

Curriculum Resource

Adapting to Change

This resource provides an overview of adapting to change and strategies for dealing with change. The Adapting to Change resource is designed for learners with Level 1 skills in Ontario’s Literacy and Basic Skills Program. It has links to both the Ontario Adult Literacy Curriculum Framework and the Skills for Success Framework.

The resource also introduces some of the Skills from the Office of Literacy and Essential Skills’ (OLES) Skills for Success model. The Skills for Success model was introduced in May 2021 by the Government of Canada as an update to its well-known model of Essential Skills. While there are 9 Skills for Success, for the purpose of this resource, CLO has focussed on the Adaptability, Collaboration and Problem Solving skills.

OALCF Alignment

Competency	Task Group	Level
Competency B - Communicate Ideas and Information	B1. Interact with others	1
Competency B - Communicate Ideas and Information	B3. Complete and create documents	1
Competency B - Communicate Ideas and Information	B3. Complete and create documents	2
Competency E - Manage Learning	N/A	Choose an item.
Competency F - Engage with Others	N/A	Choose an item.

Goal Paths (check all that apply)

- Employment
- Apprenticeship
- Secondary School Credit
- Postsecondary
- Independence

Embedded Skills for Success (check all that apply)

- Adaptability
- Collaboration
- Communication
- Creativity and innovation
- Digital
- Numeracy
- Problem Solving
- Reading
- Writing

Notes: B3.1b and B3.2a

COMMUNITY LITERACY OF ONTARIO

Adapting to Change

Introduction

[Community Literacy of Ontario](#) (CLO) is pleased to share our “Adapting to Change” resource.

It can be difficult for anyone to deal with change; however, for adult learners in Ontario’s Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) programs, change is often compounded by the multiple barriers in their lives. These barriers make thriving in Ontario more difficult. Besides low literacy levels, typical challenges include but are not limited to:

- Poverty
- Disabilities
- Mental health related issues
- Age-related challenges
- Learners who are indigenous persons, visible minorities, or immigrants
- Gender inequality
- Sexual orientation discrimination
- And other socio-economic inequities

To help meet the needs of these underrepresented groups, CLO has been funded by the Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development to develop seven curriculum resources that meet learner needs and that align with both the Ontario Adult Literacy Curriculum Framework and the Government of Canada’s Skills for Success model.

This resource provides an overview of adapting to change and strategies for dealing with change. **Adapting to Change** is designed for learners with Level 1 skills in Ontario’s Literacy and Basic Skills Program. It has links to both the Ontario Adult Literacy Curriculum Framework and the Skills for Success Framework.

This resource also introduces some of the Skills from the Office of Literacy and Essential Skills’ (OLES) Skills for Success model. The Skills for Success model was introduced in May 2021 by the Government of Canada as an update to its well-known model of Essential Skills. While there are **nine Skills for Success**, for the purpose of this resource, CLO has focussed on the [Adaptability, Collaboration and Problem Solving](#) skills.

The Social Research and Demonstration Corporation (SRDC) has completed extensive research on the Skills for Success model and has developed guidelines for their implementation. For more information, their *Skills for Success Implementation Guidance Final Report* is available at

<https://www.srdc.org/publications/Skills-for-Success-implementation-guidance-final-report--details.aspx>. This phase of the SRDC's research is available in their Research report to support the launch of *Skills for Success: Structure evidence and recommendations – Final Report*
<https://www.srdc.org/publications/Research-report-to-support-the-launch-of-Skills-for-Success-Structure-evidence-and-recommendations-Final-report-details.aspx>

For Practitioners – More on the Skills for Success

Assessments of the skill level for **Adaptability** are under development, and self-reporting is considered a primary assessment for the skills of **Collaboration and Problem Solving**. There are still some general guidelines for proficiency in these areas. To correspond with the Level 1 content and activities geared to learners with lower skill levels, CLO followed the broad entry level proficiencies for the Skills for Success for the three featured skills. For more information about these proficiencies, you can read the Social Research and Demonstration Corporation's (SRDC) *Skills for Success Implementation Guidance Final Report*, at <https://www.srdc.org/publications/Skills-for-Success-implementation-guidance-final-report--details.aspx> or visit the Government of Canada's website mentioned in the first section of this document.

In this resource, CLO focuses on the entry level components of the **Adaptability, Collaboration and Problem Solving** skills.

