

LEP Guide for Workforce Professionals



Contents

Introduction	What Is the LEP Guide? <i>Anson Green</i>
Module 1	Effective Intake and Case Management <i>Virginia Price</i>
Module 2	Nontraditional Occupations and Entrepreneurial Opportunities <i>Virginia Price</i>
Module 3	Scorecards for Evaluating Training Services for LEP Customers <i>Dr. Federico Zaragoza, Anson Green, Virginia Price</i>
Module 4	Comprehensive Assessment for LEP Customers <i>Dr. Federico Zaragoza, Anson Green, Virginia Price</i>

LEP Guide for Workforce Professionals

Edited by Anson Green

Copies of this guide are available at:
www.twc.state.tx.us/boards/guides/guides.html

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Introduction: What Is the LEP Guide?

Anson Green

Workers and job seekers with limited English proficiency (LEP) are one of the fastest-growing segments of the Texas workforce. The LEP Guide for Workforce Professionals (LEP Guide) was created to assist workforce professionals in planning, developing, and implementing strategies that effectively deliver workforce solutions for this valuable population. Local Workforce Development Boards (Boards) and staff, Texas Workforce Center staff, and education and training professionals can use the LEP Guide's four unique modules as a user-friendly blueprint for enhancing services to LEP customers.

Why an LEP Guide?

The Current and Future Workforce

- In 2005, Texas joined Hawaii, New Mexico, and California as majority-minority states. The fastest growing key segment of the population is Hispanics (U.S. Census Bureau, 2005).
- Between 2000 and 2005, the number of foreign-born LEP individuals age five and older increased over 29 percent to 2,197,648 (Migration Policy Institute, n.d.).
- Between 2010 and 2030, first- and second-generation immigrants together are projected to account for all U.S. labor force growth (Lowell, B., Gelatt, J., Batalova, J., 2006).
- Although 30 percent of immigrant workers have less than a high school education and tend to be employed in low-wage occupations, almost one-third of the foreign-born LEP population have attained the equivalency of a bachelor's degree or higher in their native country (Capps, Fix, Passel, Ost, Perez-Lopez, 2003).

The LEP Pipeline in Public Schools

- In 2005–2006, almost half of the Texas public school population were Hispanic. Over 34 percent of these students were LEP (Texas Education Agency, n.d.).
- Hispanic students account for over 50 percent of high school students lost to attrition. In 2005–2006, Hispanic attrition rates increased by 4 percent (Johnson, 2006).
- In 2006, only 12 percent of LEP students in the twelfth grade passed the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) test and only 8 percent of tenth graders passed all TAKS standards (Scharrer, 2007).
- Texas has slipped from 45th to last among states ranked by percent for citizens in 2005—age 25 and older—who have a high school diploma or General Equivalency Development credential (Murdock, 2007).

Current Readiness to Meet Business and LEP Customer Employment Needs

- In Texas, 57 percent of the 28 local workforce development areas (workforce areas) do not have local training providers that offer LEP-accessible occupational training programs (e.g., Spanish-language or bilingual training programs).
- Less than 6 percent of Texas employers have worked with adult education providers for English language or workplace literacy services (Texas Workforce Investment Council, 2006).
- Since 2001, there has been a 75 percent decrease in adult education students, including LEP students, who have the goal of transitioning to postsecondary training (Legislative Budget Board, 2007).

How the LEP Guide Can Help

The LEP Guide can assist workforce, education, and training professionals plan, develop, and implement strategies to effectively deliver workforce solutions for the growing LEP workforce in Texas.

The LEP Guide comprises four unique modules that present a user-friendly blueprint for enhancing services to LEP customers.

Module 1: Effective Intake and Case Management

This module guides effective, culturally responsive intake and case management services for LEP customers by introducing key concepts, promising practices, and strategies that can be used to maximize efforts and enhance the quality of services provided.

Module 2: Nontraditional Occupations and Entrepreneurial Opportunities

This module develops and implements effective strategies to support female LEP customers as they consider occupations that are not traditionally held or sought by women, or embark upon a path leading to small business ownership.

Module 3: Scorecards for Evaluating Training Services for LEP Customers

This module uses a balanced scorecard approach to assist workforce professionals in evaluating the effectiveness of education training courses for LEP customers. Five different scorecards measure unique areas that are critical to delivering LEP training programs based on local business demand and provide “driving directions” for engaging employers in training efforts. The five scorecards can assist Workforce Boards in:

- selecting courses for inclusion on the Eligible Training Provider List or other Workforce Board–approved vendor lists;
- improving the planning and evaluation of programs designed to connect LEP customers to high-growth, high-demand occupations;
- developing Requests for Proposals; and
- guiding training and adult education capacity-building efforts.

Module 4: Comprehensive Assessment for LEP Customers

This module guides the selection and use of appropriate assessment tests for LEP customers to ensure that their skills and abilities are assessed appropriately in order to make sound, evidence-based referrals to businesses or training providers.

Although the LEP Guide is specifically designed for Workforce Board and Workforce Center staff, it also provides beneficial information to community and technical colleges, adult education providers, community-based organizations, career schools, and other organizations that work with LEP customers seeking employment.

The LEP Guide's four modules provide a truly integrated approach to improving employment, literacy, and training services. The LEP Guide stresses the strong interrelationship between case management, assessment, instruction, and job development in culturally relevant contexts.

LEP Defined

LEP is used to describe individuals who speak English as a second language and who have rated their ability to speak English as "well," "not well," or "not at all" (RTI International, 2005). While some individuals often have less than the equivalent of an elementary school education, many have postsecondary degrees from their home country. Thus LEP should be viewed as an identification of *low levels of English* comprehension, not *limited education* or *low basic skills*.

Characteristics of persons who are LEP:

- ◆ Do not speak English as their primary language.
- ◆ Have a limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English.
- ◆ Native language is not English.
- ◆ Live in a family or community environment in which a language other than English is dominant.

Source: Texas Workforce Commission, 2006

A Market-Driven Work-Based ESL Training System for Texas

Anson Green

We “cannot afford to leave any workers behind and the Texas workforce system must direct resources and training investments to ensure that no worker is left behind.”

Texas Workforce Commission, 2005

Supporting Business Competitiveness

Remaining competitive in regional, national, and global marketplaces is a top priority for Texas businesses. Texas’ attractive business and economic climate rests largely on the availability of a workforce that is young, growing, and well educated. The Texas workforce has radically changed in the last decade and will see continued changes, especially demographic changes, into the future.

From 1980 to 2000, 26.7 million new native-born workers age 25-54 provided the workforce needed for our dynamically growing economy. From now until 2021, there will be no additional native-born workers in this prime age group. None.

Source: Ellwood, 2002, p. 11

In the last 10 years, Texas’ population has grown, become more diverse, and less educated. However, a good sign for Texas’ future workforce is that its population is also becoming younger, unlike some states with shrinking populations and, therefore, an older population average. New Hispanic, Spanish-speaking residents have fueled this population growth, challenging education and training systems—from preschool to higher education—to redesign and rethink legacy educational paradigms in order to meet the needs of this current and future workforce.

Losing Ground in Educating LEP Youth and Adults

Texas is losing ground in educating and training the state’s LEP youth population:

- Passing TAKS scores are lowest and dropout rates are highest for Texas’ Hispanic youth.
- The percentage of Hispanic youth graduating from high school is the lowest in Texas, at just under 58 percent (Editorial Projects in Education Research Center, 2006).
- Overall, Texas has slipped from 45th to last among states ranked by percent with populations age 25 and older in 2005 with a high school diploma (Murdock, 2007).

Additionally, Texas' LEP adult population's education and training systems need significant enhancements. To be competitive in the job market, LEP workers benefit from having higher levels of English literacy, yet few LEP workers with employment or employment advancement goals appear to access Texas' adult education system for English as a Second Language (ESL) services. According to the Texas Education Agency, only 1,445 of over 108,000 adult education students, including ESL students, had the goal of entering employment in 2005–2006. Of those, just 655 students reported finding jobs (National Reporting System, n.d.).

The numbers of all adult education students continuing their education through the postsecondary education level or into training are equally low. While some postsecondary education or training is required for almost all jobs today (National Center on Education and the Economy, 2007), in 2005–2006, just 602 of over 108,000 adult education students in Texas reported a goal of transitioning into college or occupational training. Of those, just 172 students statewide reported accomplishing this goal (National Reporting System, n.d.).

In 2007, the Legislative Budget Board identified that rather than increasing the transition to postsecondary training for students, there has been a 75 percent decrease in adult education students with a goal of transitioning to postsecondary training over the last few years. Fortunately, the State is working to stem this trend through legislation passed by the 80th Texas Legislature.¹

While data may not tell the whole story, and surely more adult education students have employment and higher education goals, it appears that significant work must be done to ensure these students see adult education programs as a means to transitioning into occupational training or other postsecondary education and career-building jobs.

The transition to postsecondary training is particularly challenging for LEP customers. Research shows that even if LEP customers have training goals, 57 percent of the workforce areas in Texas *do not have* local training providers that offer LEP-accessible training programs (e.g., Spanish-language or bilingual occupational training programs). Many training providers still establish minimum reading standards (e.g., sixth- or ninth-grade reading level) for enrollment in occupational training. Often, these literacy requirements are higher than those actually required for performing on the job (Spruck-Wrigley, Richer, Martinson, Kubo, and Strawn et al., 2003).

Developing Workforce Solutions Using the LEP Guide

Current education and training trends are of little benefit to employers trying to fill critical labor shortages with skilled workers. Texas employers must continue to compete in the global marketplace and maintaining a skilled workforce is one of their prime concerns. Supporting the employment and training goals of the LEP workforce is clearly a core mission for Workforce Boards, training providers, and adult education programs.

Between 2010 and 2030, first- and second-generation immigrants together are projected to account for all U.S. labor force growth (Migration Policy Institute, 2006). Workforce Boards, training providers, adult education programs, and other community partners must form working partnerships that have a shared goal of increasing the employment success of the LEP workforce. Workforce Boards are well positioned to lead these efforts and the LEP Guide can assist them in developing workforce solutions for Texas businesses and LEP customers.

¹ House Bill 1, 80th Texas Legislature, Regular Session, includes a rider that addresses the alignment of adult education and postsecondary education services. The rider is listed as Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board Rider 50 and Texas Education Agency Rider 77.

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LEP GUIDE FOR WORKFORCE PROFESSIONALS

Module 1: Effective Intake & Case
Management



— TEXAS —
WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS



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The Texas Workforce Centers, contractors, and service providers who allowed us come in and speak with staff, case managers, and management teams and those who sat and discussed the challenges and solutions that are already helping customers.

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This guide was made possible by the quiet determination of a small group of people who believe in the system. We hope that it meets the needs of those whom they have struggled to help and leads to stronger relationships and enhanced service for everyone.

LEP Guide for Workforce Professionals

The LEP Guide for Workforce Professionals consists of four individual modules, each a key component of the Texas workforce system.

Each module is meant to assist Local Workforce Development Boards (Workforce Boards), Texas Workforce Center (Workforce Center) staff, and system partners on how best to serve the limited English proficiency (LEP) population from entrance to post employment. The four modules are:

Module 1

Effective Intake & Counseling

Part 1. What Workforce Boards Can Do to Plan and Develop Effective Limited English Proficiency Skills

Part 2. Enhancing Workforce Services

Module 2

Nontraditional Occupations and Entrepreneurial Opportunities

Module 3

Scorecards for Evaluating Training Services for LEP Customers

Module 4

Comprehensive Assessment for Customers with Limited English Proficiency

Contents

- Terms Used in This Module**7
- Introduction: Enhancing the Effectiveness of Workforce Services for Customers with Limited English Proficiency**.....10
- Part 1. What Workforce Boards Can Do to Plan and Develop Effective LEP Services**.....12
 - Section 1. Assessing and Developing Greater Capacity to Serve LEP Customers**.....13
 - Analysis and Guidelines**.....13
 - Translators and Interpreters**.....14
 - Section 2. Setting Standards at the Very Beginning: Ways to Incorporate LEP Standards into Procurements**.....14
 - Section 3. Developing a Dream Team of Experts: Using and Developing Skills and Talents to Deliver Effective Services**.....15
 - Identifying, Tracking, and Monitoring Services: Learning More about the Types of Services LEP Customers Need**.....16
 - Section 4. Encouraging Rapid Response Teams to Spread Their Wings: Enhanced Services and Offerings**.....17
 - Section 5. Sharing Information on Economic Trends and High-Growth, High-Demand Occupations with Workforce Center Staff**.....18
 - Review Part 1: What Workforce Boards Can Do to Plan and Develop Effective LEP Services**.....19
- Part 2. Enhancing Workforce Center Services: The Right Tools of the Trade for Frontline Staff**.....20
 - Section 1. The Importance of Case Managers: Building Models That Support LEP Customers**.....20
 - Keeping Things Positive, A Basis for Success: Developing a Strengths-Based Case Management Model**.21
 - Discovering Things That Count: Person-Centered Strengths Assessment**.....21
 - Additional Strategies to Support a Strengths-Based Approach**.....23
 - Recognize the Customer’s Interpretation of Their Circumstances**.....23

Find Ways to Establish Common Ground.....24

Spend More One-on-One Time.....24

Taking What You Have and Using It Correctly:
 Making the Most of the Initial Intake.....24

Meeting in the Middle: Agreeing on Results and Next Steps.....25

Ensuring Customer Confidentiality: Keeping a Lid on Things.....26

Review Section 1: Importance of Case Managers.....28

Section 2. Key Steps in the LEP Customer’s Individual Employment Plan.....29

Positively Approaching the Basic Skills Assessment.29

Career Exploration: Examples of Computer-Based and Pen-and-Paper Tools.....30

Online Resources.....30

A Road Map for the Future: Developing an Effective Individual Employment Plan.....31

The Place to Start: Finding the Best Training Fit.....31

Section 3. Getting the Message Across: Improving Communication with LEP Customers.....33

The Keys to Effective Communication: Understanding the Power of Language and Culture.....33

Understanding the Unique Aspects of Mexican Culture.....36

Gender-Based Considerations.....37

Understanding the Written Word.....37

Communicating at All Levels: Improving Verbal and Nonverbal Communication.....39

Speaking To Be Understood: Effective Verbal Communication.....39

What *Is Not* Said Is Just as Important as What *Is* Said: Reading Nonverbal Cues.....39

Case Managers and Their Nonverbal Cues.....39

Reading the Nonverbal Cues of Customers.....41

Strategies for Individuals with Lower Educational Attainment.....42

Preparing to Improve Communications.....42

Review Section 3: Getting the Message Across: Improving Communication with LEP Customers.....44

Section 4. Bringing All the Pieces to the Table: Leveraging Information to Better Assist Customers in Exploring Employment and Training Options.....46

Connecting Case Managers with Employers.....46

Assisting Customers Who Are Exploring Training Options....46

Review Section 4: Bringing All the Pieces to the Table.....48

Section 5. Having Friends in the Right Places: Building a Robust System of Support for All48

Supporting Each Other.....48

Developing Support Networks for Limited English Proficiency Customers.....48

Organizing Information and Access to Services.....49

Review Section 5: Having Friends in the Right Places: Building a Robust System of Support for All.....50

Section 6. Finding the Right Job and Keeping It.....52

Enhancing Job Readiness to Fit the Needs of LEP Customers.....52

Getting a Job Is Not the End: Improving Job Retention Rates...52

Assisting Customers in Continuing Their Personal Development.....53

Lending an Assist: Post-Employment Services.....54

Review Section 6: Finding the Right Job and Keeping It.....55

Appendix A: Guidance to School Selection (English).....58

Guidance to School Selection (Spanish)60

Appendix B: Person-Centered Strengths-Based Assessment (English)....64

Person-Centered Strengths-Based Assessment (Spanish)....66

Appendix C: Department of Labor Language and Planning Self-Assessment Tool.....68

Terms Used in This Module

Case Management. Services provided by case management staff include preparing an Individual Employment Plan, identifying barriers to participation, and assisting participants in addressing barriers through guidance counseling and access to services. Assisting in the enrollment of participants in allowable activities designed to enhance employability (i.e., motivation, assessment, job preparation workshops, educational classes and/or training, and/or employment services); providing job development and placement services; and assisting individuals and families in accessing community services, addressing emergency assistance and crisis intervention, and immediate needs (i.e., food, housing, clothing, and transportation).

Counseling. Guidance or assistance to develop a participant's vocational or employment goals and the means to achieve those goals, or to assist the individual with the solution to individual problems that may prevent him or her from accomplishing those goals, including, substance abuse counseling, job counseling, child care arrangements, or any other barrier that prevents the individual's success in becoming self-supporting.

Dislocated Worker. An individual who:

1. has lost his or her job, or has received a notice of termination or layoff from his or her job because of a permanent closure of, or a big layoff at a plant, facility, or company;
2. is a displaced homemaker.

GED Test. General Educational Development (GED) tests are a battery of five tests covering mathematics, social studies, science, and interpretation of literature. The fifth test requires writing an essay. The GED tests measure communication, information processing, problem-solving and critical thinking skills. Passing scores for the GED tests are set at a level above that achieved by one-third of traditional high school graduates who are given the test.

High-growth, High-demand Occupations. High-growth, high-demand occupations and industries are characterized by a high number of new jobs projected or currently being added, or by a large number of existing jobs. Each Local

Workforce Development Board develops area-specific lists that are available to the public.

Individual Employment Plan (IEP). A service plan developed by the participant and the case manager to identify the participant's employment goals, the appropriate achievement objectives, and the appropriate combination of services for the participant to achieve the employment goals.

Industry Cluster. Industry cluster means a concentration of businesses and industries in a geographic region that are interconnected by the markets they serve, the products they produce, their suppliers, trade associations and the educational institutions from which their employees or prospective employees receive training. While located in close proximity, these industry clusters are economic in nature and not geographically bounded.

Intake. The process case managers undertake to assess needs and abilities in order to effectively provide services.

Interpreter. An individual who provides an oral translation between speakers who speak different languages.

Job Development. The process of marketing a program participant to employers, including informing employers about what the participant can do and asking the employer for a job interview for that individual.

LMI. LMI is the collection and analysis of data involving labor supply and demand.

Person-Centered Strengths Assessment. This strengths-based approach entails helping the customer realize that he or she has both internal and external strengths. Internal strengths include interpersonal skills, motivation, determination, emotional strengths, and the ability to think clearly. External strengths come from family networks, significant others, community groups, and religious institutions.

Support Services. Services that are needed to help an individual to participate in job training or job search. Support services may include transportation, health care, financial assistance, drug and alcohol abuse counseling and referral,

individual and family counseling, special services and materials for individuals with disabilities, job coaches, child care and dependent care, temporary shelter, financial counseling, and other reasonable expenses required for participation in the program and may be provided in-kind or through cash assistance.

Translator. An individual that translates the written work from one language to another, usually from the translator's native or primary language to a secondary language.

Work Readiness Skills. Businesses understand work readiness skills on a continuum, from the basics of appearance, showing up to work on time, working while you are there, and taking direction from supervisors, to more complex competencies such as commitment to serve a team, taking responsibility, and a drive to learn.

Introduction: Enhancing the Effectiveness of Workforce Services for Customers with Limited English Proficiency

Who Should Use This Module?

Part 1 is intended for use by Workforce Board staff and Rapid Response coordinators and staff. Part 2 is intended for use by Workforce Center supervisors and case managers.

This module is intended to assist Workforce Boards and Workforce Center staff in developing and implementing effective workforce services for customers with LEP, especially Spanish-speaking customers. The module introduces key concepts, promising practices, and strategies that can be used to maximize efforts and, ultimately, enhance the quality of the services provided.

Why Is This Module Important?

The demographics of the United States are rapidly changing with Hispanics becoming the country's fastest-growing minority. Companies throughout the United States are reaching out to a diverse customer base by producing advertising and marketing campaigns in languages other than English, especially Spanish.

In examining future workforce trends, we find that Hispanic workers will be *the* fastest growing segment of the workforce of the future. Consequently, it is important that we face the challenges that our changing demographics bring with creativity. Experts agree that the competitiveness of the Texas economy depends in part on how successfully we adapt services to meet the needs of LEP workers. In fact, the future successes of the Texas workforce system may be measured by its capacity to address the challenges and meet the opportunities of preparing these workers for 21st century jobs.

Questions Workforce Boards Should Ask....

1. Are there lessons we can learn from the private sector that will allow us to more effectively meet employers' needs?
2. What opportunities do our customers with limited English skills bring to the Texas workforce system in terms of skills, education, and talent?
3. Are there specific things we can do to significantly improve our Workforce Centers' abilities to bridge the needs of Hispanic and other LEP workers with employers' needs?

Further Discussions on Important Concepts

Important topics covered in Module 1 will be discussed further in Modules 3 and 4.

Module 3 discusses identifying effective training programs.

Module 4 discusses selecting and using appropriate assessment tools.

As our state's economy expands, employers are going to need to recruit more high-quality employees, including those with limited English skills. For businesses in our state to remain viable, they will need assistance in attracting, hiring, training, and retaining high-quality employees, especially when recruiting LEP individuals.

Many of us in the Texas workforce system often feel challenged—and sometimes overwhelmed—with the increasing number of LEP customers accessing services through our Workforce Centers. To overcome these challenges, workforce professionals need effective strategies and practices that focus on the strengths and capabilities of this population. In addition, Workforce Board and Workforce Center staffs are in need of well-researched tools and information to provide their diverse customer base with high-quality services.

Fortunately, promising practices are emerging throughout the state and the Texas workforce system is responding with new and innovative approaches. This module introduces some of these models and discusses and illustrates strategies to enhance the overall effectiveness of Workforce Boards and Workforce Centers in bringing employment solutions to business, which includes an LEP workforce.

Demographic Trends

By 2020, Hispanics will outnumber all other ethnic groups in the state of Texas.

Overall educational attainment of Texas' residents is also expected to decline and will significantly impact per capita income.

These losses in earnings can be reversed, but only through successful efforts in increasing the educational levels of Hispanics.

U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) Employment and Training Administration Occasional Paper 2007-03

Part 1. What Workforce Boards Can Do to Plan and Develop Effective LEP Services

This part is intended for use by Workforce Board staff and will identify strategies to develop, implement, and monitor effective services.

Topics to be covered include:

- ◆ Section 1. Assessing and Developing Greater LEP Capability
- ◆ Section 2. Setting Standards at the Very Beginning
- ◆ Section 3. Developing a Dream Team of Experts
- ◆ Section 4. Encouraging Rapid Response Teams to Spread Their Wings
- ◆ Section 5. Sharing Information on Economic Trends and High-Growth, High-Demand Occupations with Workforce Center Staff

Why Is This Part Important?

Recent reports state that over the next 20 years, immigrants will account for the growth in the U.S. labor force. Furthermore, to stay competitive, American workers will need to have a minimum of two years of college or training (National Center on Education and the Economy, 2007). Therefore, to adequately respond to these predictions, Workforce Boards will be required to respond to the language and educational needs of the LEP customer.

Self-Assessment

Workforce Boards should consider including the U.S. DOL Language Assistance and Planning Self-Assessment Tool in contracts with service providers. Including this information will help Workforce Boards identify potential issues before they become problems and offer assistance to bring activities to a level that will help LEP participants succeed.

U.S. DOL Civil Rights Center

Section 1. Assessing and Developing Greater Capacity to Serve LEP Customers

Analysis and Guidelines

Workforce boards have a variety of resources and guidance available to assist them in assessing and developing their capacity to serve LEP customers.

Based on Executive Order 13166 that calls for the improvement of services for the LEP population, DOL developed a brief four-factor analysis for nonfederal agencies that receive federal funds. DOL also developed the Language Assistance and Planning Self-Assessment Tool, a checklist tool kit, to help Workforce Boards determine their capacity to meet the new guidelines.

The National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA) has taken the DOL's four factors and developed recommendations for Workforce Boards on how they can accomplish the goals set forth by DOL. NASWA's comprehensive guidelines review each of the factors and give strategies on how to expand on each. The document also helps Workforce Boards by giving suggestions on developing a formal LEP plan.

For example, NASWA encourages Workforce Boards to increase outreach when it seems that LEP individuals' contact with a program is lower than it should be based on population and needs. This strategy responds to factor two of DOL's four-factor analysis, the frequency with which LEP individuals come in contact with a program.

Examining Services

The four factors Workforce Boards need to examine as suggested by DOL guidelines are:

1. The number or proportion of LEP customers served or encountered in the eligible service population;
2. The frequency with which LEP customers come in contact with the program;
3. The nature and importance of the program, activity, or service provided; and
4. The resources available and the cost.

National Association of State Workforce Agencies

Planning Resource

The NASWA guidelines are meant to be a tool to develop your LEP plan. As such, it can be used to help potential partners in planning how they will address the needs of the LEP population they will serve.

This tool will help partners meet the same standards that Workforce Boards must meet. With each partner attempting to meet the same standards, customers will be the beneficiaries.

Translators and Interpreters

Translation and interpretation need to be performed by trained professionals. The NASWA guidelines make suggestions on how Workforce Boards can meet the language needs of LEP customers by suggesting ways to hire and retain bilingual staff. The document also offers suggestions such as offering additional compensation for those who can translate or interpret, as well as offering Workforce Center staff members the opportunity to take classes to become qualified interpreters or translators. Creating a program in which staff members can participate so they can expand their education and move up in their careers could be attractive to many Workforce Center staff members.

There are courses and degrees offered by two Texas universities for language translation (one at The University of Texas at Dallas and the other at The University of Texas at El Paso). The American Translator Association offers certification for those who have completed their degree program. Because the practices are so different (translators work with written documents, interpreters translate spoken language), it is not often that one individual has the language skills to fill both of these roles.

Section 2. Setting Standards at the Very Beginning: Ways to Incorporate LEP Standards into Procurements

Workforce Boards currently are viewed as leaders in addressing the needs of employers, and the ability to assist business in successfully linking to the LEP population is becoming more and more important. To meet this challenge, Workforce Boards are consistently looking at improving the quality, efficiency, and effectiveness of the services they oversee. Procuring Workforce Center services is one of the largest and most important processes undertaken by Workforce Boards.

Translated Materials

NASWA recommends the following documents be considered for translation:

- ◆ Applications, consent forms, and complaint forms
- ◆ Written tests (those that do not assess English competency)
- ◆ Letters containing important information regarding participation
- ◆ List of partners and services
- ◆ Notices pertaining to reduction, denial, or termination of services or benefits, and the right to appeal such actions
- ◆ Notices that require a response from beneficiaries
- ◆ Information on the right to file discrimination complaints
- ◆ Information on the provision of services to individuals with disabilities
- ◆ Notices advising LEP customers of the availability of free language assistance
- ◆ Explanation of how to file complaints and the complaint process
- ◆ Other outreach materials

National Association of State Workforce Agencies

With this in mind, Workforce Boards should consider developing Requests for Proposals (RFPs) that include guidance outlined by DOL in the Language Assistance and Planning Self-Assessment Tool. Including these guidelines and asking partners who potentially will work with LEP customers to address each of the questions will assist Workforce Boards in complying with the recommendations and ensure LEP customers are receiving quality services. An RFP, which clearly defines the standards for services to LEP customers, better ensures compliance with DOL regulations as well as better outcomes for Workforce Center customers.

Section 3. Developing a Dream Team of Experts: Using and Developing Skills and Talents to Deliver Effective Services

As leaders in dealing with the issues of planning and delivering effective workforce services and training, Workforce Boards may want to consider developing a team of experts who can lend support and technical assistance. Ideally, this team would be composed of Workforce Board members and staff, Workforce Center staff, and volunteers from the community such as representatives from training institutions, employers, and community based organizations. At a minimum expert team members would include:

- ◆ **ESL experts from local training providers, colleges, or universities** who could provide assistance in identifying effective training and education solutions.
- ◆ **Workforce specialists from CBOs or workforce intermediaries who are involved in workforce development and Workforce Centers**, and could provide assistance in assessing services, developing programs, and monitoring performance.
- ◆ **Employer representatives** from key industries and business advocacy organizations such as the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce.
- ◆ **Local Business Services liaisons** who can outreach employers and share information on what they are learning from the field.

LEP Dream Team

For many Workforce Boards, building an LEP dream team may take time and all the potential members, particularly the workforce specialists, may not be readily available. However, as our demographics continue to shift, there will be greater demands for workforce specialists who possess special skills and training in providing services to LEP customers. Building the LEP dream team could provide the perfect opportunity to begin developing this capacity.

Education Committee

Understanding the need to address the issues of high school dropouts as well as a growing LEP immigrant workforce, the Gulf Coast Workforce Board has formed a special education committee composed of Gulf Coast Workforce Board members as well as key community partners. This committee will be looking specifically at improving the Gulf Coast local workforce development area's (workforce area) training and education system.

Identifying, Tracking, and Monitoring

Services: Learning More about the Types of Services LEP Customers Need

Building an LEP team will allow you to explore ways to identify and track services as well as monitor their effectiveness. Examples of activities undertaken by the LEP team include:

- ◆ identifying training programs for LEP customers;
- ◆ monitoring the use of Workforce Center services;
- ◆ developing benchmarks to measure program performance;
- ◆ identifying professional development offerings for Workforce Board staff and Workforce Center staff; and
- ◆ evaluating the effectiveness of workforce and training services.

Section 4. Encouraging Rapid Response Teams to Spread Their Wings: Enhanced Services and Offerings

LEP customers, especially dislocated workers, face specific challenges because of the anxiety of dealing with a language in which they have limited skills, and in many cases, limited education. In addition to the challenge of learning a new language, being displaced can be mentally, emotionally, and financially devastating. Workforce Boards may want to consider expanding Rapid Response services to include offering a short series of classes or workshops focusing on building self-esteem and planning goals and objectives.

Suggested workshops would allow customers to:

- ◆ explore their strengths;
- ◆ discuss their fears; and
- ◆ identify life goals and objectives.

Workforce Boards also may want to consider encouraging staff to implement strategies that will make it easier for the dislocated worker to transition into the Workforce Center.

Rapid Response coordinators who have extensive experience working with this population suggest that Rapid Response team members and case managers assigned to dislocated workers meet several times during the course of Rapid Response services. These meetings can serve as an efficient approach to assisting case managers with learning more about their new customers as well as increasing their appreciation of the customers' strengths and work histories.

Rapid Response

Innovative Rapid Response services take into consideration the specific needs of customers with limited English skills, such as developing workshops on:

1. building confidence;
2. assessing strengths; and
3. identifying life goals.

Another strategy could include establishing meetings between Rapid Response and Workforce Center staff.

Advancing Rapid Response

At the 2006 National Rapid Response Summit, extensive discussion took place around advancing the role of Rapid Response units in workforce areas, particularly regarding economic development.

For example, Oregon and Maine are using Rapid Response units to increase trainings, extend partnerships, and develop and fortify relationships with economic development groups and businesses to assist in the efforts to meet the demands of employers.

Customizing Rapid Response

When faced with a plant closure, Cameron County Workforce Board coordinated with the employer to deliver Rapid Response services through their mobile units. These services included language and educational assessment, GED preparation, English language training, and tax information. Services were delivered early in the morning and late at night, as needed, to accommodate the workers' shift schedules.

Section 5. Sharing Information on Economic Trends and High-Growth, High-Demand Occupations with Workforce Center Staff

As Workforce Boards continue to play an important role in economic development, they may want to consider inviting Workforce Center staff, particularly case managers, to learn more about their local workforce development area's (workforce area) economic forecasts and outlooks. In fact, when asked whether this information would be helpful, case managers working with LEP customers were extremely interested in learning more about the bigger economic picture as well as becoming more versed in their workforce area's workforce studies.

The cluster analyses that many Workforce Boards have conducted provide a wealth of information and are a great place to begin. For instance, in the Upper Rio Grande workforce area, a cluster analysis study conducted in 2005 includes a link to a Web site, <http://tools.utep.edu/iped/> that can be researched by occupation or industry and provides workforce trends into the next decade (McElroy, Olmedo, Feser, & Poole, 2005). By introducing case managers to this information, a Workforce Board ensures that the information being distributed to customers is accurate, up to date, and in line with the workforce area's economic goals. Workforce Board staff also can incorporate information about the high-growth, high-demand occupations list into labor market training. This planned exchange of information will provide customers with quality career exploration services.

High-Growth, High-Demand Occupations

Case managers should have knowledge about the research conducted that determines jobs on the high-growth, high-demand occupations list. Knowing why jobs are on the list helps case managers guide customers toward growing industries and better opportunities. Additionally, Workforce Center staff must be aware of any updates to the high-growth, high-demand occupations list.

Understanding Economic Trends

Training in understanding research such as cluster analysis studies prepares case managers for questions that customers have about job trends in the community and helps case managers understand key concepts like career clusters. All of this can lead to better results for LEP customers by providing solid career counseling and exploration.

Review Part 1: What Workforce Boards Can Do to Plan and Develop Effective LEP Services

Meeting the challenges and opportunities of successfully working with LEP customers provides Workforce Boards with opportunities to build new and innovative practices. In summary, these could include:

1. Providing guidelines for the recruitment and retention of bilingual staff. This should include a review of NASWA's guidelines (National Association of State Workforce Boards, 2004).
2. Hiring at least one qualified staff translator and interpreter who may be able to provide cultural training and language assistance to colleagues, contractors, and customers. If possible, hire bilingual staff to work with LEP customers.
3. Requiring that contractors follow DOL's Language Assistance and Planning Self-Assessment Tool for Recipients of Federal Financial Assistance checklist that is provided for Workforce Boards.
4. Recommending that contractors implement the NASWA guidelines and take into consideration other special accommodations needed to effectively provide services to LEP customers.
5. Creating and maintaining an LEP team with representatives from Workforce Boards, CBOs, community colleges, universities, business advocacy organizations, Workforce Center staff, and employers.
6. Considering expanding services such as Rapid Response to include workshops on self-esteem and other topics that assist LEP customers with evaluating and realizing their strengths.
7. Encouraging collaboration between case managers and the Business Services representatives as well as build the capacity of case managers to support regional economic development.

Language Certification

Workforce Board and Workforce Center staff willing to return to school to learn a new language should consider coursework to become an interpreter or a translator.

Ideally, Workforce Boards and Workforce Centers should develop strategies that encourage staff to become multilingual.

NASWA Guidelines

NASWA suggests promising practices such as offering current employees the opportunity to take classes leading to certification as well as offering a higher salary to bilingual Workforce Center staff.

Part 2. Enhancing Workforce Center Services: The Right Tools of the Trade for Frontline Staff

This section of the module is intended for use by Workforce Center supervisors and case managers and will identify strategies to increase the overall effectiveness of services.

Topics to be covered include:

- ◆ Section 1. The Importance of Case Managers
 - ◆ building a strengths-based approach
 - ◆ ensuring customer confidentiality
- ◆ Section 2. Key Steps in the LEP Customer's Individual Employment Plan
- ◆ Section 3. Getting the Message Across
- ◆ Section 4. Bringing All the Pieces to the Table
- ◆ Section 5. Having Friends in the Right Places
- ◆ Section 6: Finding the Right Job and Keeping It

Why Is This Part Important?

Case managers play a very important role in the workforce delivery system. Each is a guide, expert, and counselor for customers. The approach of a case manager plays an important role in how successful a customer is in transitioning into a new career. Case managers working with LEP customers require a unique set of skills. They have to approach various aspects of case management differently than they would with English-speaking Workforce Center customers because of LEP customers' unique set of characteristics and needs.

Dictionary

Case management is a collaborative process of assessment, planning, facilitation, and advocacy for options and services to meet an individual's needs through communication and available resources to promote quality cost-effective outcomes.

Section 1. The Importance of Case Managers: Building Models That Support LEP Customers

Keeping Things Positive, A Basis for Success: Developing a Strengths-Based Case Management Model

Experts as well as seasoned workforce professionals agree that effective case management begins with a strengths-based approach. This means focusing on the strengths the customer brings rather than the deficits—such as the loss of a job that brought the customer into the system.

Many times Workforce Center staff and the customer concentrate on limited English language and education skills, rather than on the abilities, positive traits, and transferable job skills a customer brings.

Central to a strengths-based approach is a deeply held belief that the customers you serve are trustworthy and committed to the process. This will enhance communication and facilitate an appropriate Individual Employment Plan (IEP).

To a great extent, the success of a working relationship is based on a foundation of mutual trust and respect, and there are additional strategies that can be used to build a strengths-based case management model.

Discovering Things That Count: Person-Centered Strengths Assessment

When literacy or skills assessment is an early intake activity, the first experience an LEP customer may have with the workforce system can begin with a focus on their academic or language deficits. When properly conducted during initial intake, a comprehensive well-structured assessment interview can yield positive results and information, rather than underscore potential employment or training challenges early on.

Module 4 provides further information on the Person-Centered Strengths Assessment during intake and counseling.

Person-Centered Assessment

This type of assessment is different from the literacy and academic assessments that need to be administered, which often highlight customers' deficiencies in language or educational attainment rather than their strengths.

This assessment is more holistic in scope and focuses on a variety of topics. An example tool is included in the Appendix B.

Saleebey, D., *The Strengths Perspective in Social Work Practice*

In addition to gathering important information, an in-depth assessment interview during intake allows the case manager and customer to establish a relationship based on mutual respect. Gathering information specifically focused on the customer's assets also sets a positive tone and builds trust and open communication among all concerned. To address this important issue, consider adding a person-centered assessment questionnaire to the case management process (Saleebey, 2002). Sample questions can be found in Appendix B and include topics such as:

- ◆ Vocational/Educational information
- ◆ Financial/Insurance information

This strengths-based approach entails helping the customer realize that he or she has both internal and external strengths (Saleebey, 2002). Internal strengths include interpersonal skills, motivation, determination, emotional strengths, and the ability to think clearly. External strengths come from family networks, significant others, community groups, and religious institutions.

Seasoned case managers using the strengths-based approach suggest completing the assessment and any future progress notes in the presence of the customer. Although the strengths-based approach requires asking the customer personal questions, it allows the relationship and the approach to be based on individual needs and abilities.

In some cases, if the case manager happens to know that the customer has strong reading and writing skills, or if the customer seems hesitant to answer (either in English or the customer's native language), the case manager can encourage the customer to take a copy of the assessment home to work on at his or her own pace, as well as to involve family and friends in helping complete the assessment questions.

Case managers who have done this type of assessment report that they are amazed with how many additional details customers provide when they take the time to write down their own thoughts about their current situation. If customers are unable to do this, then complete the assessment in their presence using a conversational approach (Saleebey, 2002).

Working from a Strengths-Based Approach

In a Houston adult education program, participants work on IEPs and report in many cases that this is the first opportunity they have had to set goals and objectives. Participants also have a chance to consider career clusters and career ladders. This is all done from a strengths-based perspective.

Case Managers

Case managers who participated in our focus groups indicated they wished they had more time to spend with their LEP customers who required extra explanation and guidance in the service delivery process.

Additional Strategies to Support a Strengths-Based Approach

Some of the additional strategies that are discussed in the this section are presented in *The Strengths Perspective in Social Work Practice* by Dennis Saleebey (4th Edition). These strategies cover a range of areas meant to assist the case manager in more effectively delivering services.

Recognize the Customer's Interpretation of Their Circumstances

One strategy toward establishing a strengths-based model is to identify ways in which you can validate the customers' feelings and attempt to represent a positive force in their lives (Saleebey, 2002). A case manager's approach and initial assessment of a customer's needs must look beyond literacy and English language skills.

The case manager's role is to assist customers in successfully meeting their employment goals as well as realistically and positively assessing their relationship to the job market and then developing a comprehensive IEP.

This means that the customer's view of the situation and the feelings or emotions related to the situation are the central focus of the discussion and interaction. Enabling customers to have a clear understanding of the facts related to their situation is equal to validating the feelings associated with it (Saleebey, 2002).

When working with dislocated workers, it may mean validating their sense of fear, loss, and anger regarding their situation; however, it also means helping them realize that this unfortunate circumstance could also provide new opportunities for them.

Customers often perceive the case manager as the decision maker with regard to delivery of support services and approval for training. Along with this responsibility, the customer assumes the case manager to be knowledgeable about all aspects of the Texas workforce system; therefore, it is important for case managers to recognize that this type of dynamic can create an imbalance of power that inhibits

communication. Developing open communication and mutual respect and trust is an effective way to address these barriers.

Find Ways to Establish Common Ground

Case managers need strategies for better communication. They also need effective strategies to find ways to have customers open up and provide the type of information needed to deliver the best possible services. A deeper understanding of the LEP customer is an important step in establishing open communication.

Finding common ground can lead to greater interaction, a more relaxed customer, and a deeper commitment to accomplishing goals. Work toward finding ways in which you and the customer can effectively communicate to reach desired outcomes.

Spend More One-on-One Time

Case managers who work with LEP customers may require smaller caseloads that allow them to spend extra one-on-one time with their customers. Culture, limited English language skills, limited ability to read, and limited access to Internet-based, self-directed job search create additional barriers to employment for this population.

The language barrier faced by someone with limited English skills will require case managers to spend extra time with their customers to ensure the customers fully understand the rules, regulations, and processes associated with the full array of services available to them. Establishing a good rapport with customers helps ensure that they will comply with all applicable program requirements. In the case of working with LEP customers, this generally takes more time.

Balancing the relationship between the customer and the case manager is essential in establishing a strong relationship. In business, it is common to have meetings on neutral sites, or to vary the location, so that each partner feels equal. This is a great practice to adopt for a population that comes from a culture of respect and formality. Meeting customers away from Workforce Centers, such as at a training provider’s facility, allows them to see that they are not the only ones who are willing to make accommodations.

On the Move

In San Antonio, case managers met participants at the training site where they attended class every day. This increased accessibility and allowed for more one-on-one meetings and improved communication.

In El Paso, Project ACHIEVE case managers meet with the staff of training providers and participants on-site to discuss progress and issues as well as deliver funding stipends. Participants, training staff, and case managers all reported that this method has enhanced the partnerships.

Taking What You Have and Using It Correctly: Making the Most of the Initial Intake

Using the strengths-based approach a case manager can discover what the customer wants (Saleebey, 2002). Using all the tools available to them, including the customer, case managers can find solutions to the problems facing their customers.

There are two components to this task. The first is to determine what they want from services. The second is to identify what they want to happen in relation to their current problem or situation.

The strengths-based approach places emphasis on service delivery that is customer-centered (Saleebey, 2002). Although exactly what customers want may not be entirely achievable based on service delivery rules and regulations, it is imperative for the case manager to be creative in using allowable services to help them achieve specific steps in their overall goal.

For example, a customer may want to become a pharmacist and the case manager is aware that this course is not available under federal, state, or local restrictions. Searching for related fields that are available and will allow the client to complete the coursework in the allotted time frame is one method of working through an obstacle from a strengths-based approach.

Meeting in the Middle: Agreeing on Results and Next Steps

Because assessments are used to guide the IEP, it is important for customers to understand the assessment results and agree with them. All assessment results in written form should be shared with the customers and translated into a language and manner they can understand (Saleebey, 2002). Customers' ownership and understanding of their assessment results is a first step in a successful IEP.

Once a good initial interview and intake have been conducted, the case manager has probably gained significant insight into the strengths, attributes, and aspirations of the customer. By taking the information gathered in the Vocational/Educational section of the person-centered strengths assessment, a comprehensive IEP can be developed.

Ensuring Customer Confidentiality: Keeping a Lid on Things

Because a strengths-based approach is grounded on mutual respect and trust, case managers must make every effort to ensure that all customer information, including conversations, written documents, and records, is maintained with a high level of confidentiality and customers are aware that their information is protected. When working with LEP customers, there are unique aspects to consider because of issues of translation and interpretation.

- ◆ Confidentiality agreements should be negotiated and enforced with both translators and interpreters who do work for Workforce Boards in accordance with DOL guidelines.
- ◆ Workforce Centers that use contracted translators and interpreters must ensure these providers are complying with confidentiality statements.
- ◆ Because of the technical language associated with workforce services, Workforce Centers should rely on qualified in-house staff to translate and interpret for customers in accordance with the Workforce Board's submitted workforce plans.
- ◆ Documents requiring translation should be secured. Care should be taken that sensitive information is not left unsecured—e.g., in the fax machine or on voice mail.
- ◆ Case files should always be secured and never left open on a case manager's desk, even if documents are in a language other than English.
- ◆ When sharing customer information during staff meetings, speak quietly, especially if sharing that a customer has limited English skills or if sharing the customer's ethnicity could compromise his or her identity.

- ◆ When using an interpreter, introduce the customer to the interpreter and explain the interpreter's role. Also, let customers know that the interpreter will maintain their confidentiality.
- ◆ Adherence to Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act regulations for health information, which includes any oral statements and written documents (U.S. Dept. Health & Human Services, 1996).

Review Section 1: Importance of Case Managers

Delivering effective Workforce Center services to LEP customers requires unique strategies:

1. Approach everything based on the customer's strengths and talents by building on the customer's strengths, talents, and abilities;
2. Find ways to incorporate person-centered assessments in your service-delivery strategies by asking questions that allow you to build rapport and trust with your customers;
3. Use an understanding of other cultures to improve service delivery and build a more effective relationship with your customers;
4. Ensure worker confidentiality by developing in-staff translating and interpreting capabilities, as well as instituting strict policies on how sensitive and personal customer information is shared; and
5. Use assessments, IEPs, and appropriate training programs to provide the best outcomes.

Section 2. Key Steps in the LEP Customer's Individual Employment Plan

Positively Approaching the Basic Skills Assessment

Assessing English language and literacy skills is one of the most important processes in developing the LEP customer's IEP. The results of the assessment are used in determining the appropriateness of training and career opportunities. In fact, many experts believe that the quality of the assessment is an important contributing factor in the overall quality of the IEP. Experience suggests that for many customers, if not approached with a positive attitude, the results of the assessment will only reinforce their fears and feelings of inadequacy. Some experts in assessment are advocating for Workforce Centers and training providers to incorporate a portfolio approach, which measures skills beyond just language and literacy (Ananda, 2000). If properly modeled, assessment can play a key role in building a strengths-based approach to delivering workforce and training services. Assessment plays such an important role that an entire module of this guide has been devoted to the topic. Module 4 provides important information about assessment options for LEP customers.

Because important decisions such as career training options are going to be determined through the customer's assessment results, case managers need to assist the individual in approaching this step positively. The case manager should explain to customers that the assessment is not pass or fail, but rather a glimpse of their skills, interests, abilities, etc., at this time. They also need to assure customers that all results are confidential and will only be discussed with them privately (TWC, 2005).

If training is deemed necessary for employment, the customer may look to the case manager for guidance in selecting a school. *Module 3 of this guide is devoted to identifying effective training.* Customers also may be seeking a clearer understanding of what the assessment results mean and how they were determined. Case managers should be prepared to have these discussions with their customers. This is an area in which the results need to be translated into the customer's native language and conveyed in a culturally sensitive manner.

Positive Assessment

Assist customers in staying positive regarding assessment results and use this momentum to move forward in building an effective IEP.

Relaying Results

The goal of assessment is to assist customers in exploring their strengths and gaining an understanding of where their strengths lie and what areas may need further development to attain employment.

Career Exploration: Examples of Computer-Based and Pen-and-Paper Tools

Career opportunities should be explored in clusters. This will allow the customer to consider career paths and set goals that allow for lifelong learning and promotion. It is also important to keep in mind that some of the career exploration tools may not be the most appropriate to use with individuals who have limited English skills or low literacy skills in their native language. If your customer has limited English skills, yet is literate in Spanish, instruments such as SAGE and SPOC (*Sistema de Preferencia Ocupacional de Carreras*) — provide career assessments in Spanish (more information on these can be found in Module 4). Whatever tool you use, it is important that the assessment be administered by an individual who is certified to administer the assessment and trained to interpret the results. An assessment tool is not useful to anyone if both the test and its results are not available in the customer's language. The companies that create assessments have training and technical assistance available to help translate, and this information usually can be found on the company's Web site.

Online Resources

One way to help in the career exploration process is to encourage your customers to visit one of the following Web sites (TWC, 2005):

- ◆ www.twc.state.tx.us/customers/jsemp/jsemsub1.html
- ◆ www.onetcenter.org/tools.html
- ◆ www.quintcareers.com/career_assessment.html
- ◆ www.careerbuilder.com/Jobseeker/Resources/CareerResources.aspx

Because LEP customers may not have the same level of comfort with the Internet as English-speaking customers, they may require additional assistance from their case managers and Workforce Center staff.

Online Resources

America's Career InfoNet at www.acinet.org has a helpful link on career options in Spanish in video format. The Web site has videos that describe various careers and their responsibilities as well as educational requirements. It is important to note that some customers may be computer savvy and able to do research on their own. Others may need assistance exploring these Web sites.

A Road Map for the Future: Developing an Effective Individual Employment Plan

The information gathered from the initial interview and assessment is the basis for developing the customer’s IEP. Different Boards may use different names for this tool (TWC, 2005) such as:

- ◆ Service delivery plan
- ◆ Employment plan
- ◆ Employability plan
- ◆ Individual development plan
- ◆ Individual action strategy

Whatever term is used, this plan is the customer’s road map for obtaining employment. Be sure that the IEP is developed to allow full customer participation. Many customers may not be familiar with concepts like goal setting and employment planning. If properly explored, developing an IEP can be an exciting exercise for customers, and can be used to monitor their progress and celebrate their accomplishments.

Translating the IEP into Spanish or any other language is going to take additional time and effort. The benefits of translating the IEP include:

- ◆ Customer participation and empowerment in its design; and
- ◆ Realistic customer expectations regarding training results and career options.

The Place to Start: Finding the Best Training Fit

Many LEP customers, including dislocated workers, will be eligible for training. Finding an appropriate training model for LEP customers can be a complicated process. Some LEP customers have experienced success in meeting their employment needs through training; however, many have not. Fortunately, there are successful models throughout the state and country that effectively integrate various aspects of working with LEP customers in delivering English language development and vocational training.

Planning for the Future

The development of the IEP alone can be viewed as a significant accomplishment because this is an opportunity for customers to take charge of their future.

TWIST

The Workforce Information System of Texas (TWIST) is the management tool for case management. This system hosts all information on customers during their time in the Texas workforce system. Though the TWIST screens are in English, case managers who can translate can enter information in Spanish.

A translator may be needed to translate the IEP/Service Plan in its entirety.

Module 3 of this guide has been designed as a direct response to challenges that Workforce Boards are facing in identifying and procuring appropriate and effective training.

Once training has been approved, customers will likely look to their case manager for guidance in choosing the best training and training provider for them. Encourage customers to visit sites to determine the best fit, but guidance in this area will help to eliminate any problems that may develop in the future. The Appendix has an example handout customers can use when visiting training providers. The handout lists a series of questions that can assist them in finding the school that is going to fit all or most of their needs.

LEP customers are going to need ongoing support, which may extend beyond gas vouchers and child care. They are going to need constant positive reinforcement as well as assistance in meeting other personal or family challenges. Effective interpersonal communication will establish the trust necessary to open the door for customers to confide in their case managers and turn to them for assistance and guidance.

Other effective strategies to support customers include:

- ◆ Assisting customers in revisiting their IEP from time to time to monitor their progress toward goals
- ◆ Establishing a point of contact among the various training providers to establish rapport
- ◆ Setting appointments with customers specifically to look at progress and acknowledge accomplishments
- ◆ Assisting customers with accessing culturally appropriate social or health services
- ◆ Assuring customers that their case manager is their advocate

Section 3. Getting the Message Across: Improving Communication with LEP Customers

Workforce Boards from around the state have recognized the positive impact that effectively communicating with their customers has on Workforce Board performance. In response, they are developing promising practices by offering training to Workforce Center staff on how to effectively work with LEP customers. This training varies from language skills (occupational Spanish) to phone intake, and applicant and customer contact skills in compliance with Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and Section 188 of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA).

LEP Customer Communications

Working with LEP customers provides opportunities to interact with different cultures and use a wide variety of written, oral, and nonverbal communication strategies.

The Keys to Effective Communication: Understanding the Power of Language and Culture

The issue of linguistically and culturally appropriate communication deserves special attention and consideration. This section will identify some strategies that case managers can employ to assist them in serving LEP customers. Communication comes in many forms: written, oral, and nonverbal. However, communication works well and conveys the necessary messages only when it is in a form that both parties understand.

Because cultural context cannot be separated from effective communication, cultural considerations for the Hispanic population are critical to productive case management. The majority of LEP customers have cultural roots in Latin American countries, where familial ties are often very strong. Families function interdependently; therefore, validating the strengths within their family network is important.

Researchers and counselors who are experts in working with Hispanic families highlight the importance that cultural sensitivity and interpersonal etiquette plays in establishing good rapport. These experts have identified six characteristics that are most valued in Hispanic interpersonal relationships. They are *personalismo*, *respeto*, *dignidad*, *simpatia*, *confianza*, and *cariño* (Santiago, Arredondo, & Gallardo-Cooper, 2002).

Dictionary

For some words, simple translation does not give a true understanding of their meaning—the best understanding comes from context:

Personalismo: Making a relationship personal

Respeto: Respect

Dignidad: Dignity

Simpatia: Pleasant, kind

Confianza: Confidence

Cariño: Affection

Personalismo (personal relationship) represents an orientation in which the person is always more important than the task at hand, including the time factor. In other words, always make the time to listen to and interact with customers.

