



# Supplemental English Language Learning for Employment

## Prototype Team



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## The Big Idea

An experiential, supplemental English language learning program that supports newcomers in developing speaking/listening skills specific to employment so that they can get a job earlier in the English learning process.



## Who is This For?

This program supports vulnerable populations with complex barriers to employment newcomer groups who do not have a job but would like one, and who have 'beginner' to 'low intermediate' English speaking/listening language skills (Stage 1 on the Canadian Language Benchmarks). These individuals may have limited literacy in their native language.

## What is the Problem?

Existing English language courses emphasize raising an individual's overall language level. While this is important, it does not enable individuals who require immediate employment to support themselves and their families, to gain the speaking/listening language skills necessary to get a 'survival' job.



## Barriers

Many new-comers struggle with existing English language programs because they have:

- A sense of urgency - English language speaking/listening skills are required as quickly as possible for finding employment
- Interrupted and incomplete schooling history from living in refugee camps
- Limited literacy even in their own language and have no experience learning to write or read
- Lack of support systems and cultural knowledge to buffer predictable challenges to employment: childcare disruptions; public transportation in off-peak hours; workplace cultural miscommunications; illness
- PTSD which results in fatigue that makes it hard to learn and difficult to focus in a classroom environment

## Our Solution:

### Supplemental English Programs Focused on Employment

This innovative program is envisioned as an 'elective' course that complements the already well-established Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) program in Canada.

#### 1 Course Registration

Newcomers accessing LINC would have the opportunity to register for this course. The course would run three times a week for three months.



#### 2 Co-Designing Course Content

The course would follow a shared leadership model of education. Educators and newcomers would work together to create lessons that reflect the challenges and questions newcomers are facing.

Space would be created for emergent and organic learning opportunities and a peer learning model would enable newcomers to learn from one another through the exploration of common challenges.



## Focused on Employment

The program would hone in on challenges newcomers face related to searching, applying for, and maintaining work including online and computer skills, job search strategies, and understanding workplace culture.

#### 3 3 Days per Week for 3 Months

One day per week newcomers would participate in a two hour classroom learning session. The second day per week would involve a two hour experiential outing and the third would involve one-on-one employment coaching.



#### DAY 1 Classroom Learning

Teacher prepares a lesson that involves a combination of new vocabulary, role play, authentic tasks and realia (ie: a menu with prices).



#### DAY 2 Experiential Learning

Activities and field trips that take students out of the classroom and into the community/workplace. Afterwards, the teacher encourages conversation about the activity.



#### DAY 3 Follow-up

The teacher reinforces key learning points from the field trip and does a check-in to see where people are at in the job search process. When needed, the teacher offers one-on-one coaching/employment problem solving.

## Building on Existing Course Structure

This program follows the LINC calendar and complements the already well established LINC program offered to newcomers across Canada. It comes at a time when LINC is exploring ways of incorporating more experiential learning at their sites to connect Stage 1 learners with employment.



#### 4 English Skills to Support Sustainable Employment

This program offers a complimentary pathway to individuals already accessing LINC by providing them the opportunity to hone speaking/listening language skills specific to employment. This will increase their chances of securing a 'survival' job whilst they continue to raise their overall English language level through LINC courses.



## Changes in Job Certification Processes Needed

Many newcomers who are still learning English are not able to acquire essential workplace certificates (First Aid, Food Safe, WHMIS) because passing the test requires a level of digital literacy and language skills that far exceed the level necessary to be successful on the job. Without these specific certificates, online applications are automatically rejected.



## Next Steps

We envision the following steps in taking this project from prototype to pilot to program.

- STEP 1**  
Three Month Pilot in a single LINC School  
We are seeking funds to cover the costs of a 3 month pilot of this program in a local LINC site.
- STEP 2**  
One Year Pilot in Several LINC Schools  
Apply for a federal government Service Delivery Improvement Grant (SDI) to run a one year pilot of the program in several LINC sites.
- STEP 3**  
Program Implemented in LINC Schools Across Canada  
LINC agrees to take on the project as their own and funds the implementation of it in LINC sites across Canada.

We want to make this prototype a reality!

If you are interested in contributing funds or piloting this program, please contact:

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**WE NEED YOUR HELP!**