

Program of Study

Introduction to the World of Work

Subject Area: Working Life



Secteur de la formation professionnelle et technique et de la formation continue

CCBE

COMMON CORE BASIC EDUCATION

Direction de l'éducation des adultes et de l'action communautaire

Québec 

Program of Study

Introduction to the World of Work

Subject Area: Working Life



Secteur de la formation professionnelle et technique et de la formation continue

CCBE
COMMON CORE BASIC EDUCATION

Direction de l'éducation des adultes et de l'action communautaire

Development Team

Coordination

Fidèle Medzo, Basic Education Coordinator

Direction de la formation générale des adultes (DFGA)

Denise Beauchesne and Maryse Lacasse, Subject Area Coordinators, DFGA

Content Development

Line Côté, Commission scolaire Marguerite-Bourgeoys

Jean Lamoureux, Commission scolaire de la Pointe-de-l'Île

Collaboration in Research and Content Development

Lorraine Boucher, Commission scolaire Marguerite-Bourgeoys

Louise Fortin, Commission scolaire du Lac-Saint-Jean

Sylvie Hudon, Commission scolaire du Lac-Saint-Jean

Monique Larin, Commission scolaire de Laval

Sylvie Tremblay, Commission scolaire de la Jonquière

Consultation

Carmen Allison, Education Consultant

Domenico Masciotra, Education Consultant

Isabelle Nizet, Education Consultant

English Version

Direction de la production en langue anglaise

Secteur des services à la communauté anglophone

Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport

© Gouvernement du Québec

Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, 2007—07-00478

ISBN 978-2-550-50535-8 (print version)

ISBN 978-2-550-50536-5 (PDF version)

Legal deposit – Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec, 2007

Subject Area: Working Life

Introduction to the World of Work

Courses

Presecondary

Rights and Responsibilities at Work — PRS-P121-1

Secondary Cycle One

Work Culture — PRS-2121-2

Table of Contents

Presentation of the Program of Study	1
The Courses of the Program of Study	2
Links Between the Program of Study and the Broad Areas of Learning.....	3
Contribution of the Program of Study to the Orientations of the <i>Government Policy on Adult Education and Continuing Education and Training</i>	4
Presentation of the Course <i>Rights and Responsibilities at Work</i>	9
Presentation of the Course <i>Work Culture</i>	29
Bibliography	47

Presentation of the Program of Study

The *Introduction to the World of Work* program comprises a total of 50 hours of courses divided into two levels: Presecondary and Secondary Cycle One. Its aim is the same as that of all the programs in Common Core Basic Education, which is to help adults deal competently with real-life situations. More specifically, it is designed to help adults discover the principles, laws, regulations and requirements that underpin the world of work.

Adults enrolled in this program will analyze elements that can help them understand their relationship to the world of work and how work fits into their personal life. As they become autonomous individuals who are able to carry out their social roles, adults must take into consideration their commitment to work. Integrating successfully into the work force and playing an active role in the workplace can be a great source of personal and social gratification.

As workplace requirements and performance and profitability thresholds keep rising, a poor understanding of the basic rules and conventions of the working world as well as insufficient schooling can pose serious obstacles for adults who want a successful career. These obstacles can lead to workplace and even social exclusion. Thus, in an effort to raise their level of education, the program of study *Introduction to the World of Work* aims to help adults assume their responsibilities and become autonomous, by providing them with the tools they need to meet basic workplace requirements, successfully integrate into the work force over the long term and participate actively in workplace activities. The program provides adults with the opportunity to undertake a critical and objective reflection that they will be able to continue throughout their lives in order to adapt to changes in the workplace.

The Courses of the Program of Study

The table below lists the courses in the *Introduction to the World of Work* program of study.

Introduction to the World of Work

Presecondary Course	Duration	Secondary Cycle One Course	Duration
Rights and Responsibilities at Work	25 hrs	Work Culture	25 hrs

The *Introduction to the World of Work* program consists of two mutually complementary courses.

At the Presecondary level, adult learners are introduced to the rights and responsibilities of most employees and employers in Québec. They become familiar with labour standards, preventive measures, and occupational health and safety standards. They learn to recognize illegal practices and file a claim or exercise recourse.

In Secondary Cycle One, adults explore the work culture in Québec. They look at events that have marked its development and situate these events in a historical context. They examine the characteristics of the local and regional market, identify its basic requirements and construct their own concept of work by defining the place that work occupies in their personal life.

Links Between the Program of Study and the Broad Areas of Learning

The real-life situations of the *Introduction to the World of Work* program are taken from the broad area of learning *World of Work*.

Within the limits of the situations presented, this program of study enables adults to achieve the educational aim of this broad area of learning, which is to help learners carry out a career plan. On the one hand, it requires them to assume their responsibilities and defend their rights, and on the other, to adapt their concept of work to the cultural realities of Québec's work force.

Their understanding of the principles governing the world of work and their ability to comply with its cultural rules are key factors in the realization of their career plan. The program of study *Introduction to the World of Work* meets these learning needs; its basic function is to help adults develop an interest in the world of work, broaden their understanding of their rights and responsibilities and adapt their concept of work to the realities they will have to face.

Contribution of the Program of Study to the Orientations of the Government Policy on Adult Education and Continuing Education and Training

This program of study addresses the orientations of the *Government Policy on Adult Education and Continuing Education and Training* by promoting cultural awareness, improvement in the quality of language, the exercise of citizenship rights and responsibilities, and the integration of information and communications technologies.

Cultural Awareness

The *Introduction to the World of Work* program helps to improve the cultural content for adults by allowing them to discover a dynamic, stimulating world, and thereby promoting the development of their general culture. The program opens up new perspectives with regard to legislation, history and culture—perspectives that engage the interest of adult learners. In terms of operational competencies, the program also helps adults communicate more effectively, exercise critical and ethical judgment in the workplace and think logically in order to adapt their concept of work to their personal life.

Quality of Language

Maintaining and improving the quality of language requires the mobilization of resources in terms of vocabulary, grammar and syntax. The program *Introduction to the World of Work* proposes activities in which adults are required to express themselves orally and write various texts, activities that take into account the quality of spoken and written language.

Other activities, such as those in which adults consult resource persons in their field, also help improve the quality of language, as

they allow adults to make use of their communication skills and acquire new ones.

Citizenship

The *Introduction to the World of Work* program helps adults to become responsible citizens who participate actively in economic, social and cultural life.