Interviews with case managers indicate that they experienced better outcomes with customers when they were able to spend more time getting to know them and assess their needs on a frequent basis. An effective approach is to use more conversational skills than interviewing skills when meeting with the customers. For example, always begin meetings with questions about their well-being, families, and other significant things in their lives.

Respeto (respect) represents sensitivity to the individual's position and creates a boundary within which conversations should be contained to avoid conflict. The Spanish language has both formal and informal systems of communication (i.e., use of the formal pronoun *usted* and the informal pronoun *tú*). The structure of language reinforces the hierarchical position among individuals.

Example: Using *usted* when working with Hispanic customers is more appropriate than using *tú*.

Dignidad (dignity) is linked to the first two characteristics: Hispanics believe in actions that embrace a sense of pride, regardless of the individual's position. This entails embracing the belief that a person is worthy and respected at all levels. Therefore, it is extremely important for case managers to understand the cultural context of *dignidad* and the importance their Hispanic customers place on this attribute.

Example: Many dislocated workers experience difficulty in coming to the Workforce Center to ask for assistance. Assure them that their work history is appreciated and valuable and that the assistance is not a *handout*, but needed to help get them back to work.

Simpatía (pleasant, kind) relates to what many call *buena gente* (good people). Also, some Hispanics who strive to embrace *simpatía* and to be seen as *buena gente* often will avoid conflict and want to preserve harmony at all times. As a result, they may lack the skills or experience to speak up about situations in which they are experiencing challenges. Customers who may

Respeto

It is essential to address adults with the terms *Señor* and *Señora* before their last names, e.g., *Señor García* or *Señora Rios*, unless invited to address them informally.

Dignidad

Case managers who have seen TANF Choices and Food Stamp Employment and Training customers return for further services may need to refocus and reevaluate their approach with different customers, such as dislocated workers, who have strong work ethics and experience.

Asking for assistance may be contrary to these workers' sense of self-reliance and dignity.

seem to be holding back verbally may be doing so out of *simpatía*. In this case, reading nonverbal cues may be more important.

Example: A Hispanic customer may not want to worry the case manager with their home or school troubles.

Confianza (confidence) refers to the development of trust and familiarity in a relationship. The term implies informality and ease of interpersonal comfort. Establishing *confianza* allows Hispanic customers to be more direct and open in conversations. Customers respond best to case managers who come across as real people. As many seasoned case managers have learned, the result is trust and collaboration. It may be difficult to effectively communicate with another person if you are not willing to disclose information about yourself. *Confianza* also helps discover and establish the common ground discussed earlier in the module. Hispanic customers routinely withhold frank conversations until after they are satisfied that a trustworthy relationship has been established.

Example: If a customer has children, share a little about the experiences, joys, and challenges of parenting, if applicable. Or, if the case manager has experienced a job loss, share a little about that experience.

Cariño (caring) represents a demonstration of endearment in verbal and nonverbal communication. Case managers may work with customers who will verbally apply *cariño* by adding the suffix *ito* to certain words and phrases to indicate a closer relationship with an individual.

The nonverbal use of *cariño* also may be expressed by customers through personal contact, including kissing the cheek when greeting and touching the person while talking. However, there are variations in how Hispanics conduct themselves interpersonally. For example, Hispanics may offer gifts or food in appreciation for help and guidance.

Dictionary

Expressions of *Carino*

Mijita: My little one (feminine)

Mijito: My little one (masculine)

Senorita: Little Miss

Besitos: Kisses

Abrazos: Caring Embrace

Cultural Knowledge

Case managers at Upper Rio Grande @ Work in the Project Achieve program had an opportunity to meet with former displaced workers as part of cultural sensitivity training. The case managers felt these events offered a valuable understanding of their customers' culture and attitudes. This improved communication and led to a better understanding of the customers and their issues.

Understanding the Unique Aspects of Mexican Culture

The Hispanic population that comprises the majority of LEP individuals in Texas comes from Mexico, the largest minority immigrant group in the state (Urban Institute, 2003). Therefore, understanding the unique aspects of this culture will help case managers implement effective strategies for working with these customers.

The Mexican culture is one based on class structure (Gudykunst, Ting-Toomey, & Nishidia, 1996). Although times have changed, this traditional understanding of rank continues to have an effect on interpersonal communications, such as the customer-case manager relationship, according to Adler (1979), Atwood & McAnanay (1986), and Delgado (1994) (as cited in Gudykunst et al., 1996). Because class distinction is a historical and integral part of Mexican culture, case managers should be aware of how this cultural dynamic affects their communication with LEP customers (Gudykunst et al., 1996).

Case managers have control over many aspects of the IEP, so according to Mexican societal norms, the case manager is considered the member of a higher class (Gudykunst, Ting-Toomey, & Nishidia, 1996). This is an important dynamic for the case manager to recognize because based on the customer's cultural framework, gestures first must be made by the member of the higher class (i.e., case manager). This understanding can go a long way in developing the type of relationship needed to assist the customer in succeeding.

Mexican Culture

Case managers are responsible for reaching out, developing, and nurturing the customer-case manager relationship because based on Mexican class structure, they may be the only ones in the relationship who are allowed to do so.

Gender-Based Considerations

Because Hispanic women represent a majority of the dislocated garment worker population in Texas, it is important to keep in mind that, in some cases, they may encounter challenges participating in activities such as training and job search, because their spouses may not look favorably on outside activities aside from employment.

If they do attend training, spending extra time outside of the classroom to study or do homework also may be difficult for these women because they are expected to continue their role as homemaker, mother, and wife, leaving little room or support for activities outside of that. These cultural conflicts could lead to marital problems and even family violence.

Therefore, case managers should be prepared to provide resources and referrals when necessary. TWC and Workforce Boards have developed guidance to assist case managers in addressing family violence.

Understanding the Written Word

A considerable amount of information is provided to LEP customers as they begin to interact with the workforce delivery system. There is much they may not understand because of their limited English skills and literacy and education levels in Spanish.

The important issue to remember is that just because a person is able to speak in a second language does not mean they are able to read in that language. Some may not have the literacy levels necessary to complete routine forms properly in either Spanish or English.

Customers may assume that completing documents is the only way to ensure they will receive assistance, and, as a result, they may readily comply and sign consent forms they cannot read (Santiago, Arredondo, Gallardo-Cooper, 2002). Thus, it is important for them to receive as much of the information in written form translated in their native language, but also in a manner that those not able to read can understand and that complies with WIA Section 188 guidelines for limited English proficiency.

Technical Terms

Consider using certified professionals to translate and interpret technical terms, words, and phrases because not all Spanish speakers have the skills necessary to accurately convey these concepts.

Family Violence Counseling

Make sure the agencies you are referring LEP customers to have the ability to provide linguistically and culturally appropriate services. Gender also may play a role in how willing customers are to accept assistance, so be sure that the agency has female counselors.

To find out more information, visit the Texas Workforce Commission at www.twc.state.tx.us.

Identifying all documents and having them translated into the appropriate language is essential. Additional strategies include:

- ◆ Providing and reviewing with LEP customers a copy of their IEPs translated into their native language. This ensures that they are aware of the time frames and goals associated with their IEPs.
- ◆ Providing qualified staff to translate and interpret assessment results.
- ◆ Results then need to be shared with customers so they can use the information to develop their employment goals and objectives.

Materials

Though it is a mandate from DOL, it is worth repeating that Workforce Centers should ensure that all documents related to programs that have a high contact rate with limited English skills participants are translated into the appropriate language and available to all case managers.

Also, it is important to realize that just because a form is in the language spoken does not mean it is understood. Case managers can use nonverbal cues to detect whether a customer is having difficulty reading and completing the forms.

Communicating at All Levels: Improving Verbal and Nonverbal Communication

Verbal and nonverbal communications are fundamental elements of exchanging information and ideas. They also are essential in building a strengths-based case management approach to achieve successful outcomes and improved performance in key areas such as entered employment and employment retention. Working with LEP customers requires strategies that can facilitate the exchange of concepts as well as technical language.

Speaking To Be Understood: Effective Verbal Communication

Case managers must be able to communicate with their customers. Verbal communication is one of the primary building blocks of a strengths-based approach; establishing a relationship with an LEP customer can be difficult because of the language barrier.

Language barriers can be frustrating and result in the exchange of little or no useful information. Case managers must either possess the language skills or have access to qualified interpreters to facilitate a meaningful conversation with their customers. Even if individuals are not Hispanic, if they are fluent in Spanish they will be effective in working with Spanish-speaking customers.

Another aspect to consider is the ability to communicate technical terms. Even native Spanish-speakers may need some assistance in translating and interpreting workforce terminology.

What *Is Not* Said Is Just as Important as What *Is* Said: Reading Nonverbal Cues

Case Managers and Their Nonverbal Cues

Communication through body language is called nonverbal communication. When case managers communicate verbally, it is important to keep in mind that they also communicate through facial expressions, hand gestures, eye contact, and tone of voice.

Nonverbal Cues

- ◆ Refusing to make eye contact (this also may be a cultural factor)
- ◆ Sighing
- ◆ Exhibiting no curiosity beyond page 1
- ◆ Shaking head no
- ◆ Just smiling
- ◆ Not writing
- ◆ Answering orally in own language (instead of writing)
- ◆ Repeating same English word (“yes, yes”)

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Actions to Avoid

- ◆ Placing an interpreter or customer on a speaker phone
- ◆ Allowing family members of friends to act as interpreters
- ◆ Allowing another customer to act as an interpreter
- ◆ Having conversations regarding customer interactions in public places
- ◆ Sharing assessment scores without the customers consent.

It is important to keep in mind, however, that eye contact and body position have different meanings in different cultures.

Case managers who are unfamiliar with some of the subtleties of nonverbal cues in a particular culture should:

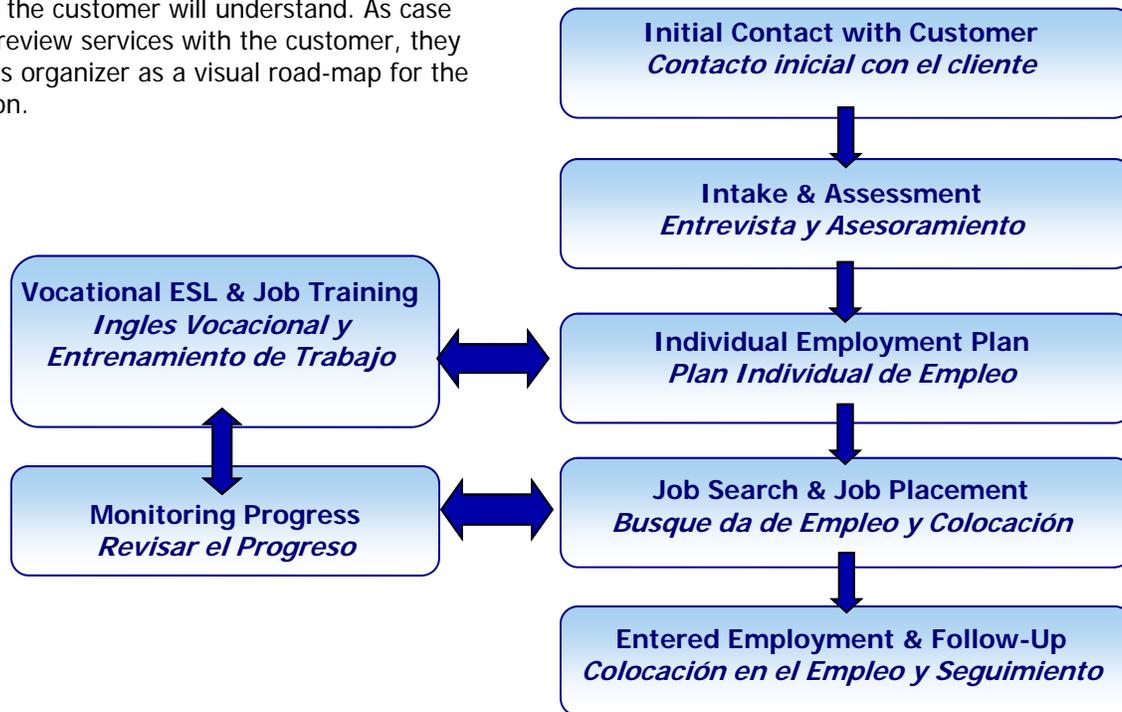
- ◆ ask a trusted person from the cultural group to share any insights they may have
- ◆ be aware of body language such as posture, crossed arms, or head shaking.
- ◆ make sure that the customer has your complete attention by avoiding looking at your computer or otherwise appearing distracted.

Things to Avoid

- ◆ Assuming that if customers speak Spanish they can read Spanish
- ◆ Assuming that customers will admit to being unable to read or write
- ◆ Assuming that staff with Spanish surnames speak Spanish fluently
- ◆ Assuming that co-workers who speak Spanish are qualified interpreters

Graphic Organizer

To help customers understand the system in visual context, case managers can use graphic organizers such as the one below. This illustration should be translated into Spanish and be written at an educational level the customer will understand. As case managers review services with the customer, they can use this organizer as a visual road-map for the conversation.



Case managers not only should be aware of their own nonverbal communication styles, but should also be aware of the nonverbal cues of their customers. Gestures or facial expressions can have unintended messages when communicating with a person from another culture.

Reading the Nonverbal Cues of Customers

After carefully studying the nonverbal cues of the customer, case managers should make accommodations to ensure that the customer understands the information provided by:

- ◆ requesting the assistance of a co-worker who is more fluent in the customer's native language or using an interpreter
- ◆ simplifying some of the key concepts into very basic language or even creating a visual chart to help explain a particular service delivery process
- ◆ responding in a reassuring manner if the customer seems nervous

Capture, Clarify, and Confirm

There are three practical rules to ensure better cross-cultural communications:

1. **Capture.** To avoid misinterpretations that may offend and confuse others—pay close attention to the conversation. Key in on specific words or phrases that give cultural understanding and maintain the meaning of what is being said.
2. **Clarify.** When unable to fully interpret what is being said, look for nonverbal cues to explain the message, then restate the information.
3. **Confirm.** To ensure understanding, give the customer an opportunity to restate what has been said. At the next meeting, make sure to follow up on the previous meeting's discussions.

Adapted from Prince, D.W., & Hoppe, M.H.

Strategies for Individuals with Lower Educational Attainment

As noted, it is important to keep in mind that adults who have limited English skills also may have lower literacy skills (reading and writing) in their native language. Therefore, Workforce Center staff may have to make special efforts to ensure that customers are able to understand the information they are presented with. The following are strategies for working with populations with lower educational attainment (Brown, 2001):

- ◆ For individuals who have limited reading and writing skills, use graphics to explain tasks and processes.
- ◆ For individuals who have difficulty understanding English, maintain eye contact during conversations and have them restate instructions in their own words.

Preparing to Improve Communications

Preparing for an initial intake or counseling session with an LEP customer is an excellent strategy for developing effective interpersonal relationships. The following concepts for case managers on how to improve rapport with customers has been adapted from Paniagua (1998), Sue & Sue (1999), and Zuniga (1992) as presented in *Counseling Latino and la Familia* (Santiago, Arredondo, Gallardo-Cooper, 2002):

- ◆ Begin sessions by setting boundaries and establishing roles before becoming familiar with customers.
- ◆ Make sure to address customers with titles using the formal Mr. and Mrs (or *Señor* and *Señora*).
- ◆ Avoid using formal physical boundaries, such as desks, when meeting with customers.
- ◆ Use a formal hierarchical system when meeting with mixed groups—start with older men and end with children.
- ◆ Note how customers refer to themselves and use that variation—formal names recorded on documents are not always the names used in everyday conversation (e.g., Maria del Carmen shortens to Carmen).

- ◆ Customers may need extra time; be flexible and make sure that the meeting is productive for both parties.
- ◆ Allow the customer time to adjust to the setting and make small talk to set the tone.
- ◆ Use their language and vocabulary so the IEP is self-explanatory and easy to understand, and avoid workforce development acronyms with which they may be unfamiliar.
- ◆ Acknowledge that because of the value of *respeto*, many customers may avoid conflict. Although you may attempt to explain things, customers may state that they understand, but won't. Therefore, find opportunities to ask questions or have them restate their understanding of the material.
- ◆ Respond to nonverbal cues to enhance interpersonal communication.
- ◆ Determine whether processes and concepts are best conveyed through illustrations and other visual aids.

Review Section 3: Getting the Message Across: Improving Communication with LEP Customers

Communication is essential to the delivery of effective workforce services for LEP customers. Below is list of concepts covered in this section.

1. Communication needs to be both culturally and linguistically appropriate.
2. Hispanic culture has distinct characteristics:
 - ◆ *Personalismo*: Making a relationship personal
 - ◆ *Respeto*: Respect
 - ◆ *Dignidad*: Dignity
 - ◆ *Simpatía*: Pleasant, kind
 - ◆ *Confianza*: Confidence
 - ◆ *Cariño*: Affection
3. Hispanic culture has unique aspects that are important to developing effective customer relationships.
4. Communication comes in various forms: written, oral, and nonverbal.
5. Case managers should provide and review an LEP customer's IEP in the customer's native language.
6. Assessment results should be translated and communicated to customers in their native language.
7. Technical words, terms, or phrases may need to be translated or interpreted by qualified professionals.
8. Case managers should be aware of their own nonverbal cues as well as those of their customers.
9. Case managers should respond to their customers' nonverbal cues to enhance interpersonal communication.

10. Concepts are best communicated to customers with lower educational attainment through illustrations.
11. Case managers should prepare for the LEP interview for the most-effective results.
12. Case managers should use the form of communication that is going to work best with each customer.

Section 4. Bringing All the Pieces to the Table: Leveraging Information to Better Assist Customers in Exploring Employment and Training Options

Why Is This Section Important?

Meeting the employment goals of LEP customers requires leveraging all of the resources and information available through the Workforce Center. Central to this is close collaboration among case managers, job developers, and Business Services representatives.

Connecting Case Managers with Employers

Case managers always should remember that the goal of the Workforce Center is to get customers employed. Arranging regular meetings between case managers and the Business Services representatives is a good strategy toward achieving this outcome.

Monthly meetings can be scheduled to discuss information such as: *What jobs are currently available? What qualities are employers searching for in new employees? Are businesses looking for Spanish-speaking employees?*

Assisting Customers Who Are Exploring Training Options

All LEP customers need to explore their career options and some also may need to research available occupational training. Most of these individuals do not fully understand the process of developing an IEP, and also may need more information about the tie between high-growth, high-demand occupations and training options.

Interviews conducted in developing this module also found customer confusion with the relationships between the high-growth, high-demand occupations list and the IEP. Case managers should have sufficient understanding of high-growth, high-demand list.

Matching Employers and Customers

Most LEP customers need to get to work as quickly as possible. Identifying employers who need to and are willing to readily hire LEP individuals provides everyone with options and demonstrates the value of leveraging resources and information.

Strategies that provide case managers with opportunities to stay connected to this important area include:

- ◆ Gaining greater insight into economic forecasts through workshops and classes
- ◆ Scheduling regular meetings to stay in close contact with Business Services representatives to identify employers who are flexible in their English language and educational requirements
- ◆ Keeping abreast of pending and actual changes in the Workforce Board's high-growth, high-demand occupations list through ongoing updates from the Workforce Board

Weekly Staff Gatherings

In the Lower Rio Grande workforce area, case managers gathered weekly to share information and discuss successful practices in handling difficult cases. The case managers reported that these meetings were helpful in providing a needed support system. The meetings also helped to establish and reinforce a team approach to problem solving that went beyond the meetings.

Review Section 4: Bringing All the Pieces to the Table

Workforce Center staff should look for ways to leverage resources and share information. Topics in the section include:

1. Developing approaches to connect case managers with employers by arranging regular meetings between Business Services representatives and case managers
2. Allowing case managers opportunities to attend after-hours and lunchtime business events to gain greater insight into employers' requirements
3. Leveraging information to build the case manager's ability to assist customers with career exploration by inviting case managers to labor market information workshops that present findings from local industry cluster studies and other economic analyses

Brown Bag Meetings

Case managers may consider gathering at least once a month for a brown bag breakfast or lunch meeting to talk about cases and introduce specific case studies. This opportunity to review specific cases allows knowledge and experience to be shared in an open and free discussion among peers. Confidentiality rules still apply, in particular to changing the customers' names. However, knowledge shared about what is happening in the real world will assist case managers to better prepare for their own cases.

Section 5. Having Friends in the Right Places: Building a Robust System of Support for All

Supporting Each Other

Working with Spanish-speaking and other LEP customers gives case managers and other Workforce Center staff valuable experiences in learning different cultures and languages. However, managing all aspects of being effective professionals, including incorporating culturally and linguistically effective practices, staying “strengths based” and “customer centered,” delivering quality customer services, and ensuring that all of the bureaucratic and performance requirements of the Texas workforce system are met can be stressful (Moxley, 2002). Therefore, establishing a strong support network for case managers can be a successful strategy.

Developing Support Networks for Limited English Proficiency Customers

LEP customers may experience a variety of barriers to employment beyond transportation and child care. Many may experience difficulties in paying their rent or utilities or in accessing health services. Participating in training can be a challenge for many customers. They may experience high levels of stress and anxiety in trying to acclimate to a new learning environment.

Many customers have been away from school for a long period or may never have been in the classroom. Added to this pressure is the fact that they are facing the challenge of learning a new language. Chances are they also may need to learn good study habits and test-taking skills. Many will need to adopt time-management skills, which will allow them to successfully balance school and home.

Supporting Trainees

Collaborate with staff from training institutions to coordinate on-site mini-workshops in stress management and study habits. Coordinate occasional ceremonies to commemorate the students' accomplishments during their training.

Leveraging Resources

Alamo Community College District has developed a partnership that includes the Alamo Workforce Board and a broad base of community partners to address the issues of access to health care for Hispanics. This effort is being funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation and is an effective means of leveraging resources to meet the needs of an underserved community.

Organizing Information and Access to Services

To determine the appropriate types of services customers may need to successfully address various barriers, consider developing instruments that can be used to survey their concerns. The results of the surveys then can be used to identify any gaps in support services as well as reinforce existing referrals. The Workforce Center should provide all case managers a listing of community nonprofit agencies that provide culturally and linguistically appropriate services.

Building a strong network of contacts within the social services community, including community-based workforce intermediaries, helps case managers to be ready to assist customers looking for services not available through the Texas workforce system. Because many LEP customers have concerns about accessing community resources, be sure and assist them in overcoming their fears.

Online Application

Consider printing the screens of some employers' online applications to help customers get acquainted with their format and language. Incorporate this into job readiness classes by having customers practice completing them in class. The customers then could move into the resource room to practice online.

Lifelong Learning

It is important for case managers to discuss the importance of lifelong learning with LEP customers, which includes strategies for promoting and encouraging participants to continue attending classes that improve their English and employment skills.

Case managers also should stress that continued improvement of customers' English skills is a means to career advancement.

Review Section 5: Having Friends in the Right Places: Building a Robust System of Support for All

Support systems are fundamental to strengthening relationships among staff members and assisting customers in addressing barriers to employment. Concepts covered in this section include:

1. Providing opportunities for case managers to support each other through regular meetings and social events
2. Attending workshops and conferences on topics related to the challenges customers are facing
3. Surveying customers regarding the types of services they are interested in and inviting representatives from corresponding agencies
4. Building an extensive network of personal contacts to connect customers to the services they need

Section 6. Finding the Right Job and Keeping It

Why Is This Section Important?

Case managers are powerful partners in job development and retention. Opportunities for case managers to assist customers in these important functions exist and can greatly improve the customers' employment outcomes and job retention rates.

Enhancing Job Readiness to Fit the Needs of LEP Customers

Job readiness can take on some additional dimensions when working with LEP customers, and go beyond what is routinely delivered. Traditional offerings such as interviewing skills, dressing for success, and résumé writing may need to be complemented with classes specifically targeting the LEP customers. Additional workshops could include:

- ◆ Introduction to online applications and demonstrations on how to complete them
- ◆ Employers sharing information on the behavioral assessments and tests they may use and require
- ◆ Employers sharing information on career clusters or ladders within their companies, and speaking realistically with customers about job requirements

Getting a Job Is Not the End: Improving Job Retention Rates

Job retention is an important measurement of the Workforce Center's performance. Once a customer has secured employment, it is important to maintain contact to ensure that the transition is successful and the customer is able to retain the job.

Employer Connections

Case managers expressed an interest in attending events that are held after hours by businesses and local chambers of commerce as well as job fairs. These events allow case managers to come in contact with key employers, better understand the job environment, and, in the end, do a better job of steering participants in the best career directions.

Job Search

Employer data and information from Business Services can be used to identify employers that are flexible in their requirements for English skills and educational attainment.

Assisting Customers in Continuing Their Personal Development

There are several ways case managers can assist customers in continuing their personal development. Some customers want to continue their studies or feel they may not have had sufficient time during training to learn all they could about their job, or perhaps they were not able to attain their GED credential prior to accepting employment. Many customers may want to continue sharpening their skills to pursue jobs with career ladders. Supporting these efforts will help them retain their current employment and secure higher-wage jobs in the future.

Encouraging customers to continue improving their English skills also could present opportunities for case managers and Workforce Boards to collaborate with employers to establish skills training at their worksites specifically for employees who desire to increase their English language proficiency. Strategies that support incumbent worker training allow Workforce Centers to continue to assist customers and employers. Ultimately, incumbent worker training can result in decreased employee turnover and competitive advantages for employers.

Continuing Education

To assist a customer in continuing his or her education, case managers can use community resource guides to search for ESL or GED classes near the customer's home or workplace. Community colleges, municipalities, churches, and other CBOs may offer free ESL or GED classes. The effective use of ESL and GED classes is covered in Module 3.

Job Coach

Case managers should not stop interacting with the participant once a job is found. The bond that leads to successful job placement also can help the participant reach full self-sufficiency with follow-up services. Workforce Centers should include follow-up services in case managers' job descriptions and duties.

Lending an Assist: Post-Employment Services

Customers who have entered employment may encounter some challenges adjusting to a new work environment, especially if they are new to the job market or have worked most of their adult life for only one employer. Some of these challenges may include:

- ◆ Adjusting to a different work schedule
- ◆ Meeting the new employer's expectations
- ◆ Working with a new group of co-workers
- ◆ Learning new rules and policies
- ◆ Learning workplace vocabulary and etiquette

A case manager may play the role of a job coach once a customer has obtained employment. In this role, the case manager will continue frequent contact to assist the customer in the transition to work. In some cases, case managers may need to intervene with employers on behalf of customers experiencing problems on the job. Job coaching is usually supported through follow-up services in the first 90 days after customers enter employment.

Review Section 6: Finding the Right Job and Keeping It

Job placement and retention are important performance areas for Workforce Boards and TWC. Concepts suggested in this section to enhance these performance measures include:

1. Enhancing job readiness to meet the needs of LEP customers by offering workshops on completing online applications and understanding behavioral testing
2. Inviting employers to conduct workshops on career ladders, language, and educational requirements
3. Assisting customers with continuing their education to enhance their career opportunities and earning ability
4. Working with employers to develop incumbent worker training
5. Implementing job coaching after a customer enters employment to improve retention rates

Appendices

Appendix A: Guidance to School Selection

Appendix B: Person-Centered Strengths-Based Assessment

Appendix C: Department of Labor, Language Assistance and Planning
Self-Assessment Tool for Recipients of Federal Financial
Assistance

Appendix A: Guidance to School Selection

Part 1: English, Pages 58–59

Part 2: Spanish, Pages 60–61

Guidance to School Selection

The following questions were taken from the Upper Rio Grande Workforce Development Board, Guidance to School Selection. They can be used by case managers to help customers in their search for appropriate training providers. They are provided here in English and Spanish sections.

Classes

1. What is the class schedule?
2. How many times is this class offered per semester?
3. How long is a semester?
4. How many classes are required per semester?
5. How much homework can be expected for each program?
6. What is the ratio of students per instructor?
7. How many ESL levels do you offer?
8. Is ESL class combined with vocational training?
9. Do you offer ESL classes until a certain level of English proficiency is reached or do you offer only so many hours of ESL instruction?
10. Do you offer several ESL levels in the same classroom? If so, does instructor have an assistant in the classroom at all times?
11. Do I have to complete ESL classes before entering vocational training?
12. If training is offered along with ESL and the entry requirement is 5th grade reading level and I am currently at 3rd grade level, how can this school assist me?

Logistics and Supplies

1. Do you have any problems with parking in the school?
2. How many locations do you have? Are all classes offered at this location?
3. Can I take classes at different locations?
4. If tools or supplies are included as part of the training, who do I request them from and how soon in training do I request them to receive them in time to use them in the classroom?

5. If for whatever reason it takes too long to receive tools or supplies, what arrangement does the school have to make sure all students have all the tools needed to continue learning?
6. If tools are not included, is there financial assistance available?
7. When are schoolbooks or uniforms provided?

Policies and Procedures

1. What is your absence and tardy policy?
2. What happens if in the middle of the semester the instructor clearly sees that no progress has been made due to my limited English?
3. How do you measure progress, and how often do you measure?
4. What happens when an instructor leaves? How soon can he/she be replaced?
5. For GED classes, do you offer an entry pre-GED exam and from then on how often do you administer another one to monitor progress?
6. How often do students meet with instructors for reports?
7. Do instructors meet with case managers to discuss my coursework?

Extra Curricular

1. If needed, do you offer tutoring?
2. What is the schedule for tutoring?
3. Request curriculum for training(s) of interest.
4. Do you offer externships? Where? Does the student have to search for the location?
5. Do you have a breakroom; does it have a refrigerator, microwave for public use? At what times are breaks?
6. Are sanitary/maintenance conditions on school kept up for the comfort of students?

Guía Para La Selección De Escuela

Las siguientes preguntas fueron adaptadas de la *“Guía Para La Selección De Escuela”* publicada por el Upper Río Grande Workforce Development Board. Las siguientes preguntas pueden ser usadas por los Manejadores de Casos para ayudar a los clientes a buscar proveedores de entrenamiento apropiado a sus necesidades. Aquí están proporcionadas en las secciones de Inglés y Español.

Clases

1. ¿Cual es el horario de clase?
2. ¿Cuántas veces se ofrece esta clase por semestre?
3. ¿Qué tan largo es el semestre?
4. ¿Cuántas clases son requeridas por semestre?
5. ¿Cuánta tarea es esperada por cada programa?
6. ¿Cual es la proporción de estudiantes por cada instructor?
7. ¿Cuántos niveles de Inglés como segundo lenguaje son ofrecidos?
8. ¿Están las clases de Inglés como segundo lenguaje combinadas con entrenamiento vocacional?
9. ¿Ofrece clases de Inglés hasta llegar a cierto nivel de pericia de Inglés o ofrece no más ciertas horas de instrucción de Inglés como segundo lenguaje?
10. ¿Ofrece diferentes niveles de clases de Inglés en el mismo salón de clase? ¿Y si ese es el caso, tiene el instructor un asistente en el salón de clase todo el tiempo?
11. ¿Tengo que completar las clases de Inglés como segundo lenguaje antes de empezar el entrenamiento vocacional?
12. ¿Si el entrenamiento es ofrecido junto la clase de Inglés como segunda lengua y el requisito para ser aceptado a la clase es leer al nivel de quinto año y estoy leyendo al nivel de tercer grado, como puede ayudarme esta escuela?

Logísticas y Suministras

1. ¿Tienen algún problema con el estacionamiento de la escuela?
2. ¿Cuántos locales tiene? ¿Son todas las clases ofrecidas en este local?
3. ¿Puedo tomar clases en diferentes locales?
4. ¿Si el entrenamiento ofrece herramientas y suministras, a quien se las pido y que tan pronto las pido para recibirlas con tiempo para usarlas en la clase?

5. ¿Si por cualquier razón se toma mucho tiempo para recibir las herramientas o suministros, que clase de arreglos hace la escuela para asegurarse que todos los estudiantes reciban las herramientas necesarias continuar su aprendizaje?
6. ¿Si las herramientas no son incluidas, hay ayuda financiera?
7. ¿Cuándo son los libros y uniformes proporcionados?

Regulaciones y Procedimientos

1. ¿Cual es la regulación respecto a las faltas o llegadas tarde a clase?
2. ¿Qué es lo que pasa si durante el medio de semestre el instructor obviamente ve que no he progresado por mi limitación en hablar el Ingles?
3. ¿Cómo mide usted el progreso y cuanta veces lo mide?
4. ¿Que es lo que sucede cuando un instructor se va? ¿Que tan pronto puede ser reemplazado?
5. ¿Para clases de GED, usted ofrece un pre-examen de GED y después de eso cada cuando administra otro examen para observar el progreso?
6. ¿Cada cuando se juntan los estudiantes con los instructores para los reportes?
7. ¿Se juntan los Manejadores de Casos con los instructores para hablar acerca de mis deberes estudiantiles?

Fuera Del Programa De Estudios

1. ¿Si es necesario, puede usted ofrecer clases privadas?
2. ¿Cuál es el horario para las clases privadas?
3. Pida el currículo para el entrenamiento(s) de interés.
4. ¿Ofrece puesto externo? ¿Donde? ¿Tiene que buscar el estudiante el lugar?
5. ¿Tiene un cuarto para descansar; tiene refrigerador o microondas para uso publico? ¿A que horas son los descansos?
6. ¿Son las condiciones sanitarias y el mantenimiento de la escuela adecuado para que los estudiantes se sientan comfortable?

Appendix B: Person-Centered Strengths-Based Assessment

Part 1: English, Pages 64–65

Part 2: Spanish, Pages 66–67

Person-Centered Strengths Assessment

The following assessment is adapted from *The Strengths Perspective in Social Work Practice* by Dennis Saleebey, Fourth Edition (2002), and the Learning Disabilities Association of Western New York (2007).

Housing/A Sense of "Home"

1. Where are you living now?
2. Do you rent or own your own home?

Transportation/Getting Around:

1. What are all the different ways you get to where you want or need to go?
2. Would you like to expand transportation options?
3. What are some of the ways you have used in the past to get from place to place?

Financial/Insurance

1. What are your current sources of income, and how much money do you have each month to work with?
2. What are your monthly financial obligations?

Vocational/Educational

1. What does your job mean to you?
2. What activities are you currently involved in where you use your gifts and talents to help others?
3. What kinds of things do you do that make you happy and give you a sense of joy and personal satisfaction?
4. If you could design the perfect job for yourself, what would it be? Indoors or outdoors? Night or day? Travel or no travel? Alone or with others? Where it is quiet or noisy?
5. What was the most satisfying job you ever had? If you worked primarily with one employer most of your life, was there a specific task or job responsibility you found most satisfying?
6. What would you like to learn more about?
7. How far did you go in school? What was your experience with formal education?
8. Have you received special education services or remedial/tutorial assistance in school?
9. What are your thoughts and feelings about returning to school to finish a degree, learn new skills, or take a course for the sheer joy of learning new things?

10. Do you like to teach others to do things? Would you like to be a coach or mentor for someone who needs some specialized assistance?

Think about your school and experiences in life. Tell me if any of these describe you.

1. I am good at following directions.
2. It is easy to read and fill out forms for work.
3. Writing a letter is easy for me.
4. In school I always finished my work on time.

Family and Social Support?

1. Describe your family. Are you single or married or divorced?
2. Do you have children?
3. What are the ways that members of your family provide social and emotional support for you, and help to make you feel happy and good about yourself?
4. Is there anything about your relationships with family that make you feel fearful, angry, or upset?

Health

1. How would you describe your health?
2. Do you or have you ever worn glasses?
3. Do you or have you ever worn a hearing aid?
4. What limitations, if any, do you experience as a result of health circumstances?
5. What do you want and believe that you need in the area of health?
6. Have you ever had a head injury?
7. Did you reverse letters or numbers as a child?

Leisure Time, Talents, and Skills

1. What are the activities that you enjoy and give you a sense of satisfaction and personal fulfillment?
2. What are your skills, abilities, and talents? These may be tangible skills such as playing a musical instrument, writing poetry, dancing, singing, painting, etc., or intangible gifts such as a sense of humor, compassion for others, kindness, etc.
3. What are the sources of pride in your life?

Evaluaciones Centradas En Las Fuerzas De La Persona

La siguiente evaluación es adaptado de el libro *The Strengths Perspective in Social Work Practice* de Dennis Saleebey, Cuarta edición (2002), y Learning Disabilities Association of Western New York (2007).

Envoltura/Un sentido de "Casa"

1. ¿Donde vive ahora?
2. ¿Usted renta o es dueño de su casa?

Transportación/Viajando:

1. ¿Que son todos los diferentes tipos de transporte que usted usa para llegar a donde quiere o donde necesita ir?
2. ¿Le gustaría tener mas opciones de transporte?
3. ¿Que son unas de las formas que usted a usado en el pasado para ir de un lugar a otro?

Financias/Aseguranza

1. ¿Cuáles son los sus recursos financieros y cuanto dinero tiene con que trabajar cada mes?
2. ¿Cuáles son sus obligaciones financieras al mes?

Vocacional/ Educacional

1. ¿Qué significa su trabajo para usted?
2. ¿En que actividades esta usted involucrado donde usa sus dones y talentos para ayudar a la gente?
3. ¿Qué clase de cosas hace usted para sentirse feliz y darse un sentido de alegría y satisfacción personal?
4. ¿Si usted pudiera diseñar un trabajo perfecto para usted, que seria? Adentro o afuera? ¿Día o noche? ¿Viajar o no viajar? ¿Solo o con otros? ¿Donde hay silencio o hace ruido?
5. ¿Qué fue el empleo que le ha dado mas satisfacción? Si no mas a trajado en un solo empleo toda su vida, había un trabajo especifico o una responsabilidad que usted encontró muy satisfactoria.
6. ¿Que le gustaría aprender?
7. ¿Hasta que año fue a la escuela? ¿Cuál fue su experiencia con educación formal?
8. ¿Ha recibido educación especial o clases remediales/privadas en la escuela?

9. ¿Qué son sus pensamientos y sentimientos acerca del regreso a la escuela para completar su licenciatura, aprender nuevas habilidades, o tomar una clase no mas por aprender nuevas cosas?
10. ¿Le gusta enseñar a otros a hacer cosas? ¿Le gustaría ser maestro o mentor de alguien que necesite asistencia especializada?

Piense en sus experiencias de la escuela y de la vida. Dígame si cualquiera de éstos le describe.

1. Soy bueno para seguir direcciones.
2. Es fácil leer y llenar formularios para mi trabajo.
3. Escribir una carta es fácil para mi.
4. En la escuela siempre terminé mi trabajo a tiempo.

Apoyo Familiar Y Social

1. Describa su familia. ¿Esta usted soltero o casado o divorciado?
2. ¿Tiene usted hijos?
3. ¿Cuáles son los modos que su familia usa para brindar apoyo social y emocional, y ayudarlo a sentirse feliz?
4. ¿Hay algo en sus relaciones con su familia que lo hacen sentir miedo, enojo o sentido?

Salud

1. ¿Describa su salud?
2. ¿Usa o ha usado lentes?
3. ¿Usa o ha usado un aparato auditivo?
4. ¿Que limitaciones, si alguna, tiene por circunstancias de salud?
5. ¿Que es lo que usted quiere o piensa que necesita en la área de salud?
6. ¿Ha tenido una lesión/herida de la cabeza?
7. ¿Ponía letras o números al revés cuando era niño?

Tiempo Libre, Talentos, y Habilidades

1. ¿Qué son las actividades que le gustarían y le darían un sentido de satisfacción y cumplimiento personal?
2. ¿Cuáles son sus habilidades y talentos? ¿Estas pueden ser habilidades palpables como tocar un instrumento musical, escribir poesía, bailar, cantar, pintar, etc. o talentos palpables como un buen sentido de humor, compasión hacia otros, bondad, etc.?
3. ¿Qué son sus fuentes de orgullo en su vida?

Appendix C: Department of Labor, Language Assistance and Planning Self-Assessment Tool for Recipients of Federal Financial Assistance

Purpose

This two-part document is intended to assist organizations that receive Federal financial assistance in their strategic planning efforts to ensure that program goals and objectives address meaningful access for all of the people they serve or encounter, including those who are limited-English proficient (LEP). This tool will assist recipients in assessing their current other-than-English language service capabilities and in planning for the provision of language assistance to LEP individuals they serve or encounter. As recipients develop performance measures to assist them in evaluating the effectiveness of their program and program delivery, by using this tool, they will be able to assess the effectiveness of performance measures relative to individuals who are LEP.

Part A provides a framework for the development of a Language Assistance Plan in light of the general Title VI requirements. The planning and self-assessment questions in Part B of this document, intended as a follow-up to Part A, are guided by the requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, and Title VI regulations, as set forth in 29 CFR Part 31; Section 188 of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and its implementing regulations at 29, CFR Part 37 (available on CRC's website at <http://www.dol.gov/oasam/programs/crc/>).

Introduction

Executive Order No. 13166

Executive Order No. 13166, "Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency," (available electronically at <http://www.dol.gov/oasam/regs/statutes/Eo13166.pdf>) was created to "... improve access to Federally conducted and Federally assisted programs and activities for persons who, as a result of national origin, are limited in their English proficiency (LEP)..." President Bush affirmed his commitment to Executive Order 13166 through a memorandum issued on October 25, 2001, by Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights, Ralph F. Boyd, Jr. Federal agencies were directed to provide guidance and technical assistance to recipients of Federal funds as to how they can provide meaningful access to LEP users of Federal programs. In addition, Federal agencies were told to look at how they served people who were limited in their English proficiency and to see what measures they could take in their direct contacts with LEP individuals that would increase meaningful access. In addition, a Federal Interagency Workgroup on Limited English Proficiency was formed to coordinate guidance and technical assistance efforts throughout the Federal government in support of Executive Order 13166. One of the Workgroup's first accomplishments was the creation of a Federal web site (<http://www.lep.gov>). The site is a work in progress and is designed to be a one-stop referral shop for recipients, Federal agencies, and communities in the quest for LEP information and technical assistance. It is through the coordinated efforts of the Workgroup that this planning and self-assessment tool was created.

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

The basis for Executive Order 13166 is Section 601 of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. 2000d, (hereinafter Title VI), which provides that no person shall "on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance." Section 602 authorizes and directs Federal agencies that are empowered to extend Federal financial assistance to any program or activity "to effectuate the provisions of [section 601] ...by issuing rules, regulations, or orders of general applicability." 42 U.S.C. 2000d-1. WIA Section 188 mirrors the requirements of Title VI.

The Supreme Court, in *Lau v. Nichols*, 414 U.S. 563 (1974), affirmed then Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW) policy (in line with HEW's Title VI regulation which is similar to that of DOJ, 45 CFR 80.3(b)(2)), stating that a recipient's failure to ensure meaningful opportunity to national origin minority, limited-English proficient persons to participate in the Federally funded program violates Title VI and Title VI regulations. In the *Lau* case, a San Francisco school district that had a significant number of non-English speaking students of Chinese origin was required to take reasonable affirmative steps to provide them with a meaningful opportunity to participate in the Federally funded education program. The requirement to provide meaningful access under Title VI applies beyond the education context to include all of the programs and activities of all recipients of Federal financial assistance.

Limited English Proficiency Self-Assessment Tool Part A: Developing a Language Assistance Plan

This section is intended to provide a general overview for the development of a Language Assistance Plan for LEP beneficiaries or potential beneficiaries. Each Federal recipient may choose to develop a Language Assistance Plan differently. Regardless of the format selected, careful consideration should be given to whether their Language Assistance Plan is sufficiently detailed to address the questions set forth in the self-assessment (Part B,).

Recipients have considerable flexibility in developing a Language Assistance Plan. The development and maintenance of a periodically-updated Language Assistance Plan for use by recipient employees serving the public will likely be the most appropriate and cost-effective means of documenting compliance and providing a framework for the provision of timely and reasonable language assistance. Moreover, such written plans would likely provide additional guidance to a recipient's managers in the areas of training, administration, planning, and budgeting. These benefits should lead most recipients to document in a written Language Assistance Plan their language assistance services, and how staff and LEP persons can access those services. Despite these benefits, certain recipients, such as those serving very few LEP persons and recipients with very limited resources may choose not to develop a written LEP plan. However, the absence of a written LEP plan does not obviate the underlying obligation to ensure meaningful access for LEP persons to a recipient's programs or activities. Accordingly, in the event that a recipient elects not to develop a written plan, it should consider alternative ways to articulate, in a reasonable manner, a plan for providing meaningful access. Entities having significant contact with LEP persons, such as schools, religious organizations, community groups, and groups working with new immigrants can be very helpful in providing important information into this planning process from the beginning.

Good Language Assistance Plans should be:

- ◆ Based on sound planning;
- ◆ Adequately supported so that implementation has a realistic chance of success; and
- ◆ Periodically evaluated and revised, if necessary.

The first topic covered in this part is the establishment of goals in a Language Assistance Plan. The second topic in this part is a brief overview of points that may be considered in developing a comprehensive Plan.

Section I: Goals

The process of developing goals flows directly from the self-assessment that has been conducted. Goals should reflect the recipient's circumstances. It is recommended that the recipient's design be based, at least in part, on the results of focused research and benchmarking and on best practices identified by community organizations, other Federal recipients, professional organizations, advocacy groups, and experts in the language assistance field.

The fundamental Title VI requirement is that Federal recipients ensure meaningful access for LEP individuals to the Federal recipient's programs and activities. Therefore, the goals for the provision of language assistance to LEP individuals should relate to a thorough assessment of the target population for each program and activity, the geographical location where the programs and activities will take place, and the expected outcome(s) of the programs and activities.

Generally, goals that are effective indicate:

- ◆ to whom they apply;
- ◆ the expected outcome;
- ◆ when the outcome is expected to materialize; and
- ◆ how success will be measured.

Effective goals for the provision of language assistance to LEP individuals address the language as well as the cultural context within which the service is provided. To enhance language assistance capabilities, recipients may also choose to have goals in such areas as basic language training for staff, language assistance policy design and implementation, and outreach initiatives for language isolated communities.

Section II: Planning

Many Federal recipients have found that it is useful, when developing or revising a Language Assistance Plan, to establish a committee or work group that includes administrators, professional and administrative support staff, potential beneficiaries, and members of community organizations. By working with a diverse group that includes stakeholders, recipients can gather comprehensive input from those whose support and efforts may be important to their Language Assistance Plan's success. Inclusive approaches in plan design and development tend to promote overall community awareness and support. In addition, these groups will be valuable resources to draw upon during plan evaluation and plan improvement activities.

One of the first steps toward developing a plan is to take the information the recipient has gained through the self-assessment (Part B), combine it with the recipient's goals, and convert it into a vi-

able plan or roadmap that helps the recipient identify and address gaps, while at the same time moves the organization towards a coordinated and comprehensive approach to meeting its needs.

Have you developed a comprehensive plan for language assistance to LEP persons?

YES

NO

If not, or if you just want more information to consider in assessing the comprehensiveness of your already existing plan, there are some useful pointers on <http://www.dol.gov/oasam/regs/fedreg/notices/2003013125.pdf> as well as on www.lep.gov.

Briefly, in designing a comprehensive Language Assistance Plan the recipient should follow the following five steps: 1) Identification of LEP Persons; 2) Language Assistance Measures; 3) Training Staff; 4) Providing Notice to LEP Persons; and 5) Monitoring and Updating the Language Assistance Plan.

1. *Identification of LEP Persons*

This first step comprises the recipient's consideration of the information obtained from the first two self-assessment factors: the number or proportion of LEP individuals eligible to be served or encountered, and the frequency of encounters. This information identifies LEP persons with whom the recipient has had, or could have contact.

In refining the recipient's assessment of the target LEP population, the recipient can use language identification cards (or "I speak cards"), which invite LEP persons to identify their language needs to staff. Such cards, for instance, might say "I speak Spanish" in both Spanish and English, "I speak Vietnamese" in both English and Vietnamese, etc. The recipient can access examples of such cards, at no cost on the Internet at <http://www.dol.gov/oasam/programs/crc/ISpeakCards.pdf>, and also at www.lep.gov. In addition, when records are kept of interactions with members of the public, the language of the LEP person can be included as part of the record. In addition, posting notices in commonly encountered languages notifying LEP persons of language assistance will encourage them to self-identify.

2. *Language Assistance Measures*

In developing an effective Language Assistance Plan, the recipient should also consider including information about the ways language assistance will be provided. For instance, the recipient may want to include information on:

- ◆ Types of language services available;
- ◆ How staff can obtain those services;
- ◆ How to respond to LEP callers;
- ◆ How to respond to written communications from LEP persons;

- ◆ How to respond to LEP individuals who have in-person contact with staff; and
- ◆ How non-Greek alphabet words will be entered into the computer systems.

3. *Training Staff*

It is essential for the members of the recipient's organization to be knowledgeable about the organization's obligations to provide meaningful access to information and services for LEP persons. It is, therefore, recommended that the recipient's Language Assistance Plan include training to ensure that:

- ◆ Staff know about LEP policies and procedures.
- ◆ Staff having contact with the public (or those in a recipient's custody) are trained to work effectively with in-person and telephone interpreters.

The recipient may want to include Language Assistance Plan training as part of the orientation for new employees. The more frequent the contact with LEP persons, the greater the need will be for in-depth training. The manner in which the training is provided is within the organization's discretion.

4. *Providing Notice to LEP Persons*

Once the recipient has decided, based on the four-factor self-assessment in Part A, that provision of language services will be implemented, it is important to let LEP persons know that those services are available and that they are free of charge. The recipient should provide this notice in a language LEP persons will understand. Some ways of accomplishing this objective include:

- ◆ Posting signs in intake areas and other entry points.
- ◆ Placing notices that that language services are available in outreach documents (brochures, booklets, recruitment information, etc.) in appropriate languages that language services are available.
- ◆ Working with community-based organizations to inform LEP persons of the language assistance available.
- ◆ Using a telephone voicemail menu in the most common languages encountered.
- ◆ Including notices in local newspapers in languages other than English.
- ◆ Providing notices in non-English language radio and television stations about the availability of language assistance services.
- ◆ Making presentations and/or posting notices at schools and religious organizations.

5. Monitoring and Updating the Language Assistance Plan

The recipient should, where appropriate, have a process for determining, on an ongoing basis, whether new documents, programs, services, and activities need to be made accessible for LEP individuals, and provide notice to the LEP public and to employees of any changes in programs or services. In addition, the recipient should consider whether changes in demographics, types of services, or other needs require annual re-evaluation of your Language Assistance Plan.

One good way to evaluate a Language Assistance Plan is to seek feedback from the community, and assess potential plan modifications based on:

- ◆ Current LEP populations in service area or population encountered or affected;
- ◆ Frequency of encounters with LEP language groups;
- ◆ Nature and importance of activities to LEP persons;
- ◆ Availability of resources, including technological advances, additional resources, and the costs imposed;
- ◆ Whether existing assistance is meeting the needs of LEP persons;
- ◆ Whether staff know and understand the Language Assistance Plan and how to implement it; and
- ◆ Whether identified sources for assistance are still available and viable.

Exemplary practices and further policies with regard to written Language Assistance Plans can be found at <http://www.lep.gov>. The following questions are designed to assist in assessing the recipient’s planning needs.

a) Does your organization have a written policy on the provision of language interpreter and translator services?

YES NO

b) If so, is a description of this policy available to the general public?

YES NO

If so, how and when is the policy available?

In what languages other than English is the written policy on language interpreters and translation services available?

c) Do you inform your employees of your policies regarding LEP persons?

YES NO

If so, how? How often?

d) Do you inform your subcontractors of your policies regarding LEP persons?

YES NO

If so, how? How often?

e) Do you inform your subcontractors of their obligation to provide language assistance to LEP individuals who participate in their programs and activities and/or who use their services provided?

YES NO

If so, how? How often?

f) Do your subcontractors have a written policy on the provision of language interpreter and translator services?

YES NO

g) If so, is it distributed to the general public?

YES NO

h) If so, when and how is it made available?

i) In what languages, other than English, is it made available?

j) Are beneficiaries informed that they will be provided interpreting services at no cost?

YES NO

k) How are they informed and at what points of contact?

l) Do you ensure that your translators and/or interpreters are qualified to provide interpreting services (which is a different skill than being bilingual) and understand any confidentiality requirements?

YES NO

If so, how?

m) Is ability to speak a language other than English a factor in hiring decisions in your organization?

YES NO

If so, how do you identify which languages are needed?

n) Do you ensure that your bilingual staff are qualified to provide services in another language?

YES NO

If so, how? How often is it reviewed or re-evaluated?

o) List the written materials that you provide to the public.

p) Do you provide written materials to the public in languages other than English?

YES NO

If so where are they located?

q) Is the public notified of the availability of the translated materials?

YES NO

r) List all written materials provided to the public in languages other than English and the languages for which they are available.

s) Are there set criteria for deciding:

Which materials will be translated?

YES NO

Who will translate the materials?

YES NO

How you will assess competency to translate?

YES NO

Who will provide a second check on the translation?

YES NO

Into which language(s) will the materials be translated?

YES NO

t) Are all translated materials pre-tested before they are finalized?

YES NO

If no, which materials are not pre-tested and why?

Section III: Language Assistance Plan Evaluation

The following information is provided to assist the recipient in identifying methods and approaches for evaluating a Language Assistance Plan. The recipient is encouraged to review the Language Assistance Plan annually and to develop approaches for evaluation that are consistent with the respective Language Assistance Plan designs, organizational needs, and circumstances. The evaluation process creates quality feedback for recipient's organization. Also, the evaluation process can be used as a sentinel to detect problems before they grow, and to confirm best practices.

