

Introduction to Occupational Terminology Workshops

The **Occupational Terminology Workshops** are part of a comprehensive project undertaken by Human Resources Development Canada (now the Department of Human Resources and Skills Development), Skills for Change, and the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship, Culture and Recreation. The Sector Terminology and Counselling (STIC) project will provide a model for sector-specific orientation, occupational terminology training, computerized profile building, and career action-plan development for internationally-trained professionals and tradespeople. The project has been developed for four sectors: engineering, accounting, health care, and motor vehicle mechanics.

The **Occupational Terminology Workshops** are an integral part of the project. Adults, especially internationally-trained professionals and tradespeople, bring a wealth of prior knowledge and experience into the classroom. A primary goal of this curriculum is to develop learning opportunities for participants to apply their professional knowledge and experience within a Canadian context. During the development of the curriculum, it was assumed that the participants in the project workshops would have at least an intermediate level of English.

The curriculum and facilitator's guidelines reflect the following:

- ◆ research and development of a task-based curriculum; a model for adoption by other sectors
- ◆ review and implementation of recent research on second language vocabulary acquisition
- ◆ identification of specific language needs of internationally-trained professionals and tradespeople.
- ◆ development of the curriculum in consultation with sector experts and other partners
- ◆ development of the curriculum incorporating Canadian Language Benchmarks
- ◆ detailed facilitator's notes accompanying each lesson
- ◆ a model for program evaluation

Each terminology workshop is a self-contained curriculum consisting of approximately 35 hours of classroom time divided into three modules that are further subdivided into three-hour lessons. The modules reflect three different contexts for communication: workplace, work search, and licensing. Relevant terminology is incorporated within each topic. The lesson plans conform to the *Canadian Language Benchmarks*, meaning the specific skills, competence areas, and competencies that are required to accomplish tasks are outlined each lesson. Clear learning outcomes are also outlined in each lesson.

Core terminology within each module was determined through a number of sources:

- 1) consultation with sector experts
- 2) research into the licensing process through documents from regulatory bodies
- 3) current communication demands for an effective job search
- 4) workplace communication requirements inherent in the profession or trade

Authentic materials are used in the curriculum wherever possible to ensure that participants are exposed to language that is actually used in the real-world context of each occupation. The curriculum includes current Occupational Fact Sheets, which provide up-to-date information about trades and professions and their licensing requirements. These fact sheets are available on the Internet. (Visit www.equalopportunity.on.ca) Facilitators are also encouraged to obtain brochures and licensing information from regulatory bodies.

Facilitator Training Guidelines have been included in Appendix A. These guidelines may form the basis of a facilitator-training workshop, or facilitators who are preparing to deliver the workshop may use them independently.

Evaluation is an important part of the curriculum. Two Participant Evaluation Questionnaires and one Facilitator Feedback Questionnaire are provided in Appendix B. It is recommended that these questionnaires be used to evaluate each lesson / each module in addition to evaluating the program as a whole following completion of the workshop.

The curriculum framework for the **Occupational Terminology Workshops** can be adapted for other sectors as a comprehensive task-based approach to second language learning. The adoption of a task-based approach ensures that language learners gain the competencies to perform the real-world language tasks needed for professional development.

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Introduction to the Accounting Occupational Terminology Workshop

The Accounting Occupational Terminology workshop begins with three lessons in the “*Communication and Terminology for the Workplace*” module, continues with three lessons in the “*Communication and Terminology for Licensing*” module, and concludes with four lessons in the module “*Communication and Terminology for Work Search*”. Each module and each topic are self-contained, but together they form a comprehensive program for occupation-specific second language learning.

Module 1: Communication and Terminology for the Workplace

The first two lessons in the workplace module use two kinds of financial reports, the Balance Sheet and the Income Statement, in order to introduce two types of business letters. The financial reports are accounting tasks in themselves that are incorporated into a workplace context. They become the basis for and the subject of correspondence documents. (Balance Sheets are enclosed with a letter to a client substantiating a recommendation on a purchase. The Income Statement is included with a letter requesting further information from a client. The last lesson in this module is on accounting cycles and accounting reports and requires participants to complete and solve an accounting case for a full accounting cycle.

Within each lesson in the workplace module, relevant terminology is first examined to either increase vocabulary or to confirm that participants have the vocabulary knowledge necessary to accomplish the tasks. Familiar accounting tasks are extended or fulfilled within an unfamiliar context.

Module 2: Communication and Terminology for Licensing

The licensing module examines brochures and documents from all three accounting bodies. In lesson one, information and terminology related to the CGAO (Certified General Accountants of Ontario) is introduced within a functional context of asking for clarification. Participants share information and seek clarification from each other as they learn about obtaining a CGA designation.

