Best Practices Case Studies

Prepared for
Human Resources Development Canada

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Canadian Case Study:
Steel Industry Worker Adjustment Program

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This case study describes a Canadian steel industry response to challenges faced by the industry during the 1980s and 1990s. The Canadian Steel Trade and Employment Congress (CSTEC), working with labour and management in the steel industry, and with support from the Canadian federal government, was able to successfully address some of the challenges brought about by rapid changes in the industry.

A. Organizational Summary and Program Background

The Canadian Steel Trade and Employment Congress is a joint venture between Canada's steel producing companies and the United Steelworkers of America (USWA). For the past fifteen years, they have been providing a wide range of services to steel industry employers and workers across Canada—including worker adjustment services that assist workers affected by layoffs and/or shutdowns of plants, and training services that address the common training needs of the current workforce in a wide range of areas.

CSTEC was established after trade and labour adjustment issues in the early 1980s provided a common focus to unite labour and management in the steel industry. CSTEC was initially formed in 1986 to promote research, education, and lobbying on steel sector-related issues. CSTEC's mandate was expanded in 1988 to provide adjustment services to workers who were affected by the significant restructuring taking place at that time in the steel industry.

Through CSTEC, union and management representatives approached the federal government department of Human Resources Development Canada (then called Employment and Immigration Canada) and accessed resources from its Innovations Program, to design and implement an adjustment initiative for laid-off workers in the steel industry.

To develop its Worker Adjustment Program, CSTEC drew on the experience of what were considered to be best practices at the time, including lessons learned from:

- the Industrial Adjustment Services (IAS) model and other government programs such as the Job-Finding Club;
- the Ontario Labour Adjustment (OLA) service programs;
- the Toronto Metro Labour Education Centre (MLEC) and its programs;
- the Centre for Advanced Workers Learning (CAWL) and its job search seminars;

- the United Food and Commercial Workers International Union (UFCW) adjustment program.

CSTEC supplemented these practices with its own innovative approach, which was derived from its well-established relationships with both management and unions in the steel industry.

The CSTEC approach included:

- joint administration of adjustment projects, which eliminated the need for a neutral chairperson and related costs;
- training of peer counsellors from the steel industry to do needs assessments and deliver worker adjustment services;
- a targeted approach to the delivery of services, providing personalized services to each individual to address his or her specific needs; and
- a results-based program that measured success by outcomes, e.g. how many people actually found jobs and how quickly they found them.

The Innovations Program funding and the relationship established with HRDC enabled CSTEC, under Section 26 of the Unemployment Insurance Act and the National Training Act, to authorise training programs for its participants without them having to go through government vocation counsellors—which was the normal practice that resulted in lengthening the time for approval. CSTEC staff and peer counsellors were trained to assist laid-off workers in developing training plans.

B. Rapid Workplace Change and Challenges

In the late 1980s, the steel industry faced a significant restructuring situation with the loss of nearly one-third of its workforce (about 15,000 out of a workforce of 48,000). It had at least three options to deal with this situation:

- to disregard the consequences
- to deal with the situation separately as individual companies
- to deal with the situation on an industry-wide basis.

The industry chose an industry-wide approach. The Canadian Steel Trade and Employment Congress, together with Canadian steel companies and with the United Steelworkers of America, initiated a unique and innovative sector-based worker adjustment program that assisted nearly 13,000 steelworkers in nearly 85 basic steel, pipe and tube, and wire draw workplaces throughout Canada.

The challenges initially faced by the industry and by CSTEC in devising a solution to the changes that were occurring in the industry involved the following:

Getting "buy-in" from the industry stakeholders—At the workplace level, neither union nor management was convinced that they should be involved in adjustment. Both parties considered it a responsibility of government. In addition, there was no tradition of companies and unions working together on these issues.

Getting "buy-in" from various levels of government and regions—Local unemployment insurance offices, and government initiatives such as the Ontario Labour Adjustment (OLA) program and the Industrial Adjustment Service of HRDC, initially regarded CSTEC as "the competition".

Demographic challenge—The average age of those laid off from the steel industry was 47, and the average years of service was about 17. The average years of formal education was Grade 10, and many were semi-skilled production and clerical workers. Studies have repeatedly indicated that age and education can be high-risk factors for those affected by layoffs. Most unemployed steelworkers had neither the skills nor the tools to re-enter the labour market. In addition, high-risk participants traditionally do not use government employment centres and tend to exhaust their benefits before finding a replacement job.

The Peer Counsellor approach—The use of peer counsellors in the delivery of adjustment services ran against the tide. Tradition had it that only "expert" consultants with the appropriate academic credentials and job placement experience could offer such services. From the other side of this challenge, industry people had to be convinced and trained to provide appropriate and credible adjustment services.

Other challenges—The general labour market condition in the late 1980s and early 1990s was far from buoyant. Any program would face difficulties under the same circumstances. The relatively high wage rates that were enjoyed in the steel industry up until that time would be difficult to match in other industry sectors. The multi-ethnic background of the steel workforce, particularly in the "Golden Horseshoe" area in Ontario, suggested that to make the adjustment program work there would be a need for ESL training ("English as a second language") and other related services.

C. The Solution

CSTEC's Worker Adjustment Program was established to provide a wide range of adjustment services to laid-off steelworkers. CSTEC developed and designed this national sector-based program to deliver a full range of adjustment services through *Local Adjustment Committees* made up of union and management participants. These services included:

- general workplace information sessions for workers affected by plant closures and downsizing in the industry;
- training for Local Adjustment Committee participants;
- personalized needs assessment and peer counselling for individual workers;
- seminars, including:
    - Career Goal Setting
    - Job Search
    - Job Finding Clubs
    - Financial Planning
    - Self Employment
    - Skill Development Courses;

- Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR)—a process to evaluate and grant credit equivalency to a worker for his or her prior formal education, training, work and life experience;
- General Education Development (GED)—a high school equivalency training program;
- short-term skills development;
- assistance with training referrals;
- job placement through local and regional Action Centres and through CSTEC's Labour Adjustment System (CLAS), a national computer database of clients and employers.

Through this range of services, CSTEC was able to deliver effective worker adjustment support to laid-off steelworkers. One of the distinguishing features of the CSTEC approach is its emphasis on results, not process – especially in terms of successful job placement of laid-off workers. Another important feature of the Worker Adjustment Program is its emphasis on working with local people to develop solutions tailored to individuals.

A sector-wide approach—At the national level, CSTEC's programs are administered and policies developed and monitored by joint union and management committees, ensuring that the WIIFMs (What's in it for me?) outlined below are continuously addressed. At the local level, CSTEC's local adjustment committees devoted considerable time to working in a joint environment where objectives and anticipated outcomes were jointly determined, and all parties brought their considerable skills to the table.

The sector-wide approach ensured "buy-in" from the stakeholders and ownership of the process by those most affected by it. This approach also enabled each local adjustment committee to access training and other services at a lower cost through economies of scale. For example, at one point during the early 1990s, there were eight projects working out of the same Action Centre in Hamilton, Ontario. Because of the economies of scale, and sharing of facilities, the costs for all services were reduced, allowing the adjustment committees to do more for their people.

Identify the WIIFMs (What's in it for me?) of each of the stakeholders—There are palpable benefits for each stakeholder in participating in an adjustment program. For the sector approach to work, each of these WIIFMs must be identified and addressed.

- **For the company**: Studies have shown that how companies deal with a downsizing has significant impact on those still working – i.e., the "survivor impact". Put negatively, if management does nothing to assist those affected, the morale of those remaining suffers, and productivity suffers as well. This is particularly true in the case where the downsizing is part of a restructuring process that may include the introduction of new technologies. "Survivors" feel more vulnerable to further layoffs. Conversely, a positive response by management ensures a positive reaction at the workplace that reduces the negative impacts.
- **For the workers and unions**: The same may be said for the workers and the unions in an adjustment program. As representative of the workers impacted by layoffs, a union is expected to act as an advocate on their behalf. Failure to do so increases the cynicism of "surviving" members towards the union, and leaves laid-off workers to

fend for themselves in a labour market that has totally changed since they first entered it.

- **For the government**: The benefits to government include:
  - Employment Insurance (EI) savings through improved re-employment rates and quicker placements, especially for high-risk participants who usually exhaust their benefits because they do not use adjustment services;
  - training savings through better negotiated rates; and,
  - lower adjustment costs as a result of leveraged industry contributions, which have been estimated by CSTEC to be around 35 percent of total costs in CSTEC projects.

Promote and pilot test the initiative—CSTEC used union conferences, area council meetings, and joint union and management regional meetings to promote its adjustment program. They also piloted a number of projects, namely at Algoma, Sydney Steel, IPSCO (Port Moody), and Sherman and Adams Mines in Northern Ontario, to test their peer counsellor approach and the various services listed above. Best practices were thereafter expanded throughout Canada in all their projects.

Develop an adjustment program that is results-based, not process driven—The key to CSTEC's success was their drive to get results. They have always been judged on what happens to their participants, not on what services they deliver. The steel industry demanded this type of approach. Those laid-off participants who were "job ready" were fast-tracked to get jobs. Those who were not job ready were provided the services they needed to become "job ready", whether it be job search tools or skills upgrading, or training.

Create partnerships between the steel industry and education/training providers and government—CSTEC has also been able to create partnerships between the industry and education and training institutions, particularly the colleges and the cégeps, which have been primary providers of training for laid-off workers.

Ensure that programs and services are tailored to individual needs—One size does not fit all. Every individual affected by a layoff has his or her own set of circumstances, skills, education and objectives. The best outcomes are derived from providing the right services for each individual.

Ensure that local adjustment committees take ownership of the process—No one knows the availability of local resources, and the needs of the people affected by a workplace layoff, better than the workplace members of a local adjustment committee. With proper training, the local committee is in the best position to ensure that affected workers receive the services they need. CSTEC provides ongoing support to local committees to help them administer their projects.

Ensure that peer counsellors are properly trained to deliver the services—CSTEC peer counsellors come from the steel industry, so it is steelworkers helping steelworkers. This means that there is instant credibility when peer counsellors deliver adjustment services. The key to the success of this approach has been ensuring that peer counsellors be properly trained by professionals.

D. Outcomes and Impacts on Workers

The services of the Worker Adjustment Program included needs assessment of workers affected by permanent downsizing and plant closures, personalized peer counselling, job search and placement, and a series of seminars to help workers adjust to new realities of the job market. The Local Adjustment Committees administered the adjustment program and coordinated participation in related activities.

As a result of CSTEC's targeted approach, using peer counsellors from the steel industry (both union and management), several successful outcomes can be cited, from a very large participation rate by laid-off workers to cost-efficiencies in administering the adjustment process.

- In the steel and mining industries, CSTEC had set up 85 local adjustment committees by August 2000. Out of 15,017 people who had been laid-off up to that time, 12,718 had participated in CSTEC's programs and services (i.e., representing an 85 percent participation rate by laid-off workers). About 90 percent of laid-off workers that had returned to the labour market found new jobs within the first six months.
- Costs of the program are competitive and run at about $500 per person due to an emphasis on results through counselling, needs assessment and job placement. Lower worker adjustment program administration costs were estimated by CSTEC to be about five percent of total adjustment costs. Savings in costs are also realized due primarily to CSTEC working in partnership with colleges to deliver training courses.
- Savings to the Employment Insurance account ensue because of CSTEC's high placement rate, quick adjustment results, and its ability to reach difficult, high-risk participants.[1] Program administration costs have accounted for roughly 5 percent of total adjustment costs, which is significantly lower than other similar programs. An example of savings to the Employment Insurance account is in the Algoma project where adjustment services were provided for 200 people, representing savings of approximately $385,000 between July 1, 1999 and March 31, 2000.
- Longitudinal surveys have indicated a very high satisfaction rate from both local adjustment committee members, who have administered adjustment projects, and from program participants. These surveys have shown a significant increase in the confidence level of participants, in their skill acquisition and in their ability to deal with job change.[2] In addition, participants have attributed to the program a reduction in stress-related social costs normally associated with job loss.
- The Worker Adjustment Program has become a model for those offered by other sectors and industries (such as the aerospace and auto industries). Outside of the steel industry, CSTEC has assisted 45 local adjustment committees comprising more than 2,200 workers.
- CSTEC has provided consultations on worker adjustment issues to other countries, including Brazil, Chile, Cuba, Japan, and Egypt. For example, CSTEC helped

[1] According to an evaluation study of CSTEC [*Program Evaluation Study of the Canadian Steel Trade and Employment Congress*, by EKOS Research Associates Inc., 1991], CSTEC's high participation rate is considerably higher than that of other similar programs.