Federal law does not prescribe a particular program model or evaluation approach; therefore, the approach to, and design of, an effective Language Assistance Plan evaluation will vary for each Federal recipient. The questions set forth below are provided as primers for the recipient to use in developing an approach.

1. Do you have and use a tool for collecting data on beneficiary satisfaction with interpreter services?

YES NO

2. Have any grievances or complaints been filed because of language access problems?

YES NO

If so, with who?

3. Do you monitor the system for collecting data on beneficiary satisfaction and/or grievance/complaint filing?

YES NO

If so, how? How often?

4. Is data used as part of a review by senior management of the effectiveness of your organization's language assistance program implementation?

YES NO

5. Do you regularly update your Language Assistance Plan and assess for modifications given changing demographics, or changes or additions to your programs?

YES NO

If so, how? How often?

6. Do you obtain feedback from the community?

YES NO

If so, how? How often?

Generally, organizations measure "success" in terms of whether a plan, when implemented, leads to the achievement of the particular goals the organization has established. If the organization has established no particular goals, it can still be successful if the results are in concert with the organization's desired outcomes. In this case, the desired outcome is the provision of language assistance, when necessary, to ensure that LEP persons are able to participate meaningfully in the Federal recipient's programs and activities.

The recipient should modify the Language Assistance Plan if it proves to be unsuccessful after a legitimate trial. As a practical matter, the recipient may not be able to comply with this Title VI requirement unless it periodically evaluates the Plan.

Part B: Self-Assessment

The questions in this part are intended for use by recipients of Federal financial assistance in conducting a self-assessment of their progress in providing language assistance to LEP persons. The questionnaire is divided into four sections and is designed to assist in a balanced assessment of access based on the following four factors: (1) Demography - the number or proportion of LEP persons eligible to be served or likely to be encountered; (2) Frequency of Contact - the frequency with which LEP individuals come in contact with the program and/or activities; (3) Importance - the nature and importance of the program, activity, or service to people's lives; and (4) Resources-the resources available and costs.

Section I – Demography

The determination to provide language assistance services should include an assessment of the number or proportion of LEP persons from a particular language group served, or encountered in the eligible service population. The greater the number or proportion of LEP persons served or encountered, the more likely language services are needed.

According to the 2000 Census, Profile of Selected Social Characteristics, Supplementary Survey Summary (Table QT-02), English is the only language spoken at home by an estimated 82.4% (209,860,377) of the population 5 years of age and over (254,746,174). The remaining 17.6 percent (44,885,797) speak a language other than English at home. Of those U.S. residents five years of age and older who speak a language other than English at home, the same Census 2000 Survey estimates that 43.4 percent (19,492,832) speak English "less than very well." For these people—approximately 7.7 percent of the total population of persons five years of age or older—language can be a barrier to obtaining meaningful access to programs and activities conducted, or services or information provided by recipients of Federal financial assistance.

There are a variety of sources for demographic information. As noted immediately above, the Bureau of Census is one potential source. Detailed information about the racial and ethnic populations a recipient serves or might serve, including their languages, can also be inferred from Department of Education data. A recipient can link directly to the Bureau of the Census, Department of Education, and other demographic data through <http://www.lep.gov> by selecting the Demographic button.

The following questions are aimed at identifying who the recipient serves. Please note that the term "serve" is used to include not only those who are often considered direct beneficiaries or recipients of government programs and activities, but also those individuals at a Workforce Investment Act One-Stop Center that may only use self-services. Job Corps recipients should also consider LEP

parents' or guardians' access when their English proficient or LEP minor children and dependents encounter their programs, activities, or services.

1. Has your organization developed a demographic profile of the population served or likely to be served by your DOL funded programs and activities?

YES NO

If no, consider utilizing the demographic information from the U.S. Census Bureau available for your particular geographical area (see the following sample data sheet) available at <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/index.html>.

2. Where the service area your program serves spans multiple labor market areas, have demographic profiles been developed for each labor market or local area?

YES NO

If no, consider utilizing the demographic information from the U.S. Census Bureau available for your particular geographical area (see the following sample data sheet) available at <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/index.html>.

3. Has your organization developed a profile of the primary languages spoken by the population served or likely to be served by your Federally funded programs and activities?

YES NO

If no, you can begin to develop such a profile now by going directly to <http://www.doleta.gov/reports/CensusData/> or to www.lep.gov in order to access demographic data including LEP statistics. In addition to the Census, you can identify and clarify language needs by calling on the Department of Education or community-based organizations in your service area.

4. Is your organization working with any community-based organizations that are familiar with the language needs of individuals participating in any of your programs and activities, or to whom you provide services or encounter?

YES NO

5. If applicable, are local workforce areas, local offices, Job Corps Centers, Unemployment Service Centers, or sub-recipients working with any community-based organizations that are familiar with the language needs of individuals participating in any of your programs and activities, or to whom you provide services or encounter?

YES NO NOT APPLICABLE

Once the recipient has completed an overview and identified general demographic data, it is in a better position to move to an analysis of the language access the recipient provides to the people it serves.

Section II- Frequency of Contact

The following questions are designed to help recipients assess the frequency with which LEP individuals are contacted or encountered and their respective language groups. The more frequent the contact with a particular language group, the more likely that enhanced language services in that language are needed. It is also advisable to consider the frequency of different types of language contacts. For example, frequent contacts with Spanish-speaking people who are LEP may require certain types of assistance in Spanish. Less frequent contact with different language groups may suggest a different and less intensified solution. If an LEP person accesses a program or service on a daily basis, a recipient has greater duties than if that same person had unpredictable or infrequent contact with a recipient's program or activity. Notwithstanding, recipients should consider whether appropriate outreach to LEP persons could increase the frequency of contact with LEP language groups.

1. Does your organization have a process for surveying, collecting and/or recording primary language data for individuals that participate in your programs and activities?

YES NO

If no, consider what process would be used for collecting such information, including: the method of collection and/or recording the data, the categories that would be used in collection, where the data would reside, and who could access the data.

2. To assist in determining the frequency of the contacts or encounters by respective language groups, you may wish to consider: the prevalent language group(s), the number of contacts or encounters with a language group in a week, month or other time period, the type of non-English assistance provided and by whom, and the person with access to such data.

3. Are the percentages of those LEP groups in the general population (Section I) fairly consistent with the frequency percentages encountered by your organization?

YES NO

Section III: Importance

Once the recipient has assessed, both through an analysis of the demographics and frequency of contact, the languages to consider with regard to access, the recipient can then look at the nature and importance of specific programs, activities, or services.

As a rule of thumb, the more important the activity, information, service, or program, or the greater the possible consequences of the contact to the LEP individuals, the more likely language services are needed. The recipient should determine whether denial or delay of access to services or infor-

Table 2. Ability to Speak English by Language Spoken at Home

Example

Universe: Population 18 years and over

Geography:		New Mexico	New Mexico Eastern Area		35040 LWIA#					
Language Spoken at Home	Speak English "very well"	Speak English "well"	Speak English "not well"	Speak English "not at all"	Total					
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total population 18 and over	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	239,155	100.0
Speak only English	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	166,720	69.7
Speak language other than English	46,150	63.7	13,845	19.1	8,525	11.8	3,915	5.4	72,435	30.3
African languages	15	50.0	15	50.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	30	0.0
Arabic	35	58.3	25	41.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	60	0.0
French (incl. Patois, Cajun)	385	79.4	60	12.4	40	8.3	0	0.0	485	0.2
German	1,190	55.4	645	30.0	300	14.0	15	0.7	2,150	0.9
Italian	90	90.0	10	10.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	100	0.0
Japanese	220	86.3	35	13.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	255	0.1
Other and unspecified languages	25	75.8	0	0.0	4	12.1	4	12.1	33	0.0
Other West Germanic languages	50	63.3	25	31.7	4	5.1	0	0.0	79	0.0
Spanish or Spanish Creole	42,095	63.7	12,170	18.4	7,935	12.0	3,845	5.8	66,045	27.6

mation could have serious implications for the LEP individual. The more important the activity, information, service, or program, or the greater the possible consequences of the contact to LEP individuals, the more likely language services are needed. For example, the requirements for eligibility for a workforce program, or filing a claim for unemployment insurance or Trade Adjustment Assistance programs must be effectively communicated. Recipients need to determine whether denial or delay of access to services or information could have serious or even life-threatening implications for an LEP individual. Decisions to make an activity compulsory, such as job training and/or job search certification in the Unemployment Insurance Program can also serve as strong evidence of the program’s importance.

1. Do you conduct compulsory activities? For example, do you require applications, registrations, consent, interviews, or other activities prior to participation in any of your programs and/or activities, in order to obtain some benefit, service, or information, or in order to participate in a higher level program?

YES NO

2. In addition to the above, do you conduct programs or activities that have serious consequences, either positive or negative, for a person who participates? For example, some consequences of not having access to unemployment benefits may potentially include not being able to support one’s self or family in terms of food, shelter, etc.

YES NO

3. Have you determined the impact on actual and potential beneficiaries of delays in the provision of services or participation in your programs and/or activities (economic, educational, health, safety, housing, ability to assert rights, transportation costs, etc.)?

YES NO

4. For those programs or activities with serious consequences, has your organization translated vital documents into various languages other than English for LEP customers or beneficiaries, for the purpose of reducing the negative impact of potential delays in the provision of services or participation in your programs and/or activities?

YES NO

Section IV: Resources

Once the recipient has reviewed the demographics, frequency of contact, and importance of programs, activities, or services, a good self-assessment will identify the resources (dollars and personnel) available to ensure the provision of language assistance to LEP persons participating in the recipient’s program and/or activities. The level of resources and the costs may have an impact on the nature of the language assistance provided. Smaller recipients with more limited budgets are not expected to provide the same level of language services as larger recipients with large budgets. In addition, “reasonable costs” may become “unreasonable” where the costs substantially exceed the benefits.

Reduction of costs for language services can be accomplished by such options as the use of technology (such as through the internet, telephonic language lines, etc.); the sharing of language assistance materials, and services among and between recipients, advocacy groups, and Federal grant agencies; and through reasonable business practices. The recipient should carefully explore the most cost-effective means of delivering competent and accurate language services before limiting services due to resource concerns.

1. Have you identified the resources needed to provide meaningful access for LEP persons?

YES NO

If no, consider the following when identifying the resources needed: the type of assistance necessary and resources available, the possible sources of the assistance, the associated costs, and the language groups assisted.

2. Is there a staff member in your organization assigned to coordinate language access activities?

YES NO

3. Have you identified the points of contact where LEP persons interact with your organization?

YES NO

If no, consider the various points where an LEP person may come into contact with your organization. In such cases, who will assist the person? How often does it occur and how long might the visit last? How will the visit be recorded?

4. Given all of the possible points of contact, is language assistance available at each of those points?

YES NO

5. By language spoken, how many employees in your organization fluently speak a language other than English?

6. What percent of the total employees in your organization are bilingual and able to competently assist LEP persons in the LEP person's language?

7. Do you utilize employees in your organization as interpreters? (Interpreting is a different skill than being bilingual and able to communicate monolingually in more than one language. Interpretation requires particular skills. For more information, see <http://www.dol.gov/oasam/regs/fedreg/notices/2003013125.pdf>)

YES NO

8. Employees within our organization provide interpreter services (check one):

Some of the time
 Most of the time
 Always
 Never

9. What outside sources for interpreter services do you use?

Contract Interpreters
 Telephone Services
 Community-Based Organizations
 Language Banks
 Other (please specify)

10. For what languages (other than English) are outside sources of language interpreters most commonly used?

11. Although you should not plan to rely on a LEP person's friends, family members, or other informal interpreters in order to provide meaningful access, are there times when you appropriately allow use of such informal interpreters? (See <http://www.dol.gov/oasam/regs/fedreg/notices/2003013125.pdf>)

YES NO

If yes, under what circumstances?

12. Are minors used as interpreters? If so, under what circumstances and how are issues such as competency, appropriateness, confidentiality, and volunteerism assessed?

YES NO

13. If additional resources are needed to ensure meaningful access, have you identified the cost of those resources?

YES NO

14. Are there currently any limitations in resources (dollars and/or personnel) that could impact the provision of language assistance services?

YES NO

15. If there are currently limitations, have you explored all options available to you in order to ensure the provision of language assistance services?

YES NO

For example, if there is a significant LEP population that speaks one language, you may wish to look at the option of hiring staff who are bilingual, bi-cultural, and knowledgeable in the particular area for which you provide a service, i.e., health care, education, science, etc. If there is a very small language population, you would not necessarily need to hire staff to meet that need; instead, you may wish to contract for that assistance. (See <http://www.dol.gov/oasam/programs/crc> for more specific help)

16. What is the total annual funding spent on provision of services in languages other than English? Consider categorizing the expenses as those related to: publications, website development and maintenance, outreach activities, translation activities, language line contractors, etc.

17. Does your organization have a written LEP Plan?

YES NO

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Notes

LEP GUIDE FOR WORKFORCE PROFESSIONALS

Module 2: Non-Traditional
Occupations and Entrepreneurial
Opportunities



— TEXAS —
WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS



LEP Guide for Workforce Professionals

Edited by Anson Green

Copies of this guide are available at:
www.twc.state.tx.us/boards/guides/guides.html

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Texas Workforce Commission
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Austin, TX 78778-0001
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This guide was made possible by the quiet determination of a small group of people who believe in the system. We hope that it meets the needs of those whom they have struggled to help and leads to stronger relationships and enhanced service for everyone.

LEP Guide for Workforce Professionals

The LEP Guide for Workforce Professionals consists of four individual modules, each a key component of the Texas workforce system.

Each module is meant to assist Local Workforce Development Boards (Workforce Boards) and Texas Workforce Center (Workforce Center) staff, and system partners on how best to serve the limited English proficiency (LEP) population from entrance to post employment. The four modules are:

Module 1

Enhancing the Effectiveness of Workforce Services for Customers with Limited English Proficiency

Module 2

Non-Traditional Occupations and Entrepreneurial Opportunities

Part 1. How Workforce Boards and Workforce Centers Can Assist Women in Succeeding in Nontraditional Occupations

Part 2. Working with and Learning from Employers: Effective Human Resource Strategies for Expanding the Number of Women in Non-traditional Occupations

Part 3. Culture and Language: Powerful Forces

Part 4. Guidelines for Informing Women about Dealing with Sexual Harassment in the Workplace

Part 5. Entrepreneurial Opportunities for Women

Module 3

Scorecards for Evaluating Training Services for LEP Customers

Module 4

Comprehensive Assessment for Customers with Limited English Proficiency

Contents

Terms Used in This Module.....7

Introduction: Non-Traditional Occupations and Entrepreneurial Opportunities.....8

Part 1. How Workforce Boards and Workforce Centers Can Assist Women in Succeeding in Nontraditional Occupations.....12

Section 1. How Workforce Boards Can Take the Lead.....13

Setting the Stage: Building an Effective Initiative.....13

Redefining Nontraditional Occupations.....14

Changing Perceptions.....15

Understanding the Importance of Business Services.....16

Using Rapid Response.....17

Establishing Transition Committees as Promising Practices in Rapid Response.....18

Review Section 1: How Workforce Boards Can Take the Lead.....19

Section 2: Helping Women Obtain Higher-Paying Jobs: Implementing Effective Workforce Center Services.....20

Guidelines for Successful Outreach.....20

Guidelines for Successful Career Counseling and Exploration.....21

Provide Appropriate Information.....22

Identify and Inventory the Customer’s Strengths.....22

Address Customer Issues and Concerns.....23

Share Job Information.....24

Leverage Resources.....24

Guidelines for Assisting Female LEP Customers in Successfully Completing Training.....26

Guidelines for Assisting Female LEP Customers in Identifying the Best Training Fit.....27

Section 2 Review: Enhancing Workforce Center Services.....29

Part 2. Working with and Learning from Employers: Effective Human Resource Strategies for Expanding the Number of Women in Nontraditional Occupations.....31

How Employers Encourage Diversity.....31

Effective Strategies for Increasing the Number of Women in Nontraditional Occupations.....33

Recruit the Right Women.....34

Getting Settled In: Orientation and Assignment to Work.....34

Training.....35

Retention.....36

Review Part 2: Effective Human Resource Strategies for Increasing the Number of Women in Nontraditional Occupations.....37

Part 3: Culture and Language: Powerful Forces.....38

The Importance of Cultural Dynamics.....38

Review Part 3: Culture and Language: Powerful Forces.....40

Part 4: Guidelines for Informing Women about Dealing with Sexual Harassment in the Workplace.....41

Assistance for Women in Understanding How to Deal with Sexual Harassment.....41

Effective Strategies That Case Managers Provide.....42

Strategies for Creating Training Materials and Curriculum That Counter Sexual Harassment.....43

Strategies that Employers Can Use to Prevent Sexual Harassment.....44

Review Part 4: Guidelines for Informing Women about Dealing with Sexual Harassment in the Workplace.....45

Part 5. Entrepreneurial Opportunities for Female LEP Customers.....46

Section 1. Strategies for Informing Female LEP Customers on How to Start Their Own Businesses.....46

The Benefits of Counseling and Case Management.....47

The Key Elements for Success: Intake and Career Exploration.....47

Assess Customer Aptitude.....48

The Entrepreneurial Assessment.....48

What Does a Business Owner Do? Identifying Business Objectives.....49

Networking with Small Business Providers.....50

Strategies to Support Entrepreneurial Training.....50

Identify the Right Training.....51

Learn from Promising Practices.....51

Section 2: Examining Successful Efforts: Models That Work.....52

The Microenterprise Manager Program.....53

Project ASSIST.....54

Other Promising Programs.....54

Promising Practices from Resource Partners.....56

ACCION Texas.....56

Commercial Lenders.....57

Review Part 5: Entrepreneurial Opportunities for Women.....58

Appendix A: Training Strategies for LEP Customers, *Adelante!*.....59

Terms Used This Module

Entrepreneur. An individual who organizes and manages any enterprise, especially a business, usually with considerable initiative and risk.

Nontraditional Employment. Jobs or types of work for which persons from one gender make up less than 25 percent of the people employed in each job or field of work.

Rapid Response. Early intervention services provided by the state or by an agency chosen by the state in case of a factory closing, a natural, or other disaster that causes job loss for large numbers of workers, in order to assist dislocated workers in obtaining reemployment as soon as possible.

Industry Cluster. Industry cluster means a concentration of businesses and industries in a geographic region that are interconnected by the markets they serve, the products they produce, their suppliers, trade associations and the educational institutions from which their employees or prospective employees receive training. While located in close proximity, these industry clusters are economic in nature and not geographically bounded.

Individual Employment Plan (IEP). A service plan developed by the participant and the case manager to identify the participant's employment goals, the appropriate achievement objectives, and the appropriate combination of services for the participant to achieve the employment goals.

Introduction: Non-Traditional Occupations and Entrepreneurial Opportunities

Module 2 is intended to assist Local Workforce Development Board (Workforce Board) and Texas Workforce Center (Workforce Center) staff in developing and implementing effective strategies to support women with limited English proficiency (LEP) as they enter nontraditional occupations or embark upon a path leading to business ownership.

Module 2 introduces key concepts, promising practices, and success stories, all of which can be used to assist female LEP customers in meeting their employment and business goals.

Who Should Use This Module?

This Module is intended for Workforce Center staff, Workforce Boards, and employers to assist them in exploring both nontraditional occupational training programs as well as small business ownership for women.

Why Is This Module Important?

Economic globalization is changing the ways in which U.S. companies are doing business. Experts believe that the economic expansion experienced during the past 30 years is transitioning, just at a time when the demographics of the U.S. workforce are shifting. During the next two decades, businesses that want to grow, or simply maintain their market position in this changing economic paradigm, will have to adapt to a shrinking pool of potential employees from which to draw (Ellwood, 2002). U.S. workers, especially women, are and will continue to be, in short supply.

In fact, the growth of the percentage of U.S. women in the workforce has flattened (Ellwood, 2002). Demographic studies suggest that the workers who will be supporting economic growth in the future will have to be recruited from a growing immigrant population and very well may have to be recruited from the growing number of Spanish-speaking women entering the job market.

Questions Workforce Boards Should Ask

1. How can we forge partnerships with local employers that will allow Workforce Center staff and training providers to tailor services to meet business needs?
2. How can we assist employers who express a willingness to hire female workers to effectively diversify their workforce?
3. How do we connect employers to individuals who have a strong work ethic, excellent work histories, and an eagerness to learn—the same characteristics that define many LEP dislocated workers?

In Texas, a significant percentage of Hispanics—one of the fastest growing populations in the state—is young and falling behind in educational attainment. According to state demographer Steve Murdock, half of the state's Hispanic population is under age 25. According to a study by the Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA), 45 percent of young Hispanic women who enter the ninth grade do not graduate from high school (IDRA, 2006).

A 2006 Harvard Civil Rights Project study reported similar findings (Losen, Orfield, and Balfanz, 2006). These statistics present Workforce Boards and training providers with both challenges and opportunities. Having a vital workforce of young Hispanic women to augment a shrinking workforce will make it imperative that Workforce Boards and educational institutions work together to better meet the needs of this population for skills and credentials.

This economic transition also appears to be providing Hispanic women with entrepreneurial opportunities. According to the Center for Women's Business Research, minority women represent 21 percent (or 1.4 million) of the 10.6 million women-owned small businesses (50 percent or more). Between 1997 and 2004, women-owned firms diversified into all industries with the fastest growth experienced in such nontraditional fields as construction (30 percent), transportation, communications, public utilities (20 percent), and agricultural services (24 percent). If properly supported, Hispanic female entrepreneurs will be able to create job opportunities and greater earning potential for themselves and others.

It's All about Inclusion: Overcoming Concerns about Targeting Women

Based on valid concerns of providing equal services to all Texas workforce system customers, many Workforce Board professionals expressed concerns about adding support services for a special population, noting that in the past special considerations have been viewed as giving preferred status. An analysis of the current business environment helps to address these concerns. In many industries, companies are proactively targeting women and minorities. The State of Texas and the federal government give contracting preferences to women- and minority-owned businesses. Occupations considered nontraditional for women pay on average 20 to 30 percent more in wages than occupations

Within the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), there are priority groups, such as veterans, for certain services. Directing services to a group not considered a 'priority' population may cause Workforce Boards to believe they are violating WIA regulations. However, targeting women for nontraditional occupations and small business ownership only increases their access to equal employment opportunities.

Nontraditional Occupations

According to the U.S. Women's Bureau the following is a list of nontraditional jobs for women and the percent currently found in the trade:

Drafters	21.8%
Network and computer systems administrators	16.6%
Broadcast and sound engineers	15.6%
Police and sheriff's patrol officers	12.8%
Computer control programmers and operators	8.2%
Fire fighters	3.7%
Surveying and mapping technicians	2.7%

U.S. Department of Labor

traditionally held by women. Experts also agree that small business ownership is one of the most effective ways to accumulate wealth (Stanley and Danko, 1996).

Informing female workers about nontraditional careers or entrepreneurial opportunities provides employers with effective outreach, recruiting, and training sources. It also provides business and government with a wider array of qualified firms with which to do business.

Effective strategies in these important areas of nontraditional occupations and entrepreneurial development that target and support female LEP customers can provide significant gains in the number of individuals entering employment as well as increases in starting wages, job retention, and career potential.

In view of the changing U.S. economy, demographics, and the needs of business, Workforce Boards and Workforce Centers should consider promoting—as well as maximizing—the opportunities presented to Hispanic women, including LEP dislocated workers, through 21st century nontraditional occupations and small business ownership.

About 54% of all working-women in this country are employed in low-paying jobs, primarily in the service industry. By contrast, women employed in nontraditional occupations earn 20% to 30% more than those in low-paying traditional occupations and have more access to paid training, wage advancement, benefits, and upward mobility.

Green River Community College.

Part 1. How Workforce Boards and Workforce Centers Can Assist Women in Succeeding in Nontraditional Occupations

Why Is This Part Important?

Nontraditional occupations hold tremendous promise for LEP Hispanic women in terms of offering higher wages and diversifying their training and employment opportunities. In Texas, LEP Hispanic women have a long history of working in nontraditional occupations. Through the years, tens of thousands of Spanish-speaking women have worked in garment factories, diversifying the manufacturing industry. These women became accustomed to working with large industrial equipment, and some moved up into management, or transportation, or logistics, and distribution. Many women working for larger manufacturers (e.g., Levi Strauss) challenged traditional Hispanic family gender roles by becoming the primary “bread winners” in their families.

In addition to the garment industry, Hispanic women have achieved success in the fields of health, technology, and business. Hispanic women’s collective experiences demonstrate that they can be attracted to and successfully work in nontraditional occupations.

Nontraditional Jobs

For identifying current non-traditional industry sectors, local Workforce Boards can use the U.S. Department of Labor categories for classifying occupations:

1. **Skilled Trade Occupations** such as carpenter, electrician, millwright, plumber and sheet metal worker;
2. **Technology Jobs** such as drafter, computer technician, airline mechanic, fiber optics, and advanced technology manufacturing (robotics);
3. **Service Jobs** such as taxi driver and truck driver;
4. **Public Service Jobs** such as firefighter, police officer, and paramedic;
5. **Professionals** such as surgical technicians and chemists

U.S. Department of Labor

Section 1. How Workforce Boards Can Take the Lead

Setting the Stage: Building an Effective Initiative

Workforce Boards should consider taking the lead in developing models and programs that support effective efforts to recruit and prepare female LEP customers for nontraditional occupations. Strategies may include the following:

- ◆ Expand the “LEP Dream Team” (Module 1) to include emphasis on nontraditional and entrepreneurial opportunities for female dislocated workers.
- ◆ Identify nontraditional occupations at the local level and share this information with Workforce Center staff through workshops and seminars.
- ◆ Develop partnerships with local employers interested in diversifying their workforce.
- ◆ Expand relationships with employers to identify and develop opportunities to place female customers in nontraditional occupations.
- ◆ Work with Workforce Center contractors and Business Services to train case managers to effectively market and support nontraditional and entrepreneurial careers.
- ◆ Incorporate nontraditional and entrepreneurial training and career materials with Rapid Response and career exploration.
- ◆ Ensure that women interested in nontraditional training programs are introduced to concepts in Rapid Response, case management, and training topics such as job assignment, health and safety, facilities, equipment, dealing with sexual harassment
- ◆ Suggest that contractors adopt strategies in case management and support services to assist customers in successfully entering and retaining nontraditional jobs.

Knowing the Numbers

Identifying nontraditional careers in each local workforce development area (workforce area) is a process that Workforce Boards can conduct during the review of high-growth, high-demand occupations. The studies each Workforce Board conducts help determine which jobs are growing in the Workforce Board's workforce area and can include identifying which jobs are defined as nontraditional.

Cluster Analysis

The Upper Rio Grande Workforce Board uses the industry cluster analysis conducted by the Institute for Economic Policy and Development to review which jobs can be considered nontraditional for its workforce area. This research will help case managers and Workforce Board staff assist employers in diversifying their workforce.

Redefining Nontraditional Occupations

Nontraditional occupations have undergone a rapid metamorphosis in the last 20 years. Many of the careers that once fell under the category of nontraditional, according to DOL's definition, are no longer considered nontraditional.

Professional occupations in areas such as medicine, computer science, and law are no longer considered nontraditional because women have succeeded in transforming the landscape of the institutions that train and educate these future professionals (DOL Web site).

Rather, emerging technologies are creating new nontraditional occupations in fields such as manufacturing and robotics, high tech, fiber optics, and health care (DOL Web site). Many nontraditional occupations including sheet metal workers, robotics technicians in manufacturing, and fiber optics installers do not require more than two years of training.

These new occupations have the potential to provide viable career opportunities for women, including female, LEP dislocated workers who choose to follow a nontraditional career path.

- ◆ For targeting nontraditional occupations that are classified as high-growth, high-demand, Workforce Boards can also use the Texas Workforce Commission's (TWC) SOCRATES labor market analysis database (see sidebar for Web address).
- ◆ When using SOCRATES to retrieve regional economic data it is important to keep in mind that SOCRATES data is not based on regional, but rather statewide statistics.

Workforce Boards can obtain even more targeted labor market information for their region by partnering with local college and university small business development centers, economists, and economic development experts.

Did You Know?

Many nontraditional jobs, including sheet metal workers, robotics technicians in manufacturing, and fiber optics installers do not require more than two years of training.

Labor Market Information

TWC's **Standardized Occupational Components for Research and Analysis of Trends in Employment System (SOCRATES)** is a tool to assist Workforce Boards and other stakeholders in performing a regional labor market analysis. It can also be used as a tool for researching regional Texas labor markets and identifying educational training possibilities. The analytical tools and regional narrative reports within SOCRATES follow the planning guidelines issued for high-growth, high-demand targeted industries and occupations approved by TWC. The link to SOCRATES is found on the TWC Web site under Labor Market and Career Information.

For more information visit:
www.twc.state.tx.us

Changing Perceptions

Workforce Boards also may want to work toward changing the perceptions of nontraditional occupations and entrepreneurial training for women.

Many customers and workforce professionals still think of nontraditional occupations as requiring advanced education and degrees or as labor-intensive jobs requiring exceptional physical strength. However, technology is changing the character of these jobs.

- ◆ In a new global economy, there are now numerous emerging occupations that may provide even more opportunities for female LEP customers. These emerging occupations and fields include computer-aided drafting, fiber optics, and robotics.
- ◆ Of the 14 percent of U.S. working women employed in nontraditional occupations, the majority work in blue collar or technical fields that require only occupational certification.

Nontraditional program initiatives developed by Workforce Boards can inform and enlighten customers and staff about these new dynamics.

Small business ownership also holds great promise for Spanish-speaking customers. Historically, Hispanic women have had the most difficulty climbing out of low-wage, low-skill jobs and have been the least likely to find employment after a layoff.

Many female LEP customers have augmented or replaced their income by operating home-based microenterprises. Research shows that Hispanic women are active in a number of industries including food service, jewelry, child care, and cleaning and janitorial. Although many of the businesses these women operate do not have proper record keeping or licenses, these microenterprises lay the groundwork, if properly nurtured, for successful small businesses startups. In these instances, entrepreneurial training can be the perfect vehicle to leverage existing skills and talents.

Small Business Goals

When asked about their entrepreneurial goals, women in the lower Rio Grande Valley (including Cameron, Hidalgo, and Starr counties) expressed a desire to expand microenterprises through small business loans to purchase the equipment they needed to widen their business opportunities.

Brenner & Coronado, 2006

Assisting Employers

When working with employers interested in diversifying their workforce by hiring and retaining women for their nontraditional jobs, Business Services representatives can conduct assessments on a particular company's readiness to integrate women into their workforce. The assessment would include items such as facilities, policies, and training. DOL's Self-Assessment Tool Kit can help identify key questions that can be asked as well as areas to target. Available through www.lep.gov.

U.S. Department of Labor <http://www.dol.gov/oasam/programs/crc/LEPAssessmentToolfinal.doc>

Understanding the Importance of Business Services

Business Services can be the link to employers interested in hiring female LEP customers in nontraditional occupations. Learning more about these occupations from area employers can assist Workforce Boards and Workforce Centers in better understanding the unique aspects of these careers that will allow for more accurate information to be passed on to their customers.

As primary contacts with employers, Business Services representatives are perfectly positioned within the Texas workforce system to provide this information. In order to effectively use Business Services to successfully identify and develop nontraditional career options for customers, Workforce Boards should consider using the following strategies:

- ◆ Forge stronger relationships with local employers who are in need of skilled, dedicated, female workers.

Example: A Business Services representative could meet with the company's human resources (HR) representative to assess the company's readiness to support hiring women into nontraditional occupations.

- ◆ Learn more about nontraditional occupations from area employers to develop recruiting materials. Pass along up-to-date information to case managers about existing job opportunities.
- ◆ Build joint initiatives with employers in need of women to fill nontraditional job openings.

Example: A Business Services representative could meet with company representatives to offer suggestions on effectively assimilating women into the workforce.

Mentors and Role Models

Consider contacting Chambers of Commerce, and women's professional groups and organizations to recruit women who have successfully performed in nontraditional jobs and are willing to act as volunteer role models and mentors.

Spanish Language Career Videos

TWC in collaboration with UT Pan Am has developed two Spanish language DVDs as part of Project *Adelante!*. One is for technology manufacturing careers and the other is for machinists. The videos are formatted as *novelas* and are short, inspirational stories delivered in a culturally relevant manner.

Transition Committee

For women who are looking at nontraditional careers, the added support system of a transition committee helps to keep them informed and encourage their continued participation.

Using Rapid Response

In order for customers to take advantage of nontraditional training opportunities, they must be given access to information early in the service delivery process (for dislocated workers, preferably during Rapid Response). Suggested strategies:

- ◆ Develop workshops with employers and volunteers willing to serve as mentors and role models.
- ◆ Show Spanish-language career videos or DVDs to illustrate the job environment and requirements in a culturally appropriate method.
- ◆ Distribute culturally appropriate materials that describe nontraditional occupations and their benefits. Implement surveys to determine customer interests and aptitudes.
- ◆ Provide all relevant information (especially salary and wages) about nontraditional careers early in the process.
- ◆ Provide information about types and lengths of training.
- ◆ Transition customers interested in nontraditional occupations to case managers and appropriate Workforce Center services.

Using SOCRATES to Identify Nontraditional Jobs

SOCRATES, a labor market tool used by TWC and Workforce Boards to identify high-growth, high-demand industries can also be used to identify nontraditional job opportunities for women.

1. Access the SOCRATES Web site at <http://socrates.cdr.state.tx.us>.
2. Find the link <Planning and research documents page>. Click on the link.
3. Find the section header labeled <Planning and Documents Workfiles>. Click on the link.
4. Find the file labeled <Percent Female, Percent Hispanic, Percent White by detailed SOC>. Click on the link.
5. Review the Excel data on the screen, save it, or manipulate it as needed.

Establishing Transition Committees as Promising Practices in Rapid Response

When working with dislocated workers, Workforce Boards should consider forming a transition committee. A well-organized transition committee allows for the dissemination of vital information in a supportive peer-to-peer environment. This can be done using bilingual presentations and testimonials. Transition committees can:

- ◆ become career committees that can continuously identify and support nontraditional employment initiatives;
- ◆ provide seamless support from the first Rapid Response meeting to job training and job placement by coordinating activities before the customer enters the system;
- ◆ support nontraditional efforts by providing opportunities for employers and Workforce Board, Workforce Center, and training staff to coordinate efforts; and
- ◆ provide a support network for all staff and customers to discuss challenges and brainstorm responses.

San Antonio's Worker's Transition Committee

Alamo WorkSource Solutions coordinated a worker's committee composed of Rapid Response staff from the TWC, Workforce Board personnel, and staff from the Workforce Centers. The workers at the affected facility selected a customer representative for the committee from among their peers.

The committee met on a monthly basis for 18 months. This collaborative initiative enabled the Workforce Board to monitor the quality of training and services provided to participants who have limited English skills.

This committee was effective because customers who normally may have been hesitant to ask questions of professional staff felt comfortable asking peers for details and information about how the workforce system worked, careers they were interested in, and assistance for any obstacles they were facing in their personal lives.

Review Section 1: How Workforce Boards Can Take the Lead

Workforce Boards can use strategies such as those listed below to effectively take the lead in planning and implementing programs to support women in nontraditional occupations and entrepreneurship.

1. **Set the stage.** Take the lead in developing models to support effective efforts to recruit and prepare female LEP customers. Suggest that contractors adopt strategies in case management and support services that will assist customers in successfully entering and retaining nontraditional jobs.
2. **Identify the latest trends in nontraditional employment.** Redefine nontraditional occupations. Partner with local entities to obtain data targeted for the workforce area.
3. **Change perceptions.** Nontraditional occupations do not require exceptional physical strength or advanced degrees. Global technology is now the driving force.
4. **Understand the importance of Business Services.** Business Services is positioned to build and maintain relationships with employers looking to hire dedicated, skilled female workers. Provide customers with full details of nontraditional employment opportunities.
5. **Use Rapid Response.** The earlier the customer is introduced to nontraditional employment opportunities, the earlier the customer can begin moving in the direction of nontraditional employment.
6. **Establish Rapid Response promising practices and strategies.** Provide Rapid Response promising practices and strategies to allow customers access to information and support.

Section 2: Helping Women Obtain Higher-Paying Jobs: Implementing Effective Workforce Center Services

This section covers the following strategies:

- ◆ Guidelines for Successful Outreach
- ◆ Guidelines for Successful Career Counseling and Exploration
 - ◆ Provide Appropriate Information
 - ◆ Identify and Inventory the Customer's Strengths
 - ◆ Address Customer Issues and Concerns
 - ◆ Share Job Information
 - ◆ Leverage Resources
- ◆ Guidelines for Assisting Female LEP Customers in Successfully Completing Training
- ◆ Guidelines for Assisting Female LEP Customers in Identifying the Best Training Fit

Why Is This Section Important?

Workforce Center staff, particularly case managers who are assisting female LEP customers in exploring nontraditional careers, should be well informed. To effectively provide guidance, case managers should gather as much information as possible regarding the nature and benefits of nontraditional occupations.

Guidelines for Successful Outreach

IWITTS provides effective outreach strategies for informing women about nontraditional occupations. These easy steps to recruiting women also can be used by Workforce Centers to recruit female LEP customers into nontraditional occupations:

Career Planning

Individual Employment Plans (IEPs) that include career ladders, wage and benefit information, integrated curricula, pre-employment skills, and guidelines on how to handle conflicts on the job (i.e., sexual harassment) should be in the customer's native language.

It is also important that local employer information be translated and made available for use by Rapid Response staff, case managers, and training providers so that clients entering non-traditional skills training have all the information they need throughout the workforce service continuum.

Materials

To be effective, all materials used in outreach must be culturally and linguistically appropriate. In addition, consider incorporating the strategies developed by the National Institute for Women in Trades, Technology & Science (IWITTS).

IWITTS

- ◆ Send a strong message encouraging female LEP customers to enter into training for nontraditional occupations. Make it clear that women are being targeted to fill these positions.
- ◆ Be active in targeting and outreach. Make the search to recruit female LEP customers for nontraditional occupations ongoing and continuously relate the benefits of nontraditional occupations to these women.

For example: Hold regular outreach sessions and workshops for female LEP customers to present them with information on current and emerging nontraditional occupations.

- ◆ Host career orientation sessions. Have women with nontraditional careers speak with female LEP customers regarding career choices.
- ◆ Generate publicity. Use the newspaper, radio, marketing materials, signage, and television to advertise opportunities in nontraditional fields. Also, consider ways to promote success stories and testimonials.

For example: Partner with Business Services to build awareness about current opportunities or identify success stories.

Guidelines for Successful Career Counseling and Exploration

Adopting innovative strategies that follow female LEP customers throughout their journey in the Texas workforce system provides them with the tools to succeed. Female LEP customers gain much-needed confidence in their ability to enter a nontraditional career when they have the information and support they need to be successful.

VIP Sessions

Project QUEST, a San Antonio base community organization, developed a program that allows customers the benefit of regular meetings with their case manager.

Case managers meet with their assigned groups in mandatory sessions called Vision, Initiative and Perseverance (VIP).

VIP sessions are held once a week where case managers teach customers about:

- ◆ Work performance
- ◆ Self-esteem
- ◆ Study habits
- ◆ Motivation
- ◆ Conflict resolution

Sessions are mandatory throughout training and continue through job search where case managers use the sessions to prepare customers for job interviews and job placement.

The VIP sessions are part pep rally, part support group. Participants have the benefit of contact hours with their case manager and also get support and encouragement from peers.

Conversely, case managers have more time to spend with customers who may need more individualized support. These weekly mandatory VIP sessions also allow case managers to develop a more positive relationship with customers.

Because many dislocated workers have been with one company their entire working lives, they may have a multitude of questions about new career prospects. Case managers sometimes are unable to answer these questions because they are unfamiliar with details about the occupations and nontraditional careers and employers.

Provide Appropriate Information

It is very important that case managers familiarize themselves with specific knowledge about nontraditional employment opportunities such as job descriptions and educational requirements. In order to provide customers the detailed information they need, case managers should:

- ◆ assist in developing outreach and informational material about nontraditional occupations as well as the companies that have expressed an interest in hiring women;
- ◆ attend workshops and seminars on relevant topics such as sexual harassment in the workplace and dynamics between genders; and
- ◆ become familiar with starting wages, benefits, career advancement opportunities, job responsibilities, and employer hiring practices.

Identify and Inventory the Customer's Strengths

Female LEP customers considering nontraditional occupations are going to need additional assistance in assessing their strengths and transferable skills. Because many of these women are immigrants, their career and educational experiences and credentials in their native country should be recorded as part of the assessment.

Strategies that case managers can use to identify female LEP customers' backgrounds and working with educational credentials from their native countries:

- ◆ Developing an IEP that takes into account all of the transferable skills and attributes

Improving Communications

Case managers observe that it can be difficult to draw their LEP customers "out of their shells" in communicating needs, issues, and questions. Module 1 contains strategies to enhance communication.

Online Resources

America's Career InfoNet at www.acinet.org has a helpful link on career options in Spanish in video format. The Web site has videos that describe various careers and their responsibilities as well as educational requirements. It is important to note that some customers may be computer savvy and able to do research on their own. Others may need assistance exploring these Web sites.

that a customer has developed over a lifetime of:

- ◆ working in different environments that may have included manufacturing or other nontraditional settings;
- ◆ caring for family;
- ◆ volunteering in the community;
- ◆ attending school or training sessions and;
- ◆ running a household.
- ◆ Ensure that every asset, skill, educational credential, and work experience becomes part of the customer's "inventoried skills." This is an excellent opportunity to use the strengths-based approaches discussed in Module 1.

Address Customer Issues and Concerns

Female LEP customers choosing nontraditional employment may feel they are exploring uncharted territory and experience uncertainty and concern about their career choices.

Case managers should consider using group sessions or peer-to-peer counseling to encourage female LEP customers to communicate their concerns about entering into nontraditional job settings. This dynamic places some additional requirements on case managers working with women who are exploring or preparing to enter nontraditional occupations. Strategies to effectively communicate with customers considering or entering nontraditional employment:

- ◆ Build rapport by sharing information about personal experiences or by sharing the experiences of other customers (as long as the customers' confidentiality is maintained).
- ◆ Draw customers out with opportunities to role-play or with discussions about challenges they may face in the future (e.g., sexual harassment).

- ◆ Share success stories documented through newspaper articles or testimonials.
- ◆ Introduce customers to mentors and role models.

Share Job Information

Understanding the nontraditional job market is essential in conducting counseling sessions with female LEP customers. Strategies that allow case managers to stay abreast of relevant information:

- ◆ Network with Business Services representatives to specifically discuss nontraditional job opportunities, share information, and identify employers willing to serve as guest speakers.
- ◆ Attend local job fairs and after-hours events to ask employer representatives about their policies on recruiting women.
- ◆ Network with women's groups and professional associations.
- ◆ Access information about nontraditional occupations through TWC Web sites such as WorkInTexas.com.
- ◆ Direct female LEP customers to America's Career InfoNet. America's Career InfoNet features short videos in English and Spanish with information about a multitude of careers that are currently in demand in the state of Texas.

Leverage Resources

There are a number of resources and organizations that case managers and Rapid Response staff can leverage to provide effective support to customers considering nontraditional careers. These resources include *Adelante!*, Wider Opportunities for Women (WOW), and business leaders and advocates.

***Adelante!*: A Comprehensive Solution**

Confronted with staffing shortages, manufacturing businesses in the Lower Rio Grande Valley workforce area approached TWC for assistance. In response, a

Career Specialist

In San Antonio, Project QUEST allows case managers to become familiar with their training providers and customers.

At Project QUEST every case manager is required to become a "Career Specialist," a process in which each learns the training requirements of specific careers. Case managers become familiar with the campus where the job training takes place, get to know the instructors and curriculum, and identify the areas where students may encounter difficulties. They also learn job requirements that local employers expect from potential employees once the training is completed.

Using this model, Workforce Board case managers could provide information customers need about nontraditional job training. This will also give case managers the added advantage of being well prepared to assist customers if they encounter difficulties during training or to prepare them for job interviews and job placement.

This practice also allows the case manager to meet with groups of participants who are in the same training programs at the same time and on a regular basis without the time constraints they would have if they had to meet with each customer individually.

partnership between The University of Texas-Pan American, TWC, and local employers was formed to create a new innovative and interactive dual-language workforce skills coursework program called *Adelante!* *Adelante!* was developed using DVDs and other effective outreach and instructional materials to assist employers in connecting with Hispanic female LEP customers at Workforce Centers.

All of *Adelante!*'s learning materials were developed in collaboration with local employers and use methods that are linguistically and culturally appropriate for female LEP customers.

Adelante!'s DVD set, entitled *Workforce Skills Courseware for Manufacturing Essentials*, provides an overview of the manufacturing industry, particularly new high-tech manufacturing and robotics. This DVD set is designed to introduce customers to the new world of manufacturing in today's global economy.

- ◆ The lesson plan and exercise portions of *Adelante!* are perfect for case managers to use during career exploration and when developing customers' IEPs.
- ◆ These DVDs also can be used during job readiness seminars and workshops. Each individual DVD coursework set explores specific careers that have been identified as high-growth, high-demand occupations in the Texas border area.

Additionally, case managers can use *Adelante!* materials specifically designed for Choices customers. Materials specifically address "soft skills" or work readiness for individuals entering the job market for the first time. This DVD set contains the short film (*telenovela*) *Breaking Away*, an inspirational story of a single mother who leaves behind her life as a farm worker for a better life. The DVD coursework set is entitled *Workforce Skills Courseware for Success Skills* and the lesson plan topics include:

- ◆ Personal Responsibility
- ◆ Developing Goals
- ◆ Commitment
- ◆ Support Networks

More information on *Adelante!* can be found in Appendix A.

Adelante!

The University of Texas-Pan American Office of Center Operations and Community Service (CoSERVE), in partnership with local employers and TWC, created a series of videos specifically designed to help Texas workforce system customers find jobs in industries looking for qualified, trained individuals.

Each DVD contains a *novela*, or story, which recounts the journeys of individual Hispanic females in their quest to become self-sufficient through employment. *Novelas* are a proven and effective method for providing vital information to individuals with limited English skills.

The rest of the programs on the DVD consist of lesson plans and exercises designed to give customers a comprehensive view of the skills, training, and experience needed for the job. The DVD also provides exercises on preemployment skills that can be easily incorporated into job training curriculum by job training providers serving dislocated workers with limited English skills.

All of the Project *Adelante!* DVD sets feature user-friendly menus, short lessons that are entertaining, interactive questions that encourage dialogue among students, a choice of English or Spanish language, and a glossary with easy to understand definitions of the key terms used in the lesson plans.

Wider Opportunities for Women: Experts in Best Practices

Another useful resource is WOW, a program sponsored by a grant from DOL's Women's Bureau and the Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training. WOW has identified best practices to increase access for women in nontraditional occupations through its Workplace Solutions initiative <http://www.workplacesolutions.org/about/jobs.cfm>

Business Leaders and Advocates

There are also numerous women's organizations and professional associations that provide information on nontraditional careers, including:

- ◆ IWITTS, www.iwitts.com/html/about_iwitts.html
- ◆ Work4Women, a WOW project, www.work4women.org/support/support.cfm

Guidelines for Assisting Female LEP Customers in Successfully Completing Training

Many women entering training for nontraditional occupations may immediately experience challenges from their male peers. Some male trainees may resent a woman joining their ranks and respond through tactics of sexual harassment or intimidating comments or remarks. In addition, women in nontraditional occupational training programs may feel isolated. Case managers must be prepared to assist their female LEP customers in successfully responding to and overcoming these obstacles.

To gain the insights and strengthen the networks necessary to effectively support their female LEP customers, case managers should build strong relationships with training providers. These relationships can be leveraged to support students by staying abreast of any issues they may be experiencing. Case managers can use the following strategies to strengthen relationships with training providers to facilitate support for female LEP customers enrolled in training:

New Workplace for Women Project

The U.S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau, and the Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training funded an 18-month demonstration study that provided intensive customized technical assistance to eight employers and unions on the recruitment, training, and retention of women in nontraditional jobs, with an emphasis on Hispanic women.

To conduct this demonstration project, the IWITTS partnered with the National Council of La Raza (NCLR) and two NCLR affiliates—Chicanos por la Causa in Tucson, Arizona and Youth Development, Inc. in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Key strategies developed during the pilot included:

- ◆ assessing and developing the readiness of a company to diversify its workforce
- ◆ building support among key management
- ◆ developing supportive policies
- ◆ maintaining momentum

IWITTS

- ◆ Visit training providers to check on the trainee's progress and discuss any challenges she may be experiencing.
- ◆ Assist training providers in developing materials for trainees on issues such as sexual harassment or acclimation to the work environment.
- ◆ Provide instructors with feedback from trainees to incorporate into classroom discussions and curriculum.
- ◆ Facilitate support networks among female trainees by organizing regular meetings or sponsoring workshops and seminars.

Guidelines for Assisting Female LEP Customers in Identifying the Best Training Fit

Female LEP customers interested in nontraditional job opportunities will possess varying levels of English language skills, educational attainment, and certifications. Many Spanish-speaking customers may have completed degrees or certifications in their native countries. Therefore, case managers may need to give them information about the appropriate steps they can take to become credentialed in the United States.

In addition, female LEP customers with higher literacy skills or educational levels from their country of origin can earn a GED credential in their native language. Once they earn a GED credential, these women can focus on improving their English skills. This is also a great morale booster and goes a long way toward building enthusiasm and self-esteem.

In El Paso, Anamarc Educational Institute (Anamarc), a training provider that primarily serves LEP customers, has taken this concept one step farther. Anamarc works with the *Consulado General de Mexico* (Counsel General of Mexico) to provide customers with supplementary Spanish textbooks and materials. These Spanish materials are available free of charge through Mexico's *Instituto Nacional para la Educacion de los Adultos* (INEA [National Institute of Adult Education in English]) to any legal permanent resident or naturalized U.S. citizen born in Mexico. The adult education materials available through INEA also are designed to provide educational support for customers with extremely low literacy levels. In addition, the textbooks also are particularly designed

to address the needs of adult learners relating to team building, conflict resolution, research skills, and critical thinking.

Working with community colleges as well as training providers and employers, Workforce Boards and these partners can design specific training courses that contain integrated, innovative curriculum specifically designed for female workers for emerging and existing nontraditional occupations. *Module 3 is devoted to identifying appropriate training programs.*

Engage Employers Every Step of the Way

Close relationships with employers interested in diversifying their workforce can provide further opportunities for women, especially those training in nontraditional fields, by:

- ◆ providing female trainees with internships that may lead to offers of permanent employment; and
- ◆ recruiting employers to serve as resources for training instructors as well as guest speakers, guest interviewers, and curriculum advisors.

Addressing Barriers

The El Paso Police Department is currently partnering with community-based organizations to assist women interested in joining elite groups, such as the Special Weapons and Tactical unit, with finding access to child care, which would be available to them during nontraditional hours. The department believes that eliminating barriers such as child care will help units become more diverse.

Assisting Small Business

Workforce Boards can play an important role assisting small businesses in their HR functions. Strategies could include:

- ◆ Workshops and seminars on implementing diversity initiatives
- ◆ Online resources in areas such as developing effective policies and practices to promote women in nontraditional jobs
- ◆ One-on-one counseling through Business Services on recruitment, training and retention

Section 2 Review: Enhancing Workforce Center Services

Workforce Center staff, particularly case managers who have direct contact with female LEP customers, must be well informed about nontraditional occupations. Case managers can use strategies such as those listed below to effectively assist women with these career opportunities.

1. Successful outreach strategies.

- ◆ Send strong messages encouraging women to train and work in nontraditional occupations.
- ◆ Enforce these messages through publicity, career orientation sessions, and actively recruiting female LEP customers to enter nontraditional fields.

2. Successful career counseling and exploration strategies.

- ◆ Become familiar with a broad range of information relevant to women in nontraditional fields.
- ◆ Develop customer IEPs that identify customer strengths.
- ◆ Address female LEP customers' issues and concerns regarding nontraditional occupations.
- ◆ Understand the nontraditional job market and direct female LEP customers to resources such as America's Career InfoNet.
- ◆ Leverage resources such as *Adelante!*, *WOW*, and various women's and professional organizations.

3. **Assist customers to successfully complete training:**
 - ◆ Build strong relationships with both female LEP customers and training providers to enhance the training experience.
 - ◆ Facilitate support networks among female trainees.
4. **Assist female LEP customers to identify the best training fit.** Work with female LEP customers, training providers, and employers to ensure the best training fit for each customer's strengths and skills.
5. **Engage employers every step of the way.** Find ways to provide meaningful internships and present employers as resources for trainers.

Self-Assessment Tool

The DOL Language and Planning Self-Assessment Tool Checklist can be modified by Workforce Boards to assist businesses in analyzing their readiness to integrate a diverse LEP workforce. Using this tool to identify potential issues for employees will benefit both the employer and the Workforce Board and maintain effective environments. Available as Appendix C in Module 1.

Part 2. Working with and Learning from Employers: Effective Human Resource Strategies for Expanding the Number of Women in Nontraditional Occupations

Working closely with local employers when recruiting and training female customers for nontraditional careers can provide several advantages. Engaged employers are already familiar with what it takes to train women in nontraditional occupations. Many companies may, as a result of the assistance provided by Business Services, develop training programs to recruit, employ, and retain female employees in order to diversify their workforce. In return, employers may have effective strategies that can be incorporated into Workforce Center services.

