INTRODUCTION

TENNESSEE WORKPLACE ESOL
A collaborative initiative of the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Office of Adult Education, and the University of Tennessee, Center for Literacy Studies

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
- What is workplace education?
- What is a workplace ESOL program?
- Why do we need ESOL classes in the workplace?
- Where does adult education fit into the workplace?
- Why this course of training?

ESOL WORKER COMPETENCIES
- To get a job
- To survive on a job
- To thrive on a job

FAQs, continued
- Are there historical and legislative precedents for adult education’s involvement in workplace education, particularly in workplace ESOL?
- Are there pitfalls to be avoided?
- How does an adult education program initiate a workplace ESOL program?
- How is the workplace readiness guide to be used prior to the training?

FAQs, continued
- What are the training goals and objectives?
- What is included in the training?
- What are the expectations once the training is complete?
- What kind of technical assistance is available?
- How is success in workplace ESOL measured?
Appendix E

MODULE ONE

WORKPLACE READINESS GUIDE

- Introduction/Frequently Asked Questions
- Workplace Readiness Survey for Program Managers/Supervisors
- Workplace Readiness Survey for Instructors
- Workplace ESOL Program Planning Chart
- Glossary of Terms
  (Appendices A, B)

FOUR-STEP PROCESS FOR TENNESSEE'S WORKPLACE ESOL

- Know your adult education program and how to present your services to business & industry
- Know your community’s needs and understand the workplace
- Design a plan to deliver and sustain services
- Know your results—monitor and evaluate learner progress and program success

TEACHING BASIC SKILLS IN THE WORKPLACE

- Workbook, chapters 1–6
- CD-ROM, modules 1–6
- Supplementary: CD-ROM, modules 7–10
- Worksheet

WHY ESOL IN THE WORKPLACE?

- Demographic changes—every state impacted by increase in adults with limited English skills
- ISO/quality demands require a more educated workforce that can communicate with one another and customers in English
- Lack of language proficiency impacts workplace safety, productivity, quality
- Limited work opportunities for nonnative speakers of English in uncertain economic times

WHY THE GROWING NEED? continued

- Limited language skills = confinement to entry level jobs
- Employee turnover costs @ $11 billion yearly
- The workplace is where adult learners are if there are jobs to be had
- Increase the numbers served by adult education
WHAT YOU ALREADY KNOW ABOUT ADULT LEARNING

- Adults are self-directed in their learning
- They have reservoirs of experience/prior knowledge that serve as resources
- They are practical, problem-solving oriented learners
- They want their learning to be applicable
- They want to know why they are learning what they are learning

WHAT YOU ALREADY KNOW ABOUT WORKPLACE EDUCATION

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BASIC PRINCIPLES OF ADULT SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING

- Language is acquired via meaningful use and interaction
- Instruction must include many opportunities for practice (listening, speaking, reading, writing)
- A mix of instructional approaches is needed
- What is taught must be applicable, transferable, and reinforced to be learned
- Language learning is a process and takes time

HOW DOES WORKPLACE ESOL COMPARE WITH TRADITIONAL ESOL?

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WHAT MAKES WP ESOL UNIQUE?

- It is focused on language and literacy skills needed to gain new employment, retain present jobs, advance in careers, or increase productivity
- It is developed collaboratively by educators, employers, and employees
- Assessment and evaluation document changes in performance and behavior

EQUIPPED FOR THE FUTURE: WORKER ROLE MAP

- Adapt to change & actively participate in meeting the demands of a changing workplace
- Do the work
- Work with others
- Work within the big picture
- Plan and direct personal and professional growth
CONCERNS, ISSUES, AND OBSERVATIONS FROM THE FIELD

- Inadequate attention to developing necessary infrastructure, capacity, and staff
- Unrealistic expectations
- No input from workers/learners
- Poorly prepared instructors
- Little integration between learning and work

SWOT ANALYSIS

INWARD FOCUS
- Identify program strengths
- Examine areas of program needing improvement