[2] See *Program Evaluation Study* of CSTEC, ibid.

Brazilian officials in Sao Paolo in their initiative to re-organize into a decentralized system for worker adjustment services.

E. The Lessons Learned

The experience of the CSTEC Worker Adjustment Program has demonstrated that an industry-wide approach ensures "buy-in" of stakeholders and ownership of the process by those most affected by it. The program has enabled Local Adjustment Committees to access targeted training and other quality services at a lower cost through economies of scale. The key lessons learned from this experience are as follows:

Peer counselling and targeting services—Over the years CSTEC has learned that most of the benefits gained from the Worker Adjustment Program resulted from an approach that emphasized the importance of peer counselling and targeting of services. The focus on peer counselling also resulted in "instant credibility" with affected laid-off workers, which, in turn, produced high participation rates and an ability to reach high-risk individuals.

Focus on results and job placement—After initial experiences, CSTEC made a concerted effort to supplement training activities with job placement initiatives, with the addition of the Job-Finding Club and the National Job Bank and database of clients and employers. Both have produced improved re-employment rates, quicker placements, and reduced adjustment costs, and savings to the Employment Insurance federal program.

Local adjustment committees—The formation and training of local adjustment committees has its distinct advantages, as mentioned above. However, to ensure best results, CSTEC established criteria for the selection of committee members. Accounting mechanisms were put in place and training referrals had to be closely monitored by CSTEC, to ensure that all training did not only go to a few individuals.

The role of government—CSTEC recognised the importance of the government's role in cost-sharing adjustment projects. Despite the success of the industry-based approach of CSTEC, the steel sector still sees adjustment as a government responsibility, and is only likely to contribute resources if they are on the basis of cost-shared agreements. Equally important, the industry is more likely to act as an industry if such shared agreements are in place.

F. A Company Perspective – Dofasco Inc.

Employees of Dofasco Inc. represent one of the examples in which the Worker Adjustment Program had a significant impact. Dofasco is currently one of Canada's largest steel producers with about 7,200 employees in Hamilton, Canada, representing some twenty percent of total Canadian steelworkers. Serving customers throughout North America with flat rolled and tubular steels and laser-welded blanks, Dofasco has recently had the distinction of being the most profitable North American steelmaker in earnings on a per-ton basis with a net income of $261 million (Canadian) on sales of $3.2 billion (Canadian) in the year 2000. According to the Dow Jones Sustainability Group Index, Dofasco was recently deemed the most sustainably managed company in the basic materials sector, globally. Dow Jones evaluates companies based on innovative technology, corporate governance, shareholder relations, and social well-

being. Dofasco has operations in Canada and the United States. Its wide range of steel products is sold to customers in the automotive, construction, energy, manufacturing, pipe and tube, appliance, packaging and steel distribution industries.

Dofasco prides itself in the "triple bottom line" of sustainability: financial performance, environmental responsibility, and social well-being. The company's slogan is "Our product is steel. Our strength is people."—and so, as such, it was a willing and active participant in the Worker Adjustment Program of CSTEC.

During the late 1980s and the first part of the 1990s, Dofasco experienced a significant downsizing in its operations as a result of a stiff competitive situation in the industry and general economic downturns within North America and worldwide. By the mid-1990s the company had seen its ranks fall from some 12,800 employees down to 7,000, all through attrition and voluntary programs.

In April 1994, approximately 650 employees received notices of lay off from the company. This event initiated collaboration between Dofasco and CSTEC, leading to the development of a strategy based on the Worker Adjustment Program to help the laid-off employees adjust to the new realities of their situation.

Dofasco established an action committee including representatives from all the stakeholders involved, including management, employees, trainers, counsellors, and CSTEC officials. Fourteen people were assigned to a Dofasco initiative called DTAP (Dofasco Transition Assistance Program) to "help employees adjust together". The DTAP team benefited from a knowledge transfer from CSTEC counsellors, to help laid-off employees adjust. The type of adjustment services that were needed by these employees included training for new skills, career counselling and job placement activities. The general perception of those who stayed and those who left Dofasco was that "those who left were treated with excellence."[3]

The DTAP program lasted three-and-a-half years at Dofasco, with a success rate of benefiting 98 percent of the participants in the program. New skills training and job placements of Dofasco employees included opportunities in other manufacturing and service industry sectors, where prospects were greater at the time compared to the opportunities offered by the steel industry. Since the mid-1990s the company has been transformed from what was then seen as an "entitlement culture"—where employees believed that they would always be looked after regardless of the company's performance during an economic downturn—to an earnings and performance culture that recognizes and encourages career development and individual needs of employees. A testimonial of one of Dofasco's current employees: "Dofasco has given me many opportunities to make meaningful contributions using my existing skills, but perhaps more importantly, they have given me many opportunities to learn new skills." Another testimonial: "I look at it [Dofasco] as a door for great opportunities."

DTAP provided counselling for training programs, for making decisions on career opportunities, and for job placement. The legacy of the DTAP program is that now Dofasco has good experience in helping its employees with their career development goals. A constructive

[3] One of the additional initiatives introduced by Dofasco at the time, to reduce the negative impacts of actual and impending layoffs, was to introduce a program for all employees called "Play-to-Win". This was a three-day experiential learning program provided at a resort in Northern Ontario that focused on coping with change, rebuilding trust, and working together in a team environment.

and useful working relationship has also been developed between Dofasco and the CSTEC organization, for example for ongoing skills training initiatives. The company recognizes that a skilled workforce is a strong competitive advantage, and from their perspective the CSTEC programs and services provide a cost efficient way of delivering skills training to company employees. CSTEC, for example, was able to work out a partnership arrangement with the Mohawk College, a local education institution, to use their instructors and facilities to deliver relevant courses for the steel industry and for Dofasco.

Today the workplace has changed considerably in the steel industry, not only because the pace of technological change has increased, but also because employee expectations and demographics have changed too. For example, an aging workforce suggests new challenges are present due to retirements and attrition, and because of the need to attract and train young qualified employees to the industry. It is estimated that about 1,300 of Dofasco's manufacturing employees will leave (retire) by 2010. New programs involving computer-based training and co-op courses (where students rotate between classes and on-the-job work experience) are helping to address this issue.

Dofasco has used the fundamental principles of CSTEC to be results-oriented (not just concerned about process) and to ensure that both the common and individual interests of the steel industry participants are addressed. As such, Dofasco's current programs help ensure that their employees are being appropriately trained and able to meet their career goals, for the mutual benefit of the company and the employees.

G. Conclusion and Replicability

The CSTEC Worker Adjustment Program has proven that the sector-wide approach can provide quality services at reduced costs, with positive labour market results for all parties involved. The principle on which it was built, addressing the common needs as well as the individual needs of participants and stakeholders, and the collaboration it fostered between management, workers, educational institutions and government, provide a guiding example for others to emulate. The process evolved out of non-political circumstances binding the affected parties through a common interest (i.e., a common workplace situation brought about by economic challenges).

The fact that the Worker Adjustment Program was used as a basis for developing programs in other industry sectors, such as the aerospace and auto industries, suggests that it is replicable across industries. Furthermore, considering that CSTEC, based on its experience, has provided consultations on worker adjustment issues to other countries, including Brazil, Argentina, Egypt, Chile, Cuba, and Japan suggests that the program provides opportunities for emulation in other countries.

Human Resources Development Canada
Good Practice Case Study

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A. Canadian Automotive Repair and Service Council

Good Practice Title: ***CARS Interactive Distance Learning***

Summary: The Cars Interactive Distance Learning (IDL) program produces top quality automotive training, both technical and management oriented, which is broadcast live via satellite in both official languages to hundreds of sites across Canada. Participants in the IDL courses are able to watch the broadcast, responding to and posing questions through an audio response system. For many auto repair and service shops, IDL has become a great equalizer, allowing smaller independents to access the highest quality training available. Large auto manufacturers and distributors also participate in developing and benefiting from IDL courses.

B. The Good Practice Highlights

The purpose of CARS IDL is to deliver up-to-date, cost effective convenient training to the auto industry's existing workforce via an interactive satellite broadcast system.

To date the CARS IDL program has served thousands of auto industry workers in hundreds of workplaces in every province in Canada. The program started in January 1998 and is ongoing. The IDL learning system provides access to training anywhere in Canada. Programs are broadcast in both French and English five days per week. Examples of some of the programs offered are Electronics, On-Board Diagnostics, Emission Control, Customer Relations and Sales.

Initial support for CARS training programs by the federal government, through Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC), has led to a self-sufficient self-funded program for the auto repairs and services sector. Cost per participant, as reported by CARS and its partners and program participants, is much lower than traditional face-to-face classroom training.

Industry contributed the cash required to develop the infrastructure and HRDC contributed the funding required to develop training materials. Overall, IDL industry training participation has increased dramatically since the inception of the program, and industry has eagerly embraced the concept of IDL delivery of training courses.

C. The Background and Context

The cornerstone of a competitive organization is a highly trained workforce. In today's automotive sector, product lifecycles are becoming shorter and more complex. The available time for training is greatly reduced, and the costs are high. Many companies have been downsizing, and consequently the responsibilities of those employees that remain expand. Jobs are consolidated and, inevitably, training needs increase.

The major cost driver of training is delivery. CARS, therefore, by introducing the IDL program, took a big step to drastically reduce the cost of delivering high quality training and education to the automotive industry. Canada's size and sparse population has made traditional classroom training expensive and often inconsistent in quality across regions. In the auto repairs and services sector, as in other industry sectors, there was, and continues to be, a big need for distance learning solutions that are practical and cost-effective. Distance learning today, in general, is a very confusing collection of approaches and techniques to training. The CARS approach, however, is focused on only one form of distance learning—one-way video, and two-way audio/data interactivity. This approach has worked well for the automotive sector.

D. The Challenge

There have been some specific challenges in introducing and implementing the CARS IDL program. To begin with, there was the initial challenge of getting employers to overcome their scepticisms about IDL's ability to address a large part of their training needs. Then there was the challenge of encouraging workers to participate once the IDL system was installed. While the success of the program to date has given the program a track record that helps address these challenges, at the outset of the program these were real barriers to overcome.

Other significant challenges for the implementation of the CARS IDL program was the challenge of establishing programming material and the challenge of developing a delivery system from scratch. Programming material was developed in close partnership with major employers in the industry and educational institutions (some examples of these partners are mentioned below). By working with the stakeholders in the automotive industry, CARS was able to develop the infrastructure necessary to ensure success of the IDL program. This included training instructors and developing satellite "downlinks" where they were needed.

E. Good Practice Solution

CARS is now able to offer a national network which addresses the needs of both employers and employees. Both groups are well represented in CARS. The CARS network infrastructure acts as a direct link between industry and educational institutions to ensure the highest calibre of training by:

- assisting with the training of trainers;
- managing donations of technology and information;
- accrediting standards for programs and facilities; and

- promoting and encouraging networking between institutions and industry.

In the beginning, acceptance of the CARS IDL program by credible industry partners was a critical element of success of the CARS IDL training solution. To date, big players participating in the program include car manufacturers such as Ford, Chrysler, General Motors, Mazda and Toyota; consumer retailers and distributors such as Canadian Tire Corporation and Sears Canada; and other organizations such as Allied-Signal, Goodyear, Hughes, Raytheon, and the National Centre for Manufacturing Sciences. These organizations, by contributing their experience to help develop courseware, and/or by sending instructors and/or students to the program, have ensured the success of CARS IDL.