Work is recognized as an important avenue for social integration and a regulator of daily life. It is one of the main factors that help adults define who they are. Work affects participation in community and economic life and social integration. By examining legislative issues and cultural aspects of the workplace in Québec, adults prepare themselves to enter the world of work. They define their concept of work, which in turn helps them define in what capacity and under what conditions they can adopt the role of producer in society. By exercising their role as producers, they can affirm their role as citizens and demonstrate their cultural distinctiveness. By participating in the workplace, adults increase their awareness of the world and learn to contribute to social debates.

Integration of Information and Communications Technologies

Adults enrolled in the *Introduction to the World of Work* program make use of new technologies to obtain legal and cultural information. They are made aware of the importance of computers and their use in the workplace. They are often required to use such tools as the Internet, CD-ROMs, or company Web sites. New technologies are essential for understanding the dynamics of the working world because they provide quick and efficient access to a wealth of information on events that affect employment opportunities. In this regard, this program of study contributes significantly to the integration of information and communications technologies.

Course
Rights and Responsibilities at Work
PRS-P121-1
Presecondary



“Every one of us is responsible for all.”

Saint-Exupéry

Presentation of the Course *Rights and Responsibilities at Work*

The course *Rights and Responsibilities at Work* is designed to help adult learners deal competently with real-life situations in which they must be familiar with the regulations governing disputes in the workplace.

This course prepares adults to assume their social responsibilities and defend their rights at work. It is specifically designed for adults who intend to enter the work force at the end of their studies, regardless of their level of work experience.

By the end of the course, adults will be able to demonstrate summary knowledge of occupational health and safety regulations and standards. They will be able to assess a situation and file a claim or exercise recourse in the event of prohibited practices or disputes that may affect them or others. Finally, adults will also be aware of their responsibilities regarding prevention in the workplace.

Dealing With the Real-Life Situations

Dealing effectively with real-life situations is based on actions. These actions are grouped into categories and make use of a set of resources that include operational competencies and essential knowledge. During the learning process, adults are expected to construct knowledge related to these resources in order to be able to deal appropriately with their real-life situations.

The class of situations, categories of actions, operational competencies and essential knowledge constitute the compulsory elements of the course. These elements are explained in detail under their respective headings.



Class of Situations Addressed by the Course

This course addresses a single class of situations: *Disputes in the workplace*.

Adults who have little schooling often find themselves in precarious job situations where exercising their responsibilities and defending their rights can prove difficult. The situations in this class will help adults recognize the need to be familiar with the basic regulations governing working conditions and prepare them to adopt appropriate behaviours and judge with discernment various situations involving disputes.

The real-life situations dealt with in this course focus on the regulations contained in two laws governing most salaried workers in Québec: *An Act respecting labour standards* and *An Act respecting occupational health and safety*. Some real-life situations involve disputes associated with one or both acts, such as pregnancy, working “under the table,” discrimination or harassment.

Class of Situations	Examples of Real-Life Situations
Disputes in the workplace	▪ Failure to comply with salary rates ▪ Leaves of absence ▪ Job loss ▪ Discrimination ▪ Harassment ▪ Pregnancy ▪ Working “under the table” ▪ High-risk jobs ▪ Work-related accidents ▪ Occupational illnesses

Categories of Actions

The *categories of actions* are groups of actions that are appropriate for dealing with the real-life situations addressed in the course. *Examples of actions* are provided to illustrate the scope of the category in a variety of contexts.

Categories of Actions	Examples of Actions
Determining rights and responsibilities at work	- Examines the responsibilities of employers and employees in a company - Consults resource persons in the field - Reads summaries explaining sections of the law - Obtains information based on concrete examples - Attends a lecture - Decodes information related to labour standards - Recognizes occupational health and safety conditions - Identifies preventive behaviours
Examining a situation that could lead to a dispute	- Identifies questionable work environments - Examines working conditions - Defines contentious issues - Defines the share of responsibility of each party involved - Identifies different types of prohibited practices - Discusses the facts surrounding a dispute - Considers the consequences of a prohibited practice on the health and safety of the persons involved - Evaluates the financial consequences of a prohibited practice

Categories of Actions	Examples of Actions
▪ Preparing to file a claim or exercise recourse	▪ Determines the actions that need to be taken ▪ Formulates his or her view of the facts ▪ Uses appropriate language ▪ Chooses the appropriate recourse ▪ Consults a resource person ▪ Considers the procedures for filing a complaint ▪ Obtains information about time limits ▪ Uses the proper forms ▪ Recognizes the behaviours to adopt

Compulsory Elements and End-of-Course Outcomes

The compulsory elements are those that the teacher must absolutely take into account when designing learning situations.

Class of Situations

Disputes in the workplace

Categories of Actions

- Determining rights and responsibilities at work
- Examining a situation that could lead to a dispute
- Preparing to file a claim or exercise recourse

Operational Competencies

Communicates

- Looks for information on labour and occupational health and safety standards
- Exchanges information on working conditions
- Validates his or her understanding with individuals in the field
- Asks for help

Exercises critical and ethical judgment

- Considers the responsibilities of the parties involved
- Forms an objective judgment on working conditions
- Evaluates the consequences of a prohibited practice
- Defines his or her position
- Determines whether a claim or recourse is necessary

Essential Knowledge

- Working conditions
- Procedures for filing a complaint

The end-of-course outcomes describe how adults make use of the compulsory elements to deal with the real-life situations addressed in the course.

End-of-Course Outcomes

In order to deal with the class of situations *Disputes in the workplace*, adults learn to follow a process that will enable them to be prepared to exercise their rights and assume their responsibilities as workers.

To determine their rights and responsibilities at work, adults read about occupational health and safety standards, observe various relevant situations and exchange information on working conditions with resource persons. Thus, they familiarize themselves with information related to a given context. The information comes essentially from summaries that explain sections of two laws: the *Act respecting labour standards* and the *Act respecting occupational health and safety*. During exchanges, adults also make sure they understand the issues by consulting individuals in their field and asking for help if necessary.

When adults analyze a work situation that could become the object of a dispute, they consider the responsibilities of the parties involved. They form an objective judgment about the facts surrounding the working conditions at issue, and accurately assess the consequences that the prohibited practices may have on individuals and the workplace.

To be prepared to exercise recourse or file a claim, adults must first determine if such action is necessary. They then consider the procedures for filing a complaint that will allow them to uphold conditions they believe to be fair and equitable. They consult the right resource person for help, and use an appropriate level of language and the correct forms. They learn to define their position clearly and keep the documents they produce, as these contain evidence of their critical analysis. They will then be able to refer to those documents and reinvest what they have learned when preparing to exercise their responsibilities and defend their rights, should these be threatened in the workplace.