OUTWARD FOCUS
- Look for opportunities for growth and development
- Anticipate challenges and obstacles to program success

MODULE TWO

FACTORS AFFECTING ESOL LEARNER SUCCESS IN WORKPLACE ESOL

- Cultural differences can impact performance and learning
- Nonnative speakers of English may hesitate to acknowledge a lack of comprehension
- Many are concerned about the connection between classes and job retention
- Most have a good work ethic but do not know how to promote themselves

EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES: REALITY CHECK

- It takes time to acquire and develop language and literacy proficiencies
- Workplace literacy is an on-going process
- Successful programs run for several modules or cycles

DON’T FORGET TO DO THE MATH

- 20% turnover in businesses is related to basic skills deficiencies
- The minimum cost per new hire at entry level is $520 (in banking and fast food services)
- It costs a minimum of $200/worker for training
- Language and literacy deficiencies can reduce productivity by 8% or more
- Lower productivity diminishes profit
THE LANGUAGE TASK ANALYSIS

- Examines the language, literacy, and cultural issues associated with job tasks performed by nonnative speakers of English
- Helps determine program goals and objectives
- Drives curriculum development, selection and adaptation of materials, and how progress and performance are measured

THE LTA: JOB SHADOWING

- Observe job being done
- Record task(s) and steps needed to perform task(s)
- Identify language skills needed to perform task(s) successfully
- Ask questions if further clarification is needed (both worker and supervisor)
- Review notes and refine identification of needs

LTA: QUICK TIPS

- Develop and use a business vocabulary
- Follow protocol in checking in with employer
- You are not there to change company policy/procedure
- Build rapport with workers being observed and interviewed
- Use an interpreter if necessary and possible
- Use a competent native English speaker as a content area expert
- Collect job related materials, forms, manuals
- Be respectful of company nondisclosure policy

WORKPLACE ESOL FOCUS VARIES ACCORDING TO NEED

- Academic
- Employability
- Occupational and technical knowledge and skills
- Limited in scope and duration
- Delivery format
- Work-centered and worker-centered

MODULE 3

- It takes time to acquire and develop language and literacy proficiencies
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- Successful programs run for several modules or cycles

TEMPLATES FOR DEVELOPING A WORKPLACE ESOL PROPOSAL

- Results of LTA and proposal for services
- Budgetary worksheet
- Statement of confidentiality
- Reporting assessment results
- Letter of agreement
- Checklists of expectations
QUALIFICATIONS OF WORKPLACE ESOL INSTRUCTORS

- Flexible, creative, sensitive, and enthusiastic
- Tuned in to the culture and content of the workplace
- Willing to observe, interview, learn about corporate needs and how WP instruction fits
- Identify and clarify cross-cultural communication issues
- Evaluate the impact of ESOL services on performance and behavior
- Showcase program to business and stakeholders
- Collect and modify job related materials
- Communicate learner progress in format and time frame requested

WHO SHOULD NOT BE A WORKPLACE ESOL INSTRUCTOR?

- Reluctant to participate in orientation, job shadowing, plant tour
- Fails to ask questions and show interest in and understanding of workplace language and culture
- Suffers from tunnel vision re: academic expertise
- Fails to embrace needs and objectives of both employee and employer

WRITING CONTEXTUALIZED ESOL LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Based on employer/employee needs
- Job contextual, using workplace materials
- Activity oriented and focused on application
- Tap into learners’ prior knowledge
- Specific, measurable outcomes/competencies
- Support improved job performance
- Motivate, build, model, guide, and provide independent, applied practice

CONTEXTUALIZED LEARNING

- Shifts the focus from acquisition of skills and knowledge to active application in realistic situations
- Marginaly literate adults enrolled in job related programs make approximately twice the gains in performance on job-related reading tasks than on standardized, general reading tests
- Demands more hands-on, active learning that stimulates learners to think, act, and apply skills and knowledge as they would in the workplace and real life