CARS has also been partnered with educational institutions across Canada for developing and delivering training materials relevant to the needs of the automotive industry. For example, Centennial College and Algonquin College in Ontario and Kwantelin University College in British Columbia have benefited from participating and contributing to CARS training programs. These are just a few examples of the many partners and stakeholders participating in the CARS IDL program.

CARS has many remote broadcast receiving locations—i.e., “downlinks”. Reaching these remote locations via satellite is as easy as reaching one’s next-door neighbour. Satellite broadcasts provide an extremely high quality video image comparable with commercial television. Even the smallest details can be shown to the students. Interactivity makes satellite delivery the "closest thing to being there". The equipment used for the IDL infrastructure has built-in assessment routines, allowing tracking of performance, confirming who participated, and offering interactivity between instructor and students. Students can ask or respond to questions and training is consistent across the country.

Satellite delivery of training programs combines the advantages of the personal interaction of a classroom with the economies of distance learning. IDL, as a satellite broadcast network program, provides easy reach to large groups of people simultaneously. Cost is, for the most part, independent of distance and the number of receiving sites. The cost is basically fixed, so the more people receive a program the lower the individual cost.

Many courses are offered by CARS and are constantly being updated, and new courses are added continuously to the program. The following course paths (each of which include several courses leading up to a concentration) are offered by IDL:

- air conditioning specialist
- anti-lock brake specialist
- business financials
- business management
- chassis electrical specialist
- customer relations
- emissions specialist
- inspection service specialist
- undercar specialist

- underhood specialist.

As can be seen from the examples of course paths listed above, there are a variety of options for students to choose from. These course paths, and the specific courses included in each path, were developed based on the needs of the automotive industry. There is usually no problem in finding students to participate in courses, since the contents of each course are carefully selected to reflect specific demands expressed by industry, employers and employees.

F. What Was Achieved

CARS IDL has set a high standard for distance learning in the auto industry sector, providing a consistent level of training in many different geographic locations in Canada. Participants are counted in the thousands (a list of over 4,500 students is posted on the CARS website). The number of IDL training courses offered is constantly on the rise—about seventy courses offered are currently listed on the CARS website.

The bottom line benefit of CARS Interactive Distance Learning, as reported by CARS and confirmed by testimonials of participants in the program, is that it provides cost-effective, convenient training in both official languages to hundreds of locations across the country. IDL is cost-effective enough for small enterprises to participate. The automotive sector in general has demonstrated its strong ongoing support for the program and subscribed in high enough numbers to financially support the program.

Satellite-based IDL provides the benefits of the classroom without the large cost. The service began broadcasting on March 16, 1999. In less than a year of operation, by November 1999, CARS had about 300 "downlink" sites signed up for the IDL program. These sites were established right across the country, in all provinces. Response to the CARS line-up of technical and management skills training courses was very positive during the initial phases of the program, and this helped it grow.

Participants in CARS IDL included technicians, service advisors, managers and an increasing number of other workers in the industry. It is now the norm to expect several thousand participants signing on to the program on a regular basis. Currently, there are about 4,500 students listed on the CARS website, enrolled in IDL courses. CARS reports that the program has been self-sufficient since January 2001, primarily due to ongoing funding through programming subscriptions. Moreover, the size of the CARS online broadcast network continues to grow.

Responses from the automotive industry to the concept and content of IDL courses have generally been very positive. For example, Ken Hamilton, General Manager of one of the Canadian Tire stores (in Stoney Creek) has described IDL as "the greatest thing since sliced bread." Speaking of the contributions of CARS to educational programs and institutions, Ron Leontowicz, Chairman of the Canadian Association of Motive Power Educators said that: "… industry's current and future employees are able to train on the technology they will encounter in their day-to-day work. The educational institutions have been able to upgrade the technology used in teaching without a large capital outlay. Most important, the companies are obtaining trained employees who meet their needs immediately."

G. Lessons Learned

There are many lessons learned associated with the CARS IDL experience. The following factors reported by CARS highlight the reasons so many organizations today are exploring this approach:

- IDL allows companies to deliver training to more people with less cost. By not requiring students to leave work, IDL reduces time off work and the amount of money spent on travel and per-diems. The increase in cost savings is an obvious benefit of IDL.

- IDL improves the quality and consistency of training programs, because of the requirement to use standardized designs. The most qualified instructors are also available to all students everywhere, wherever the courses are available through satellite broadcasting.

- When the message is critical or needs consistent delivery, IDL delivery ensures the same information is being delivered to everyone, because it is the same message. Likewise, if subject matter experts or resources are limited, IDL can efficiently utilize those scarce resources.

- IDL reduces training time by shortening the time necessary to prepare, schedule and deliver courses to a large or dispersed target population.

- IDL allows tracking and certification and can also confirm who attended a class and who left. Because the system tools associated with IDL delivery allow a company to record each student's response, it includes built-in assessments and accountabilities, which lead to a more effective training option for stakeholders in the industry.

In spite of these benefits associated with IDL, some traditional training deliverers continue to be sceptical. This scepticism likely originates from the fact that some training applications still require hands-on and face-to-face instruction (e.g., driver training). The challenge here is to convince sceptical organizations and trainers that IDL is complementary to existing training and not a replacement.

The IDL approach is best used when the audience is geographically dispersed and if it is not convenient for them to co-locate. The benefits of IDL are also most obvious when the time to reach a large population that requires training is short. Satellite delivery can reach a large and dispersed target audience immediately and simultaneously. On the other hand, IDL can be used to establish training schedules, and repeat sessions, so class sizes may be reduced and delivered in short intervals, when it is most convenient to the students.

While the accelerated pace and convenience of IDL instruction reduces the delivery time of training courses, compared to face-to-face classroom alternatives, broadcast studio planning and preparation must include sufficient rehearsal time. The necessity of planning and rehearsal, to hone the system and to prepare the instructors for IDL delivery, is a critical element of success. The CARS IDL experience during the initial phases of the program highlights this lesson learned. Shortly after implementation of the program, expansion was required to two studios to enable sufficient rehearsal of the IDL courses offered.

H. Future Outlook

Industry continues to face increasing pressure to produce up-to-date, technical and managerial courses to workers in the automotive sector. At the same time the cost of developing and delivering training continues to creep upward. As a cost-effective solution, the CARS IDL approach remains popular, and the demand for new and updated course material is ongoing.

From its track record, starting from its first broadcast in March 1999 to the present, CARS IDL has demonstrated its value to employers and employees alike. Industry has expressed its ongoing support by subscribing to IDL programming in sufficient numbers to ensure its continued success.

However, other organizations similar to CARS, in other industry sectors, that might be considering IDL as a part of their training programs, should realize that IDL represents a substantial commitment. They should carefully evaluate whether all the ingredients for success are present. These include a sustained commitment by industry stakeholders to the program; a large base of workers in need of ongoing training; and partnerships with educational and government institutions to help build the content and infrastructure needed for delivery of the IDL solution.

I. Contacts

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Human Resources Development Canada
Good Practice Case Study

By Hussein Rostum
Bytown Consulting

A. Canadian Tourism Human Resource Council: Tourism Careers for Youth

Good Practice Title: ***Tourism Careers for Youth (Sectoral Youth Internship Program)***

Summary: Tourism Careers for Youth (TCY) is a Canadian national youth internship program that assists young people with the transition from high school to the workplace. The program offers a mix of career planning, classroom and workplace training, and employment. The program provides employers with the opportunity to hire young people who are well prepared to work in the tourism industry, who have industry-specific skills, who possess the right attitude, and who have made a commitment to a career in the industry. Job candidates with TCY training offer higher skill levels, better service delivery, and reduced turnover. Training resources are made available through the Canadian Tourism Human Resource Council (CTHRC) to youth between the ages of 18 and 29. CTHRC generally provides training resources in eight tourism areas: accommodation, adventure travel, attractions, events and conferences, food and beverage, tourism services, transportation, and travel trade.

The TCY program has also played a major role in introducing to the marketplace National Tourism Occupational Standards and Professional Certification programs of CTHRC, generating a stronger training culture and appreciation of the value of good human resource management within the industry. TCY contributes to establishing a more stable workforce and serves as an important vehicle to generate awareness of the Canadian Tourism Human Resource Council from coast to coast.

Target Group: The main target group of Tourism Careers for Youth is youth between the ages of 18 and 29 who are unemployed or under-employed. The program includes Aboriginal people, youth at risk, disabled persons, single mothers, and welfare-to-work participants.

Good Practice Date: The Tourism Careers for Youth program began in 1995 and evolved over three phases during the last five years. The program is presently in its third phase with activities planned to March 31, 2002.

B. The Good Practice Highlights

Objectives: The following are the objectives of TCY, which essentially is a Canadian school-to-work, youth transition, internship program:

- to assist young people between 18 and 29 to make a successful integration into the workplace, and to pursue a career of long-term employment in tourism;

- to contribute in fostering a stronger training culture in the tourism industry at the entry-level; and
- to make available to the tourism industry relevant and useful training resources.

TCY brings together labour market and industry partners with educators, in such a way as to create an environment that will ensure an effective transition of young people from school to the tourism workplace.

Scope: The Tourism Careers for Youth program has been delivered in every province and territory in both official languages since its inception in 1995. The TCY program assists young, unemployed people, who are not returning to post-secondary education, in acquiring the skills, knowledge, attitudes, and relevant on-the-job training, to make a successful transition into the workforce, putting them on a career path to long-term employment. CTHRC provides training resources in eight key areas of the tourism industry: accommodation, adventure travel, attractions, events and conferences, food and beverage, tourism services, transportation and travel trade.

Stakeholders and participants: Various types of stakeholders are involved in TCY—for example, unemployed youth, educators and trainers, labour groups, and business partners. Participants in the program include Aboriginal people, physically challenged people, youth at risk, single mothers, and social assistance recipients (SARS). Seventy percent of all participants remain employed beyond the program's six-month minimum employment criterion and/or return to post-secondary schools.

Wide acceptance of the program: The TCY program model has been embraced by the tourism industry and young participants, primarily because of its perceived relevance and flexibility in meeting regional industry needs, and for the much-needed service that it provides. As a best practice, the TCY program has also assisted the Canadian Tourism Human Resource Council, and its regional delivery partners, in opening up markets in over 130 communities across Canada. It has done this by helping promote the Council's products and services, thereby contributing to a systematic change in the human resource training culture in Canada.

C. The Background and Context

Growth of tourism: The tourism industry employs ten percent of the Canadian workforce and is one of the fastest growing industries in Canada – approximately 300,000 new jobs will have been created in tourism between 1999 and 2005. The tourism industry provides many and varied job and career opportunities. To address this challenge of growth, the Council has responded by developing a number of resources to guide individuals through the employment choices available, and to support the tourism industry by ensuring that high standards of service are maintained. The owner of one tourism organization put it this way: "In today's highly competitive marketplace, simply telling customers you care isn't enough. They want consistent, professional service that makes each encounter a positive one."

The program context: Training resources have been designed by the Council to meet a diverse range of needs. They offer flexible delivery options that allow staff to receive training in the workplace, in moderated groups, one-on-one, or on their own. These resources are available from the tourism education council or association in each province and territory. Developed and tested by tourism industry employees, employers and educators from across

Canada, these national training resources are based on the CTHRC's National Occupational Standards, and they help prepare young employees for professional certification.

By developing and making accessible to industry the relevant training tools, and by providing tourism career awareness and planning, the TCY program has helped dispel the poor career image that young people have had of the industry. The TCY program uses training resources designed to address the specific needs of the industry: to develop a stronger training culture within tourism, and thus helping reduce employee turnover. It has provided young, unemployed people with the skills, knowledge and experience necessary to put them on the path to long-term, stable employment in tourism.

Limitations: The TCY program has been very successful in transferring skills, knowledge and attitudes to youth participants in the pre-employment orientation and classroom-training component of the program, thus getting them "job ready". However, once employed and integrated in the workplace, encouraging and promoting on-the-job training by the supervisors, using the Council's occupational standards-based training resources, is an on-going challenge.

