Human Resources and
Skills Development Canada

Ressources humaines et
Développement des compétences Canada

Now and Tomorrow
Excellence in Everything We Do

Literacy and Essential Skills Guide

For Service Providers Assisting

Homeless or At-risk Clients

Part 3:
Literacy and Essential Skills
Tools Catalogue

Developed by
Human Resources and Skills Development Canada

Canada

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About this Guide

This guide was developed to help you learn about the many essential skills tools available through Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC). These are tools that you can use to help your clients learn about the skills they will need to enter the work force.

Although the guide was created primarily for service providers who help people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, it may also be helpful to anyone who wants to learn more about literacy and essential skills.

The *Literacy and Essential Skills Guide for Service Providers Assisting Homeless or At-risk Clients* consists of three separate documents:

- ■ **Part 1:** Understanding and Using the Tools

    Part 1 of the guide includes information on how to find and select the most appropriate HRSDC literacy and essential skills tools for a particular type of individual or organization. It also includes a definition of the nine essential skills, an overview of the different types of tools available and information on how to access them.

    For the best results, it is recommended that you read this document first.

- ■ **Part 2:** Three Simple Steps to Selecting and Using the Tools — Scenarios for Service Providers

    This document includes examples and scenarios to help you use and customize the various tools to meet the needs of different types of clients.

- ■ **Part 3:** Literacy and Essential Skills Tools Catalogue

    This detailed catalogue includes descriptions and explanations of all the HRSDC essential skills tools currently available.

> The *Literacy and Essential Skills Guide for Service Providers Assisting Homeless or At-risk Clients* was produced by the Homelessness Partnering Secretariat and the Office of Literacy and Essential Skills, which are part of Human Resources and Skills Development Canada.

Literacy and Essential Skills Tools Catalogue

For information on how to find and select the most appropriate tools for a particular type of individual or organization, please read *Part 1: Understanding and Using the Tools of the Literacy and Essential Skills Guide for Service Providers Assisting Homeless or At-risk Clients.*

How to Obtain Copies of the Tools

Copies of the literacy and essential skills tools made available by HRSDC may be ordered online, or by mail or fax.

Online

The fastest way to place your order is to use HRSDC's online shopping cart, Publicentre, at **www12.hrsdc.gc.ca**.

By mail or fax

Note: When placing an order by mail or fax, be sure to provide your complete name and mailing address and include the catalogue number for each tool you are ordering.

You may fax your request to **819-953-7260**.

You can also submit your request by mail to:

> **Publications/Distribution Unit**
> HRSDC Communications Branch
> 140 Promenade du Portage
> Place du Portage, Phase IV, Level 10
> Gatineau, QC   K1A 0J9

What Are Essential Skills?

Essential skills are needed for work, learning and life. They are the foundation for learning all other skills and help people evolve with their jobs and adapt to workplace change.

There are nine essential skills: reading; writing; computer use (also called digital skills); thinking; document use; oral communication; numeracy; working with others; and continuous learning. For more information on the nine essential skills, visit **www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/workplaceskills/ LES/definitions/definitions.shtml**.

How the Tools Are Organized

Below you will find a list of titles and departmental catalogue numbers for each of the literacy and essential skills tools available from Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC).

The tools are sorted into three categories: tools that **build understanding and awareness**, tools that help **assess essential skills requirements** and tools that **support skills development**.

Each tool also includes an indication of the type(s) of users who will benefit most from that particular tool:

- ■ job seekers and workers;
- ■ apprentices and tradespeople;
- ■ trainers and career counsellors; and
- ■ employers and human resources (HR) professionals.

Title and Catalogue Number	Description	Type(s) of Users			
		Apprentices/ tradespeople	Job seekers/ workers	Trainers/career counsellors	Employers/HR professionals
Step 1: Get Informed/Build Awareness Tools in this category are designed to increase your understanding of essential skills and help you to communicate to clients why these skills are important to job success.					
■ **Building Essential Skills in the Workplace** (WP-044)	A set of case studies that offers examples on how to develop essential skills in the workplace. The case studies provide an overview of the benefits, outcomes and impacts of essential skills training.				●
Essential Skills for Success as a(an): ■ **Automotive Service Technician** (WP-125) ■ **Carpenter** (WP-126) ■ **Construction Electrician** (WP-127) ■ **Cook** (WP-128) ■ **Hairstylist** (WP-129) ■ **Industrial Electrician** (WP-162)	This resource provides sample tasks that demonstrate how each of the nine essential skills is used in any one of 15 different trades.	●	●	●	●

