

## DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 313 538

CE 053 739

AUTHOR Charner, Ivan; Fox, Shirley  
 TITLE Improving Workplace Literacy through Community Collaboration. Leader's Guide and Workbook.  
 INSTITUTION Academy for Educational Development, Inc., Washington, D.C.; National Inst. for Work and Learning, Washington, D.C.  
 SPONS AGENCY Maryland State Dept. of Education, Baltimore. Div. of Instruction.  
 PUB DATE 89  
 NOTE 159p.  
 AVAILABLE FROM National Institute for Work and Learning, 1255 23rd Street, NW, Suite 400, Washington, DC 20037 (Leader's Guide: \$12.50 plus \$3.00 postage; Workbook: \$6.00 plus \$3.00 postage; package of 10 workbooks--\$45.00 plus \$6.50 postage; quantity discounts available).  
 PUB TYPE Guides - Classroom Use - Guides (For Teachers) (052) -- Guides - Classroom Use - Materials (For Learner) (051)  
 EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.  
 DESCRIPTORS Adult Basic Education; \*Adult Literacy; Basic Skills; Change Agents; Change Strategies; \*Citizen Participation; \*Community Action; Community Change; \*Community Involvement; Community Leaders; Education Work Relationship; \*Functional Literacy; Labor Force Development; \*Literacy Education; Social Responsibility  
 IDENTIFIERS \*Workplace Literacy

## ABSTRACT

This document consists of a leader's guide that tells how to conduct a 1-day workshop and a workbook used by workshop participants to develop action plans to improve workplace literacy and the collaboration skills needed to implement those plans. It is intended that workshop participants should consist of 10-15 community members.) A memorandum in the leader's guide summarizes the intent of the guide and the leader's responsibilities. The first section gives a rationale for improving workplace literacy and for using community collaboration to do it, describes the organization of the document, and describes the workshop that the leader is to conduct. The second section gives detailed steps for conducting the workshop and includes 11 overhead transparency masters. The text of the workbook is reproduced on the left side of the page, and related notes for the workshop leader appear on the right. The workbook contains worksheets on which the participants can identify such things as workplace literacy skills; problems (for example, existing employees require skill upgrading, entry-level employees possess low levels of basic skills, and the labor pool includes large numbers of non-English speakers); possible solutions; potential community resources; and the benefits of improved workplace literacy. Other worksheets guide the development of action plans that include goals and objectives, tasks and activities, and a timeline. The document concludes with lists of basic workplace skills, reasons for adult participation in education, reasons for adults not participating, critical elements for overcoming barriers, principles and skills for successful collaboration, and strategies to create and maintain effective partnerships. A glossary and an 18-item bibliography are also included. (CML)

ED313538

IMPROVING WORKPLACE LITERACY THROUGH COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

LEADER'S GUIDE AND WORKBOOK

Ivan Charner  
Shirley Fox

Academy for Educational Development/  
National Institute for Work and Learning

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# IMPROVING WORKPLACE LITERACY THROUGH COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

## LEADER'S GUIDE

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Shirley Fox

Academy for Educational Development/National Institute for Work and Learning

Prepared for the Maryland State Department of Education  
Division of Instruction, Adult and Community Education Branch

Project funding provided by the Maryland State Department of Education through the Adult Education Act (PL 91-230) as amended, Section 310 Federal Funds.

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## MEMORANDUM

TO: Workplace Literacy Advocates

FROM: The Authors

SUBJECT: Community Teams to Improve Workplace Literacy

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### HOW CAN YOU HELP IMPROVE WORKPLACE LITERACY IN YOUR COMMUNITY?

#### WHAT CAN YOU DO TO ORGANIZE A GROUP OF INFLUENTIAL LOCAL PERSONS TO IMPROVE WORKPLACE LITERACY?

If you are interested in the answers to these questions, **READ ON**. This *Leader's Guide* is a resource for you as an advocate for improving workplace literacy in your community.

The purpose of this *Leader's Guide* and accompanying *Workbook* are to help a local "Community Team" develop an action plan for improving workplace literacy. As a workplace literacy advocate, your responsibility is to form a Community Team and help convene a workshop on improving workplace literacy through community collaboration.

#### Community Team

The Community Team should comprise from 10 to 15 persons, including representatives of employers, educational institutions, government agencies, organized labor, and community-based agencies. Those invited to become members should be directly involved with or responsible for literacy issues in the organization represented. For example, a member might be an Adult Basic Education Program director or a community college director of an ESL or GED program; the director of a volunteer literacy organization; a vice president of a corporation in charge of Human Resources; the educational director of the local chamber of commerce; or the job developer

for a community-based organization or for the Private Industry Council under the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA).

The first step is to write a letter inviting such individuals to participate in the Community Team. The letter should explain:

1. The purpose of this effort - to build stronger networks of information, support, planning, and responsibilities to improve workplace literacy.
2. The workshop - to identify critical workplace literacy issues and to develop a community action plan to improve workplace literacy.
3. The expectations for Community Team members - related to investment of time, resources, and actions.

### The Workshop

After the Community Team has been formed, the next step is to plan a one-day workshop. An individual to convene and lead the workshop should be identified. You may be that individual or it may be someone you know in the community. The individual needs to be a skilled trainer with good group process and facilitation skills. This *Leader's Guide* will help that individual to conduct the workshop. It introduces the notion of improving workplace literacy through community collaboration, explains how the materials are organized, and provides an annotated format for the completion of a workbook leading to the development of a community action plan.

The workshop follows a two-stage process. First, the different perspectives on workplace literacy are identified and understood. Participants are divided into sector groups based on their organizational affiliation and are asked to identify workplace literacy skills, problems, solutions, and resources using the worksheets provided in the first section of

the *Workbook*. Stage two involves the development of community action plans by the entire Community Team using the worksheets in the second section of the *Workbook*.

At the conclusion of the workshop, the Community Team will have an action plan for improving workplace literacy. More important, it will have the skills and understanding to maintain an effective collaboration among different organizations to carry out the plan and improve workplace literacy in the community.

In planning the workshop, you may want to consider inviting other communities to participate. Sector groups can be comprised of representatives from different communities, thus allowing for greater discussion and sharing of ideas. And, each Community Team can benefit from input and discussion with other teams. The *Leader's Guide* and *Workbook* and the workshop format were developed and tested with four Community Teams. They have proven effective and together can serve as a model for improving workplace literacy through community collaboration.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A number of individuals and organizations contributed to the development of this *Leader's Guide* and the *Workbook for Improving Workplace Literacy Through Community Collaboration*. Darla Strouse, State Specialist, Workplace Literacy, Maryland State Department of Education, served as Program Officer. The Department's Charles Talbert, State Director of Adult Education, and John Creighton, Section Chief, Adult Basic Education, provided ongoing support. James Parker, Program Specialist, Program Improvement Branch, Division of Adult Education, U.S. Department of Education, provided insights and assistance which greatly helped in developing this *Leader's Guide*. Community Teams from four counties in Maryland - Baltimore, Frederick, Howard and Prince George's - participated in pilot workshops to review a draft *Workbook* and *Guide*. Ivan Charner, the principal author of these documents and workshop leader, provided the guiding inspiration for the project. Richard Ungerer, Executive Director of the National Institute for Work and Learning, and Jessica Burton, the Institute's Secretary, also contributed to the success of the project.

Shirley R. Fox  
Project Director



# IMPROVING WORKPLACE LITERACY THROUGH COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

## LEADER'S GUIDE

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## IMPROVING WORKPLACE LITERACY THROUGH COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

Adult literacy has been a focus of national attention for the past decade. While general literacy remains a national priority, demographic, economic, and technological changes have resulted in a new emphasis on workplace literacy. The aging of the workforce, increasing numbers of minorities, technological advances, foreign competition, and changes in occupations have created a need for a workforce with new and different skills. As suggested by the study *Workplace Basics*, recently published by the American Society for Training and Development and the U.S. Department of Labor, "These combined forces are driving the nation toward human capital deficit among both new and experienced workers that threatens the competitiveness of economic institutions and acts as a barrier to the individual opportunity of all Americans."

*Improving Workplace Literacy Through Community Collaboration* presents a systematic process for 1) exploring and examining critical workplace literacy issues and concerns and 2) developing community action plans for improving workplace literacy.

### Why Community Collaboration Is Important

The concept of collaboration is based on the realization that no single organization or group can respond to the complexities of workplace literacy. Moreover, it has been demonstrated that when business, education, labor, government, and community-based organizations work together the results can be significant and far reaching.

Collaboration for workplace literacy is a process that brings together different organizations and institutions within a community to identify mutual concerns and resources that focus on the literacy needs and problems for both employees and employers. Through collaboration among

these organizations, strategies and solutions to workplace literacy problems can be developed for the benefit of all.

In the end, new programs and policies should emerge which provide workplace literacy training to different populations of workers. In addition, such collaboration will change the relationships among institutions that will have longer-term impacts on the community. The collaborative process calls for the sharing of responsibility for agenda planning and action and decision-making authority over the design and operation of workplace literacy missions and functions. It is the sharing of authority that makes collaboration challenging and exciting. Collaboration, which has community organizations and institutions working together in new ways, can be a very effective strategy for improving the levels of workplace literacy.

### Who Benefits From Community Collaboration

The process of developing and carrying out an action plan for improving workplace literacy through community collaboration can have a number of positive outcomes for individuals in need of workplace literacy training and for institutions and organizations that participate in the collaborative process.

For individual workers, community collaboration will result in new workplace literacy programs and policies that will respond to their work-related skill needs. These programs will enhance workers chances for:

- o Entering into jobs and occupations.
- o Mobility within occupations and careers.
- o Skill upgrading.
- o Acquisition of new skills.
- o Personal development.
- o Increased self-confidence.

For institutions and organizations, participation in the collaborative process can:

- o Increase their awareness, knowledge, and understanding of workplace literacy issues, concerns, and solutions.
- o Provide an awareness of the organizations and institutions in the community that goes beyond workplace literacy to goods, services, products, and so on. For example, employers can identify education and training providers who can offer a wide array of programs in addition to those related to workplace literacy. Educational institutions can identify organizations that may be interested in education and training programs for current workers and those looking for employment.

In the end, the beneficiary of community collaboration is the community. Such efforts can go beyond workplace literacy and extend to other issues critical to the economic and social well-being of the community. Community collaboration requires that participating organizations recognize cultural differences, develop mutual trust, identify resources, build consensus and commitment, and develop new problem-solving and decision-making strategies. These new modes of operating can carry over into other areas of community development to the benefit of all.

## How the Materials Are Organized

*Improving Workplace Literacy Through Community Collaboration* has two components:

- o The *Workbook* is divided into two major sections. Section I contains workplace literacy worksheets to record information on workplace literacy skills, workplace literacy problems, barriers to adult education and training, workplace literacy solutions, potential community resources for improving workplace literacy, and benefits of improved workplace literacy. Section II contains worksheets to record information for the development of action plans in eight areas: Community Team organizational missions and commitment, selection of team leader, strategies for ongoing collaboration, goals and objectives, identifying workplace literacy problems, tasks and activities to address problems, schedule of activities, and outline for action plan to improve workplace literacy. The appendices include materials related to the process of developing community action plans for improving workplace literacy through community collaboration.
  
- o The *Leader's Guide* presents two processes for guiding Community Teams in developing community action plans, namely:
  - Identifying workplace literacy skills, problems, solutions, and resources.
  - Developing community action plans to improve workplace literacy.

Each description of the processes includes a brief overview, the primary objective, and a brief statement regarding preparation needed by the leader.

The appendices include sample materials developed at the pilot workshop with Community Teams from Baltimore County, Prince George's County, Howard County, and Frederick County in Maryland. At the end of the *Leader's Guide* is a set of overhead masters which can be used to make transparencies. These transparencies should be used during the one-day workshop.

The pages of the *Workbook* are included (enclosed in a box on the page) directly in the *Leader's Guide* along with brief annotations. This format is an effective technique in presenting ideas quickly and easily. Although it is obvious how the specific worksheets are to be used, the annotated format provides key information points, use of transparencies, quick tips, estimated time for completion and suggestions about how to direct the completion of the workbooks and preparation of final community action plans.

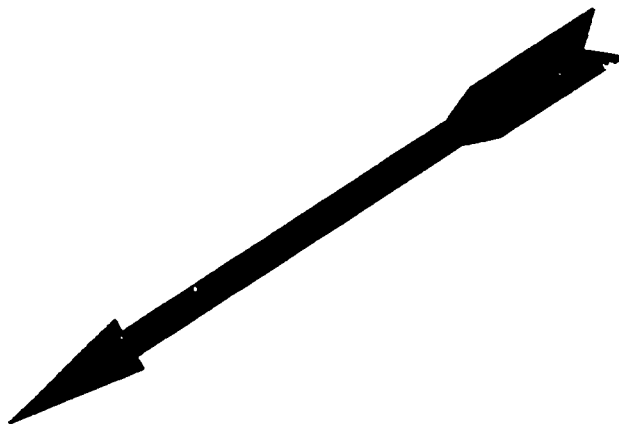
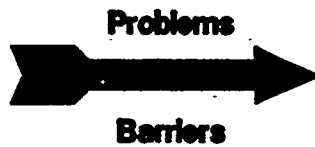
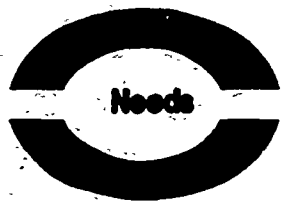
Reference is made to appendices in the *Leader's Guide* and *Workbook* with pages noted. In the case of the *Workbook* appendices, two page references are provided separated by a slash (/). The first refers to the page in the *Workbook* and the second to the page where it is reproduced in the *Leader's Guide*.