D. The Challenge

Employers in the tourism industry in Canada, especially small and medium-sized employers, do not have well developed training programs. Training and occupational standards-based training resources are somewhat daunting, especially for many smaller employers.

As target groups, Aboriginal youth and Social Assistance Recipients represent an important pool of young, unemployed people across Canada that can contribute to addressing labour shortages in the tourism sector. Special attention and care, and extra time and effort, are required on the part of regional human resource coordinators, to mentor and coach these target group participants, and to facilitate their successful integration into the workplace. For example, regional coordinators have reported that it is often necessary to "show-up" early in the morning in the driveway of participants, to reinforce the importance of punctuality and commitment.

Training programs that meet industry needs can only be developed and made available through the TCY program if adequate funds are available to the Council. Regional human resource coordinators are severely stretched to fill the need to cover large rural and remote territories. The ability of regional human resource coordinators to monitor the delivery of on-the-job training, particularly in regions where programs are delivered across geographically diverse locations, is very limited, especially if program funds become scarce.

E. The Good Practice Solution

Under the TCY program approach, the following good practice solution has been offered:

- A flexible program delivery structure, using common core training resources and supporting training tools.

- A training model that provides industry with properly recruited, well prepared, and motivated new employees that successfully complete basic entry-level skills training –

instead of having to take their chances with "off-the-street" entry-level candidates with no training.

- A training model that can be applied in a wide range of industry situations, from high volume, large-scale operations to small-scale operations – including Aboriginal communities and rural and remote regions.

- An approach to develop successful partnerships and alliances in all provinces and territories – including regional tourism industry groups, community groups, educational institutions, and federal and provincial employment programs.

The TCY program provides a unique good practice solution, with a concept and program design that fills a training gap between the secondary and post-secondary years of education.

F. What Was Achieved[4]

Youth employment: Since it's inception in 1995, the TCY program has assisted over 5,000 young people with integration into the workforce. Seventy percent of these have remained employed beyond the program's six-month minimum employment criterion and/or returned to post-secondary school. The program has also engaged over 2,000 employers to provide employment and on-the-job training to new hires.

Industry contributions: Industry contributions (cash and in-kind) for the program are equivalent to a total of $14.9 million. The TCY program has been, and continues to be, a very effective vehicle to develop and foster strong partnerships with stakeholders across Canada.

Costs are reasonable: The cost of the program, including training resource development costs, was $3,340 per participant (not including industry contributions). As a training and employment program, TCY provides good value in ensuring the employability of Canadian youth in a high growth industry sector.

Broad coverage: The TCY program has reached out to over 130 communities in every province and territory, with a strong focus on the rural and remote communities. The program has been delivered in both official languages, including French delivery in Manitoba, New Brunswick and Ontario.

G. Lessons Learned

The lessons learned from the TCY program experience include the following:

- In spite of the large number of small and medium-sized operators in the tourism industry, a systematic training program can be successful in bringing stakeholders together in a concerted effort, to upgrade the skills and employment opportunities for youth in such an industry.

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4 These results are as reported by CTHRC and confirmed through consultations with participants and contributors to the CTHRC programs.

- The establishment and maintenance of active regional advisory committees, that support the delivery of programs such as TCY, are an important part of the success of such programs.

- However, more effort is required to ensure that partnership arrangements at the regional and local levels are effective, to bring stakeholders together in a manner that results in mutually beneficial support for TCY program activities. This can be achieved by greater information sharing between regional coordinators especially in terms of experiences with the process and challenges of developing partnerships and with program management.

- TCY would not likely have succeeded without the funding made available for regional coordination, for promoting the program, for recruiting employers and for providing support to Aboriginal youth and Social Assistance Recipients – or without adequate funding for monitoring the successful integration of youth into the workplace, and on-the-job training activities. Inadequate funding jeopardizes similar future program activities.

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H. Future Outlook

The TCY program has demonstrated that as a good practice the model is replicable. In large part, this is due to the development and use of a common set of core materials and training information that are designed for flexible implementation. The delivery approach allows for easy adaptation in varied situations, and is responsive to different needs of the industry in different jurisdictions and geographic locations across Canada.

The Council's commitment to further develop the TCY program materials, and the range of its delivery methods, will greatly support the ability of the program to adapt to regional needs. For example, the Council is able to adapt components of the program to the specific circumstances of Aboriginal youth, and to accommodate variations in regional employment needs such as the operations of ski resorts and eco-tourism.

Continued success of the program and its sustainability largely depends on the support of the tourism industry, and on the industry's willingness to invest in training and development of their current and future employees.

I. Contacts

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References:

There are many references that could be supplied by CTHRC. The following are four examples:

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Human Resources Development Canada
Good Practice Case Study

By Hussein Rostum
Bytown Consulting

A. Canadian Steel Trade and Employment Congress: Skill Training Program

Good Practice Title: ***CSTEC Skill Training Program***

Summary: The early 1990s ushered in a period of growing international competition and significant technological change in the Canadian steel industry. During this period, the industry recognized that it needed to compete on the basis of quality and value added production. The critical element was to upgrade the skill level of its workforce. The industry needed to broadly increase the skill base and improve the efficiency of training.

There were essentially two options to meet this challenge:

- to deal with the challenge as individual companies as they had done in the past; or
- to deal with the challenge on an industry-wide sector basis, a new approach that could involve both benefits and risks

While more and more firms were recognizing that the pace of technological change and the shrinking training resources required a more efficient approach to training, there was no tradition in the industry of working together to reduce duplication in the development and delivery of training and to achieve economies of scale.

With the support of Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC), the steel industry initiated a cost-shared, sector-based Skill Training Program for the industry's current workforce of nearly 35,000 workers across Canada. The Canadian Steel Trade and Employment Congress (CSTEC) implemented this award-winning program in 1992).[5] This program represents a partnership that brings together the resources, experience, and expertise of steel companies, local unions, education and training providers in steel making communities, and governments, to develop a wide range of training services and training courses that meet the shared needs of the industry. CSTEC has worked with the 20 colleges and cégeps in the steel making communities across Canada to deliver the Skill Training Program.

This innovative partnership has provided significant benefits to all the stakeholders in the steel industry, including:

- delivered high quality, college-accredited courses;

[5] The CSTEC Skill Training Program was granted an award of excellence in 1996 from the Conference Board of Canada for creating effective partnerships for Lifelong Learning. The Conference Board of Canada provides annual *National Partners in Education Awards* for winning business-education partnerships in Canada.

- reduced costs by avoiding duplication and by capturing economies of scale;
- provided flexible training options;
- more than doubled the previous amount of training provided by education institutions (i.e., not directly by the steel companies themselves);
- increased transferability of skills, thereby enhancing the employability of the steel industry workforce; and,
- generally improved access to training for steel workers.

In addition, through fee-for-service agreements, CSTEC has provided its services to workplaces and organizations outside the steel industry (e.g., aerospace, mining, and food industries). These services have included skill training services and advisory services to organizations both in Canada and abroad (notably in Rosario, Argentina).

Target Group: Employers and unions in the steel sector.

Good Practice Date: 1992 to present.

B. The Good Practice Highlights

CSTEC's Skill Training Program was established to increase training and to provide a wide range of common training services and training courses to employed steelworkers (bargaining and non-bargaining units). These services include:

- delivering training projects that are cost-shared between industry, government and education institutions;
- setting up joint training committees – the so called JTCs are local joint labour-management training committees brought together to develop more strategic, effective and cost-efficient training solutions;
- preparing training plans and budget development and tracking services for various workplaces;
- identifying and analysing training needs of different workplaces;
- preparing specific training courses – including self-paced, interactive computer-based training courses;
- Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) – a process to evaluate and grant credit equivalency to a worker for his/her prior formal education, training, work, and life experience; and
- General Education Development (GED) – a high school equivalency-training program.

Through this range of services, CSTEC has been able to deliver effective training initiatives to the steel industry, and particularly to steelworkers. It has helped set up 35 joint training committees across Canada, and as such has brought together a broad spectrum of experience, information and innovation to training. Equally important, the JTC approach has dramatically increased the buy-in on the part of workers to training and to the need to constantly adapt and innovate.

Nearly two-thirds of the steel industry workplaces, particularly for production workers, have used one or more of the Skill Training Program courses. For nearly 35,000 people employed in the steel industry the amount of skills training delivered at the workplace nearly doubled since the inception of CSTEC's Skill Training Program. The contributions of CSTEC to the development of training plans has enhanced the industry's ability to develop and account for appropriate training at each workplace, thereby facilitating a strategic approach to setting training priorities and expenditures.

C. The Background and Context

CSTEC was initially formed in 1986 to promote research, education, and lobbying on steel sector-related issues. CSTEC's mandate was expanded in 1988 to provide adjustment services to workers who were affected by the significant restructuring taking place at that time in the steel industry.

Based on this experience, CSTEC again expanded its mandate in 1992 to meet the training challenges of the industry. As in other industries in Canada, the steel industry recognized that it did not have the tools to capture all the training expenditures in different companies and workplaces. A 1992 Human Resource Study of the steel industry[6] revealed that:

- most of the industry's training was in the areas of orientation, sales, apprenticeship, or health and safety;
- most of the training was company-specific, ad-hoc, non-startegic, and untracked;
- most of the training was geared to supervisors and trades people; and,
- many workplaces either did not have access to quality training courses or found training too costly to deliver.

In 1992, CSTEC negotiated a three-year cost-shared agreement with the federal government and the province of Ontario, to share the cost of delivery of generic courses in basic or foundation skills, steel industry general skills, and steel industry specific technical skills.

Later, a second agreement on course development was negotiated. In the process of developing eight pilot courses ranging from Metallurgy to Work Reorganization, the steel industry recognized that many of their training needs were common and could be developed industry-wide in order to reduce duplication, reduce training costs and ensure industry-wide quality. At the same time, these generic or transferable skills would benefit both the workers in the industry, through improved employment skills, and the companies who were undergoing significant changes in technology.

With the purpose of accessing transferability and recognition in its training courses, in 1994, CSTEC and several participating colleges and cégeps entered into an articulation agreement to jointly develop and implement a training and accreditation program, which produced standardized training programs.

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6 This study was conducted by the Canadian Labour Market and Productivity Centre (CLMPC) for CSTEC in 1992.

D. The Challenge

Getting "buy-in" from the industry stakeholders: At the workplace level, the area of training had traditionally been the sole prerogative of management. The design of a joint process between management and unions, to determine training needs, had to be very sensitive to this reality. Nor was there any tradition in the industry of common course development. Each workplace worked in isolation, designing its own curriculum.

On the other hand, union representatives had no experience in needs assessment, and, in many cases, were quite satisfied to adopt their traditional adversarial role on training issues.

The barriers to training: Prior to the last ten years, training was limited for a significant number of workers in the steel industry. In addition, there was considerable cynicism, and, in many cases, outright fear of training and its implications among workers.

The cost and manpower constraints: Globalisation and the resultant restructuring of the steel industry had reduced workplace staffing dramatically. It was very difficult to free "extra bodies" to deliver training courses.

The barriers to certification: Unions recognise the importance of training, transferability, and certification, but there was concern over access and a "watering down" of seniority rights. What would happen to seniority, if junior people received certification? This issue arose at a time when layoffs were occurring in the steel industry.

The creation of a partnership between the steel industry and the college system: The creation of a partnership between the steel industry and the college system was fraught with difficulties. In many regions throughout the country, there were no linkages between the workplaces and colleges or cégeps in their catchment areas. Relationships had to be established from scratch. In fact, outside of the Quebec cégep system, there were no linkages among colleges themselves. Even where relationships existed, misunderstandings arose over language, over motives, over credits (e.g., learning outcomes vs. classroom hours), over costs, over instructors, and over block transfer of credits between colleges and cégeps.

E. The Good Practice Solution

The sectoral approach: Ten years ago, most workplaces would address their specific training needs in an ad hoc, individual manner. Technological change and shrinking resources has changed this. Workplaces do not have the time, money, or personnel to develop courses, provide qualified instructors to deliver them, or fill a classroom. These workplaces must now work with each other to ensure that their human resource needs are met. A sectoral approach enables workplaces to meet these needs in an effective and cost-efficient manner. A sectoral approach also enables companies and unions to access government programs on a sectoral basis and to access services from other sources, like the education/training institutions.

