

Guide for an Introductory Workshop

Municipal Workplace Learning and the Community: *Bridges to the Future*



Materials for the Workshop

Workshop participants use CAMA materials produced specifically for municipal workplace learning and literacy programs. Each participant should have these booklets:

- *The Writing's on the Wall: Implementing a Municipal Workforce Literacy Program*
- *A Guide for Planning and Conducting an Organizational Needs Assessment for Municipal Workplace Literacy Programs*
- *After the Pilot Projects: Revisiting the Process*

Participants also refer to selections from the report on the 2002 CAMA literacy conferences. Make copies of these pages for each participant.

Municipal Excellence through Partnerships and Education: Conference Reports (pp. 9-10)

You can obtain copies of the booklets from CAMA or download them from the CAMA website at http://www.camacam.ca/programs_publications.asp

Overall Workshop Goal and Objectives

Overall Goal

To raise awareness about municipal workplace learning and to assist management and labour in planning a municipal workplace learning project

Objectives

Workshop participants will:

- learn about CAMA's national workplace learning and literacy project
- understand the scope of workplace learning as it relates to each municipality
- examine how workplace learning is central to a knowledge-based society and workplace.
- identify the benefits of workplace learning for all levels of a municipal corporation.
- identify the barriers to and supports for learning in each municipality.
- define joint labour-management committee work, relationships and roles in developing workplace learning programs
- review the planning cycle for setting up programs
- learn about an organizational needs assessment municipal workplaces
- draft an initial action plan for your municipal workplace

Agenda for Workshop

Welcome

- 8:00 –8:30 Welcome from the host community
- Overview of CAMA project and status of municipal workplace learning and literacy programs in Canada
- ...or...
- Speaking up for learning – from a champion for municipal workplace learning and literacy

Setting the Stage

- 8:30 - 9:00 Introductions
- 9:00 – 10:00 The scope of municipal workplace learning
- 10:00 - 11:00 Benefits of workplace learning for labour and management
- Building a positive learning model: Barriers and supports
- 11:00 – 12:00. Joint labour-management committees: Working together for learning

Lunch

Taking Action: Planning Municipal Learning Programs

- 1:00 – 1:30 - The planning cycle: What stage are you at?
- 1:30- 3:30 - Drafting an action plan
- 3:30 – 4:00 -Closing and evaluation

Setting the Stage

1. Introductions

Find out more about each other and about the different municipal corporations. Use the following topics as starting points for a large-group discussion.

Small groups. Sit with people you would like to meet.

Topics for Talk:

- Introduce yourself – name, municipality, position
- Why are you attending the session?
- What is happening around literacy and learning in your municipality

Optional topic:
Describe something you enjoyed learning recently. What did you learn and how did you learn it?

Look for patterns or trends in your discussions about learning. Choose a spokesperson to present a brief summary and any trends you have noticed.

2. The Scope of Municipal Workplace Learning and Literacies

Municipal Workplace Learning takes a broad approach to learning, includes many types of learning opportunities, and is driven by the needs and interests of workers and staff.

Whole group

Ideas that Matter for municipal workplace learning and literacy

- Each municipality determines how workplace learning develops in their own community. While there are essential steps for success, there is no one way that fits every corporation.
- Joint committees hold the responsibility for planning and implementing workplace programs.
- Workplace learning is open to people in all levels of the corporation.

Literacies – it's plural now

Literacy is no longer a single activity related to reading and writing. Nowadays, we speak of computer literacy, print literacy, graphic literacy, media literacy, information literacy and more. The term “literacies” captures the many ways in which we communicate and understand our world. It also captures the idea that all of us participate in some literacies but not in others. There’s always another type of literacy we could learn or one we can delve into in much greater detail.

Work is becoming more knowledge-based as we move into sophisticated systems for certification and documentation. This direction in work has created new demands for literacies that are now part of everyone’s job.

In many municipalities, learning began as traditional literacy programming: reading, writing, math, basic computers. As participation increased and interests broadened, programs expanded to include a range of literacies as well as personal development and job specific skills. The expansion was organic, led by the interests of people in all levels of the corporation and by the community.

3. What’s Happening in Canadian Cities

CAMA has worked with municipal unions to set up workplace learning in many cities across the country. You can depend on the experience and know-how of these municipalities to help with planning your own workplace learning program. The following case studies will give you some ideas about process, programming and best of all – good advice.

Small groups

Resources:

Four case studies from:

- *After the Pilot Projects: Revisiting the Process*
- Conference Reports

Case Studies

- Each participant in the group chooses a different case study. Read the case study and prepare to present a brief summary to your small group. Each small group will hear about the four case studies. Alternatively, each group takes one case study; report back to cover the four case studies
- Present distinctive information from your case study: type of programming, funding, successes, barriers.
- Close the activity with comments or questions directed to the whole group.

