

# **Training Needs Assessment Report**

**PLAY MAGIC**

(Date)

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## ***Introduction***

### **Acknowledgments**

I wish to thank aaaaa for arranging the focus groups and individual interviews and for giving me an eye-opening tour of the operation. I appreciate the cooperation and valuable input provided by interviewees aaaaa, bbbbbb, ccccc, ddddd, and eeeee, and by the 40 section supervisors and production workers who participated in the six focus groups.

### **Background**

PLAY MAGIC, with approximately 90 employees, is a firmly established XXXXX business that produces wooden toys for the domestic and international market, with products supplied to over 20 countries. PLAY MAGIC prides itself in being responsive to product advances and market changes. It is a flexible organization that can react and adapt quickly, when the need arises.

Although PLAY MAGIC draws from a relatively small employee base in XXXXX and surrounding area, it has been successful in finding employees who appear to be a good fit for the business, employees who take pride in doing quality work.

### **The Project Team Members**

The makeup of the initial project team is shown in Table 1.

**Table 1 — Initial Project Team**

Initial Project Team		
Name	Job Title	Group Represented
aaaaa	President/CEO/ Owner	PLAY MAGIC
bbbbb	Chief Marketing Officer (CMO)	PLAY MAGIC
ccccc	Chief Financial Officer (CFO)	PLAY MAGIC

ddddd	Chief Operating Officer/General Manager (COO)	PLAY MAGIC
eeeee	Human Resources Manager (HRM)	PLAY MAGIC
fffff	Supervisor	PLAY MAGIC
ggggg	Production Worker	PLAY MAGIC

## **The Rationale**

The PLAY MAGIC management team has undertaken an examination of the corporate structure and culture and plans adaptations and revitalizations within the elements of the business, where such are merited. Part of this process involves training and/or retraining of section supervisors and production workers. It was decided to explore the possibility of offering appropriate training programs, and the upshot of that decision is the current report.

## ***Process***

### **Individual Interviews**

Individual interviews (each approximately one hour in length) were conducted with all five members of the management team. With interviewees' permission, the interviews were audio recorded for later reference, as required. The interview protocols are provided as Appendices One, Two, and Three. In all cases, hand notes were taken by the interviewer. A "Skills for Success" (essential skills) handout was provided for reference during the interviews and is provided as Appendix Four. For reference, a handout showing the set of original essential skills (Appendix Five) and a second handout showing the relationships among the original essential skills and the new Skills for Success (Appendix Six) were also provided. The same handouts were provided to all focus groups.

### **Focus Groups**

On April 19, 20xx, a focus group (about 1½ hours in length) was conducted with the five departmental supervisors. The “Skills for Success” handout mentioned above was provided for reference and the handout “Some Skills of Effective Supervisors” was used to guide the first stage of discussion (see Appendix Seven). The second stage of discussion focused specifically on Skills for Success. Throughout, notes were recorded on flip chart. With participants’ permission, the session was audio recorded for later reference, as needed. The focus group protocol is given as Appendix Eight.

A focus group with the five unionized workers was also conducted on April 19. The protocol is provided as Appendix Nine. Discussion and recording of data followed the procedure outlined for the first focus group.

On April 20 and 21, 20xx, five focus groups (each about 1½ hours in length) were conducted with a total of 35 production workers from various sections. The Skills for Success handout was used for reference, and a series of questions provided on flip chart guided discussion (see Appendix Ten: Focus Group Protocol Production Workers). A second handout, “Reading & Writing in Your Work” (Appendix Eleven), was a questionnaire used in conjunction with questions 2 and 3 of the “Focus Group Protocol Production Workers.” As before, notes were recorded on flip chart and, with participants’ permission, the sessions were audio recorded for later reference, as needed.

### **Facility Tour**

As mentioned above, I was given a tour of the operation by aaaaa and was able to see the stages of production of the toys. The tour gave me an appreciation of the complexity of the operation and the flexibility and responsiveness of the company in its successful completion of a wide product range.

## ***Data Analysis***

## Assessment of Need for Training

Notes from the five individual interviews were transcribed and collated. The responses were alphabetized and tabulated for ease of examination and reference.

The same process was followed for the material from the focus groups of section supervisors and union personnel.

Again, the process was followed for the five focus groups of production workers, with the added collation and tabulation of the responses from the “Reading & Writing in Your Work” questionnaire. The option was offered to have an individual interview, but all participants preferred to participate in focus groups.

The tables from the interviews and focus groups are given below, each followed by one or more observations concerning the data. The observations are not intended to be exhaustive, but rather to give a few salient points to aid the reader’s orientation to the information.

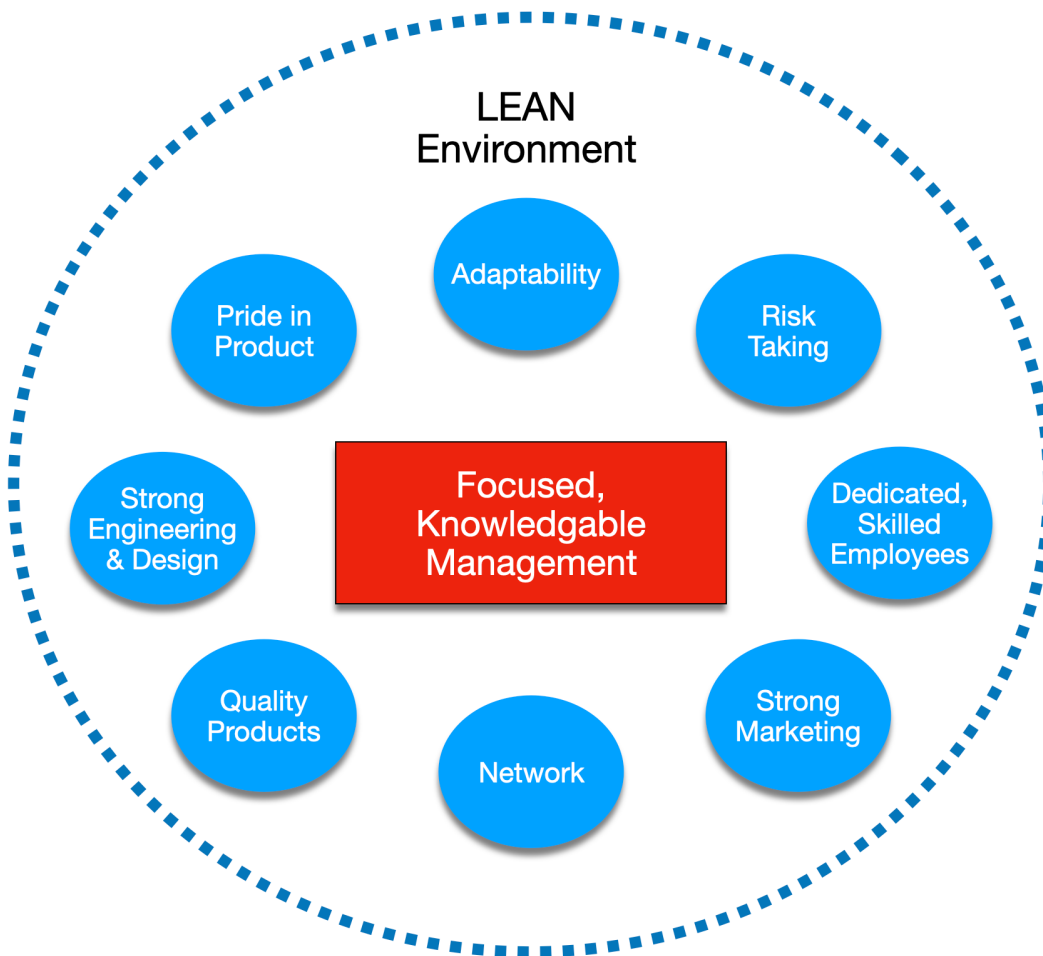
## Data Tables & Observations — Senior Management’s Interviews

**Table 2 — What has made PLAY MAGIC so successful?**

Question — In your opinion, what has made Play Magic so successful?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “we’re positive” (and always have been) that “we can do that”</li> <li>• not be afraid to try new markets</li> <li>• able to hire &amp; keep people</li> <li>• very experienced personnel</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• make quality products</li> <li>• are customer focussed</li> <li>• innovative design</li> <li>• the community has a relatively small pool of workers, but a person from the area likes the opportunities we provide</li> </ul>

### Observation

The following diagram gives several factors seen by the consultant as contributing to the success of PLAY MAGIC. The broken line of the circle suggests that the LEAN environment has yet to be fully implemented.



