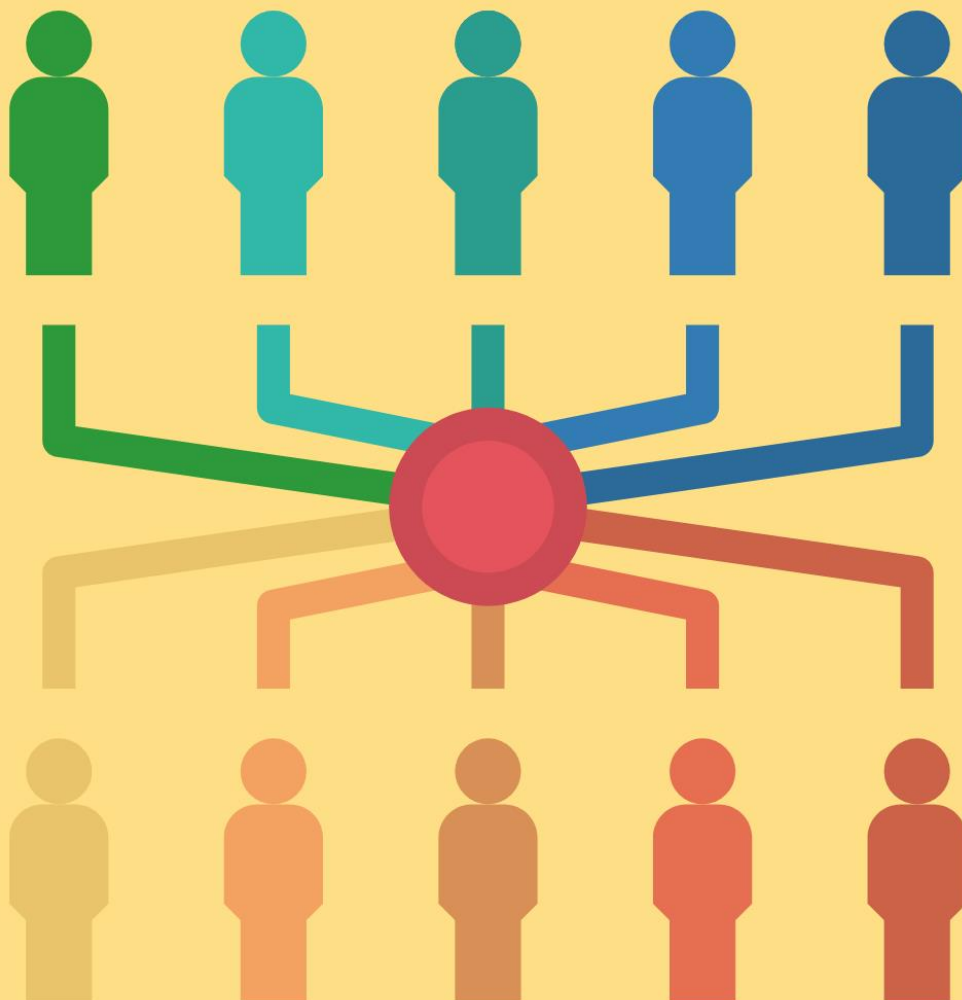

GROWING TOGETHER

A COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY FOR LITERACY AND BASIC SKILLS, EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS AND MANUFACTURING



Contents

Introduction	3
Communications Strategy 1.....	4
Who is the audience?	4
Key Message #1.....	4
Key Message #2	4
Key message #3.....	4
Getting the Word Out	5
Who could share this message digitally?.....	5
Who could distribute postcards?.....	5
What groups would benefit from information sessions?	5
Considerations for Key Message #1.....	6
Communications Strategy 2	7
Who is the audience?	7
Key Message.....	7
Getting the Word Out	7
Who could share this message digitally?.....	7
What groups would benefit from information sessions?	8
Communications Strategy 3	8
Who is the audience?	8
Key Message.....	8
Getting the Word Out	8
Who could share this message digitally?.....	9
How could resources be shared?	9
Conclusion	10
Appendix A: National Manufacturing Industry Organizations.....	11