How Employers Encourage Diversity

Recruiting and retaining a diverse employee group is a national as well as statewide issue. Nationwide employer strategies include the following (Johnson, 2003):

- ◆ Establish advisory boards to provide insight and feedback regarding HR policies and practices as they affect female and minority employees.
- ◆ Offer courses in subjects such as:
 - ◆ women and men working together;
 - ◆ women's leadership; and
 - ◆ multicultural diversity.
- ◆ Develop balanced scorecards to measure overall effectiveness in recruiting women and minorities.
- ◆ Include employees' families in networks and social gatherings.

Gender Considerations in Mentoring

Pairing women with male mentors helps to encourage cross-gender information sharing. Male mentors can assist women in more quickly acclimating to the company culture as well as building trust and understanding.

Large private employers in Texas, such as McDonald's and Frito-Lay (PepsiCo), have programs specifically geared to encourage and support diversity within their companies. Strategies large private employers use to encourage diversity include the following:

- ◆ Hold targeted training seminars for female employees (McDonald's Web site, 2007)
- ◆ Conduct surveys of minority employees to ensure that their needs are being met (McDonald's Web site, 2007)
- ◆ Create strategic plans designed to create an inclusive atmosphere (PepsiCo. Web site, 2007)
- ◆ Institute management goals tied to recruiting and hiring women and minorities (PepsiCo. Web site, 2007)

Public-sector employers also are proactively addressing the issue of diversity. The City of El Paso's Police Department is implementing innovative ways to attract and retain female officers. For example:

- ◆ Form an employee women's advisory group to advise the chief of police about various issues, including recruiting strategies, mentoring, and potential barriers to success, including child care.
- ◆ Identify community-based organizations to partner with that can provide evening, weekend, and on-call child care to female officers working in special or elite task forces.
- ◆ Initiate a process to hire a female recruiter who can play an important role in increasing the number of women on the force (Minnie Holguin, personal communication, 2007).

Most large employers have systems and policies in place to recruit and support women in nontraditional occupations. Smaller employers also understand the importance of diversity, but may not have the same level of expertise in developing HR strategies and practices. By partnering with Workforce Boards, small businesses may receive needed guidance to more efficiently overcome some of the challenges of integrating women into nontraditional occupations.

Effective Strategies for Increasing the Number of Women in Nontraditional Occupations

Get Started

Workforce Boards and Business Services can assist businesses in developing effective strategies to recruit and effectively integrate women into nontraditional occupations.

DOL's Women's Bureau joined with Hispanic community-based organizations to implement a pilot project to help businesses determine how prepared they were to diversify their workplace (IWITTS Web site, 2007). Specifically, this Women's Bureau pilot project dealt with four phases of implementation:

- ◆ Assess readiness, develop leadership, and build support within the company
- ◆ Develop strategies by researching internal studies, identifying promising practices, identifying barriers, and writing a work plan
- ◆ Provide technical assistance on creating the work plan, competency skills training, assessments of resources, health and safety issues, support strategies, "buy-in" of managers, policy assessment, and integration
- ◆ Maintain developed strategies and policies

The Business Services arms can offer innovative services that incorporate the lessons learned from the New Workplace for Women pilot project along with the results from a completed DOL Language Assistance and Self-Assessment Tool review to assist employers in preparing to successfully diversify their workforce.

Recruit the Right Women

Recruiting women for nontraditional jobs can be challenging for both employers and Workforce Boards. The best way to meet these challenges is for local employers and Workforce Boards to work together to accomplish these key tasks:

- ◆ Dispel myths about gender, race, and sexual orientation for Workforce Center and local employer staff and the customers being recruited.
- ◆ Ensure that all team members know the facts about, and are supportive of, women entering the workforce.
- ◆ Provide specific information about nontraditional occupations, including:
 - ◆ job titles and descriptions;
 - ◆ salaries and benefits; and
 - ◆ upward mobility.
- ◆ Develop processes for assessing women's skills and aptitudes that are relevant for nontraditional jobs.

Getting Settled In: Orientation and Assignment to Work

It is essential that Workforce Boards and employers promote a supportive environment from the start in order for female workers to be successful in nontraditional careers. Some of the key elements in orientation and assignment can begin in classroom training and then continue through the job interview, employment, and retention.

In both environments, women need to learn not only the formal rules of the job, but also the informal "culture" of the workplace. Men pick up on these unwritten rules from their co-workers, but women may be excluded from such informal sources of information. Women may need to develop skills in networking and information sharing.

Wages

Women who participated in focus groups agreed that had information about the wages, benefits, and upward mobility of nontraditional careers been available, they definitely would have considered these career choices. Because most of the women in these focus groups had been in the manufacturing sector, their wages were well above minimum wage; those working for Levi Strauss for example averaged \$11.89 per hour. Entering nontraditional jobs would have assisted them in more quickly recapturing their lost wages.

Cultural Norms

In more-traditional Hispanic households (mainly first generation immigrants), it is usually the male head of household who makes all the financial and career decisions for the whole family. Therefore, it is important to take all these cultural dynamics into consideration when developing materials to market nontraditional careers to female customers with limited English skills.

To effectively assist female LEP customers in achieving success once employed, it is important for case managers to be familiar with the:

- ◆ employer's policies and practices;
- ◆ number of women employed with the company who are available for networking and support; and
- ◆ departments and jobs women are assigned to at the company.

Working in partnership, workforce professionals and local employers can promote a supportive environment from the start for female LEP employees by using some key strategies:

- ◆ Hold new employee orientations to provide new hires with information about company values, policies, expectations, and culture.
- ◆ Provide all employees with information about formal and informal rules and regulations within the company, including existing policies supporting women in nontraditional occupations.
- ◆ Inform all employees about company policies prohibiting discrimination and sexual harassment. (A more in-depth discussion on sexual harassment follows in Part 4.)
- ◆ Encourage employee networks and work groups to facilitate interaction between co-workers so new female employees can become familiar with the work environment and co-workers.
- ◆ Develop a mentoring program through organized meetings and social events to help new female employees avoid isolation and stalled skill development.

Training

Many employers understand that assisting women in developing the skills they need to succeed in nontraditional occupations is an investment in their company's future. Having a skilled, diverse workforce is crucial to organizational effectiveness and competitiveness.

Strengths-Based Approach

Encouraging customers to work on the Person-Centered Strengths-Based Assessment (as discussed in Module 1) at home not only may help to inform the men in their households of the benefits of employment in nontraditional occupations, but also may open avenues for conversation and support within the family.

Strategies that can augment training efforts include:

- ◆ Provide opportunities for female employees to develop their skills through occupation-specific training in areas such as math and language, tool identification and safety, and physical conditioning.
- ◆ Review the employer's current training materials to eliminate gender- and race-biased assumptions.

Things to Avoid

- ◆ Racial, ethnic, or gender idioms
- ◆ Exclusive use of the masculine pronouns
- ◆ Illustrations of only men performing job tasks

Retention

When employers are asked which characteristics are important in an employee, honesty and motivation are always among the top five (National Association of Colleges and Employers Job Outlook, 2007). Employers understand that retaining employees and reducing turnover are important to the efficiency and competitiveness of their organization. Workforce professionals can work closely with employers to reduce expenses related to staff turnover. Key strategies for retaining women on the job include the following:

- ◆ Key management personnel—in collaboration with HR—should ensure the company has a strong policy that supports diversity. The policy should highlight the following actions:
 - ◆ Support women in nontraditional occupations by addressing key issues that affect female employees such as:
 - ◆ job assignment and promotion;
 - ◆ child care;
 - ◆ transportation;
 - ◆ health and safety; and
 - ◆ sexual harassment.
 - ◆ Encourage female employees to join support groups and networks.
 - ◆ Match female employees with mentors.
 - ◆ Ensure that female employees have access to proper facilities.

Review Part 2: Effective Human Resource Strategies for Increasing the Number of Women in Nontraditional Occupations

Many companies may, as a result of the assistance provided by Business Services, already have developed training programs to recruit, employ, and retain female employees in order to diversify their workforce. Companies that successfully recruit and retain women in nontraditional occupations do the following:

1. Implement specific strategies for increasing the number of women in nontraditional occupations.
2. Use the lessons learned in the DOL and the National Council of La Raza's (NCLR) *New Workplace for Women* pilot project.
3. Use DOL's Language Assistance and Self-Assessment Tool checklist.
4. Recruit female LEP employees using personnel who are knowledgeable about nontraditional occupations.
5. Develop nonbiased processes to assess women's skills and aptitudes for nontraditional occupations. For example, use gender-neutral terms when describing job requirements. Avoid racial, ethnic, or gender idioms.
6. Depict both men and women performing duties in training-material illustrations and in the physical workplace, as necessary.
7. Orient women to both the formal job requirements of a nontraditional employer and the workplace's culture. It is important that case managers be familiar with particular employers' job requirements and workplace cultures when referring female LEP customers.
8. Use nonbiased training materials.
9. Retain female LEP employees through collaboration with HR departments and support groups.
10. Address issues important to women, including job assignment, promotion, family care, transportation, and health and safety.

Part 3: Culture and Language: Powerful Forces

Why Is This Part Important?

Today, Hispanic women make up less than one percent of workers who choose to enter nontraditional job training (Legal Momentum, 2006). This situation leaves an incredible opportunity for employers to diversify their workforces and target an untapped labor pool. To assist employers in recruiting these customers and effectively preparing them to successfully perform on the job, careful consideration will have to be given by Workforce Boards and Workforce Centers to developing linguistically and culturally appropriate services.

The Importance of Cultural Dynamics

Many female LEP customers, especially immigrants and first generation children of immigrants, come from families where gender roles are well defined between men and women. Generally, men are the traditional heads of the households and are responsible for providing the family's basic needs and handling all the financial details of the household.

Generally speaking, women in Hispanic households are the primary caregivers, homemakers, and wives. They are responsible for rearing the children, taking care of the home, and tending to their husbands' needs when the husbands return home from work. Deviation from these traditional roles may sometimes result in families being ostracized from their close-knit extended family and community (Beckman, Harvey, & Sartre, 1999).

This loss of familial and community support systems can cause profound changes in the family dynamics. Women may be made to feel that they are disrespecting their husbands and setting a bad example for the children. On the other hand, men may feel embarrassed and ashamed that their wives are "doing a man's job."

Dislocated female workers often are familiar with this dilemma. Many of them have had to deal with these family issues when they first went to work in manufacturing and other occupations. After losing their jobs due to plant closures, their families were disrupted once again. They do not wish to cause any further disruption within the family; they feel their families have suffered enough.

In addition, many of these customers have misconceptions about nontraditional careers because they have heard “horror stories” from peers who have worked in some of these types of jobs. They are under the impression that nontraditional occupations involve dirty, physical labor in male-dominated environments where women are not treated well. Such misconceptions contribute to the attitude among many Hispanic female customers that nontraditional careers are not appropriate for them.

Strategies to address these challenges:

- ◆ Use outreach materials and presentations that address all these cultural, language, age, and gender issues.
- ◆ Facilitate group discussions among women considering or preparing for nontraditional occupations.
- ◆ Invite mentors and role models to speak with women through group sessions and workshops.
- ◆ Emphasize the person-centered assessment—introduced in Module 1—and encourage female LEP customers to complete the assessment at home with family members to facilitate familial support.

Cultural considerations are reviewed at length in Module 1-Effective Intake & Case Management.

Review Part 3: Culture and Language: Powerful Forces

Less than one percent of dislocated female LEP workers choose to enter nontraditional job training. To assist employers in recruiting these customers, Workforce Boards can employ these strategies:

1. Use appropriate materials, mentors, role models, and group discussions.
2. Emphasize the person-centered assessment to address cultural issues.
3. Think of innovative ways in which to inform family members about the benefits of nontraditional occupations.

Part 4: Guidelines for Informing Women about Dealing with Sexual Harassment in the Workplace

Sexual harassment is not experienced solely by women working in nontraditional occupations; however, the dynamics between men and women in nontraditional employment settings may create an environment more prone to sexual harassment. In addition, Hispanic cultural norms may limit the steps that women take in reporting incidences of sexual harassment (Hernandez, 2001).

Taking these factors into consideration, it is imperative to build within customers an appreciation of their protections against sexual harassment as well as strategies that can assist them in dealing with this issue.

Assistance for Women in Understanding How to Deal with Sexual Harassment

An effective place to begin preparing women to deal with sexual harassment is before they are hired to work in a nontraditional setting. Consider working with training providers to implement the following strategies to inform trainees about this sensitive topic:

- ◆ Incorporate the topic of sexual harassment into the training curriculum.
- ◆ Schedule regular sessions to discuss challenges female LEP customers experience during training.

Example: At ProjectQUEST in San Antonio, weekly VIP sessions provide a forum for students to discuss sexual harassment issues in a safe environment with a case manager or facilitator.

Effective Strategies That Case Managers Provide

Case managers should provide female LEP customers with effective strategies to enhance their ability to understand and address sexual harassment.

A very effective model for exploring sexual harassment issues women face in nontraditional careers was developed by National Women's Employment and Education, Inc. (NWEE). NWEE uses classroom settings and specializes in preparing low-income women for construction jobs and other nontraditional occupations.

NWEE uses the following guidelines for addressing sexual harassment in the classroom:

- ◆ Provide all relevant information about sexual harassment laws in plain, easy-to-understand language.
- ◆ Provide examples of sexual harassment policies from actual employers and outline the company's grievance procedures (again, in easy-to-understand language).
- ◆ Outline a sexual harassment scenario for the company—or help someone in the class who is experiencing it at an on-the-job site.
- ◆ Have class members identify and role-play necessary steps to take if they experience sexual harassment.
- ◆ In the first role-playing scenario, the woman should address the issue with the person harassing her. When the harassment does not stop, participants role-play the next step until the issue is resolved.
- ◆ Invite speakers to present information about sexual harassment to the class. The speakers can be legal experts from the community or the Workforce Boards or even actual employers (Maria Farrington, personal communication, 2007).

Supporting Trainees

For example, in San Antonio the adult education instructor worked with case managers and training providers at the Texas Engineering Extension Service (TEEX) to support a female trainee who was experiencing harassment while completing a certificate program in Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC). This team approach provided the student with multiple lines of support.

Anson Green, personal communication, April 2006

Strategies for Creating Training Materials and Curriculum That Counter Sexual Harassment

Many of the barriers encountered by women in nontraditional training programs and employment are complex and interrelated. To develop training materials that appropriately respond to these barriers, consider using the following strategies:

- ◆ Always take into consideration the socialization of female LEP workers to traditional gender roles. Many women are more comfortable in traditional occupations because they reflect traditional gender roles in society. Additionally, women may have negative attitudes about nontraditional occupations and believe nontraditional job sites are not woman-friendly, especially regarding sexual harassment.
- ◆ Be aware of the support (or lack thereof) a customer receives from family and peers. Case managers can do this when customers are in training, or once hired, through HR or Employee Assistance Program personnel.
- ◆ Address negative attitudes of classmates and co-workers as soon as possible once training or employment begins by providing clear and concise information regarding the workplace environment and the sexual harassment policies that are in place (by law) in workplaces.
- ◆ Review samples of written policies (in English and Spanish) prohibiting sexual harassment in the workplace, preferably from companies that hire women for nontraditional occupations.
- ◆ Provide assertiveness training and self-esteem building while addressing complex issues including sexual harassment through seminars and workshops.
- ◆ Offer positive female role models through networking and testimonials.

Information

Share Spanish-language materials like the following step-by-step process with employees.

Say “NO” clearly: Make it clear that whatever has happened is not something that you feel comfortable with.

Write everything down: Document *what* happened, *who* was involved, *when* it happened (including date and time), and *where* it took place. If anyone saw what happened, make sure to get their names and ask them to write down what they saw. Keep a record of what you write down for yourself and turn in a copy with your official report.

File an official report: There may be procedures to file reports, make sure you know and follow them. Talk to your supervisor, the HR contact, and/or anyone that has direct supervision over your department who can stop the harassment from happening.

Involve your union: If you belong to a union as part of your job, make sure to speak to a representative and make sure that he or she is aware of your complaint.

File a discrimination complaint with a government agency: This is the first step to federal or state lawsuits and the HR department must provide the agency's contact information to you.

Equal Rights Advocates

Strategies that Employers Can Use to Prevent Sexual Harassment

For employers, sexual harassment is a problem that can cause low morale and productivity in female employees, as well as employee legal actions. Once again, this may be an ideal area in which Business Services can assist small businesses that may not have the resources to implement effective policies and practices to prevent and deal with sexual harassment.

To support employers in their efforts to successfully assimilate women into a nontraditional work environment, workforce professionals should consider providing businesses with useful strategies in preventing sexual harassment.

Workplace Solutions, a WOW initiative, has identified promising practices in preventing sexual harassment by drawing on the experiences of employers and HR specialists across the country. These practices promote an open, supportive, work environment that leads to high morale and productivity:

1. Send a message from top management to all employees that sexual harassment will not be tolerated.
2. Create a strong written policy prohibiting discrimination of any kind against any employee. Specify sexual harassment as prohibited conduct and describe steps to be taken in the event of an occurrence.
3. Implement formal/informal problem-solving mechanisms, grievance procedures, investigative measures, and disciplinary procedures to resolve complaints.
4. Provide supervisors with awareness training on a regular basis. Ensure training reviews relevant law and organizational policy, builds problem-solving skills, and implements discussions regarding employers' responsibility to provide employees with a harassment-free workplace.
5. Provide all employees with regular workshops.
6. Survey employees to assess their awareness and understanding of sexual harassment issues, including existing company policies.

Sexual Harassment is..

Unwelcome: It is not sexual harassment if it is welcomed or encouraged.

Types of Conduct:

Sexual: Physical, verbal, nonverbal, visual

Nonsexual: Being singled out or harassed because of your gender

Severe or Pervasive: To determine this ask yourself:

- Has there been more than one occurrence over a short period of time?
- How long has it been happening?
- How many people has this happened to?

Affects Working Conditions, or Creates a Hostile Environment

Ask yourself: Have you been fired, refused a promotion, received a poor evaluation because of your reluctance to go along with supervisor's advances or comments

Equal Rights Advocates

Discussing Sexual Harassment in the Classroom

Discussing sexual harassment issues in the classroom can provide a learning opportunity for both male and female students before they enter the workforce.

Review Part 4: Guidelines for Informing Women about Dealing with Sexual Harassment in the Workplace

Workforce professionals should consider the extent to which Hispanic cultural norms may limit the steps that women take in reporting incidences of sexual harassment (Hernandez, 2001). It is imperative to build within female LEP customers an appreciation of their protections against sexual harassment as well as strategies that can assist them in dealing with this issue. Employers, Workforce Center staff, and training providers should be encouraged to use the following strategies:

1. Assist women with understanding how to deal with sexual harassment through training curriculum and group sessions that explore workplace challenges.
2. Provide women with relevant information about laws, discuss examples of sexual harassment, role-play, and present speakers who can address various aspects of sexual harassment.
3. Build a collection of materials designed to effectively assist women with dealing with sexual harassment in the workplace.
4. Develop strategies to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace. Some of these strategies could include:
 - ◆ Send a message from top management to all employees that sexual harassment will not be tolerated.
 - ◆ Supplement workplace sexual harassment policies with workshops and awareness training.
 - ◆ Survey and assess employees' awareness of company sexual harassment policies.

NWEE

NWEE incorporated sexual harassment issues in nontraditional employment into their classroom unit on Assertiveness Training. Women were provided with all the information they needed about the laws prohibiting sexual harassment in the workplace using language they could understand (plain English or Spanish).

Dealing with Sexual Harassment

Case managers and training providers should address the issue of sexual harassment with customers within a social/cultural context and in a manner where the issue of sexual harassment can then be presented in a culturally sensitive manner.

Part 5. Entrepreneurial Opportunities for Female LEP Customers

Why Is This Part Important?

In this section, we will examine some innovative ways in which Workforce Board and Workforce Center staff can support female LEP customers interested in developing their own small business.

Section 1. Strategies for Informing Female LEP Customers on How to Start Their Own Businesses

Unlike the nontraditional employment sector, women are not underrepresented in the entrepreneurial sector of our economy. Trends and transitions in the economy make it clear that leading-edge, innovative approaches are needed in order to provide female LEP customers—including dislocated workers—the opportunities they need to successfully build small businesses.

Hispanic women have a long history of microenterprise, although most of them do not view themselves as entrepreneurs (Brenner and Coronado, 2006). Many simply do not recognize that they are already running full- or part-time businesses in the areas of sewing, child care, catering, maintenance, and other services. These activities have traditionally been viewed as another way to bring in needed extra income.

Entrepreneurial training for Hispanic women requires a team effort from beginning to end, and presents a unique opportunity for Workforce Board and Workforce Center staff to partner with a wide variety of stakeholders including community-based organizations, governmental agencies, chambers of commerce, women's professional associations, and commercial banks.

Because Hispanic women are opening businesses in record numbers, Workforce Board and Workforce Center staff—including case managers—should incorporate strategies to support emerging Hispanic female entrepreneurs in their efforts.

- ◆ Four in 10 minority women-owned firms are owned by Hispanic women.
- ◆ Between 1997 and 2004, the number of firms owned by Hispanic women increased by nearly 64 percent.
- ◆ Hispanic women-owned firms employ 18.5 percent of the workers in all Hispanic-owned firms.
- ◆ Hispanic women control 39 percent of the 1.4 million companies owned by minority women in the United States.

The Benefits of Counseling and Case Management

Entrepreneurial training programs, like nontraditional job training, should incorporate a case management or support services component like any other Workforce Board-sponsored program. Fortunately, there are several effective models of case management and entrepreneurial training for this population.

The Key Elements for Success: Intake and Career Exploration

Starting a new business is an exciting opportunity, which needs to be explored and discussed. Like most Workforce Center customers, Spanish-speaking customers considering small business ownership are going to need information, guidance, and assistance. Effective strategies include:

- ◆ assessing customers aptitude
- ◆ conducting an entrepreneurial assessment
- ◆ identifying objectives
- ◆ learning how to network

Women's Business Border Center

The Women's Business Border Center (WBBC) is the first business women's center to be located within a Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (El Paso) in the United States. The WBBC is partially funded by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) and the Office of Women Business Ownership. The WBBC provides services, in English or Spanish, to women interested in starting or expanding a small business through a user-friendly, hands-on approach that includes technical support and outreach.

The WBBC provides assistance workshops and training in the following areas:

- ◆ Accounting
- ◆ Writing a business plan
- ◆ Managing operations
- ◆ Marketing
- ◆ Contracting and procurement
- ◆ Using technology including computer skills and the Internet
- ◆ Financing a small business
- ◆ Creating business legal forms

The WBBC also provides individual counseling for women interested in starting or expanding their own business. Women interested in starting a small business can contact the WBBC's easy-to-use Web site, which is also available in Spanish.

Assess Customer Aptitude

It is often said that entrepreneurs are made, not born, but not every woman has the makeup or experience to run a small business successfully. Many women never consider an entrepreneurial career because they either have never explored the benefits of being a small business owner or feel that they do not have what it takes to succeed as a small business owner. Many women already are entrepreneurs in the areas of catering, sewing, or child care and don't even realize it.

Therefore, it is important that Workforce Board and Center staff provide female LEP customers with information about entrepreneurial careers early in service delivery process. Providing information about the realities of small business ownership allows these customers to make informed decisions about the feasibility of owning a business.

Workforce Boards should consider developing an entrepreneurial profile for use by Rapid Response staff and/or case managers. A comprehensive profile should list the competencies and human attributes needed to successfully run a small business. Experts in job profiling agree that an entrepreneurship profile should include the main traits required to start a small business as well as a small business owner's objectives (Karl Haigler, personal communication, 2007).

The Entrepreneurial Assessment

An effective assessment of a customer's readiness to start his or her own business would include measuring the customer's ability to:

- ◆ identify a market and potential customers;
- ◆ implement a marketing plan that positions products or services in this market; and
- ◆ create a business plan to bring about a positive return on investment within a reasonable period of time.

Experts in job profiling agree that successful business owners need the abilities to:

- ◆ Accept a certain degree of risk
- ◆ See the big picture and recognize business opportunities
- ◆ Plan and organize business activities
- ◆ Problem solve
- ◆ Lead individuals and organizations
- ◆ Analyze the market in relationship to the business
- ◆ Respond to changing markets and technologies
- ◆ Adapt to evolving environments both internal and external
- ◆ Manage limited resources

What Does a Business Owner Do? Identifying Business Objectives

Running a business takes a certain set of skills and brings with it unique responsibilities (Karl Haigler, personal communication, 2007). A successful business owner needs to be able to:

- ◆ develop a business plan;
- ◆ communicate and market the business to potential investors, potential employees, and lending institutions to secure necessary support for start-up operations;
- ◆ periodically assess the market potential for products and services;
- ◆ manage resources efficiently (e.g., time, materials, salaries, and other operating costs);
- ◆ develop a customer base through marketing and “branding”;
- ◆ monitor performance of products and services for better business planning;
- ◆ identify, and make necessary adjustments to, business plans based on customer feedback or lack of success in marketing;
- ◆ train appropriate staff in all aspects of production, delivery, and quality specifications; and
- ◆ communicate or provide progress reports on a regular basis to supporters, employees, and lenders.

C.E.O.

C. E. O. Women is planning *telenovelas* with four main characters from, Mexico, China, Vietnam, and India. Each episode will provide conflict and drama, and in true *telenovela* tradition, the occasional romantic love scene. Once completed, the *novelas* (along with teaching units) will be available on DVD and distributed to women interested in starting a small business, enabling them to access teaching resources and information in the comfort of their home.

Farhana Huq, personal communication, 2007. For more information contact info@ceowomen.org

El Paso SBDC

The El Paso Small Business Development Center makes every effort to provide Spanish materials that have been expertly translated such as two of the most popular textbooks for small business classes, *Cash Flow: Mas Que Una Problema Contable* from Upstart Publishing and *Su Plan de Negocio* from the Oregon Small Business Development Center Network.

El Paso Small Business Development Center. For more information contact Roque Segura, Director

Networking with Small Business Providers

There is a large network of federal, state, and local agencies and organizations involved in small business development to which case managers can refer their customers. Examples include:

- ◆ Small Business Administration;
- ◆ small business development centers;
- ◆ chambers of commerce;
- ◆ small business associations;
- ◆ women's business centers;
- ◆ business information centers;
- ◆ Accion Texas;
- ◆ Rural Finance Development Corporation;
- ◆ commercial banks; and
- ◆ The University of Texas System's entrepreneurial centers.

Strategies to Support Entrepreneurial Training

In order to successfully run a small business, an entrepreneur must learn many varied and complex skills including sales and marketing, budget and finance, taxes, management, market research, accounting, payroll, business law, and computer skills (Roque Segura, personal communication, 2007).

Female LEP customers, particularly dislocated workers, may have limited English skills and minimal educational attainment. An integrated, bilingual curriculum will not only facilitate the learning process, but will give these customers the confidence they need to succeed in the classroom.

For instance, in El Paso Women's Border Business Center has a satellite that targets Spanish-speaking dislocated workers and has a track record in helping women successfully start businesses. The University of Texas at

Referral for Business Counseling

Customers considering small business ownership can connect with a number of services and resources. Most SBA-funded Business Resource One-Stop Centers have comprehensive resource guides on hand. This is a great place to refer customers just to get them started.

Assessing Potential Entrepreneurs

An entrepreneurial profile can be used in career exploration. In addition, the profile can be developed further so that more detailed job objectives can be used to assess interest as well transferable job skills.

Brownsville has developed a curriculum, which integrates language and business skills. The University of Texas-Pan American has developed a DVD-based approach, specifically targeted to Spanish-speaking female customers.

Identify the Right Training

Key components case managers should become familiar with when counseling a female LEP customer about what to look for in an effective training program:

- ◆ Culturally relevant training programs.
- ◆ An integrated, bilingual curriculum that incorporates the core subjects for entrepreneurial training along with English language instruction and basic skills enhancement.

Example: The University of Texas at Brownsville has developed the Microenterprise Manager Program (discussed below).

- ◆ Support systems that include access to wider community resources that can provide individual counseling, classes, workshops, and seminars.
- ◆ Access to capital or referrals to appropriate microlenders in the community, including information about Individual Development Accounts (IDAs).

Learn from Promising Practices

There are several promising practices from which Workforce Boards and Workforce Center staff can model effective strategies and programs. Both public and private organizations are more than willing to partner with Workforce Boards to train and inform women about entrepreneurial opportunities.

Job Objectives

Develop a business plan:

- ◆ Communicate and market business to potential investors, potential employees, and lending institutions to secure necessary support for start-up operations
- ◆ Periodically assess the market potential for product/service
- ◆ Manage resources efficiently (time, materials, employees, and other operating resources)
- ◆ Develop customer base through marketing and “branding”
- ◆ Monitor performance of product/service for better planning
- ◆ Identify and make necessary adjustments to business plan based on customer feedback or lack of success in marketing
- ◆ Train needed staff in all aspects of production, delivery, and quality specifications
- ◆ Communicate or provide progress reports on a regular basis to supporters, employees, and lenders

Section 2: Examining Successful Efforts: Models That Work

Self-Employment for Economic Development

The Self-Employment for Economic Development (S.E.E.D.) program is one such example. S.E.E.D. was funded as a pilot project by TWC to train Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) customers to achieve economic self-sufficiency by running their own small businesses. S.E.E.D. had four sites: Brownsville, McAllen, San Antonio, and Houston. The entire project was administered by the YWCA of San Antonio and headquartered at the organization's Olga Madrid Center in the city's predominantly Hispanic, low-income Westside (Alma Smith, personal communication, 2007).

S.E.E.D. strategies that can be modeled by case managers include:

- ◆ Distribute outreach materials in English and Spanish.
- ◆ Provide customers with job readiness training such as résumé writing, computer skills, money management, and interviewing. These skills can carry customers forward in building their abilities to market their businesses.
- ◆ Survey customers regarding work experience, personality, work habits, and interests.
- ◆ Meet with the customer and work together to review the survey and to assess work history, career goals, education, suitability for entrepreneurship, and personal barriers that need to be addressed.
- ◆ Develop individual career plans that specify the customer's need for business training, computer skills training, mentoring, technical assistance, career counseling, and support services (Smith, personal communication, 2007).

S.E.E.D. Program

When funding from TWC ended in 2003, the S.E.E.D. program continued operating, but on a smaller scale and at only one site (San Antonio). In 2004, the YWCA added a new innovation to the program, an Individual Development Account (IDA) component. Today, customers who participate in the IDA portion of the S.E.E.D. program may use their IDA savings as start-up capital to open a small business or as collateral for a small business loan. The City of San Antonio provides the matching funds for the IDA at a 4:1 ratio. This is the only IDA program in San Antonio where participants can use their IDA savings to start a small business.

S.E.E.D. For more information contact Alma Smith, YWCA of San Antonio

- ◆ Encourage customers to join one or more professional women's associations in order to benefit from networking, continuing education, and training opportunities (Smith, personal communication, 2007).
- ◆ Provide mentoring opportunities for customers by linking them with successful small business owners who are willing to provide guidance and technical assistance.
- ◆ Guide customers to organizations that can assist them in assessing their financial capacity to obtain business loans and in finding the appropriate lending institution.

The Microenterprise Manager Program

The University of Texas at Brownsville and Texas Southmost College (UTB/TSC) developed a Microenterprise Manager Curriculum and Program Plan designed to help female LEP customers develop job skills and work habits to enhance their potential for success through self-employment or job placement (Sorensen, 2004). In 2004, when several sewing plants in Cameron County were closed, UTB/TSC partnered with the Cameron County Workforce Board to develop effective strategies to train dislocated female LEP workers in small business development.

The Cameron County Workforce Board and UTB-TSC developed an entrepreneurial training program funded by Trade Assistance Act, WIA, and National Emergency Grant monies for female LEP dislocated workers (Nelda Najera, personal communication, 2007). Strategies from the Microenterprise Manager Program that can be modeled in effective training programs include:

- ◆ Offer training that develops job skills and work habits to increase the potential for success in either the workplace or self-employment in a small business.
- ◆ Offer training that develops fundamental business skills using a curriculum developed by an acknowledged source such as the Kauffman Foundation, and delivered through an integrated curriculum (with concurrent ESL and basic skills classes as needed).

Project ASSIST

The University of Texas-Pan American's Office of Center Operations and Community Services (CoSERVE) created an entrepreneurial training program for LEP dislocated workers in the Rio Grande Valley. Project ASSIST was developed in partnership with the North American Development Bank-Community Adjustment and Investment Program (NAD Bank-CAIP) and is designed to assist trade-affected workers displaced by NAFTA become self-sufficient through self-employment (Brent L. Mann, personal communication,, 2007).

Project ASSIST strategies, which can be incorporated into career exploration and case management, also include using short stories told through videos or DVDs such as *Open for Business*, which targets Hispanic women interested in owning a small business. *Open for Business* tells the story of Norma, a woman who loses her job after 15 years when the plant she works in shuts down. *Open for Business* follows Norma's journey as she struggles to start her own business (a bakery) and ultimately succeeds (Brent L. Mann, personal communication, 2007).

- ◆ Coalesce several economic development and job training organizations' resources to provide technical assistance.
- ◆ Distribute supplemental handbooks to students and instructors.
- ◆ Provide all information in both English and Spanish (Brent L. Mann, personal communication, 2007).

Other Promising Programs

C.E.O. Women is a nonprofit organization based in Oakland, California. C.E.O. Women has an impressive history of training minority, refugee, and immigrant women to become entrepreneurs.

According to C.E.O. Women founder, Farhana Huq, the concept of this innovative program is simple. C.E.O. Women is not based on a deficit model; rather, it is designed to build off of the entrepreneurial skills and strong work ethic that minority, refugee, and immigrant women bring to this nation.

Project ASSIST

Strategies from Project ASSIST that can be incorporated into training include:

- ◆ Complementing the *Open for Business* video with a CD that contains worksheets, information, materials, and sample small business plans with a financial statement to guide customers through the initial steps of planning a business.
- ◆ Delivering the instructional video and CD through individual counseling or in group settings by qualified instructors.
- ◆ Ensuring that the fundamental concepts of business are covered, such as:
 - ◆ Where do business ideas come from?
 - ◆ Identifying good business ideas
 - ◆ Writing a business plan
 - ◆ Financing
 - ◆ Sales and marketing
 - ◆ Advertising
 - ◆ Money management and budgeting

C.E.O. Women provides these women with the necessary tools to further their own economic empowerment and build futures for themselves and their families (Farhana Huq, personal communication, 2007). Core strategies of C.E.O. Women include:

- ◆ Rely heavily on *telenovelas*—or stories—patterned after soap operas popular in Latin America and among Spanish-speaking Hispanics in the United States (C.E.O. Women, 2007).
- ◆ Deliver an integrated model for entrepreneurial and English training. Here women acquire skills through a Vocational ESL (VESL) model curriculum where English literacy skills are acquired while gaining basic business skills, including skills in reading, writing, comprehension, basic math, marketing, legal issues, negotiation skills, finance, public speaking, and networking.
- ◆ Provide one-on-one coaching and support that allows women to gain basic business and English skills, the program provides support through peer-to-peer counseling and consulting services. After completing their coursework, women are matched with a mentor who will provide counsel and guidance in their journey toward economic self-sufficiency.
- ◆ Provide access to capital for sustainability. After successful completion of the training program, C.E.O. Women graduates are offered the opportunity to open matched IDAs that are matched 2:1. Program graduates also are given the opportunity to qualify for small cash grants (\$1,500) to launch and grow small businesses (C.E.O. Women, 2007).

Steps to Success

Case managers may want to consider supporting entrepreneurial development through:

- ◆ Counseling and intake that explores whether the customer is already engaged or interested in business
- ◆ Administering assessments that measure entrepreneurial skills and interests
- ◆ Exploring current or future business options
- ◆ Choosing to start or expand a business
- ◆ Finding a mentor
- ◆ Preparing an IEP
- ◆ Choose training providers with classes in:
 - ◆ Sales and marketing
 - ◆ Budget and finance
 - ◆ Payroll and taxes
 - ◆ Market research computer skills
- ◆ Working with community agencies/resources for technical assistance and funding
- ◆ Assisting customers to formally establish their business

Promising Practices from Resource Partners

El Paso Small Business Development Center

The El Paso Small Business Development Center (SBDC) program is imbedded in The Institute for Economic and Workforce Development at El Paso Community College.

Services include counseling, technical assistance training seminars, advocacy, research services, and research information. In addition, SBDC provides resources and training services through seminars (in English and Spanish) offered throughout the year to assist small business owners to gain knowledge and improve skills in business management, operations, and specialized areas (El Paso Small Business Development, Web site 2007).

ACCION Texas

ACCION Texas is a nonprofit microloan fund with offices throughout the state. Its mission is to provide small business loans to customers who do not have access to loans from commercial sources. ACCION Texas has extended its services through the 44 SBDC offices in Texas without hiring additional staff. Conversely, in areas without an ACCION loan office, SBDC representatives are able to close an ACCION Texas loan and hand the check directly to the customer.

This partnership has not only benefited ACCION Texas and SBDC, but also small business owners throughout the state (Salzman, Signe, Pindus, and Castenada, 2006).

Proven Curriculum

The integrated curriculum developed by UTB used the First Step Fast Trac Curriculum developed by Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation. Overall, training strategies include classroom instruction augmented by public presentations and site visits. Program activities include:

- ◆ Career exploration on the Internet
- ◆ Fast Trac business principles integrated with bilingual reading, writing, and math related to business concepts
- ◆ Preparing a business plan
- ◆ Managing projects (planning, delegating, scheduling supervising, etc.)
- ◆ Testimonials by small business owners and individuals representing various careers
- ◆ Hands-on experience in planning a model small business (small business laboratory)

Commercial Lenders

A 2006 study on capital access for women entrepreneurs by the Urban Institute identified Wells Fargo as the “gold standard” in outreach to women (Salzman et al., 2006). Wells Fargo is one of the participating lenders with the William Mann Community Development Corporation, a small business microlender in Fort Worth. Wells Fargo Bank refers applicants who have been denied conventional small business loans and also participates in loans to small businesses with this organization (Salzman et al., 2006).

Wells Fargo also has IDA pilot programs in Houston, Fort Worth, San Antonio, and El Paso. This is important to low-income entrepreneurs because IDA proceeds may be used as start-up capital to open or expand a small business (Salzman et al., 2006).

Review Part 5: Entrepreneurial Opportunities for Women

The following innovative strategies can support female LEP customers interested in developing a small business:

1. Focus on entrepreneurial issues during counseling and case management.
2. Conduct assessments designed to determine customer aptitude for small business ownership.
3. Network with small business partners.
4. Supplement strategies designed to identify the appropriate training.
5. Incorporate lessons learned by other public and private organizations.
6. Use models that work—such as the S.E.E.D. program.

Appendix A: Training Strategies for LEP Customers, *Adelante!*

The University of Texas-Pan American Office of Center Operations and Community Service (CoSERVE), in conjunction with the Texas Workforce Commission and the Lower Rio Grande Valley Workforce Board created a series of videos specifically designed for dislocated workers with limited English skills. The program, called *Adelante!*, consists of several DVDs available in both English and Spanish that help students understand training programs. Each DVD contains a *novela*, or story, that recounts the journeys of individual Latinas in their quest to become self-sufficient through employment.

The programs on the DVD consist of lesson plans and exercises designed to give customers a comprehensive view of the skills, training, and experience needed for the job. The DVD also provides exercises on preemployment skills that can be easily incorporated into job training curriculum by job training providers serving dislocated workers with limited English skills. The *novelas* are short, inspirational stories and lesson plans, and exercises are appropriate for use by case managers for career exploration when developing Individual Employment Plans (IEPs) with customers. They also can be used by training providers in the classroom and by Workforce Center staff for job search skills counseling sessions and workshops.

All of the Project *Adelante!* DVD sets feature (in addition to the *novela*) :

1. User-friendly menus
2. Short, entertaining lessons
3. Interactive questions that encourage dialogue
4. A choice of English or Spanish language
5. A glossary with easy-to-understand definitions of the key terms used in the lesson plans

Each individual DVD coursework set explores specific careers that have been identified as “in demand” in the Texas border area. Each Career DVD set comes with its own *novela* and its own set of easy-to-use lesson plans. Also accompanying each DVD is an instructor’s handbook and a student handbook.

Manufacturing Opportunities

The DVD set entitled *Workforce Skills Courseware for Manufacturing Essentials* provides an overview of the manufacturing industry, particularly new high-tech manufacturing and robotics. This DVD is designed to introduce customers to the new world of manufacturing in today's global economy. With these lesson plans, customers learn how products are made, job safety information, how to read instruments, why quality control is important, and other basic skills and information needed to begin and build a successful career in this industry. The accompanying *novela* in this DVD coursework set, *A Different Path*, is the story of a Latina's desire to enter and succeed in the manufacturing industry.

It is important to note that the lesson plans and curriculum were developed with the input of local employers after extensive labor market research that identified local high-growth, high-demand occupations. The accompanying *novela* in each DVD was also developed and produced locally with local actors portraying characters to whom dislocated, female workers can relate. In addition, the DVD sets are available in Spanish for those customers with limited English skills.

Machining Technology

The next DVD coursework set, *Workforce Skills Coursework For Machining Technology*, is also available in English and Spanish and is targeted to female dislocated workers entering a nontraditional career. The *novela* in this set includes *Laura's Story*, an inspirational story about a single mother's struggle to make it on her own while raising her two children.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families

The final DVD set is designed for TANF customers because it specifically addresses "soft skills" or preemployment skills for workers entering the job market for the first time. However, many of the lesson plans are very appropriate for female dislocated workers with limited English skills because it addresses the same

Instructional Material

The development of the *Ade-lante!* coursework was an effort that involved a team of professionals ranging from instructional designers, multimedia and production experts, adult education specialists, and manufacturing practitioners.

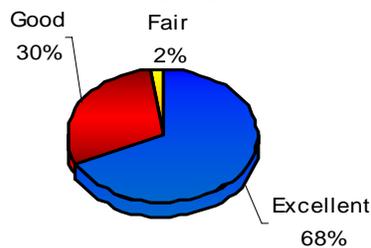
A primary goal of the curriculum was to present material in a nontraditional format conducive to the learning needs of the target population.

According to the survey respondents, the goal was achieved—68% (36) rated the instructional material excellent, 20% (16) good, and 2% (1) fair.

timely subjects that the case manager groups identified as needed additional tools. This DVD set contains the story, *Breaking Away*, a *novella* of a single mother who leaves behind her life as a farm worker for a better life.

For example, unlike first time job seekers, dislocated female workers (especially those certified as trade-affected) have exemplary work histories. Many of them have an average tenure of ten to fifteen years with one company and the skills commensurate with that work experience. Obviously these customers would feel they are being patronized by topics such as personal responsibility, commitment, attitude, and the importance of being on time. However, they could use a "refresher lesson" in Developing a Personal Plan, First Impressions, and Attitudes for Promotion.

Instructional Material



Program Usefulness

Respondents were asked to rate the usefulness of the program in preparing them for a job. An overwhelming 83% (44) rated it very useful, 15% (8) useful, and 2% (1) somewhat useful. The fact that 98% rated the program either very useful or useful indicates the value to the participants.

According to the instructor, the majority of the participants were in great need in self-esteem and self-confidence development. In her opinion, participants gained the most significant value in these two areas.

ADELANTE! Curriculum

DVD SUCCESS SKILLS (30 hours)

INTRODUCTION

Personal Responsibility

Developing Goals
Commitment

GETTING HELP

Support Networks

Backup Plans
Your Personal Plan

PERSONAL TOOLS

Positive Workplace Attitudes
Time Management
Being on Time
Problem Solving
Decision Making

STRESS

Understanding Stress
Your Changing Role
Managing Stress

COMMUNICATION

How we Communicate
Communication Principles
Communication in Practice
Body Language
Business Speak
Business Writing

WORKPLACE SUCCESS

Workplace Dress
Getting Along with Others
Conflict Resolution

SHARED SUCCESS

Getting a Job
From Job to Career
Attitudes for Promotion
See It. Be It.

DVD MANUFACTURING ESSENTIALS (40 hours)

INTRODUCTION

Manufacturing Opportunities
What is Manufacturing
Steps in Manufacturing
Your Role in Company's Success

CAREER PATHWAYS

Career Ladders in Manufacturing
Planning Ahead to Get Ahead
Your Promotional Partnership

SAFETY ON THE JOB

Attitudes for Safety
Safety in the Workplace
Unsafe Behavior
Dressing for Safety

WORKPLACE LITERACY

Filling Out Employment Applications
Writing Messages and Instructions
Reading Basic Instructions
Reading Safety Labels and Signs
Reading Tables
Reading Purchase Orders, Lists
Basics of Filing

WORKPLACE MATH

Math in Your Life
Percentages
Ratios
Using a Ruler
Metric and English Measurement
Applying Measurement

QUALITY CONTROL

What is Quality Control

DVD MACHINING TECHNOLOGY (20 hours)

INTRODUCTION

What is M Technology
Career Opportunities
Working Environment
Wages/Salary
Training
Women

SHOP SAFETY

Importance of Safety
Dressing for the Machine Shop
Safety Equipment
Workplace Safety Hazards
Lifting and Carrying
Fire Prevention

MEASUREMENT TOOLS AND PROCEDURES

The Importance of Measurement
Measurement Systems
Measurement Tools
Layout Tools

MANUFACTURING PROCESS PLANNING

Machining Procedures
Round Work
Flat Work
Blueprints and Drawings
Assembly and Detail Drawings

MACHINING TOOLS

Presses
Vices
Pliers
Hammers
Wrenches
Screwdrivers
Chisels and Punches
Hacksaws
Files
Hand Reamers
Taps
Dies
Grinders

MACHINES AND MATERIALS

Ferrous Metals
Non-ferrous Metals
Sawing
Drilling
Turning
Milling Machines
CNC Machines

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Notes

LEP GUIDE FOR WORKFORCE PROFESSIONALS

Module 3: Scorecards for Evaluating
Training Services for
LEP Customers



— TEXAS —
WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS



LEP Guide for Workforce Professionals

Edited by Anson Green

Copies of this guide are available at:
www.twc.state.tx.us/boards/guides/guides.html

2007
Texas Workforce Commission
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This guide was made possible by the quiet determination of a small group of people who believe in the system. We hope that it meets the needs of those whom they have struggled to help and leads to stronger relationships and enhanced service for everyone.

LEP Guide for Workforce Professionals

The LEP Guide for Workforce Professionals consists of four individual modules, each a key component of the Texas workforce system.

Each module is meant to assist Local Workforce Development Boards (Workforce Boards) and Texas Workforce Center (Workforce Center) staff, and system partners on how best to serve the limited English proficiency (LEP) population from entrance to post employment. The four modules are:

Module 1

Effective Case Management & Counseling

Module 2

Nontraditional Occupations and Entrepreneurial Opportunities

Module 3

Scorecards for Evaluating Training Services for LEP Customers

Part 1. Preparing the Workforce of the Future

Part 2. Finding Solutions Using the Work-Based ESL Training Scorecard Learning More about Scorecards

Part 3. Five Work-Based ESL Training Scorecards Work-Based ESL Scorecards at a Glance

Module 4

Comprehensive Assessment for Customers with Limited English Proficiency

Contents

Terms Used In This Module.....6

Introduction: A Balanced Scorecard Approach for Evaluating Training Services for LEP Customers.....8

Part 1. Introduction.....10

Texas’ Readiness to Meet New Workforce Demands.....10

New Directions in Texas Workforce Education.....13

Part 2. Finding Solutions Using the Work-Based ESL Training Scorecards15

What Areas Do Scorecards Measure?.....15

How the Scorecards Can Be Used.....16

Scorecard Mechanics.....16

Scorecard Core Measure Recommendations.....17

Weighting the Core Measures.....17

Maximizing the Benefits of Scorecards: Putting Together the Right Mixture of People and Resources.....18

Part 3. Five Work-Based ESL Training Scorecards.....19

Work-Based ESL Training Scorecards At-A-Glance.....20

Scorecard 1: Employer Engagement.....22

Scorecard 2: Instructional Design.....28

Scorecard 3: Quality Learning Environments.....37

Scorecard 4: Continuous Quality Improvement System and Return on Investment.....43

Scorecard 5: Comprehensive Assessment.....48

Appendix A: Work-Based ESL Models and Program Approaches	56
No One-Size-Fits-All Models	56
A Word about Traditional ESL Models	57
VESL Courses	58
Spanish GED Preparation	59
Work Readiness Skills	61
Work Readiness Certificates	62
Bridge Models	62
Concurrent Bilingual Model	65
Sample Concurrent Bilingual Lesson Model	68

Terms Used in This Module

Assessment. The process of collecting information about individuals, groups, or systems that relies upon a number of instruments, one of which may be a test. Therefore, assessment is a more comprehensive term than *test*.

Balanced Score Card Approach. The balanced scorecard is a management and measurement system that enables organizations to clarify their vision and strategy and translate them into action. It provides feedback around both the internal business processes and external outcomes in order to continuously improve strategic performance and results. When fully deployed, the balanced scorecard transforms strategic planning from an academic exercise into the nerve center of an enterprise.

Contextualized Curriculum. Contextualized curriculum situates the development of knowledge, skills, and abilities in real world “contexts” so that teaching and learning reflects on the job application.

Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). The ETPL is a list of training programs approved to receive training funds under the Workforce Investment Act. The ETPL provides information not only on specific performance criteria, but also a detailed program description, program length, cost and provider contact information. The ETPL is useful not only for individuals using federal dollars for training, but for all those seeking education and training.

High-growth, High-demand Occupations. High-growth, high-demand occupations and industries are characterized by a high number of new jobs projected or currently being added, or by a large number of existing jobs. Each Local Workforce Development Board develops area-specific lists that are available to the public.

Individual Employment Plan (IEP). A service plan developed by the participant and the case manager to identify the participant’s employment goals, the appropriate achievement objectives, and the appropriate combination of services for the participant to achieve the employment goals.

Industry Cluster. Industry cluster means a concentration of businesses and industries in a geographic region that are interconnected by the markets they serve, the products they produce,

their suppliers, trade associations and the educational institutions from which their employees or prospective employees receive training. While located in close proximity, these industry clusters are economic in nature and not geographically bounded.

Language Skills. Refers to English language speaking and listening, unless reference is made to another language.

Literacy. An individual’s ability to (1) read, write, and speak in English, and (2) compute and solve problems, at levels of proficiency necessary to function on the job, in the family, and in society.

Literacy Tests. Standardized tests such as TABE, CASAS, or ABLE that measure literacy levels.

National Reporting System (NRS). The national data collection system that establishes reporting requirements, instruments, and frequency of reports for WIA Title I, Out-of-School Youth and Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy programs.

Testing. Testing refers to a set of questions that has been compiled to measure a specific concept such as achievement or aptitude.

Work Readiness Skills. Businesses understand work readiness skills on a continuum, from the basics of appearance, showing up to work on time, working while you are there, and taking direction from supervisors, to more complex competencies such as commitment to serve a team, taking responsibility, and a drive to learn.

Work-based ESL. Employment-focused basic education and training programs for LEP customers.

Introduction: A Balanced Scorecard Approach for Evaluating Training Services for LEP Customers

Purpose of This Module

This module is designed to serve as a foundation on which Local Workforce Development Boards (Workforce Boards) can build effective work-based English as a Second Language (ESL) training programs for limited English proficiency (LEP) customers.

Workforce Boards can use this module to guide the use of precious state and federal training resources in strategic and prescriptive ways to ensure that adult education and training providers deliver market-driven programs for LEP customers.

The module provides Workforce Boards with a user-friendly evaluation tool that uses a balanced scorecard approach to selecting quality work-based ESL training courses. The five different scorecards measure unique areas that are critical to delivering training programs based on local business demand.

The five scorecards can assist Workforce Boards in:

- ◆ selecting courses for inclusion on the Eligible Training Provider List or other Workforce Board–approved vendor lists;
- ◆ improving the planning and evaluation of programs designed to connect LEP customers to high-growth, high-demand occupations;
- ◆ developing Requests for Proposals (RFPs); and
- ◆ guiding training and adult education capacity-building efforts.

What the module is intended to do

- ◆ The module can be used by Workforce Boards to provide local leadership and direction to adult education and training providers.
- ◆ Criteria in the scorecards can be used to evaluate or assess the capacity of education and training providers to deliver instructional programs designed to connect LEP customers to 21st century jobs.
- ◆ The module provides a compendium of evaluation questions around which a local LEP program evaluation can be structured.
- ◆ The module provides specific guidance for the development of a continuous quality improvement process using a balanced scorecard system.

Dictionary

While several different models exist, the term **work-based ESL** will be used generally to refer to employment-focused basic education and training programs for LEP customers. More-specific terms will be used to distinguish the different research-based models.

Who Should Use This Module?

Workforce Board and Workforce Center staff can use this module to evaluate local training and education efforts for LEP customers.

Training providers, including community colleges, career schools, and community-based organizations, can use the module as a research-based guide for developing effective programs for Texas' growing LEP workforce.

