

Why are Workplace Essential Skills important?

The nine Essential Skills are the foundation skills needed for learning all other skills at work.

They are the key to life-long learning.

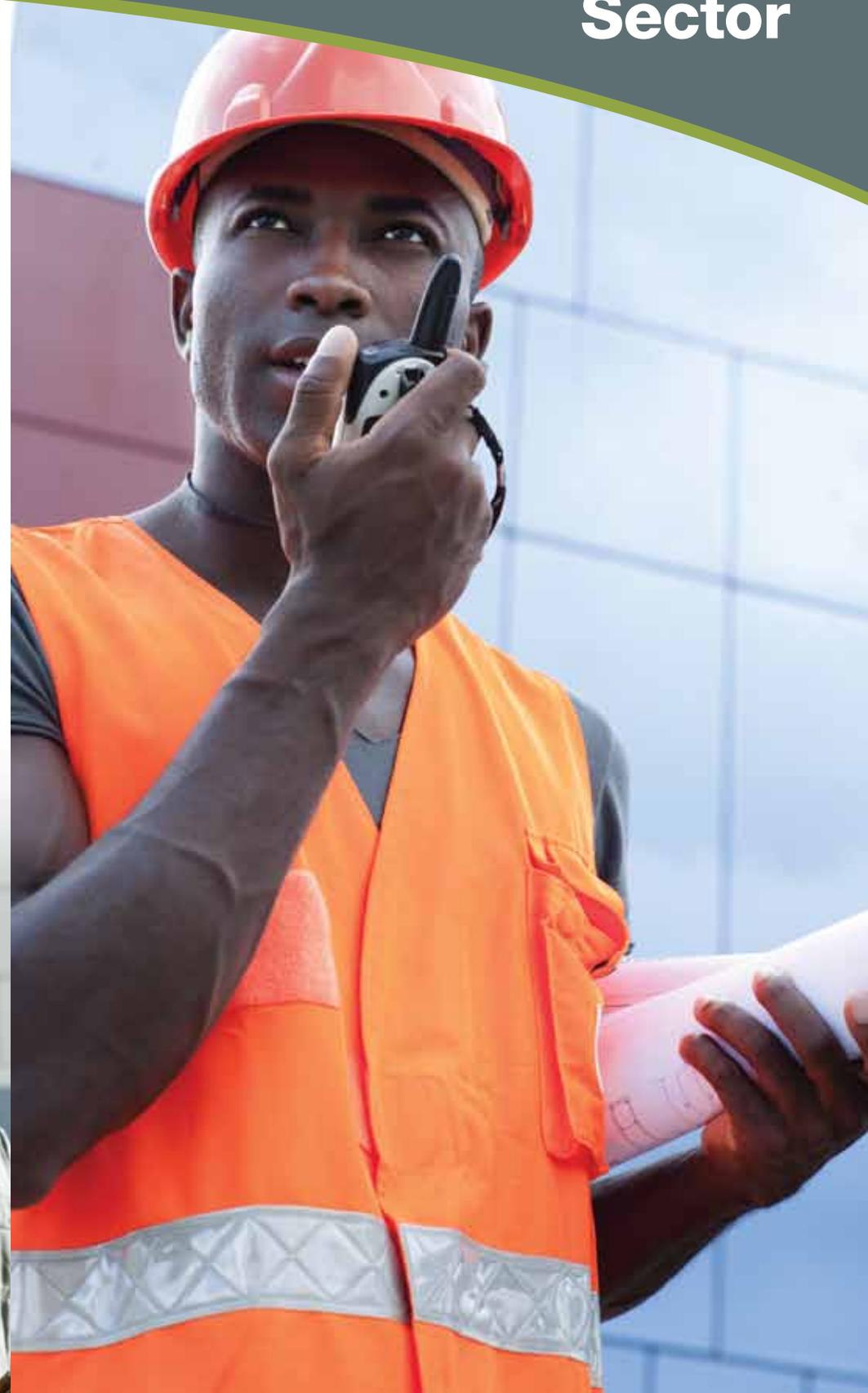
Forty-two percent of working-age Canadians don't have the minimum literacy skills required to meet today's communication demands. 55% lack the minimum numeracy skills to handle information demands.

Yet, research shows that every 1% increase in literacy skills boosts productivity by 2.5% and leads to a 1.5% increase in Canada's GDP. The report also states that raising literacy and numeracy skills for people at the lowest levels is more important to economic growth than producing more highly skilled graduates.