## The Workshop

Community collaboration requires business, education, labor, government, and community-based organizations to work together. As the initial step in the collaboration process, the members of a Community Team will participate in a one-day workshop. The Community Team comprises 10 to 15 persons who represent employers, education institutions, government agencies, organized labor, and community-based agencies. The members have been identified because of their involvement with literacy issues and their willingness to participate in a process of improving workplace literacy through community collaboration.

The purpose of the workshop is to develop, through collaboration, a community action plan to improve workplace literacy. A two-stage process is used. This is shown in the graphic on the next page. The top half depicts the first stage of the process as the identification of critical workplace literacy issues. The second stage of the process, which is portrayed along the bottom of the graphic, identifies the critical elements for developing an action plan.

In the morning, participants are divided into sector groups to identify and understand different perspectives on workplace literacy. The sector groups comprise representatives from the same sector or with similar institutional affiliations. Sectors include: education, employment (unions), and community organizations. Using the worksheets in Section I of the *Workbook*, individuals can begin to think about the different workplace literacy issues identified in the top half of the graphic. The sector groups then discuss the issues and present their perspectives on the issues. The process moves from the individual, to the sector group, to a sharing across sector groups. With each aspect of workplace literacy addressed in this manner, the result is a comprehensive understanding of the perspectives of different sectors on workplace literacy issues. This information is then used during the afternoon session for developing a community action plan.





In the afternoon, participants are reconvened as a Community Team. Using the worksheets in Section II of the *Workbook*, the team will think about and discuss the elements of a community action plan for improving workplace literacy, as identified in the bottom half of the graphic.

Using the information from the morning session on workplace literacy, the Community Team will prepare a draft action plan that includes:

- o Identification of team members and affiliation.
- o Activities to maintain team after the workshop.
- o Goals and objectives for improving workplace literacy.
- o Workplace literacy problems to be addressed.
- o Tasks and activities to address problems.
- o Schedule.

The plan is presented, discussed, and modified. A final plan is then agreed to by all team members.

This *Leader's Guide* provides all of the materials and information necessary for an effective workshop. At the conclusion of the workshop, the Community Team will have developed a community action plan for improving workplace literacy that can be initiated immediately. The team also will have developed the collaboration skills and understanding necessary for the successful implementation of the plan and for improving workplace literacy in the community.

**INTRODUCING THE CONCEPT OF  
IMPROVING WORKPLACE LITERACY THROUGH  
COMMUNITY COLLABORATION**

**Overview:** Participants will be introduced to the goals and objectives of the workshop. The agenda and *Workbook* will be reviewed.

**Objectives:** Individuals will understand that the goal of the workshop is to develop a community action plan for improving workplace literacy that will be initiated by the Community Team. Divide participants into sector group for morning session.

**Leader Preparation:** Review the introduction to the *Leader's Guide* and to the *Workbook*. Prepare an agenda for the workshop based on the following example provided. Prepare transparencies of the Agenda and Flow Diagram from the overhead masters provided at the end of the *Leader's Guide*. Divide participants into sector groups for morning session.

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**AGENDA**

Developing Community Action Plans to Improve Workplace Literacy  
(Place)  
(Date)

**MORNING SESSION**

Introductions  
Workshop Goals and Objectives  
Setting the Context (participants divided into sector groups)  
- Understanding the perspectives of different sectors  
Workbook Section I - Workplace Literacy

Lunch

**AFTERNOON SESSION**

Developing Community Action Plans (participants divided into community teams)  
- Workbook Section II - Development of Action Plans  
  
Preparing Draft Community Action Plans  
Presenting Draft Community Action Plans  
Modifying Community Action Plans

Adjourn

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The text of the *Workbook* with parallel annotations begins on the following page.

22

10

## WORKBOOK INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this workbook is to help you develop a better understanding of workplace literacy and how local collaborative activities can be an effective strategy for improving the level of workplace literacy. Literacy in general, and workplace literacy in particular, are growing concerns in our society. It has been estimated that 20 million adults are functionally illiterate. At the same time, many employers are having difficulty finding entry level employees who possess the skills necessary to be effective and productive employees who can move up in their organizations. Also, the rapid technological changes that we are experiencing require new sets of skills and knowledge that many workers do not possess and are finding difficult to learn.

Collaboration is a process that brings together different organizations and institutions within a community to identify mutual concerns and resources and to develop strategies and solutions which are mutually beneficial to all. The outcomes of collaboration include not only new strategies and solutions to identified problems, but also changes in the relationships among institutions that result from the collaborative process. Responsibility for agenda planning and action, and decision-making authority over the design and operation of certain missions and functions, are shared among organizations. This sharing of authority is what makes collaboration challenging and exciting.

This workbook will help you think about and identify workplace literacy skills, problems, and the array of existing solutions to these problems. The completion of the worksheets should be done as part of a workshop on developing community action plans to improve workplace literacy. As you complete the worksheets and participate in the workshop activities, you will learn how other organizations and institutions feel about the problem of workplace literacy, solutions that have been tried, and opportunities for working together with others.

## LEADER'S GUIDE

Review the introduction and make sure that participants understand the purpose of the *Workbook* and worksheets and that the goal of the workshop is to develop a community action plan. Use overhead transparency of Agenda and Flow Diagram to explain the workshop format and components.

Break into sector groups. Explain the makeup of the sector groups and that the purpose of working in sector groups is to identify and understand different perceptions on workplace literacy.

Have each group select a leader and recorder. One way to do this is to designate the person sitting at "12 o'clock" to be the leader and the person sitting at "6 o'clock" the recorder.

Make sure that each group has a flip chart, markers, and masking tape.

## I. WORKPLACE LITERACY

The purpose of the following worksheets is to help you identify a set of critical issues related to workplace literacy. The worksheets and group discussion with other representatives from similar organizations will provide a more complete understanding of workplace literacy skills, problems, barriers, solutions, and resources.

## 1. IDENTIFYING WORKPLACE LITERACY SKILLS, PROBLEMS, SOLUTIONS, AND RESOURCES

**Overview:** The purpose of this section is to have individuals and sector groups think about a wide array of workplace literacy issues. Participants will be broken into sector groups, as follows:

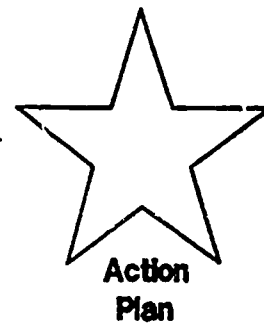
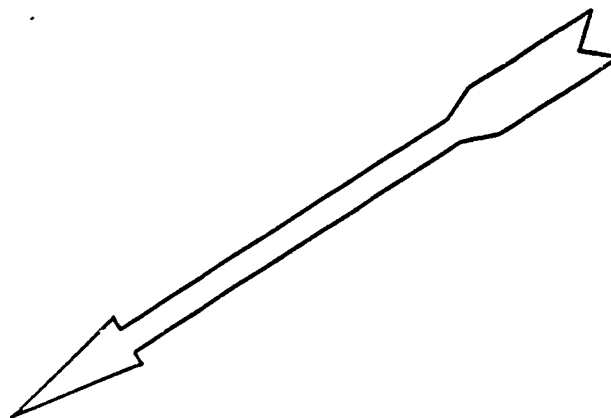
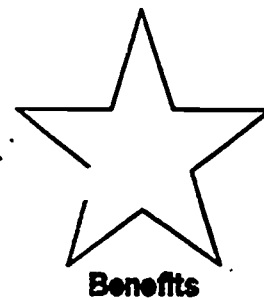
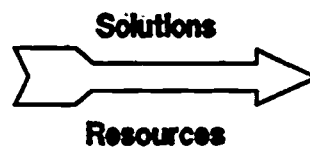
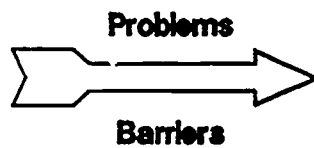
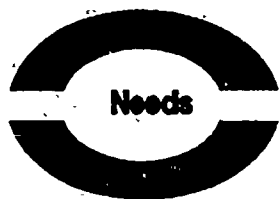
- o Employers.
- o Educators.
- o Community-based organizations and others.

For each worksheet these steps should be followed:

1. Individuals complete worksheet.
2. Sector Group discusses issue.
3. Sector Group provides summary of group's perspective on the issue.
4. Recorder puts summary on flip chart for later use.

**Objectives:** To have individuals think about workplace literacy issues, to have sector groups think about workplace literacy issues, and to have sector groups agree on the most critical elements under each workplace literacy issue.

**Leader Preparation:** Review the worksheets in Section I of the *Workbook* and the relevant appendices. Additional preparation requirements are suggested separately for each of the steps in the process of completing the workplace literacy worksheets. Have one flip chart per group plus one for the leader; markers; masking tape (to hang-up flip chart paper); and one workbook and agenda for each participant.



### A. WORKPLACE LITERACY SKILLS

**Purpose:** To identify critical workplace literacy skills. It is important to identify the literacy skills required by different employers in the community. List all of the literacy skills you feel are important to successful functioning in a workplace. After you have listed the skills, mark if they are a high or low priority.

#### Literacy Skills

**Examples:** Reading, writing, oral communication, listening, decision making, leadership, operation of equipment, technological skills.

<u>Skills</u>	<u>Priority</u>	
	<u>High</u>	<u>Low</u>
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
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_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

**Time Allocation:** 15-20 minutes

**Leader Preparation:** Review Appendix 1 (page 52) of the *Leader's Guide* - "Perceptions of Workplace Literacy Skills Needed By Employers." Prepare transparency of Basic Workplace Skills from the overhead master provided at the end of the *Leader's Guide*.

Review the purpose.

Have individuals complete worksheet.

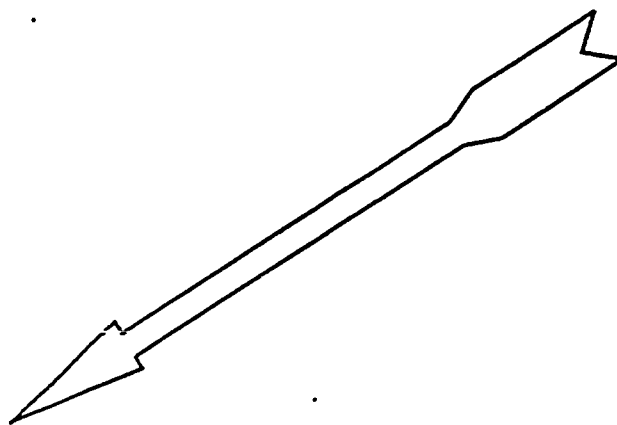
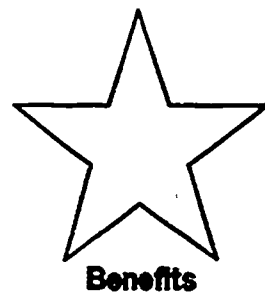
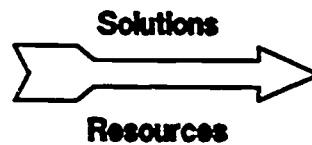
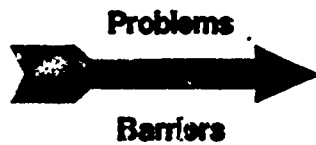
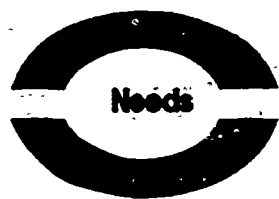
Have sector groups discuss workplace literacy skills and agree on top 8-10.

Have sector group recorder write this list on flip chart for later reference.

Have each sector group present its list.

Compare lists generated by the three sector groups and discuss similarities and differences.

Using overhead transparency, compare lists to Appendix A (page 29/44) of *Workbook* - "Basic Workplace Skills" generated by the American Society for Training and Development.





## B. WORKPLACE LITERACY PROBLEMS

**Purpose:** To identify workplace literacy problems in your organization and in your community. It is important to understand the nature and magnitude of literacy problems in order to develop successful solutions. Describe each problem, the group or population having the problem, and how the problem affects (directly or indirectly) your organization and/or employers in your community.

### Literacy Problems

**Examples:** Existing employees require skill upgrading; entry level employees possess low levels of basic skills; large numbers of non-English speakers in labor pool.

