a 42-year old Canadian-born female. You get along well with all of your colleagues including your supervisor and sometimes you go out socially with your team.

Target Scenario:

It is 10:30 Wednesday morning. You receive a phone call from your spouse. S/he is very sick. Usually your spouse would pick up the kids from school. Today s/he needs you to pick them up so you have to leave work early. You go to your boss' office. Your boss is at her desk with her back to the door. You need to leave early. What would you say?

Example of response from learner:

Good morning, I got a phone call from my husband. He is very sick today, he is unable to pick up my kids from school. May I leave early to pick up my children. If I leave at 2:00 p.m. will be fine. If needed you can call Mina. Sorry for the inconvenience.

Reference

Waugh, E. (November 16, 2012). *ATESL Conference Presentation, Empowering experiences: Engaging intercultural and language training online*. ATESL Conference Presentation.

DISCOURSE COMPLETION TASK LANGUAGE EVALUATION RUBRIC

Refer to the culture maps in the Intercultural Communicative Competence appendix (page 105) for familiarization of generally accepted Canadian workplace communication behaviour.

Band/ Level	Canadian Content <i>Does this person use language in a way that would be considered culturally- appropriate in the Canadian workplace?</i>	Organization	Directness, Politeness and Formality	Word Choice
6	Shows excellent awareness of how Canadians would make this kind of request at work in real life. This person would be perceived as 'appropriate' by the majority (80-100%) Canadian-born members of the community	The way this person makes this request is excellent . It is well- organized, succinct and coherent.	This person has an excellent delivery. S/ he has a very effective level of directness, politeness and formality,	The words this person chooses are very effective for getting his/her message across. The words are very sophisticated and there is an excellent variety .
5	Shows strong awareness of how Canadians would make this kind of request at work in real life. This person could be considered 'appropriate' by most (70-80%) Canadian-born members of the community	The way this person makes this request is strong . It is mostly well- organized, succinct and coherent.	This person has a strong delivery. S/he has an effective level of directness, politeness and formality,	The words this person chooses are mostly effective for getting his/her message across. The words are sophisticated and there is a satisfactory variety .
4	Shows satisfactory awareness of how Canadians would make this kind of request at work in real life. This person may be considered 'appropriate' by some (between 50-70%) Canadian-born members of the community	This request is satisfactory . It is mostly organized, succinct and coherent.	This person has a satisfactory delivery. S/he has a somewhat effective level of directness, politeness and formality,	The words this person chooses are somewhat effective for getting his/her message across. The words are somewhat sophisticated and there is adequate variety .

3	Shows developing awareness. This person would be considered 'appropriate' by a small number (between 20-30%) of the Canadian born-members of the community.	This request is somewhat weak . It shows developing organization, succinctness and coherence.	This person has a somewhat weak delivery. S/he shows a developing level of directness, politeness and formality,	The words this person chooses show a developing ability for getting his/her message across. The words are sophisticated and there is a somewhat limited range of words .
2	Shows almost no awareness. This person would be considered 'appropriate' by very few (between 10-20%)	This request is weak . It is disorganized, not succinct and incoherent .	This person has a weak delivery. S/he has an ineffective level of directness, politeness and formality,	The words this person chooses are effective for getting his/her message across. The words are not very sophisticated and there is a limited range of words .
1	Shows no awareness. No one would consider this person to be 'appropriate'	This request is unsatisfactory . It is disorganized, not succinct and incoherent	This person has an unsatisfactory delivery. S/he has a completely ineffective level of directness, politeness and formality,	The words this person chooses are ineffective for getting his/her message across. The words are not sophisticated and there is no range of words .

Waugh, E. (November 16, 2012). *ATESL Conference Presentation, Empowering experiences: Engaging intercultural and language training online*. ATESL Conference Presentation.

PRONUNCIATION ASSESSMENT TOOL 1

This assessment should be used with CLB 5 or higher, on a one-on-one basis.

PART I: ELICITATION PARAGRAPH

First, the assessor should read the elicitation paragraph aloud for the employee, and clarify any words they don't understand. Next, ask the employee to practice once without recording. After this, have the employee read the passage aloud again, and this time record. The assessor will listen to the recording later and identify areas of segmental pronunciation difficulties. The elicitation paragraph contains most of the consonants, vowels, and clusters of standard American English.

Please call Stella. Ask her to bring these things with her from the store: Six spoons of fresh snow peas, five thick slabs of blue cheese, and maybe a snack for her brother Bob. We also need a small plastic snake and a big toy frog for the kids. She can scoop these things into three red bags, and we will go meet her Wednesday at the train station.

Weinberger, Steven. (2013). *Speech Accent Archive*. George Mason University. Retrieved from <http://accent.gmu.edu>

The elicitation paragraph can be simplified for CLB levels, or the content can be changed to meet the speaking situation of the employee (Teaching Pronunciation, 2010).

PART II: TELEPHONE DIALOGUE

First, ask the employee to read the dialogue silently for a minute, to be sure that they understand all of the words. Next, ask the employee to take the role of the caller (Speaker 2) and practice once, the assessor taking on the role of the message-taker (Speaker 1). Finally, the employee and the assessor will repeat the dialogue and record for analysis of suprasegmental pronunciation needs.

Speaker 1: Hello, this is _____.

Speaker 2: Hello, this is _____. Can I speak with Andy?

Speaker 1: I'm afraid Andy isn't in at the moment.