Identify the WIIFMs (What's in it for me?) of each of the stakeholders: Partnerships, such as those created in the Skill Training Program, require that there be important, tangible benefits to all the stakeholders that are repeatedly and clearly articulated.

- For the companies, the benefits have included:
  - an improved access to relevant training;
  - an increased quality and variety of training packages;
  - more cost-efficient training opportunities for workers;
  - a greatly expanded role in the design and delivery of training courses;
  - improved level and quality of skills of existing workers and new entrants in the industry.

- The unions have similarly benefited from:
  - the provision of new services for their membership;
  - an important role in the curriculum development of training programs; and,
  - a greatly expanded role in the design and delivery of training courses.

- For workers, the Skill Training Program has:
  - facilitated and encouraged lifelong learning and skill upgrading;
  - improved the portability of a worker's skills and their contribution to the economy;
  - reduced the cost and time of skill upgrading and training, as a result of the recognition of prior training and learning;
  - improved the level and quality of skills;
  - improved employment and income security of workers; and,
  - given credits for prior learning and training.

- The Skill Training Program provides colleges and cégeps:
  - an expanded and enhanced relationship with workplaces;
  - the development and delivery of more relevant training courses;
  - an expanded enrolment base; and,
  - the basis for offering certificates/diplomas that could be used for attracting new entrants into the workplace.

- Various levels of government have also benefited in several ways through:
  - an improvement in the level of the national and regional skill base;
  - improved leverage of tax dollars through a significant (6:1) contribution of industry investment to government investment;
  - an improvement in the transferability of skills to other sectors;
  - more cost-efficient training and adjustment programs as a result of the savings in training and social benefits costs; and,
  - lessons learned for other sectors.

Process of collaboration: Meetings of stakeholders and participants in the program were convened over a two-year period so that all the WIIFMs (What's in it for me?) were articulated. Motives and agendas of all the parties involved were placed clearly on the table, definitions and language of the training program were clarified, and any concerns or issues were forthrightly discussed during these regularly held meetings. The desired results and expectations were also discussed during these meetings, and outcomes agreed upon. All participating parties agreed to convey the results of the meetings to their respective constituencies in whatever manner they deemed appropriate. This process resulted in a successful working relationship between the parties involved in the development and implementation of the Skill Training Program.

Develop a skill training program that is results-based, not process-driven: The key to CSTEC's success was their drive to get results. The steel industry demanded it. For example, cost constraints limited the amount of training that could be provided at the workplace, so more flexible and efficient delivery options had to be produced. CSTEC brokered and coordinated industry subject-matter experts with education/training institutions and private deliverers, and arranged licensing agreements with other training providers to develop and access all the best training material available. Equally important, CSTEC expanded the delivery options to industry including computer-based training.

This was done on behalf of all workplaces in the steel industry. If each workplace individually attempted to accomplish this, their costs would have been prohibitive. The sectoral approach of the Skill Training Program identified and addressed the needs of the industry, and produced results in the most cost-effective manner.

F. What Was Achieved

To date, the results of the Skill Training Program can be summarized as follows:[7]

- The development of training plans enhanced the industry's ability to capture and account for the training that is occurring at each workplace, thereby facilitating a strategic approach to training.

- Partnerships have been fostered through articulation agreements between the steel industry and the college/cégep system that has produced the following results:
  - joint development of forty modular, outcome-based courses that are common across the steel sector and, in many cases, relevant to other industries;
  - college accreditation for these courses where the credits may be applied towards certification or as part of a block transfer towards other college/cégep programs;
  - course delivery standards that address the critical issues of:
    - trainer qualifications
    - training delivery options
    - instructional methods and techniques
    - assessment methods and techniques;
  - per diem rates that are cost-effective and that provide additional cost savings to the industry as the volume of training increases; and
  - recognition of prior learning (PLAR) through portfolio development and program review, which enables workers to access credits for workplace training and work and life experience.

- CSTEC has worked with over 35 training committees both inside and outside the steel industry, to train committee members and to carry out training needs assessments.

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[7] These results are as reported by CSTEC, and confirmed through consultations with participants and contributors to the CSTEC programs.

- Over 35 workplaces, representing nearly two-thirds of the steel industry, have used Skill Training Program courses. The increased training reached job occupations that traditionally have not received sufficient training, namely production and clerical workers.

- The amount of non-company-specific training in the steel industry has more than doubled since the early 1990s.

- Ten courses have been developed in computer-based training (CBT) format, thereby expanding delivery options.

- There have been savings in the development and delivery of training due to the reduction of duplication – i.e., standardized courses have been developed once instead of being duplicated several times in the steel industry.

- A survey undertaken on behalf of Human Resources Development Canada in March 1996[8] indicated a very high satisfaction rate, from both joint training committee (JTC) members and from training recipients, in the quality and relevance of the training, and in the process of needs assessment. This study indicated important training benefits to individuals including:

    - 90 percent of training respondents had taken at least one job-related training course in the previous 12 months;
    - 93 percent were satisfied with the training overall;
    - 90 percent found training relevant to the job; and,
    - 94 percent found training provided the skills and information that they needed.

  This study also indicated that CSTEC services have improved the function of joint training committees, including their ability:

    - to identify training needs;
    - to make proper training decisions; and
    - to track the results of the training that was occurring.

- A number of other sectors in Canada (e.g., aerospace, mining, grocery producers), and in other countries (e.g., in Rosario, Argentina) have licensed the use of CSTEC's Skill Training Program courses. CSTEC has also provided consultative services on training issues to other governments, including Sao Paolo and Rio De Janeiro in Brazil, Chile and Japan.

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[8] *Formative Evaluation of the Sectoral Partnership Initiative: Case Study Report—Canadian Steel Trade and Employment Congress*, prepared by EKOS Research Associates, Inc., for Human Resources Development Canada, March 1996.

G. Lessons Learned

CSTEC's experience in designing a Skill Training Program for the steel industry would not have been possible without government incentives (funding or other support). To increase industry-wide training programs, and to increase the access to these programs, required the partnership of industry with government and education institutions.

In addition, incentives are required to build partnerships between:

- companies,
- companies and unions, and
- industry and education institutions.

There are common risks, in the development and delivery of training, that need to be shared between these groups. The partnership between industry and government can provide the necessary incentives to stimulate these relationships. In each case, there was no tradition in the steel industry of a partnership around training issues until CSTEC, with the help of HRDC, was able to develop the Skill Training Program approach.

As relationships are built, the need for government incentives could be reduced. As stakeholders become more aware of how partnerships within the industry and with education institutions can enable workplaces to meet their training needs, the contribution of government could be reduced. Incentives would still be needed to encourage new areas of joint venture where there is no tradition of collaboration between stakeholders.

H. Future Outlook

Over the last two years, CSTEC has been able to sustain its programs and services as a result of membership fees generously contributed from both companies and unions (at national and local levels) throughout Canada, and through its active fee-for-service programs. CSTEC, like other sector-based organizations, has had to deal with the transfer of training from the federal to provincial governments and with a shift of policy from government support to individual client-based approaches – such as "fee-for-service" payments and registered learning accounts.

The CSTEC Skill Training Program has proven that the sector-wide approach to training can provide quality services at reduced costs, with positive results for all parties involved. CSTEC believes that options exist to continue these benefits using a sectoral approach, even in the context of devolution and shifting of policy towards individual service delivery approaches.

I. Contacts

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References:	References from industry, government, and education providers are available upon request from CSTEC.

Human Resources Development Canada
Good Practice Case Study

By Hussein Rostum
Bytown Consulting

A. Canadian Steel Trade and Employment Congress: Worker Adjustment Program

Good Practice Title: ***CSTEC Worker Adjustment Program***

Summary: In the late 1980s, the steel industry faced a significant restructuring challenge with the loss of nearly one-third of its workforce. It had at least three options to meet this challenge:

- to disregard the consequences
- to deal with the challenge separately as individual companies
- to deal with the challenge on an industry-wide basis.

With support from Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC), the industry chose to address the challenge with a sector-wide approach. The Canadian Steel Trade and Employment Congress (CSTEC), together with Canadian steel companies and with the United Steelworkers of America (USWA), initiated a unique and innovative sector-based worker adjustment program that has assisted nearly 13,000 steelworkers in nearly 85 basic steel, pipe and tube, and wire draw workplaces throughout Canada.

In addition, through fee-for-service agreements with various other industry sectors and governments, both domestically and internationally, CSTEC has more recently provided consultative and other services for worker adjustment initiatives in 45 other workplaces outside the steel industry.

The services of the CSTEC Worker Adjustment Program include needs assessment of workers, personalized peer counselling, job search and placement, and a series of seminars to help workers adjust to new realities of the job market. Local adjustment committees administer the program and coordinate participation in related activities.

As a result of CSTEC's targeted approach, using peer counsellors from the steel industry (both union and management), several successful outcomes from the Worker Adjustment Program can be cited:

- an over 85 percent participation rate of laid-off steelworkers in the program;
- a re-employment rate of nearly 90 percent of laid-off workers, who returned to the labour market within six months;
- a significant increase in the confidence level of participants in the program, in their skill acquisition and in their ability to deal with job change;

- a significant reduction in stress-related social costs traditionally associated with job loss;
- lower worker adjustment program administration costs (estimated at about five percent of total adjustment costs); and
- significant savings to the federal government's Employment Insurance accounts.

The experience of the CSTEC Worker Adjustment Program, as a good practice, has demonstrated that a sector-based approach ensures "buy-in" of stakeholders and ownership of the process by those most affected by it. The program has enabled local adjustment committees to access targeted training and other quality services at a lower cost through economies of scale.

Target Group: Workers affected by permanent downsizing and plant closures (including bargaining and non-bargaining units). This good practice can be categorized under the "Adult-Labour Market Information" theme of HRDC.

Good Practice Date: 1988 to present.

B. The Good Practice Highlights

CSTEC's Worker Adjustment Program was established to provide a wide range of adjustment services to permanently laid-off steelworkers. CSTEC developed and designed this national sector-based program to deliver a full range of adjustment services through Local Adjustment Committees made up of union and management participants. These services included:

- General workplace information sessions for workers affected by plant closures and downsizing in the industry.
- Training for Local Adjustment Committee participants.
- Personalized needs assessment and peer counselling for individual workers.
- Seminars, including:
    - Career Goal Setting
    - Job Search
    - Job Finding Clubs
    - Financial Planning
    - Self Employment
    - Skill Development Courses.
- Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) – a process to evaluate and grant credit equivalency to a worker for his/her prior formal education, training, work and life experience.
- General Education Development (GED) – a high school equivalency training program.
- Short-term skills development.
- Assistance with training referrals.

- Job placement through local and regional Action Centres and through CSTEC's Labour Adjustment System (CLAS), a national computer database of clients and employers.

Through this range of services, CSTEC has been able to deliver effective worker adjustment support to laid-off steelworkers. One of the distinguishing features of the CSTEC approach is its emphasis on results, not process – especially in terms of successful job placement of laid-off workers. Another important feature of the Worker Adjustment Program is its emphasis on working with local people to develop solutions tailored to individuals.

C. The Background and Context

CSTEC was initially formed in 1986 to promote research, education, and lobbying on steel sector-related issues. CSTEC's mandate was expanded in 1988 to provide adjustment services to workers who were affected by the significant restructuring taking place at that time in the steel industry.

Through CSTEC, union and management representatives approached Human Resources Development Canada (then Employment and Immigration Canada) and accessed resources from its Innovations Program, to design and implement an adjustment initiative for its laid-off workforce.

To develop its services, CSTEC drew on the experience of what were considered to be best practices at the time, including lessons learned from:

- the Industrial Adjustment Services (IAS) model and other government programs such as the Job-Finding Club;
- the Ontario Labour Adjustment (OLA) service programs;
- the Toronto Metro Labour Education Centre (MLEC) and its programs;
- the Centre for Advanced Workers Learning (CAWL) and its job search seminars;
- the United Food and Commercial Workers International Union (UFCW) adjustment program.