1. Problem: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Population: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Effect on organization and/or employers: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Problem: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Population: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Effect on organization and/or employers: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Time Allocation: 20-30 minutes

Leader Preparation: Review Appendix 2 (page 53) of the *Leader's Guide* - "Literacy Problems by Sector."

Review the purpose.

Have individuals complete worksheet.

Have sector groups discuss workplace literacy problems. On flip chart, have each sector group fill in the following information:

<u>Problem</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Effect</u>
----------------	-------------------	---------------

Have each sector group present its list.

Compare lists and discuss similarities and differences.

3. Problem: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Population: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Effect on organization and/or employers: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. Problem: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Population: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Effect on organization and/or employers: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. Problem: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Population: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Effect on organization and/or employers: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### C. BARRIERS TO ADULT EDUCATION AND TRAINING

**Purpose:** To identify barriers to further education and training faced by adults. It is important to understand the array of reasons for workers and adults not participating in education and training courses or programs. After you have listed the reason, mark if you think it acts as a major or minor barrier for most adult workers.

#### Reasons for Not Participating in Education

**Examples:** Cost, time, low basic skills, inconvenient location or schedule of courses, lack of information, lack of counseling.

<u>Reason</u>	<u>Barrier</u>	
	<u>Major</u>	<u>Minor</u>
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
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_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Time Allocation: 30-40 minutes

**Leader Preparation:** Review Appendix B, (page 30/44); C, (page 31/45); and D, (page 32/45) of *Workbook*. From the overhead masters provided at the end of the *Leader's Guide*, prepare transparencies of Reasons for Adult Participation in Education, Reasons for Adults Not Participating in Education, and Program Elements for Overcoming Barriers.

Review the purpose.

Have individuals complete worksheet.

Have sector groups discuss barriers and agree on top 8-10.

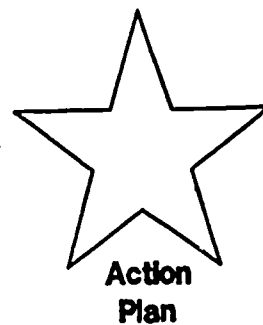
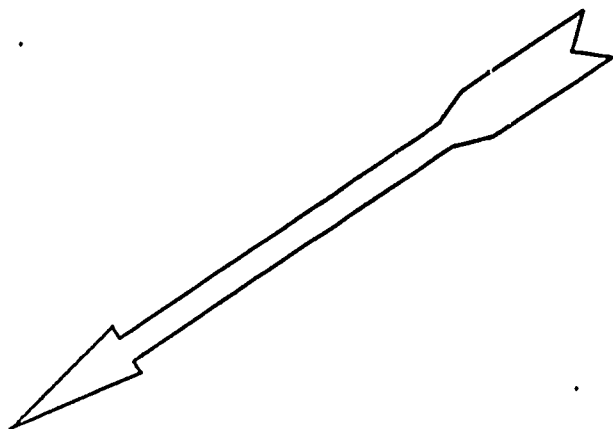
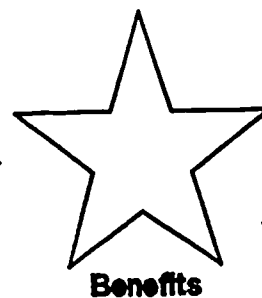
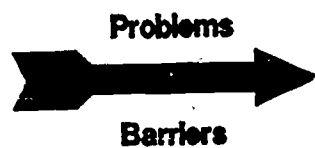
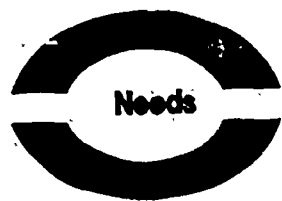
Have sector group recorder write list on flip chart.

Have sector groups present lists.

Compare lists and discuss similarities and differences.

Using overhead transparencies discuss reasons for participating and not participating in education as presented in Appendix B (page 30/44) and Appendix C (page 31/45) of the *Workbook*.

Using overhead transparency discuss critical elements for overcoming barriers as presented in Appendix D (page 32/45) of the *Workbook*.



#### D. WORKPLACE LITERACY SOLUTIONS

**Purpose:** To identify and describe organizational solutions to workplace literacy problems. It is important to identify existing programs and services that are aimed at improving workplace literacy for different groups of workers. For each solution that your organization has implemented, specify the population served, the goals and objectives of the solution, and the results.

##### Literacy Programs and Services

**Examples:** Computerized math and reading tutorials; workplace ESL programs; tuition-aid for ABE classes; in-house training programs.

1. Description: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Goals/objectives/results: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Population served: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Description: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Goals/objectives/results: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Population served: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Time Allocation: 20-30 minutes

Leader Preparation: Review Appendix 3 (page 55) of *Leader's Guide - "Workplace Literacy Solutions."*

Review the purpose.

Have individuals complete worksheet.

Have sector groups discuss solutions. On flip chart, have each sector group fill in the following information:

Solution  
Population

Goals and Objectives

Have each sector group present list.

Compare lists and discuss similarities and differences.

3. Description: \_\_\_\_\_

Goals/objectives/results: \_\_\_\_\_

Population served: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Description: \_\_\_\_\_

Goals/objectives/results: \_\_\_\_\_

Population served: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Description: \_\_\_\_\_

Goals/objectives/results: \_\_\_\_\_

Population served: \_\_\_\_\_

E. INVENTORY OF POTENTIAL COMMUNITY RESOURCES  
FOR IMPROVING WORKPLACE LITERACY

Purpose: To identify educational, employer, community-based, union, and other organizations in the community which are, or might be, involved in efforts to improve workplace literacy. For each category list the name of the organization, the contact person (if known), and the organization's current involvement in workplace literacy.

Example: UAW - Jill Corsica - Computer-assisted skill upgrading program for auto refinishers.

<u>Local Organization</u>	<u>Contact Person</u>	<u>Current Involvement</u>
---------------------------	-----------------------	----------------------------

EDUCATION

EMPLOYER

Time Allocation: 15 minutes

Review the purpose.

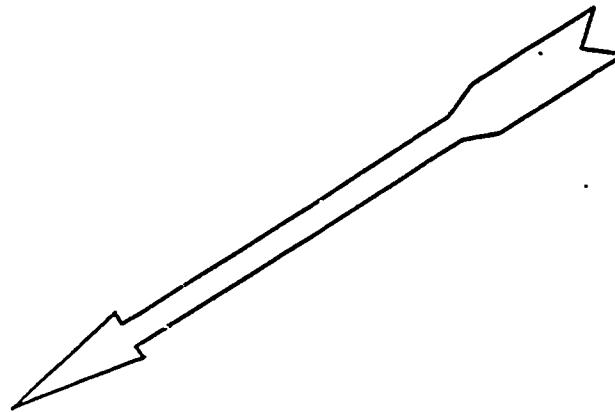
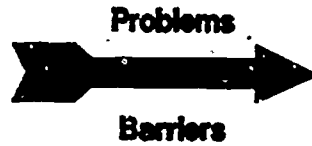
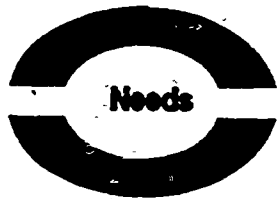
Have individuals complete worksheet, reminding them that they can identify resources from all sectors.

Remind groups that these resources will be used later when developing community action plans.

<u>Local Organization</u>	<u>Contact Person</u>	<u>Current Involvement</u>
<u>COMMUNITY BASED</u>		
<u>UNION</u>		
<u>OTHER</u>		
12		

Inventory of Potential Community Resources continued.





## F. BENEFITS OF IMPROVED WORKPLACE LITERACY

**Purpose:** To identify the potential benefits of improved workplace literacy to different groups in the community. It is important to consider the broader effects in the community of improved workplace literacy not only for employers and their employees, but for other sectors as well. For each category listed below, specify the potential benefits of improved workplace literacy.

**Example:** Welfare system - Fewer clients due to skill upgrading and increased earning potential.

Category Benefits

Employers

Current Workforce

New Entrants to Labor Force

Time Allocation: 30 minutes

Leader Preparation: Prepare transparency of benefits of workplace literacy for Individual Workers from the overhead master provided at the end of the *Leader's Guide*.

Review the purpose.

Have individuals complete worksheet.

Have sector groups discuss benefits.

For each category (employer, current workforce, new entrants, etc.), develop a list of benefits by having each sector group identify a benefit, in turn. Use overhead transparency as example of benefits for workers. Go around the room (sector group by sector group) until all benefits have been identified under each category. There is no need to develop a separate list for each group or for comparison among lists.

Workplace Literacy Benefits continued

Category

Benefits

Unions

Welfare System

Education System

Other

14

47

26

## II. DEVELOPMENT OF ACTION PLAN

The purpose of the following worksheets is to help your Community Team develop a specific plan to improve workplace literacy through community collaboration. As you complete the worksheets with the other members of your community, remember that a successful collaboration process requires that information, concerns, goals, and decision making be shared among participating organizations.

The worksheets and group discussion will provide critical input for developing your Community's Action Plan to Improve Workplace Literacy according to the outline provided at the end of this section.

## 2. DEVELOPING COMMUNITY ACTION PLANS TO IMPROVE WORKPLACE LITERACY

### RECONVENE PARTICIPANTS AS COMMUNITY TEAMS.

Overview: The purpose of this section is to have Community Teams develop a community action plan to improve workplace literacy. Participants from the employer, educator, community-based organization, and other sectors comprise the Community Team.

Unless otherwise noted, each worksheet should be used as a vehicle for group discussion. Space is provided for individuals to make notes that are relevant to the discussion.

Objectives: To have the Community Team discuss the specific components of a community action plan and to have the team develop a community action plan to improve workplace literacy.

Leader Preparation: Review the worksheets in Section II of the *Workbook* and relevant appendices. In particular, review Appendix E - (page 35/47) "Principles and Skills for Successful Collaboration" and Appendix F - (page 36/47) "Strategies to Create and Maintain Successful Collaboration." Additional preparation requirements are suggested separately for each of the steps in the process of completing the development of action plan worksheets. Have a flip chart, markers, and masking tape for each of the Community Teams.

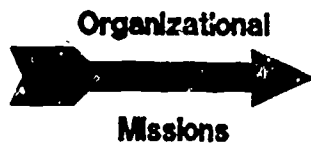
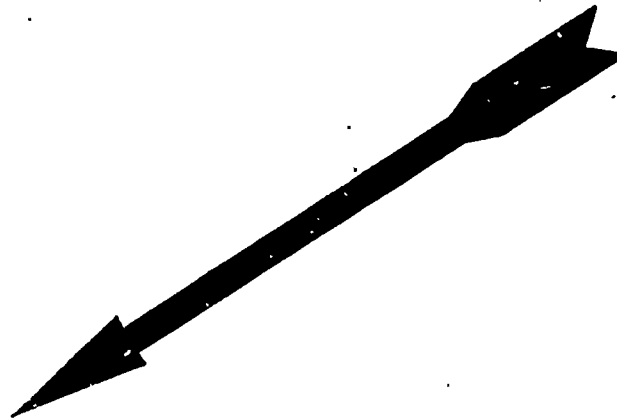
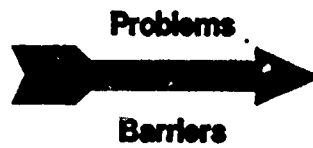
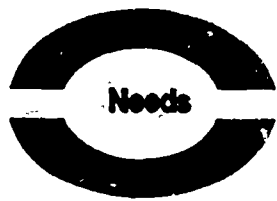
Review the purpose of this section of the workbook focusing on:

- o The goal of developing a community action plan.
- o The use of a collaborative process to develop the plan.

Make sure all Community Team members are together at one table.

Make sure that the team has a flip chart, markers, and masking tape.

Make sure that flip chart notes from earlier discussions are taped to walls for review by teams.



## A. ORGANIZATIONAL MISSIONS

**Purpose:** To clarify organizational missions. It is important to be clear about each organization's overall mission, its mission related to adult literacy, and its level of commitment to building collaborative strategies to improve adult literacy.

### A. Institutional Mission

**Examples:** To sell corporate insurance and make a profit for stockholders; to provide Adult Basic Education classes in the county; to represent active workers and collectively bargain for better working conditions and benefits.

Description of mission: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### B. Literacy Mission

**Examples:** Upgrade basic skills of entry level employees; teach English to non-speakers of English; educate and train union members so they can be upwardly mobile in their companies; work with school systems to improve decision making, planning, and leadership skills of high school graduates.

Description of literacy mission: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Time Allocation: 15 minutes

Review the purpose.

Have individuals complete worksheet.