Speaker 2: Can I leave a message?

Speaker 1: Sure, just let me get a pencil...OK

Speaker 2: Great. Can you tell Andy that we're meeting tomorrow at three o'clock?

Speaker 1: OK...three o'clock meeting with _____. Does he know where the meeting is?

Speaker 2: Tell him we'll be meeting at my office downtown.

Speaker 1: Yes, at your office downtown. Is there anything else?

Speaker 2: I'll leave my phone number just in case he doesn't have it.

Speaker 1: Ok, I'm ready.

Speaker 2: Yes, my number is 403 908 1317 (thirteen seventeen)

Speaker 1: That's 780 908 3070 (thirty seventy)

Speaker 2: No, it's 780 908 1317

Speaker 1: Ah, sorry.

Speaker 2: No problem. Thanks for your help.

Speaker 1: I'll make sure Andy sees this as soon as he gets in tonight.

Speaker 2: Thanks. Goodbye

Speaker 1: Bye

PART III: FREE SPEECH

The assessor can elicit speech from the employee by asking a few questions. The assessor will record their answers, and analyse for pronunciation needs (see the pronunciation checklist on the following page).

Examples of questions:

- 1) How long have you lived in Canada?
- 2) How long have you worked at this company?
- 3) What is your job? What do you do at work?
- 4) What would you like to improve about your pronunciation? Your English abilities?

Use the following checklist for assessment notes.

Pronunciation Assessment Checklist			
Part I			
What segmentals does the employee have difficulty pronouncing?			
Part II & III			
Suprasegmental Features			
	Yes (Does not require attention)	Does not produce/ occasionally produces (Requires attention)	Transcription Notes from Recording
Syllable stress			
Sentence stress			
Stress timing			
Appropriate intonation			
Speaking in thought groups			
Linking			
Blending			
Inflectional endings (like plural -s or past tense -ed)			
Segmental Features			
Schwa			
Consonant clusters			
Flaps			

Refer to *“Making it Clear: A Guide for Teaching Pronunciation”* by Bow Valley College, 2010, for more information on the suprasegmental and segmental features of pronunciation.

PRONUNCIATION ASSESSMENT TOOL 2

This tool can be used for assessment for more than one person at a time. Organize employees into small groups and give them discussion topics to elicit conversation. The instructor can watch and listen to how they speak, and fill in the sheet below accordingly. If the class is large, it will be necessary for this process to take place over several sessions, which is not ideal in the workplace setting.

PRONUNCIATION CHECKLIST

General Speech Characteristics/Reading						
Intelligibility Level*	1	2	3	4	5	6
Ratings 1 = poor/6 = excellent						
Volume	1	2	3	4	5	6
Speed	1	2	3	4	5	6
Energy level (voice maintained to end of phrase or sentence)	1	2	3	4	5	6
Rhythm (to emphasize key word) and intonation (to indicate type of sentence)	1	2	3	4	5	6
Linking (so that speech flows smoothly and fluently)	1	2	3	4	5	6
Not fluent when reading aloud	1	2	3	4	5	6
Speaker Characteristics**						
Facial expression	1	2	3	4	5	6
Confidence/comfort level	1	2	3	4	5	6
Eye contact	1	2	3	4	5	6
Hand and arm gestures	1	2	3	4	5	6
Body movements	1	2	3	4	5	6
Voice quality	1	2	3	4	5	6
Not fluent when speaking freely	1	2	3	4	5	6

- *Level 1: Speech barely intelligible. Accent major obstacle to communication.
- Level 2: Speech largely intelligible. Great listener effort is required; constant repetitions and verifications required.
- Level 3: Speech reasonably intelligible. Significant listener effort is required. Ongoing need for repetitions and verifications.
- Level 4: Speech largely intelligible with L1 sounds and prosodic features that may distract listener.
- Level 5: Speech is fully intelligible. Occasional sound and prosodic features from L1 not seriously distracting to listener.
- Level 6: Speech is near-native. Only minimal divergence from native speaker norm can be detected.

Minimum of Level 4 is desirable for students with careers in the professional arena.

**Speaker characteristics to be noted in classroom interactions. Some of these characteristics can be the result of cultural influences.

Created by Liz Groves

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT WRITING LEVEL ASSESSMENT

Fill in the following sections with your responses. **You will have 15 minutes.**

1) What are your long term goals for improving your English for the work place and life outside of work? Please write in full sentence format.

2) Describe why you think your goals are possible. Give details of what you plan to do to reach your goals.

Read each scenario, and respond to each as an **e-mail reply**. **You will have 25 minutes.**

1) Your boss has requested that you work overtime. You are able to stay, but you would like to be compensated for your time. Please make this request.

2) Your colleague has invited you to go out after work on Friday. You are unable to attend. Decline this request.

3) A client has requested clarification about a meeting you have scheduled for January 18. Please reply with the details of the event.