The case studies are from the pilot projects in:

- Bathurst, New Brunswick: *After the Pilots*, p. 11 -12
- Moncton, New Brunswick : *After the Pilots*, p. 10-11
- St. John's, Newfoundland: *After the Pilots*, p. 9-10
- Winnipeg, Manitoba: *Conference Reports*, p. 9-10

4. Mapping Literacies in Your Workplace

Individual work and small groups

- Work individually first and then discuss the learning you have mapped for your own municipal workplace.
- Map the literacies or learning needs and interests in your own workplace by using the chart on the next page. See the chart on the following page.
- For each level of your municipal corporation, indicate what kind of learning might be of interest. Some examples are included.
- Discuss your map with the other members of your group. Notice the commonalities and the differences.
- In the whole group, take up any comments, questions, or new understandings.

Mapping Literacies in Your Workplace

Learning Opportunity	Unionized Workers - Outside Workers	Unionized Workers - Inside Workers	Non-unionized Staff	Management
Communication		Writing email	Report writing Oral presentations	clear communication – oral and written
Computer and technology	recording data			
Math				presenting budgets
Certifications	passing tests		Develop and deliver training for certification	
Other				
Other				

5. Benefits of Workplace Learning for Labour and Management

Interests and Benefits

Discuss the following questions

- Why would managers be interested in workplace learning?
- Why would unionized workers and non-unionized staff be interested in workplace learning?
- How could workplace learning benefit
 - managers
 - unionized workers
 - non-unionized staff
 - the corporation and the union

Whole group

See *The Writing's on the Wall*, p. 29, for further ideas on impacts

Notes

6. Building a Positive Learning Model: Identifying Supports and Barriers

Supports for Learning in Your Municipality

- What supports for learning currently exist in your municipal corporation and in your community?
- Choose a recorder / spokesperson. Prepare a summary and report back to the full group. Look for common themes coming out of all the groups' responses.

Small groups: mixed or by municipality

Barriers in Your Own Municipalities

- What barriers can you anticipate encountering in your municipal corporation? What common barriers exist in your group?
- Discuss ways of overcoming these barriers that are suited to the culture of your corporation.
- Report back to the full group with common themes and innovative ideas.
- For further discussion, participants comment on how they might meet the challenges faced by the pilot projects in their own municipalities.

For details on the barriers faced by the pilot projects, see *After the Pilot Projects: Revisiting the Process*, pp. 13-15.

7. Joint Labour-Management Committees: Working Together for Learning

Joint labour-management committees plan and implement municipal workplace learning programs. In municipalities across the country, joint committees have carried out organizational needs assessments, set up programs based on the findings and evaluated the results.

Discuss what the following aspects of joint committee work mean to you. **Remember to keep your comments within the context of a joint work – labour and management working together.**

What Do These Words Mean to You?

- Decision-making
- Expectations
- Interests
- Principles
- Joint
- Power
- Confidentiality
- Communication
- Values
- Process

Think about your experience with this aspect of joint labour-management work and give your reaction to the group.

Working Together as a Joint Committee

- Each small group takes one or two questions from the list below. Discuss/make notes to present back to the full group. Choose a recorder / spokesperson and record on flip charts.
- Use your own experience with working groups to answer the questions.

Small groups: mixed or by municipality

When you are done, look over the next three pages on committee work.

How do Joint Committees work?

1. Who should lead the joint committee and what are the responsibilities of the leader(s)?
2. How do you suggest the committee makes decisions?
3. What authority does the committee have?
4. How can the committee ensure that internal communication (communication within the committee) is effective?
5. How can the committee ensure that external communication (with staff, shop stewards, etc.) is effective?
6. What other guidelines for working together can you recommend?
7. What stages do working groups go through before they are operating smoothly?

Tips for Working Together as a Joint Committee

1. Co-chairs

Often, committees have two co-chairs, one from management and one from the union. Each provides a consistent link to senior management and to the union executive.

Responsibilities of the co-chairs include

- setting agendas and inform members of meeting
- keeping people on track throughout the meetings
- getting volunteers for tasks or assign tasks to committee members
- following up with members to ensure that tasks get completed.

2. Decision making and communication within the committee

- Make decisions by consensus. Discuss until you reach a point of understanding, agreement and resolution. Can each of you live with the decision?
- Support each other through open communication. Use email where possible.
- Train committee members who need an update on computer.
- Use technology so they can fully participate in the committee.
- Assign a note-taker at meetings. Also responsible for distributing minutes to all members.
- Share the work around; don't overburden any one committee member

3. Authority of the committee

The committee informs senior management and union executive of decisions made with a request to respond by a certain date.