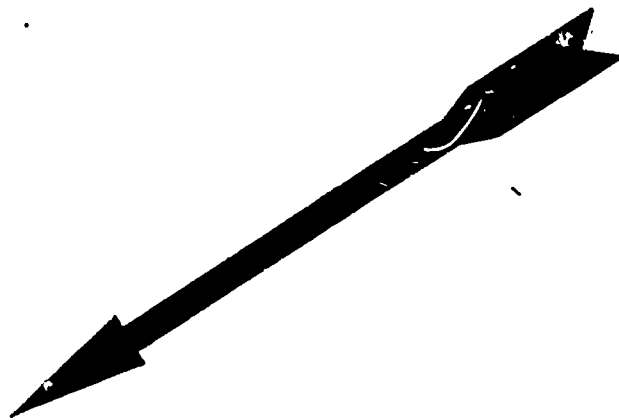
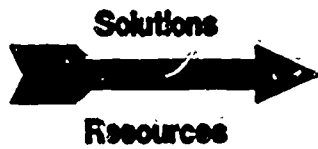
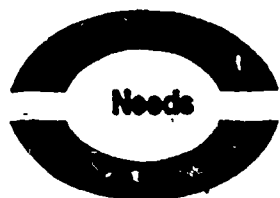
Have each individual, in turn, introduce him/herself providing the following information to others on the team:

Name.

Title.

Affiliation, with organizational mission.

Literacy mission of organization.



## B. SELECTION OF TEAM LEADER

**Purpose:** To assure a focal point for ongoing communication, determine which organization (individual) will serve as the leader of the community team. As the team decides on who (which organization) should be the team leader, consider the possible advantages and disadvantages associated with an organization from a given sector serving as the team leader.

**Examples:**

<u>Sector</u>	<u>Advantages</u>	<u>Disadvantages</u>
<u>Education</u>	Time of key people	Services to sell
	Experience	Limited ties to business
	Commitment to problem	Limited resources
<u>Business</u>	Resources	Time of key people
	Access to population	Narrow focus on need of own business
	Proximity to problem	Confidentiality of information

NOTES

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**Time Allocation:** 30 minutes

**Leader Preparation:** Review Appendix E (page 35/47) and F (page 36/47) of the *Workbook*. Based on this and other information, prepare a brief presentation on collaboration covering, at a minimum, the following:

- o Principles for collaboration.
- o Skills for collaboration.
- o Strategies to create and maintain effective partnerships.

Prepare transparencies of each from the overhead masters provided at the end of the *Leader's Guide*. Use these overhead transparencies at the presentation. Prepare transparency of Developing Your Community Action Plan from the overhead master provided at the end of the *Leader's Guide*.

After discussion of collaboration, move into Selection of Team Leader.

Review the purpose.

Have team discuss advantages and disadvantages associated with an organization (individual) from a given sector serving as the team leader.

Have team select a team leader.

This individual will lead the team through the remaining worksheets, based on your instructions.

After the leader is selected, use the overhead transparency to remind the team that:

1. The goal is to have a preliminary community action plan by later in the day.
2. The outline on pages 24 and 25 of the *Workbook* should be used for the plan.
3. Worksheets will be used to help the team develop the elements of the plan.
4. You recognize that it would be easier for one person to sit down and write a plan, but that's not collaboration.
5. The worksheets on workplace literacy should be reviewed and used as input for the discussions.

Have the team review flip chart notes on workplace literacy problems, solutions, and resources to get the team on the same "wave length" before they begin their discussions. Flip chart notes from earlier discussions should be taped to walls for review by teams.



### C. STRATEGIES FOR ONGOING COLLABORATION

**Purpose:** To identify procedures for communication among team members and for feedback and revisions of action plans to improve workplace literacy. To assure continued involvement of the team members, strategies for ongoing collaboration and information sharing should be agreed upon. The team needs to identify: What will be done? When will it be done? What resources will be needed? and, Who will do it? In developing strategies, consider if other organizations and individuals should be added to the team and the "in-kind" or actual costs that will need to be covered.

**Examples:**

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Issues To Be Covered</u>
Weekly meetings	Place, time
Community newsletter	Writing, typing, postage
Telephone (conference) calls	Initial or, costs
Weekly column in local newspaper	Writing, typing
Periodic community mailings	Writing, typing, postage

NOTES

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**Time Allocation:** 10-15 minutes

**Leader Preparation:** Review Appendix 4 (page 57-60) of *Leader's Guide - "Sample Community Action Plans"* for examples of ongoing collaboration activities.

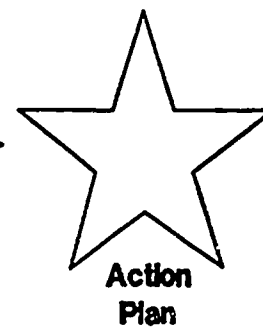
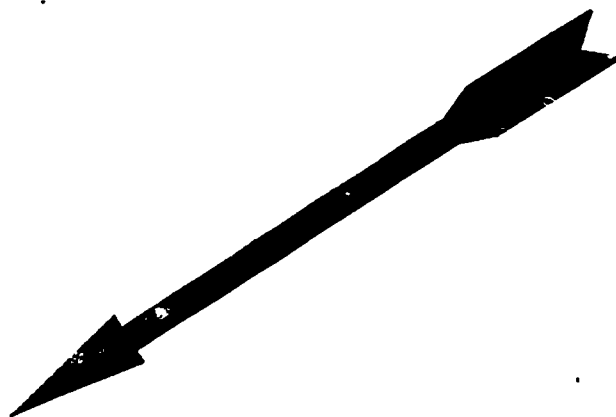
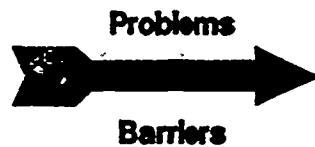
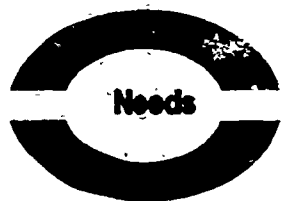
Review the purpose.

Read some examples from the Sample Community Action Plans.

Have team list strategies on flip chart.

Remind the team to review the *Workbook* worksheet (page 11/22) and flip chart notes on community resources.

Have team leader lead a discussion on strategies for ongoing collaboration.



#### D. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

**Purpose:** To identify overall goals and objectives for improving workplace literacy through community collaboration. In developing goals and objectives, the team members should review the worksheets and earlier discussions on literacy skills, problems, and solutions.

**Examples:** Improve basic skills of entry level employees; increase the communication skills of limited-English-proficient adults; improve group and organizational effectiveness skills of adult workers; increase problem-solving skills and career-development skills of entry and mid-level workers.

#### NOTES

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**Time Allocation:** 10-15 minutes

**Leader Preparation:** Review Appendix 4 (page 57-60) of *Leader's Guide* for examples of goals and objectives.

Read the purpose.

Read some examples from Sample Community Action Plans.

Have team leader lead discussion on goals and objectives.

Have team list goals and objectives on flip chart.

## E. IDENTIFICATION OF PRIORITY WORKPLACE LITERACY PROBLEMS

**Purpose:** To identify the most critical workplace literacy problems in your community. Based on the earlier worksheets and discussions the team should identify the workplace literacy problems it will address. Be as specific as possible, identifying the problem and the population group(s) having the problem.

**Examples:** Average reading level of grade six for entry level employees; large numbers of limited-English-proficient employees in certain companies; low levels of teamwork and problem-solving skills that are required for new technologies being introduced in manufacturing industry.

### NOTES

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**Time Allocation:** 15 minutes

**Leader Preparation:** Review Appendix 4 (page 57-60) of *Leader's Guide* for examples of priority workplace literacy problems.

Review the purpose.

Read examples from the Sample Community Action Plans.

Remind team to review the *Workbook* worksheet (page 6/16) and flip chart notes on workplace literacy problems.

Remind team that it can address multiple problems.

Remind team to be specific about problems and population to be addressed.

Have team leader lead discussion of priority workplace literacy problems to be addressed.

Have team list priority workplace literacy problems on flip chart.

## F. TASKS AND ACTIVITIES

**Purpose:** To identify the what, who, where, when, and how of the tasks and activities that will be undertaken to address the critical problems identified by your Community Team. For each critical problem identified, the team should answer (in detail) the following questions:

1. What will be done? For what population group?
2. What are specific goals or outcomes of activity?
3. Who will be responsible for different activities and tasks listed in #1?
4. What resources will be needed? How will they be obtained?
5. Where will activities take place?
6. When will activities take place?

NOTES

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**Time Allocation:** 30 minutes

**Leader Preparation:** Review Appendix 4 (page 57-60) of *Leader's Guide* for examples of tasks and activities.

Review the purpose, including questions to be addressed.

Read examples from the Sample Community Action Plans.

Remind team to be specific and that more than one activity can be proposed.

Have team leader lead discussion of tasks and activities.

Have team list tasks and activities on flip chart.

### G. SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES

Purpose: To develop a tentative timeline for the activities to be undertaken by the Community Team. The timeline should focus on short-range activities to be undertaken over the next three months. General plans for mid-range (4th-12th month) and long-range (year two and beyond) should also be included in the timeline.

Examples:

<u>Activity/Milestones</u>	<u>Timeline</u>
Team meetings	Weekly from October-December
Team mailings	15th of each month
ABE classes at GTX plant	Weekly November 1-30
Team workshops	Two times in October and December
Meeting with local chamber of commerce	Week of October 10
Add three new business representatives to team	March 1989
Hold "town meeting" on workplace literacy	June 1989
Revise Action Plan	Every six months

NOTES

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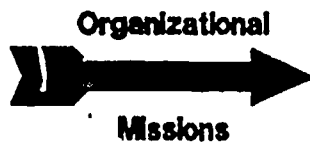
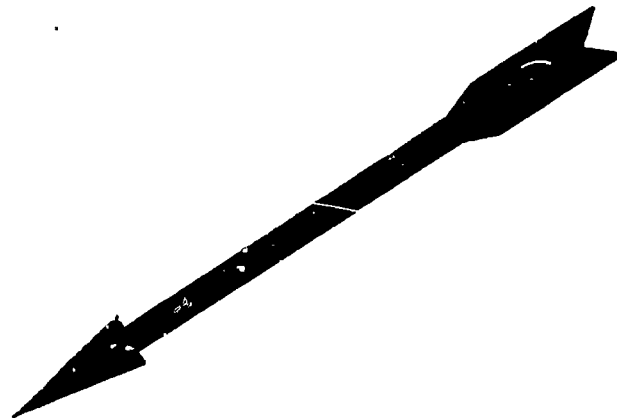
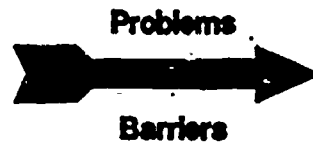
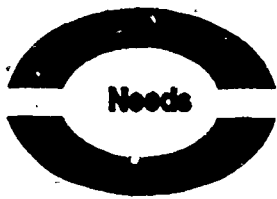
Time Allocation: 20 minutes

Review the purpose.

Read examples from the Sample Community Action Plans.

Have team leader lead discussion of schedule.

Have team list schedule of activities on flip chart.



## H. OUTLINE FOR ACTION PLAN TO IMPROVE WORKPLACE LITERACY

Below is an outline for a Community Action Plan to Improve Workplace Literacy Through Collaboration. Use the information generated from the team's discussions on developing action plans to complete the outline. It is expected that these plans will be modified as the team continues to work together over the next 3-6 months. As such, the plan should represent the team's initial thoughts on improving workplace literacy. Communities are encouraged to address more than one workplace literacy problem and are expected to detail multiple tasks/activities to address the problems.

### I. Workplace Literacy Team

- A. County/community
- B. Team leader
  - 1. Name
  - 2. Title
  - 3. Organization
  - 4. Address
  - 5. Telephone number
- C. Other team members
- D. Ongoing activities to maintain team
  - 1. What will be done, when/how often?
  - 2. Who will do what?
  - 3. Will additional organizations be added to the team? (Explain)

### II. Overall Goals and Objectives for Improving Workplace Literacy

### III. Workplace Literacy Problems to be Addressed

- A. Problem(s)
- B. Population(s)

Time Allocation: 30 minutes

Have each Community Team present components of action plan as presented on flip chart notes.

Raise questions and discuss each element of the plan as presented.

Have team leader lead a brief discussion of any modifications to the elements of the plan.

Have team prepare detailed Community Action Plan to Improve Workplace Literacy using the outline.



VI. Tasks and Activities (by problem)

- A. What will be done? What population groups are to be served?
- B. What are the specific goals or outcomes of the activities?
- C. Who will do it?
- D. What resources will be needed and how will they be obtained?
- E. Where will activities take place?
- F. When will activities take place?

V. Timeline

- A. Short-range (next 3 months)
- B. Mid-range (4th-12th month)
- C. Long-range (year two and beyond)

Before concluding the workshop make sure that the following items are covered:

- o Community Team should be clear about its next steps.
- o Team leaders should be clear of their roles and responsibilities related to the implementation of the plan.
- o Remind the team that the plan is a guide for future action and can and should be modified at some later date to reflect any changes or problems that have emerged.
- o Follow-up with team leaders to get feedback and information about ongoing and future activities.
- o Wish the teams good luck in their efforts to improve workplace literacy.

Pages 44-50 of the *Leader's Guide* contain the Appendices, Glossary of Terms, and Resource Bibliography from the *Workbook*.