Factors Contributing to the Success of PLAY MAGIC



**Table 3 — Job classifications**

Question — What are the different job classifications of employees?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• administrative assistant</li> <li>• advertising personnel</li> <li>• assemblers</li> <li>• custodial/waste management personnel</li> <li>• customer support personnel</li> <li>• designers</li> <li>• finishers (non-toxic, child-safe finishes)</li> <li>• information technology personnel</li> <li>• kiln operator</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• machine operators (drill presses, lathes, saws, routers, sanders, and planers)</li> <li>• packagers</li> <li>• purchaser</li> <li>• quality control personnel</li> <li>• researchers</li> <li>• sales personnel</li> <li>• supervisors</li> <li>• warehousing/shipping personnel</li> </ul>

Observations

1. Not only is there a wide variety of jobs, there is also a very wide range of skills required to perform the jobs successfully.
2. The so-called soft skills\*, rather than the technical skills, are the ones that are common to all employees.

[\*Note: **Soft skills** are a combination of interpersonal people skills, social skills, communication skills, character traits, attitudes, career attributes, social intelligence and emotional intelligence quotients among others that enable people to effectively navigate their environment, work well with others, perform well, and achieve their goals with complementing hard skills. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soft\\_skills](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soft_skills)]

**Table 4 — Skills employees need to do their jobs well**

Question — What skills do employees need to do their jobs well?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• need hand-tool types of skills</li> <li>• reading instructions</li> <li>• reading blueprints</li> <li>• trouble shooting</li> <li>• seeing alternatives (logical thinking)</li> <li>• retaining verbal instructions</li> <li>• understanding safely procedures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• understanding how machines work</li> <li>• proper handling of liquid finishes</li> <li>• attention to detail</li> <li>• proactive problem solvers</li> <li>• good team workers (teamwork training needed —&gt; LEAN will help)</li> </ul>

Observation

1. Not surprisingly, employees need a combination of job-related, hard skills and soft skills of the sort mentioned in the note above.

**Table 5 — Qualities or attitudes of “star” employees**

Question — What are the qualities or attitudes of your "star" employees?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• attitude —&gt; “getting the job done” (will put in extra time, if necessary)</li> <li>• ability to take instructions from supervisors &amp; designers one time &amp; do it</li> <li>• logical thinking (problem solving)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• star employees get the custom jobs can think on their feet (problem solvers)</li> <li>• can look at our products and suggest improvements</li> <li>• show common sense</li> <li>• get the work done</li> </ul>

Observation

1. The “star” employees are those who already possess a strong combination of hard and soft skills.

**Table 6 — Essential skills training needs**

Question — In terms of the nine Skills for Success, what do you see as the training needs of employees?		
Skill	Training Needed?	Comments
Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• not sure</li> <li>• no</li> <li>• no</li> <li>• yes</li> <li>• no</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• document use weak but important</li> </ul>
Numeracy (Math)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• no</li> <li>• yes</li> <li>• yes</li> <li>• yes</li> <li>• not sure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• document use weak but important</li> </ul>
Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• not sure</li> <li>• no</li> <li>• no</li> <li>• not sure</li> <li>• no</li> </ul>	
Digital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• no</li> <li>• yes</li> <li>• yes</li> <li>• yes</li> <li>• not sure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• document use weak but important</li> </ul>
Problem Solving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LEAN</li> <li>• yes</li> <li>• yes (in 4 sub-skills)</li> <li>• yes</li> <li>• yes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• learn by doing [LEAN training]</li> <li>• job task planning &amp; organizing (production &amp; shop — i.e., final assembly)</li> <li>• problem solving (engineering)</li> <li>• decision making (on the floor)</li> <li>• decision making</li> <li>• job task planning &amp; organizing</li> <li>• finding information</li> <li>• problem solving</li> </ul>
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• yes</li> <li>• yes</li> <li>• some</li> <li>• yes</li> <li>• yes</li> </ul>	<u>Supervisors</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• clearer explanations</li> <li>• motivational interchanges (<u>not</u> negative)</li> <li>• conflict management</li> <li>• respectful employee handling (<u>not</u> negative)</li> <li>• communication flow (<u>not</u> oral comm.)</li> <li>• writing</li> </ul>

Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• yes</li> <li>• yes</li> <li>• yes</li> <li>• yes</li> <li>• yes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• for supervisors communication is a real need</li> <li>• trying to change the culture</li> <li>• supervisors (eliminate negative interchanges)</li> <li>• sensitivity</li> <li>• awareness</li> </ul>
Adaptability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “all for it”</li> <li>• “absolutely”</li> <li>• yes</li> <li>• yes</li> <li>• yes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LEAN</li> <li>• supervisors</li> <li>• job skill refreshers</li> <li>• lunch &amp; learn</li> <li>• decision making (purchaser, customer support)</li> </ul>
Creativity & Innovation	possibly	may not have to go see designers so much

### Observation

1. While there is some difference of opinion as to the need for further training in specific skill areas, there is also a high degree of unanimity, with problem solving, communication, collaboration, and adaptability, as well as attention to document use, being identified as skill areas in need of additional development.

**Table 7 — Additional training needs**

Question — In addition to the Skills for Success training that you have identified, what other training needs do you see?	
<u>Supervisors</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LEAN</li> <li>• no-blame environment</li> <li>• bring problems to the surface</li> <li>• crosstraining</li> <li>• supervisory skills</li> <li>• ability to work with &amp; communicate with employees &amp; motivate them</li> <li>• discipline of employees</li> <li>• course for management on how to boost morale</li> </ul>	<u>Frontline Workers</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LEAN</li> <li>• empower employees</li> <li>• teach them to be problem solvers</li> <li>• crosstraining</li> <li>• refreshers for job skills</li> </ul>

### Observations

1. Some of the items listed can be incorporated into essential skills courses (e. g., constructive feedback, supervisory skills, communication, motivation, morale boosting, problem solving).
2. “Lunch and Learn” was mentioned in relation to the essential skills question, above, and it may be an approach that could be used effectively for some of the other training needs identified here.
3. There may be opportunities to use “Lunch and Learn” so that course participants can share their new knowledge with others.

### Data Tables & Observations — Supervisors’ Focus Group

The five participants of Focus Group 1 were asked to indicate their assessment of the supervisory team in terms of the ten items on the “Some Skills of Effective Supervisors” form and to indicate whether they thought the skills could be improved. The results are given in the following table.

**Table 8 — Some skills of effective supervisors**

	Skill	As a supervisory team, we do this well.	As a supervisory team, we could improve.
1	Communicate effectively	2	5
2	Demonstrate technical expertise	5	3
3	Get the job done	5	3
4	Show leadership	3	4
5	Are well organized	1	5
6	Adapt to and implement change	3	4
7	Promote key values	2	5
8	Demonstrate team building skills	2	5
9	Use sound judgment	3	3

10	Produce quality results	5	2
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### Observations

1. Respondents see themselves as being strong in terms of technical expertise and getting the job done, and producing quality results.
2. Respondents see themselves as weak in the areas of effective communication, organizational skills, the promotion of key values, and team building skills.
3. A large majority of respondents see a need to improve their skills, even in areas where they already perform well.

The ten items were then discussed individually in response to the following question: “If you had a training program to improve performance in that skill, what specific topics would you want to have included?”

**Table 9 — Communicate effectively**

1. Communicate effectively	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• communication among sections, but need to be able to communicate also with management</li> <li>• with workers —&gt; get info right for them</li> <li>• scheduling</li> <li>• discipline (rights as a manager —&gt; labor laws, codes)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• scheduling &amp; flow within &amp; between sections</li> <li>• making sure material is there to do the job</li> <li>• make sure drawings are right to begin with (supervisory meeting before project start)</li> </ul>

### Observation

1. Communication is seen to have several aspects, for example, information sharing and planning, problem solving/conflict resolution, inter-section cooperation, checking of materials and processes.

**Table 10 — Demonstrate technical expertise**

2. Demonstrate technical expertise	
• mentoring	

Observations

1. Supervisors trained as mentors could make a significant contribution toward ensuring quality, empowering employees to be problem solvers, and institutionalizing succession planning.
2. Although mentoring is often thought to be the special domain of Red Seal tradespersons, it does not have to be so; indeed, the very knowledgeable supervisors currently employed, but nearing retirement, could well be excellent mentors to ensure that best practices are passed along in a formal, verifiable way.

**Table 11 — Get the job done**

3. Get the job done	
• goes along with using sound judgement & verbal communication	

Observation

1. The topics identified can be included in Skills for Success programs.

**Table 12 — Show leadership**

4. Show leadership	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• written &amp; verbal comm.</li> <li>• how to handle “attitude” (conflict management)</li> <li>• day-to-day conflict</li> <li>• how to treat each individual to get the most out of them (win-win)</li> <li>• motivation of individuals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• getting input from workers solving problems</li> <li>• taking initiative (workers)</li> <li>• communicating effectively</li> <li>• finding information</li> <li>• crews to encourage sharing of knowledge</li> </ul>

Observations

1. Several of the topics suggested could make a strong supervisory skills program.
2. A number of the topics would also fit in a communication skills program.

