

**AWAL GUIDE**  
**HANDBOOK FOR FACILITATORS**  
**REVISED 2006**

# Acknowledgements

This project began when Lucy Westaway, then AWAL Project Administrator, made the observation that what was needed was “AWAL in a box.” In the months that followed, numerous AWAL facilitators and Advisory Committee members gave generously of their time to read and contribute to drafts of this Guide, making that idea a reality. In addition, this Guide would not be possible without the suggestions and feedback offered by every educator across the country who has participated in an AWAL Workshop. Particular thanks go to Karen Fetterley (Alberta Learning), Lois Morin (Manitoba Advanced Education and Training), Diane O’Connor (Kennebecasis Valley High School, NB), Tannis Orzynsky (Crocus Plains Secondary School, Manitoba), and Janice Render (NWT Education, Culture and Employment). Lastly, thanks also go to Debra Mair and Julia Fuchs of Human Resources Partnerships, HRDC, for respectively providing the resources to begin, and then supporting this project through to completion.

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## Introduction

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### **Purpose of the Guide**

*The AWAL Guide: Handbook for Facilitators* is essentially “AWAL in a box.” The background information, suggestions, and resources collected here are intended to provide you with the tools and support you need to understand, plan for, deliver, and benefit from an AWAL Workshop for your organization.

AWAL (**A**pplications of **W**orking and **L**earning) is a valuable and effective program that can result in strong benefits for both faculty development and curriculum resource development. Through meeting with and learning from employers and employees, AWAL provides a means for educators to incorporate into their own teaching practice an emphasis on the skills that Canadian workplaces have identified as essential. However, AWAL is not intended to provide a complete examination of a job, and certainly not of the people who do those jobs.

### **Development of the Guide**

In the winter of 2003, the Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) agreement for the National AWAL Project was amended to add a new project objective: *the development of an AWAL Guide to provide all the tools needed to facilitate an AWAL session.*

In the summer of 2003, the AWAL staff, with the support of a number of AWAL facilitators and members of the AWAL Advisory Committee, began working on the document. Various drafts were reviewed throughout the fall and a first version was posted to the AWAL Web site in January 2004. This was followed by the current revision in 2006.

## Overview of the Guide

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Part A: The AWAL Project	Part A describes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the Essential Skills Research Project</li><li>• the history of the AWAL Project and its organization</li><li>• key project components such as the database and Web site</li></ul>
Part B: Setting up the AWAL Workshop	Parts B, C, and D provide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the tools and information your organization will need to plan for, facilitate, and benefit from the AWAL Workshop</li></ul>
Part C: Facilitating the AWAL Workshop	
Part D: Following up the AWAL Workshop	
Part E: The AWAL Forms	Part E contains: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the forms used during the AWAL Workshop and tips for their completion</li></ul>
Part F: Resources	Part F includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• additional print and Web resources</li></ul>

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## Part A: The AWAL Project

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### The HRSDC Essential Skills Research Project

In 1994, Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC: now Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, HRSDC) launched a national research study, the Essential Skills Research Project (ESRP), to examine how the essential skills were used in the Canadian workplace. More than 3,000 interviews have now been conducted across Canada with people working in some 200 occupations.

#### BACKGROUND

- Earlier work in Canada, the United States, Australia and Great Britain had identified a set of skills that were used in virtually all occupations. We call these “Essential Skills”.
- One such skill list was the Employability Skills Profile of the Conference Board of Canada. (This list also included information on attitudes and behaviours sought by employers.)
- Essential skills, such as reading, writing, numeracy, oral communication and problem solving, are also used throughout the activities of daily life: from shopping to food preparation, from recreational activities to community involvement.

#### WHY DO THE ESRP?

- Essential skills can take many forms, ranging from simple tasks, such as filling in credit card receipts, to more complex tasks, such as writing scientific reports.
- How can we describe these differences in a standardized way? What do these skills look like in different jobs? How does an individual know if they have the skills they need to do the jobs they want to do? The ESRP tried to provide answers to these questions.

## **THE ESRP**

- The ESRP developed ways to talk about these skills, adapting scales from the International Adult Literacy Survey and the Canadian Language Benchmarks and drawing on other sources from the United States, Australia and Great Britain.
- The ESRP then conducted 3,000 interviews to provide information on what these skills looked like in a broad range of jobs.
- The ESRP focused on occupations requiring a secondary school diploma or less and on-the-job training. (These occupations were identified using the National Occupational Classification: NOC.)
- Additional data collection occurred, and continues, through the National Occupational Standards program and the Interprovincial Standards (Red Seal) program. This provides information about what these skills look like in occupations requiring higher levels of formal education.

## **The Essential Skills Profiles**

Essential Skills Profiles describe the frequency and complexity of the use of essential skills in different occupational groups. There are:

- Essential Skills Profiles for approximately 150 entry-level occupational groups from Skill Levels C and D of the NOC. These Profiles cover all occupations that can be entered with a high school diploma or less. Most are based on information from open-format interviews with 3,000 workers across Canada. Some are part of National Occupational Standards developed by the private sector with assistance from Human Resources Development Canada.
- Essential Skills Profiles for occupations requiring study beyond high school. These Profiles are part of National Occupational Standards developed by the private sector, or National Occupational Analyses conducted in the Red Seal program for apprenticeable trades.
- The second major phase of field research to develop Essential Skills profiles for approximately 250 technical and professional (NOC Skill Level A and B) occupational groups began in the fall of 2003. New profiles are posted as they become available. Some profiles will continue to be written in tandem with the National Occupational Standards developed by the private sector with assistance from Human Resources and Skills Development Canada.

An Essential Skills Profile describes how each essential skill is actually used by workers in an occupational group. For each essential skill, a Profile generally contains:

- Complexity ratings that indicate the level of difficulty of the tasks related to that skill
- Examples that illustrate how that skill is actually used
- A standardized description of how that skill is used so readers may make comparisons between occupations or aggregate information across occupations

### **USING THE ESSENTIAL SKILLS PROFILES**

The Profiles may be useful to a wide variety of people:

- Course and curriculum developers who are creating educational programs and activities at various levels of education
- Trainers and teachers working with youth and adults
- Guidance and career counsellors providing advice on career options and educational routes
- Employers who are selecting or developing appropriate training for employees
- Parents, mentors and advisors helping students plan for their future
- Learners who wish to better understand occupational requirements
- Occupational and workplace researchers who are studying employment in Canada

The Essential Skills Profiles have many potential uses. They could be used, for example, to:

- Develop workplace Essential Skills Training Programs
- Develop tasks that could be incorporated in classroom activities at various levels of education
- Create educational tools to enhance essential skills development
- Provide a framework for Essential Skills Needs Assessments in particular workplaces
- Determine an appropriate co-op placement for a student

## Essential Skills/Employability Skills

Essential, employability, or generic skills – these terms are all attempts to examine the commonality of skills rather than the uniqueness of occupations. They are attempts to determine which skills are frequently used in job performance, and which skills, commonly taught, are rarely used in job performance.

Essential skills are not technical or employment-specific skills. They are generic and transferable skills found in all occupations and used in daily life. They may also be described as the Velcro<sup>®</sup> skills – the skills that enable technical and employment-specific skills to “stick”.

HRSDC’s nine Essential Skills include:

- Reading Text
- Writing
- Numeracy (Math)
- Working with Others
- Oral Communication
- Thinking Skills
- Continuous Learning
- Document Use
- Computer Use

Understanding the connections between HRSDC’s Essential Skills and the Conference Board’s Employability Skills can help educators to use the many resources available to support assessment and development activities.

### THE ESSENTIAL SKILLS-EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS CONNECTION

- They are the same skills.
- These skills are used beyond the workplace in a broad range of daily activities.
- The ESRP looks in greater detail at these skills. It provides information on the different ways these skills are used in the workplace. It also provides a way to talk about differences in the way skills are used and differences in the skills people have demonstrated.
- The Employability Skills profile also includes attitudes and behaviours that employers are looking for.

## History of AWAL

### BC AWAL

AWAL was conceptualized and developed in British Columbia in 1997 with funding from HRDC and the BC Ministry of Education. The original project began as a K-12 initiative with a strong emphasis on the individual participants' professional development (PD) experiences.

### AWAL NATIONAL

From 2000 through 2003 HRDC provided funding to BC's Centre for Curriculum, Transfer and Technology (C2T2) to manage and promote the AWAL project. At the same time, the project's mandate expanded in three significant ways:

- From a provincial to a national project
- To include adult educators while continuing to work with those in K-12
- Made a shift to place an equal emphasis on both the professional development and the curriculum development aspects of the project

This expansion meant that assistance became available to all educators in any jurisdiction across Canada interested in adopting or adapting AWAL. In addition it meant that AWAL began to look slightly different in different parts of the country as the project tools and processes began to be adapted, and continue to be adapted, to better suit the priorities and activities of different regions.

### AWAL INNOVATIONS

From 2003 through 2006 HRSDC provided funding to Camosun College, Victoria BC to manage and promote a new AWAL project: *AWAL Innovations*. Building on the success of the earlier AWAL projects, the objectives of *AWAL Innovations* were:

- To apply the principles and lessons learned from AWAL National to a suite of new project activities led by the AWAL National Office: AWAL for literacy, increased employer involvement, and AWAL as a tool in the development of system and organization-wide curriculum resources

- To apply the principles and lessons learned from AWAL National to three new projects: specifically Research AWAL in New Brunswick, Student AWAL in Ontario, and Workplace AWAL across Canada
- To maintain the Web site and database and support the work of AWAL in established jurisdictions and to initiate the technology transfer of AWAL into new jurisdictions
- To address the question of sustainability and work toward the identification of a permanent home for AWAL

### **The AWAL Web Site**

Located at [www.awal.ca](http://www.awal.ca), the AWAL Web site is the project's primary communication tool to distribute information about the project in both official languages. Access to the Web site does not require a password. The Web site contains the following features:

- About AWAL
- AWAL Forms and Resources
- Related Sites
- The AWAL Database

### **The AWAL Database**

The AWAL database is the core of the AWAL Web site and contains more than 1500 teaching and learning activities developed between 1997 and 2005. While the AWAL Web site and database remain accessible as a valuable resource, **please note that at the time of this writing (January 2006), it is not possible to add new activities to the database.**

The majority of activities were developed during AWAL Workshops (a few were developed as part of a separate HRDC project). All activities are designed to provide practice in particular essential skills.

