

# Workplace ESOL Capacity-Building Workshop Series for Instructors and Curriculum Designers Fundamentals of Contextualized Curriculum Part 1: April 22, 2022

- Franklin Peralta  
Director of Business Engagement  
[fperalta@englishfornewbostonians.org](mailto:fperalta@englishfornewbostonians.org)  
617-982-6863
- Sarah Barber  
Workplace ESOL Coordinator  
[sbarber@englishfornewbostonians.org](mailto:sbarber@englishfornewbostonians.org)



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*Commonwealth Corporation fosters workforce equity in Massachusetts by delivering innovative and collaborative professional development solutions that help diverse communities and employers succeed.*

# UPCOMING WORKSHOPS

## BALANCING STUDENT AND COMPANY NEEDS

MAY 6 & 13, 9:30-11:30 AM

- Communicating with supervisors; addressing challenges to students; differentiating workplace content for multiple levels of English and literacy/illiteracy. Practicum: Contextualized/ differentiated lessons

## INTEGRATING TECHNOLOGY AND DIGITAL LITERACY

MAY 20 & 27, 9:30-11:30 AM

- Teaching classes online; integrating digital literacy; online resources for instructors and students. Practicum: Integrating digital literacy

[REGISTER HERE](#) or on the [Workshop Website](#)

## PART 2 NEXT FRIDAY APRIL 29, 2022

*Focus on the design and instruction of workplace contextualized **lessons**: strategies, examples, and practice.*

*If you have suggestions or expectations for next Friday, submit them in the short survey you receive after today's workshop.*

*Check out the resources posted on the [Workshop Website](#)*

# PART 1 AGENDA

1. *Introductions*
2. *Review workshop objectives*
3. *The adult learner in Workplace ESOL*
4. *Workplace ESOL contextualized curriculum*
  - Comparisons with ABE ESOL curriculum*
  - Resources for Workplace curriculum*
5. *Practice: Design a Workplace ESOL unit*



## OBJECTIVES

1. *Discuss strategies for contextualizing Adult ESOL curriculum to the Workplace needs.*
2. *Explore resources for developing Workplace ESOL curriculum*
3. *Engage with fellow educators to share ideas, experience, and practice designing Workplace ESOL curriculum*

*What else do you expect to learn about contextualizing curriculum during this workshop?*



# EDUCATION VS. TRAINING

“The goal of training is to teach people to follow prescribed procedures and to perform in a standardized manner.

The goal of education is to create independent problem solvers who have sufficient depth of understanding to figure out what to do when the procedures break down.”

# CONSIDERATIONS FOR ADULT LEARNERS

“The adult learner will need more time but will be more accurate once mastery has been reached.”

“New material should be presented in small segments...and review[ed] often.”

“Adults prefer self-directed learning” and “benefit from group learning experiences.”



# ADULT LEARNERS IN WORKPLACE ESOL

80% of adults enrolled in education said their “motivation is work-related.”

Adult learners bring “significant knowledge to the workforce education experience.”

“Concepts...are learned quicker when they are concrete to the occupational goal, and when they relate to the previous experience of the student.”

# WORKPLACE ESOL CONTEXTUALIZED CURRICULUM

*Adult ESOL educators are masters at contextualizing!*

- *Students with various educational and professional goals*
- *Functional ESOL classes*
- *Academic ESOL (college preparatory)*
- *ESOL for Parents*

*Compare Function ESOL and Workplace ESOL curriculums*

# RESOURCES FOR CURRICULUM DESIGN

- *The case for textbooks*
- *The company management team or Planning and Evaluation Team (PET) members*
- *The employee learners – your students*

# THE CASE FOR TEXTBOOKS

## *Benefits*

*Students like owning books, proud to be in English class*

*Reference materials for students, easier to work in textbook than on the phone*

*Useful content guides, provide structure for the class.*

## *Keep in mind...*

*Workplace ESOL focus is content, don't spend all \$\$ on grammar textbooks*

*Even workplace specific textbooks must be augmented with company specific content*

A list of ESOL textbooks useful for Workplace ESOL will be posted on the Workshop Series Website. Please send me any that you want to share with your colleagues.

# MANAGEMENT OR PET MEMBERS

The PET should include representatives from all stakeholders:

- the union
- company leadership
- managers / supervisors
- employee learners
- curriculum designer
- instructor(s)

Members of the PET team can provide:

- “What **workplace themes** should be addressed in the program’s curriculum.”
- “Suggestions for **class content** ideas and **materials**”

# BREAKOUT SESSION: MANAGERS AS A RESOURCE

*Breakout Session: Groups of 3, 15 minutes*

**Objective:** *Using manager input as a resource, identify themes and materials/content to include in the curriculum.*

1. Examine the following summary of four manager interviews at a grocery store chain.
2. Identify **3** workplace themes (modules/units) that should be included in the curriculum
3. What authentic materials from the company would be useful for designing curriculum to teach the themes you identified?

*Assign one group member to type your answers and be willing to share their screen when we discuss as a whole group.*

# THE EMPLOYEE LEARNERS - YOUR STUDENTS

*“Adults frequently bring significant knowledge to the workforce education experience” (Grey & Herr).*

Program participants are an important resource for curriculum design and lesson planning.

*“These students know and perform their tasks well”  
(instructor quote from MWLC).*

## **BEFORE CLASSES COMMENCE (WORKPLACE NEEDS ASSESSMENT)**

Strategies for soliciting curriculum and lesson ideas from students:

- Interviews and surveys - “[most] workers have specific concerns in common”
- Observe employees on the job – job shadowing



# ADAPTING AND DEVELOPING CURRICULUM DURING THE PROGRAM

*“ Listen inside and outside of the classroom, before, during and after class for students’ work concerns and build your curriculum around them.”*

Strategies to identify workplace themes:

- Assure students of **confidentiality**.
- Journal writing provides insights into issues to include in the curriculum.
- Reading work-related short stories may help students open up to discussing issues at work.

# BREAKOUT SESSION: DESIGN A WORKPLACE CONTEXTUALIZED UNIT

*Breakout Session: Groups of 3, 30 minutes*

*Objective: Develop scope and sequence of course curriculum for a 3-4 week unit (1 theme), 12-16 hours of instruction*

1. Examine the example of a scope and sequence grid for one unit of a restaurant Workplace ESOL curriculum.
2. Choose a theme common to workplace ESOL, or from our previous grocery store example.
3. Fill out the scope and sequence grid (feel free to use a different method to develop your unit. The grid is a guide, but there are many curriculum design formats).

*Assign one group member to type your answers and be willing to share their screen when we discuss as a whole group.*

# CONTACT US FOR INDIVIDUAL ASSISTANCE

This workshop series is sponsored by Commonwealth Corporation and delivered by English for New Bostonians.

As part of this training, we are available for individual technical assistance for your organization's Workplace ESOL questions or needs.

**Sarah's Availability Next Week:**  
Monday, April 25 9am-12 noon  
Tuesday, April 26 9am – 12 noon

**OR** feel free to arrange another time with Franklin or myself.

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## REFERENCES

Gray, K. C., & Herr, E. L. (1998). *Workforce Education: The Basics*. Allyn & Bacon, Needham Heights, MA.

Massachusetts Workforce Literacy Consortium. Chernow, H., & Lee Utech, J. (Eds.). (1999). *Workplace Education Guide*. Massachusetts Workforce Literacy Consortium.