**Table 13 — Are well organized**

5. Are well organized	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• currently developing LEAN procedures</li> </ul>	

Observation

1. Plans for LEAN are well underway.

**Table 14 — Adapt to and implement change**

6. Adapt to and implement change	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how to get employees to adapt to change (interpreting the change &amp; supporting it)</li> <li>• team meetings (info)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• employee feedback to &amp; from</li> <li>• non-conformance reporting (now underway)</li> </ul>

Observations

1. A course on change management could be developed to prepare the change leaders.
2. Change leaders could use “Lunch and Learn” sessions in achieve buy-in and broaden support.

**Table 15 — Promote key values**

7. Promote key values	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• continuously learning</li> <li>• do your best</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• trust in your people</li> <li>• “What are the key values?”</li> </ul>

Observations

1. A significant question that arose was, “What are the key values?” This may need to be addressed on a company-wide basis.
2. The key values that were identified can be topics in essential skills programs.



**Table 16 — Demonstrate team building skills**

8. Demonstrate team building skills	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• getting opinions (input from employees)</li> <li>• support employee ideas</li> <li>• support employees with problems</li> <li>• talking to groups so they feel involved</li> <li>• daily meetings to start the day</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• keeping employees in the loop &amp; understanding their place in the process</li> <li>• understanding the requirements of the other sections</li> </ul>

Observation

1. These topics could be addressed in a supervisory skills program.

**Table 17 — Use sound judgment**

9. Use sound judgment	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• need trust (both ways)</li> <li>• encourage problem solving that can be shared with the General Manager</li> <li>• decision-making process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• critical thinking</li> <li>• task planning</li> <li>• finding information</li> <li>• problem solving</li> </ul>

Observations

1. These topics could be the core of a thinking skills course.
2. The individual topics could, alternatively, be incorporated into other programs, such as communication or supervisory skills.

**Table 18 — Produce quality results**

10. Produce quality results	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• information flow between sections (is a problem now)</li> <li>• sales section has to get it right —&gt; design &amp; purchasing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• refine process flow</li> <li>• communication (written &amp; oral)</li> <li>• develop information checks</li> </ul>

Observation

1. These topics can be addressed by supervisors acting collaboratively, without the need for a training course.

The following four tables contain responses of the five supervisors to the specific skills questions given in the second part of the focus group protocol for supervisors.

**Table 19 — Skills for Success important in work**

Which of the Skills for Success are important in your work?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• writing (including use of documents)</li> <li>• numeracy (including use of documents)</li> <li>• reading (including use of documents)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• problem solving</li> <li>• collaboration</li> <li>• adaptability</li> <li>• creativity &amp; innovation</li> <li>• communication</li> <li>• all</li> </ul>

Observations

1. There is a clear recognition of the importance of Skills for Success to the work done by supervisors.
2. Document use was mentioned several times.

**Table 20 — Anticipated changes requiring further training**

What changes do you see coming in the future that will likely require further training?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• new employees &amp; training</li> <li>• new technology (e.g., application of electronics)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• design of workplace &amp; how the work is done</li> <li>• increased communication with upper management</li> </ul>

Observation

1. The range of changes foreseen underlines the importance of a commitment to adaptability.

**Table 21 — Skills for Success areas for additional training**

In which Skills for Success areas would you like to see additional training (either for yourself or others)?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• collaboration</li> <li>• communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• problem solving</li> <li>• reading</li> </ul>

Observations

1. Three of the choices (i.e., communication, problem solving, and collaboration) are closely related to the work of the supervisors qua supervisors.

**Table 22 — Other types of training suggested**

What other types of training would you like to see offered?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• safety (falls)</li> <li>• equipment operation (e.g., lathes, saws)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• air quality (especially fumes from finishes and solvents)</li> </ul>

Observations

1. Some of the topics would require certified personnel to offer the instruction.
2. It might be possible to examine some of the topics through “lunch and learn” sessions, with internal personnel taking the lead.

**Data Tables & Observations — Union Members’ Focus Group**

Focus Group 2 consisted of the five union members — two millwrights, two electricians, one tool and die maker.

**Table 23 — Union role at PLAY MAGIC**

Please tell me a bit about the role of the Union here at Play Magic .	
<u>Groups involved in the union</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• millwrights (2)</li> <li>• electricians (2)</li> <li>• tool and die maker (1)</li> </ul>	<u>Involvement</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• small amount of time required for union business               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ occasional problem solving</li> <li>○ communication (working conditions)</li> <li>○ education (support company initiatives)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• JOHS (Joint Occupational Health &amp; Safety)</li> </ul>

Observation

1. This is a small specialized group that works closely with management and non-unionized personnel.

**Table 24 — Skills employees need to do their jobs well**

What skills do employees need to do their jobs well?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• communication</li> <li>• some computer use</li> <li>• document reading</li> <li>• finding information (research)</li> <li>• time management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• individual workplace organization</li> <li>• problem solving</li> <li>• teamwork</li> </ul>

Observation

1. Employees need a combination of job-related, hard skills, and soft skills.

**Table 25 — Skills members need to participate effectively in the Union**

What skills do your members need to participate effectively in the Union?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• communicate effectively</li> <li>• fairness</li> <li>• honesty</li> <li>• interaction with others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• listening skills</li> <li>• open-minded</li> <li>• teamwork</li> <li>• trust</li> </ul>

Observation

1. Members need a combination of personal qualities and interpersonal skills to be effective in the Union.

**Table 26 — Qualities or attitudes employees need**

What qualities or attitudes do employees need to do their jobs well?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ability to keep things on even ground (roll with the punches)</li> <li>• caring</li> <li>• communication skills (prevent flow problems where information gets lost from section to section)</li> <li>• compassion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• independence</li> <li>• patience &amp; understanding</li> <li>• positive attitude</li> <li>• relaxed</li> <li>• sense of humor</li> <li>• strong self-esteem</li> </ul>

### Observation

1. Employees need a combination of job-related, hard skills, and soft skills.

**Table 27 — Essential skills training needs of employees**

In terms of the nine Skills for Success, what do you see as the training needs of employees?		
Skill	Training Needed?	How would employees' performance be improved?
Reading	No Yes No No Yes (link with writing & document use)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• more accurate understanding &amp; use of machine manuals</li> <li>• better understanding of safety material</li> <li>• better understanding of own contract and terms of employment</li> </ul>
Numeracy (Math)	No No No No No	

Writing	No Yes No Yes (linked closely with document use) Yes (link with reading)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensure quality of material written for public use</li> <li>• clarity of material for internal use, especially between sections</li> </ul>
Digital	Yes Yes Yes (for machine control) Yes Yes (basic & link with document use)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• basic skills would improve</li> <li>• increase ability to set up and trouble shoot computer-machine interface</li> <li>• increase comfort level (many people don't have computers or knowledge of how to use them or comfort with them)</li> </ul>
Problem Solving	Yes Yes Yes No Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• all skills</li> <li>• teamwork would improve</li> <li>• fewer accidents</li> <li>• able to think on your own</li> <li>• better time management</li> </ul>
Communication	No Yes Yes--very much needed Yes (link with Working with Others) No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• across sections</li> <li>• communication with management</li> <li>• feedback (giving &amp; responding)</li> <li>• improve skills in interpersonal interactions</li> <li>• improved listening skills</li> <li>• improved skill in handling stress</li> <li>• mentoring (is important)</li> <li>• participation toolbox meetings</li> <li>• problem solving</li> <li>• professionalism</li> <li>• strengthening morale</li> </ul>
Collaboration	No Yes "a big one" Yes--very much needed Yes (link with Oral Communication) No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• communication with management (&amp; recognition for going above &amp; beyond)</li> <li>• mentoring (is important)</li> <li>• teamwork</li> <li>• working with coworkers</li> </ul>

Adaptability	Yes Yes Yes Yes (this is on-going; there is a learning culture now & people will be supportive & responsive) Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "everybody should be learning everyday"</li> <li>• computer skills can be a problem</li> <li>• knowledge of equipment and some materials is always changing</li> <li>• safety regulations</li> <li>• there's always new information</li> <li>• things are changing all the time</li> </ul>
Creativity & Innovation	No Yes Yes No (not a big one) Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ability to handle the increase in production challenges</li> <li>• particularly with new employees</li> </ul>

### Observation

1. There are some differences of opinion as to the need for further training in specific skill areas, however, there is considerable agreement, with writing, digital, problem solving, communication, collaboration, adaptability, and creativity and innovation being identified as skill areas in need of additional development.