Appendix II

Course Development

COURSE OUTLINE FOR INDUSTRY – LOW-LEVEL ENGLISH



Centre for Excellence in Immigrant
and Intercultural Advancement

COURSE OUTLINE

Contract	
Class 2 (Low-Beginner)	
Instructor	Organization and Main Contact
Alice McDonald alice@bowvalleycollege.ca (403) 410-1400	Superior Windows John Smith, Operations Manager (403) 806-6750 john@superiorwindows.com 5556 – 9 Street NW, Calgary, AB
Schedule	
51 hours total 90 minutes x 1 or 2 times a week, alternating See attached schedule from workforce development specialist.	
Initial Needs Assessment Findings	
Vietnamese employees who have lived in Canada for varying lengths of time (6 months – 19 years) Most employees who will be attending this class speak no English at work. They either speak Vietnamese or get a co-worker to translate. General ESL is requested by the employer See attached Employee Level Assessment Results	
Proposed Course Outcomes	
<p>Employees will develop vocabulary use in the areas of: health and safety, window and door anatomy, tools, body parts, clothing, colours, shapes, weather, feelings, and numbers.</p> <p>Employees will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ notify supervisor of injury or illness. ■ identify safety signs and understand their meaning. ■ use appropriate greetings. ■ make simple small talk with co-workers. ■ give a simple description of self and feelings. ■ follow and give simple directions. ■ demonstrate subject-verb agreement in present tense. ■ use simple past regular verbs. (Ex. planned, watched) ■ use prepositions of place correctly. (Ex. in, on, beside, below) ■ get information, main idea and specific details from short texts. ■ complete a simple information form about self. ■ describe basic personal activities. ■ describe the time. 	

Pronunciation outcomes:

Employees will be able to:

- use appropriate intonation for short phrases, particularly questions.
- pronounce words with vowel combinations when the first vowel is the dominant sound.
- identify long and short vowel sounds.

The instructor will address individual sounds (vowels, consonants, consonant clusters) as necessary and in conjunction with vocabulary being taught.

Employer Provisions

- boardroom for instruction plus whiteboard and markers
- projector, projector screen, and laptop with wifi
- computer speakers
- access to the warehouse/workshops when necessary for classroom purposes

Course Protocol

- course is voluntary but employees are strongly recommended to attend
- homework can be given but is not mandatory
- attendance will not be taken

COURSE OUTLINE FOR PROFESSIONAL BUSINESS – HIGH-LEVEL ENGLISH



Centre for Excellence in Immigrant
and Intercultural Advancement

COURSE OUTLINE

Contract	
Engineering Firm	
Instructor	Organization and Main Contact
Alice McDonald alice@bowvalleycollege.ca (403) 410-1400	Melissa Winterman, Executive Assistant Engineering Firm Calgary, AB
Schedule	
Total hours 90 minutes x 1 or 2 times a week, alternating high and low classes. See attached schedule from workforce development specialist.	
Initial Needs Assessment Findings	
Chinese employees who have lived in Canada for .5 – 10 years Mostly higher level employees President indicated that they are difficult to communicate with – “they don’t speak well” CLB 6 - 9 See attached “Needs Assessment” document for results from level assessment	
Sample Course Outcomes	
<p>Employees will be able to demonstrate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ give a formal presentation ■ write e-mails ■ write business letters ■ participate effectively in meetings ■ present information informally in meetings ■ write reports ■ write proposals ■ conduct a telephone conversation ■ take and leave telephone messages ■ manage conversation (make requests, apologize, understand and give feedback, interrupt, clarify and confirm, make suggestions, negotiate conflict, listen actively) <p>Idioms and tips for improving English independently will be addressed each week.</p>	

Pronunciation outcomes:

Employees will be able to use appropriate stress on two-syllable nouns and verbs.

Employees will be able to accurately pronounce the top 25 words used most frequently.

The instructor will address individual sounds (vowels, consonants, consonant clusters) as necessary and when it applies to the majority of employees.

The instructor will address suprasegmentals (word stress, sentence stress, intonation) as necessary and in conjunction with language being taught.

Employer Provisions

boardroom or training room for instruction plus smartboard

computer with wifi

computer speakers

Course Protocol

course is voluntary but employees are strongly recommended to attend

homework is minimal and directly applicable to the course (Ex. Employees will be asked to practice what they learned in the workplace).

attendance will be taken

EXAMPLE LESSON – FIRST CLASS

Corporate Office: Oil and Gas Exploration and Development Firm

Date: Tuesday, March 5, 2012

Time: 90 minutes

Context: This is the first time the instructor will meet the employees, as she was not involved in the assessment process. She has prepared activities that will help her become familiar with the employees quickly, and also help them to get to know each other too. The employees work in different departments and may know one or two of their classmates, but not everyone in the class. There are nine employees in this class, seven men and two women. They have been in Canada for less than 1 year, and they are all from China.

Since it is the first class, the instructor needs to introduce a topic or skill that will generate buy-in from the learners and make them want to attend again. Although she doesn't know the employees yet, she knows that most language learners are unfamiliar with many idioms and are also eager to get pronunciation tips. See the coinciding handouts and PowerPoint presentation in this appendix.

Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Prepare enlarged paper cut outs of idioms and phrasal verbs ■ Prepare PPT presentation for the class ■ Photocopy handout of pronunciation of two-syllable nouns and verbs ■ Photocopy discussion questions for speaking assessment ■ Photocopy Needs Assessment Survey
Materials Required	USB key with PPT, name cards, paper cut outs, tape, photocopies
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Learners will get to know their classmates ■ Instructor will assess learners' speaking ■ Learners will be able to pronounce two-syllable nouns and verbs appropriately. ■ Learners will complete a needs assessment
9:30 – 9:45 a.m.	<p>Hand out name cards and ask employees to write their name (or what they would like to be called) on the card.</p> <p>Welcome and Introductions</p> <p>Introduce self and ask each employee to introduce themselves (name, what department they work in). Provide your contact information</p> <p>Explain what is on the agenda for the class today.</p> <p>Explain what learners can expect from the course this term</p>

<p>9:45 – 10:00 a.m.</p>	<p>Ice Breaker: Idioms</p> <p>Ask the class if they are familiar with term “idiom.” Elicit examples. (Ex. Run this by you.) Offer an explanation for the whole class.</p> <p>Hand out one idiom to each learner and the corresponding definition and example sentence to different learners. Not everyone will get one of each. Ask learners to find their “match” and tape them on the wall. When everyone is done, review as a group. Answer questions, and give them time to copy if they wish.</p>
<p>10:00 – 10:25 a.m.</p>	<p>Speaking Assessment</p> <p>Place learners in groups of three. Provide each group with a list of discussion questions. Ask one learner to answer the questions for five minutes. Circulate around the room and make notes about pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary gaps. This is an opportunity for the instructor to observe speaking needs. When the groups are finished, make new groups and ask them to start over until the instructor has the information she needs.</p>
<p>10:25 – 10:45 a.m.</p>	<p>Pronunciation: Two-Syllable Nouns and Verbs</p> <p>Refer to PowerPoint slides for introduction. Give each learner a copy of “Two-Syllable Nouns and Verbs” handout. First, say each sentence and have the learners repeat the words. Second, say each word in isolation, putting stress on either the first or second syllable, and have the learners guess if you’re saying a noun or verb. Third, give the learners an opportunity to practice the sentences with a partner. Fourth, brainstorm as a group any two-syllable nouns/verbs they use on a regular basis at work (Ex. proceed, record), and encourage them to practice the difference.</p>
<p>10:45 – 11:00 a.m.</p>	<p>Needs Assessment Survey</p> <p>Distribute the Needs Assessment Survey (see “Example Employee Needs Assessment Survey 1” in the Needs Assessment appendix.)</p>
<p>Homework</p>	<p>Challenge the learners to find a “role model” for speaking English. Who in your workspace do they think is a good speaker and seems to get along with other people? Ask the learners to observe this person and try to mimic some of their behaviours.</p>

EXAMPLE LESSON FIRST CLASS

Welcome to English for the Workplace

BOW VALLEY
COLLEGE

Centre for Excellence in Immigrant
and Intercultural Advancement

Introductions

- ▶ My name is Janice McCrimmon
 - jlokhorst@bowvalleycollege.ca
- ▶ BSc in Human Ecology (Social Science)
- ▶ MEd in Teaching English as a Second Language (University of Alberta)
- ▶ Research: What are the ESL needs of TFWs in Alberta?
- ▶ Instructor and resource developer at Bow Valley College in the Centre of Excellence – Immigrant and Intercultural Advancement

Introductions

- ▶ And who are you?
- ▶ Your name and what area you work in

Our Agenda Today...

- ▶ What to expect in this course
- ▶ Vocabulary Activity
- ▶ Partner discussions/ Speaking and pronunciation assessment
- ▶ Pronunciation Practice
- ▶ Needs Assessment Survey

What to expect in this course...

- ▶ Language is *more* than words...
- ▶ What do you think this means?

What to expect in this course...

- ▶ Clear speech (pronunciation)
- ▶ Canadian workplace culture
- ▶ Content based on your needs
 - E-mail writing? Giving formal presentations?
- ▶ Idioms
- ▶ Grammar as necessary
- ▶ Tips on how to improve your English on your own

**Your questions and suggestions can help
inform this course.**

What to expect in this course...

- › Lots of participation from the class
- › Some standing, walking around
- › Maybe PowerPoint, maybe not
- › Very simple, practical homework

- › Please bring a pen/pencil,
- › The best supplies for class are paper and a small binder (to keep handouts)



Let's Begin...

- › What's an **idiom**?



Let's Begin...

- › Each person has one idiom and one definition, but they don't match. Talk to your classmates to find the match.
- › Tape them to the board beside the example sentence.



Speaking Assessment

- › An opportunity for you to get to know your classmates better
- › My chance to listen to you for speaking fluency and pronunciation
- › This is not a test! So relax.



Pronunciation Practice

- › What is a syllable?
- › Syllable stress?



Pronunciation Practice

PROduce (n.)
Buy produce in a grocery store.

proDUCE (v.)
Produce a movie.



Pronunciation Practice: Two-syllable Nouns and Verbs

- › Review handout
- › Are there any nouns/verbs that you use on a regular basis?
- › Exception: PROcess (n.) PROcess (v.)



Employee Needs Assessment Survey

- › 10 - 15 minutes? Take your time.



Homework

- › Find a role model at work for speaking English. Who do you think is a good speaker, and gets along with other people? Start to observe them, and try to copy some of their behaviours.
- › Do you have a question about something at work? (Example: Something someone said in an e-mail) Bring it to class next time.



**Thank you for your
participation.**

See you next Tuesday!



EXAMPLE LESSON – FIRST CLASS

IDIOMS HANDOUT

in over one's (my) head	doing something that is beyond your experience, very difficult	Q. How's the new job? A. It's really tough. I think I'm _____.
get something off the ground	start a new project, make it happen	I want to get that project _____ next week.
cross that bridge when we get there	make a decision when we need to, not now	Q. If there is a big hail storm, should we fix our roof? A. Well, there's no storm yet, so let's just _____.
keep a level head	don't get too nervous, excited, or upset	Even though the accident scared Jake, he still _____.
slip one's (my) mind	to forget something	I'm sorry I missed your birthday, it totally _____.
blow it	to make a big mistake	We have to make this deal, so don't _____.