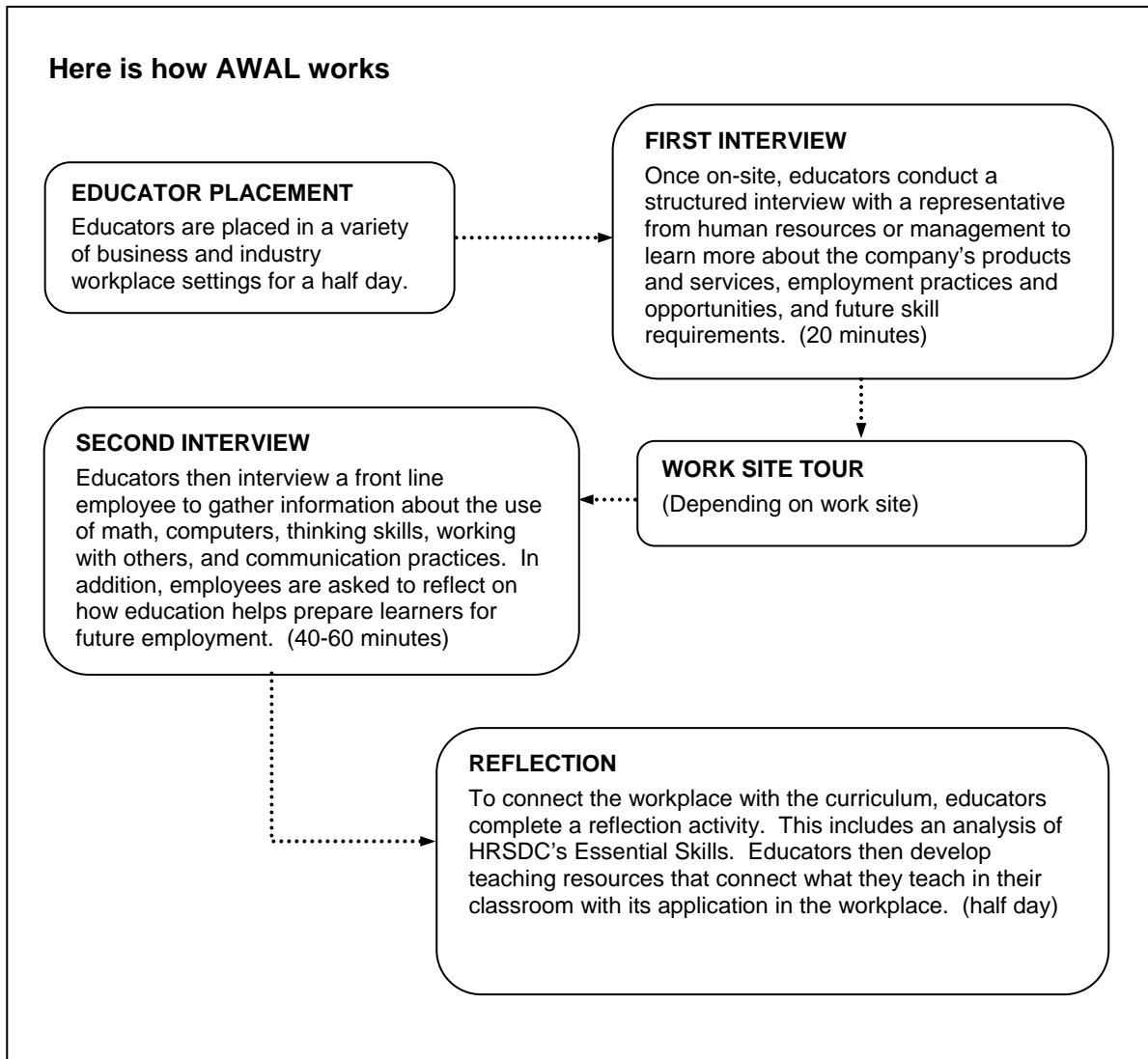
You may search the database by using any of the following criteria:

- Company Name
  - Can be further filtered by province/territory and/or date of entry
- National Occupational Classification (NOC)
  - Can be further filtered by NOC major group, grade level, province/territory, and/or date of entry
- Essential Skill
  - Can search for a particular essential skill either observed in an occupation or highlighted in a teaching and learning activity
  - Can be further filtered by skill application/purpose, grade level, province/territory, and/or date of entry
- Subject Area and Level
  - Can be searched by any combination of ten subject areas (applied skills, languages, arts, math, computers, language arts, science, career education, socials, other)
  - Can be searched by any combination of grade clusters (K-3 through to adult education and adult literacy)
  - Can be further filtered by province/territory and/or date of entry
- Collector Name
  - Search by the name of the activity developer
- Keyword
  - Search by keyword or keywords



## Part B: Setting Up the AWAL Workshop

### Before You Begin



## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **AWAL PLANNING TEAM**

We recommend that a planning team be identified within your organization to coordinate all activities around the AWAL Workshop (preparation, implementation and follow-up). It is useful to have a senior administrator as a team member to act as project sponsor and to lend an authority to the process. The team should include everyone who will be involved in the offering of the Workshop. The person to be identified as the facilitator is generally a member of the planning team for both the first and then for all subsequent AWAL Workshops.

Depending upon how many individuals are on your planning team, an action item list, including who is responsible for what task, with due dates, can streamline planning and eliminate redundancy.

### **WORKSHOP FACILITATOR**

When selecting potential facilitators, there are a number of skills and abilities to look for. Many of them are listed below:

- Knowledge in the areas of:
  - Essential skills research
  - Workplace/co-op education
  - Instructional design and curriculum development
  - Learning styles
- Facilitation Skills
- Technical/Organizational Skills

The facilitator has three main roles to play in facilitating an AWAL Workshop. This may seem to be an over-simplification of the job, but all of the many tasks to be performed can be classified into one of these three main roles.

1. Managing the time and process of the Workshop
2. Teaching the content of the Workshop: the “AWAL Basics”
3. Following up on the AWAL Workshop

## Timelines

The timeline and activities below are presented as a guide. The idiosyncrasies of your own organization will best determine your specific plans. However, it is important that everyone on the planning team be involved in developing the timeline to ensure that the work to be done is coordinated and that the timeline is realistic.

- Well in advance (4-6 months before the Workshop)
  - Identify the planning team for the Workshop
  - Determine with your organization the goals and objectives for the session and how they relate to the larger goals of your organization
  - Decide who should attend and how participants will be selected
  - Select the date and location for the AWAL Workshop and confirm space is available
  - Determine your budget (costs may include replacement teachers, catering, equipment rental, photocopying, taxi fares, parking, mileage, etc.)
- 6-8 weeks in advance
  - Announce the AWAL Workshop and invite participation from your group(s) of educators
  - Make a list of potential workplaces and HR managers' or contact persons' names, secure e-mail/mail addresses for them
  - Send invitation letters/e-mails to the workplaces you wish to participate (see sample letters later in this section)
  - Determine catering and equipment needs and confirm with suppliers
  - Consider offering members of the business community (Rotary, Chamber of Commerce, individual business) the opportunity to sponsor some or all of your catering costs through cash or in-kind contributions
- 3-4 weeks in advance
  - Confirm participation of individual educators
  - Confirm supply staff arrangements (if required)
  - Confirm professional development credit for participation (if available)
  - Do a phone or e-mail follow-up with workplaces to confirm visit time and name of contact person

- 1-2 weeks in advance
  - Copy forms (available at <http://www.awal.ca/files/AWALForms.html>)
  - Be certain the correct contact information and fax number is shown on Form 7 before copying
  - Prepare draft thank-you letters for employers/employees
  - Determine educator teams (see “Setting Up the Participant Teams” later in this section for suggestions on how to pair educators)
  - Alert individual educators if they may want or need to dress in a particular way (workplace has a conservative dress code, all visitors are required to wear safety boots, etc.)
- The day before
  - Do a phone follow-up with workplaces to confirm visit times and names of contact people
  - Confirm food and equipment arrangements
  - Prepare participant contact list to facilitate follow-up communication
  - Prepare expense claims for participants if required
  - Prepare summary list showing participants, workplace contacts, contact information and driving directions (see sample below)
  - Prepare signage and nametags if required
- The morning of
  - Arrive early and check technical equipment
  - Call any educators who are absent. Arrange substitutions if necessary and advise employers of any change in plans
- The week after
  - Collate comments from evaluation forms for your own records
  - Send thank-you letters to employers/employees – request that they forward you completed Form 7 if you haven’t received them yet.
  - Meet with your planning team to debrief on the impact of the day and plan for follow-up in your organization
  - Make time to reflect on the experience and write up a summary of highlights of the AWAL day. This will give you a written report for the planning team and other colleagues (distribute via internal newsletters,

staff meetings, etc.), and a record to refer to when determining what worked and what you might do differently next time.

**Sample Participant Handout**

	EDUCATORS	WORKPLACE	CONTACT INFO	NOTES
1	Jan Jones Roy Martin	Symatex 123 Main St. 413-9876	Employer: Lise Bin Employee: Rick Pye	Need to show ID to security in lobby
2	Daniel Ng Amy Myers	Homewood Care 456 Ryan (at Hwy 12) 423-2266	Employer: Lyle Woods Employee: Rose Ryan	Free parking available behind building
3				

**Facilities**

For morning coffee and the brief context-setting session before the participants go to the work sites, you will want to arrange seating so that everyone can see the front of the room (screen), and you, as well as each other. Try to set up the room ahead of time so you are available to greet participants as they arrive.

The participants will spend most of the day working in pairs. While they are working with paper and pencil, they will require a comfortable amount of table space to spread out on. When they are working on computer (to complete Form 5), one machine per pair of participants works well. The Workshop evaluation, Form 6, is to be completed by hand at the end of the session.