APPENDICES

## A. BASIC WORKPLACE SKILLS

### ENABLING SKILLS

Problem Solving  
Creative Thinking  
Learning to Learn

### BASIC SKILLS

Communications:  
Reading  
Writing  
Verbal  
Listening

Computation

### PERSONAL MANAGEMENT SKILLS

Personal and Career Development  
Goal Setting/Motivation  
Self-Esteem

### GROWTH AND ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS SKILLS

Interpersonal  
Teamwork  
Negotiation  
Leadership  
Organizational

Source: Adapted from ASTD "Best Practices: What Works in Training and Development" project, 1988.

## B. REASONS FOR ADULT PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATION

### Category

### Specific Reasons

#### Job or Career

- o Learning new skills and knowledge to keep up with changing technology
- o Improving skills for current job
- o Promotion or increase in income
- o Career advancement
- o Career change
- o Acquisition of credentials
- o Union operation

#### Personal or Social

- o Consumerism
- o Retirement
- o Family living
- o Better citizen
- o Community activities
- o Political awareness
- o Volunteer work
- o Hobbies
- o Leisure

#### General Education

- o Completion of an academic degree program (AA, BA, MA, or GED)
- o Acquisition of general knowledge
- o Remedial learning or basic skills

### C. REASONS FOR ADULTS NOT PARTICIPATING IN EDUCATION

#### Category

##### Situational Barriers

(factors which arise out of an individual's position in a family, workplace, or social group at a given time)

#### Specific Reasons

- o Costs
- o Lack of time
- o Age
- o Prior educational attainment
- o Home responsibilities
- o Job responsibilities
- o Occupational status
- o Level of income

##### Social-Psychological Barriers

(factors related to the attitudes and self-perceptions an individual has or to the influence of significant others - family, friends, etc. - on the actions of the individual)

- o Lack of confidence in ability
- o Feeling too old
- o Low self-concept
- o Tired of school
- o Lack of interest
- o Family or friends don't like idea
- o Hesitate to seem too ambitious

##### Structural Barriers

(policies and practices of organizations that overtly or subtly exclude or discourage individuals from participating in education or training activities)

- o Course scheduling
- o Work schedule
- o Lack of transportation
- o Inconvenient location of courses
- o Lack of relevant courses
- o Financial support restrictions
- o Too long to complete program
- o Don't want to go full-time
- o Too much red tape
- o Lack of information on courses
- o Lack of information on support assistance
- o Inadequate counseling

### D. CRITICAL PROGRAM ELEMENTS FOR OVERCOMING BARRIERS TO ADULT PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROGRAMS

#### Barriers

#### Critical Elements

##### Financial

- o Minimal costs to participants
- o Unemployment compensation not affected by participation
- o Employers finance training and skill upgrading
- o Government pays for programs
- o Use of tuition assistance for employees
- o Support services covered by program costs

##### Time

- o Program at the workplace
- o Weekend and after-workhours programs
- o Short courses, symposia, and workshops
- o Use of computers and other teaching technologies
- o Paid educational leave or flexible work scheduling
- o Support services in the community at the workplace

##### Prior Educational Attainment

- o Remedial programs and tutoring
- o Programs in congenial settings such as the workplace or community
- o Short courses or workshops that are non-threatening
- o Peer teachers (when appropriate)
- o Sensitive instructors

Prior Educational Attainment  
(continued)

- o Pragmatic and relevant programs and materials
- o Active participation by learner (hands-on or experience based)
- o Feedback and encouragement on a continuous basis

Counseling

- o At the workplace
- o In the community
- o Peer counseling
- o Peer support groups
- o Free, as part of all programs

Self-Concept

- o Peer support groups
- o Counseling
- o Courses or services that are geared to succeeding
- o Sensitive instructors
- o Peer teachers
- o Pragmatic and relevant programs and materials
- o Feedback and encouragement
- o Programs in congenial settings
- o Remedial programs and tutoring

Scheduling

- o Flexible curriculum
- o Programs at the workplace
- o Weekend and after workhours programs
- o Short courses
- o Open entry/open exit programs
- o Modular curriculum
- o Computer and other teaching technologies
- o Programs in community settings

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Location

- o Programs at worksites
- o Programs in the community
- o Provision of transportation to education/training facilities

Information

- o Job search workshops
- o Job clubs
- o Training on how to collect and use information
- o Local labor market information
- o Information on education and training institutions
- o Counseling

General

- o Joint programs of business, education, labor, local government, and community agencies
- o Classroom and experiential learning options available
- o Comprehensive approaches that combine training and support services
- o Programs that are offered before layoffs
- o Retraining programs for new or emerging jobs

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## E. PRINCIPLES AND SKILLS FOR SUCCESSFUL COLLABORATION

**DEFINITION:** Collaboration is an ongoing process which enables persons involved to identify mutual concerns and the resources to address these concerns and to develop solutions which are mutually beneficial to all.

### PRINCIPLES FOR SUCCESSFUL COLLABORATION

- o Voluntary participation
- o Multi-sector representation
- o Equal status representation
- o Converging but independent goals
- o Performance orientation leading to accomplishments of benefit to all participants and organizations represented
- o Organizational structure mutually agreed upon with necessary staff and funding to accomplish goals
- o Shared responsibility for setting priorities, implementation of activities, and results
- o Shared credit for accomplishments

### SKILLS FOR SUCCESSFUL COLLABORATION

- o Recognition of differences in "culture" of organizations
- o Development of mutual trust and willingness to give up "turf"
- o Problem solving
- o Decision making
- o Resource identification
- o Consensus building
- o Commitment
- o Communication

## F. STRATEGIES TO CREATE AND MAINTAIN EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS

New partnerships can be perceived as a threat by members of existing organizations. The benefits of partnerships far outweigh the cost. Initially there are a number of things that can be done to effectively facilitate the creation of new partnerships. So sensitive areas in the initiation of partnerships include the following:

### 1. Each partnership has its own culture

There is a certain amount of inertia in most organizations. Forces and procedures which can block new partnerships exist. These need to be identified and managed in such a way that the partnership can be successful. Sometimes messages are sent by the type of individuals who will be responsible for these new partnerships within the organizations. Care needs to be taken to ensure that the individuals selected are flexible enough to work outside usual boundaries. Any organizational changes that result from the establishment of these partnerships also send messages to the existing organization, as well as to the other partners and the community, about the importance, significance, longevity, and ultimate benefits of this partnership.

### 2. Mutual definition of problems

For the initial stage, the mutual definition of the problems for all parties of the partnership is essential. Successful outcomes need to be defined and agreed upon. Each of the parties of the partnership need to have a sense of how they will know if the project is successful. Negotiated mutual agreement on the measures of outcomes from the beginning will reduce misunderstandings in the ambiguous situations that often follow the initiation of new partnerships. In starting a partnership it is helpful to clarify the commitment that the organizations and the individuals within the organizations are making. How long do they expect to be committed? How much time or energy? What level of people will be involved in the partnership? What kinds of resources will be contributed by each partner?

3. Institutional Change

Partnerships will eventually change institutions. Not all of these changes are predictable. It is helpful to keep a clear sense of each of the individual organization's mission, and in which direction each institution would like this partnership to change its organization. It is best to start with the highest level of leadership possible in each organization. Working top down on new partnerships is most effective. Often informal agreements may need to be in existence for an extensive period of time before a similar formal agreement, if any, may be developed. Successful partnerships stress trust and open communication among members.

The advantages must be real, the problems significant, and the successful outcomes important to each of the participants. Successful partnerships create energy. When each of the partners is encouraged to celebrate ownership of the outcomes, everyone gets credit.

4. Maintaining partnerships

After the stage of initiating a partnership comes the task of maintaining the partnership. Successful partnerships have a number of qualities. They remain adaptable to change. To be successful, flexibility must be encouraged. Multiple sources of funding are often desirable so that the partnership can maintain some independence of mission and not be captured by one funding source. Communication should be frequent with a high level of interaction around the successful achievements or goals of the partnership. Regularly scheduled meetings are important but, again, agendas must be practical and it is helpful to remain very conscious of the limits of time and resources. As the partnership evolves, new long-term and short-term goals will need to be continuously negotiated, defined, and mutually agreed upon.



## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

### ABE

Adult Basic Education (ABE) is a federal and state funded basic skills and life skills program which provides instruction for educationally disadvantaged.

### AFDC

Aid to Families With Dependent Children (AFDC) is a federal program which provides assistance to income-eligible families.

### Community Team

A team of 10 to 15 persons which represents employers, education institutions, government agencies, organized labor, and community-based agencies. The Community Team works together to identify concerns and resources that focus on the literacy needs and problems for both employees and employers.

### EDP

The External Diploma Program (EDP) is a competency-based assessment process which provides an alternative route for adults to gain a high school equivalency diploma.

### ESL OR ESOL

English as a Second Language (ESL) or English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) programs.

### GED

The General Educational Development Program (GED) is a course of study which prepares students for their high school equivalency examination.

### JTPA

The Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) is a federally funded program which provides job training programs including basic education for eligible adults.

### LEP

Limited English Proficient

### SECTOR GROUP

Community representatives from the same sector or with similar institutional bases. Sectors include: education, employment, and community organizations.

### VOLUNTEER LITERACY ORGANIZATIONS

Literacy Volunteers of America (LVA), Laubauch Literacy Action for the United States, and other national volunteer reading groups are community-based and sometimes library-based agencies which provide one-to-one tutorial for people at beginning levels of reading.

### WORKPLACE LITERACY

The skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary to successfully enter, function, and learn in the workplace.

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**Leader's Guide Appendices**

Appendix 1

PERCEPTION OF WORKPLACE LITERACY SKILLS  
NEEDED BY EMPLOYERS

1. EMPLOYMENT SECTOR

Reading  
Oral communication/listening  
Interpersonal  
Computation  
Ability to learn  
Reasoning

Motor skills  
Computer skills  
Following directions  
Time management  
Comprehension  
Giving directions

2. EDUCATION SECTOR

Reading  
English proficiency  
Oral communication  
Written communication  
Interpersonal skills  
Keyboarding  
Self-esteem  
Problem solving  
Listening (effective)  
Critical thinking  
Forms completion  
Should be determined by those  
involved  
Should be cooperatively determined

Team learning  
Self-directed learning  
Employer/Employee  
communication  
Adaptive skills  
Technological skills  
Employability(work ethic)  
Inquiry  
Spelling  
Learning how to learn  
Depends on needs of  
workplace  
(customized training and  
education)

3. OTHER SECTOR (libraries, unions, community-based organizations  
and government agencies)

Reading  
Communication  
Writing  
Computation  
Organization  
Thinking  
Positive self-esteem

Valuing further education  
Getting along with fellow workers  
Accepting and managing change  
Appreciation of the worth of your  
job, including a sense of work  
ethic

Appendix 2

WORKPLACE LITERACY PROBLEMS

1. EMPLOYMENT SECTOR

<u>Problem</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Impact/Effect</u>
Detection of skills void	All levels	Time and cost; lawsuit possibility
Inability to maintain a 40-hour work week	Non-exempt American born	Disdain of other employees who comply; lawsuit possibility
Decreasing availability of workforce	All levels	Cost/more intense competition, increased turnover
Low level skills	Non-exempt (entry-level employees)	Retention, lower morale
Language barrier	Employees	Work not being done, loss of productivity. Cost/time/turnover. Failure to use resources/productivity

2. EDUCATION SECTOR

Need: To find out: Do we have problem -- if so, how expensive?

Target populations

- Those who will not be upwardly mobile
- Those who are now illiterate
- Those coming who will need literacy services

School systems problems

- Lack of awareness of jobs other than management
- Misalignment of education with industry
- Cost of education funding

### 3. OTHER SECTOR

<u>Problem</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Effect</u>
Negative attitude toward the job	Economically disadvantaged youth	Negative/high turnover
Lack of specific skills	Economically disadvantaged youth	Negative/high turnover
The employer had reduced the job to meet skills	Employees	Unmotivated employees
Inability to articulate (communication - how to ask questions, understand answers)	Entry level and at all levels	Decreased credibility for for employee and employer
Changing job market	Middle-aged and older workers	Shortage of skilled workers, loss of productivity. Need for retraining. Job loss. Income loss.