EXAMPLE LESSON – FIRST CLASS

SPEAKING ASSESSMENT DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Please talk for three to five minutes about the following questions.

1. What is your job title, and what kinds of things do you do in a typical day?
2. Describe your journey to Canada.
3. What has been the most interesting experience in your career so far? Please describe.

Please talk for three to five minutes about the following questions.

1. What is your job title, and what kinds of things do you do in a typical day?
2. Describe your journey to Canada.
3. What has been the most interesting experience in your career so far? Please describe.

EXAMPLE LESSON – FIRST CLASS

TWO-SYLLABLE NOUNS AND VERBS HANDOUT

Often, when one two-syllable word can be a noun and a verb, the pronunciation is different for each. For nouns, stress the first syllable. For verbs, stress the second.

Noun: He kept a record of all the student's absences.

Verb: She recorded her first music album.

Noun: Mail carriers in Canada joined a protest for their rights.

Verb: I must protest for animal rights.

Noun: I was happy when I found discounts at Market Mall.

Verb: Do not discount her contribution to the workplace.

Noun: You must have a fire permit if you want to have a campfire.

Verb: Please permit me to introduce my friend to you.

Noun: I will take a survey to find out what you want to learn.

Verb: When we arrived at the site of the crime, we surveyed the scene.

Noun: I love getting birthday presents!

Verb: She presented at the conference.

Noun: Rebel soldiers invaded the castle.

Verb: The teenage daughter rebels against her parents.

Noun: The children of Egypt were lost in the desert for 40 years.

Verb: John, don't desert me!

Noun: I expect a salary increase very soon.

Verb: You must increase your amount of exercise to stay healthy.

Other noun/verbs that change syllable stress:

exploit	discount	transport	insult
export	contract	refund	produce
access	address	decrease	

Appendix III

Teaching Intercultural Communicative Competence in the Workplace

CULTURE MAP FOR CLARIFYING AND CONFIRMING

Approach	Bridge	Communicate Message	Close
<p>Assume you are already engaged in a conversation with your supervisor or a co-worker.</p> <p>Make direct eye contact while you clarify.</p>	<p>Verbally signal you are about to interrupt the speaker (co-worker). This is typically done in English by saying "Sorry" or "Excuse me" and then communicating the problem.</p>	<p>Communicate your message using a strategy appropriate to the situation.</p> <p>Start with an apology:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>I'm sorry, I didn't quite get that...</i> ■ <i>I'm afraid I didn't understand you...</i> ■ <i>Sorry, I don't follow you..</i> <p>Ask a direct question</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ What do you mean by...? ■ Could you repeat (the piece you didn't understand) ■ What was (e.g. the name? the time? the tool? any specific information you need to confirm and clarify) ■ Did you say....? <p>Paraphrase the speaker's words</p> <p><i>Do you mean...</i> <i>You want me to ...</i> <i>So, I should...</i></p> <p>Echo the speaker (Repeat what you think you heard. Use rising intonation.)</p> <p>Example: Supervisor: We need this by Tuesday. Employee: <i>By Tuesday?</i></p>	<p>Close the interaction by confirming your understanding.</p> <p>Sample Language</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>Okay</i> ■ <i>No Problem</i> ■ <i>Alright</i> ■ <i>That's fine</i> <p>Longer Forms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>Thanks for the clarification</i> ■ <i>I'll write that down</i> ■ <i>Thanks for your help</i> ■ <i>I understand now</i> ■ <i>I appreciate your help</i>

*Adapted from *Grace Under Fire: Instructor Manual* (2009), Vancouver Community College

CULTURE MAP FOR MAKING A REQUEST

Approach/Attention Getter	Bridge	Communicate Message	Close (Supportive Move)
<p>To get the attention of the listener you can:</p> <p>State the name of the person to whom you are making the request. This has the effect of softening it somewhat. eg. Tan, ...</p> <p>Say "Excuse me" or "Pardon me" (If you are making a request of a stranger)</p> <p>Make a pre-request. e.g. Can I talk with you a moment/ Do you have a minute</p>	<p>Use an appropriate phrase to bridge to your request and soften its impact.</p> <p>Sample Language Most Softened (formal and indirect)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ I was wondering if I / you could... ■ Would it be <i>possible/ alright/okay</i> for me/ you/ him to.... ■ I'd like to ask you something... ■ Would you mind if I... <p>Modals (less formal)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ can you ■ could you ■ would you mind ■ Is it possible 	<p>State the actual request (e.g. <i>take the day off; use your pen; get a ride</i> etc.) in a clear, succinct way</p>	<p>Where appropriate, close the request by giving a <i>reason</i> or offering an <i>explanation</i> for the request.</p>

Adapted from *Grace Under Fire: Instructor Manual* (2009), Vancouver Community College.

Janice McCrimmon, 2013. Adapted from the culture map model in *Grace Under Fire: Instructor Manual* (2009), Vancouver Community College.