In selecting a computer lab, look for one where computers are around the room perimeter and there are large working tables in the centre of the room. This is the model typically found in a library, adult, or drop-in learning environment or centre. That way the entire Workshop can be conducted in the same room and there is no risk of losing momentum while switching venues (from workroom to computer room).

## **Suggested Supplies and Equipment**

The recommended supplies to have on hand for an AWAL Workshop include the following:

- Paper copies of the AWAL Forms 1-7 for each participant. Though not required, if convenient, you may wish to colour code them for easier reference during the session.
  - Form 1 (blue)
  - Form 2 (green)
  - Form 3 (orange)
  - Form 4 (grey)
  - Form 5 (yellow)
  - Form 5 (also on computer disk: one disk for each pair of educators)
  - Form 6 (pink) (Note there are two versions, one for K-12 and one for adult educators. See footer of form for identification.)
  - Form 7 (white)
- Extra pens and pencils
- Stapler (for stapling business cards to Form 3)
- Audio-visual equipment
  - Laptop and LCD projector for AWAL PowerPoint presentation (Available at <http://www.awal.ca/resources.asp>)
- Flip chart with an extra pad of paper, marking pens
- Masking tape
- Access to a photocopier
- Extra extension cord (110v)

## **Promoting the Workshop**

Each institution will have a different culture that requires a different type of promotion. However, in all cases, it is important to involve individuals who are supportive of innovation and professional development.

Ideally there would be one or more administrators who can provide resources and support on an ongoing basis to keep your program thriving. On the other hand, because individual participant buy-in is essential, management should not impose the AWAL program unilaterally.

Having senior administrators participate in the first AWAL Workshop offered by an organization (consider principals, vice-principals, deans, chairs, superintendents, etc.) has proved to be a very successful way to generate the kind of enthusiasm needed for an “AWAL Champion” to emerge and support the program’s implementation.

## **Participant Selection/Recruitment**

AWAL, as with all professional development programs, gets best results when participation is voluntary. Therefore, organizations may wish to offer two or three choices if AWAL is to be part of a school or district-wide PD event or conference.

If you have already offered AWAL once successfully, you may choose to draw on the original participants to spread the word in an “each one, teach one” model.

Once the participants have been identified, it is helpful to suggest that they visit the AWAL Web site and explore the activities on the database **BEFORE** the Workshop. A letter, like the one below, may also be a useful tool in focusing participants and preparing them for what to expect in the Workshop.

## Sample Participant Letter

### MEMORANDUM

TO: SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS TEACHERS

You are invited to attend a one-day professional development activity on the Applications of Working and Learning (AWAL) National Project.

The AWAL project helps educators connect the curriculum they teach in the classroom with how that curriculum is used in the workplace, by facilitating structured workplace visits. Participants are introduced to Human Resources and Skills Development Canada's nine essential skills (computer use, document use, oral communication, thinking skills, writing, continuous learning, numeracy, reading text and working with others) and given ideas and opportunities to introduce these skills to their students. Using what is learned in a variety of workplace environments, participants develop relevant classroom activities.

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ TIME: \_\_\_\_\_

LOCATION: \_\_\_\_\_

### AGENDA

- 8:00 Registration and Continental Breakfast
- 8:30 Welcome and Overview of "AWAL" Project
- 9:15 Team Preparation and Travel to Interview Site
- 10:00 Interview Management; Tour Facility; Interview Employee
- 12:00 Return from Interview Site: Lunch
- 12:45 Workplace Insights  
Connection to Essential Skills  
Classroom Applications
- 3:30 Next Steps
- 4:00 Adjournment

To register for this workshop, please provide the following information by [date] to your school contact, [contact name].

Name of School: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher(s) Attending with Subject Specialty: \_\_\_\_\_

Sincerely,

[name, title]

## Setting Up the Participant Teams

When setting up the participant teams there are many different strategies that can be used: use a prepared list to assign pairs based on subjects taught or experience; draw names of businesses randomly from a hat and distribute to participants, separate colleagues; etc. You may want to avoid having people who teach in the same discipline going together; or you may want to do that intentionally. Some like the element of surprise – others may not. Again, your knowledge here of your own group's culture should be the determiner. Your choice will in large part be based in your organization's larger goals for the Workshop (to build a community, to strengthen ties between academic and applied instructors, to highlight commonalities across subject areas, etc.).

One strategy is to hold a preliminary meeting with all of the participants to be involved before the Workshop and introduce AWAL to them. Then send them a detailed follow-up letter with the agenda so they will know what kind of a day it will be. You might ask them to prioritize two or three choices for their workplace visit. You could also ask them to find a partner with similar interests so doing the interviews would be easier. Alternately, it is not critical to have educators going to where they think the students they see will end up. (For example, rather than send English teachers to the local newspaper, send them to ABC Telesystems where they will learn that everyone needs to be able to write a coherent report.)

Another approach used is pairing individuals (from different disciplines) up before the AWAL day. That way they can contact each other in advance to discuss strategies and expectations. It is important to also leave time at the end of the morning session, before the participants head out, for them to finalize their approach to the interviews.

## Identifying Workplaces

When choosing workplaces for site visits many planning teams go with who they know and/or who the major employers in the community are. Starting with employers already supporting your co-op, entrepreneurship, and apprenticeship programs may generate good results. You may also approach employers based on where the learners in your organization are likely to end up. Making a brief presentation about AWAL to a meeting of your local Chamber of Commerce or Rotary is also a good way to generate employer interest. (They may even agree to sponsor the coffee break or lunch during the Workshop!)

The key points that employers need to know are:

- AWAL is a national project designed to help educators more effectively explain to their learners how important essential skills are no matter what kind of job they work in. If educators can do this, then the skill levels of their graduates (who become the businesses' workers) will improve. So, the participation of business is critical.
- More than 1000 companies have taken part. Employers can see the list of businesses that have participated by going to <http://www.awal.ca/companies.asp>
- The details of the visit you are requesting include:
  - You'd like to send two (2) people as a team from approximately 10:00 to 12:00
  - You'd like the team to interview a manager/HR person for 20-30 minutes to learn about the company's products, services, clients, etc. This is a context-setting exercise.
  - Then a workplace tour if possible
  - Then 40-60 minutes to interview a front line worker to learn how the worker uses the essential skills (math, reading, computer skills, problem solving, etc.) in his or her particular job
- You may send employers the two questionnaires in advance so they know what is being asked.

## **Sample Employer/Employee Set-up Letters**

While you may wish to make the initial contact with a workplace by telephone or by e-mail, it is useful to follow up in writing (letter, fax or e-mail). The important details to include in your correspondence are:

- Date, time and duration of the planned visit
- Review that there are to be two interviews and, if possible, a workplace tour
- The name of the institution, and the names of the educators
- Confirmation of any details the employer has given you (who in the company the educators will be meeting with, particular location, security, and/or safety

measures needed. For example, should educators arrive with safety glasses and footwear?)

There is no script as such, but the sample letter below confirming the visit has some language you might wish to use.

### Sample Fax/E-mail after an Initial Phone Conversation

Date

Name

Title Company

Dear Name:

This message is a follow-up to our conversation this [morning]. As mentioned, I would like to have two [teachers/educators/faculty] from [name of institution] visit your business on [date] from [time] to [time]. As we discussed, these [teachers/educators/faculty] would conduct their first interview (20-30 minutes) with an individual in human resources or management using Form 1. This will give them an overview of the business and the qualities of people you employ. I hope that this can be followed with a “behind the scenes” tour (20-30 minutes) of your facility. The [teachers/educators/faculty] will conclude their visit by interviewing a front line employee, who will give them another view of your operation. The [teachers/educators/faculty] will use Form 2 for this second interview which will take 40-60 minutes. I have attached copies of both forms so that you and your colleagues are comfortable and will have an idea of how the interviews will proceed. I do ask that you not prepare rehearsed or written answers. Once you have reviewed the forms, please let me know if you have any questions.

Thank you again for your willingness to provide an opportunity for these [teachers/educators/faculty] to see how essential skills are applied in your workplace. I know that an experience such as this goes a long way in helping them to connect what they teach in their classroom with the use of that content in a workplace setting.

Best regards,

[Your name]

[Your institution]

Enclosures:

Form 1 – Management/Human Resources Interview

Form 2 – Employee Interview



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## Part C: Facilitating the AWAL Workshop

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### Before You Begin

The AWAL Workshop has two important goals:

1. To engage the participants in a useful, authentic professional development experience.
2. To produce teaching and learning activities based on that experience that they can use with their learners.

The two goals are of equal importance and the AWAL Workshop is built around a particular process designed to accomplish both.

The facilitator's role in this process is to be a guide, rather than critic or evaluator. This is particularly important as for some participants the Workshop may mean moving out of their comfort zone – moving away from the classroom where they are expert to a situation that may be much less familiar.

### Overview of the Day

The AWAL Workshop is designed to run as a one-day activity. There are a number of practical reasons for this that include the costs of participant release time, and taking advantage of the momentum that is built in a single day. It is a busy day, but doable.

There is a sample agenda below. The specific times shown are a guideline and you may adjust them depending on distances that have to be travelled, etc. Many facilitators begin the day by reviewing the agenda as proposed, then negotiating any changes. For example, will you take afternoon breaks as a group or leave it to the individual pairs to decide when to break? The latter is usually more effective.