Evaluation Criteria

- Correctly determines his or her rights and responsibilities at work
- Objectively examines a situation that could lead to a dispute
- Is adequately prepared to file a claim or exercise recourse

Operational Competencies

The contribution of each operational competency is described in terms of the actions that are appropriate for dealing with the real-life situations in this course. These operational competencies are addressed in other courses and therefore all of the courses taken together contribute to their development.

In this course, only the following operational competencies are addressed: *Communicates* and *Exercises critical and ethical judgment*.

Contribution of the Operational Competency *Communicates*

The operational competency *Communicates* helps adult learners understand others and make themselves clearly understood when dealing with real-life situations related to the class *Disputes in the workplace*.

To be prepared to defend their rights and assume their responsibilities, adult learners exchange information about working conditions, situations that may lead to disputes, and applicable procedures. They gather information about the laws governing labour standards and occupational health and safety in order to identify the legislative provisions that govern these issues. During exchanges, adults ask for the help they need to locate useful information in summary documents and verify that they have understood information obtained from resource persons.

Contribution of the Operational Competency *Exercises critical and ethical judgment*

The operational competency *Exercises critical and ethical judgment* helps adult learners evaluate facts with discernment, question issues surrounding disputes and adopt an objective view of the working conditions they may face when dealing with real-life situations related to the class *Disputes in the workplace*.

Adult learners form an objective judgment about working conditions based on provisions of the acts respecting labour standards and occupational health and safety. They consider the responsibilities of the parties involved, in accordance with a given context and in light of what seems fair and equitable. They define their position, taking care to document it, and thus evaluate the consequences that a prohibited practice may have on them and on others. They also determine whether a claim or recourse is necessary.

Essential Knowledge

The text in parentheses defines the scope and meaning of the essential knowledge listed below. It refers to the main sections of the law summarized in documents and Web sites designed for the general public.

Working conditions

- Mission of the Commission des normes du travail
- *Act respecting labour standards*
 - wages and tips (regulations governing minimum wage and calculations)
 - duration of work (working hours, workweek, years of service)
 - annual leave (vacation)
 - paid statutory holidays
 - absences owing to sickness or accident
 - absences and leaves for family or parental matters
 - notice of termination of employment
 - notice of collective dismissal
 - o employer declaring bankruptcy
 - work done by children (regulations regarding students and 16- to 18-year-olds)
- Mission of the Commission de la santé et de la sécurité du travail
- *Act respecting occupational health and safety*
 - basic regulations concerning ergonomics and the work environment (cleanliness and order, posture, equipment, use of physical strength)
 - o preventive behaviours regarding basic regulations
 - work accidents (basic rules)
 - pregnancy and preventive leave (basic rules)
 - right to return to work (following an illness or absence)
 - right to refuse to work (in hazardous situations)

- discrimination (identification and awareness)
- psychological and sexual harassment (identification and awareness)

Procedures for filing a complaint

- Determining types of prohibited practices (practices that violate laws and regulations)
- Complaints filed before both commissions (appeals, forms, letters and requests)
- Time limit

Attitudes

The following attitudes are provided as suggestions only. The development of these attitudes can help adults become more competent in dealing with the real-life situations in this course.

Respect	Discernment
Respect for current laws and regulations is absolutely essential when protecting one's rights and assuming one's responsibilities at work.	In delicate situations, a discerning attitude will make it much easier to evaluate a problematic context and differentiate facts from opinions in versions of events given by an employer or employee.
Tact	Open-mindedness
Adults who demonstrate tact when asking for help or discussing a claim or recourse with a resource person are likely to get their message across more effectively.	Adults who are open-minded will be better able to grasp differences of opinion.

Complementary Resources

The following resources are provided as suggestions only and consist of references that may be consulted in learning situations.

Social Resources	Material Resources
▪ Commission des normes du travail ▪ Commission de la santé et de la sécurité du travail ▪ Organizations defending non-unionized workers' rights ▪ Revenu Québec ▪ Revenue Canada ▪ Human Resources Development Canada ▪ Private companies	▪ Summary documents on the <i>Act respecting labour standards</i> ▪ Summary documents on the <i>Act respecting occupational health and safety</i> ▪ Company safety codes and regulations ▪ Newspapers ▪ Company newsletters ▪ Regional directories of businesses and organizations ▪ Sample company policies ▪ Sample letters of complaint ▪ Examples of forms ▪ CD-ROMs, videocassettes and E-texts - Videos of the <i>Commission des normes du travail</i> (in French) - Videos of the <i>Commission de la santé et de la sécurité du travail</i> (in French) ▪ Government or institutional Web sites - <http://www.cnt.gouv.qc.ca> - <http://www.csst.qc.ca> - <http://www.revenu.gouv.qc.ca> - <http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca> - <http://www.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca> - <http://www2.publicationsduquebec.gouv.qc.ca>

Contribution of the Subject Areas

The contribution of other subject areas, in particular knowledge related to Languages and to Mathematics, Science and Technology, is also useful for dealing with the real-life situations in this course. The elements identified for each subject area are not compulsory and do not constitute prerequisites.

Subject Area: Languages

Program of study: *English, Language of Instruction*

- Interacting orally to obtain information and advice, report an event, describe a problem, and participate in a mediation process
- Reading informative texts related to workplace rights and responsibilities (e.g. memos, employer guidelines and procedures, government pamphlets and brochures, health and safety directives)
- Writing informative texts related to workplace disputes (e.g. letters/e-mails of inquiry/complaint/request, incident reports), filling out forms, keeping records or logs of events

Subject Area: Mathematics, Science and Technology

Program of study: *Mathematics*

- Grouping elements using sets and subsets
- Operations on whole numbers and fractions:
 - calculations related to working conditions (wages according to hours worked, leaves of absence, etc.)

Program of study: *Computer Science*

- Basic use of a word-processor and an Internet browser:
 - requests sent by e-mail or using a word processor (letter)
 - on-line search for information related to working conditions (or consultation of appropriate computer media)

Andragogical Context

The *Introduction to the World of Work* program enables adult learners to take a critical look at the working world, particularly that of Québec. Legal issues, the value of work, as well as the evolution and realities of the workplace are all endowed with cultural attributes specific to a given context. In fact, the workplace is a hierarchical world governed by a cultural code. It gives rise to numerous expectations and may be the subject of important legal disputes.