Related TWC Workforce Development Letters

WD 66-07

WD 34-07

Why This Module Is Important

Until the end of the 20th century, employers relied on a continually expanding pool of better-educated, native-born workers capable of effectively adapting to advances in technology to meet their labor needs. However, this pool of workers is no longer growing and employers will have to recruit from more-diverse labor sources, including the growing immigrant workforce in the United States (Murdoch, 2007). The net growth of the Texas workforce is projected to come from foreign-born workers, many of whom are limited English proficient. How prepared is the Texas workforce system to train them?

Part 1. Introduction

Texas' Readiness to Meet New Workforce Demands

Effective training services for LEP workers require the coordinated efforts of both occupational training and adult education providers.

Adult Education Preparedness: According to the Texas Education Agency's (TEA) Extension of Texas State Plan for Adult Education and Family Literacy (2006), the current adult literacy system is unable to meet the demand for adult ESL and literacy classes. With the current allocated resources, Texas is serving only 3.5 percent of the 3.8 million individuals in need of adult basic education services.

A recent study by the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO, 2006) found that inadequate funding created capacity gaps and waiting lists as well as curtailed access to adult education and ESL classes in certain Texas communities (NALEO, 2006). The NALEO study documented that waiting lists were common in Texas, especially in areas with high concentrations of Hispanic and immigrant populations.

Although waiting lists were reported in all studied communities, they were more evident in El Paso, where all program providers reported waiting lists with a more than three-month average waiting period. Houston providers reported that 71 percent of their classes had one-month waiting periods. Specialized programs tend to have the longest waiting times.

These statistics are projected to worsen as the LEP population grows. Assuming current demographic and service delivery trends, the capacity of the adult literacy system will decline to 2.5 percent of the eligible population by 2010 (Texas Workforce Investment Council, 2003).

The adult education system cannot support the needs of this rapidly growing population, and also is poorly prepared to deliver the employment and training

LEP Labor Force Facts

- ◆ Texas has the second-largest LEP population in the United States.
- ◆ LEP individuals constitute approximately 27 percent of the total population and 28 percent of the adult workforce.
- ◆ LEP populations will become an even more important source of workers for Texas businesses.
- ◆ Assuming current population growth trends continue, LEP individuals will account for the entire U.S. civilian labor force growth between 2016 and 2035.
- ◆ 25 percent of LEP adults have earned a high school diploma, and 17 percent have completed some college work.
- ◆ The vast majority of LEP workers, 84 percent, are foreign-born.
- ◆ Lack of English proficiency and job skills are the top barriers to the LEP population's success in the labor market.

National Immigration Law Center, 2003

outcomes Texas employers require. In a survey of over 2,400 Texas employers, only 6 percent reported having ever worked with adult education providers [Texas Workforce Investment Council (TWIC), 2006]. In 2006, only 1,445 of over 108,000 adult education students, including ESL students, had the goal of entering employment. Of those, just 655 students reported finding jobs (National Reporting System, n.d.). While some postsecondary education or training is required for almost all jobs today (National Center on Education and the Economy, 2007), just 602 of over 108,000 adult education students in Texas reported a goal of transitioning into college or occupational training. Of those, just 172 students statewide reported accomplishing this goal (National Reporting System, n.d.). Significant work must be done to ensure students see adult education programs as a means to transitioning into occupational training or other postsecondary education and career-building jobs.

Occupational Training Preparedness: Community colleges, career schools, and other training providers are not any better positioned to train the LEP workforce for current and future jobs than adult education providers.

While a wide variety of training services are available for English-speakers in all Workforce Areas occupational training services for LEP customers, such as Spanish language and bilingual programs, are nonexistent in 57 percent of the local workforce development areas (workforce areas) [Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) Eligible Training Provider Certification (ETPC), 2006].

Of the workforce areas that do have training options for LEP customers, the majority of providers are located in two workforce areas: Upper Rio Grande and Gulf Coast. Outside of the Upper Rio Grande and Gulf Coast workforce areas, very few training options or certified training providers are available to effectively improve the labor force participation of LEP populations (Table 1).

While Texas community colleges are the significant providers of ESL and adult education, they do not appear to be a major player in the delivery of work-based ESL instruction. However, although career schools often have higher fees than community colleges, “for-profit models are surprisingly effective with minority, adult and first-generation students” (DOL, 2007, p.18). A review of these training providers shows that 81 percent of the providers for these services were community-based organizations or career schools (Table 2).

Capacity Issues

1. Adult Education Programs

Texas is serving only 3.5 percent of the 3.8 million individuals in need of adult basic education services.

Waiting lists of up to 3 months were reported in workforce areas with large LEP populations like Upper Rio Grande and Gulf Coast (NALEO, 2006).

Enrollment has dropped for the last four years in adult education programs (TEA, 2006).

2. Work-Based ESL Programs

No work-based ESL training programs are available in 57% of the workforce areas.

Almost 70% of work-based ESL or bilingual training providers are in two workforce areas (Upper Rio Grande and Gulf Coast).

The vast majority of work-based ESL and bilingual training providers are career schools or nonprofit organizations.

NALEO, 2006. TWC, 2006a, TEA, 2007.

TABLE 1 Workforce ESL, Bilingual, and VESL Eligible Training Provider Certification (ETPC)			
Workforce Area	Provider	Occupational Areas	Percentage
1 – Panhandle	1	1	1.82
2 – South Plains	1	1	1.82
3– North Texas	1	2	3.64
6 – Dallas	2	2	3.64
10 – Upper Rio Grande	13	23	41.82
11- Permian Basin	1	1	1.82
14 – Capital Area	3	2	3.64
20 – Alamo	3	1	1.82
21 – South Texas	2	3	5.45
23 – Lower Rio Grande Valley	4	1	1.82
24 – Cameron County	2	4	7.27
28 – Gulf Coast	8	14	25.45
Totals	41	55*	100
*57% or 16 of 28 LWB, list no providers			
Self-generated table from Texas Workforce Commission, ETPC list for December 2006. * 32 unduplicated occupational areas.			

Field Notes

Traditional linear ESL models are not designed for LEP populations with short-term employment goals.

“(T)he traditional paradigm, in which students follow a sequential, lineal model... has met with little success among Latinos who are unemployed and seeking job retraining and education” (Huerta-Macias, 2002. p. 27).

Work based ESL programs are available in the Upper Rio Grande and the Gulf Coast workforce areas.

El Paso Community College and Houston Community College are leaders in the delivery work-based ESL training programs.

Recommended training models include Vocational English as a Second Language, bilingual training, work readiness preparation, internships, Spanish GED, and integrated support services.

TABLE 2 Profile of Workforce ESL, Bilingual, and VESL Vendors Eligible Training Provider Certification				
Organizational Profile	Proprietary/ Nonprofits	Community Colleges	Univ.	Total
Number of Training Programs*	25	6	0	31
Adjusted Percent of Total	81%	19%	0%	100%
Self-generated table from TWC, ETPC list for December 2006 *Training providers that deliver only teacher certification programs were not counted because these are alternative certification programs for college graduates, not LEP participants.				

Community colleges represent only 19 percent of the work-based ESL providers statewide. El Paso Community College and Houston Community College are two notable exceptions; both are leaders in the delivery of traditional adult literacy and ESL programs as well as in the design and delivery of a variety of work-based ESL and bilingual training programs for LEP populations.

Without effective mechanisms to assess and upgrade the language and occupational skills of LEP populations, Texas will face great disadvantages in the competitive global market. The fact that the LEP population is expected to become an even more important source of workers for Texas businesses requires an examination of the capacity of the workforce and education systems to prepare LEP individuals for employment in high-growth, high-demand occupations.

New Directions in Texas Workforce Education

Until recently, there has been a tendency to regard LEP workers as a “special population” in workforce and training programs. One look at the future demographics of the Texas labor market shows that workforce professionals can no longer maintain this view—training and educating this future workforce is a primary concern for public education, training, and workforce professionals.

Business and workforce development leaders such as the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and National Association of Manufacturers have taken the lead in researching and developing resources to support business efforts to tap into the vast potential of this growing LEP workforce, including efforts to support job attainment and advancement in high-growth, high-demand industry clusters (AFL-CIO Working for America Institute, 2004).

While traditionally viewed as an undereducated workforce, data suggests that the LEP population is a more diverse population with untapped assets. Although 30 percent of immigrant workers have less than a high school education and tend to be employed in low-wage work (Capps, Fix, Passel, Ost, & Perez-Lopez, 2003), almost one-third of the foreign-born LEP population has completed the equivalent of a bachelor’s degree or higher in their native country (Capps et al., 2003). An additional 25 percent of the LEP population has earned a high school diploma, and 17 percent has completed

For-Profits Lead the Way

Career schools can “provide a road map to the kinds of changes in organizational model that will be needed across higher education” (DOL, 2007. p.18). The following innovative practices distinguish career schools:

- ◆ Offerings targeted to meet specific career needs of adult learners
- ◆ Faculty hiring decisions biased toward applicants who have industry experience, an appreciation of applied learning, and an education credential in their field
- ◆ Instructional methods are hands on and practical
- ◆ Integration of education courses with occupational content, and delay of general education courses until after students have started their technical program
- ◆ Employment focus that emphasizes counseling, placement, and tracking employment outcomes
- ◆ Flexible scheduling with frequent entry and exit options
- ◆ Accelerated time to degree as a priority, with shorter course lengths
- ◆ Data-driven assessment of student learning and program value to students (Bailey et al. 2003, as cited in DOL, 2007)

some college work (Capps et al., 2003). The LEP population's substantial workforce potential has not escaped the attention of employers. Workforce and training professionals must find ways to better identify and train these workers.

In 2005, the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) funded the first wave of new LEP programs under the "English Proficiency and Hispanic Worker Initiative" (DOL, 2006). Using models that integrate occupational training and language skills, the DOL projects are demonstrating that it is possible to connect LEP participants to critical high-growth, high-demand occupations in many fields, such as the automotive, manufacturing, hospitality, health care, and construction trades.

Texas employers and Workforce Center customers all stand to benefit from the development of work-based ESL programs that align with business and industry requirements.

4 Step Approach to Improving LEP Training

Step 1 Evaluate Current Courses

Use the scorecards to determine the effectiveness of current programs.

Step 2 Improve Planning

Use the scorecards to establish future planning goals and objectives for local programs training LEP customers.

Step 3 RFP Development

Use the scorecards to establish research-based RFP design objectives and proposal evaluation criteria.

Step 4 Capacity Building

Use the scorecards to guide local training and adult education providers' efforts to develop effective training services for LEP customers.

Part 2. Finding Solutions Using the Work-Based ESL Training Scorecards

This section of the module is intended for use by Workforce Board and Workforce Center staff and identifies strategies to identify and procure training that can effectively prepare LEP customers for 21st century jobs.

Businesses continue to look for assistance in recruiting qualified workers, including workers who may have limited skills in English. Training linked to industries and employers holds the potential to produce the highly skilled workforce that businesses must recruit in the coming years. Workforce Center customers expect training that prepares them for these jobs and Workforce Boards are strategically positioned to work with training and education providers to design and implement effective training programs. The work-based ESL training scorecards provide Workforce Boards with a user-friendly approach to better assess the quality of existing training programs and develop new programs designed for LEP customers.

What Areas Do Scorecards Measure?

Each scorecard in this module has multiple core measures that are based on a review of best practices, LEP program effectiveness literature, and field research.

Scorecard 1: Employer Engagement

Scorecard 2: Instructional Design

Scorecard 3: Quality Learning Environments

Scorecard 4: Continuous Improvement System and Return on Investment

Scorecard 5: Comprehensive Assessment

How the Scorecards Can Be Used

Specifically, Workforce Boards can use the scorecard criteria to:

- ♦ evaluate courses for inclusion on the Eligible Training Provider List or other Board-approved vendor lists;
- ♦ improve the planning and evaluation of programs designed to connect LEP participants to high-growth, high-demand occupations;
- ♦ develop RFPs to ensure effective training for LEP customers; and
- ♦ guide capacity-building efforts for local training and adult education services.

Scorecard Mechanics

Each of the five scorecards has core measures that describe the review criteria. The illustrated scorecard below describes the various elements.

Using the Work-Based ESL Training Scorecard				
Core Measure	Description	Weight	Score	Total Score
		Scoring Rubric: 3 = Exceeds; 2 = Meets; 1 = Unacceptable		
2	Provider documents that employer assisted in determining LEP training program curriculum objectives.	2	3	6

The core measure **Description** is provided here. More detail for each description is provided following each scorecard table.

Workforce Boards establish the **Weight** for each measure here. *(How much value the Workforce Board places on the item.)*

Score the local training program's response on the core measure using the scoring rubric.

Tabulate the **Total Score** by multiplying the weight by the score.

Scorecard Core Measure Recommendations

The work-based ESL training scorecards are divided into the five core areas essential for positive LEP training results. However, in the overall implementation of training programs some areas carry a heavier burden toward program success than others. Accordingly, Workforce Boards may want to consider assigning each area a specific percentage of the overall number of available points.

Weighting the Core Measures

Just as the five scorecards vary from each other in overall value, the core measures for each scorecard also carry different weights depending on the Workforce Board's strategic priorities. One approach is to establish a rating scale that considers the relationship of each core measure to the total score. Thus, the most important core measures will be assigned higher weights than less critical measures. When assigning weights to each core measure, consider the following guide:

- ◆ High point range, 30%–40% for essential core measures
- ◆ Moderate-to-high point range, 20%–30% for critical core measures
- ◆ Low-to-moderate point range, 5%–10% for important core measures

The process is similar to the process procurement specialists use when weighing sections of an RFP. Sample values are listed in Table 3:

Scorecard 1	Employer Engagement is an essential core measure that should have a high range point value of between 20% - 30%.
Scorecard 2	Instructional Design is an important core measure that should have a moderate to high range point value of between 30%-40%.
Scorecard 3	Quality Learning Environment is a required core measure that should have a low to moderate point value of between 5%-10%.
Scorecard 4	Continuous Quality Improvement and Return on Investment is a value added core measure that should have a low to moderate point value of between 5%-10%.
Scorecard 5	Comprehensive Assessment is an important core measure that should have a moderate to high range point value of between 20%-30%.

Maximizing the Benefits of Scorecards: Putting Together the Right Mixture of People and Resources

Workforce Boards may want to consider using a multidisciplinary team when implementing the use of scorecards. The right team of professionals can provide the leadership and insight needed to maximize the usefulness of a scorecard system as well as to effectively design, implement, and evaluate LEP training initiatives.

While the scorecards provide the framework within which program design and evaluation takes place, team members provide expertise within specific scorecard criteria.

For instance:

- ◆ Procurement professionals can provide expertise in defining the weights of scorecards and core measures.
- ◆ Adult education specialists can evaluate program design criteria, assessment, and facilities.
- ◆ Business Services representatives and employers can evaluate employer engagement and alignment with industry requirements.
- ◆ Workforce development professionals can evaluate continuous improvements and conformance with prescribed timelines, rules, and regulations.

Coupled with a qualified team of professionals, these evaluative instruments can provide Workforce Boards with enhanced training and employment outcomes and greater return on public investment.

LEP Dream Team

Workforce Boards may want to consider organizing a multidisciplinary team of professionals to oversee the design, implementation, and evaluation of LEP training programs. Please see Module 1 for more information on the LEP Dream Team.

Part 3. Five Work-Based ESL Training Scorecards

This section presents the five work-based ESL training scorecards. Workforce Boards can use the scorecards to examine adult education and training services.

Scorecard Alignment to Research

Evidence from proven training programs for LEP customers, as well as a review of the research literature, provides a theoretical basis for each scorecard. Each scorecard aligns with one or more of the characteristics of promising bilingual programs for LEP and low-level education adults identified in Table 4 by El Paso-based researcher Ana Huerta-Macias (2002).

Table 4

Five Work-Based ESL Training Scorecards	Characteristics of Promising Bilingual Training Programs (Huerta-Macias, 2002)
1 Employer Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Close relationships and collaborations with industry
2 Instructional Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ An integrated (rather than sequential) model that includes ESL or VESL, basic education, occupational training, and/or General Educational Development (GED) instruction ◆ Bilingual instructional materials ◆ Employment placement assistance
3 Quality Learning Environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Bilingual and biliterate administrative and instructional staff ◆ A nurturing, caring, and motivational environment ◆ Instructional staff who are experienced and knowledgeable in the areas they are teaching ◆ Counseling and referrals to social service agencies for students facing educational barriers
4 Continuous Quality Improvement and Return on Investment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Accountability based on a variety of measures and assessment instruments ◆ Ongoing professional development for instructional staff
5 Comprehensive Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Formative evaluation of student progress to satisfy accountability requirements set by funding agencies ◆ Ongoing assessment so that students, instructors, and program administrators can monitor learning

Work-Based ESL Training Scorecards At-A-Glance		Page
Scorecard 1 Employer Engagement		
1	Training provider has engaged local businesses in labor market analysis documenting job demand courses in occupational areas that are in the Workforce Board's cluster industries or occupations.	24
2	Training provider documents that employer assisted in determining LEP training program curriculum objectives.	25
3	Training provider documents that employers are involved in program implementation activities, such as curriculum development, guest demonstration, mentoring, practice interviews, shadowing, internships, and job development.	26
4	Training provider has a business steering or advisory committee that monitors and advises program on LEP training effectiveness for LEP customers.	27
Scorecard 2 Instructional Design		
5	Instructional design follows research-based design elements for work-based ESL training.	32
6	English language curriculum is aligned to the competencies identified in an occupational language task analysis.	33
7	Occupational training curriculum is aligned to the competencies, skills, and industry requirements and certifications identified in a job task analysis.	34
8	Training provider documents that program employs well-trained staff and instructors experienced in working in business-driven programs.	35
9	Training provider documents a process that ensures close collaboration between the English language and occupational training faculty.	36
Scorecard 3 Quality Learning Environments		
10	Training provider documents that the program will be delivered in dedicated facilities that are clean, safe, well lit, and comfortable for adult students.	39

11	Training provider documents LEP participants will have access to instructional support including computer labs, tutors, and student support.	40
12	Training provider provides evidence of student policies that identify the rights, grievance process, and standards of respect.	41
13	Training provider documents procedures for making Workforce Center support services and personnel accessible at training location.	42
Scorecard 4 Continuous Quality Improvement System and Return on Investment		
14	Training provider uses employer and student surveys or data for program improvement.	46
15	Training provider documents having met or exceeded performance in previous training contracts and is evaluated on cost-per-placement and return-on-investment variables.	47
Scorecard 5 Comprehensive Assessment		
16	Training provider documents use of a multidimensional assessment process to determine the interests, skills, and abilities of LEP customers including, but not limited to, assessment of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ literacy, language, and numeracy in English and Spanish; and ◆ career aptitude, occupational skills, and interests. 	50
17	Training provider uses National Reporting System (NRS)–endorsed assessment instruments to assess participants’ English language and basic skills.	51
18	Training provider identifies assessment process that aligns the skills and abilities of customers to academic and occupational training plans that ensure completion in the time allotted by the Individual Employment Plan (IEP) or other parameters.	52
19	Training provider has systems in place to identify dispositional and affective barriers as well as learning needs.	53
20	Training provider follows required test administration procedures as outlined by the test publisher.	54

Scorecard 1 Employer Engagement

Lewis and Paral (2001) found that employer engagement is the single most important step in designing effective and responsive programs for LEP customers.

Many options exist for engaging employers in the design and delivery of training programs for LEP customers. In work-based ESL programs, employer engagement is often used to assist instructors in contextualizing the curriculum and ensuring that learning closely matches business needs.

Workforce Boards can use Scorecard 1 to measure the extent to which training providers engage employers and use related information from business to shape program design across four core measures:

- ◆ Alignment with local cluster and high-growth, high-demand occupations
- ◆ Engagement in developing curriculum objectives
- ◆ Involvement in implementation of programs
- ◆ Contribution of business steering or advisory committees

Business-Driven Programs Engage Employers by:

- ◆ Gathering information about labor market trends (local wisdom)
- ◆ Aligning courses to local industry cluster and high-growth, high-demand occupations
- ◆ Assessing the adequacy of training curriculum
- ◆ Soliciting advice on program effectiveness
- ◆ Encouraging businesses to serve on advisory committees

Work-Based ESL Training Scorecard				
Scorecard 1: Employer Engagement				
Core Measure	Description	Weight	Score	Total Score
		3= Exceeds; 2 = Meets; 1 = Unacceptable		
1	Training provider has engaged local businesses in labor market analysis documenting job demand courses in occupational areas that are in the Workforce Board's cluster industries or occupations.			
2	Training provider documents that employer assisted in determining LEP training program curriculum objectives.			
3	Training provider documents that employers are involved in program implementation activities, such as curriculum development, guest demonstration, mentoring, practice interviews, shadowing, internships, and job development.			
4	Training provider has a business steering or advisory committee that monitors and advises program on LEP training effectiveness for LEP customers.			
Notes				Total Score

Scorecard 1

Core Measure Descriptors

Core Measure 1

Training provider has engaged local businesses in labor market analysis documenting job demand courses in occupational areas that are in the Workforce Board's cluster industries or occupations.

Overview

This measure addresses the need for work-based ESL programs to align with local high-growth, high-demand occupations. Workforce Boards have aligned their strategic plans to high-growth, high-demand occupations (or sectors) as a means to move participants toward economic self-sufficiency. Because work-based ESL programs are designed to lead to jobs in demand occupational clusters, customers can often pursue a career path with opportunities for upward mobility based on further education or training.

Labor market information (LMI) analysis is a fundamental component of workforce development programs. LMI is data collected from employers to determine occupational demand, educational requirements, labor force availability, compensation, and job forecasting.

Employer involvement is critical to validating LMI data and providing local wisdom. Training providers can use local wisdom to help identify elements of business expansion or decline that may not show up in aggregated data. Local wisdom can be collected from local employers through Business Services contact, employer associations, local surveys, or advisory committees.

Critical Aspects

Industry Cluster Analysis – The State of Texas as well as several Workforce Boards have completed cluster analyses that can be used to identify current and emerging high-growth, high-demand occupations. Work-based ESL programs should take these studies into consideration when targeting employers for involvement in program development or in serving on advisory boards.

Connections to Untapped Labor Force – Work-based ESL programs should be designed to provide employers with an increased supply of workers in areas that face critical labor shortages or that have the potential for significant job growth. LEP customers can be a new source of skilled or semiskilled workers and increase the likelihood that key industry sectors will continue to support economic growth.

Career Pathways – LMI can identify jobs where upward mobility is possible. Training programs in these high-growth, high-demand occupations greatly improve the current and future job opportunities for LEP customers.

Program Alignment – Work-based ESL programs can be designed to address Workforce Boards' strategic goals for targeting jobs in high-growth, high-demand industries, providing education and training programs with the ability to contribute to the Workforce Boards' attainment of strategic objectives.

Local Wisdom – Workforce programs use local wisdom to identify emerging occupations and local occupational requirements that may not show up in state-aggregated data. For example, several Lower Rio Grande Valley Workforce Board staff members identified employers with limited English language requirements that would hire LEP dislocated workers.

Scorecard 1
Core Measure Descriptors

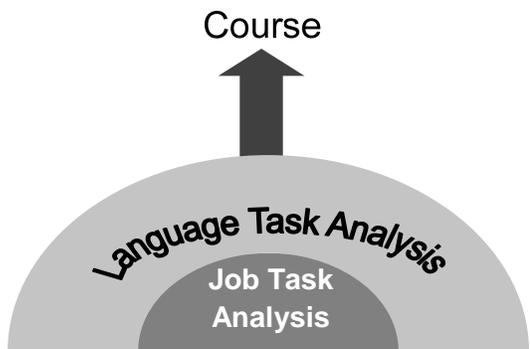
Core Measure 2
Training provider documents that employers assisted in determining LEP training program curriculum objectives.

Overview

Employer involvement is critical during the curriculum development process because employers are the training provider’s ultimate customer. Work-based ESL programs must engage local employers during the curriculum development phase if they are to strategically address the unique needs of local businesses and identify the specific language competencies needed for these businesses.

While curriculum developed through other projects or commercially developed curriculum may be useful, curriculum objectives must be customized to the needs of local businesses. Only they can truly determine the specific skill competencies that LEP workers must possess to be effective and job ready in their business.

Truly customized curriculum development requires that employers define the program competencies and skill standards through both job and language task analysis processes that allow employers to define the English literacy, job competencies, and skill sets. (NOTE: Core Measures 6 and 7 provide specific guidance Workforce Boards can use to determine the extent to which a thorough job task and language task analysis has been conducted by the training provider.)



Critical Aspects

Communicate Frequently with Upper Management – Successful training programs have strong, frequent communication linkages with company management. Because management is more aware of the strategic direction of the company, it can provide training providers with direction related to the future needs of the company that supervisors or foremen may not know.

Additionally, while managers are usually not the experts in specific training competencies, they can provide trainers with the access to the right people within the company who can identify specific training objectives and competencies for curriculum development.

Engage Human Resource Generalists – Often, important contacts are Human Resource (HR) generalists who can identify the basic skills and knowledge that employees will need to possess. HR generalists should have a good grasp of training and education requirements, though they may not have the specific knowledge needed for specific curriculum development.

Rely on Content Experts or High-Performing Workers – Because of their proximity to the actual services or work product, these workers are the most appropriate employer representatives for identifying specific curriculum objectives. These workers must be engaged in skill-mapping analysis of tasks, sequencing of curriculum, and identification of machinery and equipment.

Make Continuous, Not Onetime Efforts – While employer engagement is critical during the curriculum development phase, communication with business partners at all levels should be continuous. Business needs change continuously, and thus training providers should communicate with business regularly to adjust curriculum to meet changing requirements.

Scorecard 1

Core Measure Descriptors

Core Measure 3

Training provider documents that employers are involved in program implementation activities, such as curriculum development, guest demonstration, mentoring, practice interviews, shadowing, internships, and job development.

Overview

Employer involvement during program implementation shows business partners that the training program is authentic in its desire to address their unique needs. Additionally, employer involvement can close the gap between “earning the training certificate” and “getting the job.”

In work-based ESL training programs, employer engagement can assist instructors by ensuring that language learning closely matches business needs. Employers can also support the instructional component by serving as guest trainers, mentors, and role models, increasing student motivation and retention in the program.

In San Antonio, workers dislocated after the closure of the Levi's® plant reported that employer engagement was an important dimension of the St. Philip's College–Southwest Campus program. Employers assisted the trainees in gaining a better understanding of job requirements, career opportunities, and job benefits. These programs also allowed trainees to engage in employer internships.

Employers can be valuable role models for trainees and provide support through coaching and mentoring. Trainees see employers' active participation in the program as evidence that the program is a direct path to real job opportunities and employment—not just a program that will help them become more employable.

Employers can support the instructional component by serving as mentors, role models, and enablers for LEP participants.

Critical Aspects

Curriculum Customization – Training providers should show evidence of how employers were involved in customizing lesson plans to meet direct business requirements.

Interaction with the Training Program – Customized training programs provide a valuable service to business partners and businesses often want to be involved in the training. Training providers should show how they provide opportunities for employers to participate in lectures, equipment demonstration, review of company procedures, tours, and identification of class projects that can provide trainees with applied learning opportunities.

Identification of Employment Requirements – Employers can provide trainees with information on job requirements and assist in determining work readiness. Employers can articulate the specific process of applying for jobs, the types of tests that may be required, and other requirements such as background checks or drug screening that may not have surfaced in the curriculum development process. Employers can also bring realism to employment interview practice, assist with employment portfolio development, and evaluate trainees who are ready to begin job search.

Creating Opportunities for Internships – Employers can provide trainees with work readiness experience through job shadowing opportunities and internships. This can provide opportunities for trainees to observe how skills learned in class are applied on the job. Internships can also provide business with a valuable way to get to know trainees that can lead to job opportunities.

Scorecard 1

Core Measure Descriptors

Core Measure 4

Training provider has a business steering or advisory committee that monitors and advises program on LEP training effectiveness for LEP customers.

Overview

Steering or advisory committees facilitate employer engagement in work-based ESL training programs. These committees should be an integral and valuable part of the program because they provide program administrators and instructors with ongoing program guidance and support. These committees facilitate employer participation in satisfaction surveys, evaluations, and program improvement processes.

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board requires that all occupational or technical training programs seeking accreditation, including programs for LEP customers, have a business advisory committee.

Time to Partner

Changing demographics and workforce shortages contribute to the willingness of employers to participate in workforce and work-based ESL training program advisory committees.

Critical Aspects

Workforce Boards should determine the extent to which training providers engage businesses in the following areas:

Serving as Resource Brokers – Employers who participate in advisory committees have access to significant resources that can support work-based ESL training programs. They can assist in identifying other employers to participate in the various implementation phases of the program such as guest demonstration, mentoring, practice interviews, job shadowing, internships, and job development.

Providing Program Improvement and Evaluation – Advisory committees can provide customer feedback to program staff, faculty, and administration regarding LEP participants who complete the program and become employed. Workforce Boards can use this data to support continuous program improvement processes.

Gaining Stakeholder Support – Advisory committees can ensure that learning objectives closely match business needs, thereby building trust and valuable support from business partners. Employer advisory committees can also serve as program champions and advocates on behalf of the program to assure Workforce Boards that work-based ESL training programs meet the “demand” side expectations that Workforce Boards have built into their strategic and business service plans.

Broadening Engagement – Employers who participate in business advisory committees make excellent partners. Their familiarity with the training organization often increases their willingness to engage in expanded partnerships that cover a wide spectrum of activities, from writing letters of support, to providing investments through scholarships, donating equipment, and assisting with the identification of additional funding.

Scorecard 2

Instructional Design

Adult education and training programs for LEP workers cover a wide spectrum of models, approaches, and activities in part because of the diverse language proficiency and marketable skill levels of adult learners.

Workforce Boards can use Scorecard 2 to measure specific areas common to work-based ESL models across five measures:

- ◆ Instructional design is founded on research-based, work-based ESL training models.
- ◆ Language curriculum is aligned to the competencies identified through a language task analysis.
- ◆ Occupational skills curriculum is aligned to industry requirements and certifications identified in a job task analysis.
- ◆ Training providers employ fully qualified and experienced training staff and instructors.
- ◆ Training providers facilitate collaboration between English language and occupational training faculty.

Work-Based ESL Models

A growing consensus from the research literature asserts that the most-effective program models are those that coordinate, in some manner, occupational training, work readiness, and English language acquisition (Ramsey & Robyn 1992, Friedenber, 1995, Forbes, 1995, MDRC, 2001, Burt 2004, Casey et al., 2006).

LEP customers who receive both occupational and English language training have greater success at work in terms of attendance, production, and job retention (National Immigration Law Center, 2003).

Work-Based ESL Training

- ◆ Curriculum customized, based on an occupational and language task analysis.
- ◆ Coordinated curriculum provides short-term options for customers to learn occupational skills and English.
- ◆ Programs promote integration and collaboration between English and occupational trainers.
- ◆ Programs have high retention rates and motivate participants to complete.
- ◆ Occupational training can be delivered in the customer's native language.
- ◆ Customers with very limited English are able to find employment in demand occupations as helpers or paraprofessionals that can be aligned to career paths.

Because of their alignment with occupational objectives, businesses view customized work-based ESL training programs as a business asset, but they do not have the same opinion of traditional ESL programs funded by the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), which address other objectives such as civics engagement, life skills, and family literacy (NAW/Jobs for the Future, 2006).

Forbes (1985) found that LEP participants who engage concurrently in job training and language acquisition have the most labor market success as compared to others who engage in either English acquisition or work programs.

The (2001) found that the most successful workforce development programs for transitioning LEP populations to jobs used an integrated approach that blended short-term education and training with a job search program that emphasized family-sustaining jobs. Similar findings were reported by Ramsey and Robyn (1992) and more recently by Miriam Burt (2004).

Ramsey and Robyn reported that VESL courses were more effective in moving adult LEP participants into jobs than programs that follow a sequential process requiring participants to enroll in stand-alone ESL courses in order to raise literacy levels to meet vocational training program prerequisites. Burt (2004) researched integrated models in the workplace concluding that learning in the context of work can improve work skills while improving language skills.

In a comprehensive study addressing retention and program design, Sticht (2005) considered the tendency of training providers to offer stand-alone education programs that aim to develop academic cognitive skills, and the impact these programs have on adults who have very specific goals in mind, such as getting a job. Sticht found that, if the institution offered education and/or job training directly related to a participant's job goals, the participant's motivation and retention significantly increased.

Characteristics of Effective Work-Based ESL

Although many variations of work-based ESL models exist, most share at least one of these common components:

- ◆ Instructional components are designed to provide job readiness to prepare LEP participants for entry into target occupations.
- ◆ Instruction is designed to ensure that LEP customers can communicate and function in the workplace or occupations.
- ◆ Occupational training is provided in demand occupations or occupational clusters.

More recently, the National Research and Development Centre research resulted in similar findings and found that the more embedded literacy education was with occupational skills training, the steeper the rise was in English literacy development as measured by standardized assessments. This research proposed that adults are more likely to engage in literacy development when it is relevant to occupational development (Casey, H., Cara, O., Eldred, G., Hodge, S., Roz R., Ivanic, T., Lopez, D., & McNeil B., 2006).

Thus, for LEP participants who have a goal of attaining employment, VESL programs will result in higher retention and completion rates. The Sticht research is particularly significant because it validates TWC's call to increase the number of workforce training programs available for LEP customers whose goal is to transition into 21st century jobs.

Work-Based ESL Training Scorecard				
Scorecard 2: Instructional Design				
Core Measure	Description	Weight	Score	Total Score
		3 = Exceeds; 2 = Meets; 1 = Unacceptable		
5	Instructional design follows research-based design elements for work-based ESL training.			
6	English language curriculum is aligned to the competencies identified in an occupational language task analysis.			
7	Occupational training curriculum is aligned to the competencies, skills, and industry requirements and certifications identified in a job task analysis.			
8	Training provider documents that program employs well-trained staff and instructors experienced in working in business-driven programs.			
9	Training provider documents a process that ensures close collaboration between the English language and occupational training faculty.			
Notes				Total Score

Scorecard 2

Core Measure Descriptors

Core Measure 5

Instructional design follows research-based design elements for work-based ESL training.

Overview

Several work-based ESL training models exist that are grounded in the workforce LEP research literature. The Appendix A of this module describes these models in detail.

When implemented, each model uniquely addresses and reflects the variety of needs of both LEP customers and employers by coordinating, in some manner, occupational training, English language training, and work readiness preparation. Effective programs also provide customers with access to both academic (tutors and instructional resources) and employment (case management) support services to address barriers to successfully completing training.

The models can be categorized under two broad frameworks:

- ◆ Bridge Models
- ◆ Concurrent Bilingual Models

The common elements Workforce Boards should look for in work-based ESL training programs are listed to the right. Several variations of each of these models exist, and Workforce Boards should consider which elements are most important for the unique training needs of their customers.

Critical Aspects

Vocational English as a Second Language (VESL) – VESL courses teach the English language required for specific occupations or occupational clusters. These courses should augment occupational training courses and include the specific language skills required for employment.

Occupational Training – These courses teach the skills required for specific occupations. Effective work-based ESL training models make occupational training accessible to LEP customers through native language or bilingual instruction.

GED Preparation – Programs should include GED test preparation if the GED credential is required for employment. Spanish GED courses can build the academic skills of participants in their native language and may assist them in making more rapid progress in VESL classes and in being better prepared for occupational training [Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL), 2006].

Work Readiness Preparation – Businesses rank work readiness skills first in the list of skills that were most important for an entry-level employee (TWIC, 2006). These skills include basic requirements such as adhering to dress codes, punctuality, working while you are at work, and taking direction, to more sophisticated competencies such as having a commitment to serve a team and taking initiative and responsibility.

Internships – Job internships provide customers with exposure to how the skills learned in the classroom are applied on the job. Internships can also provide businesses with a valuable way to identify potential employees, which can lead to job opportunities.

Scorecard 2

Core Measure Descriptors

Core Measure 6

The English language curriculum is aligned to the competencies identified in an occupational language task analysis.

Overview

Workforce Boards should ensure that a language task analysis forms the foundation for English language curriculum development in work-based ESL training programs. The analysis defines the specific language and skill level that LEP customers must attain to perform successfully on the job. Effective language task analysis focuses on both the functional and social aspects of communicating on the job.

To determine these language requirements, direct observation and interviews are conducted with peer employees, foremen, supervisors, management, and HR personnel, as well as others with whom the worker will have to interact. Meetings and team activities may be observed for language use.

The language task analysis should also identify skills required for reading, writing, and math. Written materials used in the workplace or in the particular occupation—for example, manuals, notices, safety instructions, and office forms—also should be collected and analyzed for linguistic or mathematical difficulty.

Language Task Analysis Elements

- ◆ Establish a language task analysis team
- ◆ Conduct an organizational scan based on interviews with key personnel, site tour, observations, and employee interviews to document workplace environment, workflow, and operational procedures
- ◆ Analyze job tasks, critical thinking, oral skills, and job requirements
- ◆ Conduct a job literacy skill audit that focuses on reading, writing, and numeracy
- ◆ Analyze and synthesize results

New Zealand Centre for Workforce Literacy Development

Critical Aspects

Training Provider Makes This the First Step – Language task analysis should be conducted before the curriculum, lesson plans, and instructional approaches for a particular work-based ESL training program are determined. This analysis should ensure that language development is focused on both the functional and social aspects of communicating on the job.

Businesses Are Engaged – A language task analysis must be conducted in cooperation with employers and workplace representatives. The analysis must involve learning about the worksite from multiple perspectives. In occupations where bilingual workers function as “part-time interpreters,” programs should carefully interview these workers, as they may be able to define more critical communication areas.

The Analysis Includes All Modes of Communication – The language task analysis must review all language interactions the LEP worker will encounter, including:

- ◆ **Reading and Writing** – specific technical words, symbols, numbers, and diagrams from simple single words and symbols to understanding of signage and technical written information
- ◆ **Speaking and Listening** – common one-on-one dialogues, large and small group communication, and more complex language requirements related to successful performance on the job including specific jargon and oral communication related to critical aspects of safety and customer service
- ◆ **Numeracy** – numbers, symbols, and words—from simple addition to complex formulas—as well as the use of equipment such as calculators and measuring devices.

Scorecard 2
Core Measure Descriptors

Core Measure 7
Occupational training curriculum is aligned to the competencies, skills, and industry requirements and certifications identified in a job task analysis.

Overview

Job task analysis forms the foundation for occupational skills curriculum development in work-based ESL training programs. Workforce Boards should evaluate the extent to which training programs have engaged employers to:

- ◆ define occupational competencies, required skill sets, and job tasks;
- ◆ identify and prioritize necessary curriculum competencies and skill standards; and
- ◆ identify required certifications or other “exit points” required for employment in the industry.

Because it forms the learning objectives and assessment benchmarks for occupational training, job task analysis, along with language task analysis, are critical to any effective work-based ESL training program.



Recognized Job Task Analysis Processes

DACUM (Developing A Curriculum) and ADDIE (Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation), are job task analysis processes familiar to employers and used by many community and technical colleges.

Critical Aspects

Job Task Analysis Is Aligned with Business Demand – Work-based ESL training programs contextualize curriculum by collaborating with business partners to ensure that learning closely matches the business needs and aligns with requirements of the job.

Job Task Analysis Is Used as a Basis to Simulate the Work Environment – Work-based ESL training programs should document that training simulates the requirements of the particular occupations. Training labs should meet the industry standard for the particular skill level of the training program.

Ensure Continuous Improvement – Training programs should improve curriculum by continually incorporating input from participants and business. Workforce Boards should review the extent to which instructors improve the curriculum on an ongoing process.

Include Industry Certifications – Industry certification provides employers with a third-party validation of individual job-related skills and abilities. Industry certification identifies individuals who have met the industry-established proficiency requirements in a specific occupation, competency, or skill area. By achieving industry certification, individuals are able to differentiate themselves from other individuals and have greater advantages in the labor market.

Many industries such as the automotive industry will hire only certified mechanics (NATEF, National Automotive Technicians Education Foundation) or I-Car certified auto collision technicians. Industry certifications are available in a wide range of occupations. A small sampling of occupations that utilize industry certifications are skill trades, manufacturing, automobile mechanics, computer network administrators, computer applications, and heavy equipment operators.

Scorecard 2

Core Measure Descriptors

Core Measure 8

Training provider documents that program employs well-trained staff and instructors experienced in working in business-driven programs.

Overview

Workforce Boards should review the extent to which training providers employ experienced instructors who have knowledge of adult learning theory, workforce readiness competencies, and contextual learning methods. Student achievement, retention, and completion rates are significantly improved when experienced instructors lead work-based ESL training programs.

In describing barriers to implementation of work-based ESL training models, difficulty finding experienced instructors is a primary consideration in both the field research and the literature review.

In 2006, 83 percent of all adult basic education program staff in Texas were part-time. Of the 113 programs reporting information, 62 had no full-time teachers and only 3 of the programs had more than 10 full-time teachers (Texas Learns, personal communication).

While the relevant experience of instructional staff is a critical aspect Workforce Boards should consider when evaluating local programs, they should also review the professional development plans for instructional staff. Belzer (2003) found that professional development is linked to better teaching and learning outcomes. Workforce Boards should ensure that training providers have a well-defined professional development approach that focuses on LEP instructional improvement to support instructors and program staff.

Macias-Huerta (2003) found that instructors working with LEP adults need to build their conceptual knowledge of curriculum and effective learning methods with linguistically and culturally diverse populations.

Critical Aspects

Ensure Training Staff Is Qualified – Workforce Boards should give priority consideration to programs that employ full-time instructors who have demonstrated experience implementing effective workforce-related education and training programs for LEP customers.

Review Relevance of Ongoing Professional Opportunities – The teaching function in work-based ESL programs requires a high degree of knowledge regarding instructional pedagogy, complex instructional models, and alignment to business needs. Therefore, professional development is an essential dimension of effective programs. Workforce Boards should evaluate the extent to which instructors are knowledgeable about adult learning theory so they can create lessons that are most effective for LEP customers.

Facilitate Alternative Professional Development – Professional development is often conceived as additional training in an individual's particular field, such as language task analysis training for VESL teachers. Programs should consider alternative ways to develop the ability of staff to deliver work-based ESL training. For example, ESL instructors could participate in internships, company tours, and other activities that will enable them to contextualize language acquisition lesson plans. Workforce Boards are well positioned to assist training providers in identifying such alternative professional development opportunities

Scorecard 2

Core Measure Descriptors

Core Measure 9

Training provider documents a process that ensures close collaboration between the English language and occupational training faculty.

Overview

The most-effective work-based ESL training programs facilitate frequent communication and integration between English language and occupational instructors. Ideally, the two instructional components should directly reinforce one another so that LEP participants are learning the fundamental language and skill requirements of the select occupation in a strategically coordinated manner.

Traditionally, most English literacy instructors lack knowledge about occupational training competencies and occupational training instructors lack knowledge about teaching LEP customers. English literacy instructors can build their knowledge of occupational training through frequent discussions with trainers about course content or even taking the training course to learn directly what types of language and math skills are needed for the occupation.

Similarly, occupational instructors should also be familiar with adult learning theory and teaching methods designed to best engage LEP customers in the teaching and learning process. These instructors are often accustomed to a top-down approach to teaching using lectures and demonstrations to transmit knowledge, but this approach is not as effective with LEP students. Training providers should create opportunities for these faculty members to meet in order to strengthen the program's ability to train LEP customers.

Critical Aspects

Review Opportunities for Instructor Collaboration – Work-based ESL training programs should allow time for occupational and VESL instructors to meet and discuss lesson plans, coordinated projects, and discuss individual LEP participant needs. The interaction between the instructors is an absolute necessity and should be allotted for both in terms of time release or instructional workloads. It is recommended that instructors meet at least once a week on a formal basis.

Consider Workforce Partner Participation – Case managers and job developers should be invited to attend curriculum planning meetings. Workforce Center staff can provide unique perspectives on instruction-related customer needs and can assist training providers in scheduling training events so they align best with the customer's IEP. Additionally, by learning more about the training course and requirements, Workforce Center staff is also better positioned to guide customers in selecting training options that best meet their needs.

Scorecard 3

Quality Learning Environments

When evaluating training programs for LEP customers, Workforce Boards should ensure that these programs are delivered in safe and comfortable learning environments that are accessible to students and have up-to-date equipment.

While ensuring that training is held in quality learning facilities may seem like an obvious point, fieldwork for this project identified instances where LEP displaced workers described inadequate facilities and the absence of adequate instructional support, such as tutors and computer labs. Many experienced a sense of inferiority and reported feeling like the training provider was delivering “second-tier services.” Some LEP displaced workers also reported a lack of convenient access to job search and case manager assistance through the training provider.

Considerations for a quality learning environment start with the basic facility and educational resources allocated to the program. Programs should be safe, comfortable, easily accessible to where participants live, and equipped with computer labs that provide video, audio, and computer-based interactive learning systems to complement classroom instruction.

Workforce Boards can use Scorecard 3 to evaluate the extent to which training providers offer a quality learning environment for trainees across four core measures:

- Facilities are accessible, clean, safe, and comfortable.
- Students have access to instructional support including tutors, guidance counselors, and computer labs.
- Program includes policies to solicit information on student satisfaction as well as identified rights, grievance processes, and standards of respect.
- Program includes procedures for facilitating student access to Workforce Center staff and services at the training site.

Work-Based ESL Training Scorecard Scorecard 3: Quality Learning Environments					
Core Measure	Description	Weight	Score	Total Score	
		3= Exceeds; 2 = Meets; 1 = Poor;			
10	Training provider documents that the program will be delivered in dedicated facilities that are clean, safe, well lit, and comfortable for adult students.				
11	Training provider documents LEP participants will have access to instructional support including computer labs, tutors, and student support.				
12	Training provider provides evidence of student policies that identify the rights, grievance process, and standards of respect.				
13	Training provider documents procedures for making Workforce Center support services and personnel accessible at training location.				
Notes				Total Score	

Scorecard 3
Core Measure Descriptors

Core Measure 10
Training provider documents that the program will be delivered in dedicated facilities that are clean, safe, well lit, and comfortable for adult students.

Overview

While space is always a premium for most training providers, the willingness to dedicate quality classroom facilities for work-based ESL programs is usually a good indicator of the importance that the organization places on programs for LEP customers.

More effective teaching and learning will occur in facilities that are designed, dedicated, and configured for adult populations. Classrooms should be configured to include course and program information in a bilingual format and posters that present relevant occupational content such as posters of the nervous and skeletal systems in health care programs or critical safety procedures for industrial-related training.

Workforce Boards should also review the extent to which training providers offer dedicated classrooms for training programs. Classrooms that are shared by multiple classes or with daytime public schools greatly limit opportunities for instructors to configure the classroom into an optimal learning environment for adult LEP customers. In addition, shared classrooms create a logistical challenge for instructors who must transport class materials and equipment from one location to another.

Review Suitability for Adults
The use of public school elementary and middle school classrooms may not be appropriate for adult learners because they are equipped with chairs, desks, and furniture designed and sized for children.

Critical Aspects

Review Facility Quality – LEP customers should enjoy a quality learning environment that begins with a safe, clean, well-lit classroom that is also properly ventilated and acoustically designed to facilitate learning with ergonomically designed furnishings. The overall facility should provide easy access to bathrooms and break areas as well as adequate parking.

Ensure Accessibility – LEP customers need access to quality facilities and equipment. Accessibility to facilities should include factors such as proximity to public transportation systems. Accessibility must also be extended to meeting the needs of customers with special needs. All facilities must be ADA compliant.

Review Campus Safety – Classroom safety is a critical consideration Workforce Boards should review. Additional precautions may be necessary due to unique circumstances such as classes that dismiss late in the evening or are offered off campus. Training providers should also develop staff awareness of the potential for violence related to students who have family members who may be unsupportive of their educational pursuits. Site managers should assess the need for on-site security or request that local police provide extra patrols at dismissal times. Workforce Boards should ensure that all members of the training provider staff and students are aware of emergency procedures including:

- ◆ having emergency phone contacts for all participants;
- ◆ displaying maps of the classroom and the building indicating all entrances;
- ◆ changing entrance/exit locations if the location is in a hidden or blind area; and
- ◆ when possible, having staff meet all visitors at controlled entrances.

Scorecard 3
Core Measure Descriptors

Core Measure 11
Training provider documents LEP participants will have access to instructional supports including computer labs, tutors, and student support.

Overview

Perhaps even more than traditional students, LEP students benefit from services that support program completion. Unfortunately, many of the programs designed for LEP customers in community colleges tend to be isolated from the core services available to other students. A 2004 study by Jobs for the Future found that adult education students did not benefit from the counseling, advising, financial aid, or academic support enjoyed by college students.

When evaluating training services for LEP customers, Workforce Boards should review what types of instructional support is made available to participants. LEP customers should have access to tutors, campus support services, and computer labs to reinforce learning.

Computer-based learning opportunities are especially valuable in situations that require individualized instruction due to multiple ability groupings because they can be customized for different literacy levels. Many programs have diagnostic components that can provide instructors with valuable feedback on student academic progress.

Another dimension of instructional support is the availability of support services. For LEP and other individuals with multiple barriers to employment, support services are often critical to the students' ability to complete programs and transition into employment.

Critical Aspects

Review Computer Lab Access – LEP participants should have access to computer labs staffed by bilingual staff and equipped with appropriate instructional software programs designed for lower-level literacy students.

Review Availability of Tutoring Services – The use of bilingual tutors to provide individualized instructional assistance or to assist with interpretation is often mentioned in the research literature as an effective instructional support strategy. For VESL models, bilingual tutors with occupational content expertise are very helpful when the occupational instructors are not bilingual.

Evaluate Access to Support Services – Many LEP customers require support services to successfully complete training programs. Research (MDRC, 2006 and AFL-CIO, 2004) reveals that retention and completion rates are improved by incorporating case management and tutorial services into the instructional program of studies. Modules 1 and 2 provide extensive information and strategies for support services that are appropriate for LEP populations.

Promising Practice

By pooling resources from community partners, public and private alike, St. Philip's College in San Antonio was able to provide services to dislocated workers that include child care assistance, transportation, textbook loans, and financial assistance. Students also had access to services such as community closets, food banks, and counseling advising as well as referral to a network of community resources. To help further services, faculty and staff were supplied with information in the form of a guide to help them work with students who might be in need of services (Jobs for the Future, 2004).

Scorecard 3

Core Measure Descriptors

Core Measure 12

Training provider provides evidence of student policies that identify the rights, grievance process, and standards of respect.

Overview

An important goal of adult training programs is to create a productive climate for learning. For adults, learning experiences are enhanced when they are active participants in the instructional process and have input into aspects of institutional procedures. For many LEP customers, their language as well as factors such as low formal education and cultural norms, inhibit their ability to voice suggestions or concerns and advocate in their own behalf.

In addition to the physical and programmatic dimensions of adult learning environments that were discussed in Core Measures 10 and 11, Workforce Boards should review the extent to which training providers have transparent procedures through which students can make program improvement suggestions and, when necessary, file grievances.

Workforce Boards should look for policies that:

- ◆ signal that students are a primary customer;
- ◆ outline a transparent process for including student feedback in continuous program improvement;
- ◆ ensure students are apprised of their rights and understand the training provider's grievance process;
- ◆ include processes that ensure students understand all relevant aspects of training operations; and
- ◆ identify the individuals students can turn to for assistance in different areas, such as a campus ombudsman.

Policies and procedures like these serve to support adult learning as well as to help stave off challenges before they become serious problems. In short, they promote successful student participation by providing a healthy and respectful learning environment.

Critical Aspects

Ensure Notification of Legal Rights – WIA-funded programs must provide a process for dealing with grievances and complaints. Workforce Boards should review the extent to which training providers have clear-cut processes for resolving complaints as well as addressing student concerns. Additionally, training providers should have policies that address civil rights violations under WIA Section 188. These complaints must be referred to DOL's Civil Rights Center (WIA Final Rule, 1988).

Review Student Involvement in Program – Education research pioneer Malcolm Knowles identified a cooperative learning climate as well as how students are involved in mutual instructional planning as critical aspects of effective education programs for adults (Knowles, 1970). Workforce Boards should review the extent to which both the operational procedures and curriculum of training providers allow students to provide input to ensure learning is customized to meet their educational needs.

Ensure Comprehension of Procedures – LEP customers may not understand procedures designed to solicit their input and protect their rights because they have a limited ability to understand the language of these procedures.

Training providers must ensure that procedural information is written in clear and understandable language. Because many LEP participants have low literacy levels in their native language, bilingual print material still may not be fully understood. Bilingual staff can convey oral information to LEP customers who need this assistance.

Additionally, while U.S. culture promotes individual assertion, taking initiative, and "making your voice heard," these concepts may be perplexing for LEP customers coming from cultures where students are viewed as having a "lower status in the classroom" (Ziegahn, 2001). Such students may be less inclined to self-direct, provide input, question authority, or complain. Workforce Boards should review how training providers ensure that all customers can comfortably signal their needs.

Scorecard 3

Core Measure Descriptors

Core Measure 13

Training provider documents procedures for making Workforce Center support services and personnel accessible at training location.

Overview

LEP customers are best served through the collaboration of various stakeholders including Workforce Board and Workforce Center staff and training providers. These collaborations provide greater integration of services, sharing of resources, and, ultimately, support increased employment and training results for customers.