**Sample Agenda**

<b>A G E N D A</b>	
8:30	Coffee and muffins
9:00	Welcome AWAL project overview <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Project introduction</li><li>• Goals for the day</li><li>• Goals for the host organizations</li></ul>
9:30	Team preparation Travel to workplace
10:30	Interview manager Tour workplace Interview employee
12:30	Return from workplace Lunch
1:15	Workplace observations Connection to Essential Skills Classroom applications
3:30	Observations and next steps
4:00	Closing

## Workshop Schedule

Please note that there is a free PowerPoint presentation with speaking notes available from the AWAL Web site at <http://www.awal.ca/resources.asp>

**8:30**                      **Coffee**

**9:00 to 9:45**              **Welcome and Introduction of AWAL and Preparation for the Workplace Visits**

Suggested points to include in the time the participants are first with you before they go off to the employers (30-45 minutes):

- Introductions and Goal Setting: You may wish to reverse the order of the introductions and overview. That way when people introduce themselves they have some context and can answer: *Who are you? Where do you work/with who? What is your goal for the day?* Keep track of the goals on a flip chart and revisit them at the end of the day to ensure that they were met.
  - This is a good opportunity for a representative of the host organization (a member of the project team) to restate what its particular goals are for the Workshop and how that fits into the larger strategy for professional development.
- AWAL Overview:
  - HRSDC funded research and development project (1997-February 2006)
  - Part of the HRSDC ESRP (Quick brainstorm on “When we say ‘essential skills’ what do we mean?”)
  - Begun in 1997 in BC, since 2000 a national project for K-12 and adult educators
  - Workshops have been delivered in AB, BC, MB, ON, NB, NS, NWT, PEI and SK (*as of Winter 2006 writing*)
  - Will provide you with answers to reply to “*Why do I have to learn this?*”
- Overview of the day
  - Walk through the agenda
  - Let people know it will be a busy day and there will be times when they’ll feel pressured and we’ll try to work to alleviate that (good time to set any housekeeping or group rules if appropriate)
  - Encourage people to leave their preconceptions at the door

- Acknowledge that for some leaving the classroom may mean moving out of their comfort zone – it will be OK
- Summarize what this process is doing (combining their knowledge with new experience)
- Clearly introduce the idea that throughout the afternoon participants will be developing teaching ideas based on what they hear to use with their own learners
- Distribute and review Form 1 and 2 (the employer and employee questionnaires)
  - Forms 1 (blue) and 2 (green), 1 @ person
  - Suggest participants get business cards from interviewees if possible
  - Handwriting on Forms 1 and 2 need only be legible to the collector
  - They can assure employer/ee that the answers to the questionnaires will not be circulated.
  - Let participants know if the workplace has seen the questions already or not
  - Review any questions that might seem obvious or that may trigger sensitivities
  - For additional tips on completing the AWAL Forms, see Part E of the Guide
- Distribute and review Form 7 (workplace feedback)
  - Form 7 (white), 1 @ pair
  - This form is to be left with the employer. It provides an easy way for them to send their feedback back to the project. Suggest that it's best if it is faxed in as soon as possible, while thoughts are fresh, and certainly within the week.
- Assign pairs according to the strategy you have chosen and allow time for them to meet together and plan their question-asking strategy before they leave. It is important for participant teams to review all of the questions before they leave in order to know what they'll be asking.

**10:30 to 12:30            Workshop Participants are at the Workplaces**

- As the facilitator you have choices about how to spend the time while the participants are off-site. The possibilities include providing a short

presentation to other staff in the host organization on AWAL, doing other work, or going out as part of a team on a workplace visit. The last is recommended to keep you fresh and to permit you to gather more workplace stories of your own. However, there is one caution here. If you do go out to a workplace, when you return you will not be able to work with your workplace partner to develop an activity, as you will be busy working with all of the teams. Therefore, if you choose to go out, consider going with a team (so there will be three in the group), or with one of the administrators of the host organization who may be planning not to develop an activity.

### **12:30 to 1:15            Lunch**

- It is best to have lunch catered on site as experience demonstrates that participants who are left on their own for lunch may lose track of time or become distracted with other work.
- Suggest you stress that everyone be back in time to begin together for 1:15 at the latest (or whatever time you determine), as the first activities after lunch are large group activities.
- Lunch may be used as working lunch. As participants tend to come back quite enthusiastic from the visits, lunch may be a good time to start to share those “aha!” observations.

### **1:15 to 1:30            AWAL Observations**

- This is an opportunity for the participant teams to share one key insight gained during the morning. It is important to be mindful of time here and balance the participants’ enthusiasm about wanting to share what they experienced with the need to protect time for them to apply what they have learned in the activities to be developed.
- As the facilitator, it is helpful for you to listen for common themes and provide a summary of their observations.

### **1:30 to 2:15            Connection to Essential Skills**

- As the remainder of the day will be spent in developing teaching and learning activities, the next part of the workshop is a quick review on some of what we know about both how people learn, and what contributes to good instructional

design. This section will vary depending on the facilitator's own areas of expertise but may include a quick review of several of the following:

- Learning and learning transfer as processes
- Brain-based research: what makes learning “stick”?
- Problem-based learning
- Appreciative Inquiry
- Essential skills across the curriculum
- Components of effective activities

### **2:15 to 3:30                      Classroom Applications**

- This is the part of the day where the teaching and learning activities are developed.
- The goal is to have one or two activities developed per pair
- It is useful to work step by step with the entire group through the completion of Forms 3, 4 and 5 (Sections A-D). For specific details on completing the forms, please see Part E below, “Tips on Completing the AWAL Forms.”
- After the forms above have been completed, the teams move to working on their own, rather than as part of the larger group, to develop their activities. The facilitator then moves among the groups providing feedback, and answering and asking questions.
  - Some pairs will require less support from the facilitator than others. Try to be aware of the entire group.
  - While most teams will choose to develop their two activities collaboratively, others may choose to work independently, or only use each other as editors of their final drafts. These variations will depend on the culture of the group.
  - Some educators may finish quickly. You might work as an editor with them suggesting ways to enhance the activity. For example, consider if the following elements have been included: resources required, timeline, grouping strategy, evaluation criteria, follow-up, etc.

### **3:30 to 4:00 Wrap Up**

- It is important to bring the teams back together as a group before completing the Workshop. As teams may finish at different times, this will take some coordination. Be certain to help the teams pace themselves by giving time notices as you work (“You have 30 minutes left,” etc.).
- In order for the AWAL Workshop not to be an isolated incident, you may wish to ask questions such as, “So what? What next?” Keep track of the ideas generated and use them with the planning team when you debrief on the effectiveness and follow-up for the Workshop.
- Distribute Form 6 to all participants to solicit their feedback on the day and suggestions for improving or adapting the Workshop.
- Collect the following forms from each team before they leave and staple them together:
  - Form 3: 1 per team
  - Form 5: 1 complete Form 5 for each activity developed
  - Form 6: 1 per person
- Be certain to thank all participants and the host organization for the contribution of their time and enthusiasm.

### **Additional Handouts**

In addition to the AWAL Workshop Forms 1-7 (see Part E), you may also wish to provide participants with individual copies of the day’s agenda (also provided in Part E). People may be more likely to participate if they can follow the flow of the schedule.

Feel free to include additional handouts of other areas that you are covering.

### **POINTS TO REMEMBER WHEN WORKING THROUGH FORM 5 (ON DISK)**

- Part A: straightforward information transfer from Form 3
- Part B: straightforward, but important
- Part C: straightforward transfer from list on Form 4. You may be asked, “Why can’t you code these so that we can just write 1a) or 3c), or whatever?” The answer can include the information that often mistakes can be made while transferring information. This way we know that you wrote the skill

application that you intended to. And second, we also know that many people (particularly academics) learn better by writing things down. So this is an opportunity for reinforcement.

- Part D: straightforward, but important. Identify the skill and application on which the activity will be based.
- Parts E and F. If you wish to, you may include as an introduction the facts around the evolution of completing forms using word processing. However, this is not necessary.<sup>1</sup>

## Troubleshooting

Overwhelmingly, the feedback from AWAL Workshops is positive. Participants value the experience and are eager to apply what they have learned in their own teaching situations.

However, even the best programs can be subject to criticism. Here are some scenarios and questions that could arise and possible suggestions for addressing them.

### 1. The “perfectionist”

*“I don’t want to give you this activity; it doesn’t reflect my best work.”*

The two most common responses in the AWAL feedback forms are 1) Great PD!, and 2) Not enough time! Be sure to acknowledge in your opening remarks that

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<sup>1</sup> When AWAL began in the late 1990s, the project used to ask everyone to simply hand write the context and their activity in the boxes on the forms. Not surprisingly, people would write enough to fill the boxes and then they would stop. In August 2002 there was an AWAL session in Quesnel, BC that was held in a learning lab. It was a place where adult learners, in this case, could drop in and work one on one with an instructor or do their own work on the computers. As we got to the idea development part of the session, one of the instructors asked if it would be ok if she wrote up her idea on the computer. Several others followed suit.

In looking at the activities developed in that session, a number of things emerged. Without exception all of the activities developed using word processing were not only longer, but they were fuller and more detailed than those created previously by hand. The theory that emerged is that as educators of a certain generation, many of us have become more comfortable writing with a computer than with a pen and paper. We are more likely to edit ourselves when word processing than we are if it means we have to scratch something out, have an ugly blot on the page and then rewrite it. Using the computer also allows for the creation of supplemental resources. For example, an activity might include a table with the headings included where learners would write their findings. That table can easily be created in Word and become an instructional handout. It is also possible for freehand sketches or diagrams to be included. Another advantage to working on computer is that the Internet can be open providing access to samples already on the AWAL database, and to permit the search for input from other sites to incorporate into the activities.

this will be a long intense day – that there is a lot of material to cover. Also remind participants as they work that while we want the instructional ideas to be as full as is possible, there are practical limits. Try your absolute best to leave with an activity from everyone. Not surprisingly, past experience confirms that while the intention to submit something at a later date is good, the “perfected” activities rarely arrive.

## **2. Just one skill?**

*“How can I just pick one skill for my activity? They are all important.”*

Occasionally participants will find it difficult to identify a single skill as the focus of their activity. This is not surprising, as many tasks in and away from the workplace require us to use skills in combination. It may be helpful to point out that the identification of one skill is meant to help other educators narrow down their choices and find something appropriate to their teaching needs within the database. Participants can be encouraged to think of the one skill that is most important, recognizing that a great many (or even all) are of some importance. Within the activity itself they can be encouraged to incorporate and to identify the full cluster of skills they wish to highlight.