CSTEC supplemented these practices with its own innovative approach, which was derived from its well-established relationships with both management and unions in the steel industry. The CSTEC approach included:

- joint administration of adjustment projects, which eliminated the need for a neutral chair and related costs;
- training of peer counsellors from the steel industry to do needs assessments and deliver worker adjustment services;
- a targeted approach to the delivery of services, providing personalized services to each individual to address his/her specific needs; and
- a results-based program that measured success by outcomes, e.g. how many people actually found jobs and how quickly they found them.

The Innovations Program funding and the relationship established with HRDC enabled CSTEC, under Section 26 of the Unemployment Insurance Act and the National Training Act, to authorise training programs for its participants without them having to go through Vocation Counsellors. CSTEC staff and peer counsellors were trained to assist laid-off workers in developing training plans. However, a critical limitation of the program in terms of scope was the restriction on eligibility for adjustment services to only workers from the basic steel industry – as set out in the Innovations agreement for funding.

D. The Challenge

Getting "buy-in" from the industry stakeholders: At the workplace level, neither union nor management was convinced that they should be involved in adjustment. Both parties considered it a responsibility of government. In addition, there was no tradition of companies and unions working together on these issues.

Getting "buy-in" from various levels of government and regions: The IAS, the OLA, and regional and local unemployment insurance offices initially regarded CSTEC as "the competition".

Demographic challenge: The average age of those laid-off from the steel industry was 47, and the average years of service was about 17 years. The average years of formal education was Grade 10, and many were semi-skilled production and clerical workers. Studies have repeatedly indicated that age and education can be high-risk factors for those affected by layoffs. Most unemployed steelworkers had neither the skills nor the tools to re-enter the labour market. In addition, high-risk participants traditionally do not use government employment centres and tend to exhaust their benefits before finding a replacement job.

The Peer Counsellor approach: The use of peer counsellors in the delivery of adjustment services ran against the tide. Tradition had it that only "expert" consultants with the appropriate academic credentials and job placement experience could offer such services. From the other side of this challenge, industry people had to be convinced and trained to provide appropriate and credible adjustment services.

Other challenges: The general labour market condition in the late 1980s and early 1990s was far from buoyant. Any program would face difficulties under the same circumstances. The relatively high wage rates that were enjoyed in the steel industry up until that time would be difficult to match in other industry sectors. The multi-ethnic background of the steel workforce, particularly in the "Golden Horseshoe" area in Ontario, suggested that to make the adjustment program work there would be a need for ESL training ("English as a second language") and other related services.

E. The Good Practice Solution

The sector approach: At the national level, CSTEC's programs are administered and policies developed and monitored by joint union and management committees, ensuring that the WIIFMs (What's in it for me?) outlined below are continuously addressed. At the local

level, CSTEC's local adjustment committees devoted considerable time to working in a joint environment where objectives and anticipated outcomes were jointly determined, and all parties brought their considerable skills to the table.

The sector-wide approach ensures "buy-in" from the stakeholders and ownership of the process by those most affected by it. This approach also enables each local adjustment committee to access training and other services at a lower cost through economies of scale. For example, at one point during the early 1990s, there were eight projects working out of the same Action Centre in Hamilton, Ontario. Because of the economies of scale, and sharing of facilities, the costs for all services were reduced, allowing the adjustment committees to do more for their people.

Identify the WIIFMs (What's in it for me?) of each of the stakeholders: There are palpable benefits for each stakeholder in participating in an adjustment program. For the sector approach to work, each of these WIIFMs must be identified and addressed.

- **For the company:** Studies have shown that how companies deal with a downsizing has significant impact on those still working – i.e., the "survivor impact". Put negatively, if management does nothing to assist those affected, the morale of those remaining suffers, and productivity suffers as well. This is particularly true in the case where the downsizing is part of a restructuring process that may include the introduction of new technologies. "Survivors" feel more vulnerable to further layoffs. Conversely, a positive response by management ensures a positive reaction at the workplace that reduces the negative impacts.

- **For the union and the workers:** The same may be said for the role of the union in an adjustment program. As representative of the people impacted by layoffs, the union is expected to act as an advocate on their behalf. Failure to do so increases the cynicism of "surviving" members towards the union, and leaves laid-off workers to fend for themselves in a labour market that has totally changed since they first entered it.

- **For the government:** The benefits to government include:
  - Employment Insurance savings through improved re-employment rates and quicker placements, especially for high-risk participants who usually exhaust their benefits because they do not use adjustment services;
  - training savings through better negotiated rates; and,
  - lower adjustment costs as a result of leveraged industry contributions, which have been estimated by CSTEC to be around 35 percent of total cost in CSTEC projects.

Promote and pilot test the initiative: CSTEC used union conferences, area council meetings, and joint union and management regional meetings to promote its adjustment program. They also piloted a number of projects, namely at IPSCO (Port Moody), Algoma, Sydney Steel, and Sherman and Adams Mines in Northern Ontario, to test their peer counsellor approach and the various services listed above. Best practices were thereafter expanded throughout Canada in all their projects.

Develop an adjustment program that is results-based, not process driven: The key to CSTEC's success was their drive to get results. They have always been judged on what happens to their participants, not on what services they deliver. The steel industry demanded this type of approach. Those laid-off participants who were "job ready" were fast-tracked to get jobs. Those who were not job ready were provided the services they needed to become "job ready", whether it be job search tools or skills upgrading, or training.

Create partnerships between the steel industry and education/training providers and government: CSTEC has also been able to create partnerships between the industry and education and training institutions, particularly the colleges and the cégeps, which have been primary providers of training for laid-off workers.

Ensure that programs and services are tailored to individual needs: One size does not fit all. Every individual affected by a layoff has his or her own set of circumstances, skills, education and objectives. The best outcomes are derived from providing the right services for each individual.

Ensure that local adjustment committees take ownership of the process: No one knows the availability of local resources, and the needs of the people affected by a workplace layoff, better than the workplace members of a local adjustment committee. With proper training, the local committee is in the best position to ensure that affected workers receive the services they need. CSTEC provides ongoing support to local committees to help them administer their projects.

Ensure that peer counsellors are properly trained to deliver the services: CSTEC peer counsellors come from the steel industry, so it is steelworkers helping steelworkers. This means that there is instant credibility when peer counsellors deliver adjustment services. The key to the success of this approach has been ensuring that peer counsellors are properly trained by professionals.

F. What Was Achieved

The results of CSTEC's approach and array of services range from a very large participation rate by laid-off workers to significant cost-efficiencies in administering the adjustment program.[9]

- In the steel and mining industries, CSTEC had set up 85 local adjustment committees by August 2000. Out of 15,017 people who had been laid-off up to that time, 12,718 had participated in CSTEC's programs and services (i.e., representing an 85 percent participation rate by laid-off workers). About 90 percent of laid-off workers that had returned to the labour market found new jobs.
- Costs of the program are competitive and run at about $500 per person due to an emphasis on results through counselling, needs assessment and job placement.

[9] These results are as reported by CSTEC and confirmed through consultations with participants and contributors to the CSTEC programs.

Savings in costs are realized due to CSTEC working in partnership with colleges to deliver training courses.

- There are also savings to the Employment Insurance account because of CSTEC's high placement rate, quick adjustment results, and its ability to reach difficult, high-risk participants.[10] Program administration costs have accounted for roughly 5 percent of total adjustment costs, which is significantly lower than other similar programs. An example of savings to the Employment Insurance account is in the Algoma project where adjustment services were provided for 200 people, representing savings of approximately $385,000 between July 1, 1999 and March 31, 2000.
- Longitudinal surveys have indicated a high satisfaction rate from both local adjustment committee members, who have administered adjustment projects, and from program participants. These surveys have shown a significant increase in the confidence level of participants, in their skill acquisition and in their ability to deal with job change.[11]
- CSTEC's adjustment services and programs have become a model for those offered by other sectors and industries (such as the aerospace and auto industries). Outside of the steel industry, CSTEC has assisted 45 local adjustment committees comprising more than 2,200 workers.
- CSTEC has also provided consultations on worker adjustment issues to other countries, including Brazil, Chile, Cuba, Japan, and Egypt. For example, CSTEC helped Brazilian officials in Sao Paolo in their initiative to re-organize into a decentralized system for worker adjustment services.

G. Lessons Learned

Peer counselling and targeting services: Over the years CSTEC has learned that most of the benefits gained from the Worker Adjustment Program resulted from an approach that emphasized the importance of peer counselling and targeting of services. The focus on peer counselling also resulted in "instant credibility" with affected laid-off workers, which, in turn, produced high participation rates and an ability to reach high-risk individuals.

Focus on results and job placement: After initial experiences, CSTEC made a concerted effort to supplement training activities with job placement initiatives, with the addition of the Job-Finding Club and the National Job Bank and database of clients and employers. Both have produced improved re-employment rates, quicker placements, and reduced adjustment costs, and major savings to the Employment Insurance federal program.

Local adjustment committees: The formation and training of local adjustment committees has its distinct advantages, as mentioned above. However, to ensure best results, CSTEC established criteria for the selection of committee members. Accounting mechanisms were put

[10] According to an evaluation study of CSTEC [*Program Evaluation Study of the Canadian Steel Trade and Employment Congress*, by EKOS Research Associates Inc., 1991], CSTEC's high participation rate is considerably higher than that of other similar programs.

[11] See *Program Evaluation Study of CSTEC*, ibid.

in place and training referrals had to be closely monitored by CSTEC, to ensure that all training did not go to only a few individuals.

The role of government: In the last two years, CSTEC has also recognised the importance of the government's role in cost-sharing adjustment projects. Despite the success of the industry-based approach of CSTEC, the steel sector still sees adjustment as a government responsibility, and will only contribute resources if they are on the basis of cost-shared agreements. Equally important, the industry is more likely to act as an industry if such shared agreements are in place.

H. Future Outlook

The CSTEC Worker Adjustment Program has proven that the sector-wide approach can provide quality services at reduced costs, with positive labour market results for all parties involved. The principle on which it was built, addressing the common needs as well as the individual needs of participants and stakeholders, and the collaboration it fostered between management, workers, educational institutions and government, provide a guiding example for others to emulate. The process evolved out of non-political circumstances binding the affected parties through a common interest (i.e., a common workplace situation brought about by economic challenges).

CSTEC, like other sector-based organizations, has had to deal with the transfer of training from the federal to provincial governments and, even more important, with a shift of policy from government support to individual client-based approaches – such as "fee-for-service" payments and registered learning accounts. Over the last two years, CSTEC has been able to sustain its programs and services through cost-sharing and membership fees generously contributed from both companies and unions (at the national and local levels) throughout Canada, and through its fee-for-service programs.

I. Contacts

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CSTEC Contact:	George Nakitsas, Executive Director, Canadian Steel Trade and Employment Congress (CSTEC). Telephone: (416) 480-1797.
References:	References from industry, government, and education providers are available upon request from CSTEC.

Human Resources Development Canada
Good Practice Case Study

By Hussein Rostum
Bytown Consulting

A. The Textiles Human Resources Council: Textile Training Through Technology

Good Practice Title: ***Textile Training Through Technology—"Textile Manufacturing Basics"***

Summary: Textile Training Through Technology is a Textiles Human Resources Council (THRC) initiative to develop comprehensive computer-based programs to enable training in the workforce. "Textile Manufacturing Basics" is the first computer-based program under the Textile Training Through Technology standard.

"Textile Manufacturing Basics" is a world's first for the Canadian textile industry. It comprises a unique bilingual multimedia, interactive training CD-ROM and a 200-page *User Guide*. The Textiles Human Resources Council developed this training tool with the direct involvement of over thirty Canadian textile companies, unions, educational partners, and instructional design experts. It is the first textiles training tool of its kind in the world.

B. The Good Practice Highlights

Work on the computer-based "Textile Manufacturing Basics" training package began in 1998. The finished product, on CD-ROM, including a comprehensive *User Guide*, was launched in November 2000. The target group for this training program generally includes employers, youth, the adult labour market, and older workers. It is intended to engender workforce development, career promotion, and capacity building for innovative workplaces and for the textiles labour force in Canada.