Title and Catalogue Number	Description	Type(s) of Users			
		Apprentices/ tradespeople	Job seekers/ workers	Trainers/career counsellors	Employers/HR professionals
■ Industrial Mechanic (Millwright) (WP-130) ■ Ironworker (WP-161) ■ Machinist (WP-131) ■ Plumber (WP-132) ■ Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Mechanic (WP-165) ■ Sheet Metal Worker (WP-133) ■ Steamfitter-pipefitter (WP-164) ■ Truck and Transport Mechanic (WP-163) ■ Welder (WP-134)					
■ Essential Skills in the Workplace: What's in It for You? (WP-160)	A fact sheet for employers explaining the many benefits of investing in essential skills.				●
■ Essential Skills Poster (WP-158)	A poster to communicate how essential skills contribute to job success. It lists the nine essential skills and provides the website where the tools and additional information can be found.	●	●	●	●
■ Essential Skills Tools for the Skilled Trades Postcard (WP-166)	A short reference sheet that explains how to use or order the tools for the skilled trades.	●	●	●	●

Title and Catalogue Number	Description	Type(s) of Users			
		Apprentices/ tradespeople	Job seekers/ workers	Trainers/career counsellors	Employers/HR professionals
■ **Literacy and Essential Skills Toolkit Postcard** (WP-094)	A short reference sheet that outlines the categories of the tools, and their intended users. **Note:** this postcard does **not** include information about the apprenticeship tools.		●	●	●
■ **Living and Learning: Essential Skills Success Stories** (HIP-031)	A collection of real stories about Canadians who have experienced success in work and life after improving their essential skills. Told from the learners' points of view, these stories can help inspire others to deal with their own essential skills challenges.		●	●	
Using Essential Skills: On the Job with a(an): ■ **Automotive Service Technician** (WP-146) ■ **Carpenter** (WP-147) ■ **Construction Electrician** (WP-153) ■ **Cook** (WP-148) ■ **Hairstylist** (WP-150) ■ **Machinist** (WP-151) ■ **Industrial Mechanic** (Millwright) (WP-149) ■ **Plumber** (WP-124) ■ **Sheet Metal Worker** (WP-152) ■ **Welder** (WP-154)	A resource that describes a typical work day for a tradesperson in any one of 10 different trades. It also provides practical activities that use essential skills.	●	●	●	

Title and Catalogue Number	Description	Type(s) of Users			
		Apprentices/ tradespeople	Job seekers/ workers	Trainers/career counsellors	Employers/HR professionals
■ **What Are Essential Skills for the Trades?** (WP-123)	A fact sheet that outlines how the nine essential skills are used in the trades. It includes definitions, common tasks and examples of how each skill is used in various trades.	●	●		●
■ **What Are Essential Skills?** (WP-077)	A fact sheet that explains the nine essential skills that people need for work, learning and life. It includes examples of how essential skills are used in the community and workplace.		●	●	●

Step 2: Assess Essential Skills Requirements

Use these tools to assess an individual's essential skills and identify their strengths as well as areas that need improvement.

Title and Catalogue Number	Description	Apprentices/ tradespeople	Job seekers/ workers	Trainers/career counsellors	Employers/HR professionals
■ **Essential Skills Interview Assistant** (available on DVD) (WP-122)	A computer program that helps employers integrate job-specific, essential skills questions into their interview processes to ensure new hires are work-ready. The software can also be used to prepare learning plans and sessions with employees.				●
■ **Essential Skills Self-Assessment for the Trades** (WP-135)	A checklist to help identify essential skills strengths and areas for improvement. It includes statements that describe common trades-related tasks for the nine essential skills.	●	●	●	
■ **Essential Skills Workbook for the Trades** (WP-167)	A workbook with practical exercises to help learners practice their reading, writing, numeracy and document use skills. A full answer guide is included to help learners understand the steps to reach the right answer.	●	●	●	
■ **Hiring Checklist** (WP-031)	An interview guide and template to help employers collect information about the essential skills of job candidates. It can help employers find new workers who can complement the skills of their existing teams.				●

Title and Catalogue Number	Description	Type(s) of Users			
		Apprentices/ tradespeople	Job seekers/ workers	Trainers/career counsellors	Employers/HR professionals
Indicators (also available online): ■ **Document Use** (WP-040) ■ **Numeracy** (WP-038) ■ **Reading** (WP-039)	A guide and informal assessment that asks learners to solve questions to get an indication of their essential skills ability. Indicators are available for the following essential skills.	●	●	●	●
■ **Organizational Needs Assessment** (WP-060)	A guide and checklist that helps employers determine whether essential skills gaps are affecting their organizations' performance.				●
Self-assessments and checklists: ■ **Computer Use** (WP-084) ■ **Continuous Learning** (WP-089) ■ **Document Use** (WP-087) ■ **Numeracy** (WP-088) ■ **Oral Communication** (WP-083) ■ **Reading** (WP-086) ■ **Thinking** (WP-169) ■ **Working with Others** (WP-090) ■ **Writing** (WP-085)	These informal assessments guide learners through a series of statements to help them identify their essential skills strengths and areas for improvement. Self-assessments are available for each of the nine essential skills: Online versions (checklists) that are similar to the self-assessments are available for two essential skills: continuous learning and working with others.	●	●	●	●
■ **Workplace Check-up Guide for Employers** (WP-029)	A guide and checklist to help employers gather information from their workers about essential skills needs within an organization.				●