## **3. The “sufferer”**

*“I had no choice, I was told that I had to attend this AWAL session.”*

We strongly recommend that participation in an AWAL session be voluntary. However, there are circumstances where either logistics or organizational goals mean that it is more practical for everyone to attend. If you can anticipate who the individuals are that might feel this way, try and partner them with someone who is likely to be more enthusiastic. Most often, that enthusiasm will be contagious. Another tack is to remind the “sufferer” that occasionally they will have students of their own who feel this way and ask, *“How would you handle that?”*

#### **4. The “expert”**

*“I’m a co-op teacher. I know all this.”*

Be sure to include in your opening remarks something like, “For some/many of you this will be a refresher or a return to familiar material rather than something brand new. Use this time as an opportunity to reaffirm your practice, make new contacts in the workplace, and to gather new ‘real life’ stories for your learners.”

#### **5. The tough questions**

*“I don’t know, but I will certainly find out.”*

This last scenario is not for troubleshooting possible participant questions, but is a reminder for you as a facilitator. Occasionally there will come questions that you don’t know the answer to. This is to be expected. The statement above is the best possible answer that you can give: *“I don’t know, but I will certainly find out.”*

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## Part D: Following Up the AWAL Workshop

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In order to increase the likelihood of long-term benefit to your organization, follow-up with all Workshop participants is a key component of AWAL. This includes not only the educators but the employers and employees as well.

### Collecting and Using Feedback

AWAL Forms 6 and 7 are designed to assist you in collecting feedback from educators, and employers and employees respectively. Please feel free to expand on the questions on the forms.

### Educator Follow-up

Professional development is most effective when it is part of a long-term professional development strategy. It works best when it is continuous, involving follow-up, opportunities to integrate the new learning, and support for further learning. AWAL then also works best when it is one component of a longer and integrated PD plan.

How you follow-up with the participants will vary according to the culture of your own organization. Possible strategies include:

- Have the participants come back together several weeks after the session and consider the question, “has this made a difference to my teaching practice?”
- Do in person or electronic follow-up to learn who has used their activity in class. Seek out volunteers to share their results or the lessons themselves with others.
- Ask for volunteers from the AWAL Workshop to coordinate another Workshop the next term.
- Let others know about your experience. Make a presentation to a Parent’s Advisory Council or include a write-up in your institution’s newsletter.

### Workplace Follow-up

AWAL Form 7 is designed to get a quick response from workplaces indicating their impressions of the day and whether they would be interested in participating again. In addition, it is important to send a note or e-mail to the workplaces to express your thanks for their

participation. Many organizations have their own community partner certificates of appreciation or recognition that can also be used for this purpose. In addition to providing thanks, an effective follow-up letter can explore possible involvement in another AWAL Workshop or other ways in which the workplaces may wish to become involved in the institution's activities (co-op education, apprenticeship, work experience, career fairs, etc.), and provide an opportunity for questions to be asked and answered. You may also wish to invite employers and employees for reciprocal visit to your classrooms.

## Sample Employee/Employer Thank You Letters

The letter offered below is just one example of how you might thank workplaces for their participation. Each institution is in the best position to determine whether print or e-mail is most appropriate according to the work cultures.

### Sample Letter/Fax/E-mail After a Workplace Visit

Date

Name

Title

Company

Dear Name:

Thank you for investing your valuable work time [date] in explaining and demonstrating to [educators] from [institution name] what you do in your work. Through opportunities like this, the AWAL Project believes that [educators] will make more "real" connections for [learners/students]. The association between what is taught in class and how that information is applied in a workplace setting is critical for workplace success. Through experiences such as these we believe that [educators] will be better able to better answer the question "Where will I ever use this?"

Thank you again for both the time and energy you invested in the **Applications of Working and Learning (AWAL)** program.

Best regards,

[Your name]

[Your institution]

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## Part E: The AWAL Forms

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The AWAL Forms consist of a set of seven forms. Though not required, if convenient, you may wish to colour code them for easier reference during the session. Copies of the forms are on the pages that follow.

- Form 1 (blue): Management/HR Interview
- Form 2 (green): Employee Interview
- Form 3 (orange): Company Information
- Form 4 (grey): List of HRSDC Essential Skills and Applications
- Form 5 (yellow): Data Summary and Instructional Activity
- Form 6 (pink): Collector Information and Feedback (Please note there are two versions, one for K-12 and one for adult educators. See footer for identification.)
- Form 7 (white): Workplace Feedback

Forms 1 and 2 may be collected for shredding or may be kept by the participants.

Other handouts include:

- Agenda
- Sample activities from the database to distribute as models
- Additional resources as appropriate to your session

### Tips for Completing the AWAL Forms

The questions on Forms 1 and 2 may be used for any other non-commercial educational use (co-op interviews, etc.) provided the AWAL copyright is included on all copies.

#### **Form 1 (blue): Management/HR Interview (2 pages)**

- Ask for two business cards (Section A)
- Possibly sensitive questions: 7 and 8
- Participants may add additional questions if there is time

**Form 2 (green): Employee Interview (4 pages)**

- Ask for two business cards (Section A)
- Possibly sensitive questions:
- The questions are written to be applicable to a wide range of scenarios; some may not fit every workplace or may seem obvious
- Participants may add additional questions if there is time
- This form provides the input for the educators to develop the activities

**Form 3 (orange): Company Information (1 page)**

- Staple business cards here rather than fill in boxes by hand
- Note “education requirements” will not be on business cards

**Form 4 (grey): List of HRSDC Essential Skills and Applications (1 page)**

**Form 5 (yellow): Data Summary and Instructional Activity (4 pages)**

- This form has seven sections (A-G)
- See Part D “Developing Activities on Computer/on Paper” above for detailed information on completing Form 5

**Form 6 (pink): Collector Information and Feedback (1 page)**

- The information collected here is used to make the AWAL project better
- Additional questions may be added to suit your own situation
- Please note there are two versions of Form 6, one for K-12 teachers and one for adult educators. See footer for identification.

**Form 7 (white): Workplace Feedback (1 page)**

- This form is to be left with the employer at the end of the interview
- The employer may wish to complete the form alone, with the employee, or have each of them complete their own form
- Insert the fax number of the local facilitator/contact on the form

**A NOTE ON PENMANSHIP AND PRIVACY**

Forms 1 and 2 are the research notes that the participants will use for developing their activities. They will not be read by anyone else; therefore they do not need to be legible to anyone else. Occasionally employers may ask what happens to the forms. Even more occasionally they may request that they be destroyed. In that case, please assure them that the forms will be destroyed and shred them at the end of the day.

**The AWAL Forms**

AWAL Forms 1 through 7 follow.



**AWAL: National Applications of Working and Learning Project**  
**Management/Human Resources Interview**

**FORM 1**

<b>Date of Visit:</b>	
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**A. Company & Management Information** (Attach business card if available.)

Name of Company:	
Industry Sector:	
Management Name: (first/last)	
Job title:	
Educational Requirement:	
Department:	
Company Address:	
City:	
Province:	
Postal Code:	
Phone Number:	(     )
Fax Number:	(     )
E-Mail:	

**B. Management Interview Questions**

Question	Response
1. What are the key activities of your company?	
2. What are your primary products/services?	
3. How would you describe the kind of person / employee you are looking to hire? (attributes, skills)	
4. How do you announce employment openings?	

<p>5. What type of pre-screening of applicants do you do? (education, experience, etc.)</p>	
<p>6. What kind of interviewing do you do? (one on one, team, progressive)</p>	
<p>7. Why do you let a person go? (e.g. reasons for last 3 terminations)</p>	
<p>8. Why would a person leave your company?</p>	
<p>9. What skills will be needed in five years? (future workforce)</p>	
<p>10. What type of in-house training do you do?</p>	
<p>11. Some questions about your workforce:</p>	<p>Total number of employees? _____  # of males? _____ # of females? _____  # with less than high school graduation? _____  # with only high school graduation? _____  # with a college diploma? _____  # with a four-year degree? _____  # with an advanced degree? _____  # with Certificate of Apprenticeship or Qualification, or Inter-provincial Standard Endorsement (Red Seal)? _____</p>
<p>12. Is there any additional information that you would like to tell us?</p>	

**AWAL: National Applications of Working and Learning Project**

**Employee Interview**

**FORM 2**

<b>Date of Visit:</b>	
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**A. Company & Employee Information** (Attach business card if available.)

Name of Company:	
Industry Sector:	
Employee Name: (first /last)	
Job title:	
Department:	
Phone Number:	
Fax Number:	
E-Mail:	

**B. Employee Interview Questions**

<b>Question</b>	<b>Response</b>
1. What are your main duties/activities?	
2. What tools and equipment do you use in your work?	
3. How do you go about finding information? <i>(reports, memos, books, Internet)</i>	
4. What type of writing do you do? <i>(reports, memos, fax, forms)</i>	

<p>5. Do you use or produce diagrams, drawings, maps, graphs, or blueprints in your work? For what purpose?</p>	
<p>6. Do you do any public speaking or training in your work? Are you involved in interviewing or negotiating?</p>	
<p>7. How many people do you work with, the majority of the time?</p>	
<p>8. What is your most common form of contact with others? (personal contact, memo, fax, e-mail, telephone)</p>	
<p>9. What type of supervision do you receive? How often?</p>	
<p>10. How many people do you supervise?</p>	
<p>11. Are you responsible for the safety of others? In what way?</p>	
<p>12. To what extent do routines and procedures have to be followed and deadlines met?</p>	
<p>13. What planning or organizing do you have to do? (predetermined/self-directed)</p>	

14. How are decisions made in your company?	
15. How are changes implemented in your company?	
16. Do you use computers in your work? How do you use them and for what purpose?	
17. What mathematical calculations do you have to do in your work? <i>(money, measurement, budgeting, scheduling, accounting, data analysis, estimation, calculation)</i>	
18. What aspects of your work, if any, require you to “be accurate on the first attempt?”	
19. What would be the consequence of “not getting it right the first time?”	
20. What aspects of your job require physical effort? <i>(carrying/pushing/pulling)</i>	
21. What is the most common problem that you face in your daily work? How do you solve it?	
22. What are your prospects for future growth and development with this company?	

23. What is the most valuable skill a new employee could bring to your position?	
24. What prior experience is required for your work?	
25. What are the educational qualifications for this job?	
26. How does this company advertise job openings?	
27. Why would a person leave this company?	
28. What do you like most about your job?	
29. Which high school classes have been most helpful?	
30. Knowing what you know now, what do you wish you had learned more about while you were in high school?	
31. What would you tell a high school student about the workplace?	
32. Is there any additional information that you would like to tell us?	