The course *Rights and Responsibilities at Work* provides an opportunity for adults to explore the dynamics of the working world. By becoming familiar with the legal provisions governing the workplace, adults become versed in some of its cultural aspects and learn to identify their impact on working life. As they construct knowledge that is essential for evaluating working conditions, adults prepare themselves to deal with the most common situations likely to arise at work. The course contributes to the development of communication skills and critical and ethical judgment that will allow adults to adopt appropriate behaviours, judge working conditions and denounce prohibited practices; however, it does not cover the unique features of unionized environments.

To prepare themselves to exercise their rights and fully assume their responsibilities, adults will refer to past experiences or to examples of disputes. Various activities, such as case studies, role-playing, hypothetical situations, presentations, or testimonials, may be used

to support adults in their learning process. However, in order to protect adults' right to privacy, these activities will almost always be based on simulated cases. The concepts presented are simple. They concern the basic rules contained in two laws governing the working conditions of most employees and employers in Québec: the *Act respecting labour standards* and the *Act respecting occupational health and safety*. The legal texts and related regulations presented consist of summaries written for the general public.

The teacher's role consists in explaining the legal provisions in everyday terms so that adults can understand their basic concepts. It also involves guiding adults by providing models and objective facts on which adults can base their critical and ethical judgment. Teachers may consult various support organizations for salaried workers or the list of social and material resources to prepare different learning activities. These activities require the use of tools that are easily accessible and available, such as those offered by government agencies or Web sites. For example, two commissions (the CCST and the labour commission) provide a series of short videos (French only) on their Web sites that use terms easily understood by most adults. Various wage calculation tables, summaries of labour regulations and standards and forms are also available on these sites.

Learning Situation

The learning situation that follows is provided as an example to show teachers how the principles of the education reform can be applied in the classroom.

It is authentic in the sense that it addresses a real-life situation (taken from the class of situations in the course) that adults may find themselves in. It is sufficiently open and comprehensive to allow adult learners to explore several important aspects related to dealing with this real-life situation.

The examples of actions presented in the course help the teacher to identify those actions that an adult would take to deal with the real-life situation. The teacher can then refer to these examples in order to develop pertinent learning activities.

The learning situation is organized in terms of the three steps of the teaching-learning process, which are as follows:

- planning learning
- actual learning
- integrating and reinvesting learning

These steps highlight the principles of the education reform insofar as they encourage adults to be active, to reflect on their learning and to interact with their peers when the learning context is suitable. They include learning activities and may also include evaluation activities intended to support adults in the learning process.

These activities help learners to construct knowledge related to the compulsory elements of the course that are targeted by the learning situation concerned: one or more categories of actions, essential knowledge and the actions of the operational competencies associated with the categories of actions.

The example provided also refers to certain teaching strategies—pedagogical methods and techniques—that can be selected according to the learners, the context and the learning environment. Certain learning strategies may also be suggested, as well as a variety of material and social resources.

Example of a Learning Situation

Standards Governing Wages and Absences

The learning situation chosen for the class *Disputes in the workplace* involves a violation of standards governing wages and absences.

In order to help adult learners determine their rights and responsibilities as workers, the teacher asks them to evaluate different situations involving payments by an employer, or leaves of absence at work. The purpose of this analysis is to help adults examine labour standards and their application in common, real-life situations. The adults will be required to use the competencies *Communicates* and *Exercises critical and ethical judgment*.

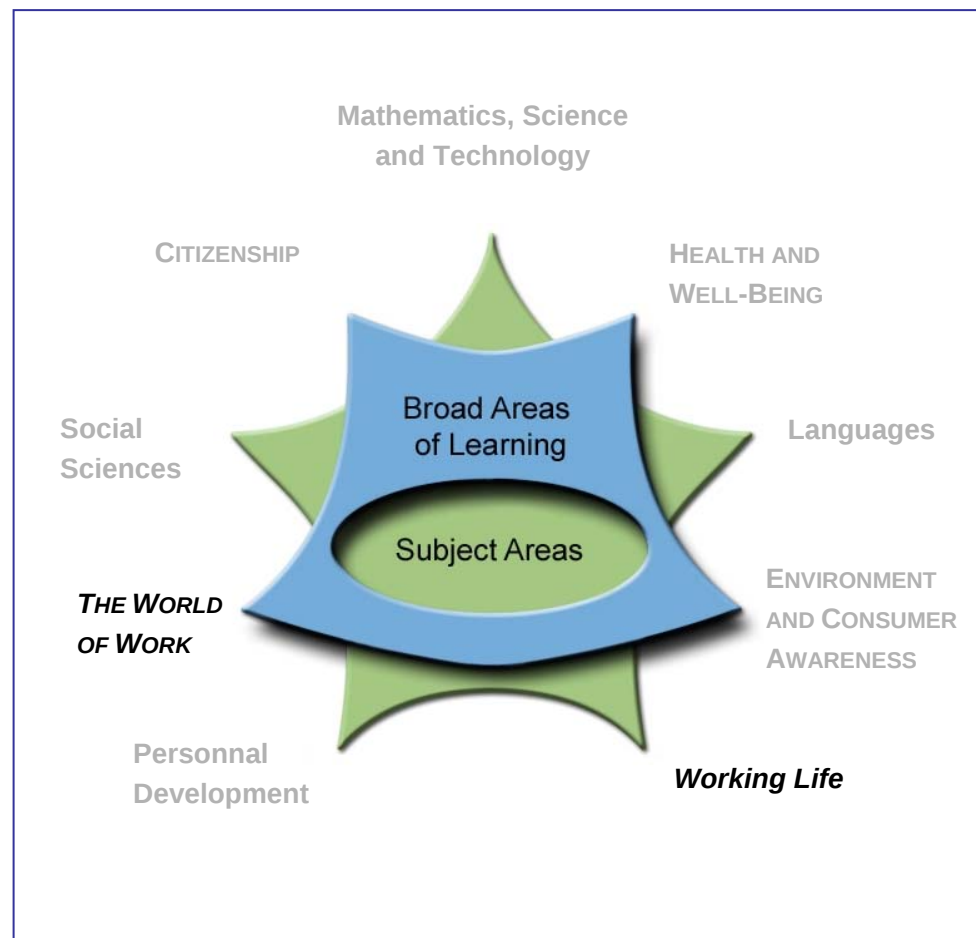
In the first learning activity, the teacher distributes a simple case study describing three situations that could lead to a dispute. The first situation involves wage calculations, the second, the right to a leave of absence, and the third, a student's work hours. The teacher specifies that these situations deal with certain labour standards, such as those governing wages and tips, the duration of work, annual leave, paid statutory holidays, absences due to sickness or accident or for family or parental matters, and work done by children. The adults are first asked to answer a series of questions to determine what they know about labour standards and their application. They listen to a lecture on a topic related to the learning situation and go over the questions in order to validate their initial answers. The teacher then asks the adults to read about the context surrounding each situation on their own and answer the questions proposed. Once the questions have been answered, the adults discuss their observations and difficulties with the teacher and their classmates.