Introduction

During Literacy Link South Central’s 2020-2021 Ontario Labour Market Partnership (OLMP) project “LBS: Meeting the Needs of Modern Manufacturers” project staff noted a lack of information about literacy programs among manufacturers, and not enough information about manufacturing being shared within the literacy community. Given the role of Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) programs within Employment Ontario and the challenges that manufacturing employers face finding people to fill open entry-level positions, Literacy Link South Central identified communication and marketing as a critical need.

This Communications Strategy outlines elements to further promote manufacturing to LBS and LBS to manufacturing, and goes beyond that to consider the role that Employment Services and Ontario Works play in connecting these two. As a result, this plan targets several different audiences:

- Manufacturers
- Employment Services staff
- Ontario Works caseworkers
- LBS learners
- LBS practitioners

One or more key messages has been identified for each audience, along with tools and strategies to “get the word out.” Potential communication partners have been identified, and for one of the key messages (that LBS programs may be a source of employees) a draft process for responding to employer requests has been outlined.

Many of the key messages for manufacturers are already in the process of being shared as a result of support from the steering committee for this OLMP project. In the months and years ahead, we hope to continue sharing these critical messages and strengthening the relationship between LBS and the manufacturing sector.

The views expressed in this strategy are those of Literacy Link South Central, and do not necessarily reflect those of the Province. The Government of Ontario and its agencies are in no way bound by any recommendations contained in this document.



This *Employment Ontario* project is funded in part by the Government of Canada and the Government of Ontario

Communications Strategy 1

Who is the audience? Manufacturing employers

Key Message #1 Your next great employee may be found in an adult literacy program.



London Area Manufacturers
Are you looking for your next great employee?

Many adults in Ontario's literacy upgrading programs are building their skills for work. They've shown dedication to lifelong learning, a desire to grow, and commitment to reaching their goals.

They have the essential skills you need in your business. Your next great employee may be just a phone call away.

Contact Literacy Link South Central to find out more!

519-681-7307 | literacylink@llsc.on.ca | www.llsc.on.ca

EMPLOYMENT ONTARIO This Employment Ontario project is funded in part by the Government of Canada and the Government of Ontario.

Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) programs are an untapped market for new entry-level recruits. There are adults in LBS programs who are building their skills for employment, and particularly with the growing importance of soft skills, could make excellent entry-level workers.

These employment-bound learners have demonstrated that they're willing to take the time and make the effort to build their skills, and they will make a similar effort in the workplace.

Key Message #2 A free soft skills assessment tool is now available.



Literacy Link

How can you be sure new hires have the right attitude, attention to detail, and interpersonal skills for the job?

Literacy Link South Central is here to help. Try their free Soft Skills Assessment Tool today!

EMPLOYMENT ONTARIO This Employment Ontario project is funded in part by the Government of Canada and the Government of Ontario.

Literacy Link South Central's Soft Skills Assessment tool was developed based on research and input from local manufacturers about the soft skills they need most for entry-level positions. The tool was designed to be easy-to-use, and contains authentic workplace scenarios that identify someone's strength in eight key skills. It can be used during the application process to identify applicants who are a good fit for entry-level positions.

Key message #3 If your current employees are lacking soft skills, LBS programs have training that can help.



London Area Manufacturers

Did you know:

Ontario's FREE adult literacy programs can help your employees improve their reading, writing, math, computer and interpersonal skills? Contact Literacy Link South Central today to find out how!

519-681-7307 | literacylink@llsc.on.ca | www.llsc.on.ca

EMPLOYMENT ONTARIO This Employment Ontario project is funded in part by the Government of Canada and the Government of Ontario.