Adaptability

The ability to achieve or adjust goals and behaviours when expected or unexpected change occurs, by planning, staying focused, persisting, and overcoming setbacks.

Adaptability: Entry Level Proficiency: You can follow direction to adjust and complete plans, tasks and goals. You can do this in response to expected and unexpected changes requiring minor adjustment or learning that is provided. You can stay positive, persist, and manage emotions in response to minor stress.

Collaboration

Collaboration is your ability to contribute and support others to achieve a common goal.

Collaboration: Entry Level Proficiency

You can interact with familiar people or a small number of diverse unfamiliar people to share information to complete routine independent tasks. You can maintain cooperative respectful behaviours toward others and minimize conflict.

Problem Solving

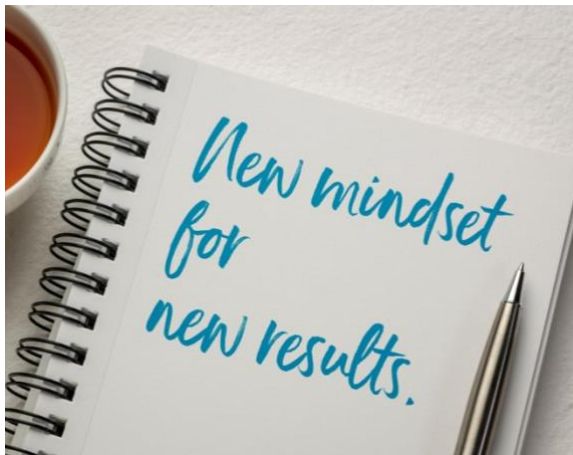
Problem solving is your ability to identify, analyze, propose solutions and make decisions. Problem solving helps you to address issues, monitor success and learn from the experience.

Problem Solving: Entry Level Proficiency

You can make decisions or solve problems when there are limited or familiar variables, all of the information is provided, and the stakes are low with few consequences. You can use your general knowledge and skills to process information, do simple or routine troubleshooting if needed, identify the decision or solution, and confirm the issue is resolved.

You can read about the definitions, components and proficiency levels for all of the **nine Skills for Success** at the Government of Canada's website at

<https://www.canada.ca/en/services/jobs/training/initiatives/skills-success/learning-steps.html>.



Adapting to Change is designed for Level 1 learners in Ontario's Literacy and Basic Skills program.

Literacy practitioners can verbally share the content with learners with Level 1 skills. Learners with higher skill levels could use this resource independently.

Now let's get talking about adapting to change!

Adapting to Change

Adapting to Change contains six sections:

1. Welcome and Unwelcome Change
2. Strategies for Adapting to Change
3. Plan and Prioritize
4. Goal Setting
5. Don't Give Up!
6. Supporting Activity

A supporting activity which has been articulated to the Ontario Adult Literacy Curriculum Framework and which outlines the incorporated Skills for Success is included at the end of this resource.

Section 1 – Welcome and Unwelcome Change

Adaptability is how we adjust to change. Our lives are always changing whether we welcome the changes or not. These changes could be big, or they could be small. They could be changes we welcome, or they could be changes that are unwelcome.

Welcome changes can make us feel happy and excited, but sometimes worried too. A good change might be welcoming a new baby to your family. You might be very happy about this change but also worried about how you will pay the extra bills.

Unwelcome changes can make us feel sad, angry, helpless or worried. Sometimes, unwelcome changes can end up with positive results; for example, you get a better job than the one you lost. Most often unwelcome change is stressful and hard. It can sometimes make us feel as though we have no control over our lives.

Most of us tend to react the same way to unwelcome change. For example,

- we might avoid our family and friends and not reach out for help
- we might rush in to act right away
- we might get upset more easily at home or work
- we might pretend that nothing is wrong.

None of these reactions are wrong. But are they helping you to decide your best way forward?

Sometimes, unwelcome change, as hard as it is, leads to good things happening in our lives. It is often hard to see that at the time though.

Section 2 – Strategies for Adapting to Change

So, an unwelcome change has happened in your life. You might be feeling many different things like:

- shocked
- worried
- confused
- unable to accept it

However, whether we like it or not, change is always happening. It happens at home, school and work. Change can be hard, but there are some useful ways to adapt to it.

Take your time

When an unwelcome change occurs, pause before you panic. Take time to think about the change and understand it. Ask yourself what it means to you and to your life. Think about what problems will actually happen. When you are calm, you can make plans to solve those problems.