**AWAL: National Applications of Working and Learning Project****Company Information****FORM 3****A. Company Information**

Name of Company:	
Industry Sector:	
Company Address:	
City:	
Province:	
Postal Code:	
Phone Number:	(     )
Fax Number:	(     )

**B. Management Contact Information** (Attach business card if available.)

Name: (first /last)	
Job title:	
Department:	
Phone Number:	(     )
Fax Number:	(     )
E-Mail:	
Education Requirements:	

**C. Employee Contact Information** (Attach business card if available.)

Name: (first /last)	
Job title:	
Department:	
Phone Number:	(     )
Fax Number:	(     )
E-Mail:	
Education Requirements:	



### **Reading Text**

- to scan for specific information/to locate information
- to skim for overall meaning/to get the gist
- to read the full text to understand and to learn
- to read the full text to critique or to evaluate
- not observed

### **Writing**

- to organize/remember
- to keep a record/to document
- to inform/to request information
- to persuade/to justify a request
- to present an analysis or comparison
- to present an evaluation or critique
- to entertain
- not observed

### **Oral Communication**

- to greet
- to take messages
- to provide/receive information, explanation, direction
- to seek/obtain information
- to co-ordinate work with that of others
- to reassure/comfort
- to discuss (exchange information, opinions)
- to persuade
- to facilitate/animate
- to instruct, instil understanding, knowledge
- to negotiate/resolve conflict
- to entertain
- not observed

### **Use of Documents**

- read and interpret information
- enter information
- create document to display information
- not observed

## **Thinking Skills**

- problem solving
- decision making
- job task planning and organizing
- use of memory
- finding information
- critical thinking
- not observed

## **Continuous Learning**

- as part of regular work activity
- from co-workers
- through training offered in the workplace
- through reading or other forms of self-study
- through off-site training
- not observed

## **Working with Others**

- work alone
- work independently
- work jointly with a partner or helper
- work as a member of a team
- participate in supervisory or leadership activities
- not observed

## **Numeracy**

- money math
- scheduling or budgeting and accounting math
- measurement and calculation math
- data analysis math
- numerical estimation
- not observed

## **Computer Use**

- basic information entry/no software knowledge required
- use familiar software functions
- use advanced software features to perform multiple tasks/operations
- extensive use of software features and packages/integration of tasks
- expertise in programming and network design/set-up
- not observed

For more information: <http://www.hrsdc-rhdcc.gc.ca/essentialskills>

**AWAL: National Applications of Working and Learning Project**  
**Data Summary – Teaching and Learning Activity**

**FORM 5**

**A. Employee Information**

Company:	
Company Department:	
Job Title:	

**B. Collector Information**

Collector(s):	
Date of Interview:	

**C. Essential Skills Summary**

Using **Form 4** (Essential Skills) **choose one** purpose or application to enter in each box.

<b>Skill</b>	<b>Purpose/Application</b>
Reading Text	
Writing	
Oral Communication	
Use of Documents	
Thinking Skills	
Continuous Learning	
Working with Others	
Numeracy	
Computer Use	

**D. Essential Skill Selection**

Which Essential Skill will you focus on in your activity? Choose 1 from those you identified on the previous page.

**E. Essential Skill Application Context**

How was the Essential Skill you have selected used in the workplace setting? Please be as specific as possible.

**F. Suggested Teaching and Learning Activity**

Create an activity that will require the learners you work with to apply the Essential Skill you have chosen. Include as much information as you can to allow other educators to try the same activity (grouping strategies, timeline, required materials, steps of the activity, evaluation strategy, follow-up, web resources, etc.). Links to URLs and to attachments that you create may be included as “supplemental resources.”

(Please attach additional pages as needed.)

Please list the name(s) of the activity developers.

Name(s):	
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## G. Curriculum Connections

Select the Subject Area, Course Title and Grade Level where **YOU** will use this activity. **MAXIMUM of 2 Subject Areas.**

Subject Area	Course Title	Grade Level
<input type="checkbox"/> Applied Skills	<input type="checkbox"/> Drafting <input type="checkbox"/> Economics <input type="checkbox"/> Electronics <input type="checkbox"/> Home Economics <input type="checkbox"/> Family Studies <input type="checkbox"/> Food services <input type="checkbox"/> Life Skills <input type="checkbox"/> Textiles <input type="checkbox"/> Marketing <input type="checkbox"/> Mechanics <input type="checkbox"/> Metal <input type="checkbox"/> Tourism <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____	<input type="checkbox"/> K-3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4-6 <input type="checkbox"/> 7-9 <input type="checkbox"/> 10 <input type="checkbox"/> 11 <input type="checkbox"/> 12 <input type="checkbox"/> Adult Basic Education <input type="checkbox"/> Post-secondary <input type="checkbox"/> Adult Literacy
<input type="checkbox"/> Arts Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Art <input type="checkbox"/> Drama <input type="checkbox"/> Graphic Design <input type="checkbox"/> Music <input type="checkbox"/> Photography <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____	<input type="checkbox"/> K-3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4-6 <input type="checkbox"/> 7-9 <input type="checkbox"/> 10 <input type="checkbox"/> 11 <input type="checkbox"/> 12 <input type="checkbox"/> Adult Basic Education <input type="checkbox"/> Post-secondary <input type="checkbox"/> Adult Literacy
<input type="checkbox"/> Career Education	<input type="checkbox"/> CaPP (Career & Personal Planning) <input type="checkbox"/> Entrepreneurship <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____	<input type="checkbox"/> K-3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4-6 <input type="checkbox"/> 7-9 <input type="checkbox"/> 10 <input type="checkbox"/> 11 <input type="checkbox"/> 12 <input type="checkbox"/> Adult Basic Education <input type="checkbox"/> Post-secondary <input type="checkbox"/> Adult Literacy
<input type="checkbox"/> Computers	<input type="checkbox"/> Business <input type="checkbox"/> Applications <input type="checkbox"/> Data Management <input type="checkbox"/> Information Management <input type="checkbox"/> Computer Science <input type="checkbox"/> Information Technology <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____	<input type="checkbox"/> K-3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4-6 <input type="checkbox"/> 7-9 <input type="checkbox"/> 10 <input type="checkbox"/> 11 <input type="checkbox"/> 12 <input type="checkbox"/> Adult Basic Education <input type="checkbox"/> Post-secondary <input type="checkbox"/> Adult Literacy

Subject Area	Course Title	Grade Level
<input type="checkbox"/> Language Arts	<input type="checkbox"/> Communications <input type="checkbox"/> English <input type="checkbox"/> English Literature <input type="checkbox"/> Journalism <input type="checkbox"/> Technical & Professional Communications <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____	<input type="checkbox"/> K-3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4-6 <input type="checkbox"/> 7-9 <input type="checkbox"/> 10 <input type="checkbox"/> 11 <input type="checkbox"/> 12 <input type="checkbox"/> Adult Basic Education <input type="checkbox"/> Post-secondary <input type="checkbox"/> Adult Literacy
<input type="checkbox"/> Languages	<input type="checkbox"/> French <input type="checkbox"/> Mandarin <input type="checkbox"/> Spanish <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____	<input type="checkbox"/> K-3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4-6 <input type="checkbox"/> 7-9 <input type="checkbox"/> 10 <input type="checkbox"/> 11 <input type="checkbox"/> 12 <input type="checkbox"/> Adult Basic Education <input type="checkbox"/> Post-secondary <input type="checkbox"/> Adult Literacy
<input type="checkbox"/> Math	<input type="checkbox"/> Accounting <input type="checkbox"/> Applications of Mathematics <input type="checkbox"/> Calculus <input type="checkbox"/> Essentials of Mathematics <input type="checkbox"/> Math <input type="checkbox"/> Principles of Mathematics <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____	<input type="checkbox"/> K-3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4-6 <input type="checkbox"/> 7-9 <input type="checkbox"/> 10 <input type="checkbox"/> 11 <input type="checkbox"/> 12 <input type="checkbox"/> Adult Basic Education <input type="checkbox"/> Post-secondary <input type="checkbox"/> Adult Literacy
<input type="checkbox"/> Science	<input type="checkbox"/> Biology <input type="checkbox"/> Chemistry <input type="checkbox"/> Earth Science <input type="checkbox"/> Geology <input type="checkbox"/> Physics <input type="checkbox"/> Science <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____	<input type="checkbox"/> K-3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4-6 <input type="checkbox"/> 7-9 <input type="checkbox"/> 10 <input type="checkbox"/> 11 <input type="checkbox"/> 12 <input type="checkbox"/> Adult Basic Education <input type="checkbox"/> Post-secondary <input type="checkbox"/> Adult Literacy
<input type="checkbox"/> Social Studies	<input type="checkbox"/> Comparative Civilizations <input type="checkbox"/> Geography <input type="checkbox"/> History <input type="checkbox"/> Law <input type="checkbox"/> Social Studies <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____	<input type="checkbox"/> K-3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4-6 <input type="checkbox"/> 7-9 <input type="checkbox"/> 10 <input type="checkbox"/> 11 <input type="checkbox"/> 12 <input type="checkbox"/> Adult Basic Education <input type="checkbox"/> Post-secondary <input type="checkbox"/> Adult Literacy
<input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Physical Education <input type="checkbox"/> Psychology <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____	<input type="checkbox"/> K-3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4-6 <input type="checkbox"/> 7-9 <input type="checkbox"/> 10 <input type="checkbox"/> 11 <input type="checkbox"/> 12 <input type="checkbox"/> Adult Basic Education <input type="checkbox"/> Post-secondary <input type="checkbox"/> Adult Literacy

# AWAL: National Applications of Working and Learning Project

## Collector Information

FORM 6

Thank you for participating in AWAL today!

Please take a few minutes to note down your thoughts about the project below. Your observations and ideas are important for AWAL to continue to improve.