It is important that employees build and demonstrate not only their technical skills, but their soft skills like work ethic, teamwork, and decision making. Without them, workplaces often face communications challenges, absenteeism, or conflicts between staff. Literacy and Basic Skills programs can help employees build those skills, helping your workplace increase its moral and productivity and encouraging employee retention.

Getting the Word Out

This message can be shared in a variety of ways, including:

1. Social media posts by organizations that manufacturers follow on Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn and/or Facebook
2. Articles in newsletters or newspapers that manufacturing employers subscribe to
3. Postcards for direct outreach to manufacturers ¹
4. Presentations or information sessions for groups that manufacturers belong to

¹Funding needs to be considered for the printing and mailing of physical postcards.

Who could share this message digitally?

1. The Excellence in Manufacturing Consortium (EMC) through their national newsletter
2. The London Economic Development Corporation (LEDC) through their social media accounts
3. The Workforce Planning and Development Board (WPDB) through both their monthly regional newsletter and social media platforms
4. Chambers of Commerce through their newsletters and social media accounts
5. Articles in Elgin This Month, the London Free Press, or other media outlets that are widely read by business owners

For additional distribution partners that could be approached to share this message, please see Appendix A: National Manufacturing Industry Organizations.

Who could distribute postcards?

1. Through regional literacy networks within their own service area, or provincially through the Learning Networks of Ontario (LNO)
2. The WPDB, with a focus on local manufacturers who answered “yes” to the question “would you like more information about adult education for your employees?” in the most recent EmployerOne survey.

What groups would benefit from information sessions?

- Human Resources Professional groups
- Business Improvement Associations
- Associations and organizations beyond manufacturing that need entry-level employees, including the London Restaurant and Hotel Association, Hospital staff associations, etc.

Considerations for Key Message #1

A process needs to be established so when an employer contacts the distributors of this message and says “I’m interested in hiring an LBS student” clear steps are followed. A draft of this process appears below.

1. If the employer contacts someone other than the regional literacy network, that organization contacts the network to get them involved.
2. The regional literacy network reaches out to their local LBS programs via email, letting them know that an employer has been in touch, and asking programs to identify how many employment-bound learners they have with strong soft skills who may be ready for entry-level work.
3. The regional network or the employer’s original contact notifies the employer of the number of potential applicants and asks for their preferred application process.
4. The regional network shares the application process with the learner and their LBS program’s staff.
5. Employment-bound learners who are already connected with an Employment Ontario ES agency and are interested in applying are directed to notify their employment counsellor so they can get support with the application process.
6. Employment-bound learners who are not connected with an Employment Ontario ES agency and are interested in applying are referred to an ES agency by their LBS program.
7. Learners are encouraged to continue in the LBS program throughout the application process, and in the event of their successful transition to work, are welcomed to work on upgrading part-time while they are working.

Communications Strategy 2

Who is the audience? Employment Services staff and Ontario Works Caseworkers

Key Message LBS programs can help clients develop the skills they need to be successful at work.



While both Employment Services (ES) and Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) are part of Employment Ontario, the referral relationship is not as strong as it could be and there are opportunities for us to work more closely together. With the current shortage of workers in the labour market, the focus on moving people off Ontario Works and into employment is increasing. A wealth of soft skill and employment-focused skill building can be found in LBS programs, and this strategy would build awareness of how referrals to LBS can help both clients and programs achieve their goals. Clarifying that clients can be registered with ES and LBS at the same time would also be beneficial.

Getting the Word Out

This message can be shared in a variety of ways, including:

1. Social media posts by organizations that career professionals and Ontario Works staff follow on Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn and/or Facebook
2. Articles in newsletters that career professionals and Ontario Works staff subscribe to
3. Presentations or information sessions for career professionals and Ontario Works caseworkers

Who could share this message digitally?