In the second learning activity, each adult teams up with a partner to draw up a list of questions concerning labour standards, in particular monetary standards and leaves of absence. The teacher walks around the classroom and guides the teams as they work on their questions. The questions are then discussed and pooled, and a list covering the most important elements is finalized. To avoid duplicating work, the teacher divides up the questions among the different teams. The class listens to a lecture on labour standards, during which the adults take notes and ask questions. The teacher then distributes a summary of the concepts associated with the situations discussed. Working with their partner, the adults read the summaries and then answer questions using information from the lecture. To add to their sources of information, the teacher may suggest that adults consult the Web site of the *Commission des normes du travail*, which contains information on wages, leaves and absences. The teacher circulates among the various teams, guiding them in their on-line search. Participants determine whether this information helps them confirm or enrich their answers. Armed with this new knowledge, each adult can further explore the situations presented and answer outstanding issues.

The teacher then distributes an evaluation checklist and asks the participants to validate their answers and compare them to the ones they gave at the beginning of the activity. This enables adults to gauge how much they have learned from the activities. The teacher also discusses the answers with the class to make sure that everyone has interpreted the information correctly.

Elements of the Course Addressed by the Learning Situation

Class of Situations	
Disputes in the workplace	
Learning Situation	
Standards Governing Wages and Absences	
Categories of Actions	
▪ Determining rights and responsibilities at work ▪ Examining a situation that could lead to a dispute	
Operational Competencies	Essential Knowledge
▪ Communicates ▪ Exercises critical and ethical judgment	▪ Working conditions ▪ Mission of the Commission des normes du travail ▪ <i>Act respecting labour standards</i>
Complementary Resources	
▪ Commission des normes du travail	▪ Summary documents on the <i>Act respecting labour standards</i> ▪ Government or institutional Web sites



Course
Work Culture
PRS-2121-2
Secondary Cycle One



“Culture is the human force that discovers the requirements for change and helps the world become aware of them.”

Elio Vittorini

Presentation of the Course *Work Culture*

The *Work Culture* course is designed to help adult learners deal competently with real-life situations that involve understanding the cultural characteristics of the working world of Québec.

This course enables adult learners to acquire an objective view of the realities of the workplace in order to understand their impact on working life. It is specifically designed for adults who are interested in the workplace and intend to enter it at the end of their studies.

By the end of the course, learners will be able to interpret the realities of the workplace and anticipate their impact on regional employment opportunities. They will be able to understand basic workplace requirements and construct a concept of work that is adapted to the realities of Québec.

Dealing With the Real-Life Situations

Dealing effectively with real-life situations is based on actions. These actions are grouped into categories and make use of a set of resources that include operational competencies and essential knowledge. During the learning process, adults are expected to construct knowledge related to these resources in order to be able to deal appropriately with their real-life situations.

The class of situations, categories of actions, operational competencies and essential knowledge constitute the compulsory elements of the course. These elements are explained in detail under their respective headings.



Class of Situations Addressed by the Course

This course addresses a single class of situations: *Exploring the work culture of Québec*.

This class of situations includes real-life situations in which adults explore the specific characteristics of the Québec workplace in order to be prepared to meet its requirements.

Situations such as immigrating, moving to a new region or keeping up with technological change all involve adapting to a new environment. It is important for adults to understand the values and requirements of this new environment so that they can adjust their concept of work and their integration strategies accordingly. It is important for adults to quickly grasp the cultural and historical

characteristics of the working world, their dynamics and evolution, if they want to be able to adapt to them. They must be able to interpret these characteristics in light of the political, economic, sociological and technical events that have shaped the history of the workplace and influence its culture.

This course provides a basic introduction to work culture in order to help adults determine the place that work occupies in their personal life and prepare to enter the work force.

Class of Situations	Examples of Real-Life Situations
Exploring the work culture of Québec	▪ Immigration ▪ Moving to a new region ▪ Technological change ▪ Continuing education and training ▪ Desire to enter the work force

Categories of Actions

The *categories of actions* are groups of actions that are appropriate for dealing with the real-life situations addressed in the course. *Examples of actions* are provided to illustrate the scope of the category in a variety of contexts.

Categories of Actions	Examples of Actions
Analyzing the realities of the workplace	- Interprets current events affecting the local and provincial economy - Determines the economic sectors in his or her region - Perceives the influence of political, economic, sociological or technological events on his or her field - Recognizes regional differences in the job market - Determines how fluctuations in the supply and demand of various products affect the local economy - Explains possible causes of unemployment in his or her region - Examines a local unemployment problem based on unemployment cycles and its causes - Identifies workplace requirements in his or her region
Analyzing how work contributes to personal life	- Considers the consequences of unemployment on his or her personal and working life - Plans potential employment income in accordance with his or her financial needs - Considers how work may affect his or her personal relationships - Considers the importance of social status associated with a job - Discusses with family and friends how a job may affect his or her personal and family life - Considers possible accomplishments at work
Adapting one's concept of work	- Selects personal and objective criteria to take into account - Seeks to upgrade his or her competencies - Modifies his or her attitudes and behaviours - Includes continuing education and training in his or her plans - Seeks to integrate into a work environment that meets his or her criteria

Compulsory Elements and End-of-Course Outcomes

The compulsory elements are those that the teacher must absolutely take into account when designing learning situations.

Class of Situations

Exploring the work culture of Québec

Categories of Actions

- Analyzing the realities of the workplace
- Analyzing how work contributes to personal life
- Adapting one's concept of work

Operational Competency

Thinks logically

- Examines current events objectively
- Perceives the cause-and-effect relationship between particular events and employment fluctuations
- Infers trends related to basic workplace requirements
- Compares his or her values, needs and attitudes with workplace requirements
- Plans workplace integration strategies appropriate to the trends observed

Essential Knowledge

- Principles underlying the dynamics of the workplace
- Introduction to the history and realities of the workplace
- Impact of work on personal life

The end-of-course outcomes describe how adults make use of the compulsory elements to deal with the real-life situations addressed in the course.