**Table 28 — Other training needs**

In addition to the Skills for Success training that you've identified, what other training needs do you see?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• all courses are good courses (always learn from them)</li> <li>• Union already does seminars &amp; courses (but only for union members)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• rights and responsibilities</li> <li>• union development courses (on-going through Union)</li> </ul>

### Observations

1. There may be opportunities to use "Lunch and Learn" so that course participants can share their new knowledge with others.
2. "Lunch and Learn" sessions could be used for "rights and responsibilities," which would benefit Union and non-union employees, alike.

**Table 29 — How training would improve performance of duties**

How would training in those areas improve employee performance of their duties?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>eliminate injuries (as much as possible)</li> <li>enhance the work flow</li> <li>increase job security and satisfaction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>reduce turnover of personnel (although it is not particularly high)</li> </ul>

Observation

1. The consensus is that job satisfaction would be enhanced, along with increased job performance.

**Table 30 — Union support for training programs**

How could the Union support training programs?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>already supports education programs (e.g., GED given previously)</li> <li>being encouraging</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>building a strong employer–employee relationship</li> <li>moral support</li> </ul>

Observation

1. The Union is strongly supportive of all educational programs.

**Table 31 — Additional ideas/comments**

Is there anything you'd like to add?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>considers training programs a "great idea"</li> <li>need to enhance communication frontline and supervisors/management</li> <li>very supportive of this initiative</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>sometimes a problem is reported and it continues because the communication is not good (maybe because of processes or personalities)</li> </ul>

Observation

1. As noted in answer to the previous question, the Union is strongly supportive of all educational programs and members feel that everyone can benefit.



## Data Tables & Observations — Production Workers' Focus Groups

The following tables give the responses to the protocol questions by the 35 participants of Focus Groups 3 to 7 (see Appendix Ten).

**Table 32 — Skills for Success important in work**

What are the most important skills for success that you need in your work?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• all nine (x4)</li> <li>• adaptability (x5)</li> <li>• digital (x2)</li> <li>• numeracy (including documents) (x4)</li> <li>• creativity &amp; innovation (1)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• communication (x5)</li> <li>• reading (including documents) (x3)</li> <li>• problem solving (x5)</li> <li>• collaboration(x4)</li> <li>• writing (x2)</li> </ul>

[Note: (x#) indicates that the skill was mentioned in that number of focus groups]

### Observations

1. Respondents indicate that all nine Skills for Success are important in their work.
2. It was emphasized that adaptability, communication, and problem solving are especially important.

**Table 33 — Reading in your work**

Reading: (a) What sort of reading do you have to do in your work?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• email</li> <li>• group insurance</li> <li>• machine manuals</li> <li>• sales orders</li> <li>• order confirmations</li> <li>• production specs/papers</li> <li>• Safety Committee minutes</li> </ul>	<u>Also documents:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• organization</li> <li>• safety (tools &amp; chemicals)</li> <li>• standards</li> <li>• check blueprints vs specs</li> <li>• blueprints</li> <li>• jigs (patterns)</li> <li>• safety signs</li> <li>• labels</li> <li>• user assembly instructions (where required)</li> <li>• quality manuals</li> </ul>
Reading: (b) How important is the reading?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sometimes very important (e.g., safety &amp; tools)</li> </ul>	

### Observation

1. Most of the reading is for a narrow set of purposes, often with established patterns and a limited range of expected outcomes.

As noted previously, a two-part questionnaire entitled “Reading & Writing in Your Work” was provided (see Appendix Eleven). On the form, focus group respondents indicated whether they performed a particular function and, if so, the importance of that in their work. The combined results for the 35 participants of the five focus groups are given in Tables 34 and 36.

**Table 34 — Reading functions in your work**

Reading	No	Yes		
		Not Very Important	Fairly Important	Very Important
• Read and understand simple texts, such as product labels and emails or memos	4	4	8	19
• Read and understand written instruction such as work orders	4	4		27
• Skim lengthier text for meaning and key ideas	4	8	4	19
• Identify relevant information in text			16	19
• Refer to manuals for information		4	16	15
• Analyze and integrate information from several sources		4	4	27
• Refer to manuals on how to complete work tasks	8		16	11
• Read and understand complex texts such as company policy and training manuals		4	8	23

Other ways you use reading

- 

Observations (based on 35 respondents)

1. For most respondents, reading of the types identified is either fairly important or very important.
2. For some respondents, reading of the types identified is not required or is not very important.

**Table 35 — Writing in your work**

Writing: (a) What sort of writing do you have to do in your work?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• log sheets</li> <li>• notes (production)</li> <li>• safety warnings (where needed)</li> <li>• advertising copy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• time card</li> <li>• note additions to the user manual (where needed)</li> <li>• assembly instructions (where needed)</li> <li>• payroll forms</li> <li>• quotes/sales</li> </ul>
Writing: (b) How important is the writing?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• important</li> </ul>	

Observation

1. Most of the additional writing is related to specific tasks carried out by designated personnel or, in some cases, for one's own use (e.g., production notes).

**Table 36 — Writing functions in your work**

Writing	No	Yes		
		Not Very Important	Fairly Important	Very Important
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write brief text that is less than a paragraph, such as log entries or reminder notes</li> </ul>	4	4	8	19

• Write text that is a paragraph or longer, such as memos or letters	8	8	8	11
• Write text using correct grammar and spelling		16	4	15
• Write text with a clear purpose, such as to inform or request information	4	8	8	15
• Write informal text intended for familiar audiences, such as notes to coworkers	8	8	8	11
<u>Other ways you use writing</u>				
•				

### Observations (based on 35 respondents)

1. There is a wide range of writing needs among respondents.
2. For at least half of the respondents, writing of the types identified is either fairly important or very important.
3. For a large number of the respondents, writing of the types identified is either not required or is not very important.

**Table 37 — Numeracy in your work**

Numeracy: How do you use numeracy (math) in your work?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• computing</li> <li>• cutting materials</li> <li>• data conversions</li> <li>• financial statements</li> <li>• fraction equations</li> <li>• placement of materials in the schematics</li> <li>• time management &amp; reporting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reading measuring tape</li> <li>• sales documents/quotes</li> <li>• shipping &amp; receiving materials</li> <li>• ordering materials</li> </ul> <p><u>Also documents:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• fabrication to proper specs</li> <li>• finishing to proper specs</li> </ul>

### Observations

1. Numeracy is used for a variety of purposes.

2. An individual would appear to have a more or less predictable set of situations requiring the use of numbers.

**Table 38 — Digital use in your work**

Digital: How do you use digital devices in your work?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• calculator</li> <li>• photos of products</li> <li>• computer-controlled cutting machines</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• computer (accounting software, word processing)</li> <li>• phone</li> </ul>

### Observation

1. Electronic devices are used by a limited number of employees for clearly established purposes.

**Table 39 — Problem solving in your work**

Problem Solving: (a) What sort of problem solving do you do in your work?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• creative problem solving</li> <li>• critical thinking</li> <li>• decision making</li> <li>• job task planning &amp; organizing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• memorizing information needed for different jobs</li> <li>• problem solving</li> <li>• using previous experience to solve new problems</li> </ul>
Problem Solving: (b) Please give examples.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• planning your day</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• recognizing potential problems</li> </ul>

### Observations

1. Several aspects of problem solving were identified as important.
2. Problem solving is a very important skill.
3. The recognition of potential problems implies a high-level understanding of materials and processes.
4. Skill in recognizing potential problems could save time, energy, and money by averting problems.

**Table 40 — Communication in your work**

Communication: (a) Who are the people or groups you have to communicate with in your work?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• customers</li> <li>• “everyone” (“to get things done”)</li> <li>• management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• other employees</li> <li>• outsiders</li> <li>• supervisor</li> </ul>
Communication: (b) What is the purpose of the communication?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• get directions</li> <li>• quality control</li> <li>• customer service (answer questions about products)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• work flow</li> <li>• work conditions (health &amp; safety)</li> </ul>

Observation

1. Communication is involved in a potentially wide range of situations with a variety of individuals, requiring sensitivity and flexibility.