Title and Catalogue Number	Description	Type(s) of Users			
		Apprentices/ tradespeople	Job seekers/ workers	Trainers/career counsellors	Employers/HR professionals
■ **Workplace Survey** (WP-028)	A questionnaire to help employers identify potential essential skills issues and areas of strength in the workplace.				●

Step 3: Support Skills Development

These learning and training tools can help you develop a person's essential skills. They can also assist you to integrate skills into training programs. For entrepreneurs and HR professionals, these to. be used to help recruit and retain employees.

Title and Catalogue Number	Description	Apprentices/ tradespeople	Job seekers/ workers	Trainers/career counsellors	Employers/HR professionals
■ **Before Training: Resources to Improve Your Essential Skills** (WP-138)	This booklet includes tips and activities that help apprentices identify ways to improve their essential skills and be better prepared for training.	●	●	●	
■ **Communications Essentials: A Modular Workshop** (available on DVD) (WP-122)	A collection of resources to help intermediaries deliver a customized workshop. It includes information and exercises to help individuals practice and strengthen their oral communication skills.			●	●
■ **Developing Partnerships to Support Literacy and Essential Skills** (downloadable PDF only)	This downloadable PDF contains tips and activities to help employers develop effective partnerships to support essential skills in the workplace.				●
■ **Essential Skills for Your Apprenticeship Training** (WP-136)	A booklet that includes tips and tricks to help apprentices prepare for in-class training, take effective notes and understand and remember lessons.	●	●	●	
■ **Job Enhancement and Essential Skills** (WP-091)	A guide to help managers and supervisors support workers in improving their essential skills by giving them new responsibilities and opportunities for development.			●	●
■ **Mentoring and Essential Skills** (WP-092)	A guide with tips and activities to support essential skills development in the workplace through mentoring relationships.			●	●

Title and Catalogue Number	Description	Type(s) of Users			
		Apprentices/ tradespeople	Job seekers/ workers	Trainers/career counsellors	Employers/HR professionals
■ **Oral Communication: An Essential Skill in the Canadian Workplace** (video available on DVD) (WP-122)	A video that explores typical Canadian work situations and what makes oral communication effective in each setting. Newcomers to Canada may find the information and tips offered in this video particularly useful. Includes two segments: The Job Interview and Workplace Conflict.	●	●	●	●
■ **Passport** (WP-037)	A tracking resource that lets learners record their skill strengths and identify areas that may need improvement. It is intended to be updated and reviewed regularly.	●	●	●	●
■ **Portfolio** (WP-036)	A collection of binder inserts that helps users keep a record of knowledge gained and skills developed through essential skills training and learning activities. Use it to build a collection of learning materials (e.g. tips sheets, practice exercises) and samples from on-the-job experiences (e.g. emails, time sheets, a safety information sheet).	●	●	●	●
Problem Solved! ■ **A Guide for Employees and Learners** (WP-064) ■ **A Guide for Employers and Practitioners** (WP-063)	A guide that includes various techniques, activities and worksheets to help learners practice and improve their thinking skills. The version for employers and practitioners provides instructions for how to integrate this tool into training and development programs.	●	●	●	●
Taking Action: ■ **A Guide** (WP-059) ■ **An Introduction** (WP-062)	A guide that introduces a seven-step process for developing and integrating essential skills training in the workplace. The introduction is a condensed version of the guide.				●

Title and Catalogue Number	Description	Type(s) of Users			
		Apprentices/ tradespeople	Job seekers/ workers	Trainers/career counsellors	Employers/HR professionals
Tip sheets and practice and learning exercises: ■ **Computer Use** (WP-070) ■ **Document Use** (WP-071) ■ **Oral Communication** (WP-072) ■ **Reading** (WP-101) ■ **Thinking** (WP-172) ■ **Working with Others** (WP-093) ■ **Writing** (WP-109)	A booklet that provides learners with practical tips and activities to improve their essential skills.	●	●	●	●
■ **Trades Math Workbook** (WP-145)	A workbook with practical exercises to help learners practice their numeracy skills and increase their success in an apprenticeship program.	●	●	●	
■ **Training Activities** (WP-030)	A reference sheet that outlines a series of suggested activities to help employers incorporate essential skills upgrading into workplace training.			●	●
■ **Using Essential Skills: Preparing for Your Interprovincial Red Seal Exam** (WP-137)	This guide provides learners with tips and tricks to study and prepare for the interprovincial Red Seal exam.	●	●	●	
■ **Vocabulary Building Workbook** (WP-102)	A workbook with various exercises to help learners improve their vocabulary and learn words commonly used in the Canadian workplace.	●	●	●	