Workplace Essential Skills

A look at the Construction Sector



Using the Essential Skills in the Construction Sector



Reading Text

Understanding sentences and paragraphs.

Journeyman carpenters frequently read specification booklets, details and notes on blueprints, and codes specified by engineering drawings.



Document Use

Getting information from documents or filling in information.

Construction electricians read procedures for each new worksite. These lists contain information such as emergency numbers or voltage being used and information about conditions that are unique to the site.



Writing

Writing texts and writing in documents, in both paper-based and digital modes.

Supervisors in construction write notes describing safety breaches, delays and maintenance requirements.



Numeracy

Using numbers and being able to think in quantitative terms.

Iron workers calculate the required quantities of materials such as bolts, rivets, rebar, welding rods and sheet metal needed for construction jobs.



Oral Communication

Talking to give and exchange thoughts and information.

Heavy equipment operators receive job assignments and directions from supervisors or contractors, and discuss road conditions, equipment problems and material shortages with them.



Working with Others

Working independently or with others to achieve a job task.

Sheet metal workers coordinate activities with co-workers and tradespeople such as plumbers and electricians to ensure the efficient uses of workspaces, materials and time.



Thinking

Using the six distinct and interrelated cognitive functions.

Painters contact paint stores and salespersons for information about products including availability, proper selection of materials and new products on the market.



Computer Use

Using different kinds of computer applications and technical tools.

Elevator mechanics use software applications to input commands into a handheld diagnostic device containing a computer and coded programs.



Continuous Learning

Participating in ongoing process of acquiring skills and knowledge.

Bricklayers participate in safety orientations and courses such as training on rigging, first aid and occupational health and safety. They may learn about new products or attend courses on topics such as landscaping with bricks, blocks and stone.

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Workplace Essential Skills

A look at the Hospitality Sector

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Using the Essential Skills in the Hospitality Sector



Reading Text

Understanding sentences and paragraphs.

Hotel front desk clerks read log books at the beginning of every shift to obtain information on special requests, incoming groups or issues that need attention.



Document Use

Getting information from documents or filling in information.

Cleaners read Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) labels on products to understand the applicable safety precautions.



Writing

Writing texts and writing in documents, in both paper-based and digital modes.

Food service supervisors write memos in plain language for servers to describe new items on the menu and specify procedures for making new beverages.



Numeracy

Using numbers and being able to think in quantitative terms.

Guest room attendants estimate the quantity of supplies such as towels, soap or coffee needed.



Oral Communication

Talking to give and exchange thoughts and information.

Cooks talk to dishwashers and stewards about cleanup and the availability of cutlery or dishes.



Working with Others

Working independently or with others to achieve a job task.

Cooks coordinate their activities with co-workers to ensure optimum use of work space and equipment.



Thinking

Using the six distinct and interrelated cognitive functions.

Casino workers provide customers with the appropriate explanations on policies or refer the problems to their supervisors.



Computer Use

Using different kinds of computer applications and technical tools.

Front desk clerks use software designed specifically for the hotel industry to check in guests and prepare invoices for check-outs.



Continuous Learning

Participating in ongoing process of acquiring skills and knowledge.

Cleaners acquire new information by reading Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS), manuals and articles.

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Workplace Essential Skills

A look at the Manufacturing Sector

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Using the Essential Skills in the Manufacturing Sector



Reading Text

Understanding sentences and paragraphs.

Assemblers read notes from supervisors to receive instructions on procedural changes and quantities.



Document Use

Getting information from documents or filling in information.

Machinists complete checklists and other administrative forms to document work completed, place requests, and identify problems and deficiencies.



Writing

Writing texts and writing in documents, in both paper-based and digital modes.

Machinists write short reports describing problems encountered on the job, corrective actions taken and recommendations for improvements.



Numeracy

Using numbers and being able to think in quantitative terms.

Assemblers take measurements to cut wire to specific lengths or mark where to cut holes on sheet metal for the wiring.



Oral Communication

Talking to give and exchange thoughts and information.

Assemblers speak with co-workers to troubleshoot assembly problems.



Working with Others

Working independently or with others to achieve a job task.

Machinists work with other machinists to carry out new tasks or to solve problems.



Thinking

Using the six distinct and interrelated cognitive functions.

Assemblers memorize specified tolerances to ensure that products meet quality standards.



Computer Use

Using different kinds of computer applications and technical tools.

Assemblers search for parts data, enter data and print out labels to attach to completed products.



Continuous Learning

Participating in ongoing process of acquiring skills and knowledge.

Machinists participate in training stay informed of new technologies, products and trends within the machining industry.