When unwelcome change happens, it's okay to take time just to think.

Talk to people you trust

When you are ready to share, talk to people you trust. There are people who will support you. It's good to have a support system when our lives change in ways we don't want.

Here are some of the people you might reach out to for help:

- Family or friends
- Your instructor or tutor
- Someone at work
- A person who shares your hobbies or interests
- Someone from your faith community, club or community group
- A counsellor
- Online counselling supports or support groups
- Ontario 211

We all need people around who can support and encourage us as we adapt to challenges and change.

Think about your strengths

Do an honest assessment of your strengths. Ask trusted people for their opinion of your strengths.

- What are you good at?
- What do you enjoy doing?

When you start to plan your next steps, focus on your areas of strength. For example,

- I am not much of a talker, but I am good at working with my hands.
- I like working with a small team, but I'm shy around large groups.

Focus on what you can control

We do not have a control over every change in our lives. For example, you don't decide whether the business where you work closes down. But you can control what you do as a result.

- I can't control the change: *"People say that my employer's business may be closing."*
- What I can do about it: *"I always promised my kids I'd go back and finish my high school diploma. I think this is a good time to do that."*

Look for the positives

In the example above, the negative change turned into a positive solution. Sometimes, it may be hard to find the positives in difficult situations. But there may be some. Take a second look at your situation. Are there any good things that can come from the change? Plan your next steps forward with those positive options in mind. For example,

“I really needed that job, but I didn’t get it because my computer skills aren’t good enough. This is the motivation I need. I’m going to start to take online classes to improve my computer skills in the evenings.”

Start with small changes.

Start small. There is an old saying, “How do you eat an elephant? One bite at a time!” Plan for just a couple of steps to move forward at a time. For example,

“Next Monday, I will talk to my tutor about my job situation. She always has good ideas. On Wednesday, I will go to the Employment Centre and ask about apprenticeship programs.”

Continue to upgrade your skills

Because you are learning new things, upgrading your skills can give you more confidence and adaptability. This can help you to deal with change. So be a lifelong learner and continue to build your skills!



Something to Think About...

Think about two things you could do to help you adapt to change.
Share your thoughts with another learner or practitioner.

Section 3 – Plan and Prioritize

Adapting to change involves planning. It also requires you to prioritize. To prioritize means to decide which things are most important to do. This resource will show you some ways to plan and prioritize.

When you are facing an unwelcome situation, you do have choices. Think about all the things you could do to react to the change. Write down the top actions you can take to adapt to the change.

Here is an example:

Change: I've been laid off from my job.

The top tasks I can do are:

- Find a cheaper place to live
- Go on Employment Insurance
- Start job searching
- Go to Employment Services (Employment Ontario) for help with my resume
- Ask my parents for a loan
- Go back to college and upgrade my education

It can really help you to focus on what is most important and doable. Taking a few steps at a time is the best approach to adapting to change.

Tips to Prioritize

Once the list of tasks is created, then it is time to prioritize! Consider each task. Is it the best solution to adapt to the change? Ask yourself questions about it. Here are some possible questions.

- Is this a task I need to do now, in a week, or in a few months or years?
- How important is this goal to me?
- Is it easy or hard to do?
- Do I have the support to do this? (This could include money, family support, workplace support, etc.)

Why did we suggest these questions? Usually, a good start is picking tasks that are:

- very important
- easy to accomplish, and
- have the support and resources you need.

Sample priorities chosen

After asking questions about each option, some priorities may seem better.

In this example, likely priority tasks picked would be:

- Start my benefits with Employment Insurance
- Start job searching online



Something to Think About...

What are two of your most important priorities?
Share your thoughts with another learner or practitioner.

Section 4 – Goal Setting

We've learned about how to prioritize. Now, it's time to think about setting goals to adapt to change. Your goals should fit with your needs and abilities and the supports and resources you have.

Don't take on too many goals at once! Remember to prioritize. Take on only one or two goals to start. This is a journey, not a race!

When you set goals, you want to them happen. Unclear or general goals often don't get done, even if they're great ideas. Turn general goals into reality by making them SMART. **SMART goals** are a helpful way to set goals.

Smart goals are:

- **Specific** (*Is it a clear goal?*)
- **Measurable** (*Are there ways to know whether my goal was achieved?*)
- **Achievable** (*Do I have the resources and supports to do take on this goal?*)
- **Relevant** (*Is this goal linked to the most important tasks I need to do?*)
- **Time bound** (*Does this goal have a set timeline?*)

Life is busy, and it is easy to forget things, unless you develop SMART goals.