**Table 41 — Collaboration**

Question — Collaboration: (a) What teams do you work on?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Play Magic</li> <li>• accounting</li> <li>• customer service</li> <li>• marketing &amp; sales</li> <li>• purchasing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• production</li> <li>• Safety Comm.</li> <li>• plant</li> <li>• research</li> <li>• development</li> </ul>
Question — Collaboration: (b) What are their purposes?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• mostly planning processes and actions and evaluation of them</li> </ul>	

Observation

1. Employees have to collaborate with others in a variety of situations that require a range of interpersonal skills.

**Table 42 — Creativity & Innovation**

Creativity & Innovation: (a) Have you sometimes seen ways to improve work processes?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• once in a while</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• yes</li> <li>• no</li> </ul>

Creativity & Innovation: (b) Were the changes made?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• if there was time, we could try them to see if they were an improvement; if they worked, we used them</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• yes</li> <li>• no; cost too much</li> </ul>
Creativity & Innovation: (c) Did they work out as you had thought?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sometimes</li> <li>• yes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• too complicated to learn</li> </ul>

### Observation

1. Employee experience in this skill area has been mixed, begging the question whether it could be given more attention.

**Table 43 — Adaptability**

Adaptability: (a) What changes in the workplace have you seen in the past that have required retraining or improved skills?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LEAN has been introduced</li> <li>• new products</li> <li>• new methods of materials handling &amp; storage</li> <li>• from manual to computer-controlled cutting machines</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WHMIS (Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System)</li> <li>• expansion of product line</li> <li>• improved finishes</li> </ul>
Adaptability: (b) Was it difficult to adapt to the changes?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• change from manual to computer-controlled machines was difficult</li> <li>• keeping up with the job changes when new products are introduced is sometimes difficult</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• no</li> <li>• took a while to learn</li> <li>• not enough time</li> </ul>
Adaptability: (c) What supports were you given to help you adapt to the changes?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the training was good</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• supervisors learned, then trained us</li> </ul>
Adaptability: (d) Were there other supports that you wish had been available?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• maybe more time to practice on scrap material</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• maybe more working in pairs while learning</li> </ul>

### Observations

1. The most wide-ranging changes would seem to have to do with expansion of the product line.
2. For some employees, it was difficult to adapt to the changes.
3. Generally, it was felt that the supports provided to aid adaptation to the changes were adequate.

**Table 44 — Anticipated changes requiring further training**

What changes do you see coming in the future that will likely require further training?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• more LEAN training</li> <li>• more new materials handling &amp; storage</li> <li>• new products</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• new tools (e.g., graphic detailing)</li> <li>• product differences</li> <li>• changes to Health &amp; Safety standards</li> </ul>

#### Observation

1. The importance of openness to continuous learning is shown by the responses.

**Table 45 — Skills for Success areas for additional training**

In which Skills for Success areas would you like to see additional training (either for yourself or others)?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• adaptability</li> <li>• collaboration (especially, team building)</li> <li>• digital technology skills</li> <li>• problem solving (especially, job task planning &amp; organizing)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• oral communication (very important)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• at the supervisor level</li> <li>• at the production level</li> </ul> </li> <li>• reading (especially, documents)</li> </ul>

#### Observations

1. Oral communication is considered to be “very important” at both the production and supervisor levels.
2. Collaboration relates closely to oral communication, and the two could be incorporated into a single program.
3. Respondents identified many uses of documents (see the earlier Reading question) and see a need to become more proficient in reading them.

**Table 46 — Other types of training suggested**



What other types of training would you like to see offered?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• aptitude tests for prospective employees</li> <li>• professional development (accounting designation)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• standardized training for use of all shop tools &amp; machines</li> <li>• auto-cad</li> </ul>

### Observation

1. This “wish list” is for management’s consideration.

**Table 47 — Implementation: Time**

Implementation: (a) What would be a good time to hold courses?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• during work hours</li> <li>• evening, if paid</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• weekend, if paid</li> </ul>
Implementation: (b) How many hours per week?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 or 3</li> </ul>	

### Observation

1. Striking a balance will be an important task for the Project Team.

**Table 48 — Implementation: Worker and management contributions to training programs**

Implementation: What could workers and management contribute to a program to make it successful?	
<u>Workers</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• appreciation</li> <li>• cooperation</li> <li>• good attitude</li> <li>• understanding</li> <li>• willingness to participate</li> <li>• willingness to share &amp; listen to others</li> </ul>	<u>Management</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• acknowledgment</li> <li>• appreciation</li> <li>• encouragement</li> <li>• incentives</li> <li>• participation</li> </ul>

### Observations

1. Respondents have a clear understanding of factors that will support success in a program.
2. Management has taken the lead in this workplace education initiative, so their commitment is already established.

**Table 49 — Implementation: Possible barriers to participation in courses**

Implementation: What, if any, do you feel may be barriers to people participating in courses?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• bullying</li> <li>• feel it won't help</li> <li>• if no value in it</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• lack of ambition</li> <li>• social anxiety</li> <li>• time</li> </ul>

Observations

1. These are typical — but very real — barriers.
2. It will be important that prospective participants understand from the outset how a proposed course will benefit them.

**Table 50 — Implementation: Predicted level of interest in a course**

Implementation: On a scale of 1 to 10 (10 high), how interested do you think people would be in a course?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2, 4, 5, 7, 8 (consensus by group)</li> </ul>	

Observation

1. The range suggests that the Project Team will need to consider carefully how to promote prospective courses.

***Conclusion*****Program Recommendations — Supervisors**

Supervisory program recommendations are given in Table 51. Possible program topics are suggested in the tables that follow (Tables 52–56).

**Table 51 — Program Recommendations — Supervisors**

Program Recommendations — Supervisors
Supervisory Skills
Adaptability
Collaboration

Program Recommendations — Supervisors
Communication
Problem Solving

Since there are only five supervisors, I recommend that each of the programs be opened to up to five production workers. This should enhance the interactions and be of benefit to both supervisors and the production workers. This would also be consistent with the process of succession planning in the event that the particular production workers showed interest in moving into supervisory roles in the future.

I recommend the following for each course:

- 13 weeks duration
- 3 hours per week
- 2 sessions per week (either Monday and Wednesday OR Tuesday and Thursday; this separation of sessions is important to give participants time to process and experiment with new ideas before coming back to them in the following session)
- each session: 1.5 hours

I suggest the following:

- that courses meet in the evening
- that there be some level of remuneration for participants

These programs can have an important spin-off effect. If a “lunch and learn” program is implemented, program participants will be well equipped to take a leadership role, since many of the topics in the courses would be excellent for sharing and discussion with other company personnel.

Possible topics for the courses are given in the following tables.

## **Table 52 — Supervisory Skills — Supervisors**

Supervisory Skills	
Possible Topics	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Priority management</li> <li>• Time management</li> <li>• Performance management</li> <li>• Ethics in the workplace</li> <li>• Emotional intelligence</li> <li>• Conflict resolution -- win-win (how to handle “attitude”)</li> <li>• Supporting coworkers</li> <li>• Observational skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standards of performance</li> <li>• Performance reviews</li> <li>• Implementing organizational objectives</li> <li>• Motivating the team</li> <li>• Conducting a successful toolbox talk</li> <li>• Team building</li> <li>• Leading by example</li> </ul>

**Table 53 — Adaptability — Supervisors**

Adaptability — Supervisors	
Possible Topics	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Goal setting</li> <li>• Responsiveness</li> <li>• Experimentation</li> <li>• Resilience</li> <li>• Learning to accept change</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accepting alternative ideas</li> <li>• Learning from mistakes</li> <li>• Developing your curiosity</li> <li>• Asking the right questions</li> <li>• Welcoming opportunities to learn</li> </ul>

**Table 54 — Collaboration — Supervisors**

Collaboration — Supervisors	
Possible Topics	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Awareness and appreciation of diversity</li> <li>• Understanding group dynamics</li> <li>• Fostering unity</li> <li>• Active listening</li> <li>• Open discussion</li> <li>• Closed discussion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Constructive conflict</li> <li>• Collaborative decision making</li> <li>• Collaborative goal setting</li> <li>• Brainstorming</li> <li>• Mixed-skill teams</li> <li>• Cross-functional collaboration</li> </ul>

**Table 55 — Communication — Supervisors**

Communication — Supervisors	
Possible Topics	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Charged” (hot-button) language</li> <li>• Asking the right questions</li> <li>• Barriers to effective communication</li> <li>• Body language/paralinguistics</li> <li>• Clear explanations</li> <li>• Communication process</li> <li>• Communication styles</li> <li>• Confirming/checking the message</li> <li>• Eliminating negative exchanges</li> <li>• Giving &amp; receiving feedback</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Empathic/active listening (sensitivity &amp; awareness)</li> <li>• Generational differences</li> <li>• Giving clear directions</li> <li>• Looking at the “facts,” not the personality (“don’t shoot the messenger”)</li> <li>• Respectful employee handling (<u>not</u> negative)</li> <li>• Slowing down &amp; acting thoughtfully</li> </ul>

**Table 56 — Problem Solving — Supervisors**

Problem Solving — Supervisors	
Possible Topics	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being proactive</li> <li>• Identifying the problem</li> <li>• Doing the research</li> <li>• Looking for possible solutions</li> <li>• Making a decision</li> <li>• Putting the decision into action</li> <li>• Awaiting results</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Critical thinking</li> <li>• Active listening</li> <li>• Dependability</li> <li>• Brainstorming</li> <li>• Learning from mistakes</li> </ul>

I should point out that once an instructor has been hired, they will conduct individual interviews with prospective participants. At that time, they will need to add, subtract, and prioritize topics.