The second lesson has two topics. The Occupational Fact Sheet for Chartered Accountants forms the basis for the first topic. Participants read the text and scan for specific information and then apply their knowledge of the process for obtaining a CA (Chartered Accountant) designation to the professional situations

of their colleagues in the workshop. The next topic is on accounting-related positions and the terminology that is used to advertise positions that do not require a designation. Some participants may feel that CA (or CGA or CMA) positions are part of their long-range plans. As a result, they may need information on short-term employment goals in accounting before they obtain a designation. This lesson is therefore designed to meet the varying needs of the participants.

The last lesson in the licensing module also includes two topics. The first focuses on some of the specific management aspects of the CMA (Certified Management Accountant) designation. It allows participants to do some self-directed reading of brochures for this designation. The second topic in this lesson is a preparation for the work search module. Participants are given a chart that contains verbs and nouns related to accounting. Participants must choose which verbs and nouns are commonly used together. In this way, participants can start listing their own accounting skills.

Module 3: Communication and Terminology for Work Search

The work search module contains four lessons. In the first two lessons, participants gain critical skills in reading job ads for employer requirements and then matching their skills, personal attributes, educational background, and experience to those required by employers. In addition, participants expand their vocabulary in order to describe their own skills and personal attributes.

In the third lesson, participants examine accounting résumés in order to expand their knowledge of verbs traditionally used in résumé-writing, including more powerful verbs that suit the needs of current workplaces. The last lesson focuses on employment interviews. While the task involves a role-playing exercise, the lesson also has participants critically analyze the script of a job interview for sociolinguistic and sociocultural errors.

Cumulatively, the three modules provide an introduction to the communication and terminology needed by internationally-trained accounting professionals to perform tasks related to the workplace, licensing, and work search.

Overview of Accounting Curriculum for Occupational Terminology Module 1 – Communication and Terminology for the Workplace

TOPIC	TASK	SOME LANGUAGE COMPETENCIES	TERMINOLOGY
1. Preparing Balance Sheets and Writing Letters to Clients	5 prepare a Balance Sheet 5 write a letter advising a client on an investment	5 format text into a standard form 5 discuss the pros and cons of a purchase	5 receptive and productive knowledge of terminology associated with Balance Sheets 5 apply prior knowledge and experience in a Canadian workplace context
2. Letters of Request and Income Statements	5 prepare an Income Statement 5 write a letter requesting further financial information from a client	5 explain case studies 5 analyze and evaluate case studies by applying prior knowledge and experience	5 receptive and productive knowledge of terminology associated with income statements 5 apply prior knowledge and experience in a Canadian workplace context
3. The Accounting Cycle and Accounting Reports	5 provide a business owner with accounting/business advice. 5 prepare accounting records and financial reports in an accounting case	5 negotiate an accounting problem with a team	5 receptive and productive knowledge of terminology associated with the accounting cycle and accounting reports 5 apply prior knowledge and experience in a Canadian workplace context

Overview of Accounting Curriculum for Occupational Terminology Module 2 – Communication and Terminology for Licensing

TOPIC	TASK	SOME LANGUAGE COMPETENCIES	TERMINOLOGY
1. Requesting Clarification from the CGA	5 exchange information about CGA process for obtaining a designation with a colleague	5 read informational text 5 use expressions of clarification	5 receptive and productive knowledge of CGA terminology and general licensing terminology
2A. Obtaining a CA Designation 2B. Accounting Positions not Requiring a Designation	5 (2A.) explain process for obtaining a designation to a colleague 5 (2B.) compare accounting relate positions with own experience	5 read informational/instructional text 5 discuss job duties of other accounting positions	5 receptive and productive knowledge of CA terminology and other accounting titles/positions
3A. Obtaining a CMA Designation 3B. Specific Accounting Skills: Self Assessment	5 3A. read CMA brochures 5 3B. list own accounting skills	5 read informational/instructional text 5 identify verbs and nouns commonly associated together in an accounting context	5 receptive and productive knowledge of CMA terminology and verb + noun collocations in an accounting context

Overview of Accounting Curriculum for Occupational Terminology Module 3 – Communication and Terminology for Work Search

TOPIC	TASK	SOME LANGUAGE COMPETENCIES	TERMINOLOGY
1. Understanding Job Ads: Skills and Personal Attributes	5 match own skills and personal attributes with those of job ads	5 scan for specific information	5 have expanded productive knowledge of vocabulary used to describe skills and personal attributes
2. Job Ads: Recruitment Terminology	5 match own skills, attributes, education, and job experience with those in job ads	5 scan for specific information 5 analyze job ads for employer/industry requirements	5 have receptive and productive knowledge of recruitment terminology
3. Accounting Résumés	5 apply learned terminology and format to a résumé writing task	5 evaluate choice of verbs and résumé formats	5 have receptive and productive knowledge of terminology associated with résumés; understand connotative meanings
4. Accounting Employment Interviews	5 role play an employment interview for an accounting position	5 analyze script of an employment interview 5 use clarification strategies	5 have receptive and productive knowledge of different language strategies appropriate for an employment interview