<u>Problem</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Effect</u>
Low market turnover, stagnation		
H.S. Diploma (major hiring criterion, but lack basic skills)	Youth (any level)	False expectations, high turnover, increased costs, low productivity, high absenteeism
Employees can't use new equipment well	Existing employees	Miscommunication/frustration
Large number of LEP/NEP in labor pool	Non-native speakers	Low productivity, increased training costs, low profits, unacceptable turnover
Non-standard English speakers	Native speakers	Poor public relations, communications
Fear of recognizing a literacy problem	Employees and potential employees	
Non-acceptance of the work ethic		

## Appendix 3

### WORKPLACE LITERACY SOLUTIONS

#### 1. EMPLOYMENT SECTOR

**Organizational Solutions: Strategy, Activity, Idea(s), What Works!**

- A. Combined effort with all levels of employees. Chamber of commerce customized/tailored program, use of video
- B. In-house computer training tutorial program (training), introduction to computer use to learn how to read. "Computer club" available for all (broad range of users)
- C. One-on-one solutions with supervisor on detecting illiteracy (confidential)
- D. "Brown bag" seminars  
Review courses/class-English  
Conventions  
Telephone answering etiquette
- E. Awareness raising, recruitment, assessment: i.e., instructional delivery, evaluation

#### 2. EDUCATION SECTOR

<u>Solution</u>	<u>Goals and Objectives</u>	<u>Population</u>
Institutional/organizational on-site time release classes/training (fee or non-fee)	Provide efficient, cost effective, employee programs which are convenient, job related	Employees at all levels
Volunteer tutorial programs	Self-improvement using one-on-one tutors	
ABE classes	Self-improvement	
Consultation, referral services	To assess readiness for training	Human Resource Center
Marketing/employer awareness	Educate employers about existing services/resources	Non-education community
Training of trainers	Give business community trainers skills needed to conduct effective literacy programs	Any group needing the service

### 3. OTHER SECTOR

<u>Solution</u>	<u>Goals and Objectives</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Solution</u>	<u>Goals and Objectives</u>	<u>Population</u>
Literacy assessment when applying for social service benefits	To identify and refer	AFDC recipients	Skills upgrading class	To enable student to qualify for training	JTPA eligible
ABE classes	Increase literacy skills to keep or upgrade jobs	Union members	Information and referral (library)	Link with education service	Business community recipient of service, etc.
Retraining		Dislocated workers	Literacy Program	Tutor, also to network and to advise	County residents/ employees
Referral	Improve skill level of workers	Unemployed/ underemployed	Clearinghouse	To target small business employers to identify services	Business sector; indirectly employees
ABE/GED class on site	Improve education and establish rapport	Unemployed and employed who need H.S. diploma	Mentoring	To integrate the foreign born into the workforce	Foreign born
PET/life skills	Job-seeking skills, money management, survival skills	JTPA eligible	Co-funded literacy/GED classes, tailored to workforce needs of site (voluntary)		Union Members
			Inservice training to respond to specific training needs	To address a specific literacy need	All employees with the training need



## Appendix 4

### COMMUNITY ACTION PLANS

#### BALTIMORE COUNTY

##### I. Workplace Literacy Team

###### A. Baltimore County, Maryland

- B. Team Leader(s) - JoAnn Murphy, Community Liaison  
Baltimore County Public Schools  
6901 Charles Street  
Towson, MD 21204  
(301) 887-4171

Mel Mossovitz, Adult Education Supervisor  
Baltimore County Public Schools  
6901 Charles Street  
Towson, MD 21204  
(301) 887-4064

###### C. Other Team Members

1. Terri Boblooch - Baltimore County, Department of Community Development
2. Patty Spears - McCormick & Co., Inc.
3. Dexter Hess - USF&G
4. Jeanne Page - Baltimore County Chamber of Commerce
5. Debra Brown Felser - AFL-CIO Community Services
6. Edith Donahue - Sheppard Pratt Hospital

##### II. Ongoing Collaborative Activities

- A. Develop program with Baltimore County Chamber of Commerce. Make contacts to begin discussion of putting together a program. Agenda: have selected companies to give presentations on their literacy programs. Audience have time for questions. Half-day program.

- B. Publish resource listing. Directory of Lifelong Education Service providers. Make available at meeting.

- C. Meetings: called as needed around the project. After: to plan future projects and/or network.

- D. Meetings may have been set up independently to find out what other companies have done. Board of Education available to support activities at companies and the meeting project.

###### E. Additional Team Members

1. Economic Development Commission
2. Greater Baltimore Committee
3. Library system
4. Community colleges

##### III. Overall Goals and Objectives for Improving Workplace Literacy

Develop the linkage between educational providers and business consumers by: raising the conscious awareness of the workplace literacy problem within the business community; creating opportunities for workplace literacy dialogue between providers and workplace consumers; making known available resources necessary for the assessment and improvement, if needed, of job skills necessary to perform the present job and/or develop for future jobs; and providing models of successful workplace literacy projects to educators and workplace consumers.

##### IV. Workplace Literacy Problems

- A. Workers do not have the necessary skills to perform current and future assignments. This skill void results in lower productivity, restricted promotability, and high turnover. Since there is an increasingly reduced pool of skilled people for new hires, it's essential that employers provide opportunities for the current workforce to enhance skills.

- B. The target population is the current workforce in Baltimore County.

## V. Task and Activities

- A. The first activity will be to enlist the support of the Baltimore County Chamber of Commerce as a co-leader with the Baltimore County Public Schools. The team feels that the chamber should take the lead in sponsoring an initial awareness symposium where employers will share successful models for workplace projects. The target population will be small and large employers who have an interest in workplace literacy.
- B. Goals/Outcomes
1. Employers will have the information necessary to set up programs in their individual work places.
  2. Employers will share their progress with literacy skills with the Literacy Steering Committee, which will in turn share with members.
  3. New models will develop with both service providers and employers sharing success stories.
- C. The Literacy Team will take the responsibility for providing opportunities for sharing dialogue among employers/service providers.
- D. Resources needed will include printing of resource book of service providers, mailings to companies, sites for meetings, promotional materials.
- E. Where will activities take place? To be determined.
- F. When will activities take place? See timeline.

## VI. Timeline

- A. During the next 30 days, we will meet with the chamber of commerce and have a planning meeting. We will also add new members to the Literacy Team as needed.
- B. During the next 60-90 days, we will plan our awareness activity.
- C. Awareness activity to be held in spring of 1989.
- D. Follow-up meeting to evaluate activity (May 1989).
- E. Three months later survey participants to determine if anything has been initiated at the work site.

## VII. Evaluation Plan

To determine if companies make use of the human resource publication, to find out what steps participating companies have taken to deal with literacy in the workplace.

Instrument: 1) follow-up survey 3 months after program. 2) Program survey at meeting.

One year: follow-up survey to determine level of awareness and activity.

## FREDERICK COUNTY

### I. Workplace Literacy Team

- A. Frederick County, Maryland
- B. Team Leader(s) - Shanon Wolf  
Department of Economic and  
Employment Development  
100 West Patrick Street  
Frederick, MD 21701  
(301) 694-2101
- C. Other Team Members
  - 1. Tammy Lipan, Adult Education
  - 2. Joyce Fedak, Frederick Community College
  - 3. Lin Snyder, Eastalco Aluminum Co.
  - 4. Margaret Nusbaum, Job Training Agency
  - 5. Marian Knill, Whittaker Bioproducts  
Joyce Dennis, Whittaker Bioproducts
  - 6. Judith Ferro, Frederick Trading Co.
  - 7. Kitty Reed, Chamber of Commerce
  - 8. Wayne Moran, Economic and Community Development  
Commission

Frederick County plans to tie into an already existing organization in the county, the Literacy Coalition. Some of the members of the Workplace Literacy Team are already members of the coalition. The coalition is composed of all the literacy providers in Frederick County. The coalition has already done the following: 1) Compiled a booklet of all literacy services available in Frederick County. This will be revised and updated, then distributed to businesses. 2) Surveyed 400 businesses in Frederick County to assess interest in need for, and commitment to, literacy in the worksite. 3) Established a literacy hotline. 4) Printed posters for distribution.

### II. Ongoing Collaborative Activities

- A. The three business representatives of the Workplace Literacy Committee will meet as often as needed to develop a business list of their literacy needs at their own plants.
- B. The Workplace Literacy Committee will then mesh the three businesses' needs with the Literacy Coalition's providers and available services to determine which provider has the resources to begin to solve the needs of the businesses. This will be developed into a pilot business literacy demonstration project.
- C. By January 1, the three employers ought to have a well-defined plan as to how this pilot literacy project would work in a segment of one, two, or all three companies. Literacy services will then be implemented in a pilot program and assessed as to effectiveness.
- D. By the end of October, the business subcommittee will have met to begin defining its plan of action. November will involve collaborative efforts between the three business representatives and the literacy providers to mesh the needs of the three businesses with the services that can be provided by the literacy providers.

A pilot literacy program will hopefully be implemented by about March 1, 1989.

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY

I. Workplace Literacy Team

A. Prince George's County, Maryland

- B. Team Leader(s) - Jacquelyn Lendsey  
Special Assistant to the Superintendent  
Prince George's County Public Schools  
14201 School Lane  
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772

C. Other Team Members

1. James Harmon, Litton Industries
2. Agnes Houff, Prince George's County Public Schools
3. Suzanne Escucha, Hechinger
4. Margaret Hayes, Iverson Mall
5. Malcolm Barnes, Minority Business Resource Institute
6. Honore Francis, Prince George's County Library

II. Ongoing Collaborative Activities

To be determined at next meeting of Community Team.

III. Overall Goals and Objectives for Improving Workplace Literacy

- A. To provide the greatest amount of services to the greatest number of employees.
1. Refine and quantify in objective terms (measurable).
  2. Define the problem in local terms.
- B. To increase awareness of workplace literacy and access to resources.
1. Complete a resource directory of Workplace Literacy resources.

2. Conduct needs assessment.

3. Agree on operational definition of Workplace Literacy and determine the degree of seriousness of the problem ("bottom line" definition?).

4. Disseminate Workplace Literacy information through business associations and organizational newsletters.

C. To develop collaborative strategies to continue the effort beyond grant funding period.

1. Continue to meet.

2. Explore "Business and Industry Council" model to address Workplace Literacy problem.

3. Contact merchants association, mall association, and others.

IV. Workplace Literacy Problems to be Addressed

A. Market Segmentation Approach. We will target the following employer groups for our needs assessment to determine the depth of the problem and target employee populations:

1. Major employers
2. Small businesses
3. Minority-owned business
4. Non-profit organizations
5. Local government agencies

V. See Objectives

VI. Timeline

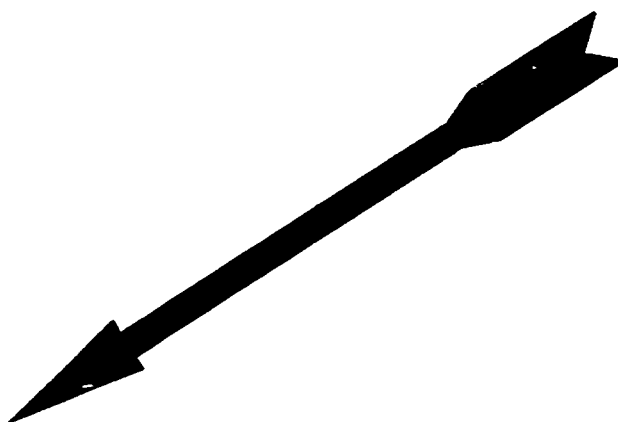
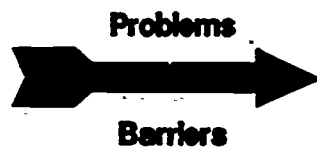
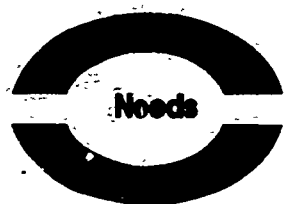
To be defined at next meeting.

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## OVERHEAD MASTERS FOR TRANSPARENCIES

The following pages should be used as overhead masters to produce transparencies for use during the one-day training session:

1. Flow Diagram
2. Agenda
3. Basic Workplace Skills
4. Reasons for Adult Participation in Education
5. Reasons for Adults Not Participating in Education
6. Program Elements for Overcoming Barriers
7. Benefits of Workplace Literacy for Individual Workers
8. Principles for Successful Collaboration
9. Skills for Successful Collaboration
10. Strategies to Create and Maintain Effective Partnerships
11. Developing Your Community Action Plan



## **AGENDA**

### **Developing Community Action Plans to Improve Workplace Literacy**

#### **MORNING SESSION**

**Introductions**

**Workshop Goals and Objectives**

**Setting the Context**

**Understanding the Perspectives of Different Sectors**

**Workbook Section I - Workplace Literacy**

#### **LUNCH**

#### **AFTERNOON SESSION**

**Developing Community Action Plans**

**Workbook Section II - Development of Action Plans**

**Preparing Draft Community Action Plans**

**Presenting Draft Community Action Plans**

**Modifying Community Action Plans**

**Adjourn**

## **BASIC WORKPLACE SKILLS**

### **ENABLING SKILLS**

- Problem Solving**
- Creative Thinking**
- Learning to Learn**

### **BASIC SKILLS**

#### **Communications:**

- Reading**
- Writing**
- Verbal**
- Listening**

#### **Computation**

### **PERSONAL MANAGEMENT SKILLS**

- Personal and Career Development**
- Goal Setting/Motivation**
- Self-Esteem**

### **GROUP AND ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS SKILLS**

- Interpersonal**
- Teamwork**
- Negotiation**
- Leadership**
- Organizational**

**Source: Adapted from ASTD "Best Practices: What Works in Training and Development" project, 1988.**



## **REASONS FOR ADULT PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATION**

**Learning new skills and knowledge to keep up with changing technology**

**Improving skills for current job**

**Promotion or increase in income**

**Career advancement**

**Career change**

**Acquisition of credentials**

**Union operation**

**Consumerism**

**Retirement**

**Family living**

**Better citizen**

**Community activities**

**Political awareness**

**Volunteer work**

**Hobbies**

**Leisure**

**Completion of an academic degree program (AA, BA, MA, or GED)**

**Acquisition of general knowledge**

**Remedial learning or basic skills**

## **REASONS FOR ADULTS NOT PARTICIPATING IN EDUCATION**

**Situational Barriers** - factors which arise out of an individual's position in a family, workplace, or social group at a given time, including: Costs, lack of time, age, prior education attainment, home responsibilities, job responsibilities, occupational status, level of income.