Promising practices identified through this project demonstrate the value of having Workforce Center staff, such as case managers, visit with customers at the training provider's facilities. Close contact between Workforce Center staff, instructors, and students promote various benefits:

- ◆ LEP customers can spend less time going to and from Workforce Centers for things like transportation vouchers and meetings with case managers, leaving more time for training.
- ◆ Workforce Center staff can get out of the office and get to know training providers and their services. Being at the training location also signals to customers that their training is important and that the case manager is taking extra steps to ensure that students are not pulled out of training needlessly.
- ◆ Training providers get more time for instruction with students and can gain special expertise or information from Workforce Center staff and can address potential case management issues on-site.

Training and job search requires flexibility, patience, and close communication. Workforce Boards should encourage training providers to develop multiple ways to ensure all stakeholders have avenues to communicate and be involved in the training program.

Critical Aspects

Provide Dedicated Space for Workforce Center Staff – Workforce Boards should encourage training providers to provide a dedicated work space in which Workforce Center staff can meet with customers at least once a week. On-site locations:

- ◆ support students during the learning process;
- ◆ assist students in connecting with necessary support services; and
- ◆ provide students with immediate LMI analysis on which businesses are hiring.

Identify Points of Contact – Workforce Center staff should have a specific point of contact within the training program with whom they can communicate regularly regarding participant progress and issues.

Address Challenges Immediately – When Workforce Center staff communicates frequently with training providers, they can more readily anticipate challenges that may arise for customers and proactively assist them with support services and guidance. For example, if an internship location changes unexpectedly, and customers face an immediate transportation challenge, Workforce Center staff familiar with the business partner providing internships can help address the challenge until a transportation solution is developed.

Meet Regularly – Promising practices include brown bag lunches or coffee and donuts meetings where Workforce Center staff and training providers can share information regarding the progress of customers or other relevant workforce and training issues.

Scorecard 4

Continuous Quality Improvement System and Return on Investment

Collectively, quality improvement systems drive continuous improvement. Because training providers are a critical component of Workforce Boards' organizational performance, they, too, should provide evidence of a quality improvement strategy. Workforce Boards that adopt quality improvement systems should consider the impact of outcomes on customers, operational procedures, and financial strategies.

Training providers are a critical component of Workforce Boards' organizational performance, they, too, should provide evidence of a quality improvement strategy.

Scorecard 4 addresses the need for Workforce Boards to evaluate accountability and continuous quality improvement systems used by training providers. The essential components of this measure include:

- ◆ use of employer and student feedback, including satisfaction surveys and other data; and
- ◆ a demonstrated track record of meeting or exceeding training performance standards and providing transparent and reasonable cost-per-trainee information.

Quality Improvement

Kaiser (2005) concluded that the overarching goal of quality systems such as TQM, ISO 9001, Six Sigma, Baldrige, Kaizen, and Lean Manufacturing are to create cultures of excellence based on the ability of organizations to measure and improve performance.

Because employment is the key goal of work-based ESL training programs, performance measures should reflect the effectiveness of the program in assisting participants with gaining full-time employment.

At a minimum, there are two primary evaluation variables that should be embedded in work-based ESL training programs:

- ◆ Because employers and participants are customers of the workforce system, training providers should solicit satisfaction data from these groups.
- ◆ Because employment is the key goal of work-based ESL training programs, performance measures should reflect the effectiveness of the program in assisting participants with gaining full-time employment.

Workforce Boards should look for program evaluation strategies that are ongoing processes used by training providers to monitor progress toward meeting specific employment-related outcomes. Training providers should have transparent processes that guide program improvement corrective actions that program administrators, instructors, and staff can take.

Return on Investment

Workforce Board evaluation procedures often include some form of return-on-investment methodology. Many Workforce Boards will measure this by adherence to their strategic goals and objectives.

An analysis of the training system in Texas demonstrates that adequate capacity to meet the needs of the LEP workforce does not currently exist.

LEP customers will be an ever-growing population in the Texas workforce and effective training and placement is critical to Workforce Boards' performance. An analysis of the training system in Texas demonstrates that adequate capacity to meet the needs of the LEP workforce does not currently exist. Therefore, Workforce Boards may need to make the upfront investment necessary to build adequate training infrastructures including close communication with training providers to share business needs, new course approvals in the Eligible Training Provider System, and investments in curriculum development.

Building capacity to serve LEP customers can result in additional costs when compared to less-expensive training for English speakers.

Building capacity to serve LEP customers can result in additional costs when compared to less-expensive training for English speakers. Yet, the return on this investment is not only worthwhile but necessary: This is a growing segment of the future workforce of Texas and, more and more, Workforce Board performance will be tied to the ability of training providers to effectively train LEP customers.

Quality training for LEP customers will go a long way in securing Texas' ability to successfully train our growing workforce and allow us to remain economically competitive in the years to come.

Work-Based ESL Training Scorecard				
Scorecard 4: Continuous Quality Improvement System and Return on Investment				
Core Measure	Description	Weight	Score	Total Score
		3 = Exceeds; 2 = Meets; 1 = Unacceptable		
14	Training provider uses employer and student surveys or data for program improvement.			
15	Training provider documents having met or exceeded performance in previous training contracts and is evaluated on cost-per-placement and return-on-investment variables.			
Notes				Total Score

Scorecard 4
Core Measure Descriptors

Core Measure 14
Training provider uses employer and student surveys or data for program improvement.

Overview

LEP workers and employers are the primary customers of training programs. Survey data from these groups is necessary to ensure accountability, improve instructional effectiveness, and support continuous improvement.

Surveys can document the quality of training and determine the effectiveness of the curriculum. They can also be designed to provide broad-based information critical to matching LEP customers with business requirements.

Workforce Boards should look for evidence that training providers use survey data to support and improve training programs for LEP customers including student and employer satisfaction and other surveys that gather outcomes related to job placement, wages, long-term job retention, and continued training or certification.

Critical Aspects

“Customer” Service Surveys – Employers and students are the primary customers of training providers. Workforce Boards should evaluate the extent to which surveys used by training providers determine if work-based ESL training programs are effective in preparing students for work and meeting business needs. Survey questions may include questions on the effectiveness of the program to meet the job requirements expected by businesses, responsiveness to student or business partner needs, and other customer service indicators.

Workforce Board Surveys – Customer surveys provide evidence that the training provider has met the satisfaction standards established by the Workforce Board. Work-based ESL programs should be held to the same performance accountability standards and reporting requirements as other program providers.

Content Alignment Surveys – Training providers should use employer surveys to align or realign curriculum competencies and learning objectives to meet changing business needs or industry standards. Work-based ESL training should have processes for monitoring changing language requirements and specific workplace jargon and vocabulary because they are usually moving targets. Training providers should describe how employer survey data is continually used to enhance program curriculum.

Scorecard 4

Core Measure Descriptors

Core Measure 15

Training provider documents having met or exceeded performance in previous training contracts and is evaluated on cost-per-placement and return-on-investment variables.

Overview

Most Workforce Boards measure past demonstrated effectiveness during the RFP evaluation process to ensure that job training providers have a proven record of instructional effectiveness and accountability. Cost-per-training and placement variables should also factor in the Workforce Board's review of training providers.

Many Workforce Boards require that proposers provide historical data regarding performance relative to the local WIA performance measures. While traditional stand-alone ESL programs are usually not evaluated against employment-related outcomes, these WIA performance standards should apply for work-based ESL training programs because the programs are designed for the specific purpose of preparing LEP customers for employment.

Critical Aspects

Review Effectiveness – Like all other training programs, work-based ESL training programs should meet performance measures established by the Workforce Board.

Evaluate Alignment with High Growth, High-Demand Occupations – Training providers should demonstrate reliance on accurate LMI studies regarding industry growth so LEP customers can be placed in high-growth, high-demand jobs for which they are trained.

Reevaluate Costs vs. English Language Courses – Workforce Board review should include a return-on-investment review that aligns training costs against performance measures set forth in the Workforce Board's strategic plan. Because work-based ESL training programs include a wide variety of unique elements, costs for these training programs may be higher than the costs for traditional training in English. Well-trained instructors who are also bilingual, Spanish-language occupational instructors, and ESL instructors who understand training and business needs all have unique skill sets. Additionally, these programs will have intricate curriculum designs that integrate all of the objectives of standard English occupational training courses with an intensive VESL component.

For these reasons, a one-to-one comparison of cost between English language courses and those of LEP customers is not advised.

Scorecard 5

Comprehensive Assessment

Comprehensive assessment approaches play an instrumental part in effective work-based ESL training programs. Because assessment generates metrics that document training program effectiveness, Workforce Boards should evaluate the quality and comprehensiveness of assessment approaches among training providers.

Workforce Boards can use Scorecard 5 to measure various aspects of assessment across four measures:

- ◆ Use of a multidimensional process that includes, but is not limited to, measuring English language skills, literacy, and occupational skills and interests
- ◆ Use of NRS-approved tests
- ◆ Processes that align training plans to IEP parameters
- ◆ Systems that gather information regarding dispositional or affective barriers as well as learning needs.

In training programs, assessment serves multiple functions. First, assessment scores are used for academic diagnostics to determine placement in courses and programs, serving as a blueprint to guide participants toward the attainment of personal goals. Second, assessments are incorporated into instructional design to measure student progress. Finally, assessments serve as an accountability or effectiveness indicator to evaluate and report program success.

Scorecard 5 will assist Workforce Boards in determining if the training providers have a well-defined approach to assessing LEP customers so that assessment adequately informs both training and employment outcomes.

Work-Based ESL Training Scorecard Scorecard 5: Comprehensive Assessment				
Core Measure	Description	Weight	Score	Total Score
		3 = Exceeds; 2 = Meets; 1 = Unacceptable		
16	Training provider documents use of a multidimensional assessment process to determine the interests, skills, and abilities of LEP customers including, but not limited to, assessment of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ literacy, language, and numeracy in English and Spanish; and ◆ career aptitude, occupational skills, and interests. 			
17	Training provider uses National Reporting System (NRS)–endorsed assessment instruments to assess participants’ English language and basic skills.			
18	Training provider identifies assessment process that aligns the skills and abilities of customers to academic and occupational training plans that ensure completion in the time allotted by the Individual Employment Plan (IEP) or other parameters.			
19	Training provider has systems in place to identify dispositional and affective barriers as well as learning needs.			
20	Training provider follows required test administration procedures as outlined by the test publisher.			
Notes				Total Score

Scorecard 5

Core Measure Descriptors

Core Measure 16

Training provider documents use of a multidimensional assessment process to determine the interests, skills, and abilities of LEP customers including, but not limited to, assessment of:

1. literacy, language, and numeracy in English and Spanish; and
2. career aptitude, occupational skills, and interests.

Overview

An important objective of assessment in workforce development programs is to help participants set realistic employment goals and establish service plans and related timelines. Assessment results should be used to determine if LEP customers require intensive services, basic skills development, or job training. Unfortunately, no single assessment instrument is capable of providing workforce professionals with this information. A multidimensional assessment process is required, and Workforce Boards should determine the extent to which training providers are prepared to offer LEP customers assessment in the three areas listed to the right.

Performance Portfolios

A performance portfolio can be used to organize elements of a multidimensional assessment process. This portfolio may contain work samples, instructor observations, performance verification assessments, and test scores. To provide test results with a real-world context, scores can be aligned against performance descriptors, such as the NRS educational functioning level descriptors.

This collection can highlight demonstrated attainment of relevant competencies or skill sets in a way that test scores alone cannot. Moreover, instructors and customers can engage in ongoing feedback to develop the portfolio and to discuss progress.

Résumés and other job application materials can be included to create a collection that aligns instructional accomplishments with job search. Because of their comprehensiveness, portfolios are a “valuable tool to for gauging in-depth learning relative to a wide range of standards.” (Ananda, 2000).

Critical Aspects

Language, Literacy, and Numeracy in English–

Tests in these areas measure all or some of the following abilities: speaking and listening, reading, writing, and numeracy. Workforce Boards should encourage training providers to use tests that are approved by NRS (refer to Core Measure 17 for more information).

Language, Literacy, and Numeracy in Spanish–

It is sometimes assumed that if an individual speaks Spanish that they have corresponding reading and writing skills in Spanish. Very often, Spanish-speaking customers have very limited academic preparation and thus weak reading and writing skills in Spanish. This can make placement in Spanish-language training courses a challenge if the courses require extensive reading. Training providers should use Spanish-language tests to determine the academic preparation customers have in Spanish. Training providers can use this information to determine appropriate placement in training courses. In addition, customers who score high on Spanish-language assessments can often progress more quickly in ESL courses because they have a strong academic foundation in their native language. These individuals are good candidates for fast-track ESL courses and Spanish-language GED courses.

Career Aptitude, Vocational Skills, and Interests–

Tests in these areas typically assess skills and abilities and inform LEP customers about career opportunities and related educational requirements. Because the native language reading skills of LEP customers can vary greatly, Workforce Boards should ensure that assessment instruments used by training providers are appropriate for LEP participants with low literacy levels in Spanish.

Scorecard 5
Core Measure Descriptors

Core Measure 17
Training provider uses NRS-endorsed assessment instruments to assess participants' English language and basic skills.

Overview

NRS establishes a national system of accountability for the federally funded programs providing basic skills training under the Common Measures.

The NRS provides criteria that training providers can use to establish baseline Educational Functioning Levels (EFL) and measure the educational gain of participants. Each EFL level describes a set of skills and competencies that reflect student performance and abilities in the areas of reading, writing, numeracy, speaking, and listening.

The use of NRS-approved tests is encouraged because NRS assessment instruments are subject to rigorous testing and public accountability standards. In addition, TEA-funded adult education programs are required to use NRS-approved tests making portability of test scores between Workforce Center contractors and adult education providers possible, thus reducing unnecessary (and costly) duplication of assessment. Of the four NRS-approved tests for ESL, TEA has designated two for use in adult education programs statewide.

Critical Aspects

Table 5 provides a list of both the NRS-approved assessments for measuring language and literacy in English and those tests required by TEA adult education programs. If data sharing between Workforce Boards, TEA-funded adult education programs, and training providers is a consideration, Workforce Boards and Workforce Centers should consider requiring training providers to use the TEA-approved tests. A full analysis and description of each test is available in Module 4. More information on NRS can be found at www.nrsweb.org.

Table 5
NRS- and TEA- Approved Tests

	NRS-Approved Tests	TEA-Approved Tests
English as a Second Language (ESL)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ CASAS ◆ BEST ◆ Oral BEST ◆ BEST Literacy ◆ BEST Plus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ BEST Plus ◆ Best Literacy

Scorecard 5

Core Measure Descriptors

Core Measure 18

Training provider identifies assessment process that aligns the skills and abilities of customers to academic and occupational training plans that ensure completion in the time allotted by IEP or other parameters.

Overview

When LEP customers are not adequately assessed, they often are unable to complete training in the time stipulated in their IEP because the training plan was not built on accurate data related to the customer's skills and abilities. Because basic skills tests like TABE are not closely aligned with job or training requirements, they cannot be used as a sole indicator for placement in training programs.

Training providers should document how multiple sources of assessment data are used to inform placement in training programs that are designed to ensure completion in the time permitted in the customer's IEP.

For Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Workers

Enrolling LEP workers in any form of stand-alone remedial education (including without limitation English as a Second Language, General Educational Development, Adult Basic Education, and basic computer skills courses) must be avoided unless:

- ◆ assessment indicates that the worker only needs remedial education, and no vocational skills, to become job ready in an appropriate demand or target occupation; or
- ◆ the stand-alone remedial education is of limited duration and approved in conjunction with dual-language or standard vocational training, and the case manager reasonably expects the worker to complete both the remedial and vocational parts and be job ready within the time allowed under TAA.

Texas Workforce Commission, 2006b

Critical Aspects

Resist One-Size-Fits-All Approaches— LEP customers have a wide variety of skills and abilities in English and their native language. Workforce Boards should insist that training providers have training options that recognize these variations and have assessment protocols that ensure proper placement. Some LEP customers may have very strong skills and even postsecondary credentials in their native language. Others may have similar skills in English but very limited skills in their native language. Training providers should capture these variations in the assessment process to ensure proper student placement in training options that will better ensure LEP customers can complete training.

Avoid Stand-Alone ESL Programs – Students with limited English proficiency who function at lower literacy levels often do not complete the traditional sequence of stand-alone ESL courses and English language training. Therefore, Workforce Boards should encourage the development of IEPs and occupational and academic plans that include training in the work-based ESL training models described in this module. These models are designed around the employment needs of LEP populations and participants who have a higher likelihood of completing training within the allowable time limits.

Monitor Customer Progress Continually – In addition to aligning customer assessment with the development of an IEP and occupational training plan, it is essential that Workforce Boards and Workforce Centers collect and use midterm assessment data to closely monitor the progress of LEP customers throughout the training to ensure adequate progress is being made and to retain sufficient time for job placement.

Scorecard 5
Core Measure Descriptors

Core Measure 19
Training provider has systems in place to identify dispositional and affective barriers as well as learning needs.

Overview

Dispositional and affective barriers such as low self-esteem, fear of school, lack of interest and commitment, and unclear academic goals are more common among nontraditional populations in training programs (Green, 1998). LEP customers, especially those who have lost their jobs due to trade dislocations, may be at higher risk for exhibiting dispositional and affective barriers especially if they have limited formal education or evidence of prior poor academic performance.

In addition, some customers may have unidentified disabilities that impact learning or attention. Unlike most physical disabilities, these disabilities, such as learning disabilities, are “hidden” disabilities and can be interpreted as low intelligence, poor motivation, mental health problems, or substance abuse.

Because learning disabilities are less well understood and harder to screen for in LEP populations, these barriers are almost always unidentified. Dispositional, affective, and learning barriers can greatly reduce success rates in training programs. Workforce Boards should review the comprehensives of screening and counseling services training providers make available to LEP customers to address these barriers.

Adults with these barriers may be perceived as difficult work with or detached from the program. Such behavior can be a sign of individuals’ lack of confidence in their ability to learn or the belief that they will ultimately fail. Green (1998) further found that the use of structured strategic communications and support systems improved engagement and completion rates.

Critical Aspects

Identify Sufficient Support Services – A common theme expressed in this guide is the need to ensure that LEP programs have good communication systems between the instructional and support services components to ensure that customer needs, including screening for dispositional and learning needs, can be identified and addressed.

Review Appropriateness of Service Provider – LEP customers should have access to counseling and support services and these services should be provided by bilingual staff to ensure that language does not inhibit the delivery of service and assistance.

Review Availability of Learning Needs Screening – Learning needs screening tools for languages other than English are very limited. Research on identifying learning needs, including learning disabilities in LEP populations, has revealed this to be a complex topic with no simple solutions (Schwarz, n.d.). Nonetheless, training providers should have an awareness of how to identify customers who may need additional testing services to identify barriers to learning. (Module 4 provides more information on identifying learning needs for LEP individuals.)

Develop Effective Communication Protocols – LEP instructional programs should provide customers with easy access to Workforce Center staff and services. Workforce Boards should review the extent to which training providers develop procedures for ensuring clear communication with Workforce Center staff to avoid delay in addressing dispositional, affective, and learning barriers that may hinder customer progress in training or the transition to work. (See Core Measure 13 for additional guidance.)

Scorecard 5

Core Measure Descriptors

Core Measure 20

Training provider follows required test administration procedures as outlined by the test publisher.

Overview

Testing is a science and Workforce Boards should ensure that training providers treat assessment of LEP customers as such. For the results of standardized tests to be valid and reliable, the test must be administered under standard conditions (Sticht, 1999). Workforce Boards should evaluate the thoroughness, quality, and security of testing procedures established by training providers to ensure that test administration provides accurate customer placement and valid measures of ability and progress.

If initial assessment procedures are careless or unstructured, the reliability of test results is compromised. This can result in inaccurate placement or mismatches between the actual abilities of customers and the requirements of employers wishing to hire them. In some cases, poor test administration can raise Equal Employment Opportunity challenges or accessibility concerns for individuals with disabilities.

Adult education providers rely on student progress assessment as a primary performance accountability measure, and thus these providers often have a considerable amount of expertise assessing LEP customers. Many training providers have less experience working with LEP customers and thus have less expertise assessing them. Workforce Boards may want to consider convening an assessment task force of all parties who provide assessment to LEP customers. This group can work to establish common assessment protocols, establish data-sharing agreements, and share assessment expertise.

Workforce Boards can modify the Assessment Administration Standards Checklist on the next page to use as a review tool for evaluating the quality of training provider assessment procedures. The checklist can also be modified to evaluate the testing procedures of Workforce Center contractors.

Critical Aspects

Review Adherence to Protocols for Published Tests – Workforce Boards should ensure that Workforce Center staff is properly trained and follows the administration procedures stipulated in the technical or administration manual of each test. Translating test items, providing extra time, or otherwise not adhering to test administration standards jeopardizes the reliability of the test results and could expose the training providers or the Workforce Board to legal challenges.

Review Staff Qualifications – Most tests require examiners to be trained, and often, to be certified to administer tests. Workforce Boards should review the qualifications of testing staff.

Review Test Security and Privacy – All testing materials, manuals, and answer sheets must be kept in a locked area, available only to staff involved in test administration. Additionally, all testing results should be secure, as these are private records.

Review Disability Accommodation Procedures – Workforce Boards must ensure that training providers have adequate resources and procedures to provide appropriate testing for customers with various disabilities. All tests reviewed in Module 4 of this guide have either some form of alternative format or alternate administration procedures to accommodate customers with different disabilities. The How to Begin section of Module 4 provides additional guidance on ensuring that customers with disabilities receive appropriate testing services.

Training providers should also have a designated testing area for customers with disabilities who have specific lighting, space, or sound needs, or individual administrators to accommodate their disabilities.

Assessment Administration Standards Checklist Adapted from: Assessment Policy and Guidelines (2006). Maryland Literacy Works	
Test Security	✓
All test materials, including test booklets, answer sheets, test manuals, and related materials, are kept in locked storage, available only to those involved in test administration.	
A system is in place to distribute and collect test materials for testing. Numbering of test booklets should be part of the system under most circumstances.	
Test administrators are responsible for the security of all test materials in their possession.	
All test booklets are periodically reviewed for condition. Those that are marked, torn, well worn, etc., are discarded and replaced.	
Test Selection	
An internal review process documents the rationale for test selection.	
Selected tests measure language, literacy, and numeracy in English and skills in native language.	
Selected tests assess occupational interests and skills for LEP customers.	
Alternative versions of tests are selected to accommodate customers with disabilities.	
Test Training	
All staff who administers a specific test receives initial and updated training on how to administer the test.	
All staff who administers a specific test receives training on how to score it.	
All staff who administers a specific test has the test training dates recorded.	
All staff who administers a specific test is trained on how to provide test-taking accommodations and/or specific assistive technology in accordance with test-publisher guidance.	
Test Preparation	
The test administrator has a copy of the test's current test administration manual and follows the test publisher's written instructions for administering the test.	
The test administrator regularly consults the test publishers to check for modifications in test information.	
All test materials (booklets, answer sheets, etc.) and supplies are assembled.	
A clock or watch is available for the test administrator/proctor.	
An overhead projector is provided if a transparency of the answer sheet will be used for demonstration.	
Test Administration	
The test administrator provides step-by-step verbal instructions to the customers, following the procedures in the test administration manual.	
Customers are administered a placement, locator, or appraisal test to determine the appropriate test to be administered.	
A quiet, comfortable testing location with adequate space for each customer is provided.	
The testing location is not in the same room where instruction is taking place.	
If more than eight learners are testing, at least one proctor should assist the test administrator.	

Appendix A: Work-Based ESL Models and Program Approaches

Scorecard 2, Instructional Design, assists Workforce Boards in evaluating work-based ESL training programs that aim to train LEP customers with the specific language vocabulary and competencies needed to attain or advance in employment.

This Appendix provides Workforce Boards with additional information that can be used to evaluate local training services for LEP customers, including information on the following:

- ◆ Traditional, sequential ESL models
- ◆ Vocational English as a Second Language (VESL)
- ◆ Spanish GED preparation
- ◆ Work readiness skills
- ◆ Bridge training models
- ◆ Concurrent bilingual models

No One-Size-Fits-All Models

Several research-based models exist to address specific workforce needs. No one model is necessarily better than the other, and when implemented, every program should be customized to meet the needs of the business environment, labor market, and LEP customer. In addition to language, academic, and occupational skills, job internships and support services are critical components that should be present in each work-based ESL training model.

Different work-based ESL training models will be more effective at meeting the different needs of workers than others. For example, LEP workers who are highly skilled in a trade may require only an occupation-specific VESL class. A dislocated worker who has LEP and lacks transferable occupational skills for reemployment would require training in a model that delivers both English and occupational instruction.

The work-based ESL programs models featured in this manual augment occupational training with combinations of VESL, Spanish GED preparation, and work readiness skills training. Each of these curriculum components is discussed in more detail below.

Work-Based ESL Training Models	
Bridge Models (CAEL, 2006)	Concurrent Bilingual Model (Huerta-Macias, 2003; Taggart and Martinez, 2003)

Workforce Boards can use the models presented below to gauge the extent to which local training and adult education providers have aligned their programs with research-based approaches to address the various needs of LEP customers.

Texas-based examples are provided for each model to document each research-based model in real-life practice.

A Word about Traditional ESL Models

The traditional, or stand-alone, sequential ESL program is the most prevalent instructional model in Texas. The model allows students to start at any level in a linear continuum, at their own pace, until they can meet the academic standards needed to enroll in ABE, GED preparation, higher education, or job training programs.

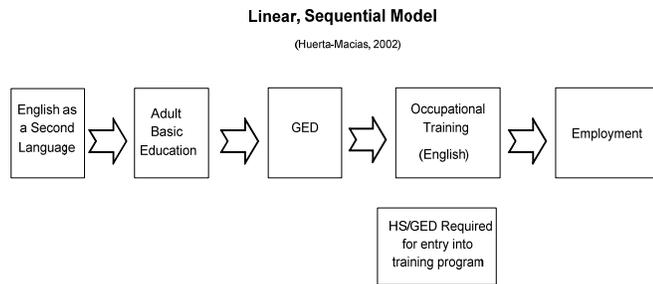
When working with LEP customers who have employment goals, Workforce Center staff often make referrals to traditional ESL classes either because they are offered at no cost or because it is the only instructional option available. While no-cost ESL classes may be financially attractive, Workforce Boards and Workforce Center staff, as well as contractors should consider the potential trade-offs of referring customers to these programs.

Upper Rio Grande Workforce Board Expressed a Need for More Work-Based ESL and VESL Programs

“The driving forces in English as a Second Language (ESL), basic skills, and GED are stand-alone activities followed by occupation (vocational) training. However, the linear approach does not meet the need of many LEP individuals who may need to enter/reenter the workforce as quickly as possible...”

Upper Rio Grande 2007-08
Workforce Plan

Because of the extended linear sequence, LEP customers languish in the sequence of ESL courses “without making enough progress to move on to occupational training...” [Government Accounting Office (GAO), 2001]. Most students either run out of time in time-limited training programs (Huerta-Macias, 2002) or leave ESL programs for other reasons. In a recent study of *exemplary* ESL programs, between 33 percent and 37 percent of students in these ESL classes failed to reenroll beyond one term (Chisman and Crandall, 2007).



Most TEA-funded ESL programs use this model for ESL instruction. As such, these programs are available throughout Texas and benefit from having significant instructional and professional development resources. However, because these programs lack a direct connection to training or work, they are not considered work-based ESL models.

VESL Courses

Vocational English as a Second Language—or VESL—courses focus on employment-related content. VESL classes form the English language portion of each of the work-based ESL training models featured in this module.

VESL courses can take a wide variety of approaches, from employer-based courses that last only a few hours or days and address very specific purposes, to longer-term courses that augment occupational training courses or employment transition.

VESL programs develop curriculum competencies based on a language task analysis process that focuses on the language skills needed for specific occupations. (Core Measure 6 provides more information on language task analysis.) This analysis identifies the reading, writing, listening, speaking, and numeracy competencies required for training on the job as well as how workers must *apply* these skills on the job.

Though rare in publicly funded adult education programs, VESL course options are often attractive to LEP customers because they “often believe that traditional educational pathways are too long for them to follow” (CAEL, 2006).

Spanish GED Preparation

Work-based ESL models in Texas often incorporate Spanish GED coursework in their course design. Workforce Boards like Upper Rio Grande have relied on these programs to provide LEP customers with much-needed access to this important credential. Students enrolled in Spanish GED courses sometimes enroll concurrently in VESL courses or enroll upon completion of the GED coursework.

The Spanish GED coursework prepares students to pass the nationally normed GED exam in Spanish. The Spanish GED course is similar to the English version but is based on the Spanish language, culture, and social norms of Latin American countries (Cotton and Cantu-Luja, 1998). The official transcript for the Spanish GED credential is the same as that for the English version.

For some, the Spanish GED coursework may not seem to be a logical choice in programs designed to increase the English skills of LEP customers, but there are multiple reasons why the Spanish GED courses make sense for LEP customers. These courses:

- ◆ develop the critical thinking skills valued by employers;
- ◆ prepare workers for a high school equivalency credential required for certain jobs and for certifications (such as the Certified Nursing Assistants in most states) (CAEL, 2006);
- ◆ provide a credential generally sufficient to gain admission into college and obtain financial aid; and
- ◆ show lower-level LEP customers that they possess academic skills, often providing the moral boost needed to take on the challenges of learning English.

In addition, Spanish GED coursework allows trainees, especially those who have been out of a classroom envi-

Benefits of the Spanish GED

LEP customers “who pass the Spanish GED subsequently enroll in ESL courses...may be able to make more rapid progress than they would otherwise. And if they seek to make the transition to postsecondary education, they will be prepared with the other skills (particularly math) that the GED tests.”

CAEL, 2006

ronment for 5, 10, or even 20 years, to re-acclimate to a learning environment and develop academic and study skills in their native language. This can prove to be a valuable foundation for learning English and can help customers develop reading and writing skills in English more quickly (CAEL, 2006).

The Alamo and Upper Rio Grande Workforce Boards have funded Spanish GED programs that enabled LEP dislocated workers to mainstream into community college and career school programs. For many LEP participants, the goal of acquiring a Spanish GED credential may be the most appropriate recommendation as it increases both employment and educational options.

While the Spanish GED credential presents many benefits to LEP participants, there are challenges with Spanish GED services. Because the market for the Spanish GED credential is limited (compared to the market for the GED credential in English), there are limited adult-oriented curriculum materials for GED preparation (Strucker, 1997).

Another challenge is related to funding to support Spanish GED programs. Neither the Trade Act nor WIA Title I prohibit the use of these funds to allow customers to take GED coursework in Spanish. However, the same is not true for adult education programs funded under WIA Title II in Texas. Although WIA Title II does not specifically prohibit foreign language instruction in adult education programs, Texas Learns, the contractor that administers the state adult education program in Texas for TEA, has forbidden instruction in Spanish, including Spanish GED coursework (Texas Learns, 2004). This greatly limits the availability of these classes in Texas and creates challenges for some Workforce Boards.

Though unsubstantiated by research undertaken for this project, some educators and workforce professionals believe that employers will not accept the GED credential in Spanish. What is known is that employers value critical-thinking skills and English fluency. VESL and Spanish GED options help LEP customers develop both of these skills. TWC has long operated under the premise that Workforce Boards know whether or not employers will accept the GED in Spanish.

Spanish GED Strengths

- ◆ Local employers often require a high school diploma or GED credential as a condition of employment.
- ◆ Some LEP customers opt for the Spanish GED because the time it takes to prepare for the test in their native language is shorter than for the English GED.
- ◆ The Spanish GED increases the employability of LEP participants because many employers use the GED as a proxy for critical thinking and basic skills ability.

Limitations

- ◆ The Spanish GED is not appropriate for LEP populations with lower literacy levels in their native language.
- ◆ The Spanish GED is not available in all communities.

Work Readiness Skills

Work readiness are a critical component to the curriculum of any work-based ESL program. In Texas, businesses rank these skills “such as teamwork, problem-solving ability, and dependability” first in the list of skills “they felt were most important for an entry-level employee” ahead of technical or job-specific, academic and customer services skills (TWIC, 2006).

Workforce professionals often consider résumés, cover letters, and practice on completing job applications as work readiness skills, but they are not. For LEP customers, these are *literacy* activities first because they involve complex writing for a specific purpose.

“The Right Stuff” for Today’s Worker		
Plays well with others	Self-motivate	Self-educate
1 Good collaborator 2 Gives and receives direction 3 Values customer	1 Passion for work 2 Takes responsibility 3 Adapter 4 Synthesizer	1 Curious 2 Learn how to learn 3 Problem solve 4 Create solutions

Friedman, T. (2006). *The World Is Flat, (updated and revised)*

Businesses understand work readiness skills on a continuum, from the basics of appearance, showing up to work on time, working while you are there, and taking direction from supervisors, to more complex, often subtle, competencies such as commitment to serve a team, taking responsibility, and a drive to learn.

Because they are largely behavioral in nature, representing competences that individuals learn over long periods of time from parents, teachers, and at work, these skills often cannot be easily learned through lecture or by reading about them. They must be developed through modeling and practice.

Workforce Boards should ensure that work-based ESL training programs incorporate employability skills preparation *throughout* the course, rather than as a unit at the end of an ESL or training class. Instructional designs should indicate how employability skills are modeled and practiced in class. Simple strategies include establishing ground rules and classroom policy that reflect employer

expectations of behavior. Visiting worksites and explicitly pointing out examples of these skills in action is another strategy programs can use.

Learning labs and occupational training courses present multiple opportunities to develop employability skills. When reviewing courses, Workforce Boards should look for instructional examples that include project-based learning and hands-on activities that build skills such as taking responsibility, time management, team building, collaboration, taking and giving direction, adapting, and problem solving toward solutions.

Work Readiness Certificates

An idea growing in popularity and application among employers and workforce professionals alike is the concept of work readiness certification.

Employers, many of whom have long complained that job seekers lack even the basic academic and employability skills needed for entry-level work, desire some form of certificate or credential that signals job seekers have a certain level of readiness for work.

Jobs for the Future has reviewed four of the leading work readiness certification systems (Norma, C., Rey-Alicea, N. & Scott, G., 2007). Such credentials may serve positively to highlight certain skills and abilities LEP customers exhibit that may not show up in more traditional academic indicators of achievement like ESL test scores or a GED credential. Workforce Boards may review the findings of this research to consider the extent to which such certification would be beneficial to businesses in their area and for LEP customers.

Bridge Models

Purpose

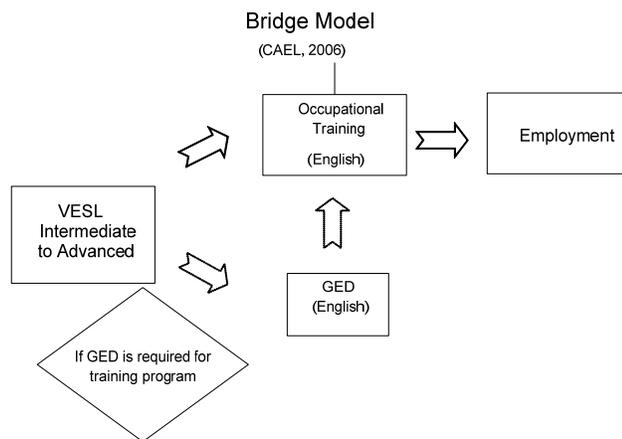
Bridge models deliver curriculum “based on the competencies needed to succeed in a particular postsecondary training program and/or in jobs that lead to career advancement” (CAEL, 2006).

Bridge models take various forms but most can be cate-

gorized as either Bridge-to-Training models or Bridge-to-Work models. Bridge-to-Training models provide VESL curriculum designed to prepare LEP customers to enter occupational training. Bridge-to-Work models are designed to provide the English skills needed to move directly into work.

Intended Populations

Bridge-to-Training models are usually designed for intermediate to advanced ESL students who require occupation-specific language development to enter English language degree or certificate training programs (CAEL, 2006). Bridge-to-Work models are usually designed for beginning level students with immediate entry-level (and often low-wage) employment goals.



Description: Bridge-to-Training Model

The Bridge-to-Training model provides LEP customers with the English skills needed to transition into English language occupational courses. Because training is in English, this model is easier for programs to implement because they do not require the use of hard-to-find occupational instructors who are skilled in facilitating bilingual instruction, like those required for bilingual models. Similarly, mainstreaming LEP customers into standard English language classes reduces the perceptions that trainees are in a “special course.”

Bridge-to-Training models have been designed in a variety of different occupational areas, including machine operator, welding, certified nursing assistance, office skills, computer technology, medical records, construc-

tion, and dental assistant.

Bridge-to-Training models sometimes modularize or “chunk” training components into smaller sections rather than require customers to commit to full-time, all day training. This also allows trainees to work while making progress toward a credential (CAEL, 2006).

VESL curriculum in this model must be specifically customized to teach the language and literacy skills required for successful entry into occupational training. This curriculum may also require math skills development. Customers with lower levels of English ability may require multiple VESL classes. GED preparation in English or Spanish may be required for training programs that require a GED credential or high school diploma for entry.

As with other work-based ESL training models, training internships and comprehensive support services increase transfer of learning, trainee persistence, and likelihood of employment.

Texas Project: St. Philip’s College - Southwest Campus

St. Philip’s College - Southwest Campus is a workforce specialty campus of the Alamo Community College District. During 2003-2005 almost 200 Levi Strauss displaced workers participated in one of several VESL programs in Electrical Trades, Office Skills, Homebuilding, Plumbing, Welding, and Auto Collision Repair. Each program connected to the college business advisory committee to validate the language and occupational competencies of the program curriculum. In addition, Southwest Campus assigned student service staff to support the instructional function.

The VESL programs teamed college bilingual vocational faculty and work-based literacy instructors to deliver concurrent VESL programs. Approximately 90 percent of the Levi’s® dislocated workers completed Workforce and Marketable Skills Certificates. Almost 85 percent of completers looking for work were employed within 90 days of completing their VESL program of studies.

Bridge Model Strengths

- ◆ Models reflect significant employer input.
- ◆ Models can be aligned to career paths or cluster industries.
- ◆ Models have high retention rates.
- ◆ Model provides a short-term option for employment.
- ◆ Model can be implemented in institutions that do not have occupational training programs, like public independent school districts.

Description: Bridge-to-Work Model

This model provides LEP customers with the English skills needed to transition directly into work in specific occupations (e.g., home health aide) or occupational clusters (e.g., health care). More general programs that focus on occupational clusters often appeal to customers with varied career interests or who need to immediately enter the workforce.

This model often stresses “survival level English and the vocational English and cultural orientation needed to get and keep an entry level job” (Gillespie, 1996). Because it lacks an occupational training component, this model often leads to low-wage work. Curriculum often includes ESL and job readiness to reinforce job placement outcomes.

Texas Project: Seguin Independent School District provides instruction in health care-related ESL, manufacturing-related ESL, and industry-based GED preparation at the Alamo Community College District’s Central Texas Technology Center in New Braunfels. Employer partners include Mission Pharmacal, Moll Industries, Chemical Lime, Kirkwood Manor, McKenna Hospital, and The Institute for Public Health and Education Research located in New Braunfels.

Concurrent Bilingual Model**Purpose**

This model provides LEP customers with immediate access to occupational training through native language training aligned with VESL and basic skills instruction.

Intended Populations

This model is best suited for LEP customers who need immediate access to training that leads to higher skilled employment options. It is also well suited for LEP customers who have higher literacy levels or credentials such as higher education degrees in their native language.

This model is the only work-based ESL training model

Bridge Model Disadvantages

- ◆ VESL curriculum may not be appropriate for customers with citizenship, GED, or family literacy goals.
- ◆ Lower level workers may require several VESL courses to transition into English language training.
- ◆ There is little off-the-shelf curriculum.
- ◆ Bridge-to-work models typically prepare LEP populations for low-wage, entry-level employment as helpers or assistants.
- ◆ Higher tuition and program costs than stand-alone or traditional ESL.
- ◆ Limited number of experienced instructors.
- ◆ Curriculum may be too short to show educational functioning level gains.

that allows lower level literacy students—regardless of their proficiency in English—to access vocational training without first having to attain a specific level of English language competency.

Description

The concurrent bilingual model is the most comprehensive training model for LEP customers. It is also the most complex model in its instructional design and implementation. The model emerged from the Bilingual Vocational Training program developed in the 1970s under the Carl Perkins Vocational Education Act. In Texas, this model has been successfully adapted in El Paso to address weak training infrastructure for Spanish-speaking displaced workers (GAO, 2001).

Common instructional elements of the model include:

- ◆ The stacking of occupational skills training, VESL and Spanish GED components
- ◆ The use of Spanish to teach higher-order cognitive skills
- ◆ VESL curriculum coordinated with the language and literacy skills needed for occupational training
- ◆ Work readiness components
- ◆ Training internships
- ◆ Comprehensive support services

The stacking of instructional elements requires a full day of coursework often with intensive VESL and GED classes in Spanish in the mornings and afternoon occupational skills training (GAO, 2001). The model has been proven with intermediate-level LEP customers (Huerta-Macias, 2002). Beginning-level customers may begin ESL and Spanish GED components before they tackle the additional load of occupational training (Huerta-Macias, 2002).

Businesses desire workers with critical thinking skills. Even though trainees may have limited English language skills, this model supports students' ability to engage and develop higher-order, critical thinking skills in their native language as they tackle more challenging occupa-

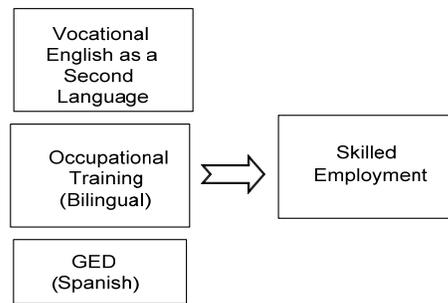
Concurrent Bilingual Model

Strengths

- ◆ Uses customer's native language to learn occupational skills.
- ◆ Accelerates attainment of curriculum competencies through the use of native language.
- ◆ Effective in communities with large numbers of LEP and immigrant workers who share a common native language.
- ◆ Development of higher-order cognitive skills through Spanish GED courses.
- ◆ Bilingual courses can lead to college credit or occupational certificate.
- ◆ Approved bilingual degree programs may be eligible for financial assistance.

tional and GED preparation coursework. This cognitive

Concurrent Bilingual Model
(Huerta-Macias, 2003, Taggart and Martinez, 2003)



foundation in the native language prepares trainees for the challenges of learning English. As the trainees become more fluent in English, instructors strategically increase the use of English in class (Huerta-Macias, in press).

Most concurrent bilingual programs in El Paso have fully bilingual, bicultural staff. This model uses bilingual instructional aids and materials, such as texts, in both Spanish and English. Because it is difficult to find instructors who can teach both English literacy and an occupational skill, most programs use different instructors for the ESL, GED preparation, and training sections. These instructional teams meet regularly to coordinate lesson plans and activities (Gillespie, 1996).

In El Paso, private career schools regulated by TWC have pioneered this model into their programs that include close business collaboration, carefully monitored internships, and various career tracks. Training in occupations that require a high school diploma or GED credential add a GED component to the curriculum. In El Paso, programs provide the Spanish GED component.

Texas Project

Anamarc Educational Institute, a private career school in El Paso, works with the Upper Rio Grande Workforce Board and local employers to help students with limited-English skills enter high-growth, high-demand occupations, such as a nursing assistant, through a cooperative program. Courses use bilingual instructors who work with students on workplace language and assist students by providing them with occupational training.

Concurrent Bilingual Model

Disadvantages

- ◆ Difficult to find experienced and effective bilingual instructors who have experience in adult bilingual methodology.
- ◆ Stigma associated with the misconception that participants do not want to learn English.
- ◆ Teacher training in adult bilingual methodology is almost nonexistent.
- ◆ Spanish or native language dominance may limit English literacy needed to succeed on the job.
- ◆ Misconception that because instructors are bilingual, they can teach bilingual courses.
- ◆ High tuition costs due to market demand, complex instructional design scarcity of qualified instructors.

Internships provide students with direct experience and a better understanding of the job requirements. The school's high student retention, employment, and certification rates underscore the ability of this program model to help customers succeed through intensive occupational training programs (National Association of State Workforce Board Chairs, 2007).

Sample Concurrent Bilingual Lesson Model

Source: Huerta-Macias, A.G. (2003). Meeting the challenge of adult education: A bilingual approach to literacy and career development. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 47(3), pp. 223-224. Reprinted with permission of the International Reading Association.

The following is an outline of a lesson for adults learning about plastic injection molding.

Introduction—The instructor begins by introducing the lesson to the students in the native language. A general description of what plastic injection molding entails is first provided. The discussion, for example, focuses on what plastic injection molding is, the types of products that are made with the molding process, the extent to which it is used in manufacturing in the United States, and the local demand for workers who are certified in plastic injection molding. This discussion is brief, as the more extensive dialogue on these topics comes in later lessons. The instructor next explains that the lesson for the day involves an initial overview of the operation of the molding machine. Some vocabulary in English relevant to the lesson (e.g., mold, temperature, eject, and pressure) is introduced during this part of the lesson using visuals, realia, or text.

The Lab—This part of the lesson involves a visit to the lab, where the students gather around the molding machine. English is used in this part of the lesson as the instructor describes the operation of the machine. The students observe, listen, and take notes during this time. The instructor occasionally walks to the chalkboard and writes the names of some of the parts of the machine or draws some of the internal mechanism using arrows to show direction of movement.

Reflection—The class returns to the classroom where the discussion on the basic parts and operation of the machine continues in English. On the chalkboard is a more detailed blueprint of the machine with all the parts labeled. The basic steps (e.g., checking the oil pressure,

closing the operator safety gate, selecting the mode of operation, injecting the plastic, and cooling) are reviewed as the instructor poses questions to the students and they respond in English. As a comprehension check, the students are asked to list the basic steps on the board and to label some of the external moving parts on a chart that shows a large photograph of the machine.

Technology Integration—Technology might be integrated at this point for the purpose of taking digital pictures of different parts of the machine, printing them, attaching labels to the pictures, and compiling them for study at home. The instructions on this part of the lesson would be most effective in the native language. Use of that language would ensure comprehension of this integration of technology with the lesson and would allow the process to proceed rapidly and efficiently.

Recap—At the end of the lesson, the instructor would have a general question-and-answer period. This could be done in the native language or bilingually, depending on the students' proficiency. Questions could also be fielded in the native language and answered in English. The lesson would close with some brief statements in the native language on the home assignment and on the agenda for the following lesson.

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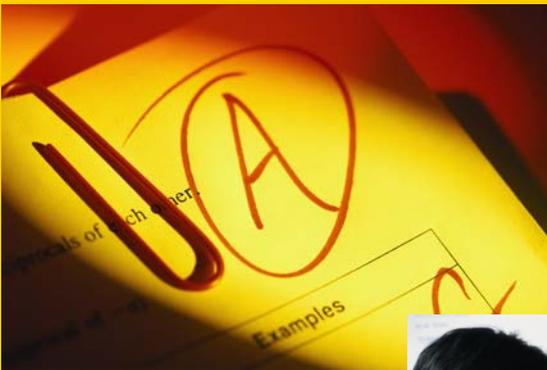
Notes

LEP GUIDE FOR WORKFORCE PROFESSIONALS

Module 4: Comprehensive
Assessment for
Customers with LEP



TEXAS
WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS



LEP Guide for Workforce Professionals

Edited by Anson Green

Copies of this guide are available at:
www.twc.state.tx.us/boards/guides/guides.html

2007
Texas Workforce Commission
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This guide was made possible by the quiet determination of a small group of people who believe in the system. We hope that it meets the needs of those whom they have struggled to help and leads to stronger relationships and enhanced service for everyone.

LEP Guide for Workforce Professionals

The LEP Guide for Workforce Professionals consists of four individual modules, each a key component of the Texas workforce system.

Each module is meant to assist Local Workforce Development Boards (Workforce Boards) and Texas Workforce Center (Workforce Center) staff, and system partners on how best to serve the limited English proficiency (LEP) population from entrance to post employment. The four modules are:

Module 1

Effective Case Management

Module 2

Nontraditional Occupations and Entrepreneurial Opportunities

Module 3

Scorecards for Evaluating Training Services for LEP Customers

Module 4

Comprehensive Assessment for Customers with Limited English Proficiency

Part 1: The Context for Assessment: LEP Customers and Labor Force Supply

Part 2: A User-Friendly Approach to Choosing and Using Standardized Tests

Contents

Terms Used in This Module.....5

Introduction: Comprehensive Assessment for Customer with Limited English Proficiency.....8

Part 1. The Context for Assessment: LEP Customers and Labor Force Supply 10

Section 1. How Prepared Is the Texas Workforce System to Serve LEP Customers?.....11

Section 2. A Five-Step Assessment Agenda13

Agenda Item 1: Align with Business Needs.....13

Agenda Item 2: Review Current Assessment Tests and Procedures for LEP Customers.....13

Agenda Item 3: Review Referral Process of LEP Customers to Literacy and Adult Education Agencies.....14

Agenda Item 4: Review Literacy Requirements in Employment and Training Programs.....15

Agenda Item #5: Take Strategic, System wide Next Steps.....15

Part 2. A User-Friendly Approach to Choosing and Using Standardized Tests.....17

Section 1. How to Begin: An Assessment Strategy for Workforce Center Customers17

Provide Equal Opportunity and Access to Services.....18

Identifying Cultural, Situational, and Health Considerations That Affect Testing.....20

Learning Disabilities in LEP Populations.....21

The Pre-Assessment Interview.....22

Section 2: How Tests Were Selected for Review on the LEP Tests At-A-Glance Matrix..... 26

Section 3. LEP Tests At-A-Glance Matrix.....28

Test Measures in Depth30

Section 4.. Test Profiles.....39

Terms Used in This Module

Aptitude. Aptitude refers to how prepared an individual is to learn a specific skill. Testing aptitude allows examiners to predict how easy it will be for an individual to learn an unfamiliar skill. The more aptitude the individual has, the more likely he or she can learn more advanced skills.

Assessment. The process of collecting information about individuals, groups, or systems that relies upon a number of instruments, one of which may be a test. Therefore, assessment is a more comprehensive term than *test*.

Bias (test bias). In a statistical context, bias is a systematic error in a test score. In discussing test fairness, bias is created by not allowing certain groups into the sample, not designing the test to allow all groups to participate equitably, selecting discriminatory material, testing content that has not been taught, etc. Bias usually favors one group of test takers over another, resulting in discrimination.

Grade Equivalent. A score that represents the average performance of students assessed at a specific month of a school year. For example, a grade equivalent of 5.4 on the fifth-grade test would be interpreted as a score that is average for a group that has completed the fourth month of grade 5.

Norms. A performance standard that is established by a reference group and that describes average or typical performance. Usually norms are determined by testing a representative group and then calculating the group's test performance.

Portfolio. A collection of student-generated or student-focused evidence that provides the basis for demonstrating the student's mastery of a range of skills, performance level, or improvement in these skills over time. The portfolio evidence may include student work samples, photographs, videotapes, interviews, anecdotal records, interviews, and observations.

Pre-assessment Interview. A process of collecting information about individuals prior to the administration of a test. The process collects information about individuals that helps to assess their individual needs.

Reliability. The reliability of a test refers to the consistency of replicating test results when an individual or group of individuals repeats the testing procedure. For example, if an individual takes a test once, then re-takes the test the next day, and then a week later, the individual's score should be in the same range with each administration, unless other factors have changed, such as the test administration time or testing environment. It is important that Workforce Center staff follow the test administration protocol outlined by the test publisher because test administration influences the reliability of test conditions. Failure to follow testing procedures affects both the reliability and validity of the assessment process. In addition, reliability is affected when test administrators are not qualified or trained on the specific test being administered. *For more information, see Test Measures in Depth, 4.*

Standardized Test. A test constructed of items that are appropriate in level of difficulty and discriminating power for the intended examinees, and that fit the pre-planned table of content specifications. The test is administered in accordance with explicit directions for uniform administration and is interpreted using a manual that contains reliable norms for the defined reference groups.

Test forms. Parallel or alternate versions of a test that are considered interchangeable, in that they measure the same constructs, are intended for the same purposes, and are administered using the same directions.

Test. A measuring device or procedure. Educational tests are typically composed of questions or tasks designed to elicit predetermined behavioral responses or to measure specific academic content standards.

Validity. The extent to which an assessment measures what it is supposed to measure and the extent to which inferences and actions made on the basis of test scores are appropriate and accurate. For example, if a student performs well on a reading test, how confident are we that that student is a good reader? A valid standards-based assessment is aligned with the standards intended to be measured, provides an accurate and reliable estimate of students' performance relative to the standard, and is fair. An assessment cannot be valid if it is not reliable. *For more information, see Test Measures in Depth, 4.*

Introduction: Comprehensive Assessment for Customer with Limited English Proficiency

This module is designed to assist Local Workforce Development Boards (Workforce Boards) in improving assessment services for limited English proficiency (LEP) customers by providing an overview of issues and promising practices related to assessing LEP customers and a review of appropriate assessment tests.

While the focus of this module is on assessment for LEP customers, the strategies, recommendations, and methodology are no less applicable to English-speaking customers.

This module reviews a selection of commonly used tests appropriate for LEP customers, however, not all tests are covered. Workforce Boards can use the review criteria and guidance to determine the extent to which other tests are appropriate for LEP populations and a sound investment to meet the Workforce Boards' goals and objectives. LEP customers in Texas speak a variety of languages, but few tests are available in languages other than English and Spanish.