End-of-Course Outcomes

In order to deal with the class situations *Exploring the work culture of Québec*, adults learn to construct and adapt their concept of work by basing their point of view on a coherent analysis of the realities of the workplace, both locally and in a broader context.

To analyze the realities of the workplace, adults look specifically at current events, which they analyze objectively while taking into account Québec's cultural and historical context. They establish cause-and-effect relationships between specific events and employment fluctuations, in light of what they know about the history and realities of the working world. Based on phenomena such as the globalization of markets, technological change and population aging, adults can infer about trends regarding basic workplace requirements and understand their principles. They associate the characteristics of political, economic, sociological or technological events in order to explain where these requirements come from and what effect they have at the local and regional level.

Analyzing the way in which work contributes to personal life entails comparing one's values, needs and attitudes with workplace requirements. By explaining the impact of work on their life and specifying in what way their personal characteristics correspond to or differ from basic workplace requirements, adults are able to understand the importance of upgrading their competencies through continuing education and training.

By understanding the phenomena behind job market fluctuations, adults can broaden their perceptions and adapt their concept of work while taking into account the cultural realities and requirements of the workplace. This conception includes future workplace integration strategies that are appropriate to the trends observed and take into account personal and objective criteria.

Throughout this analytical process, adults produce documents that demonstrate how their concept of work is evolving. These documents serve as a guide in defining the place that work will occupy in their personal life and allow adults to reinvest what they have learned to keep pace with changing requirements.

Evaluation Criteria

- Analyzes objectively the realities of the workplace
- Recognizes how work contributes to his or her personal life
- Adapts his or her concept of work to the realities of the workplace

Operational Competencies

The contribution of each operational competency is described in terms of the actions that are appropriate for dealing with the real-life situations in this course. These operational competencies are addressed in other courses and therefore all of the courses taken together contribute to their development.

In this course, only the following operational competency is addressed: *Thinks logically*.

Contribution of the Operational Competency *Thinks logically*

The operational competency *Thinks logically* is the ability to use analytical reasoning in order to construct and adapt one's concept of work when dealing with real-life situations related to the class *Exploring the work culture of Québec*.

To construct their concept of work, adults need to be able to examine current events objectively. This allows them to establish cause-and-effect relationships between specific events and employment fluctuations and thus infer about trends in basic workplace requirements. For example, they may explain the evolution of employment sectors in their region or the effects of competition. By comparing their personal values, needs and attitudes with workplace requirements, they can plan workplace integration strategies that are appropriate to the trends observed. For example, adults may be able to find effective solutions to potentially difficult situations, such as prolonged periods of unemployment, by adapting their strategy to focus on jobs with good employment prospects.

Essential Knowledge

The text in parentheses defines the scope and meaning of the essential knowledge listed below.

Principles underlying the dynamics of the working world

- Supply and demand (competition)
- Types and cycles of unemployment:
 - economic and structural
- Distribution of economic sectors
- Regional employment differences
- Job market fluctuations

Introduction to the history and realities of the workplace

- Work culture in Québec:
 - basic workplace requirements (required attitudes, competencies, level of schooling and values)
- Historical context specific to Québec:
 - transition from agriculture to industrialization and to information, communications and production technologies
- Characteristics of events behind job market fluctuations:
 - political/economic (globalization of markets)
 - sociological (population aging, multiculturalism and immigration, participation of women in the work force)
 - technological (automation and information in a given sector)
- Links between the historical context and different events
- Links between the historical context and job market fluctuations
- Links between job market fluctuations and basic workplace requirements

Impact of work on personal life

- Financial contribution
- Relational aspects
- Social role (status)
- Time and space management
- Personal and professional development (accomplishments and continuing education and training)
- Integration strategies (coherent criteria for adapting one's concept of work):
 - personal criteria (attitudes, needs and values)
 - objective criteria (employment opportunities, job requirements)

Attitudes

The following attitudes are provided as suggestions only. The development of these attitudes can help adults become more competent in dealing with the real-life situations in this course.

Curiosity	Coherence
Adults who are curious try to understand the dynamics of the working world and develop the tools they need to anticipate the realities they will have to face and be better prepared to face them.	Adults who are coherent in their analysis will be able to adapt their concept of work and avoid inappropriate strategies that can negatively affect their career. For example, they will realize that a lack of education may lead to prolonged unemployment and financial problems or negatively impact their personal and professional development.

Complementary Resources

The following resources are provided as suggestions only and consist of references that may be consulted in learning situations.

Social Resources	Material Resources
▪ Human Resources Canada ▪ Private companies ▪ Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale ▪ Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles ▪ Sectoral and joint committees	▪ Newspapers ▪ Television or Internet newscasts ▪ Studies on the effects of unemployment and the benefits of work ▪ Company newsletters ▪ Regional directories of businesses and organizations ▪ Sample company policies ▪ Documents on the history of the workplace in Québec ▪ Specialized magazines on the workplace ▪ Government or institutional Web sites: - <www.conferenceboard.ca> - <www.cnt.gouv.qc.ca/en/index.asp> - <www.emploiuebec.net/anglais/index.htm> - <www.oecd.org/home> - <www.publicationsduquebec.gouv.qc.ca/accueil.en.html> - <www.rhdsc.gc.ca/en/home.shtml> - <www.statcan.ca/start.html>

Contribution of the Subject Areas

The contribution of other subject areas, in particular knowledge related to Languages and to Mathematics, Science and Technology, is also useful for dealing with the real-life situations in this course. The elements identified for each subject area are not compulsory and do not constitute prerequisites.

Subject Area: Languages

Program of study: *English, Language of Instruction*

- Oral interaction to exchange information and discuss issues related to the characteristics of the Québec workplace
- Reading and listening to informative texts on the history and cultural realities of the Québec workplace
- Writing informative texts to record personally relevant information (e.g. about job market fluctuations, regional employment opportunities, potential employment income, personal criteria, etc.)

