



SKILLSFORSUCCESS INITIATIVES SERVICE DELIVERY PILOTS 2023/24

CASE STUDY OVERVIEW

From 2022 to 2024, Ontario's Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) program received federal funding to undertake projects in support of Canada's Skills for Success (SFS) framework.

Resource development and/or service delivery pilots were funded under five initiatives:

- **Supporting Underrepresented Groups;**
- **Supporting Apprenticeship Integration;**
- **Supporting Better Jobs Ontario Integration;**
- **Workplace Literacy;** and
- **Expanding and Enhancing Digital Delivery.**

Projects were designed in accordance with the Ontario Adult Literacy Curriculum Framework (OALCF).

The goals of SFS initiatives are:

- to support ongoing LBS program development objectives by building capacity across cultural streams and delivery sectors;
- to strengthen LBS employment and apprenticeship outcomes;
- to integrate LBS services into the broader workforce development system; and
- to enhance and expand blended and fully distance learning opportunities.



CASE STUDY OVERVIEW

PROGRAM: VALLEY ADULT LEARNING ASSOCIATION, FORT FRANCES ON

SECTOR: COMMUNITY-BASED CULTURAL STREAM: ANGLOPHONE

INITIATIVE: WORKPLACE LITERACY

GOALS

The course designed and developed for individuals who require skills development to improve functioning in an administrative employment position.

It was also designed to help employers experiencing a high turnover of employees and who are often short staffed so training new employees is often a challenge.

LESSONS LEARNED

Ten weeks has proven to be a challenging time frame. Even though learner retention has remained high, the energy and momentum in the course has definitely changed in the latter half. If VALA were to run this project again, we would likely reduce the duration to 6-8 weeks with additional time each session or to split into 2 separate 5 week classes i.e. a part 1 and part 2 with a break in between.

OUTCOMES

VALA has a lot of inquiries about training of this nature and word about this course has already spread to other employers in the district.

Two other employers have already approached VALA about running a similar course for their employees. Beyond employers, VALA has a lot of learners entering the program who are interested in this type of programming and many inquiries are received via our website.

Learners have reported an increase in skills, confidence, self advocacy and comfort in an administrative employment environment.



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SNAPSHOT

The project was titled **Skills for Success: Administration** and it was a course designed and developed for individuals who require skills development to improve functioning in an administrative employment position. This project was able to accommodate 10 participants and provided training over a 10 week period. Partners for the project included Ametros Learning, Alpha Bookkeeping and Seven Generations Educational Institute.

This project is currently ongoing and running well as a weekly small group session. The project uses a blended learning approach and incorporated live, on site training as well as an experiential, adaptive learning module.

REASON FOR PROJECT

This project was designed and developed based on the results of an Organizational Needs Assessment that was done in cooperation with Seven Generations.

This project includes skills development and training that was determined by the employer. Seven Generations Educational Institute was approached to complete an ONA in early 2023. This employer was approached due to high referrals into VALA for employee skills development and training. This employer experiences a high turnover for employees and is often short staffed so training new employees hired for an administrative role is often a challenge.

PROJECT IMPACT

This project is not yet complete however it has had very positive results and feedback thus far. The employer reports high satisfaction for the skills that are being delivered and there has been excellent feedback and outcomes from learners during sessions.

Learners have reported an increase in skills, confidence, self advocacy and comfort in an administrative employment environment. The project has retained high learner retention.

LESSONS LEARNED

Ten weeks has proven to be a challenging time frame. Even though learner retention has remained high, the energy and momentum in the course has definitely changed in the latter half. If VALA were to run this project again, we would likely reduce the duration to 6-8 weeks with additional time each session or to split into 2 separate 5 week classes. i.e. a part 1 and part 2 with a break in between.

This project has offered the learners a level of ownership and self direction which has been very well received. The project had an outline and specific learning outcomes that were determined by the ONA completed with the employer however that outline was a guide and learners were encouraged to bring their own questions and needs forward. Learners were asked to determine how classes would run and what policies would govern the course which allowed them to have input on sessions and content. This has allowed the skills development to be more authentic and tailored to learner needs which has generated excellent feedback and participation.

FUTURE IMPACT POTENTIAL

VALA has a lot of inquiries about training of this nature and word about this course has already spread to other employers in the district. Two other employers have already approached VALA about running a similar course for their employees. Beyond employers, VALA has a lot of learners entering the program who are interested in this type of programming and many inquiries are received via our website.

This area is experiencing a lot of staffing issues and employers have been finding it necessary to hire individuals who need skills development due to the lack of available workforce. This problem gets compounded when the employer is understaffed and finds it a challenge to provide adequate training to already under skilled new hires.

RESOURCES & SUPPORTS

VALA definitely found it helpful to be a part of the Community of Practice group. It is very helpful to find out what other agencies are doing and what best practices are working well. Resources are always an asset and the lbsresourcesandforum website was excellent at providing quick, ready and engaging resources.

The resources come with an informative and specific cover page that makes it quick to find a suitable resource for learners and they are well organized and well labeled so it saves time for the instructors

BENEFIT TO PARTICIPANTS / EMPLOYERS

PARTICIPANT: **NATASHIA**

SKILLS FOR SUCCESS: ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM PILOT

Natashia heard about the pilot project being developed at VALA through word of mouth and community engagement. She has been working to upgrade her education and to find stable, sustainable employment in an administrative field. This learner has been working on upwards mobility and has been upgrading her skills and employability through a variety of positions and employment opportunities. She wants to continue to improve her skills in administration so that she can move into a more permanent position. Natashia is building confidence as she progresses and improves her skill base. She feels that she started at the bottom but by continuing to learn and grow she has continued to move forwards towards her goal. She hopes this class will help her to further develop her skills and enable her to obtain an upgraded employment situation.

Natashia reports that this project has helped to improve her skills, increase her ability to self advocate and has improved her confidence. She reports an increase in communication skills and she has really enjoyed meeting other like minded individuals who are also improving their skills.

NATASHIA SAYS...

“Even small steps will help you to reach your goals. Keep moving forward with small steps and you will see progress.”

The employer was extremely excited to participate in this initiative with VALA and has had very positive feedback. This employer has already contacted VALA to see if we can run another project like this. This positive employer feedback has also made it out into the community through word of mouth and other employers have indicated a desire to access services through VALA if possible.

Seven Generations Educational Institute was approached in early 2023 to participate in an ONA regarding training needs and opportunities. This Workplace Literacy Pilot project was designed around the needs indicated in that ONA and was developed to specifically meet the employer's needs.

Literacy Northwest was an excellent asset in supporting and implementing the ONA and with the development of the pilot project. LNW continues to be a big support for VALA in all things.

This project was able to accommodate 10 participants and was hoping to get at least 8 (80%) to enroll. VALA was happy to get 10 participants enrolled.