Who Should Pick Up and Read This Module?

This module is intended for use by Workforce Board and Workforce Center staff, as well as training providers, including community colleges and career schools.

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This module is intended for use by Workforce Board and Workforce Center staff, as well as training providers, including community colleges and career schools.

Related TWC Workforce Development Letters

WD 24-01

WD 08-04

WD 42-06, Change 1

WD 13-07

Why Is This Module Important?

Proper assessment of the interests, knowledge, skills, and abilities of customers forms the foundation of any training and employment strategy. Module 4 of this guide provides information on tests and test administration that can address a variety of needs.

- ✓ **Businesses in many industry sectors employ LEP workers.** These businesses often seek guidance on how best to screen and assess the skills of workers in English as well as their skills in other languages like Spanish. This module supports the ability of Workforce Boards to provide assessment of the LEP workforce as a business service.
- ✓ **Workers with LEP are an ever-increasing segment of customers in Workforce Centers.** Workforce Boards must ensure that the skills and abilities of these customers are assessed appropriately in order to make sound referrals to businesses or training providers.
- ✓ **Workforce Boards are providing more and more services to LEP customers.** When reviewing proposals for training services, Workforce Boards must be prepared to ascertain the quality and thoroughness of proposed assessment services. Workforce Boards can use this module to know what to look for and how to provide training providers with necessary guidance.

Part 1. The Context for Assessment: LEP Customers and Labor Force Supply

This part is meant to provide Workforce Boards and other professionals who test LEP customers with an overview of why quality assessment of these workers is critical to the growth of a market-driven workforce system.

Why Is This Part Important?

LEP individuals will play an increasingly important role in the Texas labor force and are expected to become an even more important source of workers for Texas businesses. LEP populations will account for all of the U.S. civilian labor force growth between 2016-2035 (Capps, R., Fix, M., Passel, J., Ost, J., & Perez-Lopez, D., 2003). The Texas population, like that of the U.S., is aging rapidly and its largest population cohort, baby boomers born between 1946 and 1964, are beginning to retire (Murdock, 2003). As the baby boomers retire in larger numbers, new workers will be needed. In fact, most major industry groups have already warned of impending labor shortages, especially of higher-skilled workers.

To fill these gaps in the workforce, Texas businesses are relying more and more on LEP workers. While this growing workforce is young and hardworking—attractive attributes to businesses looking to expand or locate in Texas—it is also very underskilled: 47 percent of Spanish speakers in Texas have less than a high school diploma and 45 percent have limited English skills (Migration Policy Institute, n.d.). For these workers to fully engage in the workforce and benefit from the resources of the workforce and adult education systems, assessment policies and procedures will have to be improved to ensure that the knowledge, skills, and abilities of these workers are properly identified.

Assessment Goal

For LEP populations in Workforce Centers, the assessment function should stress multiple approaches to gathering information related to the skills and abilities of workers and acknowledge that the primary participation goal is employment in a high-growth, high-demand occupation.

Section 1. How Prepared Is the Texas Workforce System to Serve LEP Customers?

Texas has the second-largest LEP population in the nation. The vast majority of LEP workers, 84 percent, are foreign born and most do not possess the language or occupational skills required by the emerging 21st century Texas economy (Capps, R., Fix, M., Passel, J., Ost, J., & Perez-Lopez, D., 2003). Without an effective workforce development and training mechanism to upgrade the language and occupational skills of LEP populations, Texas employers will face greater disadvantages in the competitive global market.

The ability of the workforce development and adult education systems to prepare LEP populations for 21st century jobs is a growing concern. A recent study by the AFL-CIO Working for America Institute concluded that existing workforce development and training programs are unprepared to address the language and employment needs of LEP workers (AFL-CIO Working for America Institute, 2004).

Workforce Centers reviewed in the AFL-CIO Working for America Institute study were ill-equipped to provide services to LEP populations, often lacking basic services such as interpreters. Another important finding is that training providers established artificial barriers to participation by setting language requirements for participation in training programs funded through the Workforce Investment Act (WIA).

The AFL-CIO Working for America Institute report found that many WIA-funded training programs across the U.S. are geared toward workers with at least a ninth grade command of English. This requirement excludes LEP populations who are one of the fastest-growing segments of the workforce. In many instances, these requirements were not necessary for the particular training program.

Similar findings were reported by the National Council of La Raza (NCLR) in its report to Congress for WIA reauthorization (Thomas-Breitfield, 2003). Additionally, such “literacy gates” established by training providers often are not aligned to the requirements stipulated by business. For example, Spruck-Wrigley, Richer, Martinson, Kubo, and Strawn (2003) found that “English require-

Comprehensive Assessment

LEP assessments should include consideration for support services, participant demographics, barriers to employment, and family circumstances.

ments for performing on the job are much less than those demanded for admission into a training program, keeping the language threshold artificially high” (pg. 24).

Any attempt to improve the responsiveness, effectiveness, and capacity of workforce development and training programs to prepare LEP populations for 21st century jobs calls for a review of our current assessment and placement processes. LEP customers will require more comprehensive assessment approaches that, at a minimum, assess English literacy, literacy in the native language, and occupational interests, skills, and abilities. This module provides a user-friendly framework to assist Workforce Boards in pursuit of these efforts.

Section 2. A Five-Step Assessment Agenda

This module provides Workforce Boards with guidance and information needed to review and enhance assessment processes for LEP customers. Workforce Boards can use this information to align strategic, operational, and budget considerations to improve assessment services and program options for LEP customers. In determining what is feasible, Workforce Boards should consider the following five steps as an agenda for improving assessment services for LEP populations.

Agenda Item 1: Align with Business Needs

Developing a comprehensive assessment strategy for LEP customers will position Workforce Boards to meet current and future demands for skilled workers. LEP workers constitute a rapidly growing segment of the Texas workforce. Businesses know they cannot remain competitive by waiting for future workers to learn English, and, for years, many have been adjusting business processes and training to accommodate LEP workers.

Workforce Boards and training providers, however, have been slower to catch up with sourcing strategies that will identify the language and occupational skills of LEP customers.

Agenda Item 2: Review Current Assessment Tests and Procedures for LEP Customers

Assessment in workforce development programs should capture a customers' educational background, interests, aptitudes, skills, literacy, and other relevant information necessary to set employment and training goals. Part 2, Section 1, How to Begin, provides a discussion of what elements Workforce Boards should consider when designing test administration procedures.

Review Use of the TABE Test. The TABE assessment and TABE Español test are the most common assessment tests used in Workforce Centers. The TABE test is also the state-mandated test for English-speaking participants in Texas adult education programs. While Workforce Center staff is familiar with the TABE test and its administration, the test can be used mistakenly for nonintended populations or purposes.

Five-Step Assessment Agenda

Agenda Item #1

Align with Business Needs

Agenda Item #2

Review Current Assessment Tests and Procedures for LEP Customers

Agenda Item #3

Review Referral Process of LEP Customers to Literacy and Adult Education Agencies

Agenda Item #4

Review Literacy Requirements in Employment and Training Programs

Agenda Item #5

Take Strategic, Systemwide Next Steps

Workforce Boards should consider the extent to which Workforce Center contractors are appropriately using the TABE test. Some of the most common misunderstandings related to using it can be avoided by noting the following:

- ◆ **The TABE test is not an English as a Second Language (ESL) test.** While the English version of the TABE test is appropriate to use with most English-speaking customers, it is often used to assess LEP customers. However, the English version of the TABE test is not valid to measure the reading or math skills of LEP customers as it is neither intended nor developed for this group.
- ◆ **The TABE Español test is not an English literacy test.** The TABE Español test assesses reading, mathematics, and language skills in Spanish. This test is intended and normed on an adult Spanish-speaking population. Because the TABE Español test is designed to test basic skills in Spanish, it will not answer the question: How fluent is the customer in English?
- ◆ **The TABE and TABE Español tests are not employment and training screening tests.** Neither the TABE test nor the TABE Español test is aligned to training or employment-related objectives, career paths, or work readiness standards, limiting the usefulness of these tests as placement or training eligibility tests. These tests measure only basic academic skills; thus, they are not recommended for use as the sole measure for screening and employment purposes (CTB/McGraw-Hill Web site).

Use Tests Wisely

While Workforce Center staff is familiar with the TABE test and its administration, the test can be used mistakenly for unintended populations or purposes.

Workforce Boards should consider how assessments are used when making training and employment referral decisions and especially when developing service strategies for LEP customers because these workers are covered not only by employment law, but also civil rights protections

Agenda Item 3: Review Referral Process of LEP Customers to Literacy and Adult Education Agencies

Workforce Centers often refer LEP customers who test low on standardized assessments to literacy or adult education programs. Unfortunately, these programs are often unresponsive to the work-related goals of the LEP customers because most programs do not focus on work-related objectives. As such, the large majority of customers fail to persist in adult education programs and do not transition into training or employment. Workforce Boards should review information related to

the capacity of local adult education and literacy programs to address the employment goals of LEP customers and work to increase the availability of work-based ESL programs in their local workforce development areas (workforce areas). Module 3 of this guide can be used to assist Workforce Boards in these efforts.

Agenda Item 4: Review Literacy Requirements in Employment and Training Programs

A common practice among training providers has been to establish minimum English reading standards, such as a sixth to ninth grade reading level, for enrollment in job training programs. Often, these reading requirements are higher than those actually required for performing on the job (Spruck-Wrigley et al., 2003). At a time when businesses in many industry sectors are increasing access to job opportunities for LEP workers, this practice artificially limits LEP customers’ access to the training needed for these jobs (National Council of La Raza, 2003). No single factor such as English literacy or a single test should be used to make high-stakes decisions regarding student preparedness. Because English language and literacy tests are not aligned to occupational training objectives, they are not valid predictors of future performance in training or job performance (Stitch, 1999).

Because English language and literacy tests are not aligned to occupational training objectives, they are not valid predictors of future performance in training or job performance.

Stitch, 1999

Workforce Boards should consider working with employers to review the entrance requirements for local training programs and seek to ensure that programs use multiple, job-related criteria to determine student preparedness for training. For programs in which there are few, if any, occupational training programs available to LEP customers, Workforce Boards should consider using Module 3 of this guide to support the expansion of work-based ESL training models that increase the training options for lower-level literacy LEP populations that will increase access to high-growth, high-demand jobs.

Agenda Item #5: Take Strategic, Systemwide Next Steps

Limited resources and competing priorities in adult education, training, and workforce development programs call for strategic approaches to enhancing assessment services. Workforce Boards must balance staff time, financial resources, and available technical assets when making improvements to assessment services offered in Workforce Centers and by training providers. Workforce

Boards can use this module to support enhancement to assessment services across adult education programs, training providers, and Workforce Center contractors.

A first step Workforce Boards can take is to convene a workgroup of local stakeholders including training providers, Workforce Center contractors, vocational rehabilitation programs, adult education providers, and business, to create a concerted effort to address testing needs. The LEP “Dream Team” discussed in Module 1 would be just such a group of experts to provide assistance to Workforce Boards in this important technical area.

Part 2. A User-Friendly Approach to Choosing and Using Standardized Tests

Workforce Boards can use this section to select tests and make assessment administration decisions aimed at increasing the effectiveness of workforce services for LEP customers.

- ◆ Section 1. How to Begin: An Assessment Strategy for Workforce Center Customers
- ◆ Section 2. How Tests Were Selected for Review on the LEP Tests At-A-Glance Matrix
- ◆ Section 3. LEP Tests At-A-Glance Matrix
- ◆ Section 4. Test Profiles

Assessment should not be an end in itself, but a means to an end.

Why Is This Part Important?

Workforce Boards have significant flexibility and local discretion when selecting tests and designing test administration procedures. Therefore, with the proper information and resources, Workforce Boards have the ability to ensure that the assessment of LEP customers captures the information necessary to make informed training and employment decisions.

Section 1. How to Begin: An Assessment Strategy for Workforce Center Customers

This section is designed to assist Workforce Boards in providing contractors with test administration guidance so that assessment services meet the unique needs of the job seeker and business customer.

Proper administration of tests is critical to ensuring that testing services meet validity, reliability, and fairness standards for all customers. When tests are not properly administered, there is greater likelihood that contractors are not providing equal opportunity and meaningful disability and language access to all federally funded services.

When tests are not properly administered, there is greater likelihood that contractors are not providing equal opportunity and meaningful disability and language access to all federally funded services.

Workforce Boards must ensure that all individuals with disabilities or with LEP skills have equal opportunity and access to all federally funded workforce services (Texas Workforce Commission, 2001).

While designed to address the specific needs of LEP customers, this section, like many other parts of the LEP guide, are applicable to Workforce Center customers in general.

Provide Equal Opportunity and Access to Services

Workforce Boards have a responsibility to ensure equal opportunity and access to all Workforce Center services. Though it is sometimes viewed as a topic pertinent for the Workforce Center staff member overseeing “special populations” or “disability services,” providing necessary modifications to service design is everyone’s responsibility.

Testing procedures used by Workforce Board contractors and subcontractors must be designed with the goal of providing customers a level playing field by making reasonable modifications to policies, practices, and procedures that deny equal access to individuals with disabilities or LEP. Workforce Boards should review testing procedures implemented by contractors to ensure their procedures follow disability and civil rights guidance and recommended best practices.

Testing procedures designed to provide customers with an equal opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and abilities can result in two mutually beneficial goals: compliance with civil rights and disability laws and more accurate and useful test outcomes.

Because the testing and assessment process usually takes place early in a service plan for customers, Workforce Center staff and training providers often know very little about customers, particularly about specific needs for testing modifications. Similarly, customers—especially LEP customers—often do not know their own testing or learning needs, especially if they are from countries where perceptions about educational opportunity and access to people of all abilities are different (Schwarz, n.d.).

Requests for Testing Accommodations

Customers are responsible for requesting accommodation. If the disability and/or the need for accommodation is not obvious, The Workforce Center may request documentation.

Testing accommodation must be provided based on documentation submitted, and whether or not the request would create an undue hardship, or a fundamental alteration of the nature of the test. However, the specific test used, in combination with appropriate accommodations or modifications, must be able to provide a valid and reliable evaluation of the knowledge, skills, abilities, and/or interests of the customer with a disability. If the nature or extent of a particular customer’s disability, or the limitations of the test itself, prevent the test from providing a valid or reliable evaluation in a particular case, an alternate assessment tool must be offered.

The WorkSource, Equal Opportunity Policies and Procedures for Serving Customers who have Disabilities

Define What You Want Testing to Accomplish

An important first step in selecting and evaluating the use of appropriate tests for LEP customers is to establish a clear understanding regarding the population to be assessed; the outcomes assessment is intended to inform, such as the Individual Employment Plan (IEP); and what skills and abilities the Workforce Board needs to measure in order to best meet the employment and training needs of LEP customers and the local business community.

During intake and before any tests are administered to customers, a structured pre-assessment interview (discussed below) should be conducted to clearly identify the objectives and goals that testing is meant to inform as well as the customer's unique needs related to testing. This interview should review the customer's educational and employment history, familiarity and comfort with testing, and actual or potential challenges the customer may have when taking a test

Once the pre-assessment interview has been completed and this understanding is established, the LEP Tests At-A-Glance Matrix can assist workforce professionals in selecting appropriate tests and designing test administration procedures aimed at accurately and fairly obtaining the information needed to make decisions about the training and employment options available for the customer.

Diversity within the LEP Population and Customization of Testing

LEP customers are a diverse group of individuals with varying backgrounds, interests, skills, and experiences. Effectively providing services to this group of customers requires that we consider factors such as levels of formal education, cultural and social background, health conditions, and disabilities.

Diversity among the LEP population also extends to countries of origin. Although the majority of LEP customers in Texas are Spanish speaking, there are individuals from Eastern European and Asian countries as well as from other countries around the world, who also are in need of access to workforce services.

It is important to understand that the same factors that contribute to diversity within the LEP population also are important in determining appropriate assessment strategies and can be identified through the pre-assessment interview.

Pre-Assessment

A structured pre-assessment interview should be conducted to clearly identify the objectives and goals that testing is meant to inform as well as the customer's unique needs related to testing.

Federal Civil Rights Laws Protecting Equal Opportunity and Access

- ◆ United States Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title VI
- ◆ Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504
- ◆ Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Title II
- ◆ Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (Public Law 105-220), Section 188

Understanding Differences in Formal Education

Workforce Center staff should review the educational and employment history of the customer as this information is critical to determining the appropriateness of different tests.

While most foreign-born workers in the U.S. have less than a high school education, almost one-third have completed the equivalent of a bachelor's degree or higher in their native country (Capps, R., Fix, M., Passel, J., Ost, J., & Perez-Lopez, D., 2003). Many have earned professional degrees in high-growth, high-demand occupations, such as health and engineering (Capps, et. al., 2003). Despite this diversity, workforce, adult education providers, and training programs often have a one-size-fits-all approach to testing this population.

Customers with a high school or college education in their native country, or who have employment histories that required reading and writing, should be able to demonstrate their knowledge on many native language tests reviewed in this module. These same tests, though, will not be appropriate for customers with little or no formal education as they may have little or no reading ability in their native language or limited or no familiarity with the concept of standardized testing. Workforce Center staff can determine the appropriateness of certain tests by comparing the customer's background information against the intended population for whom the test was designed.

The pre-assessment interview section provides sample questions test administrators can use to determine important aspects of the educational and employment background of LEP customers.

Identifying Cultural, Situational, and Health Considerations That Affect Testing

In addition to educational and employment history, the pre-assessment interview can identify critical health and cultural or situational considerations found in LEP populations that may greatly impact the outcomes of standardized testing.

Cultural and Situational Considerations:

- ◆ Limited or no formal education or education that was frequently interrupted by migration, war, or leaving school as a child to

work

- ◆ Unfamiliarity with testing protocols such as the concept of multiple-choice selection, filling in blanks or bubbles, or the concept of standardized testing in general

Health Considerations:

- ◆ Physical health problems such as vision, hearing, or the effects of medication
- ◆ Affective or emotional factors such as anxiety or depression
- ◆ Trauma such as post-traumatic stress disorder resulting from violence, family violence, or experiences related to fleeing their home country as a refugee or immigrant

In addition to these considerations, some LEP customers may have disabilities, including learning disabilities, that affect testing. Learning disabilities in LEP populations are discussed in more detail below.

Cultural, situational, and health consideration areas may greatly influence the effectiveness and accuracy of test performance. If customers are from non-European countries, there may be little or no understanding of concepts of different learning styles and a lack of understanding that an individual can be intelligent, but still have a hard time learning or testing. There also is not the same understanding concerning equity and support for persons with disabilities. Thus, it is very unlikely that these customers will self-identify as having difficulties testing or learning (Schwarz, n.d.).

Learning Disabilities in LEP Populations

Learning disabilities are disorders that affect an individual's "ability to either interpret what they see and hear or to link information from different parts of the brain. These limitations can show up in many ways: as specific difficulties with spoken and written language, coordination, self-control, or attention." (National Institutes of Health, 1993, as cited by LDonline.org)

Since 2002, several Workforce Boards in Texas have been active in providing screening and assessment services for learning disabilities. While there is a consider-

able amount of research on learning disabilities and screening tools available for native English-speaking adults, research and screening tools for other languages is very limited (Schwarz, n.d.; Abwender, 2005).

There is a growing body of qualitative research emerging on learning disabilities within the adult LEP population (Schwarz, n.d.), but little quantitative scientific research in this area exists. As a result, there is no scientifically validated screening tool for learning disabilities for LEP adults, leaving “a gaping hole in the overall diagnostic process” (Abwender, 2005).

While there is a temptation to translate English learning needs screening tools, there are multiple problems associated with the validity of this approach (Schwarz, n.d.). Additionally, the availability of Spanish-speaking diagnosticians, trained in administering diagnostic tests in Spanish in order to determine the existence of learning disabilities, is very limited (Schwarz, n.d.; U.S. Department of Education, 2000).

In 2006 and 2007, the Concho Valley Workforce Board began working with a Spanish-speaking diagnostician to screen and assess Spanish-speaking customers for learning disabilities. While early in the process, such efforts show that there is a need for the research and testing fields to catch up with the needs of workforce and education professionals in order to support LEP populations, particularly Spanish-speaking customers, some of whom may have challenges related to unidentified disabilities.

The Pre-Assessment Interview

A well-structured pre-assessment interview can identify a customer’s strengths as well as potential barriers to test performance. The interview should be conducted in the customer’s native language and include a discussion about the customer’s goals; work-related inventory of skills; abilities, knowledge, and competencies; educational history; disability-related needs; and health-related questions.

Staff interviewing customers should be fluent in the customer’s language, aware of the unique aspects of the customer’s culture, and, where possible, be from the same culture. The Person-Centered Strengths Assessment adapted from Saleebey (2002) and discussed in

The assessment of the cognitive capabilities of individuals from culturally and linguistically diverse populations [is] one of the most difficult tasks facing psychologists today.

Ortiz, S. O. & Flanagan, D. P., 1998

Module 1 can be used to assist workforce professionals in completing an effective pre-assessment interview.

Targeted questions about the health and disability needs, as well as past employment and educational history, of LEP customers are essential in a pre-assessment interview. Below are samples of the types of questions that can provide test administrators with information that can better match tests to customer’s needs and backgrounds. This information also plays an important role in determining appropriate assessment strategies that will yield usable, reliable results.

Has the customer ever worn eye glasses or does the customer have difficulty seeing? Poor eyesight can result in poor test results. LEP customers may never have had their eyes checked, may have lost their eye glasses, or may have outdated prescriptions.

Has the customer ever worn a hearing aid or does the customer have difficulty hearing? Poor hearing can also result in poor test results because customers may not be able to respond accurately to verbal test instructions or to questions in an English language exam.

Does the customer have a condition or disability that will require accommodation? If a customer is asked whether he or she has a disability that requires accommodation, this must be asked of every customer, and asked in writing through materials in accessible formats, not just orally. These questions must be asked privately and confidentiality procedures must be enforced (Institute for Community Inclusion, n.d.).

Has the customer completed any secondary education (i.e., high school) in the customer’s native country or worked in a professional occupation? Having some secondary education or work experience in a professional occupation is a good indicator that tests developed for individuals at the high school level (e.g., Spanish WorkKeys, Spanish CAPS) would be appropriate for the customer.

This information is also useful when developing a training and employment plan with the customer. Having a strong educational background also makes learning English easier; thus, customers with more formal education may progress in ESL classes more quickly because they can draw on grammatical concepts in their native lan-

Pre-Assessment Interview

A pre-assessment interview can include:

- ◆ customer’s goals;
- ◆ work-related inventory of skills;
- ◆ abilities, knowledge, and competencies;
- ◆ educational history;
- ◆ disability-related needs; and
- ◆ health-related questions.

guage, they have developed study habits, and they have experience with the more challenging cognitive demands involved in certain language tasks or activities (Cummins, 1981).

If the customer does not have a secondary education, how many years of schooling does the customer have? Tests developed for high school level individuals may not be appropriate for customers who have not completed any secondary level coursework. These tests are not appropriate for individuals who have had no schooling or only very limited education.

The questions about formal education asked during the pre-assessment interview can also help English instructors better understand the “cognitive preparation” students have in order to better customize learning activities based on native language literacy. Research indicates that understanding and using the native language of students is “not only effective but necessary for adult ESL students with limited...literacy or schooling and that use of students’ linguistic resources can be beneficial at all levels of ESL” (Auerbach, 1993).

Businesses are very interested in the Spanish reading abilities of workers in order to accurately determine at what levels to write Spanish language safety literature or to provide Spanish language training materials.

In addition to the Person-Centered Strengths Assessment included in Module 1, another resource Workforce Boards should consider when developing

interview questions is the Native Language Literacy Screening Device. This screening device is presented in 27 primary languages, ranging from Albanian to Vietnamese, and is designed to provide a program with an initial indicator of native language literacy. This resource is available through the Hudson River Center for Program Development, Inc. at www.hudrivctr.org/ae.htm.

Well-structured, pre-assessment interview questions can help Workforce Center contractors take strategic steps to ensure that the administration of tests provides LEP customers with the greatest opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and abilities.

Customized Methods of Test Administration

The goal for assessment is, of course, to obtain the most accurate picture of a customer’s ability and knowledge. Therefore, Workforce Boards should ensure that the testing protocols used by contractors support that

Business Interest

Businesses are very interested in the Spanish reading abilities of workers in order to accurately determine at what levels to write Spanish language safety literature or to provide Spanish language training materials.

goal.

LEP customers are a diverse group and may have a wide variety of testing and learning needs. Some will have disabilities, either known or unknown to themselves. Not only can these differences greatly impact testing results, but they also impact employment and training outcomes.

Workforce professionals are well aware of these differences, but test administration procedures are often not customized to accommodate these differences. Instead, testing procedures usually provide diverse customers with a one-size-fits-all approach. Assessment protocols designed for a homogenous customer are not customized to meet different customer backgrounds and needs and “rarely represent a truly accurate measure of ... abilities” (Rose & Dolan, 2000).

One approach to ensure equal opportunity and access for a diverse customer base is customizing testing services in such a way that all customers are provided with support that ensures that the testing yields the most accurate picture of skills, abilities, and knowledge. The pre-assessment interview can help test administrators identify individuals who have specific testing needs because of limited formal schooling, health-related barriers, or disabilities. In addition, test administrators should take steps to ensure that test administration procedures do not present unnecessary barriers that can inhibit test performance.

Before testing begins, test administrators should clearly state the purpose of the tests and ensure that test instructions are easy to understand and are explained clearly—regardless of customers’ testing experience, language, or abilities. Reasonable accommodations must be provided to customers with documented disabilities and testing procedures must follow the administration guidelines developed by the test developer. These accommodations should be determined in full consultation with the customer.

By creating a testing environment that accommodates this diversity, Workforce Centers can provide customers with equal access and opportunity to services while also increasing the potential for more accurate and useful test outcomes.

Assessment Gap

Most traditional tests used in workforce programs, such as the TABE test, do not measure the job skills, knowledge, native language, or abilities of LEP customers. This assessment gap systemically limits the effectiveness of Workforce Boards to identify and tap into the vast potential of many highly skilled professional LEP customers.

Access for All

Access for All: A Resource Manual for Meeting the Needs of One-Stop Customers with Disabilities is a comprehensive manual designed to assist Workforce Center staff in meeting the needs of customers with disabilities. The manual may be accessed online in whole or in part from the Institute for Community Inclusion’s Web site at www.communityinclusion.org/onestop/onestopmanual.html

Section 2: How Tests Were Selected for Review on the LEP Tests At-A-Glance Matrix

Workforce Boards can use the matrix in this section to compare, at a glance, 13 widely used tests for LEP customers. The matrix compares tests across 14 unique criteria that Workforce Boards can use to make test selection decisions. In-depth descriptors of the criteria are included following the matrix. Tests were selected for review based on the following criteria:

Appropriateness for Adult LEP Populations. Tests selected for this review were designed for the purpose of assessing adult LEP populations. Most are designed to assess adults functioning at lower academic levels who have employment or training goals. Tests designed primarily for children or high school students were not reviewed because they are not designed for adults.

Obviously, this review does not capture all available tests. If Workforce Boards are considering the use of assessments not reviewed in this module, such as Prove It!, Kudner, or Supera, they can use this manual to review the appropriateness of tests like these for adult LEP customers.

Review criteria can be used to evaluate tests not reviewed in this module.

Relevant Content. Tests selected for this review measure the competency or interest in areas useful for assessing the employability of LEP customers: language (i.e., speaking and listening), literacy and numeracy (in English or Spanish), aptitude, and vocational interests.

Disability Supports. All tests reviewed in this module are available in alternative formats and/or have alternative administration procedures to accommodate the testing needs of customers with different disabilities (see Test Measures in Depth 5 for more information).

Test Administration Support. Each test selected in this review includes a detailed test administration protocol as well as training, technical assistance, and certification information, if necessary.

Use and Familiarity within the Texas Workforce System. There is great benefit to using tests that have some level of recognition in the local area and among other service providers. Many of the tests selected in this review are commonly used tests in Workforce Cen-

ters. In some cases, this review evaluates the Spanish language version of a test commonly used in Workforce Centers such as the TABE Español test and VCAT (Spanish). Some assessments such as the Spanish WorkKeys were included because of employers' familiarity with the assessment and the potential value for assessing LEP populations with high literacy abilities in their native language.

Approval by the National Reporting System (NRS). The National Reporting System (NRS) establishes a national system of accountability for the federally funded programs under the U.S. Department of Labor's (DOL) and U.S. Department of Education's (USED) Common Measures.

Language and literacy tests selected for review include tests required by the Texas Education Agency for adult education providers and other tests also approved by NRS. NRS provides criteria that training providers can use to establish baseline student educational functioning levels and measure educational gain.

NRS-approved tests are subject to rigorous testing and public accountability standards. Adult education providers are required to use NRS-approved tests, making portability of test scores between Workforce Center contractors and adult education providers possible, thus reducing unnecessary (and costly) duplication of assessment. For more information on NRS, see Core Measure 17 of Module 3 and www.nrsweb.org.

How Tests Were Selected

The following criteria guided the selection of tests for review:

- ◆ Appropriateness for adult LEP populations
- ◆ Relevant content for LEP customers with employment and training goals
- ◆ Availability of alternative formats and procedures for persons with disabilities
- ◆ Test administration support
- ◆ Use and familiarity within the Texas workforce system
- ◆ NRS approval for English literacy and language tests

Section 3. LEP Tests At-A-Glance Matrix

Using the LEP Tests At-A-Glance Matrix

The LEP Tests At-A-Glance Matrix presents each test across 14 criteria Workforce Boards can use to make assessment decisions. Further descriptions of each criterion are provided after the matrix.

Workforce Boards can use the following steps to review and select tests.

Study the Matrix: Review the LEP Tests At-A-Glance Matrix and related descriptors to build an understanding of what each test measures and what variables should be considered.

Review Need, Including Local Demographics and Business Need: Review the workforce area’s demographics. What percentages of potential workforce customers are LEP? What languages are represented? Then review what data is useful for making informed employment and training decisions. If training providers offer Spanish language courses or businesses are interested in the abilities of potential workers who speak Spanish, then Spanish language assessments should be a consideration.

Determine Usefulness of Tests Data: When selecting tests, it is important to determine if test data is useful in meeting the employment and training needs of LEP customers and Workforce Boards’ objectives. Administering tests when there is not a clear purpose for using test results is not recommended. For example, while Spanish language assessments provide very useful information on the abilities of customers, the information is of limited use if it cannot be used to direct placement into Spanish language GED or training courses or to provide information to businesses interested in the abilities of Spanish speakers.

Calculate Available Resources: Cost is usually the first factor Workforce Boards and Workforce Center contractors must consider when making assessment decisions. Assessment budgets are often limited. If so, use this module to develop a rationale for future funding requests.

Assessment tests selected for review measure language, literacy, and numeracy as well as vocational interests and aptitude.

- #### Using the LEP Tests At-A-Glance Matrix
1. Study the matrix
 2. Review need, including local demographics and business need
 3. Determine usefulness of test data
 4. Calculate available resources

LEP Tests At-A-Glance Matrix	Language, Literacy, Numeracy		Vocational Aptitude & Interests											
	Measures English Skills		Measures Spanish Skills			Measures Aptitude and Interests in Spanish								
	Best Literacy	BEST Plus	CASAS Employability Competency System (ECS)	CASAS Life Skills	Bateria III Woodcock-Munoz	CASAS Evaluacion de Comprension de la Lectura	TABE Español	SAGE	Spanish Work Keys	Spanish CAPS ¹	SPOC ² (Sistema de Preferencia Ocupacional de Carreras)	Aviator 3 (Spanish)	VCAT ³ (Spanish)	
Key: Y = Yes, N = No, U = Uncertain														
Competency Measured	More Information													
1. Speaking				Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	
2. Listening			Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	
3. Reading			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
4. Numeracy			N	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	
5. Writing			N	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	
6. Test items use employment con-text			N	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
7. Vocational Aptitude		See page 31	N	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	
8. Vocational Interests		See page 31	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	
General Criteria														
9. Spanish language test suitability for customers with limited formal education	See page 32		Not Spanish Language Tests				Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	N
10. Test meets reliability and validity standards	See page 34		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	U	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
11. Test provides guidance for disability accommodations	See page 35		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
12. Test has degree of recognition with businesses	See page 36		N	N	N	N	N	U	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
13. Test can be administered in group setting			Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
14. Test administration time less than 1 hour			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Notes: ¹ Spanish CAPS = Career Occupational Preference System; ² SPOC (Sistema de Preferencia Ocupacional de Carreras) is the Spanish translation of the COPS (Career Occupational Preference System Interest Inventory) test; ³ VCAT = Valpar Computerized Abilities Test														

Test Measures in Depth, 1

Language, Literacy, and Numeracy Tests

Importance of This Measure

Tests for English language, literacy, and numeracy measure how well adults speak, listen, read, write, and calculate. Well-recognized tests are available in both English and Spanish.

Workforce Boards should carefully review all available tests before making test adoption decisions. The criteria on the right are some of the areas Workforce Boards should consider when making language test selection decisions.

Elements for Consideration

Comprehensiveness of Available Tests: No single test covers language, reading, writing, and math so multiple tests may need to be administered to capture comprehensive data on the basic skills of LEP customers.

Speaking and listening are the most important English skills required for work, so, at a minimum, Workforce Boards should assess those competencies in customers. If LEP customers are pursuing training in English, then reading assessment is recommended. If training is bilingual or in Spanish, then Spanish language reading and math assessments are recommended.

The Value of Testing Spanish Language Skills: Assessing skills in Spanish has multiple benefits. It is sometimes assumed that if an individual speaks Spanish they have corresponding reading and writing skills in Spanish. This is not always the case. Very often Spanish-speaking customers have very limited formal education and thus weak reading and writing skills in Spanish. This can make placement in Spanish language training courses a challenge if these courses require intensive reading. (See Test Measures In Depth, 3 for more information)

Conversely, if customers score high on Spanish language assessments, they often can progress more quickly in ESL courses because they have a strong academic foundation in their native language. These individuals are good candidates for fast-track ESL courses and Spanish language GED courses. If customers are considering Spanish language training courses, assessing math skills in Spanish is also recommended.

Consider Employment-Focused Test Items: For LEP populations with employment goals, tests should be selected that measure basic skills required in a workplace context.

Value of NRS-Approved Tests: The National Reporting System (NRS) establishes a national system of accountability for the federally funded programs under the U.S. Department of Labor's and U.S. Department of Education's Common Measures. The use of NRS-approved tests is encouraged because these tests are subject to rigorous testing and public accountability standards. In addition, Texas adult education providers are required to use NRS-approved tests, making portability of test scores between Workforce Center contractors and adult education providers possible, thus reducing unnecessary (and costly) duplication of assessments.

The Spanish GED

(Los exámenes del GED en Español)

The Texas Education Agency recognizes Spanish GED test as an acceptable high school equivalency test and thus Workforce Boards can use it to meet WIA performance (Texas Workforce Commission, 2007).

Workforce Boards may want to administer GED practice tests to determine if a customer is ready to take the GED test in Spanish. Because they are not actual determinative tests, but pretests, the Spanish GED pretests were not fully reviewed in this module.

GED testing sites that provide the test in Spanish can be found at: <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/ged/info.html>.

Test Measures in Depth, 2 Vocational Interests & Aptitude Tests

Importance of This Measure

Vocational interests and aptitude tests are used to assess interests, aptitudes, and skills for career planning or placement (Timmons et al., 2005). Aptitudes refer to natural or innate knowledge and abilities, such as intelligence and cognitive or physical abilities; skills refer to abilities and knowledge that are learned. For LEP participants, vocational assessments are an effective method for identifying nonlanguage aptitudes and skills. Several of the tests reviewed here also measure personal career interests.

Elements for Consideration

Aviator 3 (Spanish), a translation of its English counterpart, is designed as a multifunctional approach for career aptitude assessment databases from the Valpar standard and O*NET databases, which are related to approximately 1,000 jobs. It also assesses basic reading skills based on Spanish language curricula taught in most U.S. schools from grade four through the first year of college.

SAGE is a comprehensive assessment system to identify cognitive and conceptual abilities, vocational aptitudes, temperaments, vocational interests, learning styles, work attitudes, and work ethic concepts. It is an assessment instrument that is made up of 19 individual assessments.

Spanish CAPS measures eight ability dimensions keyed to entry requirements for the majority of occupations in each of the 14 Career Occupational Preference System Interest Inventory System (COPS) Career Clusters. The test measures occupational abilities including mechanical reasoning, spatial relations, verbal reasoning, numerical ability, language usage, word knowledge, perceptual speed and accuracy, and manual speed and dexterity.

Spanish WorkKeys is a direct translation of the original English WorkKeys tests used to assess job skills measuring real-world skills that employers consider critical to job success. The Spanish version includes applied mathematics, applied technology, locating information, and reading for information.

SPOC (Sistema de Preferencia Ocupacional de Carreras) contains Spanish language batteries that are counterparts to the English version of the COPS test. The batteries of tests contain interest inventories related to the 14-item clusters aligned to high school and college curricula. They can be designed for student advising and career planning between the ranges of “seventh grade through high school and college” (www.edits.net).

Test	Skills Measured
Aviator 3 (Spanish)	CI,PSA,MSD,N, S,LU,WK
Spanish CAPS	CI,LU,M,MSD, NV,PSA,S,V,WK
SAGE	CI,M,MSD,N,S,PSA,V
VCAT (Spanish)	AT,CI,LU,V,S,WK,N
Spanish WorkKeys	AT,LI,N,R
SPOC (Sistema de Carreras)	CI
<p>Key: M=Mechanical Reasoning* S = Spatial Relations* AT=Applied Technology PSA = Perceptual Speed and Accuracy* MSD=Manual Speed and Dexterity* CI = Career Interest R= Reading for Information LI= Locating Information V=Verbal WK = Word Knowledge N = Numerical Ability LU =Language Usage</p>	
<p>* Definitions for some less well known terms listed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Mechanical Reasoning—understanding mechanical principles and devices ◆ Spatial Relations— understanding three dimensional visualization ◆ Perceptual Speed and Accuracy—measure of speed and accuracy dealing with letters, numbers, and symbols ◆ Manual Speed and Dexterity—measure of speed and accuracy dealing with hand movements 	

Test Measures in Depth, 3

Spanish Language Test is Suitable for Customers with Limited Formal Education

Importance of This Measure

The selection of a valid assessment instrument for LEP customers requires careful review of the intended population for which the test was developed.

This descriptor provides information to help Workforce Boards understand what to look for when matching Spanish language tests to the customers they intend to test.

Workforce Boards should consider two factors:

- ◆ The level of education customers have from their native country.
- ◆ Information from the test publisher on the intended population for which the test was designed including ages and years of formal education.

When selecting tests, Workforce Boards should match, as closely as possible, tests that are based on the number of years of formal education customers have in their native language.

The formal educational history of LEP customers can vary greatly. Many have limited schooling in their native language. For example, most LEP dislocated garment workers have fewer than six years of education (Huerta-Macias, 2003), yet many foreign-born Texas residents have bachelor's degrees or higher (see Table 2).

Matching intended customers to appropriate tests is critical for ensuring that assessment fairness standards are met. In the assessment literature, fairness refers to the professional values and ethical standards that must be maintained to ensure fairness and equitable treatment for everyone who participates in assessment activities.

Table 2

	Less than high school graduate	Bachelor's degree or higher
Foreign Born	48.0%	18.7%
Speak Spanish	46.7%	10.7%

Migration Policy Institute (n.d.)

Intended Populations for Spanish Language Tests

Batería III Woodcock-Muñoz -

The "Batería III assesses and evaluates both cognitive and achievement levels of Spanish-speaking individuals between the ages of 2 and 90+ years of age."

CASAS: Evaluación de Comprensión de la Lectura - (Spanish Reading Comprehension Test).

"The test includes items at a range of difficulty levels, from approximately three to nine years of schooling (through *secundaria*) in most Spanish-speaking countries. The language used is not specific to any one cultural group

Spanish CAPS - The Spanish version of the popular CAPS test has items developed for "junior high, senior high, college and adults" that are normed on "Spanish speaking students from the U.S. combined with a sample from Mexico."

SAGE - SAGE is used by job seekers, career counselors, and employers and can be customized to specific needs. Appropriate for any person with fifth grade reading ability.

SPOC (Sistema de Preferencia Ocupacional de Carreras) -

SPOC is the Spanish version of the popular COPS (Career Occupational Preference System) assessment. The assessment has items developed between the levels of "seventh grade through high school and college" and is normed on "Spanish-speaking students from the U.S. combined with a sample from Mexico."

Spanish Language Test continued...

Elements for Consideration

LEP vs. Limited Formal Education- LEP is used to describe individuals who speak English as a second language and who have rated their ability to speak English as “well,” “not well,” or “not at all” (RTI International, 2005). While some individuals often have less than the equivalent of an elementary school education, many have postsecondary degrees from their home country. Thus LEP should be viewed as an identification of *low levels of English* comprehension, not *limited education* or *low basic skills*. This distinction is important because some Spanish language tests will be appropriate for LEP customers who have the equivalent of a high school education but not for those who have limited formal schooling.

Matching Customers with the Right Tests- When selecting any test, Workforce Boards should review the extent to which the test has been standardized against the population it intends to test. For example, if Workforce Center staff have learned through the intake assessment that a Spanish-speaking worker completed six years of formal education in Mexico, a secondary level reading test in Spanish is not appropriate because it will have too few items at the elementary level to measure knowledge, skills, and abilities. If tests are used on populations for which they were not designed, the validity of the test results is questionable.

Working with Limited Information from Test Publishers- Some test publishers do not provide detailed information about how test items were developed, how the test was normed, and how the norm samples (ages, formal schooling, and ethnicities) were created. The Spanish language tests reviewed are *translations* of English editions of the tests, and the technical information is usually based on the English, not Spanish, edition. While some of the evaluative criteria on these tests may be accurate, it is difficult to determine if issues such as cultural bias have been adequately addressed.

Capitalize on Local Wisdom- Since adequate information is limited on the norm samples used to develop some Spanish language tests reviewed in this guide, one solution is to establish a local assessment task force to review the issue. Testing experts from areas such as adult education, vocational rehabilitation, and workforce development and training can review information on Spanish language tests and share experiences using different tests. Test publishers can be brought in to discuss their products. The task force can create a base of local wisdom the Workforce Board can use to make test purchasing decisions.

Intended Populations continued...

TABE Español- This version of the test is available in levels E (Easy, grade level 1.6-3.9) and M (Medium, 3.6-6.9). “TABE Español uses standard Spanish and avoids regionalism and ambiguous words. It is appropriate and relevant for students with various dialects, including those from Mexico, Puerto Rico, and Cuba. Developers wrote test passages that positively convey the diverse cultures of native Spanish speakers.”

Spanish WorkKeys- The intended populations are employees and potential employees who are adults and/or high school students who function at the secondary level in Spanish literacy.

VCAT (Spanish) and Aviator (Spanish)- The intended populations are students or individuals with native (Spanish) language abilities typically taught in U.S. schools from grade four (ABE or higher) through the first year of college. However, the language scale is set at grades 4 to 10.

Test Measures in Depth, 4

Test Meets Reliability and Validity Standards

Importance of This Measure

Workforce Boards should consider the reliability and validity of a test before making test purchasing decisions, as these measures are critical to determining the accuracy of testing results.

Validity: An assessment is valid “when the test, or other instrument, assesses what it is intended to measure, and when uses of the assessment results are only those for which the instrument was designed” (Messick, 1989). Thus, the test and the use of the test results are considered when determining validity. An important piece of information necessary for determining if the assessment instrument is suitable for LEP customers is the validity coefficient, which provides a statistical measure of how well the instrument measures the desired competency (see Table 3).

Reliability: The reliability of a test refers to the consistency of replicating test results when an individual or group of individuals repeats the testing procedure. For example, if an individual takes a test once, then retakes the test the next day, and then a week later, the individual's score should be in the same range with each administration, unless other factors have changed, such as the test administration time or testing environment. It is important that Workforce Center staff follow the test administration protocol outlined by the test publisher because test administration influences the reliability of test conditions. Failure to follow testing procedures affects both the reliability and validity of the assessment process. In addition, reliability is affected when test administrators are not qualified or trained on the specific test being administered.

Elements for Consideration

- ◆ **Ensure Proper Administration:** To ensure reliability, Workforce Boards must ensure that test administrators are qualified, trained, and certified according to the test publisher's specifications.
- ◆ **Review Test Facility:** Workforce Boards should review the testing area in use by contractors. A non-controlled environment (e.g., classroom, waiting room, shared space) can lead to disruptions that impact the reliability of the test scores. Because a noncontrolled assessment administration impacts the reliability of results, it is important that test administration functions be continuously monitored and periodically reviewed.
- ◆ **Share Results:** Workforce Boards and Workforce Center staff are encouraged to share assessment data with training providers to monitor the reliability of assessment instruments. Reliability issues can be detected when significant variance occurs on the same instrument between Workforce Center and training provider assessment scores. Privacy guidelines for sharing customer-level data should always be followed

Reliability Coefficients

A high reliability coefficient score is an indication that the assessment instrument has shown consistency in results during statistical trials. Information on the validity of test items can be attained by purchasing the technical manual for a test or by subscribing to test review services, such as the Buros Institute (www.unl.edu/buros), which publishes the Mental Measurements Yearbook and Tests in Print.

Table 3

Test	Reliability Coefficient
Aviator 3 (Spanish)*	.82 - .92
Bateria III*	.80 - .90
BEST Literacy	.96 - .97
BEST PLUS	.96 - .97
CASAS ECS	.73 - .96
CASAS Life Skills	.73 - .96
CASAS- <i>Evaluación de Comprensión de la Lectura</i>	.73 - .96
SAGE	.57 - .94
Spanish CAPS	.70 - .95
SPOC (Sistema de Carreras)	.86 - .92
TABE Español*	.52 - .73
VCAT (Spanish)	.82 - .92
Spanish WorkKeys *	.89 - .90

Source: Buros Institute and Test Publisher

* Reliability level are for the English version test.

Test Measures in Depth, 5

Test Provides Guidance for Disability Accommodations

Importance of This Measure

Note: Refer to Part 2, Section 1, How to Begin, in this module for more information related to ensuring equal opportunity and meaningful disability and language access in the testing process.

Workforce Boards must ensure that all individuals with learning disabilities (LD) and other disabilities have equal opportunity and access to all federally funded workforce services (Texas Workforce Commission, 2001).

Testing accommodations are modifications made to a test and/or test administration procedure to allow customers with disabilities to demonstrate their knowledge and skills. Accommodations should be provided at the request of the customer and be based on professional guidance to ensure accommodations are appropriate. The accommodation should minimize any advantage or disadvantage associated with completing the test. LEP customers will require bilingual translators to ensure that language barriers do not inhibit test administration. Each of the tests reviewed in this guide has either alternate versions (e.g., large print, Braille, recorded) or alternative procedures (e.g., extra time, individual administration, adaptive furniture recommendation, oral response). The test profiles following this section describe the accommodated features available for each test.

Elements for Consideration

- ◆ **Ensure Accessibility:** Failing to provide reasonable accommodations during intake or testing prevents customers with disabilities from having an equal opportunity to benefit from workforce and training programs. Workforce Boards must ensure that Workforce Center staff and contractor staff, including training providers, have procedures and are trained to provide customers with disabilities with appropriate services, including accommodated testing procedures.

Workforce Boards and contractors should review applicable laws, including the Americans with Disabilities Act and Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (especially Section 504) to ensure that all services, including testing, adhere to civil rights principles enforced by the federal government.

- ◆ **Review Resources:** There is no shortage of high-quality information and guidance related to services to individuals with disabilities, though there is more limited information related to disability testing for LEP customers. Workforce Boards should review all workforce services provided by contractors to ensure compliance.

Local Disability Navigators

Disability Navigators are a valuable resource for workforce areas that are building capacity to more effectively serve customers with disabilities. Their expertise can be used to review the accessibility of testing procedures. Fourteen Workforce Boards joined with TWC to implement the DOL-SSA Disability Program Navigator Initiative. For more information, visit www.twc.state.tx.us/boards/disnav.html#intro or call Janice Ferguson at 512-305-9637.

The resources below can provide a start:

- ◆ **Legal Guidance:**
www.disabilityinfo.gov
- ◆ **One-Stop Services:** communityinclusion.org/onestop/onestopmanual.html
onestoptoolkit.org
hhs.gov/ocr/prohibition.html
- ◆ **LEP Customers and Learning Disabilities:**
ldlink.coe.utk.edu/pdf_files/esl_ld.pdf
- ◆ **General Disability Information:**
www.LDOnline.com

Test Measures in Depth, 6
Test Has a Degree of Recognition with Businesses

Importance of This Measure

Business recognition is an important aspect to consider when choosing a test. When businesses are familiar with a test, they often have more confidence relating test results to worker performance. Unfortunately, gauging the level of test recognition for LEP customers is difficult to determine. A review of the ERIC database did not yield any studies or reports on employer awareness or use of assessment instruments. A review of the National Human Resources Association (www.humanresources.org) also did not yield any results. Secondary sources including a search of the test Web sites were reviewed. In addition, a review of the Buros Institute test review service was used to determine if evidence suggested high employer recognition.

Elements for Consideration

Aviator 3 (Spanish) and VCAT (Spanish): Tests publisher Valpar was founded in 1973 providing vocational evaluation services to more than 8,000 customers in all 50 states and 42 foreign countries. Valpar focuses on basic skills assessment aligned to the DOL Dictionary of Occupational Titles and O*NET system.

Batería III Woodcock-Muñoz: This test is an assessment instrument designed for preschool, and school-age and adult education students. The Riverside Publishing Web site did not reveal efforts to directly market to employers.

BEST Plus and BEST Literacy: The test publisher, the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL), stated in its mission statement that its customers included K-12 educators, ABE and ESL educators, school districts, professional developers and assessors, and policymakers. Neither BEST Plus or BEST Literacy assess for job readiness. No evidence exists of employer engagement or employer awareness of this assessment instrument.

CASAS ECS and Life Skills: The CASAS Web site reports that a national coalition was developed with employers and Strumpf Associates: Center for Strategic Change of Washington, DC, that resulted in the establishment of a Workforce Skills Certification System. CASAS identified Bank of America, Hewlett-Packard, IBM, Pacific Bell, and Sutter Health as collaborating partners. Although evidence of strategic employer engagement in the test item selection and validation process exists, CASAS's primary customer bases are education institutions and basic education agencies.

Table 4	
Test	Business Recognition
Aviator 3 (Spanish)	YES
<i>Batería III</i>	NO
BEST Plus & BEST Literacy	NO
CASAS <i>Evaluación de Comprensión de la Lectura</i> :	NO
CASAS ECS and Life Skills	NO
SAGE	YES
Spanish CAPS	YES
Spanish WorkKeys	YES
SPOC (Sistema de Carreras)	YES
TABE Español	NO
VCAT (Spanish)	YES

Business Recognition continued...

CASAS *Evaluación de Comprensión de la Lectura*: The CASAS Web site reports that a national coalition was developed with employers and Strumpf Associates: Center for Strategic Change of Washington, DC that resulted in the establishment of a Workforce Skills Certification System. CASAS identified Bank of America, Hewlett-Packard, IBM, Pacific Bell, and Sutter Health as collaborating partners. While there is evidence of strategic employer engagement in the test item selection and validation process, CASAS's primary customer bases are education institutions, basic education agencies, and Workforce Centers.

SAGE: SAGE is well known among employers and Workforce Boards. According to the Pesco Web site, SAGE has been used effectively by General Motors and Ford Motor Company in cooperation with UAW in displaced worker programs.

Spanish CAPS: Spanish CAPS is primarily a career guidance assessment instrument designed for high school and college students. The developer, Edits, claims on its Web site that it has served business and industry professional development needs for more than 40 years.

Spanish WorkKeys: This test is well known among employers and educators. The occupational profiling feature allows employers to assess potential employees for the job skills needed to meet company-specific performance norms. WorkKeys is a job skills assessment system measuring "real-world" skills that employers consider critical to job success.

SPOC (*Sistema de Carreras*): This test is primarily a career guidance assessment instrument designed for high school and college students. On its Web site, the developer, Edits, claims that it has served business and industry for more than 40 years.

TABE Español: This test's primary customer base includes educational institutions, basic education agencies, and Workforce Centers. The test publisher, CBT McGraw Hill, and the Buros Institute review did not reveal efforts to market directly to employers. However, TABE is widely used in Workforce Centers giving TABE indirect exposure to employers.

Section 4. Test Profiles

The following pages are profiles of 13 commonly used tests.