Subject Area: Mathematics, Science and Technology

Program of study: *Mathematics*

- Interpreting, organizing and comparing qualitative and quantitative data on the workplace
- Using percentages, proportions/ratios and graphical representations of data (histograms, charts or graphs) on the distribution of the labour force by economic sector

Program of study: *Computer Science*

- Basic use of a word processor for writing documents
- Searching for information in databases or on the Internet

Andragogical Context

The *Introduction to the World of Work* program enables adult learners to take a critical look at the working world, particularly that of Québec. Legal issues, the value of work, as well as the evolution and realities of the workplace are all endowed with cultural attributes specific to a given context. In fact, the workplace is a hierarchical world governed by a cultural code. It gives rise to numerous expectations and may be the setting of important disputes.

Like the Presecondary course *Rights and Responsibilities at Work*, the course *Work Culture* provides an opportunity for adults to explore the dynamics of the working world, this time by analyzing the cultural realities of Québec from a historical perspective. Because adults are preparing themselves to enter the work force and confront situations that are relatively new to them, the course focuses on constructing knowledge that is essential for understanding the basic factors affecting the job market and perceiving the benefits of work on personal life. It also contributes to the development of logical thinking skills, which help adults infer or deduce how cultural realities of the workplace affect their personal and working lives.

Adults explore the culture of work in Québec and define their own concept of work by examining current events, in print or on television. Various activities such as guided searches, presentations, case studies, comparisons of points of view, testimonials or personal reflections may be used to support adults in their learning. The concepts presented are simplified by the teacher and concern the basic rules governing the workplace, the major

trends behind regional and local market fluctuations, and the impact of work on personal life. The goal is not to turn adult learners into job market analysts, but to prepare them to anticipate how certain cultural realities may affect employment opportunities and make them aware of the value they attribute to work in their personal life.

The teacher's role consists above all in providing a framework for observing and analyzing political, economic, sociological and technological events that will help adults situate these events in a historical context. It also involves guiding adults who are learning to think logically, by providing them with checklists with which to interpret objective facts. Adults will thus practise predicting the impact of certain events on employment as well as the changes they are likely to bring about at the local and regional level. To explain the dynamics of the working world, the teacher may refer to major macroeconomic principles, texts on the history of the Québec job market and its current state, news articles on regional job market fluctuations and studies on the impact of unemployment on personal and working life. To help orient their future workplace integration strategies, the teacher guides adults during various learning activities where adults consider the impact of work on their life.

Finally, the course *Work Culture* is part of a developmental approach that aims to help adults upgrade their competencies through education and training and through personal and professional development. All of its activities should enable adults to determine what work means to them and how they will integrate and evolve in the workplace.

Learning Situation

The learning situation that follows is provided as an example to show teachers how the principles of the education reform can be applied in the classroom.

It is authentic in the sense that it addresses a real-life situation (taken from the class of situations in the course) that adults may find themselves in. It is sufficiently open and comprehensive to allow adult learners to explore several important aspects related to dealing with this real-life situation.

The examples of actions presented in the course help the teacher to identify those actions that an adult would take to deal with the real-life situation. The teacher can then refer to these examples in order to develop pertinent learning activities.

The learning situation is organized in terms of the three steps of the teaching-learning process, which are as follows:

- planning learning
- actual learning
- integrating and reinvesting learning

These steps highlight the principles of the education reform insofar as they encourage adults to be active, to reflect on their learning and to interact with their peers when the learning context is suitable. They include learning activities and may also include evaluation activities intended to support adults in the learning process.

These activities help learners to construct knowledge related to the compulsory elements of the course that are targeted by the learning situation concerned: one or more categories of actions, essential knowledge and the actions of the operational competencies associated with the categories of actions.

The example provided also refers to certain teaching strategies—pedagogical methods and techniques—that can be selected according to the learners, the context and the learning environment. Certain learning strategies may also be suggested, as well as a variety of material and social resources.

Example of a Learning Situation

Current Events and Employment

The learning situation chosen for the class *Exploring the work culture of Québec* involves the situation *Desire to enter the work force*.

In order to contextualize this situation, the teacher asks adults to analyze the realities of the workplace by predicting how a current event may affect regional employment, and to draw conclusions about the way work contributes to their personal life. Dealing with this situation requires the use of the operational competency *Thinks logically*.

Adults will be required to analyze and interpret a current political/economic event, such as a massive layoff or a plant closure, which is likely to cause the regional unemployment rate to rise. The analysis will have to include the event's causes, its effects on regional employment and the possible consequences for the individuals involved. During a final learning activity, adults will reflect on the effects that such an event could have on their lives.

The first learning activity consists of a group discussion during which the teacher presents the characteristics of a current political/economic event and explains how such an event can affect the region's basic workplace requirements. He or she answers questions and then hands out an article about another event. Working in pairs and using documents and course notes from previous learning situations, participants determine the type of unemployment the event brings about, its causes, and its effects on employment distribution and job requirements in the region.

During the second learning activity, participants analyze the event itself, and identify the main features that characterize it. They base their analysis on their perception of the region's job market and its requirements—a perception they have acquired in previous learning activities on employment fluctuations and types of unemployment. The teams identify, for example, the type of unemployment the event causes, and the consequences on the region's population. They may also observe changes with regard to the education and competencies required to find a job. During the activity, the teacher circulates among the various teams, answering questions, spending time with adults who have the most difficulty analyzing and understanding the event. Exchanges among the teams allow adults to validate their understanding and agree on a common interpretation. Once the analysis is done, the teacher asks each team to present its results to the rest of the class.

In the third learning activity, the teams present their analysis and conclusions in a written text or using a diagram or visual aid to the teacher and their classmates, who ask questions and provide feedback. Using peer comments and the help of the teacher, each team reviews its analysis and fills in the missing information. By discussing and sharing information, adults are able to compare their interpretations and validate the probable causes and effects of the event.