Here is an example of a general and a specific goal:

Goal #1 – General Goal

My kids are growing up so fast, I want to spend more time with them, so I promise to play with them more often.

- This goal is not likely to be achieved. It is not specific or measurable. No clear timelines have been set.

Goal #2 – SMART Goal

My kids are growing up so fast, I want to spend more time with them, so I'm going to play Board games with them every Friday night.

- **Specific** – Playing a Board game is a specific action.
- **Measurable** – Did I get to spend more time with my children?
- **Achievable** – It is a goal that fits the family's timelines and budget.
- **Relevant** – The goal is relevant to the parent's desire to spend more time with the kids.
- **Time-Bound** – This activity is scheduled to happen every Friday night.

Set Your Own SMART Goal

When you are facing changes and need to adapt, set clear goals. SMART goals will help you to keep moving forward.

Here are some more sample goals:

- I want to have a better paying job by April 2023.
- I want to learn to play guitar before summer 2024.
- I want to get my GED by August 2025.

Try to stay focused on one or two SMART goals. You can adapt to the changes and challenges. You will have a better chance of heading to the future you want.

Sometimes, your needs change and new things happen in your life. Then you may need to come back and adjust your goals. That is okay. Just make sure the new goals are still SMART goals.



Something to Think About...

What is one SMART goal you could set?
Share your thoughts with another learner or practitioner.

Section 5 – Don't Give Up!

Over 2,000 years ago, a Greek philosopher said, *“There is nothing permanent except change”*. This was true then, and it's still true now!

Adapting to change is difficult. Change is hard, especially unwelcome change. You may have to face new challenges. Your plans and goals don't happen the way you would like. You may get discouraged. However, don't give up. Stay on track for a better future.

Here are some tips for staying on track:

- Ask friends, family and other trusted people for support and encouragement.
- Try to think of positive things that are happening in your life.
- Be ready for change... nothing happens exactly as we'd expect.
- Revisit your goals and revise them.
- Take things a bit at a time! One goal is plenty. One step is enough.
- You may experience a set-back. Revisit some of the ideas in this resource.
- Try to reduce your stress and worry. Exercise, walks, talking with friends and family, support groups and taking time for yourself are a few things that can help.
- Reach out for help. There are organizations and supports available in your community, and there are many resources available online. **Call [Ontario 211](#) and they will help you figure out what services are available locally. If you need help, please don't be afraid to ask for it.**



Something to Think About...

What is one thing you could do to help you stay on track?
Share your thoughts with another learner or practitioner.

Don't give up. You are worth it! Adapting to change can help you to build the life you want for yourself and your family.

Section 6 – Supporting Activity

Instructions for Practitioners

The following activity incorporates elements of OALCF Performance Descriptors associated with Task Group Level 1 and some Level 2 Indicators. The activity also contains multiple Skills for Success (Adaptability, Problem Solving, Collaboration, Writing, Communication, Reading, and potentially Digital); however, in this resource we are focussing on Adaptability, Collaboration and Problem Solving. We did not include the skills of Numeracy or Creativity and Innovation.

More detailed information about the components and proficiency levels for all of the **nine Skills for Success** are available on the Government of Canada’s website at

<https://www.canada.ca/en/services/jobs/training/initiatives/skills-success/learning-steps.html>

The corresponding OALCF Competency, Task Group and Level indicators, and Skills for Success components and proficiencies can be used to discuss performance, determine skill progression and identify some possible next steps to further develop learner proficiency.

Practitioner - Step 1.

Share this short scenario with a small group of learners or with an individual learner if working one-to-one.

Scenario:

You had a job interview scheduled for next week and it has changed to a later time in the day.

Practitioner - Step 2

After sharing the scenario, ask the group or individual learner to complete the following task. Learners will need a pen and paper (or it can be completed online if the group is working on computers).

Learner: Task 1 – Make a list of three challenges you might have because of this change in your interview time.

This activity incorporates elements of the following OALCF Competency and Task Group:

Competency B: Communicate Ideas and Information

Task Group: Complete and create documents (B3)

- B3.1b Create very simple documents to display and organize a limited amount of information

This activity also incorporates some Adaptability skill components and elements of Entry Level proficiency (Skills for Success).