**Social-Psychological Barriers** - factors related to the attitudes and self-perceptions an individual has or to the influence of significant others - family, friends, etc. - on the actions of the individual, including: lack of confidence, feeling too old, low self-concept, tired of school, lack of interest, family does not like idea, hesitate to seem too ambitious.

**Structural Barriers** - policies and practices of organizations that overtly or subtly exclude or discourage individuals from participating in education or training activities, including: course scheduling, work schedule, lack of transportation, inconvenient location of courses, lack of relevant courses, financial support restrictions, too long to complete program, does not want to go full-time, too much red tape, lack of information, inadequate counseling.

## PROGRAM ELEMENTS FOR OVERCOMING BARRIERS

<u>Barriers</u>	<u>Critical Elements</u>
<b>Financial</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o Minimal costs to participants</li><li>o Support services covered by program costs</li></ul>
<b>Time</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o Program at the workplace</li><li>o Weekend and after-workhours programs</li><li>o Short courses, symposia, and workshops</li></ul>
<b>Counseling</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o At the workplace</li><li>o Peer counseling</li><li>o Peer support groups</li></ul>
<b>Scheduling</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o Flexible curriculum</li><li>o Programs at the workplace</li><li>o Short courses</li><li>o Open entry/open exit programs</li><li>o Modular curriculum</li></ul>
<b>Location</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o Programs at worksites</li><li>o Provision of transportation to education/training facilities</li></ul>
<b>Information</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o Information on education/training</li></ul>

**BENEFITS OF WORKPLACE LITERACY**  
**FOR INDIVIDUAL WORKERS**

**Entering into jobs and occupations**

**Mobility within occupations and careers**

**Skill upgrading**

**Acquisition of new skills**

**Personal development**

**Increased self-confidence**

## **PRINCIPLES FOR SUCCESSFUL COLLABORATION**

**Voluntary participation**

**Multi-sector representation**

**Equal status representation**

**Converging but independent goals**

**Performance orientation leading to accomplishments of benefit to all participants and organizations represented**

**Organizational structure mutually agreed upon with necessary staff and funding to accomplish goals**

**Shared responsibility for setting priorities, implementation of activities, and results**

**Shared credit for accomplishments**

## **SKILLS FOR SUCCESSFUL COLLABORATION**

**Recognition of differences in "culture" of organizations represented**

**Development of mutual trust and willingness to give up "turf"**

**Problem solving**

**Decision making**

**Resource identification**

**Consensus building**

**Commitment**

**Communication**

## **STRATEGIES TO CREATE AND MAINTAIN EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS**

**New partnerships can be perceived as a threat by members of existing organizations. The benefits of partnerships far outweigh the cost. Initially there are a number of things that can be done to effectively facilitate the creation of new partnerships. Some sensitive areas in the initiation of partnerships include the following:**

**Each partnership has its own culture**

**Mutual definition of problems**

**Institutional change**

**Maintaining partnerships**

## **DEVELOPING YOUR COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN**

- 1. The goal is to have a preliminary community action plan by later in the day.**
- 2. The outline on pages 24 and 25 of the Workbook should be used for the plan.**
- 3. Worksheets will be used to help the team develop the elements of the plan.**
- 4. It would be easier for one person to sit down and write a plan, but that's not collaboration.**
- 5. The worksheets on workplace literacy should be reviewed and used as input for the discussions.**





# IMPROVING WORKPLACE LITERACY THROUGH COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

## WORKBOOK

Ivan Charner  
Shirley Fox

Academy for Educational Development/National Institute for Work and Learning

Prepared for the Maryland State Department of Education  
Division of Instruction, Adult and Community Education Branch

Project funding provided by the Maryland State Department of Education through the Adult Education Act (PL 91-230) as amended, Section 310 Federal Funds.

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# IMPROVING WORKPLACE LITERACY THROUGH COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

## WORKBOOK

by

Ivan Charner and Shirley Fox  
Academy for Educational Development/National Institute for Work and Learning

Published by

The Academy for Educational Development  
1255 23rd Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20037

Prepared for

The Maryland State Department of Education  
Division of Instruction, Adult and Community Education Branch

# IMPROVING WORKPLACE LITERACY THROUGH COMMUNITY COLLABORATION WORKBOOK TO DEVELOP COMMUNITY ACTION PLANS

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## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this workbook is to help you develop a better understanding of workplace literacy and how local collaborative activities can be an effective strategy for improving the level of workplace literacy. Literacy in general, and workplace literacy in particular, are growing concerns in our society. It has been estimated that 20 million adults are functionally illiterate. At the same time, many employers are having difficulty finding entry level employees who possess the skills necessary to be effective and productive employees who can move up in their organizations. Also, the rapid technological changes that we are experiencing require new sets of skills and knowledge that many workers do not possess and are finding difficult to learn.

Collaboration is a process that brings together different organizations and institutions within a community to identify mutual concerns and resources and to develop strategies and solutions which are mutually beneficial to all. The outcomes of collaboration include not only new strategies and solutions to identified problems, but also changes in the relationships among institutions that result from the collaborative process. Responsibility for agenda planning and action, and decision-making authority over the design and operation of certain missions and functions are shared among organizations. This sharing of authority is what makes collaboration challenging and exciting.

This workbook will help you think about and identify workplace literacy skills, problems, and the array of existing solutions to these problems. The completion of the worksheets should be done as part of a workshop on developing community action plans to improve workplace literacy. As you complete the worksheets and participate in the workshop activities you will learn how other organizations and institutions feel about the problem of workplace literacy, solutions that have been tried, and opportunities for working together with others.

## I. WORKPLACE LITERACY

The purpose of the following worksheets is to help you identify a set of critical issues related to workplace literacy. The worksheets and group discussion with other representatives from similar organizations will provide a more complete understanding of workplace literacy skills, problems, barriers, solutions, and resources.

## A. WORKPLACE LITERACY SKILLS

**Purpose:** To identify critical workplace literacy skills. It is important to identify the literacy skills required by different employers in the community. List all of the literacy skills you feel are important to successful functioning in a workplace. After you have listed the skills, mark if they are a high or low priority.

### Literacy Skills

**Examples:** Reading, writing, oral communication, listening, decision making, leadership, operation of equipment, technological skills.

### Skills

### Priority

High

Low

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## B. WORKPLACE LITERACY PROBLEMS

**Purpose:** To identify workplace literacy problems in your organization and in your community. It is important to understand the nature and magnitude of literacy problems in order to develop successful solutions. Describe each problem, the group or population having the problem, and how the problem affects (directly or indirectly) your organization and/or employers in your community.

### Literacy Problems

**Examples:** Existing employees require skill upgrading; entry level employees possess low levels of basic skills; large numbers of non-English speakers in labor pool.

1. Problem: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Population: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Effect on organization and/or employers: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Problem: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Population: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Effect on organization and/or employers: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



3. Problem: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Population: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Effect on organization and/or employers: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. Problem: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Population: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Effect on organization and/or employers: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. Problem: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Population: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Effect on organization and/or employers: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### C. BARRIERS TO ADULT EDUCATION AND TRAINING

**Purpose:** To identify barriers to further education and training faced by adults. It is important to understand the array of reasons for workers and adults not participating in education and training courses or programs. After you have listed the reason, mark if you think it acts as a major or minor barrier for most adult workers.

#### Reasons for Not Participating in Education

**Examples:** Cost, time, low basic skills, inconvenient location or schedule of courses, lack of information, lack of counseling.

<u>Reason</u>	<u>Barrier</u>	
	<u>Major</u>	<u>Minor</u>
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

## D. WORKPLACE LITERACY SOLUTIONS

Purpose: To identify and describe organizational solutions to workplace literacy problems. It is important to identify existing programs and services that are aimed at improving workplace literacy for different groups of workers. For each solution that your organization has implemented, specify the population served, the goals and objectives of the solution, and the results.

### Literacy Programs and Services

Examples: Computerized math and reading tutorials; workplace ESL programs; tuition-aid for ABE classes; in-house training programs.

1. Description: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Goals/objectives/results: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Population served: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Description: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Goals/objectives/results: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Population served: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. Description: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Goals/objectives/results: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Population served: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. Description: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Goals/objectives/results: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Population served: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. Description: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Goals/objectives/results: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Population served: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

E. INVENTORY OF POTENTIAL COMMUNITY RESOURCES  
FOR IMPROVING WORKPLACE LITERACY

Purpose: To identify educational, employer, community-based, union, and other organizations in the community which are, or might be, involved in efforts to improve workplace literacy. For each category list the name of the organization, the contact person (if known), and the organization's current involvement in workplace literacy.

Example: UAW - Jill Corsica - Computer-assisted skill upgrading program for auto refinishers.

Local Organization

Contact Person

Current Involvement

EDUCATION

EMPLOYER

Local Organization

Contact Person

Current Involvement

COMMUNITY BASED

UNION

OTHER

## F. BENEFITS OF IMPROVED WORKPLACE LITERACY

**Purpose:** To identify the potential benefits of improved workplace literacy to different groups in the community. It is important to consider the broader effects in the community of improved workplace literacy not only for employers and their employees, but for other sectors as well. For each category listed below, specify the potential benefits of improved workplace literacy.

**Example:** Welfare system - Fewer clients due to skill upgrading and increased earning potential:

**Category**

**Benefits**

**Employers**

**Current Workforce**

**New Entrants to Labor Force**

Category

Benefits

Unions

Welfare System

Education System

Other



## II. DEVELOPMENT OF ACTION PLANS

The purpose of the following worksheets is to help your Community Team develop a specific plan to improve workplace literacy through community collaboration. As you complete the worksheets with the other members of your community, remember that a successful collaboration process requires that information, concerns, goals, and decision making be shared among participating organizations.

The worksheets and group discussion will provide critical input for developing your Community's Action Plan to Improve Workplace Literacy according to the outline provided at the end of this section.

## A. ORGANIZATIONAL MISSIONS

**Purpose:** To clarify organizational missions. It is important to be clear about each organization's overall mission, its mission related to adult literacy, and its level of commitment to building collaborative strategies to improve adult literacy.

### A. Institutional Mission

**Examples:** To sell corporate insurance and make a profit for stockholders; to provide Adult Basic Education classes in the county; to represent active workers and collectively bargain for better working conditions and benefits.

Description of mission: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### B. Literacy Mission

**Examples:** Upgrade basic skills of entry level employees; teach English to non-speakers of English; educate and train union members so they can be upwardly mobile in their companies; work with school systems to improve decision making, planning, and leadership skills of high school graduates.

Description of literacy mission: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## B. SELECTION OF TEAM LEADERS

**Purpose:** To assure a focal point for ongoing communication, determine which organization (individual) will serve as the leader of the Community Team. As the team decides on who (which organization) should be the team leader, consider the possible advantages and disadvantages associated with an organization from a given sector serving as the team leader.

**Examples:**

<u>Sector</u>	<u>Advantages</u>	<u>Disadvantages</u>
<u>Education</u>	Time of key people	Services to sell
	Experience	Limited ties to business
	Commitment to problem	Limited resources
<u>Business</u>	Resources	Time of key people
	Access to population	Narrow focus on needs of own business
	Proximity to problem	Confidentiality of information

---

### NOTES

## C. STRATEGIES FOR ONGOING COLLABORATION

Purpose: To identify procedures for communication among team members and for feedback and revisions of action plans to improve workplace literacy. To assure continued involvement of the team members, strategies for ongoing collaboration and information sharing should be agreed upon. The team needs to identify: What will be done? When will it be done? What resources will be needed? and, Who will do it? In developing strategies, consider if other organizations and individuals should be added to the team and the "in-kind" or actual costs that will need to be covered.

### Examples:

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Issues To Be Covered</u>
Weekly meetings	Place, time
Community newsletter	Writing, typing, postage
Telephone (conference) calls	Initiator, costs
Weekly column in local newspaper	Writing, typing
Periodic community mailings	Writing, typing, postage

### NOTES

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## D. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

**Purpose:** To identify overall goals and objectives for improving workplace literacy through community collaboration. In developing goals and objectives, the team members should review the worksheets and earlier discussions on literacy skills, problems, and solutions.

**Examples:** Improve basic skills of entry level employees; increase the communication skills of limited-English-proficient adults; improve group and organizational effectiveness skills of adult workers; increase problem-solving skills and career-development skills of entry and mid-level workers.

