

Workplace Learning and Literacy in Canadian Municipalities

**Canadian Association of
Municipal Administrators (CAMA)**

www.camacam.ca

What is workplace learning and literacy?

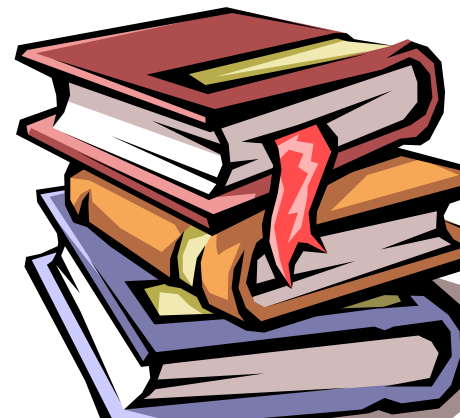


- ✓ Broad approach to learning, including many types of educational opportunities for program participants
- ✓ Programs driven by needs and interests of workers, staff, and management
- ✓ Programs open to people at all levels of the corporation
- ✓ Joint labour-management committee plans and implements programs

What kinds of learning?



- ✓ Essential skills as core program, including communications, math, and basic computer skills
- ✓ Personal development
- ✓ Study skills for certification training
- ✓ Test-taking skills for exams
- ✓ Family literacy
- ✓ English as a Second Language
- ✓ GED preparation



Why is workplace learning and literacy important?



- ✓ Knowledge based workplace and economy requires workers to adapt quickly to increased skills and knowledge requirements
- ✓ Labour market requires high-level skills in analytical thinking, literacy, numeracy, and computers
- ✓ New responsibilities on the job require higher levels of education



What does research say?



- ✓ 2003 International Adult Literacy and Lifeskills (ALL) Survey revealed low-level proficiencies of Canadians in literacy, numeracy, and problem solving
- ✓ 48% of Canadians (16 years and over) perform below the level desired to cope with increased reading demands
- ✓ 55% of Canadians (16 years and over) perform below desired levels in math skills
- ✓ Higher literacy levels—key factor in more socially active communities and better jobs

What are benefits to employees?



- ✓ Improved communications, math, and computer skills for work and home
- ✓ Improved health and safety
- ✓ More independence in problem solving
- ✓ Educational and training achievements, including GED and certification
- ✓ Greater job satisfaction
- ✓ Increased self-confidence



What are benefits to labour?



- ✓ Increased participation in union activities
- ✓ More opportunities for promotion
- ✓ Improved health and safety
- ✓ Greater understanding of collective agreements
- ✓ Strategies and skills for resolving workplace issues
- ✓ Increased job security



What are benefits to management?



- ✓ Better relations between labour and management
- ✓ Broader skill sets for employees—facilitating adaptation to workplace changes
- ✓ Improved health and safety
- ✓ Less time required for supervision
- ✓ More team participation
- ✓ Better succession planning
- ✓ Improved customer service



What are key success factors?



- ✓ Joint labour-management committee to plan program
- ✓ Organizational Needs Assessment (ONA) to determine needs and interests of all stakeholders
- ✓ Supportive adult learning principles to shape program
- ✓ Clear, inclusive, and ongoing communications to all levels of the municipality
- ✓ Ongoing and final program evaluations

What are some models of delivery?



- ✓ Teacher-led instruction
- ✓ One-on-one tutoring
- ✓ Peer tutoring
- ✓ Computer-assisted learning

What kind of support is available?



- ✓ CAMA and the Municipal Learning Resources Network
 - CAMA's track record: over 200 initiatives across Canada since 1995

- ✓ The Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) and its National Literacy Project

- ✓ Local literacy organizations, educational institutions, and independent consultants