### Collector Information (You may attach your business card if available)

Name: (first/last)	
Position:	
E-Mail:	
Institution:	
Program:	
Work Address:	
City:	
Province:	
Postal Code:	
Phone Number:	(     )

1. Please rate your knowledge of Essential Skills **before** the workshop using a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is the lowest and 5 is the highest. \_\_\_\_\_

2. Please rate your knowledge of Essential Skills **after** the workshop using a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is the lowest and 5 is the highest. \_\_\_\_\_

3. Insights gained today

4. Suggestions for improving the AWAL project

5. I'd also like to say...

# AWAL: National Applications of Working and Learning Project

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FORM 6

Thank you for participating in AWAL today!

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### Collector Information (You may attach your business card if available)

Name: (first/last)	
Teaching Assignment:	
E-Mail:	
School District: (name/number)	
School:	
School Address:	
City:	
Province:	
Postal Code:	
Phone Number:	(      )

1. Please rate your knowledge of Essential Skills **before** the workshop using a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is the lowest and 5 is the highest. \_\_\_\_\_

2. Please rate your knowledge of Essential Skills **after** the workshop using a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is the lowest and 5 is the highest. \_\_\_\_\_

3. Insights gained today

4. Suggestions for improving the AWAL project

5. I'd also like to say...

**AWAL: National Applications of Working and Learning Project**

**Workplace Feedback**

**FORM 7**

Thank you for sharing your valuable time with us. Workplace participation is essential to help educators make better connections between teaching and learner success in the workplace.

Please take a few minutes to note down your ideas about the project below. Your comments are important to us and will help AWAL to continue to improve.

Please fax this form back to: \_\_\_\_\_ at (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Or e-mail your comments to: \_\_\_\_\_

**A. Company Information**

Name: (first/last)	
Company Name	
Position:	
E-Mail:	
Phone Number:	(     )
Fax Number:	(     )

**B. Insights gained!**

**C. Suggestions for improving the AWAL project?**

**D. Do you have any questions?**

**E. Would you be willing to participate in the project again?**



**Sample Agenda**



**National Applications of  
Working and Learning**

**A G E N D A**

- |       |   |
|-------|---|
| 8:30  | Coffee and muffins  |
| 9:00  | Welcome<br>AWAL project overview <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Project introduction</li><li>- Goals for the day</li><li>- Goals for the host organization</li></ul> |
| 9:30  | Team preparation<br>Travel to workplace   |
| 10:30 | Interview manager<br>Tour workplace<br>Interview employee   |
| 12:30 | Return from workplace<br>Lunch  |
| 1:15  | AWAL observations<br>Connection to Essential Skills<br>Classroom applications   |
| 3:30  | Observations and next steps   |
| 4:00  | Closing   |



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## Part F: Resources

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### ESSENTIAL SKILLS RESEARCH PROJECT

- For information on the Essential Skills Research Project and its applications, visit Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) at <http://www.hrsdc-rhdcc.gc.ca/essentialskills>

### AWAL WORKSHOP POWERPOINT

- There are three versions of the AWAL Workshop PowerPoint available at [www.awal.ca](http://www.awal.ca). The AWAL PowerPoint is designed to be used with the *AWAL Guide: Handbook for Facilitators*. The PowerPoint presentations include more than 40 slides with speaker's notes for you to deliver your own AWAL Workshop. Choose from three different presentations:
  - AWAL for Schools
  - AWAL for Literacy Practitioners
  - AWAL for Adult Educators

### AWAL ARTICLES AND PROMOTIONAL HANDOUTS

The following articles may be used and adapted for your own AWAL Workshop.

## Article 1: Go AWAL!

### GO AWAL! Connecting the Communities of Learning and Work

By Wendy Magahay, Centre for Curriculum, Transfer and Technology

*Focus on the Journey: open minds, open doors.* The theme of this year's Canada Career Week is an exciting one – and one that AWAL participants take literally. By going AWAL, educators open classroom doors, journey to workplaces and return with open minds and new ideas that translate into learner and career success. AWAL stands for *Applications of Working and Learning* and is a one-day professional development activity designed to help teachers, counselors, and adult educators answer questions like “*But why do I have to do this?*” and, “*Why can't I just work alone? Teamwork takes too much time.*”

As reported in *The Independent* (1999), “learners who can merely reiterate what they have been told by others will be about as sought after in the next few years as those who cannot read have been for the last few. What counts are the skills; how they deal with knowledge.” Consistent with that, AWAL helps educators connect the curriculum they teach with workplace applications of HRDC's nine Essential Skills:

- Reading Text
- Continuous Learning
- Document Use
- Working with Others
- Writing
- Numeracy (Math)
- Thinking Skills
- Oral Communication
- Computer Use

AWAL participants learn how essential skills are used everyday in every job by visiting workplaces and conducting structured interviews. Afterward they develop curricular ideas based on what they've learned. Many of their activities have been posted to an easy to use, searchable, database available free online to anyone interested in bringing workplace relevance to educational activities. The database, in both official languages, is at [www.awal.ca](http://www.awal.ca).

Does AWAL make the link for educators between workplaces and what happens in their classrooms?

Ask the participants:

- *It is really valuable for teachers to participate in this. Through visiting work sites, we are able to see applications of high school math and science that we can pass on to our students. Too often we think of narrow job descriptions, but there are so many jobs out there that require math and science outside of traditional roles.*
- *This program ties directly to ABE programs and adult students... They need to know what they require to succeed the second time around.*
- *Wow! Fascinating how many companies want the same skills – critical thinking, basic numeracy, willingness to learn, respect, reading and comprehension... makes us, as teachers, more focused on what is essential for our students in the workplace!*

Originally an HRSDC Essential Skills project, AWAL has a mandate to support participation across Canada, working with educators from K-12 through Adult Ed. AWAL sessions have been delivered in Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Northwest Territories, Ontario, Saskatchewan, Nova Scotia, and PEI.

For information on arranging an AWAL session, contact \_\_\_\_\_

## Article 2: Essential Skills Research and AWAL

### Essential Skills Research and AWAL

The Essential Skills Research can be helpful in:

- Assessing and building students' workplace skills, including literacy and numeracy; and
- Identifying relevant skill targets for building schoolwork transition programs.

Description of Essential Skills Research:

- Essential Skills (ES) are the kinds of generic skills people use in virtually all occupations; they are not the technical skills required by specific occupations. They are referred to as the “enabling skills” that help people perform the tasks required by their jobs.
- Human Resources and Skills Development Canada conducted research and interviews with Canadian workers and identified nine “Essential Skills”, including: reading text, writing, oral communication, use of documents, thinking skills, continuous learning, working with others, numeracy and computer use. Most of the essential skills have a complexity scale (from 1-4 or 1-5, with 1 being the lowest and 4/5 the highest degree of complexity). The complexity rating corresponds to the degree of skill involved in performing a given task.
- HRDC has developed essential skill profiles for over 170 occupations that can be obtained with a high school diploma or less. Essential skill profiles are available for a number of skilled trades, including Red Seal trades, and work is underway to develop them for select professional and managerial level occupations. The profiles show how essential skills are used differently in different occupations. Each profile provides information on tasks performed in a specific occupation and the essential skill and level of complexity of skill associated with performing each of these tasks (
- The National Occupational Classification (NOC) matrix classifies occupations in Canada by educational level and occupational grouping.

Resources based on Essential Skills Research for educators, workplace trainers and learners:

- Step Into the World of Workplace Learning – a collection of authentic workplace materials, such as catalogues, order forms, labels, schematics, regulations and manuals (<http://eservice.nelson.com>).
- Numeracy At Work – collection of stories from 20 Canadian workers about how they use numeracy in their jobs, including money math, scheduling or budgeting and accounting math, measurement and calculation math, data analysis math, and numerical estimation (<http://www.skillplan.ca>).
- Writing At Work – explains workplace writing skills and how to develop them. The resource provides examples of different writing formats, including: daybooks, memos, email, entry forms, logbooks, reports, bulletins, press releases, newsletters, regulations, policies and procedures (<http://www.skillplan.ca>).

Applications of Essential Skills Research include:

- How Do Your Skills MEASURE UP: a Web-based self-assessment and practice tool that provides more than 100 problem sets involving reading text, document use and numeracy and that are based on workplace documents <http://www.towes.com>
- TOWES (Test of Workplace Essential Skills): an accurate measure of reading text, document use and numeracy using authentic workplace documents <http://www.towes.com>
- AWAL (Applications of Working and Learning): professional development project for educators helping them make connections between skills developed in the classroom and skills used in the workplace (<http://www.awal.ca>).

Career Awareness Resources and the Essential Skills Research:

- Many sector councils are incorporating the Essential Skills Research in the development of occupational profiles and career awareness resources. One example is the Canadian Automotive Repair and Service Sector (CARS)'s Web site and career awareness resource, The Future is Wide Open, aimed at students in grades 7-9 ([www.carsyouth.ca](http://www.carsyouth.ca)). More information on sector councils can be obtained at <http://www.councils.org>.
- VECTOR (Video Exploration of Careers, Transitions, Opportunities and Realities) is a series of over 120 six-minute video vignettes that profiles some of Canada's most-needed careers and occupations and references the essential skills required for them. It is produced by the Canadian Foundation for Economic Education and is available online at [www.vector.cfee.org](http://www.vector.cfee.org) and through CD and DVD.

For information on the Essential Skills Research and AWAL, contact:

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## ARTICLES FOR FACILITATORS

### FACILITATION TIPS<sup>2</sup>

The tips below are useful reminders when working with groups and planning for a workshop or professional development opportunity such as AWAL.

#### ***Tip 1: Cover all the bases when planning for a workshop***

Key questions to ask yourself when preparing for a workshop

- What is the purpose of the workshop?
- What are the objectives for participants?
- Who will be attending the workshop?
- When and where will the workshop be held?
- How long will the workshop be?
- What will be the next steps once the workshop is completed?

#### ***Tip 2: Getting the session started: inform, excite, involve, engage***

The opening of a workshop is critical. It sets the tone, pace, and expectation for the rest of the day. Three key points to cover in your opening are:

- Inform the participants about what is going to happen in the workshop
- Get them excited about the process by giving them a clear vision of the overall objectives to be achieved and the benefits to them
- Engage them by having them speak as early as possible

#### ***Tip 3: Focusing the group***

Checkpoints at the beginning of each activity or facilitated process can help to ensure that the participants are with you. There are three parts to a checkpoint.