◆ Aviator 3 (Spanish).....	40
◆ BEST Literacy.....	42
◆ BEST Plus.....	44
◆ CASAS <i>Evaluación de Comprensión de la Lectura</i>	46
◆ CASAS Employability Competency System (ECS).....	48
◆ CASAS Life Skills.....	50
◆ SAGE.....	52
◆ Spanish CAPS.....	54
◆ Spanish WorkKeys.....	56
◆ SPOC (Sistema de Carreras).....	58
◆ TABE Español.....	60
◆ VCAT (Spanish).....	62
◆ Bateria III Woodcock-Muñoz.....	64

Aviator 3 in Spanish								
<p>Publication Date 2006 Edition First Author Bryan B. Christopherson and Alex Swartz</p>	<p>Publisher Valpar International Corporation 20 Ryan Ranch Road Monterey, CA 93940 Telephone (toll free): 1-800-538-9547 or 831-393-0700 Web: http://www.valparint.com/aviator.htm</p>	<p>Narrative Summary Aviator 3 in Spanish is a translation of the English Valpar test. The test is designed for aptitude assessment. The test contains two pictorial/audio interest surveys, and two databases from the standard and O*NET databases relating to approximately 1,000 jobs. NRS Test: No</p>	<p>Purpose Aviator 3 in Spanish uses a criterion-referenced battery of short tests to assess aptitude in work-related factors of the U.S. Department of Labor's (DOL) O*NET.</p>	<p>Method and Format Aviator 3 in Spanish is computer-based with optional hands-on work samples.</p>	<p>Cost Aviator 3 in Spanish is available only in the computer version for \$3,000 (price subject to change without notice).</p>	<p>Usage Aviator 3 in Spanish is used for career exploration, career planning, or career assessment.</p>		
<p>Intended Population College students and adults with Spanish reading abilities typically taught in U.S. schools from grade four through college freshman (4th to 13th).</p>	<p>Competencies Measured Skills are measured in the academic areas of reading, math, vocabulary, and spelling. Other skills tested include editing, hand-eye coordination, problem solving, color discrimination, size discrimination, and short-term visual memory.</p>	<p>Speaking No</p>	<p>Listening No</p>	<p>Reading Yes</p>	<p>Numeracy No</p>	<p>Writing No</p>	<p>Vocational Aptitude Yes</p>	<p>Vocational Interests Yes</p>

<p>Norm Reference Groups</p> <p>Valpar field tested approximately 600 people, including limited English proficiency (LEP) individuals and native English speakers.</p>	<p>Validity/Reliability</p> <p>Validity: The Burros Institute (2007) Web-based test review service reported a validity coefficient range of moderate (.64-.70) for Valpar essential skills test items.</p> <p>Reliability: Burros Institute (2007) Web-based test review service reported a reliability coefficient range of .82-.92 for Valpar essential skill test items.</p>	<p>Administration</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td> <p>Test Time</p> <p>All subtests and surveys are computer based and can be completed in 60 minutes or less.</p> </td> <td> <p>Group Delivery</p> <p>Yes</p> </td> </tr> </table>	<p>Test Time</p> <p>All subtests and surveys are computer based and can be completed in 60 minutes or less.</p>	<p>Group Delivery</p> <p>Yes</p>
<p>Test Time</p> <p>All subtests and surveys are computer based and can be completed in 60 minutes or less.</p>	<p>Group Delivery</p> <p>Yes</p>			
<p>Scoring</p> <p>Scores are reported in accordance with DOL descriptor scales for academic and aptitudes (GED 6-1, Aptitudes 1-5). Work factors reported by Aviator include GED aptitudes, math, and language plus the aptitudes of general learning ability, verbal, numerical, spatial, form perception, clerical perception, and color discrimination. For those interested in testing physical aptitudes such as motor coordination and finger and manual dexterity, an optional hands-on component is available.</p>	<p>Number of Forms</p> <p>Two pictorial/audio interest surveys and two databases</p>	<p>Disability Accommodations</p> <p>The computerized test comes with instructions that can be read to customers who require assistance. No print version is available, however.</p>		
<p>Unique Features</p> <p>Aviator 3 in Spanish was designed to measure basic Spanish aptitude career interest using the O*NET databases.</p>	<p>Degree of Business and HR Community Recognition</p> <p>Founded in 1973, Valpar provides vocational evaluation services to more than 8,000 customers in all 50 states, and 42 foreign countries. The focus of Aviator's O*NET database is based on DOL's O*NET. Aviator's Standard Occupational Database was derived from DOL's collection of 12,700+ jobs using the 66 interest areas of the Guide for Occupational Exploration as a filter.</p>	<p>Source</p> <p>Adapted from VCAT at http://www.valparint.com/aviator.htm and revisions per noted sources.</p>		

BEST Literacy							
<p>Publication Date 1984, 1987, 2006 Edition 2006 revision Author Center for Applied Linguistics</p>	<p>Publisher Center for Applied Linguistics 4646 40th Street, NW Washington, DC 20016 Telephone: 202-362-0700 Fax: 202-362-3740 http://www.cal.org</p>						
<p>Narrative Summary BEST Literacy is the updated version of the literacy skills section of the Basic English Skills Test (BEST) test originally published in 1984. The BEST Literacy revisions modernize test items, graphics, and pictures but do not impact the original test construct. The literacy skills section contains about 50 items categorized under personal background, calendar, food and clothing labels, rentals, envelopes, telephone directory, train schedule, signs, a reading passage, and a writing question. NRS Test: Yes</p>	<p>Purpose BEST Literacy assesses adult limited English proficiency (LEP) customers' ability to read and write in a variety of functional literacy tasks using a competency-based assessment format.</p>	<p>Method and Format BEST Literacy is available in a print version.</p>					
<p>Intended Population LEP populations, non-native adults, and youth who function at the beginning-to-advanced ESL educational functional levels.</p>	<p>Usage BEST Literacy is used to assess LEP customers' ability to read and write in English.</p>	<p>Cost Minimum order: \$45.00 (20 examinee test booklets and scoring sheets)</p>					
<p>Competencies Measured BEST Literacy tests reading and writing skills in authentic situations specifically geared for adult English language learners in the United States.</p>	<p>Speaking No</p>	<p>Listening No</p>	<p>Reading Yes</p>	<p>Numeracy No</p>	<p>Writing Yes</p>	<p>Vocational Aptitude No</p>	<p>Vocational Interest No</p>

<p>Norm Reference Groups Taylor (1997) reported the number of students who participated in the BEST U.S. field testing: 987 for the oral interview section and 632 for the literacy skills section. The norm reference groups included beginning level literacy students and native English speakers.</p>	<p>Validity/ Reliability Taylor (1997) reports BEST total reliability scores of .96-.97.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Administration</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td> <p>Test Time BEST Literacy has a one-hour time limit.</p> </td> <td> <p>Group Delivery Yes</p> </td> </tr> </table>		<p>Test Time BEST Literacy has a one-hour time limit.</p>	<p>Group Delivery Yes</p>
<p>Test Time BEST Literacy has a one-hour time limit.</p>	<p>Group Delivery Yes</p>				
<p>Scoring The BEST Literacy Skills section is scored manually. Scorers must use the conversion table from the <i>BEST Test Manual</i> published in 1984 and 1987, and BEST Literacy users must use those found in the BEST Literacy Test Manual, published in 2006, to properly score the assessments. The manual provides all of the required information to administer and score the test. No certification is required for the test administrator.</p>	<p>Number of Forms BEST Literacy is available in three parallel forms (B, C, D).</p>	<p>Disability Accommodations Test accommodations related to administration procedures include use of eyeglasses or magnifying glasses, earplugs, color overlays, or rulers. Testing-environment accommodations might include frequent breaks or testing in an area away from outside noise or distractions. Contact the Center for Applied Linguistics for additional information.</p>			
<p>Unique Features BEST Literacy is the only test for LEP customers that includes a writing test.</p>	<p>Degree of Business and HR Community Recognition The Center for Applied Linguistics states that BEST Literacy is designed for government institutes, K-12, and adult education users. No information was found to suggest BEST Literacy has recognition in the business community.</p>	<p>Source Center for Applied Linguistics (http://www.cal.org)</p>			

BEST Plus	
<p>Publication Date 2003 Edition 2003 revision Author Center for Applied Linguistics</p>	<p>Publisher Center for Applied Linguistics 4646 40th Street, NW Washington, DC 20016 Telephone: 202-362-0700 Fax: 202-362-3740 http://www.cal.org</p>
<p>Narrative Summary BEST Plus is adapted from the oral interview section of the Basic English Skills Test (BEST). BEST Plus assesses interpersonal communication and "integrates current knowledge in the assessment of speaking and listening skills with the latest knowledge and practice in educational measurement to present a precise, updated, and flexible oral assessment." BEST Plus is an oral interview test that can be administered using either a computer adaptive version or a semi-adaptive print-based version. NRS Test: Yes</p>	<p>Purpose BEST Plus assesses the oral language proficiency of non-native adult English language learners.</p>
<p>Method and Format There are two versions—a computer adaptive version and a semi-adaptive print-based version. The adaptive BEST Plus was developed in response to the need for a performance assessment that could be given within a short period of time and could be given frequently for pre- and post-testing. When using the computer version, the test automatically adapts to the customer based on the answers to previous questions. Software provided for the testing will also provide scoring reports.</p>	<p>Cost Print Based Version Examinee Test Booklets: \$30.00 (packet of 20 booklets per form). Each test booklet can be used only once. A BEST Plus Picture Cue Book containing corresponding sets of picture cues for each form must be purchased for \$15.00 per form. Computer-Adaptive Test Administrations: \$1.50 per administration. A minimum order of 20 administrations is required. Volume prices are available. Test administrator training is required before materials can be purchased. Training is available through the Texas Learns (www-tcall.tamu.edu/texasLearns/tlgreat.htm). Contact Texas Learns or CAL for information on training requirements.</p>
<p>Intended Population Non-native adult English language learners who may or may not have received an education in their native language or in English, but who need to know English to function in day-to-day life in the United States.</p>	<p>Usage BEST Plus is commonly used by adult basic education programs as a language assessment for limited English proficiency (LEP) populations. BEST Plus is a NRS-approved test and a Texas Education Agency–mandated test for WIA Title II–funded programs.</p>

Competencies Measured	Speaking	Listening	Reading	Numeracy	Writing	Vocational Aptitude	Vocational Interest
<p>Competencies Measured BEST Plus is designed to assess the student's interpersonal communication skills using language and pictures from everyday life.</p>	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
<p>Norm Reference Groups A nationally representative 10-person technical working group reviewed and approved. More than 2,400 from 25 programs participated in the full-scale field tests. Each administrator used nonadaptive forms of the test, which was administered to 65 students representing all ability levels within their programs (BEST Plus Technical Manual, 2005).</p>	Validity/Reliability Validity: Scores not available. Reliability: Taylor (1997) reports BEST Plus total reliability scores of .96-.97.						
<p>Scoring Responses are rated on each of three subscales: Listening comprehension: 2-point rubric Language complexity: 4-point rubric Communication: 3-point rubric Each examinee receives a total score as well as a score on each of the three subscales (NRS Assessment, 2007). A six-hour training workshop in administering and scoring the test is required for all test administrators.</p>	<p>Number of Forms The program underlying the computer-adaptive version ensures that examinees will receive different items each time they take the test. The print-based version consists of three equivalent forms. Each form has three proficiency levels. The appropriate level to administer is determined by a locator test (NRS Assessment, 2007).</p>						
<p>Unique Features BEST Plus includes a computer-adaptive version that follows the ability of examinees as they answer, and as the test administrator scores.</p>	<p>Disability Accommodations Hearing aid accommodations can be made but BEST Plus is not a timed test, therefore no accommodation for testing time is needed. For the oral proficiency interview, no accommodation can be made for students who cannot hear or speak. Contact Center for Applied Linguistics for additional information.</p>						
<p>Degree of Business and HR Community Recognition CAL's Web site states BEST Plus is designed for government institutes, K-12, and adult education programs. No information was available on the use or recognition of the test by businesses.</p>	<p>Source BEST Plus Technical Report (2005) National Reporting System (2007) www.nrsweb.org/NRSwork/database/assessment.asp?mode=Show. Center for Applied Linguistics www.cal.org</p>						

Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) – Spanish Reading Comprehension Test (<i>Evaluación de Comprensión de la Lectura</i>)								
<p>Publication Date 1980-2004 Edition Third Edition Author CASAS</p>	<p>Publisher CASAS 5151 Murphy Canyon Road, Suite 220 San Diego, CA 92123-4339 Telephone: 1-800-255-1036 or 858-292-2910 Web: www.casas.org</p>	<p>Purpose The test can be used to assess participant progress, or as a level or program exit measure in Spanish literacy, employability, workplace, Spanish GED, or Spanish as a second language programs. It does not give a grade-level equivalent of Spanish reading ability but can serve to identify those who have low literacy skills.</p>	<p>Method and Format CASAS <i>Evaluación de Comprensión de la Lectura</i> is available in a print version.</p>	<p>Narrative Summary The CASAS Spanish Reading Comprehension Test is a competency-based test of reading comprehension in Spanish. The test contains reading selections drawn from authentic Spanish language material in functional life skill contexts (e.g., newspapers, signs, maps). CASAS Spanish can be used at the front and back end of testing for an individual, as well as to test the individual's progress. Program placement for workforce programs and Spanish literacy levels can also be tested. The test is a translation of the English reading comprehension test items. NRS Test: No</p>	<p>Cost Test Administration Manual: \$50.00 Test Booklets: \$70.00 (25 test booklets) Answer Sheets \$ 33.00 (25 answer sheets)</p>	<p>Usage CASAS Spanish is used to assess native Spanish-speaking populations for employability and day-to-day life skills.</p>		
<p>Intended Population "The test includes items at a range of difficulty levels, from approximately three to nine years of schooling (through <i>secundaria</i>) in most Spanish-speaking countries."</p>	<p>Competencies Measured The test measures competencies related to priority functional life skills on reading.</p>	<p>Speaking No</p>	<p>Listening No</p>	<p>Reading Yes (in Spanish)</p>	<p>Numeracy No</p>	<p>Writing No</p>	<p>Vocational Aptitude No</p>	<p>Vocational Interest No</p>

<p>Norm Reference Groups</p> <p>The norm reference group included adult workers and students with limited English language abilities. The Burros Institute (2007) reported that the English version of the CASAS test underwent several updates between 1995 and 1999; five validation studies in four states (Iowa, Indiana, Connecticut, and California) surveyed more than 17,000 professionals who work, or are stakeholders, in adult basic education.</p>	<p>Validity/Reliability</p> <p>Validity: The Burros Institute (2007) Web-based test review service reported a validity coefficient range of moderate to high (.70–.91) for equivalent English versions.</p> <p>Reliability: The Burros Institute (2007) Web-based test review service reported a reliability range of .73–.96 for equivalent English versions.</p>	<p>Administration</p> <p>Test Time</p> <p>Catalogue test administration reports that the reading comprehension test takes approximately 50 minutes.</p> <p>Group Delivery</p> <p>Yes</p>
<p>Scoring</p> <p>The test contains 30 multiple-choice items to be answered on a self-scoring answer sheet. No training is needed for those administering an assessment, though it is recommended that those administering the test read the manual first.</p>	<p>Number of Forms</p> <p>The test is available in two alternate forms.</p>	<p>Disability Accommodations</p> <p>Local test administrators may provide or allow some accommodations in test administration procedures or environment for documented disabilities without contacting CASAS. However, it is not an appropriate accommodation in test administration procedures to read a CASAS reading test to a learner who is blind or has low literacy skills.</p>
<p>Unique Features</p> <p>This test may be used as an appraisal, as a progress test, or as a level or program exit measure in Spanish literacy, employability, workplace, Spanish GED, or Spanish as a second language programs.</p> <p>The test does not give a grade-level equivalent of Spanish reading ability but can serve to identify those who have low literacy skills.</p>	<p>Degree of Business and HR Community Recognition</p> <p>The CASAS Web site reports that a national coalition was developed with employers and Strumpf Associates: Center for Strategic Change of Washington, DC, that resulted in the establishment of a Workforce Skills Certification System. CASAS identified Bank of America, Hewlett-Packard, IBM, Pacific Bell, and Sutter Health as collaborating partners. While there is evidence of strategic employer engagement in the test item selection and validation process, education institutions, basic education agencies, and Workforce Centers are CASAS's primary customer base.</p>	<p>Source</p> <p>Adapted from CASAS 2007 Catalogue, San Diego, CA; Web access at https://www.casas.org/home/index.cfm?fuseaction=home.showContent&MapID=1125 and revisions per noted sources.</p>

Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) – Employability Competency System (ECS)											
<p>Publication Date 1980-2004 Edition Third Edition Author CASAS Spanish Version No</p>		<p>Publisher CASAS 5151 Murphy Canyon Road, Suite 220 San Diego, CA 92123-4339 Telephone: 1-800-255-1036 or 858-292-2910 Web: www.casas.org</p>			<p>Purpose The CASAS Employability Competency System measures the basic academic skills needed by adults and youth to succeed in today's workforce and to be placed into appropriate education and employment training programs or jobs.</p>			<p>Method and Format CASAS Employability Competency System is available in print and computer-based formats. A cassette tape is used for the listening portion. An oral interview can be used to screen customers who function minimally in English to determine the appropriateness of administering listening, reading, and writing sections.</p>			
<p>Narrative Summary The Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) Third Edition Employability Competency System (ECS) measures reading, math, writing, speaking, and listening abilities applied in an employability context. NRS Test: Yes</p>		<p>Usage The CASAS Employability Competency System can be used to assess basic skills in an employment context matching the abilities of customers to appropriate programs and levels of instruction.</p>			<p>Cost Test Booklets: costs vary by form, \$33.00–\$70.00 Listening Comprehension (for ESL/ELL students) (includes one cassette tape per set): \$75.00 Computer-based Version: Excluding installation costs. Available in increments: 50 \$88.00; 100 \$135.00; 500 \$500.00; 1000 \$750.00. Annual License Fee (client/server installation) \$295</p>						
<p>Intended Population The CASAS Employability Competency System can be used for adults and youth who function from ESL to Adult Secondary Education (i.e., GED) levels.</p>		<p>Competencies Measured Employability Competency System (ECS) series focuses primarily on measuring literacy skill levels in reading, math, and listening in an employability context.</p>			<p>Speaking Yes</p>	<p>Listening Yes</p>	<p>Reading Yes</p>	<p>Numeracy Yes</p>	<p>Writing Yes</p>	<p>Vocational Aptitude No</p>	<p>Vocational Interest No</p>

		Administration	
Norm Reference Groups	Validity/Reliability	Test Time	Group Delivery
<p>The Buros Institute (2007) Web-based test review service reported that the CASAS norm reference group includes adult workers and students with limited English language abilities. Between 1995 and 1999, five validation studies in four states (Iowa, Indiana, Connecticut, and California) surveyed more than 17,000 professionals who work, or are stakeholders, in adult basic education. In all cases, a large majority of the competencies represented in CASAS were supported and deemed important to adult basic education programs.</p> <p>Scoring</p> <p>CASAS requires training to implement the ECS system. Noncertified agencies are eligible to purchase the Distance Training CD-ROM and additional certification activities if they operate no more than three sites and serve fewer than 1,000 learners in total. Price for Distance Training and certification is listed at \$325.</p> <p>Tests are scored automatically using patented computer scoring or print answer sheets for employability tests for reading, math, and listening to measure the ability to apply basic skills in an employability context. Listening tests require the use of cassette tapes or CDs. Measures are based on 300 competencies representing life skills and employability domains.</p> <p>Unique Features</p> <p>CASAS Employability provides measures of job readiness and employability for LEP adults. Employability directly targets the U.S. Department of Labor's SCANS [Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills] competencies.</p> <p>It is the only test available that can be used to assess English, reading, and listening skills in an employability context for both LEP and native English-speaking populations.</p>	<p>The Buros Institute (2007) Web-based test review service reliability section reported an overall reliability coefficient range of .73–.96.</p> <p>Number of Forms</p> <p>There are two forms per level for print and computer formats.</p> <p>Degree of Business and HR Community Recognition</p> <p>The CASAS Web site reports that a national coalition was developed with employers and Strumpf Associates: Center for Strategic Change of Washington, DC, that resulted in the establishment of a Workforce Skills Certification System. CASAS identified Bank of America, Hewlett-Packard, IBM, Pacific Bell, and Sutter Health as collaborating partners. While there is evidence of strategic employer engagement in the test item selection and validation process, education institutions, basic education agencies, and Workforce Centers are CASAS's primary customer base.</p>	<p>Testing time varies depending on which tests the agency wants to administer.</p>	<p>Yes</p>
		<p>Disability Accommodations</p> <p>Local test administrators may provide or allow some accommodations in test administration procedures or environment for documented disabilities without contacting CASAS. However, it is not an appropriate accommodation in test administration procedures to read a CASAS reading test to a learner who is blind or has low literacy skills. CASAS test forms that may be appropriate for learners with a disability include CASAS e-Tests, computer-adapted and computer-based tests, and large-print tests. CASAS large-print tests include ECS test booklets. See CASAS Web site for information on disability accommodations at (https://www.casas.org)</p> <p>Source</p> <p>Adapted from CASAS 2007 Catalogue, San Diego, CA; Web access at https://www.casas.org</p>	

Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) – Life Skills											
Publication Date 1980-2004 Edition Third Edition Author CASAS Spanish Version No		Publisher CASAS 5151 Murphy Canyon Road, Suite 220 San Diego, CA 92123-4339 Telephone: 1-800-255-1036 or 858-292-2910 Web: www.casas.org			Purpose The CASAS Life Skills Series helps identify basic skills that individuals need to function successfully in family and community contexts.			Method and Format The CASAS Life Skills series is available in print and computer formats. A cassette tape is used for the listening portion. An oral interview can be used to screen customers who function minimally in English to determine the appropriateness of administering listening, reading, and writing sections.			
Narrative Summary The Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) Third Edition Life Skills Series assesses reading, math, writing, speaking, and listening abilities needed to function successfully in society. NRS Test: Yes		Usage The CASAS Life Skills Series can be used to assess basic skills in an employment context matching the abilities of customers to appropriate programs and levels of instruction.			Cost Print: Sets of 25 unless otherwise noted. One test administration manual per order is included. Life Skills Appraisal Test Administration: \$66.00 Test Booklets: \$70.00 Self-Scoring Answer Sheets: \$33.00 Computer-based Version: Excluding installation costs from \$88.00–\$750.00. Annual License Fee: \$145–\$295					Intended Population The CASAS Life Skills Series can be used for adults and youth who function from ESL to Adult Secondary Education (i.e., GED) levels.	
Competencies Measured The CASAS Life Skills Series measures competencies related to priority functional life skills. Measures are based on 300 competencies representing life skills and employability domains.		Speaking Yes	Listening Yes	Reading Yes	Numeracy Yes	Writing Yes	Vocational Aptitude No	Vocational Interest No			

<p>Norm Reference Groups</p> <p>The Buros Institute (2007) Web-based test review service reported that the norm reference group includes adult workers and students with limited English language abilities. Between 1995 and 1999, five validation studies in four states (Iowa, Indiana, Connecticut, and California) surveyed more than 17,000 professionals who work, or are stakeholders, in adult basic education (ABE). In all cases, a large majority of the competencies represented in CASAS were supported and deemed important to ABE.</p>	<p>Validity/Reliability</p> <p>Validity: Scoring not available.</p> <p>Reliability: The Buros Institute (2007) Web-based test review service reliability section reported an overall reliability coefficient range of .73–.96.</p>	<p>Administration</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td> <p>Test Time</p> <p>Assessment test: 20–25 minutes, each section</p> <p>Progress test: 45–60 minutes</p> <p>Pre- and Post-Test: 45–60 minutes</p> <p>Computerized test time is dependent on individual's speed.</p> </td> <td> <p>Group Delivery</p> <p>Yes</p> </td> </tr> </table>	<p>Test Time</p> <p>Assessment test: 20–25 minutes, each section</p> <p>Progress test: 45–60 minutes</p> <p>Pre- and Post-Test: 45–60 minutes</p> <p>Computerized test time is dependent on individual's speed.</p>	<p>Group Delivery</p> <p>Yes</p>
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<p>Scoring</p> <p>CASAS requires training to implement the Employability and Life Skills Series. Noncertified agencies are eligible to purchase the Distance Training CD-ROM and additional certification activities if they operate no more than three sites and serve fewer than 1,000 learners in total. Price for Distance Training and certification is listed at \$325.</p>	<p>Number of Forms</p> <p>There are two initial assessment forms and eight forms to measure progress.</p>	<p>Disability Accommodations</p> <p>CASAS test forms that may be appropriate for learners with a disability include CASAS e-Tests, computer-adapted and computer-based tests, and large-print tests. CASAS large-print tests include Life and Work test booklets, and Secondary Assessment test booklets in math. Large-print answer sheets are also available. See CASAS Web site for information on disability accommodations at (https://www.casas.org)</p>		
<p>Unique Features</p> <p>The test uses an appraisal pre-test to identify the correct form of the full test to administer.</p> <p>The CASAS Life Skills test can be used for both limited English proficiency (LEP) and native English-speaking populations.</p>	<p>Degree of Business and HR Community Recognition</p> <p>The CASAS Web site reports that a national coalition was developed with employers and Strumpf Associates: Center for Strategic Change of Washington, DC, that resulted in the establishment of a Workforce Skills Certification System. CASAS identified Bank of America, Hewlett-Packard, IBM, Pacific Bell, and Sutter Health as collaborating partners. While there is evidence of strategic employer engagement in the test item selection and validation process, education institutions, basic education agencies, and Workforce Centers are CASAS's primary customer base.</p>	<p>Source</p> <p>Adapted from CASAS 2007 Catalogue, San Diego, CA; Web access at: https://www.casas.org</p>		

System for Assessment and Group Evaluation (SAGE)

<p>Publication Date 1980-2007 Edition Revised 1994 Author Pesco International</p>	<p>Publisher Pesco International 21 Paulding Street Pleasantville, NY 10570 (914) 769-4266 , (914)769-2970 fax Telephone (toll free): 1-800-431-2015 http://www.pesco.org</p>						
<p>Narrative Summary Narrative Summary The System for Assessment and Group Evaluation (SAGE) is a comprehensive assessment system consisting of multiple manual, computerized, manipulative tests and personality surveys. Additionally, results can be matched to General Educational Development (GED) levels and specific job requirements. Specifically, SAGE measures: cognitive and conceptual abilities; vocational aptitudes; temperaments; vocational interests; learning styles; work attitudes; and work ethic concepts. NRS Test: No</p>	<p>Purpose The purpose of the SAGE test is to assess individual skill sets, attributes, and abilities in relationship to job requirements.</p>	<p>Method and Format The SAGE test is available in computerized and print versions.</p>					
<p>Intended Population SAGE is intended for individuals with fourth grade and higher reading abilities—unless a higher level of reading ability is being tested.</p>	<p>Usage The Sage test is used for applicants or workers to assess career interests, aptitudes, and skills, as well as for employers to determine how well applicants or employees match general requirements for the job.</p>	<p>Cost Total: \$31,795.00 SAGE Computer Assessment System = \$15,000 Sage Computerized Bilingual Testing System = \$15,995 Additional components at additional cost, contact Pesco for information.</p>					
<p>Competencies Measured Measures a person's ability to learn or perform duties in the areas tested, including speaking, reading, numeracy, vocational aptitudes, and vocational skills. Vocational aptitudes include eye-hand-foot coordination; finger dexterity; manual dexterity; color perception; clerical; motor coordination; form perception; and spatial relationships.</p>	<p>Speaking Yes</p>	<p>Listening No</p>	<p>Reading Yes</p>	<p>Numeracy Yes</p>	<p>Writing No</p>	<p>Vocational Aptitude Yes</p>	<p>Vocational Skills Yes</p>

<p>Norm Reference Groups According to test publishers research and norms manual, SAGE's initial research population included a total of 108 students. The total group was 30 unclassified 'normal' students and 78 students classified into special education.; 58 male and 50 female; average age: 19, age range from 15 to 21. Sexes had equal amounts of formal education, averaging 11 years. Grade enrolled ranged from grade 8 through junior college, 11 were enrolled in college. All students came from low socioeconomic backgrounds. Since SAGE's development and implementation, norming studies have been conducted for nine populations of testees representing a substantially greater number of students than the initial research population. These norm populations are classified as: psychologically handicapped; having mixed disabilities; physically handicapped; learning disabled; mentally handicapped; high school students with low intelligence quotients (IQs); high school students enrolled in vocational and technical courses; industrial workers; and normally functioning adults.</p>	<p>Validity/Reliability Validity: The validity coefficient level ranges—based on the initial battery subtest intercorrelations—were .53 to .84. Reliability: The initial internal consistency Kuder-Richardson (KR-20) reliability coefficient level ranges were .57 to .94.</p>	<p>Test Time Complete SAGE administration takes two hours.</p> <p>Administration Group Delivery Yes</p>
<p>Scoring Multiple-choice manual assessment system with psychomotor testing stations. Scoring scanning system available.</p>	<p>Number of Forms Unavailable.</p>	<p>Disability Accommodations The SAGE test is available in large print, Braille, and some units are specially adapted for the visually impaired.</p>
<p>Unique Features The SAGE test provides some level of assessment in the following areas: Learning Styles: Indicates how a person best learns, whether it is by listening, doing, seeing, etc. Worker Attitudes: Gives an indication of a person's attitude toward the workplace. Temperament Factors: Indicates the person's choice of preferred working conditions such as whether or not they prefer working alone or with people, whether they prefer jobs in which they make judgments or whether they prefer being told what to do, etc. SAGE tests are available in Spanish, Russian, and Vietnamese.</p>	<p>Degree of Business and HR Community Recognition The SAGE test is well known among employers. The occupational profiling feature allows employers to assess potential employees for specific job skills needed to meet company-specific performance norms. According to the Pesco Web site, the SAGE test has been used effectively by General Motors and Ford Motor Company in cooperation with the UAW in displaced worker programs.</p>	<p>Source PESCO International (1999), The vocational aptitude battery (VAB) research and norms manual. Pleasantville, NY: Author. PESCO Web site: www.pesco.org</p>

Spanish CAPS (Career Ability Placement Survey)										
<p>Publication Date 2003–2007 Edition 2003 revision Author Knapp-Lee, Lisa; Knapp, Lila F.; Knapp, Robert R.</p>	<p>Publisher Edits/Educational and Industrial Testing Service P.O. Box 7234 San Diego, CA 92167 Telephone: 1-800-416-1666 http://www.edits.net</p>	<p>Purpose Spanish CAPS assesses abilities to identify career options consistent with test taker interests and aptitudes.</p>	<p>Method and Format Print booklets with computer-based scoring option.</p>							
<p>Narrative Summary Spanish CAPS is a comprehensive, multidimensional battery designed to measure vocally relevant abilities. Spanish CAPS measures eight ability dimensions keyed to entry requirements for the majority of occupations in each of the 14 Career Occupational Preference (COP) System Career Clusters. Spanish CAPS scores are interpreted in terms of examinees' abilities relative to others at the same educational level. Scores are also interpreted in terms of the COPSsystem Career Clusters. NRS Test: No</p>	<p>Intended Population Spanish CAPS is appropriate for Spanish speakers with high school level or higher Spanish language abilities.</p>	<p>Usage Spanish CAPS is used to assist in career guidance and counseling for college-bound students, professionals, and college students.</p>	<p>Cost Booklets: Range from \$55.25–\$880.25 Self-Interpretation Profile: \$17.75–\$256.50 Spanish CAPS Basic Machine Scoring: \$1.80 each</p>	<p>Speaking No</p>	<p>Listening No</p>	<p>Reading Yes (in Spanish)</p>	<p>Numeracy Yes</p>	<p>Writing No</p>	<p>Vocational Aptitude Yes</p>	<p>Vocational Interests Yes</p>
<p>Competencies Measured CAPS measures occupational abilities including mechanical reasoning, spatial relations, verbal reasoning, numerical ability, language usage, word knowledge, perceptual speed and accuracy, and manual speed and dexterity.</p>										

<p>Norm Reference Groups Translation of the English COP System was re-normed with data that were gathered from January 2000 through June 2002 for a sample of 18,991 seventh through twelfth grade students. In addition to the high school sample, a sample of 1,898 college students was examined.</p>	<p>Validity/Reliability Validity: Spanish CAPS, English version reported validity at moderate (.65 to .81). Reliability: Spanish CAPS, English version .70 to .95.</p>	<p>Administration</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td> <p>Test Time 51 minutes</p> </td> <td> <p>Group Delivery Yes</p> </td> </tr> </table>		<p>Test Time 51 minutes</p>	<p>Group Delivery Yes</p>
<p>Test Time 51 minutes</p>	<p>Group Delivery Yes</p>				
<p>Scoring Self-scoring or machine scoring. Machine scoring utilizes the Integrated Reporting, Interpretation and Scoring Software (IRIS) and provides instant results for CAPS assessments. Online help is available to assist you with program operation.</p>	<p>Number of Forms One form per version</p>	<p>Disability Accommodations Braille or enlarged print</p>			
<p>Unique Features Spanish CAPS scores are interpreted in terms of the COPSystem Career Clusters.</p>	<p>Degree of Business and HR Community Recognition Spanish CAPS is primarily a career guidance assessment instrument designed for high school and college students. The developer, Edits, claims on its Web site that it has served business and industry professional development needs for more than 40 years.</p>	<p>Source Edits/Educational and Industrial Testing Service (www.edits.net) and revisions per noted sources.</p>			

The Spanish WorkKeys						
<p>Publication Date 1992-2007 Edition Spanish Version 2000 Author Lindquist, E. F. and McCarrel, T.</p>	<p>Publisher The WorkKeys ACT 500 ACT Drive P.O. Box 168 Iowa City Iowa 52243-0168 Telephone: 1-800-WORKKEY (967-5539) or 319-337-1550. http://www.act.org/workkeys/</p>	<p>Purpose The purpose of the Spanish WorkKeys is to measure abilities in relationship to workplace skills that are used in a wide range of occupations.</p>	<p>Method and Format WorkKeys assessments are available in paper and computer-based formats.</p>	<p>Cost WorkKeys can only be accessed through an ACT-licensed provider. Contact ACT for WorkKeys pricing.</p>	<p>Vocational Aptitude Yes</p>	<p>Vocational Interests No</p>
<p>Narrative Summary Spanish WorkKeys tests are direct translations of the original English WorkKeys tests, which have been administered more than six million times since 1992. WorkKeys is a job skills assessment system measuring real-world skills that employers consider to be critical to job success. The following WorkKeys tests are available in Spanish: applied mathematics, applied technology, locating information, and reading for information. NRS Test: No (Only the English WorkKeys test is approved by the NRS.)</p>	<p>Usage The Spanish WorkKeys tests are used to assess "real-world" skills that employers consider to be critical to job success.</p>	<p>Listening No</p>	<p>Reading Yes</p>	<p>Numeracy Yes</p>	<p>Writing No</p>	<p>Vocational Interests No</p>
<p>Intended Population Native Spanish language employees and potential employees who are adults and/or high school students.</p>	<p>Competencies Measured WorkKeys tests provide competency measurement in applied, workplace contexts. In addition to the reading and math skills, the Spanish WorkKeys assess applied technology skills.</p>	<p>Speaking No</p>	<p>Listening No</p>	<p>Numeracy Yes</p>	<p>Writing No</p>	<p>Vocational Interests No</p>

<p>Norm Reference Groups The WorkKeys system was developed in consultation with employers, educators, and labor organizations. The norm groups included native Spanish language employees and potential employees who were adults and/or high school students. In 1991–1992, initial WorkKeys foundational skills were selected on the basis of a review of the literature relating to employer-identified skill needs and a survey of employers and educators. Businesses and educators assisted in the design and review of plans and materials and provided examinees for the prototype and field-test phases of assessment development.</p>	<p>Validity/Reliability WorkKeys Performance Assessment Technical Manual (2007) provides a performance index that combines both scales for demonstrated internal consistency and reliability. The combined index reliability range is .89–.90.</p>	<p>Test Time Paper test version: 45 min. for each of the four tests Computer-based test: 55 min. for each of the four tests</p> <p>Group Delivery Yes</p>
<p>Scoring WorkKeys can only be accessed through an ACT-licensed provider. Scoring includes print and computer-based options.</p>	<p>Number of Forms Varies with the 10 separate assessments (NRS, 2007). Practice tests also available online and print versions are available for test centers.</p>	<p>Disability Accommodations Testing accommodations include: (1) assignment to a wheelchair-accessible room; (2) large-type test booklet; (3) marking answers in the test booklet; and (4) permission for diabetics to eat snacks, etc. Examples of accommodations students with hearing impairments may request include: (1) seating near the front of the room to lip-read spoken instructions; (2) a sign language interpreter (<i>not</i> a relative) to sign spoken instructions (<i>not</i> test items); and (3) a printed copy of spoken instructions with visual notification from testing staff of start, time remaining, and stop times. Contact ACT for additional information.</p>
<p>Unique Features WorkKeys tests are one of the few Spanish reading and numeracy assessment instruments with test items that have an employment context. They also include a Spanish language applied technology test.</p>	<p>Degree of Business and HR Community Recognition WorkKeys is well known among employers. WorkKeys offers an occupational profiling feature that allows employers to assess potential employees for specific job skills needed to meet company-specific performance norms. The ability to identify job-specific skill gaps is a valuable tool for employers.</p>	<p>Source WorkKeys at www.act.org National Reporting System at www.nrsweb.org.</p>

Sistema de Preferencia Ocupacional de Carreras (SPOC)								
<p>Publication Date 1982-1989 2003 revision</p> <p>Author Knapp-Lee, Lisa; Knapp, Lila F.; Knapp, Robert R.</p>	<p>Publisher</p> <p>Edits/Educational and Industrial Testing Service P.O. Box 7234 San Diego, CA 92167 Telephone: 1-800-416-1666 http://www.edits.net</p>	<p>Narrative Summary</p> <p><i>Sistema de Preferencia Ocupacional de Carreras (SPOC)</i> is a Spanish translation of the English version of the Career Occupational Preference System (COPS) Interest Inventory. SPOC interpretive material emphasizes a "hands-on" approach to career exploration, featuring career and educational planning worksheets, along with a list of suggested activities to gain experience.</p> <p>The Spanish translation includes a Self-Interpretation Profile and Guide that lists job titles in Spanish along with related courses and college majors.</p> <p>NRS Test: No</p>	<p>Purpose</p> <p>The purpose of SPOC is to assist Spanish-speaking customers in selecting careers or jobs that are aligned to their career interests.</p>	<p>Method and Format</p> <p>Print self-scoring or computer-based scoring options are available for SPOC.</p>	<p>Cost</p> <p>25 self-scoring or machine-scored SPOC booklets: \$16.25 25 Self-Interpretation Profiles: \$16.25 Volume prices and additional information are available from the publisher.</p>	<p>Competencies Measured</p> <p>SPOC measures career interest through an interest Inventory of 168 items in various career clusters: science (medical-life, physical); technology (civil, electrical, mechanical); outdoor (agribusiness, nature); business (management, finance, computation); communication (written, oral); arts (design, performing); and service (social-health, instructional).</p>		
		<p>Usage</p> <p>SPOC is used to assist in career guidance and counseling for college-bound students, professionals, and college students.</p>						
		<p>Intended Population</p> <p>SPOC is appropriate for Spanish speakers with high school or higher native language abilities.</p>						
		<p>Speaking</p> <p>No</p>	<p>Listening</p> <p>No</p>	<p>Reading</p> <p>No</p>	<p>Numeracy</p> <p>No</p>	<p>Writing</p> <p>No</p>	<p>Vocational Aptitude</p> <p>No</p>	<p>Vocational Interest</p> <p>Yes</p>

<p>Norm Reference Groups Translation of the English COP System was re-normed with data that were gathered from January 2000 through June 2002 for a sample of 18,991 seventh through twelfth grade students. In addition to the high school sample, a sample of 1,898 college students was examined.</p>	<p>Validity/Reliability Validity: The publisher reports a validity coefficient of .21 to .49 for the English version of the test. Reliability: The publisher reports a reliability coefficient of .86 to .92 for the English version of the test.</p>	<p>Administration</p> <p>Test Time 20–30 minutes</p> <p>Group Delivery Yes</p>	
<p>Scoring Self-scoring or machine scoring</p>	<p>Number of Forms One form per version</p>	<p>Disability Accommodations Braille or enlarged print</p>	
<p>Unique Features The <i>Sistema de Preferencia Ocupacional de Carreras</i> (SPOC) Interest Inventory provides job activity interest scores related to the 14 COPSystem Career Clusters. Each cluster is keyed to high school and college curriculum, as well as current sources of occupational information.</p>	<p>Degree of Business and HR Community Recognition SPOC is primarily a career guidance assessment instrument designed for high school and college students. The developer, Edits, claims on its Web site that it has served business and industry professional development needs for more than 40 years.</p>	<p>Source Edits/Educational and Industrial Testing Service at www.edits.net</p>	

Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) Español							
<p>Publication Date 1980-2004 Edition Fifth Edition Author CTB/McGraw-Hill</p>	<p>Publisher CTB/McGraw-Hill 20 Ryan Ranch Road Monterey, CA 93940 Telephone (toll free): 1-800-538-9547 or 831-393-0700 http://www.ctb.com/</p>						
<p>Narrative Summary TABE Español assesses basic reading, mathematics, and language skills in Spanish using content and language appropriate for adults. TABE Español is based on the English TABE 7 & 8. NRS Test: No (Only the English TABE is NRS approved.)</p>	<p>Purpose The purpose of TABE Español is to assess basic reading, mathematics, and language skills using content and language appropriate for adults.</p>	<p>Method and Format TABE Español is available in print and computer formats. TABE Español uses test administration procedures that include an orientation and structure similar to TABE 7 & 8. The Spanish edition assesses two basic skill levels: Level E (Easy) tests grade ranges 1.6 to 3.9, and Level M (Medium) tests grade ranges 3.6 to 6.9. TABE Español can be scored either by hand or with the computer-based software.</p>					
<p>Intended Population TABE Español is intended to assess adults whose native language is Spanish with equivalent skills of grade levels 1.6 through 6.9.</p>	<p>Usage TABE Español is used to help adult education teachers, employers, and training professionals to effectively plan individual and group instruction and assess progress.</p>	<p>Cost Complete Kit \$35; TABE-E Español TEST 25 Packets \$111; TABE-M Español TEST 25 Packets \$111; Locator 50 Answer Sheet \$32; TABE Español 50 Answer Sheet \$32; 50 Practice Exercise/Locator Tests \$32; 25 Locator SCOREZE Answer \$31; 25 TABE E&M Español SCOREZE \$39; 25 Practice Exercise and Locator \$60; 50 Interview Form Word List \$37; Examiner's Manual \$20.</p>					
<p>Competencies Measured TABE Español focuses on three types of literacy: prose literacy, document literacy, and quantitative literacy. These main content areas are supported by optional vocabulary, language mechanics, and spelling tests.</p>	<p>Speaking No</p>	<p>Listening No</p>	<p>Reading Yes</p>	<p>Numeracy Yes</p>	<p>Writing No</p>	<p>Vocational Aptitude No</p>	<p>Vocational Interests No</p>

		Administration	
		Test Time	Group Delivery
<p>Norm Reference Groups TABE Español was developed by Spanish-speaking experts and includes “positive cultural references and an objective structure targeted to basic skills instruction in Spanish.” The methodology used to establish norm reference is the same scale as TABE 5 & 6 and reflects percentiles of the adult Spanish-speaking population.</p>	<p>Validity/Reliability For the English version of TABE, the Burros Institute reported the following: Validity: coefficient range of moderate .70–.71 Reliability: coefficient range of .52–.73.</p>	<p>A single complete battery and locator test is available in Spanish. The complete battery administration time is approximately 120 minutes. The locator test administration time is 20 minutes.</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>Scoring Hand- or computer-scoring options are available. TABE Español examiners must be able to read and speak English and Spanish to administer the tests.</p>	<p>Number of Forms TABE Español uses level E (Easy) test grade ranges of 1.6 to 3.9, and level M (Medium) tests grade ranges of 3.6 to 6.9. There is one form per level.</p>	<p>Disability Accommodations CTB/McGraw-Hill uses Guidelines for Inclusive Test Administration (2005) to determine appropriate accommodations. The guidelines use three categories for accommodations: Category 1, take the test alone or in a study carrel; Category 2, use extra testing time for any timed test; and Category 3, relates to the use of a Braille test. CTB recommends that individual student scores obtained with Category 2 and 3 for accommodations be interpreted in light of the accommodation(s) used including consideration of how the accommodation(s) may alter what is measured. Agencies may assign accommodation information to one or more of these special codes spaces, and CTB can disaggregate the necessary information on score reports and/or research data files. Test administration conditions may also appear on individual student reports, but will be interpretable only by those familiar with the code layout.</p>	<p>Source CTB/McGraw-Hill (www.ctb.com) CBT/McGraw-Hill, Guidelines for Inclusive Test Administration (2005)</p>
<p>Unique Features TABE Español provides a Spanish language math test that is appropriate to assess Spanish in customers with limited formal education.</p>	<p>Degree of Business and HR Community Recognition The TABE Español primary customer base is education institutions, basic education agencies, and Workforce Centers. The McGraw-Hill Web site and Burros test review service did not reveal efforts to directly market to employers.</p>		

Valpar Computerized Ability Tests (VCAT) (Spanish)						
<p>Publication Date 1998-1999 Edition First Author Christopherson, B. and Swartz, A.</p>	<p>Publisher Valpar International Corporation 20 Ryan Ranch Road Monterey, CA 93940 Telephone (toll free): 1-800-538-9547 or 831-393-0700 http://www.valparint.com/index.htm</p>	<p>Purpose Spanish VCAT provides a multifunctional approach to career assessment. It encompasses aptitude and academic assessment, a pictorial forced-choice interest survey, and job searching.</p>	<p>Method and Format VCAT is a computer-based assessment system that is available in English and Spanish.</p>	<p>Cost The cost is based on the number of test administrations; there are no additional installation fees. Test administration rates are \$495 for 100 tests; \$2,995 for 500 tests; and \$4,595 for 1,000 tests.</p>	<p>Vocational Aptitude Yes</p> <p>Writing No</p> <p>Vocational Interests Yes</p>	
<p>Narrative Summary VCAT in Spanish is a translation of the English language VCAT. The test is a pictorial interest survey used to survey an individual's job-related interests for use in career exploration and job/training placement. Vocational interests are surveyed through a pictorial/audio presentation of more than 100 jobs. NRS Test: No</p>	<p>Intended Population Adults and youth with Spanish language skills comparable to grade four through college freshmen in U.S. schools.</p>	<p>Usage The Spanish VCAT is used as a multifunctional approach to career assessment for native Spanish speakers.</p>	<p>Speaking No</p> <p>Listening No</p> <p>Reading Yes</p> <p>Numeracy Yes</p>	<p>Competencies Measured VCAT assesses basic skills and vocational interests and aptitudes in Spanish. Aptitudes measured include general learning ability, verbal, numerical, spatial perception, form perception, clerical skills, and color discrimination.</p>		

<p>Norm Reference Groups Valpar field tested approximately 600 people, including limited English proficiency individuals (LEP) and native English speakers with 380 items divided between four English language and four math tests.</p>	<p>Validity/Reliability The Burros Institute test review service reported the following: Validity: coefficient range of moderate (.64-.70) Reliability: coefficient range of .82-.92</p>	<p>Administration</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td> <p>Test Time All subtests and surveys are computer based and can be completed in 60 minutes.</p> </td> <td> <p>Group Delivery Yes</p> </td> </tr> </table>	<p>Test Time All subtests and surveys are computer based and can be completed in 60 minutes.</p>	<p>Group Delivery Yes</p>
<p>Test Time All subtests and surveys are computer based and can be completed in 60 minutes.</p>	<p>Group Delivery Yes</p>			
<p>Scoring Scoring options include student-driven or evaluator-directed computer-generated results. The survey is administered and scored on the computer based on the latest O*NET database and contains more than 1,000 occupations, each with a full skills profile. Spanish VCAT's multifunctional approach to career assessment encompasses aptitude and academic assessment, a pictorial forced-choice interest survey, and job searching.</p>	<p>Number of Forms Two equivalent forms</p>	<p>Disability Accommodations Consult Valpar for disability accommodation information.</p>		
<p>Unique Features Valpar is aligned with the U.S. Department of Labor's Handbook for Analyzing Jobs.</p>	<p>Degree of Business and HR Community Recognition Founded in 1973, Valpar reports that its assessments provide vocational evaluation services to more than 8,000 customers, including employers, in all 50 states and 42 foreign countries.</p>	<p>Source Valpar International Corporation (www.valparint.com) and revisions per noted sources</p>		

Batería III Woodcock-Muñoz															
<p>Publication Date 2006 Edition Third Edition Author Woodcock, R. W.; Munoz-Sandoval, A. F.; Ruef, M.; Alvarado, C. G.</p>	<p>Publisher Riverside Publishing (a division of Houghton-Mifflin) 425 Spring Lake Drive Itasca, IL 60143 1-800-323-9540 http://www.riverpub.com/products</p>														
<p>Narrative Summary The <i>Batería III Woodcock-Muñoz</i> is a parallel Spanish version of the well-known Woodcock-Johnson III test. The test consists of cognitive and achievement batteries. The achievement battery includes reading, oral language, mathematics, and language and academic language proficiency sections designed to test native Spanish speakers of all ages. NRS Test: No</p>	<p>Purpose The purpose of the <i>Batería III Woodcock-Muñoz</i> is to provide a comprehensive measurement of general intellectual ability, specific cognitive abilities, oral language, and academic achievement for Spanish-speaking persons ages 2 to 90+ years and grades K.0 to 16.9+.</p>														
<p>Intended Population Native Spanish speakers ages 2–90</p>	<p>Usage The <i>Batería III Woodcock-Muñoz</i> can be used to assess literacy, math, and language skills for non-native English speakers.</p>														
<p>Method and Format Print version with computer-based scoring.</p>	<p>Cost The cost for the <i>Batería III Woodcock-Muñoz</i> complete system is \$1,142.00. This includes cognitive standard and extended testbooks, an examiner's manual, an examiner's training workbook, audio recording, 25 test records and subject response booklets, 5 BIS test records, scoring guides, achievement standard and extended testbooks, <i>Batería III Compuscore</i>, and Profiles Program and scoring guides. All first-time individual test purchasers must furnish evidence of education and professional qualifications to use tests.</p>														
<p>Competencies Measured The assessment consists of cognitive and achievement batteries. The achievement battery measures four areas of achievement: reading, oral language, mathematics, and language and academic written language proficiency.</p>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 15%;">Speaking</th> <th style="width: 15%;">Listening</th> <th style="width: 15%;">Reading</th> <th style="width: 15%;">Numeracy</th> <th style="width: 15%;">Writing</th> <th style="width: 15%;">Vocational Aptitude</th> <th style="width: 15%;">Vocational Interests</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Yes</td> <td style="text-align: center;">No</td> <td style="text-align: center;">No</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Speaking	Listening	Reading	Numeracy	Writing	Vocational Aptitude	Vocational Interests	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Speaking	Listening	Reading	Numeracy	Writing	Vocational Aptitude	Vocational Interests									
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No									

		Administration	
Norm Reference Groups	Validity/Reliability	Test Time	Group Delivery
<p>Norm Reference Groups</p> <p>Normative data for the test were gathered from 8,818 subjects in more than 100 geographically diverse communities in the United States.</p> <p>The sample consisted of 1,143 preschool subjects; 4,784 kindergarten to twelfth grade subjects; 1,165 college and university subjects; and 1,843 adult subjects.</p> <p>The sample was selected to represent, within practical limits, the U.S. population from ages 24 months to 90+ years.</p>	<p>Validity/Reliability</p> <p>The English Woodcock-Johnson III and <i>Bateria III Woodcock-Munoz</i> were co-normed, which means that the normative data are based on a single sample. When tests are co-normed, examiners get actual discrepancies and avoid errors typically associated with estimated discrepancies.</p> <p>The English Woodcock-Johnson III test shows a reliability coefficient of .80 to .90.</p>	<p>Test Time</p> <p>Cognitive standard 7 tests (35–45 minutes)</p> <p>Achievement standard 11 tests (55–65 minutes)</p> <p>Diagnostic supplement supplies an additional 11 cognitive tests (55–65 minutes), approximately 5–10 minutes per test</p>	<p>Group Delivery</p> <p>No</p>
<p>Scoring</p> <p>For scoring, the <i>Bateria III Woodcock-Munoz</i> uses Compuscore, a computer-based scoring system, which yields scores and profiles based on individual tests.</p>	<p>Number of Forms</p> <p>The <i>Bateria III Woodcock-Munoz</i> includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Five reading tests Four oral language tests Four mathematics tests Four written language tests Four supplemental academic language proficiency tests 	<p>Disability Accommodations</p> <p>The Riverside test developer allows various types of accommodations: (1) tested off level or out of level; (2) use of braille edition; (3) use of large-print edition; (4) answers recorded by an assistant; (5) extended time; (6) communication assistance; (7) test given individually or in a small group; (8) repeat direction; (9) read tests aloud; and (10) use a word-to-word dictionary for translation.</p> <p>Contact Riverside representative for the <i>Woodcock-Munoz Bateria III</i> protocol.</p>	
<p>Unique Features</p> <p>The <i>Bateria III Woodcock-Munoz</i> includes a phonological component that is an early predictor of reading acquisition, vocabulary, or listening comprehension and is an important predictor of educational achievement. Deficits in this area are a major cause of severe reading problems. Phonological awareness is the ability to focus on the sound structure of language apart from its meaning. It is a predictor not an actual measure of existing listening comprehension abilities.</p>	<p>Degree of Business and HR Community Recognition</p> <p><i>Bateria III Woodcock-Munoz</i> is an assessment instrument designed for preschool, and school-aged and adult education students. The Riverside Publishing Web site did not reveal efforts to directly market to employers.</p>		<p>Source</p> <p>Riverside Publishing (www.riverpub.com)</p>

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Notes