4. Communication with staff and shop stewards

The committee informs as necessary by e-mail and personal contact

- supervisors
- shift leaders
- shop stewards
- staff.

5. Guidelines for working together

- Include everyone in the discussion, decision-making and activities of the committee; vet issues with members who were not present at a meeting before making decisions.
- Listen to each person and respect each other's opinions.
- Help each other to stay involved and contribute to the work of the committee
- Share responsibilities and accountability fairly.
- Keep a vision of what we want to accomplish.
- Participate.

Stages of Group Development

Read through the stages of group development and reflect on committees or groups that you have worked with in the past.

Stage One: Forming

During this initial period, groups/committees focus on defining their goal and establishing working procedures. During this stage, members want to know what they are supposed to do and how the committee will operate. Concentration is on tasks and procedures rather than relationships.

Stage Two: Storming

During this stage, the committee focuses on developing effective relationships. There may be frustration with the committee process. Things may seem awkward. Members may struggle to find ways to work together.

Stage Three: Norming

The committee begins to function smoothly and share responsibilities.

Stage Four: Performing

Now mature, the committee works efficiently and effectively and becomes quite independent.

Taking Action: Planning Municipal Learning Programs

1. The Planning Cycle: What Stage Are You At?

The Planning Cycle

Whole group

- Using *The Writing's on the Wall: Implementing a Municipal Program*, pp. 13 – 20, walk through the steps involved in planning and implementing a workplace learning program. See the following page for a list of the steps.
- Questions to consider:
 - What projects have you worked on that have included some similar steps (work projects or community projects)?
 - What questions does the planning cycle raise in light of your experience and the culture in your municipal workplace?
- In the whole group, discuss what stages people are at in the development of workplace learning programs. Are participants or groups at a similar stage or different stages of planning?

Resources:

Make a visual of the planning cycle
The Writing's on the Wall

See the following page for a list of the steps.

The afternoon is a working session – giving each municipal group time to begin considering and drafting initial action plans.

Municipal representatives leave the workshop with a draft plan for moving ahead on workplace learning programs.

Organizing a Workplace Learning Program: Steps in the Planning Cycle

1. Identify literacy champions and supporters
2. Form stakeholder committee
3. Gain commitment
4. Set overall goals and policies
5. Conduct needs assessment
6. Determine program priorities, goals, approach
7. Develop a communication plan to promote programs
8. Plan evaluation
9. Implement programs
10. Conduct ongoing evaluation and improve programs
11. Conduct final evaluation
12. Celebrate program results

2. Preparing for an Organizational Needs Assessment (ONA)

Small groups by municipality or whole group

The ONA is an essential step in developing a workplace learning plan. It is the first major piece of work for the committee. The ONA not only gives you the information you need to start learning programs, it also helps the committee gain the support and confidence of the workforce for learning initiatives.

Resources:

The Writing's on the Wall

- How are training and learning needs usually identified in your municipal corporation?
- Read through the description of the ONA in *The Writing's on the Wall*, pp. 15-16.
- How does the ONA process differ from any training surveys you might have conducted or participated in?
- Use the *Guide* (mentioned in the resources), pp. 9-12, to discuss the who, what, how and why of the ONA.
- In your group, begin to sketch out the ONA process by working through pages 13 – 16 in the *Guide*.

For detailed information, see *A Guide for Planning and Conducting an Organizational Needs Assessment*

Conclusion: Success Starts Here: Key Factors for Successful Programs

- Drawing on the discussions throughout the day, what do you think are some key factors for successful workplace programs? (facilitator records on flip chart or board)

Whole group

For further discussion, you can

2 small groups

- Enlarge your discussion by referring to *The Writing's on the Wall* and *After the Pilot Projects*.
- Each group uses a different manual. Skim the pages, taking note of main points. Which factors have not been mentioned by the full group? Discuss those factors.
- Choose a recorder or spokesperson. Report back to the full group with brief comments on factors that were not covered initially.

Resources

The Writing's on the Wall, pp. 4-7;

After the Pilot Projects, pp. 15 – 19.

Evaluation of the Municipal Workplace Learning and Literacy Workshop

Location _____

Date _____

1. Head, Heart and Feet: A Review of the Day¹

What do you take away from this day?

☺ What new knowledge did you gain?

♥ What new feelings do you have?

ℒ What actions are you ready to take?

¹ Adapted from Arnold, R., Burke, B., James, C., Martin, D., and Thomas, B. *Educating for a Change. Between the Lines*, 1991, p. 106.

Evaluation – page 2

1. How well did the workshop meet your expectations (preliminary survey) for learning more about municipal workplace programs?

2. What were the most useful aspects of the day's program?

3. What changes can you suggest to improve the workshops?

4. What other types of workshops or learning opportunities would you like to see CAMA develop?