

Developing Work-related **Learning Materials**

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About *SkillPlan*

SkillPlan, the BC Construction Industry Skills Improvement Council, was formed in response to the learning needs of an evolving industry. The construction workforce requires increasingly higher levels of reading, writing, numeracy, problem solving and oral communication skills. SkillPlan's mandate is to provide a solid foundation of these Essential Skills, the Velcro™ to which all other training sticks. Essential Skills are part of a worker's life and underlie literacy in the wider community.

SkillPlan is a joint labour and management initiative of the construction industry in British Columbia. It was established as a not-for-profit society in March 1991. For more information, visit SkillPlan's website at www.skillplan.ca.

Introduction

The information and exercises in this Guide are based on years of experience developing materials for the *How do your skills Measure Up?* website and Essential Skills research. The Guide draws on lessons learned over the years to provide you with tips to get you started on developing your own materials.

Who is this Guide for?

This Guide is designed for:

- Practitioners in all settings who want to develop work-related learning materials.
- Practitioners in leadership roles in curriculum development or professional development.

You might be working on your own, with a colleague, or on a team. Your scope may be aimed at the lesson level or at the project level.

What is the purpose?

Many practitioners across the country are recognizing the benefits of connecting learning directly with workplace skills. The Coordinator and Instructor of the program *Pathways to Employment* in Georgian College, Owen Sound, Ontario says,

I use authentic materials in instruction because it helps the learner identify with documentation and forms they will actually see and may use in any workplace. The learners become more engaged because they see the benefits of the exercises.... learning is enhanced and progress is measurable.

The purpose of this Guide is to offer tips to practitioners to encourage the collection and development of work-related activities. Helping learners or program participants in realizing their employment goals is our contribution to the Canadian economy. If you have been thinking about developing lessons around workplace materials, this Guide is for you.

Is background necessary?

Some background is useful before you launch into using this Guide.

- Try some of the activity sets that can be downloaded at no cost from the website, *How do your skills Measure Up?* These sets will allow you to gauge participant reaction and appropriate benchmark levels.
- Read the Getting Started document posted on the website, *How do your skills Measure Up?* at www.skillplan.ca.
- Learn more about Essential Skills at the website www.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/essentialskills.

How is this Guide organized?

The Guide is arranged in four major sections, each with its own table of contents. At the end of each section, a checklist summarizes the information presented in that section, followed by exercises with answers.

How should the Guide be used?

It is a good idea to skim through the Guide starting with the table of contents to see which sections are most important to you. You do not need to go through the Guide section by section. You can go to the sections that apply to you. Exercises and answer keys are provided for photocopying.

We wish you all the best as you join colleagues across the country in providing instruction that contributes to getting and sustaining employment.

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