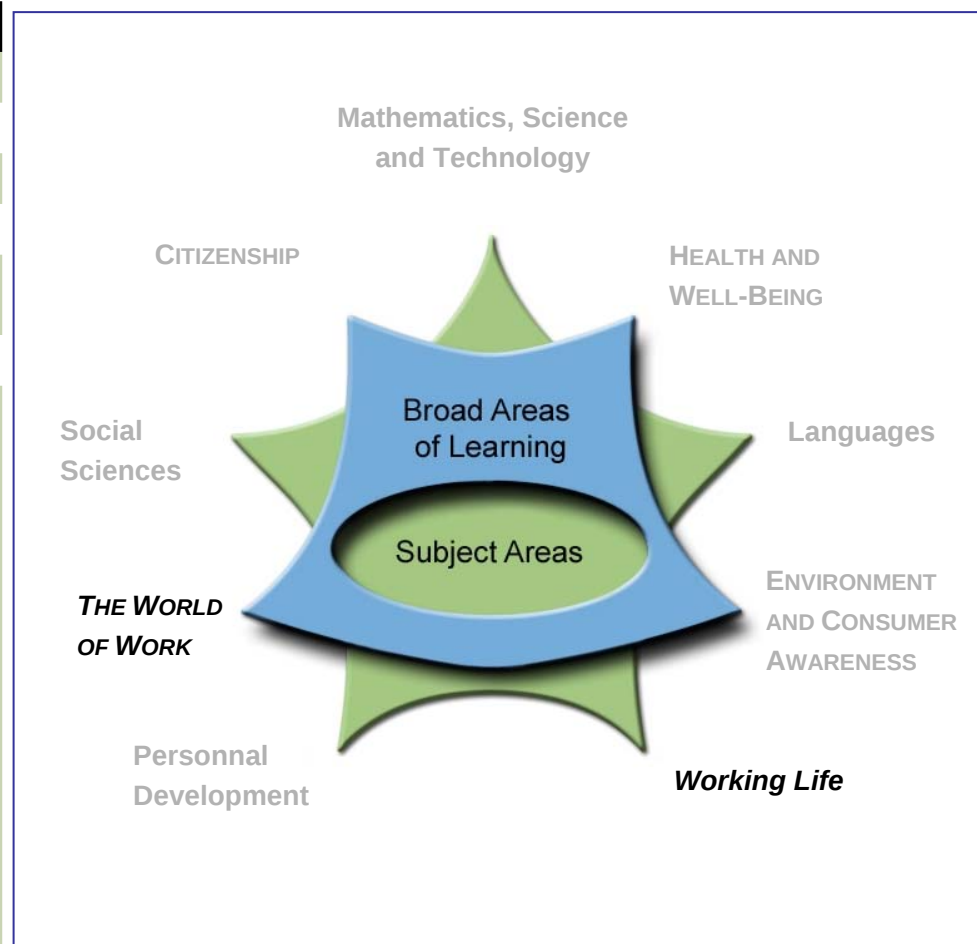
In the final learning activity, the teacher asks the adults to reflect on the consequences that such a situation could have on a worker's personal and working life. This could include financial consequences, as well as effects on relationships, on a person's

role in society or social status, on time and space management, or on a person's personal and professional development. After providing examples of possible effects, the teacher then asks the adults to consider how their own lives would be affected if they found themselves out of work. The teacher circulates through the class, helping adults clarify their thoughts and take into account all of the elements analyzed. The results of this reflection are then recorded in a document, such as a logbook.

This learning situation allows adults to analyze how work contributes to personal life. The same process may be applied to other events that affect the workplace. It may also be used in other learning situations aimed at helping adults define the strategies to adopt and the actions to take in order to minimize the effects of unemployment on their future working life. Such reflection will guide adults in their first steps in adapting their personal concept of work.

Elements of the Course Addressed by the Learning Situation

Class of Situations	
Exploring the work culture of Québec	
Learning Situation	
Current Events and Employment	
Categories of Actions	
- Analyzing the realities of the workplace - Analyzing how work contributes to personal life	
Operational Competency	Essential Knowledge
Thinks logically	Introduction to the history and realities of the workplace - Characteristics of events behind job market fluctuations: - political/economic (globalization of markets) - Links between job market fluctuations and basic workplace requirements - Impact of work on personal life - Financial contribution - Relational aspects - Social role (status) - Time and space management - Personal and professional development (accomplishments and continuing education and training)



Complementary Resources

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Newspapers▪ Television or Internet newscasts▪ Studies on the effects of unemployment and the benefits of work | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Government or institutional Web sites:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- <www.conferenceboard.ca>- <www.oecd.org/home>- <www.statcan.ca/start.html> |
|---|--|

Bibliography

Au Bas de l'Échelle. Groupe populaire pour la défense des droits des travailleuses et des travailleurs non syndiqués.

<<http://www.aubasdelechelle.ca/accueil.html>> (October 3, 2007).

Canada. Department of Justice Canada. Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

<<http://laws.justice.gc.ca/en/charter>> (October 3, 2007).

Commission des normes du travail.

<http://www.cnt.gouv.qc.ca/en/lois/coup_doeil/conditions.asp> (October 3, 2007).

Commission de la santé et sécurité au travail.

<<http://www.csst.qc.ca>> (October 3, 2007).

Desilets, Christian and Denis Ledoux. *Histoire des normes du travail au Québec de 1885 à 2005*. Québec: Éditeurs La Commission des normes du travail, 2006.

Dolan, Shimon L., Gérald Lamoureux and Éric Gosselin. *Psychologie du travail et comportement organisationnel*. Montréal: Gaétan Morin éditeur, 2002.

Éducaloi, Le carrefour d'accès au droit.

<<http://www.educaloi.qc.ca/en>> (October 3, 2007).

Gagnepetit, Jean-Baptiste. *Les travailleurs montréalais à la fin du XIX^e siècle*. Montréal: Éditions de l'Aurore, 1975.

Harvey, Fernand. *Révolution industrielle et travailleurs*. Montréal: Éditions Boréal Express, 1978.

Limoges, Jacques et al. *Bien se maintenir en orbite autour du travail : Au premier tiers de la trajectoire de sa carrière, Plan et devis (guide du participant)*. Gestion de vie au travail series. Pratiques professionnelles collection. Sherbrooke: Éditions GGC, 2004.

Limoges, Jacques. *Stratégies de maintien au travail et dans d'autres situations de vie*. Sainte-Foy: Septembre éditeur, 2001.

Québec. Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse. *The Québec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms*. R.S.Q. C-12. Québec: Gouvernement du Québec, 2006.

Québec. Ministère de l'Éducation. Direction de la formation générale des adultes. *Program - Sociovocational Integration Services*. Québec: Gouvernement du Québec, 2002.

Québec. Ministère du développement économique, Innovation et Exportation. Business directories.
<<http://www.mdeie.gouv.qc.ca/page/web/portail/en/ministere/nav/Publications.html?&iddoc=43695>> (October 3, 2007).

Schermerhorn, John R. et al. *Organizational Behavior*. Hoboken, N.J.: John Wiley & Sons Inc, 2003.

Thwaites, James D. and André Leblanc. *Le monde du travail au Québec : bibliographie / The World of Labour in Québec: Bibliography*. Sainte-Foy: Presses de l'Université du Québec, 1995.