CULTURE MAP FOR EXPRESSING CONCERNS IN THE WORKPLACE

Approach	Bridge	Communicate	Close
<p>Approach your boss/ colleague in a calm and controlled manner. Make eye contact. Greet and address him/ her by name.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Do you have a minute to...(discuss / talk about/review) ■ I was just wondering if we could... (discuss/ talk about/ review/ go over...) ■ Do you mind if I... (talk to you a few minutes/ ask you a question) 	<p>Expressing Your Concern:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ I sense that... ■ I feel that... ■ I can see that... ■ I've noticed that... ■ It seems to me that... ■ I was just wondering if... <p>Hearing the Concern of Others:</p> <p>Active Listening Strategies</p> <p><i>Acknowledge:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ That's a... (good point/ valid concern) ■ That's understandable <p><i>Echo</i> Repeat what the other person says with falling intonation.</p> <p><i>Empathize</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ I can see how you might think that... ■ I can see you feel strongly... ■ I can see what you mean <p>Brainstorming A Solution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ How about we... ■ What are your... (thoughts/ suggestions/ ideas/ views) ■ What could we do (to resolve this/so this doesn't happen again) 	<p>Summarizing/Action Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ So... (I will/ you will/ we should/ we can) <p>Leave Taking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ I really appreciate your... (hearing my concerns/taking the time/ suggestions/ advice) ■ Well I'd better not take up any more of your time... ■ Okay, thanks for... (your time/ taking the time/ talking with me)

Adapted from *Grace Under Fire: Instructor Manual (2009)*, Vancouver Community College, in *Culture and Language for Work (2011)*, Bow Valley College.

A CULTURAL MAP FOR DELIVERING A GOOD PRESENTATION

Approach (The Introduction)	Bridge (The Overview)	Communicate (The Body of the Presentation)	Close (The Conclusion)
<p>You can approach your audience by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Greeting the audience ■ Welcoming them ■ Introducing yourself (where appropriate) ■ Catch the audience’s attention and involve them in your presentation <p>Use a “Motivational Hook”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ State an unusual fact or statistic ■ Show an object or picture ■ Tell a personal incident ■ Give an interesting example ■ Ask your audience questions 	<p>Give the audience a brief outline or overview of your presentation (i.e. the road map). Outline the main points you’ll cover and the order you’ll be talking about them.</p> <p>Sample Language: My presentation will be divided into...</p> <p>Today I’m going to talk about the three ways...</p> <p>First I will discuss... Then I will...</p> <p>Finally, I will...</p>	<p>Develop your main points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use a logical order ■ Discuss one main point at a time ■ Develop each main idea by providing details, facts, examples, explanations and reasons ■ Use visual aids ■ *Use transitions or signal words to help your audience follow your talk and your organizations (see Table) 	<p>Briefly summarize the main points</p> <p>End with a general statement or sentence the audience will remember or associate with your presentation</p> <p>Tips:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Don’t say “Well that’s it”, or “I guess I’m finished” ■ Don’t introduce any new information in your conclusion

**Developed by Clare Meyers. Used with permission.*

CULTURE MAP FOR ANSWERING QUESTIONS DURING PRESENTATIONS

Approach	Bridge (Acknowledge the Question)	Communicate Message	Close
<p>At first, make eye contact with the individual when you answer the question.</p> <p>If your answer is long, begin to make eye contact with the whole group.</p>	<p>If you understand the question you can say:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>Thanks for your question.</i> ■ <i>That's a great question...</i> <p>If you did not understand, refer to the "Clarifying and Confirming Culture Map."</p>	<p>Communicate your message using an appropriate strategy for the situation.</p> <p>If appropriate, simply answer the question.</p> <p>To not answer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>Thanks for bringing that up. I'll get to that in just a moment.</i> ■ <i>I'm just about to discuss that.</i> ■ <i>Please wait until the end of the presentation, and I'll be happy to answer your question.</i> ■ <i>I'm sorry, unfortunately we don't have time to cover that right now (Maybe another time, or get in touch with me if you need more information.)</i> ■ <i>I think that requires a longer explanation. an we address it at the end of the presentation?</i> <p>For lengthy comments: Wait for them to pause, then say:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>I can see that is important, but we need to move along.</i> ■ <i>Thanks for your comment, but we need to keep moving.</i> ■ <i>Thank you, let's continue.</i> ■ <i>Okay, let's continue.</i> 	<p>Close the interaction to confirm they understand.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>Does that answer your question?</i> <p>Return to presentation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>Let's continue.</i> ■ <i>So, as I was saying...</i> ■ <i>Where was I? Okay...</i>

EXAMPLE LESSON: MAKING REQUESTS

Class 1 (CLB 5 - 6 in Speaking, CLB 4 – 5 in Writing)

90 minutes

Preparation	- photocopy handouts - prepare PPT
Materials Required	- handouts - USB key
Outcomes	Learners will understand and utilize the four factors for choosing how to make a request: relationship, degree of imposition, and context of the situation. Learners will be able to make a culturally appropriate request in a variety of situations.
Rationale	During a conversation in class, learners demonstrated how they ask for lotto tickets at a convenience store. They expressed frustration as to why they were not treated very warmly by the cashier, but the instructor perceived that their approach was pragmatically incorrect.
5 minutes	Warm-up: Ask learners to give examples of how they would ask for a lotto ticket at the 7-11. Write their answers on the board.
15 minutes	Task: Ask the learners, in pairs, to order the answers from least polite to most polite, and include any other phrases for making a request they can think of. Return to the board and as a group decide how to order the phrases from least polite to most polite. When finished, introduce the imperative (give me a lotto ticket) as the least polite and the phrases, "Would it be possible", "I was wondering if," and "I was wondering if it would be possible" as most polite. Instruction: Learners may be confused by the modal verbs and grammar of the present progressive. Take this opportunity to explain that the past progressive does not represent the actual time of the sentence but is a strategy for figuratively distancing the person from the request.
15 minutes	Awareness activity: Give learners handout 3.0.2 "Perceptions of Politeness" from Culture and Language for Work. Individuals can work at own pace. Review the answers together. Since this is based on student perception, there is no "correct" answer, only opinions.