- Review quickly what has been done (Review)
- Discuss briefly what the group is about to do (Preview)

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<sup>2</sup> Adapted from Michigan Professional Development Facilitators' Institute, Copyright © 2002 Literacy Research Centers: National Center on Adult Literacy (NCAL), International Literacy Institute (ILI), and the Penn Technology and Education Learning Laboratory (PennTELL), University of Pennsylvania/Graduate School of Education, LITERACY.org.<http://www.literacy.org/michigan/resources/>

- Explain how what the group is about to do fits into the overall objectives of the workshop (Big View)

***Tip 4: Starting questions***

When you want participants to provide information, begin with great starting questions.

Great starting questions typically begin with an image-building phrase such as: think about, imagine, if, consider, and pretend. Test your questions on someone before the workshop to see if they can picture what you are looking for.

***Tip 5: Managing workshop behaviour***

Part of the facilitator's responsibility is to maximize productive behaviour in a workshop. The facilitator must detect disruptive behaviour early and resolve it.

- Approach privately or generally
  - Make the decision whether you will talk privately with the person at a break, or address your comment to the group as a whole. If you choose to address your comment to the group make sure you avoid calling the person out.
- Empathize with the symptom
  - Find something to praise about the behaviour you observe. If a person is continually pointing out that things won't work you could praise their desire to find workable solutions.
- Address the root cause
  - At this point you attempt to address the reason for the negative behaviour. This may require a guess on your part. The participant's response to your comments will confirm or disprove your hypothesis as to the problem.
- Get agreement on a solution

***Tip 6: Review, evaluate, close***

When ending a workshop:

- Review the activities and participant's objectives
- Have the participants fill out an evaluation/feedback form
- Close the workshop by discussing next steps

**ACTIVE LISTENING SKILLS<sup>3</sup>**

Active listening is one of the key skills of an effective facilitator. Active listening can be described as the practice of remaining present in the moment to hear accurately what is being said and receive the intended message without judging.

**When to Use Active Listening**

- When you hear feelings
- When the person says they have a problem and you really want to help this person
- When you are willing to take the time
- When you trust that person to make her or his own decisions
- When the message of the other person is not direct and straightforward
- When your own feelings and values are not too strongly involved

**When Not to Use Active Listening**

- When you try to manipulate the person into thinking as you do
- When there is no genuine empathy
- When you don't have the time to deal with the issue
- When the message is already direct and clear
- When you cannot remain objective

**Benefits of Active Listening**

- Reduces friction and resolves conflicts productively
- Alerts you to opportunities to hear people who want your help
- Removes blocks and filters that get in your way
- Ensures positive progress in planning
- Asserts your confidence, authority, and leadership better than words
- Bridges gaps in understanding before they become crises
- Gives greater flexibility and confidence

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<sup>3</sup> This article is used with permission from the *ISW Facilitator Development Workshop Handbook for Participants*, copyright Centre for Curriculum, Transfer and Technology (C2T2) 2002.

- Helps the person to feel that you are not trying to change him or her
- Helps the other person feel understood
- Keeps the communication channels open to explore other alternatives

### **Strategies to Promote Effective Listening**

- Arrange the environment to assist with effective communication
- Face the person to whom you will be talking
- Make eye contact to show attention and to help receive information
- Lean slightly toward the person to indicate interest and receptivity
- Show genuineness through facial expressions and other nonverbal behaviours

### **THREE TECHNIQUES FOR ACTIVE LISTENING**

#### **Reflecting**

Reflecting is repeating or mirroring the words of the other person to ensure that you heard correctly. You must ensure that you hear the words and not make assumptions about what the person said. Reflecting forces the speaker to really think about what he or she is saying. They will often solve their own problem through discussion.

#### **Paraphrasing**

Paraphrasing is condensing the other person's statements into your own words to ensure understanding and to try to get the main point or the "meat" of the message. Repeat the statement in your own words so that the other person can let you know whether or not you have grasped the meaning. Paraphrasing is used when the message from the other person is not very clear or when you are more personally involved in the issue and may not hear the other person very clearly.

#### **Probing**

Probing is used when either you aren't understanding the other person or you want to help them come to a better understanding for themselves. It can involve closed-ended questions, open-ended questions, or both.

Closed-ended questions:

- Have only one answer or one direction in which to answer
- Tend to shut down or limit discussion
- Force people to make decisions
- An example of a close-ended question is “Was John’s objective clear?”

Open-ended questions allows for clarification and more than one answer, such as “What do you think was John’s major point?”

#### **IMPROVING TEACHING AND LEARNING<sup>4</sup>**

The Instructional Skills Workshops (ISW) has proven an effective vehicle for improving teaching and learning, first in Canada, then, since 1986, in California. Some of the key principles of the ISW may be useful considerations for you in preparing for an AWAL Workshop or any other professional development experience.

ISWs are intensive 24-hour experiences, usually spread across four days, where small groups of instructors (five per Workshop) teach three cycles of “mini-lessons” (microteaching), give and receive feedback, and are introduced to key concepts that help them understand, plan and successfully model the learner-centred classroom. ISWs are organized and run by pairs of trained facilitators who are themselves members of the faculty. The ISW is a successful initial activity that can be enhanced by related activities to continue to offer professional development opportunities for faculty.

The following are some of the issues that should be addressed in implementing activities for improving teaching and learning:

- Addressing Diversity
- Building Community
- Initiating an Ongoing Program
- Anticipating Change

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<sup>4</sup> Reprinted with permission of the author, Melissa Sue Kort, Ph.D., faculty member at Santa Rosa Junior College, California.

### **ADDRESSING DIVERSITY**

Learner-centred classroom – ISW advocates the learner-centred classroom, a model that can help institutions shift from “education for all,” to providing “education for each.”

Learning styles – At the heart of the ISW is an interest in learning styles and attention to the students’ individual preparation, motivations, and goals. The Workshop itself is structured according to Kolb’s experiential learning model.

Feedback model – The feedback aspect of ISW helps instructors to recognize their own learning styles and to learn directly about the learning styles of others, sensitizing them to adjust their teaching techniques accordingly.

### **BUILDING COMMUNITY**

Commitment to individual change can begin with commitment to the college community.

Grassroots model – The ISW begins on a small scale and builds slowly, allowing it to evolve in ways most appropriate to each institution. Its small beginnings counter possible faculty resistance; as the program grows, so does faculty trust.

Collaborative learning – In the ISW, teachers help teachers, with colleagues facilitating, not teaching each other. This fosters an increased respect for colleagues as professionals, and encourages delineating shared goals for improving teaching and learning.

Team building – The ISW begins with a small team of facilitators and trainers. It advocates offering Workshops for interdisciplinary groups, enhancing cross-campus relationships. The small Workshop format and sense of belonging to an important development can break down the impersonality of the institution and increase the sense of being an integral part of the institution.

### **INITIATING AN ONGOING PROGRAM**

The Instructional Skills Workshop can be one step in implementing a series of activities for the improvement of teaching and learning. Consider:

- Small Group Instructional Feedback (SGIF) – At the instructor’s request, and with prior consultation, a facilitator solicits students’ feedback in the classroom through the use of small group discussion and consensus building.

The facilitator then shares the results with the instructor, who is encouraged to report back to the students on his or her responses and adjustments.

- Computer Assisted Teaching Survey (CATS) – With the help of a facilitator, an instructor can design a questionnaire for student feedback; predict the response; administer, analyze and respond to the results. The instructor only needs access to a personal computer in order to analyze the information collected.
- Classroom Research – P. Cross and T. Angelo’s model of Classroom Research, utilizing Classroom Assessment Techniques, is a natural companion to ISW in that it advocates the instructor identifying clear goals and objectives and soliciting feedback on the students’ success in achieving the learning goals.
- Peer Consultation – Facilitators would be available to “contract” with faculty wishing to deal with specific classroom-related issues. Peer consultation could include classroom visits, reviews of videotapes, and discussions of objectives, techniques, and classroom skills.

### **ANTICIPATING CHANGE**

Educational institutions need to address the needs of its present faculty, with particular attention to “aging” faculty, as well as offer meaningful orientation to new faculty, whose numbers are likely to increase greatly over the coming years. The Instructional Skills Program provides non-threatening, formative evaluation opportunities for both groups, and can help institute an ongoing process of formative evaluation and development. It provides a safe place for colleagues to help each other address challenges.

Initially, faculty may confuse the ISW with evaluation, and the institution needs to make clear that ISW is a voluntary program and should not be connected to summative evaluation processes.

The Instructional Skills Workshop can be part of an ongoing program with a variety of dimensions to address different needs of faculty. It can help develop a shared vocabulary and knowledge base for improving campus-wide discussions of teaching, learning, and formative evaluation. It can increase interest in instructional, as well as discipline-based development activities. Above all, it can

lead to a spontaneous opening of classroom doors, sharing of expertise, and mutual support for attaining institutional and personal goals in teaching.

## Web

AWAL: <http://www.awal.ca>

HRSDC Essential Skills Research Project

<http://www.hrsdc-rhdcc.gc.ca/essentialskills/>

Knowledge Matters: Skills and Learning for Canadians

<http://www.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/sp-ps/sl-ca/home.shtml>

How Do Your Skills Measure Up? Essential Skills Self-Evaluation Tool

<http://measureup.towes.com>

Test of Workplace Essential Skills

<http://www.towes.com/>

ESPORT: Essential Skills Computerized Occupational Readiness Training

<http://www.esportfolio.com/ESPORT/>

The 21st Century Learning Initiative: Promoting a Vision, Knowledge, Experience and a Network

<http://www.21learn.org>

Employability Skills 2000+, The Conference Board of Canada

<http://www.conferenceboard.ca/education/learning-tools/employability-skills.htm>

Job Futures: Canada's National Career and Education Planning Tool

<http://jobfutures.ca/en/home.shtml>

Creating Work You Want: Life and Work in your Twenties

<http://portfolio.telecampus.com/>

Canada Career Information Partnership (CCIP)

<http://www.ccip-picc.org/>