The "Textile Manufacturing Basics" CD-ROM and *User Guide* provide a flexible, cost-effective, industry-sanctioned training and learning enabling experience through the use of computer-based technology in both official languages.

The CD-ROM uses text audio, graphics and animation to describe and illustrate the basics of various inter-related textiles manufacturing processes. The *User Guide* provides a more in-depth explanation of the terms and processes discussed in the CD-ROM. This non-technical program features a modular design, self-check exercises and an evaluation of learning at the end of the program.

The purpose of this approach is to deliver effective training to a geographically dispersed industry and to contribute to a continuous learning culture—a culture needed by the Canadian textile industry to develop its workforce and achieve a competitive edge in the international textile marketplace. This training initiative was industry driven and tailored to meet industry needs.

C. The Background and Context

In October 1998 the Textiles Human Resources Council undertook a survey of nineteen Canadian textiles training firms.[12] The survey's purpose was to assess industry interest in multimedia computer-based technical training and to identify the best design protocols for the workplace delivery of computer-based training, using CD-ROMs and the Internet.

The results of the survey indicated that industry support for computer-based training was overwhelming. In interviews conducted with textile companies in Quebec, Ontario and Eastern Canada, it was confirmed that computer-based training was an exciting, cost effective prospect for industry. "If you don't use technology for training you're dead," was the frank comment of one participant.

Based on the findings of the survey, THRC began its Textile Training Through Technology (TTTT) project with "Textile Manufacturing Basics" as the first TTTT program to be developed. Key to the success of the effort to mount "Textile Manufacturing Basics" on a computer-based platform was the direct input of more than thirty textile companies, unions and educational partners such as Mohawk College in Ontario, CÉGEP St. Hyacinthe in Quebec, and North Carolina State University in the U.S.A.

Although specific work on the "Textile Manufacturing Basics" CD-ROM and the *User Guide* began in 1998, the curriculum for "Textile Manufacturing Basics" was already well established. Core material was drawn from a classroom training program produced by one of the most diverse and integrated textile manufacturers in Canada: Hafner Inc. in Granby, Quebec. The Hafner program had been created to address a continuing need of the textile industry – the need for training in textile manufacturing basics. There was no doubt in the industry such knowledge would be an asset to employees in their work and would benefit their employers.

The "Textile Manufacturing Basics" CD-ROM and the *User Guide* were unveiled at THRC's annual meeting in November 2000. A broader Canadian textile industry audience was reached through the *Canadian Textile Journal*'s November/December 2000 edition, with a cover and article devoted to the product.[13]

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12 *The Learning Technologies Survey*, prepared for the Textiles Human Resources Council, by Lyndsay Green and Associates, October, 1998.

13 "The Future of Textile Training and Education Has Arrived", *Canadian Textile Journal*, November/ Decembre 2000.

D. The Challenge

Over the past decade, the Canadian textile industry has transformed itself into a highly dynamic capital intensive and internationally competitive sector. According to Industry Canada's estimates,[14] Canada's textile industry in 1999 consisted of 950 establishments, employed about 49.8 thousand workers, and shipped $8 billion worth of textiles and textile products, of which 42.2 percent ($3.4 billion) was exported. The U.S.A. continues to be Canadian textiles main export market, accounting for some 87.4 percent of total textiles exports. In 1999, the textile industry accounted for 2.2 percent of Canadian manufacturing Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and 2.7 percent of manufacturing employment.

In the five-year period of 1994-1999, aggregate textiles shipments increased 21.2 percent, rising from $6.6 billion to $8 billion. For primary textiles, aggregate shipments are estimated to have risen from $3.4 billion to $4.2 billion, an increase of 23.5 percent, while aggregate shipments of textile products are estimated to have risen from $3.2 billion to $3.8 billion, an increase of 18.8 percent. The industry in recent years has performed at record levels. Despite rapid productivity growth, direct employment has remained steady at about 50 thousand workers. The industry is also a leading employer of women and minorities, primarily in non-metropolitan communities such as Granby and Cowansville in Quebec, Bridgetown in Nova Scotia, and Arthur in Ontario. Textile firms now supply over 150 other industries including apparel, home furnishings, engineering, construction and transportation.

However, as Canadian textile firms seek to expand their international and domestic markets, there is increased demand for a highly skilled workforce, both to adopt the latest high-tech tools and to retain the industry's competitive edge globally. A 1996 Price Waterhouse textiles industry needs assessment study came to the conclusion that "traditional delivery and content of training in the textile industry are no longer relevant".[15] The study highlighted a number of priorities for the industry to address immediately, including the need to develop current tools to support the recruitment and training of employees, and to explore alternative training delivery mechanisms.

Some of the principal challenges to delivering cost-effective, relevant and effective training to the Canadian textile industry are its geographical distribution, its variable production schedules and its reliance on shift work. Training, therefore, must be taken to the employees. These characteristics make traditional classroom delivery of training programs problematic or non-existent. Thus, the industry is uniquely suited to benefit tremendously from the flexibility, adaptability and cost-effectiveness of computer-based training using such tools as CD-ROMs and the Internet.

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[14] See reference in Industry Canada's Strategis online database: *http://strategis.ic.gc.ca/SSG/tx03139e.html.*

[15] *Industry Needs Assessment*, Price Waterhouse, 1996.

E. Good Practice Solution

The "Textile Manufacturing Basics" CD-ROM and the *User Guide* were officially unveiled at THRC's annual meeting in November 2000. A broader Canadian textile industry audience was reached through the *Canadian Textile Journal*'s November/December 2000 edition, with a cover and article devoted to the product.[16]

The CD-ROM contains three training segments:

The Manufacturing of Yarn—This introduces the processes involved in converting fibres to yarns. The different types of fibres—natural and man-made—are introduced, and an overview of yarn manufacturing is provided.

The Weaving Process—This includes the dyeing and finishing of woven fabrics, as well as inspection and quality control. This segment acquaints employees with the various steps in the fabric manufacturing process.

The Knitting Process—This includes the dyeing and finishing of knitted fabrics, as well as inspection and quality control. The manufacturing of fabrics and the various types of knitting equipment are introduced. This segment is organized according to the various departments of a typical knitting company.

Each of the three basic segments is divided into smaller modules for flexible scheduling. Employees can take all the segments or simply choose the modules they find most relevant to their needs. Each module contains self-check exercises so employees can assess their own understanding as they proceed through the program. They can also go back and review material at any time and advance at their own pace. An evaluation at the end of each program allows employees to self-test their understanding of each module. Their answers are scored but not recorded.

The *User Guide* follows the organization of the program modules. It provides additional information and illustrations, as well as extra questions and answers for more practice.

F. What Was Achieved

"Textile Manufacturing Basics" presents the world's first bilingual, interactive multimedia CD-ROM and *User Guide* training package for the textile industry. Over 100 copies of the "Textile Manufacturing Basics" CD-ROM and *User Guide* package were sold in the two months after its publication. These sales occurred even before any active marketing efforts were made.

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16 "The Future of Textile Training and Education Has Arrived", *Canadian Textile Journal*, November/ December 2000.

The federal government's Office of Learning Technologies cited the "Textile Manufacturing Basics" project as one of ten examples of best practices, Canada-wide.[17] One of the characteristics shared by all of the best practices cited is the reliance on partnerships in the development and delivery of technology training products. Other success factors cited by the Office of Learning Technologies that are features of the Textile Training Through Technology program of THRC are: clearly identified learner needs; credible content; sufficient market; appropriate platform for development and delivery; and links to accreditation.

The results of "Textile Manufacturing Basics" are best described through statements about computer-based training (CBT) by some of the many users of this package, as expressed by them in feedback during *Future*Tex*, a conference organized by the THRC, and on other occasions.

> *A class size of one is economically feasible, and it gives us the flexibility in course scheduling that our industry needs.*
>
> *We run our operations on five shifts. To free up one person at a time doesn't really interrupt production.*
>
> *What our employees like is that they can see how far they've evolved, and measure their own success.*
>
> *The challenge is not whether to use CBT [computer-based training], but to choose the best way to use it. CBT is not only a powerful tool to improve the quality of training – ultimately it also improves the quality of our products.*
>
> *Most of our students prefer CBT to a lecture format. We like to think of it as education on demand.*
>
> *CBT is an optimum learning resource – it provides basic knowledge, accommodates different learning styles and contains links to more conventional learning resources, such as libraries.*
>
> *I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for the Textile Training Through Technology. We have approximately 150 staff comprised of manufacturing and office (personnel). We have been in business for over 47 years. We sell throughout North America. Informative CD-ROMs like the one developed will help our company to compete in the ever-competitive workplace. I look forward to further products in the future.*

These statements about computer-based training and about the TTTT provide a good illustration of what the "Textile Manufacturing Basics" package is able to accomplish as a CBT tool.

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[17] *Partnering for Learnware: Case Studies and Critical Success Factors*, Office of Learning Technologies, Human Resources Development Canada, December 1999.

G. Lessons Learned

Because of the strong support for multimedia computer-based training expressed by many companies in the textile industry, THRC responded by developing its Textile Training Through Technology program (including the "Textile Manufacturing Basics" package). This program has the following good practice characteristics:

Collaboration and Joint Effort—Textile Training Through Technology's "Textile Manufacturing Basics" package is a joint effort developed by the Canadian textile industry for the industry. The use of proven curriculum content and the extensive input of industry partners ensure a relevant, effective training program that is used.

Cost Effectiveness—Low delivery costs are essential for a training program to be successful in the Canadian textile industry. The "Textile Manufacturing Basics" CD-ROM and *User Guide* development costs represented, for the most part, substantial materials and time donated by company and employee representatives. However, the product can be offered to member firms for a maximum cost per unit of under $300, with volume purchases reducing the unit cost to just under $200.

Flexibility—One of the most positive characteristics of computer-based training is the ability of learners to fit training around operational constraints. Training can be undertaken anytime and anywhere.

Learner-paced Learning—The design of the "Textile Manufacturing Basics" package, and computer-based learning in general, allows the learner to self-assess and to proceed at their own pace, to review and to repeat training modules (at no additional cost) if so desired. This approach also ensures the privacy of the learner and removes the pressure and possible embarrassment of the traditional classroom.

Highly Visual Content—To avoid learning difficulties caused by possible low literacy levels, the "Textile Manufacturing Basics" CD-ROM is not heavily reliant on text. It allows for a highly visual presentation using colour graphics, and three-dimensional animations, diagrams and illustrations. The *User Guide* augments the material as necessary.

Modularized Structure—A modularized structure is easily incorporated into computer-based training and is characteristic of the "Textile Manufacturing Basics" package. Such a structure presents the curriculum in "bit-sized" pieces that can be incrementally digested. The learner can test for comprehension before he or she moves on to modules that build on the previous lessons.

H. Future Outlook

"The Textile Manufacturing Basics" CD-ROM will be fully migrated to the Internet, to become an online training tool for the textile industry. When this work is complete, "Textile Manufacturing Basics" will be the first web-based textiles training program in the world.

The planned training and learning centre on THRC's new website will be the new home for the Council's own computer-based programs as well as other top educational and training resources available world-wide. Consequently, what the THRC will eventually have is a one-stop, human resources shopping mall for the industry.[18]

Only a highly skilled and creative workforce can meet the future demands of the textile industry, a mature yet challenging field. In many cases Canadian firms have had to recruit technicians and managers from overseas or the United States, because few training or skills-upgrading opportunities have existed within the industry in Canada. A world-class textile training and education is critical to the industry's competitive success.

The "Textiles Manufacturing Basics" package is one of the industry's answers to the challenge of delivering training that is relevant and adaptable to the pace of change within the textiles business. One factor that will help speed up the adoption of these kinds of learning technologies is the role of sector councils and industry associations. "These organizations have a pivotal role to play in the effective adoption of learning technologies because of the support they provide to companies in their sector."[19]

I. Contacts

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References:	John Alleruzzo, Canadian Director, Union of Needle Trades, Industrial and Textile Employees: (514) 844-8644. Adrian Spoerry, President and CEO, Hafner Inc.: (450) 372-6862. Eric Barry, Past President, Canadian Textiles Institute: (613) 232-7195. David Kelly, Project Manager, Textiles Human Resources Council: (613) 230-7217 ext. 301.