WP INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES

- Company newsletters
- Purchase and work orders
- Invoices
- Safety and health literature
- Union material
- Signs
- Employee handbooks
- Inventory sheets
- Operating instructions
- Medical forms
- Job descriptions
- Workers’ compensation and insurance forms
- Company brochures
- Pay slips, memos, labels
- Manuals

EXTENDING LEARNING BEYOND FORMAL INSTRUCTION: RATIONALE

- Capitalize on what corporate America already knows and does
- Utilize what you know about adult learning (including that vocabulary activities can be boring and unproductive)
- Gain leverage to ensure buy-in, document success, and further promote your services
EXTENDING LEARNING BEYOND FORMAL INSTRUCTION

- Strategy 1: Reading
- Strategy 2: Discussion
- Strategy 3: Class Presentations
- Strategy 4: Dictionary Check
- Strategy 5: Vocabulary Reinforcement

MODULE FOUR

WORKPLACE ESOL ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

- Pre- and postassessment for baseline measures
- Qualitative assessment: portfolios, periodic observations, self-evaluations, focused work-related checklists, interviews with learners and supervisors
- State or national assessments for licensing or credentialing
- Summaries of learners’ accomplishments in context of personal and employer’s goals
- Descriptions of how instruction impacted learner’s life at work, at home, in the community

THE FINAL SUMMARY REPORT

- Specific data re: learners enrolled, attending, completing
- Aggregate data re: pre- and postassessment
- Aggregate data re: learner progress
- Quotes from participants and supervisors re: changes in performance/behavior (quantitative and qualitative in nature)
- Conclusions and recommendations for next steps

SIX CHALLENGES TO PRACTICAL APPLICATION

- Integrating ESOL into workforce development
- Focusing on work-related language and basic skills
- Using the work context for learning
- Integrating technology into workplace learning
- Building respectful relationships
- Collaborating to build lasting partnerships

OKAY, NOW WHAT DO I DO? NEXT STEPS

- Getting started
- Action plan
- Praxis (practical application)
- Spring follow-up sessions
- Evaluation of training
### SUGGESTIONS FOR PRAXIS

- Prepare a marketing packet
- Prepare workplace ESOL instructors—guide them through TBSWP Workbook and CD-ROM modules (a professional development opportunity?)
- Identify and initiate collaboration with a local business for workplace ESOL services
- Arrange to conduct a language task analysis at a business employing nonnative English speakers
- Develop and conduct a survey of local businesses employing nonnative speakers of English

### REVIEW OF KEY POINTS #1: THE PLANNING PROCESS

- Include all stakeholders and ensure that they understand the scope of the program and the expected results
- Conduct a language task analysis
- State goals initially that are minimal, manageable, and measurable
- Explain that language mastery can be a lengthy process somewhat dependent upon individuals’ formal education and native language skills
- Set course length at 6–8 weeks to optimize employer and employee commitment

### REVIEW OF KEY POINTS #2: ASSESSMENT

- Participant assessment is part of planning, implementing, sustaining, and evaluating the program
- The language task analysis is a significant part of these same processes
- Assessment should be related to program goals
- Standardized tests should be used to establish baseline data but verified and amplified via other formal/informal assessments throughout instruction

### REVIEW OF KEY POINTS #3: IMPLEMENTATION

- Include realia in instructional activities
- Think context, placing priority on skills identified as work-related
- Ensure maximum opportunity for practical use of all language skills
- Grammar and usage should be included but are not the focus of workplace instruction
- Focus on understanding and ability to communicate and succeed in the context of the workplace setting

### REVIEW OF KEY POINTS #4: EVALUATION OF A PROGRAM

- Both quantitative and qualitative
- Related directly to program goals and objectives
- Include evaluation measures that clearly define learner progress in the final report
- Variety in assessment and evaluation approaches will capture the most data and acknowledge different types of learning