### **Program Recommendations — Production Workers**

I identified five areas where courses would be appropriate. Although document use was mentioned by three groups, I have not set up a separate course for it but, rather, incorporated it into the digital course.

Three of the courses have the same names as courses for supervisors, however, while topics are generally the same, the focus and practical application should be adapted to the production workers' situations.

I recommend the following for each course:

- 13 weeks duration
- 3 hours per week
- 2 sessions per week (either Monday and Wednesday OR Tuesday and Thursday; this separation of sessions is important to give participants time to process and experiment with new ideas before coming back to them in the following session)
- each session: 1.5 hours

I suggest the following:

- that courses meet in the evening
- that there be some level of remuneration for participants

As with the supervisors' courses, these programs can have an important spin-off effect. If a "lunch and learn" program is implemented, participants will be well equipped to actively participate, since many of the topics in the courses would be excellent for sharing and discussion with other company personnel.

Here are the five courses I recommend for production workers. Possible topics for the programs are given in Tables 58 to 62.

**Table 57 — Program Recommendations — Production Workers**

Program Recommendations — Production Workers
Adaptability
Collaboration
Communication

Digital
Problem Solving

**Table 58 — Adaptability — Production Workers**

Adaptability — Production Workers	
Possible Topics	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Goal setting</li> <li>• Responsiveness</li> <li>• Experimentation</li> <li>• Resilience</li> <li>• Learning to accept change</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accepting alternative ideas</li> <li>• Learning from mistakes</li> <li>• Developing your curiosity</li> <li>• Asking the right questions</li> <li>• Welcoming opportunities to learn</li> </ul>

**Table 59 — Collaboration — Production Workers**

Collaboration — Production Workers	
Possible Topics	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding group dynamics</li> <li>• Fostering unity</li> <li>• Active listening</li> <li>• Open discussion</li> <li>• Closed discussion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborative decision making</li> <li>• Collaborative goal setting</li> <li>• Brainstorming</li> <li>• Mixed-skill teams</li> <li>• Cross-functional collaboration</li> </ul>

**Table 60 — Communication — Production Workers**

Communication — Production Workers	
Possible Topics	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Charged” (hot-button) language</li> <li>• Asking the right questions</li> <li>• Barriers to effective communication</li> <li>• Clear explanations</li> <li>• Communication process</li> <li>• Confirming/checking the message</li> <li>• Giving &amp; receiving feedback</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Empathic/active listening (sensitivity &amp; awareness)</li> <li>• Hedge words</li> <li>• Generational differences</li> <li>• Giving clear directions</li> <li>• Looking at the “facts,” not the personality (“don’t shoot the messenger”)</li> <li>• Slowing down &amp; acting thoughtfully</li> </ul>

**Table 61 — Digital — Production Workers**

Digital — Production Workers	
Possible Topics	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Play Magic’s IT policies</li> <li>• Basic word processing</li> <li>• Creating documents of different formats</li> <li>• Sharing files</li> <li>• System-wide document updating</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicating</li> <li>• Email &amp; messaging etiquette</li> <li>• Handling information</li> <li>• Transacting</li> <li>• Problem solving</li> <li>• Being safe and compliant online</li> </ul>

**Table 62 — Problem Solving — Production Workers**

Problem Solving — Production Workers	
Possible Topics	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being proactive</li> <li>• Identifying the problem</li> <li>• Doing the research</li> <li>• Looking for possible solutions</li> <li>• Consulting with supervisor</li> <li>• Making a decision</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Putting the decision into action</li> <li>• Awaiting results</li> <li>• Critical thinking</li> <li>• Brainstorming</li> <li>• Learning from mistakes</li> </ul>

## Proposed Project Team

The proposed Project Team is given in Table 63. The makeup of the team will change from program to program as instructors and program participants change.

**Table 63 — Proposed Project Team**

Proposed Project Team		
Name	Job Title	Group Represented
aaaaa	President/CEO/Owner	PLAY MAGIC
bbbbb	Chief Marketing Officer (CMO)	PLAY MAGIC
ccccc	Chief Financial Officer (CFO)	PLAY MAGIC
ddddd	Chief Operating Officer/General Manager (COO)	PLAY MAGIC



Proposed Project Team		
Name	Job Title	Group Represented
eeeeee	Human Resources Manager (HRM)	PLAY MAGIC
fffff	Supervisor	PLAY MAGIC
ggggg	Production Worker	PLAY MAGIC
TBA	Instructor	
TBA	Participant	Program Participants
TBA	Participant	Program Participants

### Other Training Needs Identified

See Tables 7, 22, 28, and 46. The training needs identified in these tables are for skills other than essential skills. As such, they will be of particular interest to management.

### Remarks

Given the extended period of time necessary for the programs recommended here, careful and consistent oversight by the Project Team will be very important to ensure that clear goals consistent with the principles of adult education (see Appendix Twelve) are enunciated, operationalized, monitored, and evaluated. With this in mind, the following observations on effective program planning and evaluation are offered:

- First, the Project Team needs to set clear goals for each course, taking into account the results of the particular instructor's individual interviews with participants. Objectives for each goal should then be stated. It would be ideal if the Project Team could also identify achievement standards for the objectives. This is a time-consuming process, however, and may not be feasible. (The instructor's assessment on a skill-by-skill basis, mentioned next, may be a satisfactory substitute.)

- Second, the instructor needs to decide, on a skill-by-skill basis, what constitutes a satisfactory level of performance and carry out assessment accordingly.
- Third, an end of program evaluation by participants will assist the Project Team to evaluate the degree to which their goals were met.

## **Summary**

I wish to recognize the importance of the steps taken by PLAY MAGIC in initiating the sponsorship of skills training for employees. Where skills programs have been offered elsewhere, significant benefits have been achieved. It is to be expected that such will be the case with the programs suggested in this report, especially given the enthusiasm for training demonstrated by management and many focus group participants.

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## ***Appendix One: Individual Interview Protocol CEO***

Name:

Position: CEO or Owner

Main responsibilities:

[Note: Use Question 1 only if there are more than one business operating under the management umbrella.]

1. How do the sections of the (name of company) Group relate to each other? (For example, is there a single management team? How independent is each member of the group?)

2. In your opinion, what has made \_\_\_\_\_ so successful?

3. What skills do employees need to do their jobs well?

4. What are the qualities or attitudes of your "star" employees?

5. [Handout - "Skills for Success"]

In terms of the nine Skills for Success, what do you see as the training needs of employees?		
Skill	Training Needed?	How would employees' job performance be improved?
Reading		
Numeracy (Math)		
Writing		

Digital		
Problem Solving		
Communication		
Collaboration		
Adaptability		
Creativity & Innovation		

6. In addition to the Skills for Success training that you've identified, what other training needs do you see?

Supervisors	Workers

7. How would training in those areas improve employee performance of their duties?

Supervisors	Workers

8. Is there anything you'd like to add?



## ***Appendix Two: Individual Interview Protocol CFO***

Name:

Position: CFO

Main responsibilities:

1. In your opinion, what has made (name of company) so successful?

2. What do you see as the special strengths of \_\_\_\_\_ ?

3. What skills do employees need to do their jobs well?

4. What are the qualities or attitudes of your "star" employees?

5. [Handout - "Skills for Success"]

In terms of the nine Skills for Success, what do you see as the training needs of employees?		
Skill	Training Needed?	How would employees' job performance be improved?
Reading		
Numeracy (Math)		
Writing		
Digital		

Problem Solving		
Communication		
Collaboration		
Adaptability		
Creativity & Innovation		

6. In addition to the Skills for Success training that you've identified, what other training needs do you see?

Supervisors	Workers

7. How would training in those areas improve employee performance of their duties?

Supervisors	Workers

8. Is there anything you'd like to add?

### ***Appendix Three: Individual Interview Protocol HR or QA Manager***

Name:

Position: HR or QA Manager

Main responsibilities:

1. Please tell me a bit about your employees:

1. How many employees?
2. What is the range of education of employees?
3. Roughly, what would be the average length of time that employees have been here?
4. Are there any challenges in finding the kinds of employees you need?