[18] Visit the THRC website at *www.thrc-crhit.org*.

[19] Lindsay Green, "Guide to Training and Development", *Canadian HR Reporter*, November 2000.

Human Resources Development Canada
Good Practice Case Study

By Hussein Rostum
Bytown Consulting

A. Canadian Tourism Human Resource Council: Partnership with Retail Council of Canada to Develop Curriculum

Good Practice Title: ***Partnership with Retail Council of Canada to Develop Curriculum (A Process Model)***

Summary: The good practice described in this case study is a strategic project management approach that leveraged resources in a co-managed venture, and relied on complementary expertise of the Canadian Tourism Human Resource Council (CTHRC) and the Retail Council of Canada (RCC). This partnership resulted in:

- a curriculum for use by both the retail and tourism sectors
- a strategic private and public sector partnership
- a framework to establish worker development and mobility across the retail and tourism sectors
- a framework to establish sponsorships and other funding sources
- potential for capitalizing on new marketing opportunities and distribution means.

This good practice is a process model that has been the basis for curriculum development for youth, employers, welfare-to-work participants, social assistance recipients, Aboriginal peoples, and others. As such, the model has significant relevance to future applications. Currently the Canadian Tourism Human Resource Council uses this good practice process model as a way of managing all its development projects.

The term "curriculum" refers to a group of learning tools such as a self-directed training workbook, a training guide for on-the-job supervisors and mentors, testing and evaluation mechanisms, and train-the-trainer programs. All CTHRC training tools are competency-based (where National Occupational Standards are the basis for the learning outcomes), and are intended for use primarily in the workplace.

Target Group: The main target group of this project is retail sales associates. This includes front-line retail workers employed in all types of retail outlets across Canada.

Additional target groups include: owner/operators and managers of retail outlets; individuals concerned with human resources associated with retail sales associates; and project development staff of non-profit associations.

Good Practice Date: The partnership was first established in late 1998. Project development activities occurred during 1999 and ended in 2000.

B. The Good Practice Highlights

Scope: The partnership between the Canadian Tourism Human Resource Council and the Retail Council involved the development of National Occupational Standards, a self-directed training course (print-based), and a professional certification program. The project was pan-Canadian in scope, involving job incumbents and stakeholders from a variety of regions (including urban, rural and remote participation).

Type and number of participants: Various types of participants and stakeholders were involved – for example, over four hundred job incumbents, several educators, labour and business partners, curriculum and instructional design experts, organization Board members and government representatives participated in the program. Some relevant statistics on participation that are worth noting include:

- In-kind contributions from front-line job incumbents: 3,200 hours or $80,000.
- In-kind contributions from supervisory and management-level participants: 800 hours or $48,000.
- In-kind contributions from partners: 380 hours or $22,800.

CTHRC's transferable expertise: The CTHRC is involved in many curriculum development activities (including training tools, occupational standards, and certification). CTHRC has developed and implemented over 26 programs similar to that done jointly with RCC, and over 180 training products. They are currently updating many of these programs and moving to alternative delivery modes (i.e., using online media). The programs are all available in both of Canada's official languages.

What was done: Using the CTHRC training resource development methodology, a relevant curriculum was developed for the retail sector. Excellent quality with practical application was achieved by this partnership project. In addition, CTHRC established direct links with stakeholders to access and meet the needs of target markets. It increased the level of commitment by stakeholders and it shared resources with the Retail Council of Canada, thereby eliminating and preventing any duplication of efforts. CTHRC shared important training tools and information with the Retail Council at no extra cost.

C. The Background and Context

Common interests: The RCC and CTHRC have similar labour market profiles. Individuals employed in retail or tourism often work in both sectors, or have prior experience in working in one of the sectors before migrating to the other. Both sectors are experiencing labour market shortages. Where these sectors do attract potential employees, these candidates are often young and have little or no work experience. Moreover, once these people become employed in one of these two sectors, there is difficulty in retaining them.

Shared goal: The goal of the partnership between CTHRC and RCC is to "raise the level of professionalism" of their respective workforces. This refers to increasing the skills and knowledge of workers and to raising the profile of the sectors within the general labour market. By promoting a strong training culture and increasing job transferability between the two sectors, CTHRC and RCC hope to achieve a more nationally competitive, stable and professional workforce.

Benefits: By working together, the two Councils can strive to create an environment that will improve 'skill transference' between the tourism and retail sectors. Both the RCC and CTHRC can benefit from the shared expertise and knowledge that both parties bring to the development activities. Whereas CTHRC has a lot of experience and success in developing competency-based training and evaluation tools, RCC has a lot of sector-specific knowledge and access to key markets that are common to the two industry sectors. Consequently, a partnership between the two Councils to develop training capabilities is mutually beneficial.

Efficiency: Working together also promotes a good use of federal funding. Rather than duplicate efforts or build systems that are not compatible, the two Councils can achieve efficiency while addressing their market needs more rapidly. The value in working together is to ensure a unified approach that will be transparent to the workforce, thus enabling mobility and transferability of skills.

D. The Challenge

The main (sector-wide) challenge in both the retail and tourism industries, as described above, is the difficulty in attracting and retaining skilled and experienced workers. To add to this, both tourism and retail sectors experience image problems for potential recruits, who perceive employment in these sectors as dead-end jobs with no or little skill required. To address these challenges, resources are needed to support and encourage the development of a training culture that leads to professionalism and stability in the labour force of the retail and tourism sectors.

Reliance on volunteers to participate in development phases of human resource training programs is also a challenge. However, volunteers are a fundamental requirement towards achieving a valuable and relevant product that meets the needs of stakeholders. Keeping stakeholders interested and involved in the development of training programs is a challenge in itself for the Councils.

E. The Good Practice Solution

The good practice solution to the challenges faced is a process model comprising nine stages of activities towards developing curricula for training programs. These nine stages are as follows:

1. *Planning Stage.* This includes research into market needs and the development of the work plan (including strategy).
2. *Establish Partnerships Stage.* Partners and stakeholders are identified. Formal agreements or arrangements are made.

3. *Procurement Stage.* This involves the purchase or acquisition of rights to underlying works, where applicable.
4. *Request for Proposal Stage.* Potential contractors are qualified and selected based on an RFP that is broadcast across Canada.
5. *Development Stage.* Several interim stages of development occur — from draft to a final validated document. Once the content is created, it undergoes a formal edit and design treatment (to suit the medium for which it will be applied).
6. *Adaptation into Second Official Language Stage.* The product is adapted through a validation process.
7. *Pilot and Implementation Stage.* Where funding permits, the product is field-tested and evaluated.
8. *Pricing and Distribution Stage.* A retail price is determined and the product is placed in the Council's national distribution system. This includes an announcement and/or related marketing collateral.
9. *Post Completion Evaluation Stage.* The development team reflects on the process and outcomes of the project to make recommendations on how to introduce improvements where required. In addition, the group may contribute ideas towards a formal marketing strategy.

On-going feedback and data is collected on each training product developed through the above process. This feedback is captured for evaluation and future planning.

In order to avoid duplication and to continue to strive towards improvements in the partnership between RCC and CTHRC, the two Councils established process and policy documents, forms, protocols, lexicons and other product development tools. These included a Request for Proposal protocol, a national database of registered consultants, a French-English lexicon, a photo library, a writing style guideline, needs assessment methods, inventories of related products in the Canadian marketplace and pro-forma legal agreements (including those related to copyright and underlying works). Because both Councils worked together in developing these tools, they avoided duplication of efforts.

Prior to the partnership, RCC had no capacity to build or implement competency-based training and professional certification programs. CTHRC transferred this knowledge and the related intellectual property to enable the RCC to develop this capacity.

F. What Was Achieved[20]

The process model described in this document was implemented across Canada. Stakeholders from all regions of Canada participated in curriculum development activities based on this process. Participants included all stakeholders. These can be grouped in the following categories: job incumbents; education community; labour and business groups; organization

[20] These results are as reported by CTHRC and confirmed through consultations with participants and contributors to the CTHRC programs.

Board members; individuals employed at the tourism education councils; and provincial, territorial and national associations.

Aside from the results already listed in previous sections of this document, the following was achieved:

- An important strategic partnership was forged between the Retail Council of Canada and the Canadian Tourism Human Resource Council, with opportunities to do more joint work together. (In fact, the Retail Council has since approached CTHRC to collaborate on new projects.)
- An increased level of commitment and buy-in by stakeholders in tourism and the retail industry to realize the training objectives of the human resource sector councils.
- A higher level of credibility of the work done by the contributing councils, particularly as perceived by stakeholders and partners in human resource development at local and provincial levels.
- Reaching out to a large and widespread youth labour market was made possible by this partnership, and significant and direct access to the stakeholders in two industry sectors was achieved (i.e., business and labour partners as well as the education and training community).

In addition, CTHRC ensured that there was no duplication of efforts or wasted resources. Instead, resources were shared and leveraging or complementary activities resulted from the partnership between the Retail Council and CTHRC. The partnership means that 20 percent of the labour market (10 percent represented by the tourism sector and 10 percent represented by the retail sector) is benefiting from a common model, shared expertise and resources.

G. Lessons Learned

Strategic partnerships are useful in situations such as that described in this good practice example. It would be an exception if any agency had the breadth and depth of knowledge, competency, or funds to achieve quality products totally on their own. Partnerships also contribute to reducing the risks of product development, sharing costs, and establishing broad user markets. The following are some of the additional lessons learned arising out of the partnership between CTHRC and RCC to develop curricula for training:

- To support the partnership arrangement, developing policy and procedural frameworks, aligned with the mandate or objectives of the developing agencies, are important. Without this, projects will lack direction and focus, and the quality of the products could be compromised.

- Developing a communication plan or protocol is also important. All stakeholders need to be kept up-to-date with regards to progress and made aware of challenges and opportunities arising out of the joint project.

- In a situation where written training and curriculum materials are being developed, knowledge of copyright laws, and how to manage related procurements, is also important. This is necessary for reducing risks and protecting one's investment.

- Diligent and fair Request for Proposal practices are key to the process. Only qualified contractors should be hired. The RFP process is also an important tool for managing contractors once hired (since all project criteria and expectations are made clear at that time). This process must be transparent, so that the project manager can demonstrate the appropriateness of the selection of a contractor to the various stakeholders.

- Resources to market training products are often very limited. As a result, it is possible that insufficient market penetration would be realized before the product's shelf life expires. This also impacts on the chance to sustain the product, as too few revenues would be realized to re-invest in its evolution.

One of the realities observed during the implementation of the project described in this good practices profile is that obtaining meaningful and sufficient input from industry stakeholders, especially business partners, is a major challenge. The Councils relied on stakeholders to volunteer their time and expertise. However, stakeholder volunteers are also stretched for resources and time. Without the input of these stakeholders, the product would have had less real value, as its relevance would be diminished, and achieving buy-in for the results would have been more difficult.

H. Future Outlook

Potential: The good practice experience of the process model, used in the partnership project between RCC and CTHRC, is very relevant to future applications. Currently the CTHRC uses this process model as a way of managing the development of all its training resources. In addition, with the move towards new information technology and online media, the model becomes even more relevant in that it helps mitigate the risks and the additional resources needed to develop training materials for the new media. CTHRC is now moving towards online delivery of its programs. It is developing its capabilities to deliver online training materials, candidate testing and evaluation tools, career planning information, needs analysis and HR planning tools.

Implications for other organizations engaging in similar practices: The process model used by CTHRC can assist other human resource sector agencies in achieving equally significant results. There appears to be no down side to adopting the disciplined approach of this model. On the other hand, there are risks of introducing inefficiencies if a sector agency does not adopt a similar systematic approach in developing its training resources.

I. Contacts

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References:

There are many references that could be supplied by CTHRC. The following are two examples:

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