1. The Workforce Planning and Development Board (WPDB) through both their monthly regional newsletter and social media platforms
2. The Employment Sector Council (ESC) through their monthly newsletter,
3. Individual ES agencies through their social media channels, as many ES agencies follow one another
4. The City of London's Ontario Works distributes a monthly newsletter to thousands of Ontario Works clients and interested parties, and the February 2021 issue was read by over 3,700 individuals. Providing an article in this newsletter about a client who has benefited from LBS upgrading and is now employed could have far-reaching impact.

What groups would benefit from information sessions?

- The Employment Sector Council (ESC) Professional Development committee’s “lunch & learn” attendees
- Job Developer Network
- Ontario Works team huddles and management meetings

Communications Strategy 3

Who is the audience? LBS Learners and Practitioners

Key Message Manufacturing is an excellent career choice for LBS learners on the employment goal path.



Through our work on Labour Market Partnership project “LBS: Meeting the Needs of Modern Manufacturers,” we spoke with many manufacturers anxious to fill open entry-level positions in their business. Spreading the word about these jobs and what they have to offer can encourage LBS learners to consider a career in manufacturing, helping solve this important labour market issue. LBS Practitioners also need information and support to help prepare learners on the employment goal path for careers in manufacturing.

Getting the Word Out

This message can be shared in a variety of ways, including:

1. Social media posts on channels that literacy learners on the employment goal path may follow
2. Plain language flyers about manufacturing jobs directed at learners that:
 - a. Promote manufacturing as a viable and enticing career for LBS learners on the employment goal path.
 - b. Summarize the skills manufacturers value most and outlined the connection between them, and the skills the learner is developing in the LBS program.

3. A support guide for LBS practitioners outlining several ways to help learners understand the sector, and develop their skills for jobs in manufacturing. Information contained in the guide would include:
 - a. Why a job in manufacturing may be a good choice for employment-bound learners to consider.
 - b. Which soft and hard skills manufacturers value most.
 - c. Suggestions on how to talk about manufacturing with LBS learners, especially if they have biases against the idea (ex. myth-busting that all manufacturing jobs are dirty.)
 - d. A case study demonstrating how LBS programs can build relationships with local manufacturers for the benefit of their learners (ex. some LBS programs have welcomed employers to come in and talk directly to their learners about what is involved in jobs at their company.) The case study could share how the visit was arranged and the results.

Who could share this message digitally?

Targeted marketing through social media algorithms is an option, but does incur a cost. Funding would need to be available to support this effort.

How could resources be shared?

The practitioner support guide could be released to LBS programs across the province by the Learning Networks of Ontario (LNO). With additional funding, an informational webinar could be created to launch the guide, outlining each element and walking LBS practitioners through its contents. The guide could be made available in several formats, including:

- As Word or PDF files, emailed to practitioners directly by their regional literacy network
- On a public-facing website, where resources could be continually added as they are produced

Learner-facing printed² materials could be distributed to LBS program staff several ways, including:

- At Literacy Service Planning meetings
- Mailing them directly to programs²

²Funding needs to be considered for the printing and mailing of physical materials. As an alternative and to cut down on costs, these promotional materials could be created only in a digital format, and posted online. Learners with strong enough digital literacy skills would then need to be directed to the site where they could view the resources.

Conclusion

Literacy Link South Central is dedicated to strengthening the relationship between Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) community, Employment Services (ES) and the manufacturing sector. We look forward to pursuing opportunities to spread these key messages to each targeted audience as we support the adult literacy field and its learners.



For more information about this Communications Strategy, or Literacy Link South Central, please contact us at literacylink@llsc.on.ca or 519-681-7307.

Appendix A: National Manufacturing Industry Organizations

To expand the reach of this Marketing Strategy, Literacy Link South Central recommends that contact be made with the following national industry organizations. Each has their own marketing strategies and initiatives, and may be interested in the messages outlined in this strategy, and willing to share them with their membership.