Adaptability: Entry Level Proficiency

You can follow direction to adjust and complete plans, tasks and goals. You can do this in response to expected and unexpected changes requiring minor adjustment or learning that is provided. You can stay positive, persist, and manage emotions in response to minor stress.

Practitioner - Step 3

Ask the/each learner to choose one of the challenges from their individual list.

Practitioner – Step 4

Ask learners to break into pairs if they are working in a group.

Learner: Task 2 – Dialogue and Sharing Task (no materials needed)

Pick one challenge from the list you created in Task 1 and share it with your partner **or** instructor. Discuss ways that you might be able to solve this problem.

This task incorporates elements of the following OALCF Competency and Task Group:

Competency B: Communicate Ideas and Information

Task Group: Interact with Others (B1)

B1.1 Participate in brief Interactions to exchange information with one other person

This task also incorporates some Collaboration skill components and elements of Entry Level proficiency (Skills for Success).

Collaboration: Entry Level Proficiency

You can interact with familiar people or a small number of diverse unfamiliar people to share information to complete routine independent tasks. You can maintain cooperative respectful behaviours toward others and minimize conflict.

This task also incorporates some Problem Solving skill components and elements of Entry Level proficiency (Skills for Success).

Problem Solving: Entry Level Proficiency

You can make decisions or solve problems when there are limited or familiar variables, all the information is provided, and the stakes are low with few consequences. You can use your general knowledge and skills to process information, do simple or routine troubleshooting if needed, identify the decision or solution, and confirm the issue is resolved.

Practitioner - Step 5

The following three charts highlight the Skills for Success used in the first two tasks. One or more charts can be completed depending on the individual learner's progress and your preference.

Practitioner assistance may be required to support learners with lower skill levels, as they complete the chart(s). While the tasks contain multiple Skills for Success, these charts focus on the skills of Adaptability, Collaboration and Problem Solving.

In these charts, you could adapt which skill components are used to suit individual learner's goals and skill levels. The wording of the skill components has been simplified in these to better meet Level 1 OALCF skills.

Learner: Task 3 – Skills for Success – Chart Handout(s)

Complete the following chart(s) with a checkmark for how you and your partner came up with ways to solve the problems that you shared.

Chart 1 – Adaptability Skill Components

When discussing with your partner, ways to solve your problem, did you...	Yes – a lot	Maybe – a little	No – not at all
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stay focussed on the problem? 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notice how one change, like the change in time, can result in other changes? 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set small ways to solve this problem? 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Talk about some of the steps needed to reach any of the solutions? 			

This chart incorporates elements of the following OALCF Competency and Task Group:

Competency B: Communicate Ideas and Information

Task Group: Complete and create documents (B3)

- B3.2a Use layout to determine where to make entries in simple documents

This chart encourages self-reflection and reinforces some of the Adaptability skill components and proficiencies used in Tasks 1 and 2.

Chart 2 – Problem Solving Skill Components

When discussing with your partner, ways to solve your problem, did you...	Yes – a lot	Maybe – a little	No – not at all
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think about whether this was an easy or hard challenge to solve? 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk about goals or ways to solve this challenge? 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think about what information you might need to solve this challenge? 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Break the challenge into smaller parts? 			

This chart incorporates elements of the following OALCF Competency and Task Group:

Competency B: Communicate Ideas and Information

Task Group: Complete and create documents (B3)

- B3.2a Use layout to determine where to make entries in simple documents

This chart encourages self-reflection and reinforces some Problem Solving skill components used in Task 2.

Chart 3 – Collaboration Skill Components

When discussing with your partner, ways to solve your problem, did you...	Yes – a lot	Maybe – a little	No – not at all
• Support each other and work together?			
• Listen to opinions that were different than yours?			
• Respond to ideas without making judgement?			
• Have helpful discussions?			
• Resolve any differences in opinions in a positive way?			
• Support and motivate each other to share ideas?			
• Use your partner’s feedback to make your solutions better?			

This chart incorporates elements of the following OALCF Competencies and Task Group:

Competency B: Communicate Ideas and Information

Task Group: Complete and create documents (B3)

- B3.2a Use layout to determine where to make entries in simple documents

This chart encourages self-reflection and reinforces some of the Collaboration skill components used in Activity 2.



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The opinions expressed in this resource are the opinions of Community Literacy of Ontario, and do not necessarily reflect those of our funders.