2.

What are the different job classifications of employees?	What are the main duties of each classification?

3. What are the main skills employees need to do their jobs well?

4. What are the qualities or attitudes of your "star" employees?

## 5. [Handout - "Skills for Success"]

In terms of the nine Skills for Success, what do you see as the training needs of employees?		
Skill	Training Needed?	How would employees' job performance be improved?
Reading		
Numeracy (Math)		
Writing		
Digital		
Problem Solving		
Communication		
Collaboration		
Adaptability		

Creativity & Innovation		
-------------------------	--	--

6. In addition to the Skills for Success training that you've identified, what other training needs do you see?

Supervisors	Workers

7. How would training in those areas improve employee performance of their duties?

Supervisors	Workers

8. In your opinion, what has made \_\_\_\_\_ so successful?

9. Is there anything you'd like to add?

## Appendix Four: Skills for Success Handout



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

Here is what the site says about each of the skills:

### **Adaptability**

Your ability to achieve or adjust goals and behaviors when expected or unexpected change occurs, by planning, staying focused, persisting, and overcoming setbacks. For example, we use this skill to change work plans to meet new deadlines, learn how to work with new tools and improve our skills through feedback.

### **Collaboration**

Your ability to contribute and support others to achieve a common goal. For example, at work we use this skill to provide meaningful support to team members while completing a project.

### **Communication**

Your ability to receive, understand, consider, and share information and ideas through speaking, listening, and interacting with others. For example, we use this skill to listen to instructions, serve customers and discuss ideas.

**Creativity and innovation**

Your ability to imagine, develop, express, encourage, and apply ideas in ways that are novel, unexpected, or challenge existing methods and norms. For example, we use this skill to discover better ways of doing things, develop new products, and deliver services in a new way.

**Digital**

Your ability to use digital technology and tools to find, manage, apply, create and share information and content. For example, we use this skill to create spreadsheets, safely use social media, and securely make online purchases.

**Numeracy**

Your ability to find, understand, use, and report mathematical information presented through words, numbers, symbols, and graphics. For example, we use this skill to perform calculations, manage budgets, analyze and model data and make estimations.

**Problem solving**

Your ability to identify, analyze, propose solutions, and make decisions. Problem solving helps you to address issues, monitor success, and learn from the experience. For example, we use this skill to make hiring decisions, select courses of action and troubleshoot technical failures.

**Reading**

Your ability to find, understand, and use information presented through words, symbols, and images. For example, we use this skill to locate information on forms and drawings, and to read items such as emails, reports, news articles, blog posts and instructions.

**Writing**

Your ability to share information using written words, symbols, and images. For example, we use this skill to fill out forms and applications, and write emails, reports and social media posts.



## ***Appendix Five: Essential Skills (Original)***

### **Essential Skills (Original)**

**Reading:** Reading and understanding words in the form of sentences and paragraphs

**Writing:** Using written language to explain ideas (i.e., pen and paper, keyboard typing)

**Document Use:** Understanding visual images (pictures) such as maps, symbols, lists, and labels

**Numeracy (math):** Solving problems using numbers

**Digital Technology Skills:** Using technology to write, research, create, and share information

**Thinking:** Using your own thoughts to understand situations and make decisions  
Includes:

- Problem solving
- Decision making
- Critical thinking
- Job task planning and organizing
- Significant use of memory
- Finding information

**Oral Communication:** Using spoken language to communicate thoughts, ideas, and opinions to others

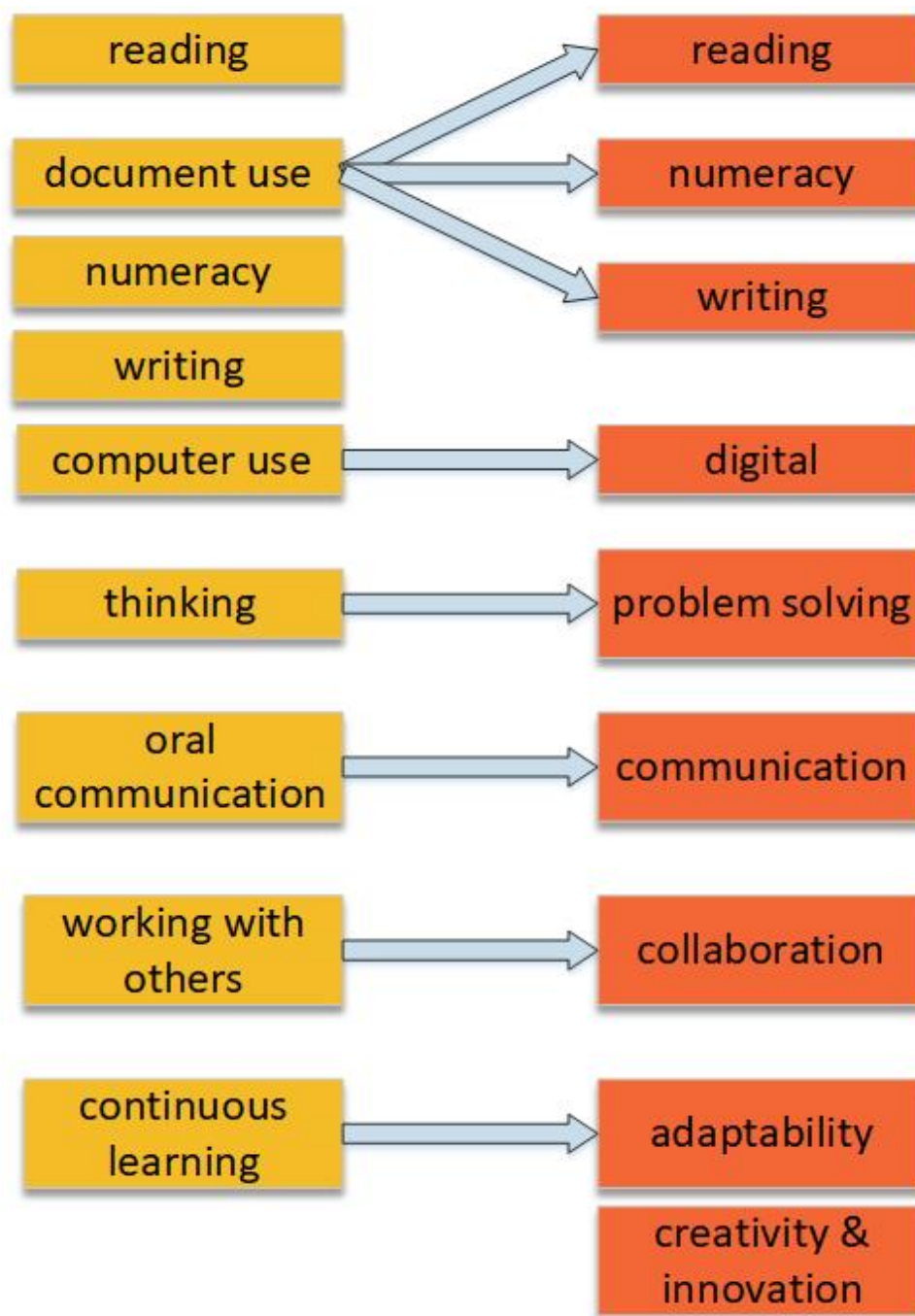
**Working with Others:** Working with family, friends, students, and co-workers to accomplish tasks together

**Continuous Learning:** Learning new information or new skills to build and improve what you already know

<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/essential-skills.html>

National Occupational Classification (NOC)  
<https://noc.esdc.gc.ca/>

***Appendix Six: Essential Skills (Original) and Skills for Success  
(Revised)***



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

### ***Appendix Seven: Some Skills of Effective Supervisors***

	<b>Skill</b>	<b>As a supervisory team, we do this well.</b>	<b>As a supervisory team, we could improve.</b>
1	Communicate effectively		
2	Demonstrate technical expertise		
3	Get the job done		
4	Show leadership		
5	Are well organized		
6	Adapt to and implement change		
7	Promote key values		
8	Demonstrate team building skills		
9	Use sound judgment		
10	Produce quality results		

## ***Appendix Eight: Focus Group Protocol Supervisors***

### Introductions: Self & Group

- A. Distribute the “Skills for Success” handout
  - A. Go over it briefly
  - B. Note that it’s for reference throughout our session
- B. Distribute the “Some Skills of Effective Supervisors” sheet
  - A. Ask participants to check the applicable column for each skill
  - B. Tabulate the results
  - C. Prioritize the tabulated results for discussion
- C. Work through the prioritized list:
  - Ask: “If you had a training program to improve performance in that skill, what specific topics would you want to have included?”