This list has been developed with the three target NAICS (North American Industry Classification System) subsectors with available entry-level jobs and flexible educational requirements. They are:

- Transportation Equipment Manufacturing (NAICS 336)
- Food and Beverage Manufacturing (NAICS 311/312)
- Metal, Metal Product, and Machinery Manufacturing (NAICS 331/332/333)

The Agricultural Manufacturers of Canada (AMC)

<https://www.a-m-c.ca/>

AMC is a national, member-driven industry association representing just over 250 agricultural equipment manufacturers and associated suppliers. Their mission is to foster and promote the growth and development of the agricultural equipment manufacturing industry in Canada.

Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters (CME)

<https://cme-mec.ca/home-departments/>

CME is Canada's largest trade and industry association, and the voice of manufacturing and global business. Founded in 1871, CME represents more than 10,000 companies nationwide. More than 85% of its members are small- and medium-sized enterprises and collectively account for an estimated 82% of Canadian manufacturing production and 90% of all goods and services exports.

Canadian Manufacturing Coalition (CMC)

<https://www.manufacturingourfuture.ca>

CMC is comprised of roughly 50 manufacturing industry groups that provides input on priority issues affecting manufacturers. Their member organizations represent roughly 100,000 companies and 1.8 million workers, coast to coast.

Canadian Steel Producers Association (CSPA)

<http://www.canadiansteel.ca/>

CSPA seeks to advance public policies to advance industry competitiveness, innovation, environmental performance, community responsibility and develop a skilled and productive workforce. One of the CSPA's main area of work is to attract new workers to the steel industry and retain and upgrade the skills of the current workforce as industrial processes become more complex.

Canadian Tooling and Machining Association

<https://www.ctma.com/home>

CTMA represents, supports and promotes the interests of the Canadian tooling and precision metalworking industries. Among their objectives is promoting and providing programs devoted to apprenticeship training and skills upgrading in the tooling and machining industries.

Canadian Vehicle Manufacturers' Association (CVMA)

<https://www.cvma.ca/>

CVMA represents Canada's three largest manufacturers of light and heavy duty motor vehicles. The CVMA's membership includes Fiat Chrysler Automobiles; Ford, Limited; and General Motors. The CVMA provides research, information, industry-government advocacy and other services aimed at building a better understanding of the importance of a healthy automotive industry to Canada's economic well-being and prosperity.

Food and Beverage Canada (FBC)

<https://fbc-abc.com/>

FBC is committed to a competitive business environment for food and beverage manufacturers through collaborative relationships and constructive communications with federal and provincial governments. The organization is composed of five regional associations located from coast to coast and represents over 1,500 food and beverage manufacturing businesses across Canada.

Food and Beverage Ontario (FBO)

<https://foodandbeverageontario.ca/>

FBO is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to advancing the interests of Ontario's food and beverage processors. The goal of FBO is to promote and support a competitive Ontario industry locally and within the global marketplace. They are one of the five regional associations that created Food and Beverage Canada (above).

Food Processors of Canada (FPC)

<https://foodprocessorsofcanada.ca/>

FPC's mandate is to advocate on behalf of Canadian owners and leaders of food based companies, and as such they facilitate policy consultations, support issue management and resolution, and provide advice on strategy, regulation, research, and business development. The FPC membership includes key members of the federal and provincial governments, academic partners and industry leaders.

Global Automakers of Canada (GAC)

<http://www.globalautomakers.ca/>

GAC is the national industry association representing the Canadian interests of 15 automakers. The GAC represents the interests of members engaged in the manufacturing, importation, distribution and servicing of light duty vehicles and advocates for sound public policy to support a competitive and sustainable automotive market in Canada.

Mining Association of Canada (MAC)

<https://mining.ca/>

MAC is a national organization representing companies engaged in mineral exploration, mining, smelting, refining and semi-fabrication. Member companies account for most of Canada's production of base and precious metals, uranium, diamonds, metallurgical coal, mined oil sands and industrial minerals.

Note: Literacy Link South Central further recommends sharing information with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA), as they provide funding, information and support for Ontario-based food and beverage manufacturing businesses.

<http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/food/business-development/index.htm>