20 minutes	Instruction/Practice: Give learners handout 3.0.3 “Investigating Politeness, Directness and Formality in English Requests”. Review the information at the top. When they complete the activity, as a group establish the following rules: The greater the imposition, the more polite the request. The greater the power distance, the more polite the request. The greater the formality of the setting, the more polite the request.
10 minutes	Instruction: Introduce and review the Culture Map for Stages of a Request (see appendix, page 109)
20 minutes	Practice: Refer the learners to a number of different scenarios in a PowerPoint slide (see the following attachment). Using the culture map and other handouts from this class, ask learners to work with a partner to determine the appropriate request for each situation on each slide. Work through one slide at a time. Have each pair present their request for each scenario. Allow the other learners to provide their feedback regarding the appropriateness of the requests. Modify the number of demonstrations per scenario according to time constraints.
Wrap Up/ Homework	Ask the learners to practice making requests in a culturally appropriate way this week, following the Culture Map and the rules discussed. Ask them to prepare to report on their experience next class.
Next Class	Today’s class was a focus on the theory behind choosing language for making requests. In the future, there needs to be a deeper look at the finer points of the language: A more thorough examination of the grammar (Handout 3.0.4 “Investigating the Language of politeness in requests”.) A more examples of and practice with softened directives. More practice with pronunciation (intonation and stress) in speech acts.

UNDERSTAND POWER

by Paul A. Holmes

The Canadian workplace is less hierarchical than many other workplaces in the world. There is little difference between supervisors and subordinates. Supervisors are not called by their titles or last names. They do not dress differently to other employees. They expect subordinates to make many decisions independently. In fact, in some Canadian workplaces, it is difficult to identify the supervisor from their subordinates. The difference in authority and influence between supervisors and subordinates is called "power distance". This low "power distance" in the Canadian workplace, between supervisor and subordinate, has a strong affect on communication; it makes consensus and "softeners" essential for respectful interaction between coworkers.

You can gain power i.e. influence and respect, by using a Canadian communication style. Power is not simply ascribed to you because of your education, expertise, age or seniority. The words you choose and how you order them is often more important than having perfect-spoken grammar. Develop a communication style that is clear, concise and coherent. Use softeners to build consensus when you communicate. These increase trust and respect for you as a professional. Be aware of the other communication styles of coworkers from other cultures.

HOFSTEDE'S STUDY

A number of studies have been done to measure the power distance between cultures. The most famous research has been done by Geert Hofstede (1980), who measured the power distance of IBM employees in over 50 countries. The [following table] is a list of 24 countries from Hofstede's Power distance Index (PDI)...The higher the score, the more hierarchical the workplace culture tends to be. Hofstede's numbers are relative [to other countries], not absolute positions of countries.

Power Distance Index

Philippines	94
Russia	93
Romania	90
Mexico	81
Venezuela	81
Arab Countries	80
China	80
India	77
West Africa	77
Vietnam	70
Brazil	69
Hong Kong	68
Poland	68
Columbia	67

Turkey	66
East Africa	64
South Korea	60
Iran	58
Pakistan	55
Canada Quebec	54
Argentina	49
South Africa	49
Canada	39
United States	39
Netherlands	38

Framework Author's Note: This information is only a starting point for understanding power distance differences in very general terms. When the instructor is helping employees identify cultural differences in their workplace, she should discuss cultural differences in terms of the individual's personal experience, not their country. The employee may have a very different experience with power distance in their country than others, depending on their workplace.

Appendix IV

Course Completion

INSTRUCTOR'S FINAL REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Windows – April 30, 2013

Prepared by

alice@bowvalleycollege.ca

1. Course Content

The following topic areas were addressed in **Class 1** (High):

Grammar

- Simple present vs. present continuous
- Using a, an, and the
- Simple past regularly and irregular verbs
- Simple future (I will vs. I am going to) and question form
- Passive voice and simple past

Vocabulary Themes

- Christmas vocabulary
- Tool vocabulary

Pronunciation Strategies

- Long vowels
- Syllable distinction
- Attention to the last sound of a word
- Number pronunciation
- Linking
- Past tense –ed
- /p, b, f, v, w/

Speech Acts

- Giving instructions at work
- Making requests
- Understanding softened requests (Ex. Maybe we should...)

Employer Content

- LEAN and Standardization videos
- Developing a Continuous Improvement Plan
- Daily supervisor responsibilities
- Maintenance Request Form
- Re-order Form
- E-mailing at work (supervisors only)

The following topic areas were addressed in **Class 2** (Low):

Grammar

- Prepositions of place
- Simple past, regular verbs
- Simple present

Vocabulary Themes

- Safety signs
- Christmas and winter words
- Numbers
- PPE
- Parts of the body
- Clothing
- Colours
- Shapes
- Feelings and emotions
- Parts of windows and doors
- Things in a house

Pronunciation Strategies

- Sounds of the alphabet
- Vowels
- Linking
- -ed endings
- T and S
- /s/ vs. /sh/ in initial and final position
- /ch/ vs. /j/ in initial and final position
- Consonant clusters at beginning of words

Speech Acts

- Introductions
- Basic description of self (where you from, where do you live, likes and dislikes)
- Describe emotions
- Describing illness and injury

2. Learner Progress

Although classes were split according to level, there were mixed levels within the classes.