### NOTES

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## E. IDENTIFICATION OF PRIORITY WORKPLACE LITERACY PROBLEMS

**Purpose:** To identify the most critical workplace literacy problems in your community. Based on the earlier worksheets and discussions the team should identify the workplace literacy problems it will address. Be as specific as possible, identifying the problem and the population group(s) having the problem.

**Examples:** Average reading level of grade six for entry level employees; large numbers of limited-English-proficient employees in certain companies; low levels of teamwork and problem-solving skills that are required for new technologies being introduced in manufacturing industry.

### NOTES

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## F. TASKS AND ACTIVITIES

Purpose: To identify the what, who, where, when, and how of the tasks and activities that will be undertaken to address the critical problems identified by your Community Team. For each critical problem identified, the team should answer (in detail) the following questions:

1. What will be done? For what population group?
2. What are specific goals or outcomes of activity?
3. Who will be responsible for different activities and tasks listed in #1?
4. What resources will be needed? How will they be obtained?
5. Where will activities take place?
6. When will activities take place?

---

### NOTES

## G. SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES

Purpose: To develop a tentative timeline for the activities to be undertaken by the Community Team. The timeline should focus on short-range activities to be undertaken over the next three months. General plans for mid-range (4th-12th month) and long-range (year two and beyond) should also be included in the timeline.

Examples:

<u>Activity/Milestones</u>	<u>Timeline</u>
Team meetings	Biweekly from October-December
Team mailings	15th of each month
ABE classes at GTX plant	Weekly November 1-30
Team workshops	Two times in October and December
Meeting with local chamber of commerce	Week of October 10
Add three new business representatives to team	March 1989
Hold "town meeting" on workplace literacy	June 1989
Revise Action Plan	Every six months

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### NOTES

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## H. OUTLINE FOR ACTION PLAN TO IMPROVE WORKPLACE LITERACY

Below is an outline for a Community Action Plan to Improve Workplace Literacy Through Collaboration. Use the information generated from the team's discussions on developing action plans to complete the outline. It is expected that these plans will be modified as the team continues to work together over the next 3-6 months. As such, the plan should represent the team's initial thoughts on improving workplace literacy. Communities are encouraged to address more than one workplace literacy problem and are expected to detail multiple tasks/activities to address the problems.

- I. Workplace Literacy Team
  - A. County/community
  - B. Team leader
    - 1. Name
    - 2. Title
    - 3. Organization
    - 4. Address
    - 5. Telephone number
  - C. Other team members
  - D. Ongoing activities to maintain team
    - 1. What will be done, when/how often?
    - 2. Who will do what?
    - 3. Will additional organizations be added to the team? (Explain)
- II. Overall Goals and Objectives for Improving Workplace Literacy
- III. Workplace Literacy Problems to be Addressed
  - A. Problem(s)
  - B. Population(s)

IV. Tasks and Activities (by problem)

- A. What will be done? What population groups are to be served?
- B. What are the specific goals or outcomes of the activities?
- C. Who will do it?
- D. What resources will be needed and how will they be obtained?
- E. Where will activities take place?
- F. When will activities take place?

V. Timeline

- A. Short-range (next 3 months)
- B. Mid-range (4th-12th month)
- C. Long-range (year two and beyond)

## APPENDICES

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## A. BASIC WORKPLACE SKILLS

### ENABLING SKILLS

Problem Solving  
Creative Thinking  
Learning to Learn

### BASIC SKILLS

#### Communications:

- Reading
- Writing
- Verbal
- Listening

Computation

### PERSONAL MANAGEMENT SKILLS

Personal and Career Development  
Goal Setting/Motivation  
Self-Esteem

### GROUP AND ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS SKILLS

Interpersonal  
Teamwork  
Negotiation  
Leadership  
Organizational

Source: Adapted from ASTD "Best Practices: What Works in Training and Development" project, 1988.

## B. REASONS FOR ADULT PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATION

<u>Category</u>	<u>Specific Reasons</u>
Job or Career	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o Learning new skills and knowledge to keep up with changing technology</li><li>o Improving skills for current job</li><li>o Promotion or increase in income</li><li>o Career advancement</li><li>o Career change</li><li>o Acquisition of credentials</li><li>o Union operation</li></ul>
Personal or Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o Consumerism</li><li>o Retirement</li><li>o Family living</li><li>o Better citizen</li><li>o Community activities</li><li>o Political awareness</li><li>o Volunteer work</li><li>o Hobbies</li><li>o Leisure</li></ul>
General Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o Completion of an academic degree program (AA, BA, MA, or GED)</li><li>o Acquisition of general knowledge</li><li>o Remedial learning or basic skills</li></ul>

## C. REASONS FOR ADULTS NOT PARTICIPATING IN EDUCATION

### Category

### Specific Reasons

#### Situational Barriers

(factors which arise out of an individual's position in a family, workplace, or social group at a given time)

- o Costs
- o Lack of time
- o Age
- o Prior educational attainment
- o Home responsibilities
- o Job responsibilities
- o Occupational status
- o Level of income

#### Social-Psychological Barriers

(factors related to the attitudes and self-perceptions an individual has or to the influence of significant others - family, friends, etc. - on the actions of the individual)

- o Lack of confidence in ability
- o Feeling too old
- o Low self-concept
- o Tired of school
- o Lack of interest
- o Family or friends don't like the idea
- o Hesitate to seem too ambitious

#### Structural Barriers

(policies and practices of organizations that overtly or subtly exclude or discourage individuals from participating in education or training activities)

- o Course scheduling
- o Work schedule
- o Lack of transportation
- o Inconvenient location of courses
- o Lack of relevant courses
- o Financial support restrictions
- o Too long to complete program
- o Don't want to go full-time
- o Too much red tape
- o Lack of information on courses
- o Lack of information on support assistance
- o Inadequate counseling

D. CRITICAL PROGRAM ELEMENTS FOR OVERCOMING  
BARRIERS TO ADULT PARTICIPATION IN  
EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROGRAMS

Barriers

Critical Elements

Financial

- o Minimal costs to participants
- o Unemployment compensation not affected by participation
- o Employers finance training and skill upgrading
- o Government pays for programs
- o Use of tuition assistance for employees
- o Support services covered by program costs

Time

- o Program at the workplace
- o Weekend and after-workhours programs
- o Short courses, symposia, and workshops
- o Use of computers and other teaching technologies
- o Paid educational leave or flexible work scheduling
- o Support services in the community or at the workplace

Prior Educational Attainment

- o Remedial programs and tutoring
- o Programs in congenial settings such as the workplace or community
- o Short courses or workshops that are non-threatening
- o Peer teachers (when appropriate)
- o Sensitive instructors
- o Pragmatic and relevant programs and materials
- o Active participation by learner (hands-on or experience-based)
- o Feedback and encouragement on a continuous basis

- Counseling
  - o At the workplace
  - o In the community
  - o Peer counseling
  - o Peer support groups
  - o Free, as part of all programs
  
- Self-Concept
  - o Peer support groups
  - o Counseling
  - o Courses or services that are geared to succeeding
  - o Sensitive instructors
  - o Peer teachers
  - o Pragmatic and relevant programs and materials
  - o Feedback and encouragement
  - o Programs in congenial settings
  - o Remedial programs and tutoring
  
- Scheduling
  - o Flexible curriculum
  - o Programs at the workplace
  - o Weekend and after workhours programs
  - o Short courses
  - o Open entry/open exit programs
  - o Modular curriculum
  - o Computer and other teaching technologies
  - o Programs in community settings
  
- Location
  - o Programs at worksites
  - o Programs in the community
  - o Provision of transportation to education/training facilities
  
- Information
  - o Job search workshops
  - o Job clubs
  - o Training on how to collect and use information
  - o Local labor market information
  - o Information on education and training institutions
  - o Counseling



## General

- o Joint programs of business, education, labor, local government, and community agencies
- o Classroom and experiential learning options available
- o Comprehensive approaches that combine training and support services
- o Programs that are offered before layoffs
- o Retraining programs for new or emerging jobs

## E. PRINCIPLES AND SKILLS FOR SUCCESSFUL COLLABORATION

**DEFINITION:** Collaboration is an ongoing process which enables persons involved to identify mutual concerns and the resources to address these concerns and to develop solutions which are mutually beneficial to all.

### PRINCIPLES FOR SUCCESSFUL COLLABORATION

- o Voluntary participation
- o Multi-sector representation
- o Equal status representation
- o Converging but independent goals
- o Performance orientation leading to accomplishments of benefit to all participants and organizations represented
- o Organizational structure mutually agreed upon with necessary staff and funding to accomplish goals
- o Shared responsibility for setting priorities, implementation of activities, and results
- o Shared credit for accomplishments

### SKILLS FOR SUCCESSFUL COLLABORATION

- o Recognition of differences in "culture" of organizations represented
- o Development of mutual trust and willingness to give up "turf"
- o Problem solving
- o Decision making
- o Resource identification
- o Consensus building
- o Commitment
- o Communication

## F. STRATEGIES TO CREATE AND MAINTAIN EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS

New partnerships can be perceived as a threat by members of existing organizations. The benefits of partnerships far outweigh the cost. Initially there are a number of things that can be done to effectively facilitate the creation of new partnerships. Some sensitive areas in the initiation of partnerships include the following:

1. Each partnership has its own culture

There is a certain amount of inertia in most organizations. Forces and procedures which can block new partnerships exist. These need to be identified and managed in such a way that the partnership can be successful. Sometimes messages are sent by the type of individuals who will be responsible for these new partnerships within the organizations. Care needs to be taken to ensure that the individuals selected are flexible enough to work outside usual boundaries. Any organizational changes that result from the establishment of these partnerships also send messages to the existing organization, as well as to the other partners and the community, about the importance, significance, longevity, and ultimate benefits of this partnership.

2. Mutual definition of problems

For the initial stage, the mutual definition of the problems for all parties of the partnership is essential. Successful outcomes need to be defined and agreed upon. Each of the parties of the partnership need to have a sense of how they will know if the project is successful. Negotiated mutual agreement on the measures of outcomes from the beginning will reduce misunderstandings in the ambiguous situations that often follow the initiation of new partnerships. In starting a partnership it is helpful to clarify the commitment that the organizations and the individuals within the organizations are making. How long do they expect to be committed? How much time or energy? What level of people will be involved in the partnership? What kinds of resources will be contributed by each partner?

3. Institutional Change

Partnerships will eventually change institutions. Not all of these changes are predictable. It is helpful to keep a clear sense of each of the individual organization's missions and in which direction each institution would like this partnership to change its organization. It is best to start with the highest level of leadership possible in each organization. Working top down on new partnerships is most effective. Often informal agreements may need to be in existence for an extensive period of time before a similar formal agreement, if any, may be developed. Successful partnerships stress trust and open communication among members.

The advantages must be real, the problems significant, and the successful outcomes important to each of the participants. Successful partnerships create energy. When each of the partners is encouraged to celebrate ownership of the outcomes, everyone gets credit.

4. Maintaining partnerships

After the stage of initiating a partnership comes the task of maintaining the partnership. Successful partnerships have a number of qualities. They remain adaptable to change. To be successful, flexibility must be encouraged. Multiple sources of funding are often desirable so that the partnership can maintain some independence of mission and not be captured by one funding source. Communication should be frequent with a high level of interaction around the successful achievements or goals of the partnership. Regularly scheduled meetings are important but, again, agendas must be practical and it is helpful to remain very conscious of the limits of time and resources. As the partnership evolves, new long-term and short-term goals will need to be continuously negotiated, defined, and mutually agreed upon.

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

### ABE

Adult Basic Education (ABE) is a federal and state funded basic skills and life skills program which provides instruction for educationally disadvantaged.

### AFDC

Aid to Families With Dependent Children (AFDC) is a federal program which provides assistance to income-eligible families.

### COMMUNITY TEAM

A team of 10 to 15 persons which represents employers, education institutions, government agencies, organized labor, and community-based agencies. The Community Team works together to identify concerns and resources that focus on the literacy needs and problems for both employees and employers.

### EDP

The External Diploma Program (EDP) is a competency-based assessment process which provides an alternative route for adults to gain a high school equivalency diploma.

### ESL OR ESOL

English as a Second Language (ESL) or English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) programs.

### GED

The General Educational Development Program (GED) is a course of study which prepares students for their high school equivalency examination.

### JTPA

The Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) is a federally funded program which provides job training programs including basic education for eligible adults.

### LEP

Limited English Proficient

## SECTOR GROUP

Community representatives from the same sector or with similar institutional bases. Sectors include: education, employment, and community organizations.

## VOLUNTEER LITERACY ORGANIZATIONS

Literacy Volunteers of America (LVA), Laubach Literacy Action for the United States, and other national volunteer reading groups are community-based, and sometimes library-based agencies which provide one-to-one tutorial for people at beginning levels of reading.

## WORKPLACE LITERACY

The skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary to successfully enter, function, and learn in the workplace.

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