---

### Skills for Success Focus

- Q.1 Which of the Skills for Success are important in your work?
- Q.2 What changes do you see coming in the future that will likely require further training?
- Q.3
  - a. In which Skills for Success areas would you like to see additional training (either for yourself or others)?
  - b. For each skill area, what specific topics would you like to have included?
- Q.4 What other types of training would you like to see offered?

## ***Appendix Nine : Union Focus Group Protocol***

1. Please tell me a bit about the role of the Union here at \_\_\_\_\_ .

2. What skills do employees need to do their jobs well?

3. What skills do your members need to participate effectively in the Union?

4. What personal qualities or attitudes make for good employees?

5. [Handout - “Skills for Success”]

In terms of the nine Skills for Success, what do you see as the training needs of employees?		
Skill	Training Needed?	How would employees’ job performance be improved?
Reading		
Numeracy (Math)		

Writing		
Digital		
Problem Solving		
Communication		
Collaboration		
Adaptability		
Creativity & Innovation		

6. In addition to the Skills for Success training that you've identified, what other training needs do you see?

7. How would training in those additional areas improve employee performance of their duties?

8. How could the Union support training programs?

9. Is there anything you'd like to add?

## ***Appendix Ten: Focus Group Protocol Production Workers***

### **A. Use of Skills for Success**

Q.1 Let's start with the "Skills for Success" handout. What are the most important skills for success that you need in your work?

Q.2 Reading

(a) What sort of reading do you have to do in your work?

(b) How important is the reading?

Q.3 Writing

(a) What sort of writing do you have to do in your work?

(b) How important is the writing?

#### Follow-up to Reading & Writing

- Distribute "Reading & Writing in Your Work" handout
- Ask participants to complete the form & return it

Q.4 Numeracy

How do you use numeracy (math) in your work?

Q.5 Digital

How do you use digital devices in your work?

Q.6 Problem Solving

(a) What sort of problem solving do you have to do in your work?



(b) Please give examples.

Q.7 Communication

(a) Who are the people or groups you have to communicate with in your work?

(b) What is the purpose of the communication?

Q.8 Collaboration

(a) What teams do you work on?

(b) What are their purposes?

Q.9 Creativity & Innovation

(a) Have you sometimes seen ways to improve work processes?

(b) Were the changes made?

(c) Did they work out as you had thought?

Q.10 Adaptability

(a) What changes in the workplace have you seen in the past that have required retraining or improved skills?

(b) Was it difficult to adapt to the changes?

(c) What supports were you given to help you adapt to the changes?

(d) Were there other supports that you wish had been available?

## **B. Perceived Need of Training**

- Q.11 What changes do you see coming in the future that may require further training?
- Q.12 In which Skills for Success areas would you like to see additional training (either for yourself or others)?
- Q.13 What other types of training would you like to see offered?

### **C. Implementation**

- Q.14 (a) What would be a good time to hold courses?  
(b) How many hours per week?
- Q.15 What could workers and management contribute to a program to make it successful?
- Q.16 What, if any, do you feel may be barriers to people participating in courses?
- Q.17 On a scale of 1 to 10 (10 high), how interested do you think people would be in a course?

## ***Appendix Eleven: Reading & Writing in Your Work***

Reading	No	Yes		
		Not Very Important	Fairly Important	Very Important
• Read and understand simple texts, such as product labels and emails or memos		1	2	3
• Read and understand written instruction such as work orders		1	2	3
• Skim lengthier text for meaning and key ideas		1	2	3
• Identify relevant information in text		1	2	3
• Refer to manuals for information		1	2	3
• Analyze and integrate information from several sources		1	2	3
• Refer to manuals on how to complete work tasks		1	2	3
• Read and understand complex texts such as company policy and training manuals		1	2	3
<u>Other ways you use reading</u>				
Writing	No	Yes		
		Not Very Important	Fairly Important	Very Important
• Write brief text that is less than a paragraph, such as log entries or reminder notes		1	2	3
• Write text that is a paragraph or longer, such as memos or letters		1	2	3
• Write text using correct grammar and spelling		1	2	3
• Write text with a clear purpose, such as to inform or request information		1	2	3
• Write informal text intended for familiar audiences, such as notes to co-workers		1	2	3
<u>Other ways you use writing</u>				

## ***Appendix Twelve: Principles of Adult Education***

Understanding how adults learn is another key to developing curricula that engage learners and, thus, facilitate learning. This means understanding the needs of adult learners and leads to learner-centered program delivery.

Adult education like other learning is part of the two-way communication process. Like its cousins, *reading/writing and speaking/listening*, teaching and learning require a “sender” and a “receiver” of information who interact continually, regularly trading roles. Each partner knows that positive outcomes are founded in identifying a clear purpose and accurate identification of their needs as both senders and receivers of information.

As a workplace educator helping adults learn, it is important to take into account the adult education principles along with other generally agreed upon characteristics of adult learners.

- *Adults are moving toward autonomy and **self-directedness**.*
  - *Adults tend to be voluntary learners.* Their decision to return to formal learning is a significant one and is often preceded by careful consideration. The Nova Scotia Workplace Education Initiative invites learners to participate throughout every stage of program planning, scheduling, design and delivery. Adults want to make decisions for themselves, so all stages of the program must include consultation and collaboration.
- *Adults have valuable **life experiences** which are to be respected and used in learning whenever possible.*
  - *Adult learners are diverse, have a wealth of work/world experience, and possess well-developed personal identities which, when respected,*

provide a wonderful resource for the learning process. They vary in age, abilities, job experiences, cultural and educational backgrounds as well as personal goals. Incorporating workplace issues, experience and materials into a curriculum uses contexts familiar to the learners. This builds a comfort level in the classroom and then allows learners to focus fully on acquiring the essential skills they want.

- *Adults' perceptions of what they need to learn along with their **readiness to learn** increase as they take on new roles, responsibilities, etc.*
  - *Adults make a voluntary commitment to learn when they experience a real need to know or do something.* For many workers, the changing workplace has created this need. Instructors, therefore, must relate curriculum content to specific contexts relevant in learners' lives and work. These contexts can be in the form of a worksite problem, issue or concern. The instructional approach can be task or problem-centered.
- *Adults need to apply new knowledge immediately.*
  - *Adults need to know why they are learning something.* Learning is more effective when learners can see how new knowledge will be immediately useful to them at work and at home. Adults often have clear learning objectives and need to know, through ongoing feedback, the extent to which their learning objectives are being met. The learning process must clearly present both the means and the ends to their learning.
- *Adults often have a high degree of motivation to learn.* They respond to extrinsic motivators like higher wages and promotions, but also to intrinsic motivation like the need for self-esteem, recognition and achievement.

- *Adults' sense of "self" influences their learning.* They may carry feelings which inhibit learning such as embarrassment about their return to school, inaccurate perceptions of their own abilities, and negative impressions of past school experiences. Learning in a workplace education setting allows them to meet their learning needs within the safety of a familiar group. This helps to diminish their fear and builds a willingness to learn. When workplace learning is well designed and delivered, learners are at ease, knowing they are already valued.
- *Adults need regular and honest feedback.* This allows for lots of positive reinforcement and ensures that gaps in understanding are identified early.
- *Adults come to learning with unique challenges and barriers influencing their ability to participate in learning.* Many have heavy family and community responsibilities that claim their attention, especially after working a full day. Flexibility and innovation are essential to helping them learn within the demands of family, community perceptions, and coworkers' needs.

#### Adult learners thrive on...

##### Dialogue

- Interaction between learners as well as learner and instructor provides role modeling for real-life situations.
- Fostering active listening skills means more productive exploration of concepts through discussion.

Adult learners thrive on...	
<b>Safe Environment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comfortable, safe atmosphere which is free from judgment and embarrassment allows the risk-taking behaviors inherent in learning.</li> <li>• Acknowledgment and support from outside the learning environment, such as management, co-workers, and the community, encourage a learning culture.</li> </ul>
<b>Open Communication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Regular</b> encouragement and <b>honest</b> feedback make clear opportunities for discussion and nonjudgemental exploration of new ideas and concepts with other learners and their instructor.</li> </ul>

### Adults respond best to learning that is:

- Active
- Experience-based
- Values the learner as an expert
- Independent
- Real-life centered
- Task-centered
- Problem-centered
- Solution-driven
- Skill-seeking
- Self-directing
- Internally and externally motivated

The ultimate goal of adult education is to create independent learners who have the tools to identify their learning needs and meet them by acquiring whatever knowledge or skills they need to live their lives as they choose.

From Nova Scotia Workplace Education Initiative (2007). *Workplace Education: Instructor Manual*, (pp. 11–13).

— End of Report —