In Class 1, most content that was delivered was familiar to the learners, as they had learned it previously in other language classes in their youth or as newcomers to Canada. The class was often a “refresher” and a reminder to incorporate in speaking and writing. Learners typically demonstrated an understanding of all grammar and vocabulary that was taught, but the lower learners in the class did not demonstrate incorporating it into regular speech and writing (such as simple past tense, for example). Attendance was irregular, which made it difficult to review former lessons and build on what was previously taught. Those learners who did consistently attend during a multi-class session on making requests successfully demonstrated the outcome in writing and speaking.

Learners in Class 2 showed more progress in learning outcomes as attendance for the class as a whole was generally more consistent. Each class, previous content was reviewed and new content was introduced that built on what was taught previously. The class successfully learned vocabulary that was taught, and the lowest learners demonstrated basic small talk skills and simple requests. The learners with a higher level of language demonstrated more skill in making more elaborate and appropriate requests. All demonstrated pronunciation skills taught, but more time and practice is required for them to use in regular speech outside of the classroom.

3. The Instructor “Experience”

Overall, I found teaching at Windows an extremely positive experience. John Smith, the supervisor and BVC’s direct contact was very collaborative, very helpful and answered questions quickly. The site provided a laptop, projector, and speakers. Unfortunately the speakers did not have a power cord; the solution was to use the internet wifi power cord instead. This meant that you could not use the internet and the speakers simultaneously, which was problematic on a few occasions. Usually class started at about 2:50 as employees showed up individually from the back. I encouraged learners to speak English only, but in Class 2 they often spoke Vietnamese, the very lowest learners often seeking help from each other. A car was required to teach at Windows, which wasn’t a problem, and classes took place at the end of the day. My preference would’ve been to teach at the beginning of the day, but there are advantages and disadvantages to both. In this way I avoided morning rush hour traffic on the Deerfoot.

In each class there were mixed levels, especially in Class 2, where some learners could be considered CLB 1 and others were CLB 3. Needless to say, unless it was new vocabulary, sometimes the lesson was either too difficult for the lowest or too easy for the highest.

The learners in Class 1 were friendly but often tired. They usually did not participate in activities that required standing up or role playing with a partner, but they would work on other partner tasks. A few of the supervisors seemed less motivated and even averse to some of the tasks, such as learning about and completing forms that were part of their duties. In Class 2, learners were extremely energetic, motivated, hard working, and supportive of each other. From the beginning to the end of the class they concentrated very hard and put their best effort forward. Both classes had a great sense of humour and liked to laugh.

4. Recommendations

- An additional class or two would help alleviate the multi-level issue in classes. Then the highest learners might be challenged in each class.
- Keeping the supervisors in a class of their own. Although not realized until later in the contract, I believe that cultural hierarchy affected participation in the class, as supervisors and subordinates did not want to lose face in front of each other. This could work, as those individuals who are currently supervisors are approximately the same level.
- The content mandated for this contract was General ESL. In order for the class to be more effective in the short time that it's offered, I recommend that the content should focus on workplace needs. The instructor would need to job shadow for a day to understand what language needs are required.
- Having said this, the employees all said that they rarely use English at work. However, John Smith emphasized a few times to me that he wants them to use English. His expectations will need to be made explicit to the employees in order for buy in to a "work focused" language class.
- Two classes a week would be beneficial. Only having one class a week and a full week apart is a long time between.
- Class length of 1.5 hours is good and it could be longer, but definitely not shorter.
- There is an endless amount of content that could be taught in the future, and I hope to see this company renew their contract next fall for their employees. In the lower level, a continuation of general ESL is recommended. In the higher level, a focus on pronunciation and writing is recommended. John should be consulted as to the kind of language required for getting things done in the workplace.

CHECK SHEET FOR OUTGOING AND INCOMING INSTRUCTORS

Required Information and Materials for Incoming Workforce Development Instructor during Mid-contract

1. Information

- Workplace name, location, and contact information
- Class schedule and contract end date

2. Materials

- Class participant list
- Attendance (if applicable)
- Resources supplied by employer (Ex. computer, whiteboard and markers, Smartboard)
- Recommended texts and resources from Bow Valley College ELL Resource Room, the P drive, etc.
- Authentic learning materials collected from the workplace
- Access to workplace requirements (Ex. swipe card, computer login information)

3. Course and Learner Details

- Needs assessment and level assessment results
- Complete lesson plan for first day of outgoing instructor's absence
- Describe elements of "a typical class"
- Course Outline for class (see Course Development appendix, page 85)
- List of outcomes previously covered
- Past lesson plans
- Collection of assessment scores (if applicable)
- Collection of anecdotes regarding employee progress in the class
- Specific student details regarding attendance, challenges, likes and dislikes
- Anecdotal information collected from employer during contract (Ex. information regarding employee performance at work, attitudes towards English class)

4. Making Connections

- Incoming instructor with a CEIIA coordinator
- Incoming instructor meets with the workforce development specialist
- Incoming instructor meets the employer
- Incoming instructor shadows at least one class taught by the outgoing instructor if possible

