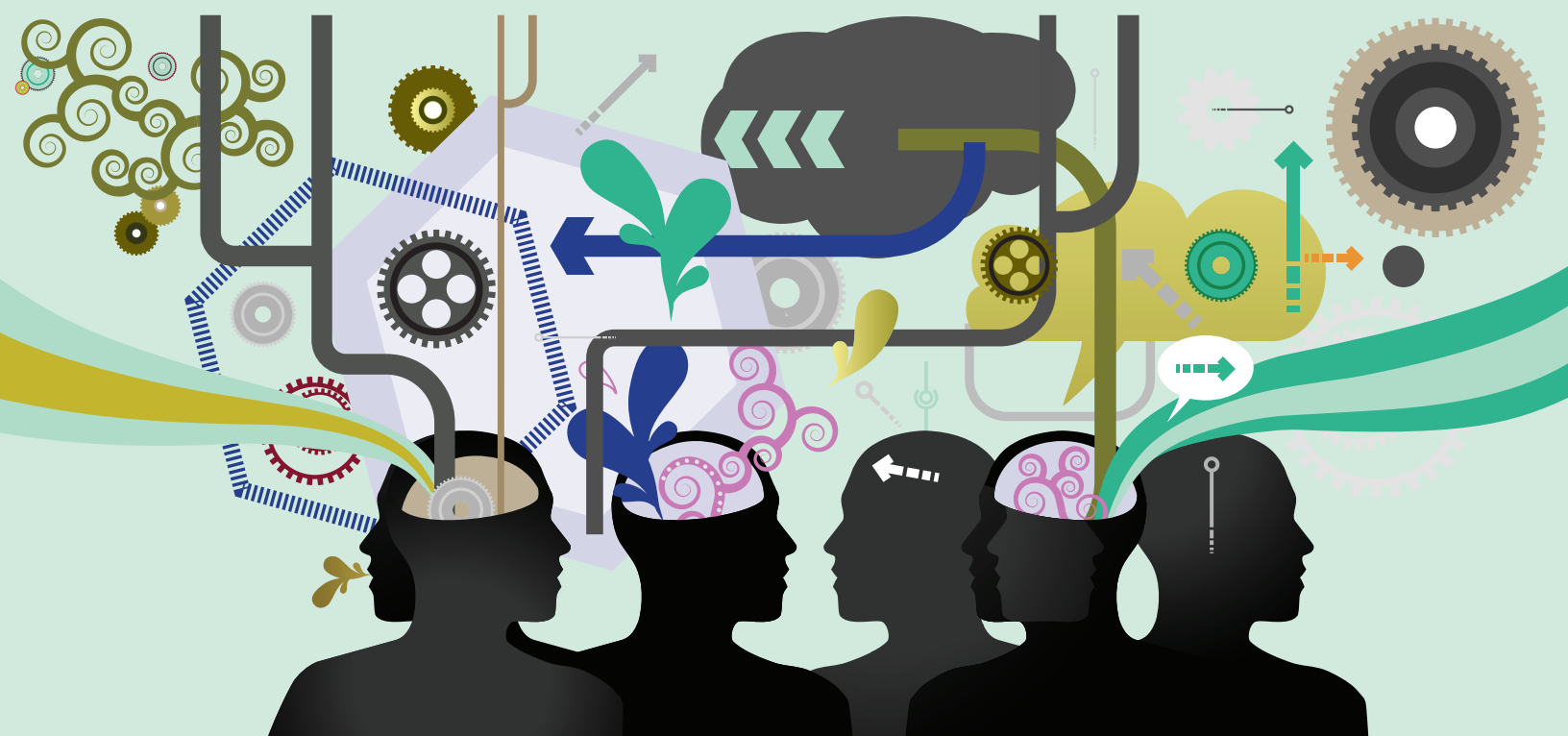


# RETHINKING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

**Reference Manual for Developing Professional Skills  
among Organizations and Practitioners  
within an Integrated Andragogical Process**

**RESDAC**

*Tool supporting professional development practices among organizations and practitioners who work with adults with low literacy skills within a skills-based approach*



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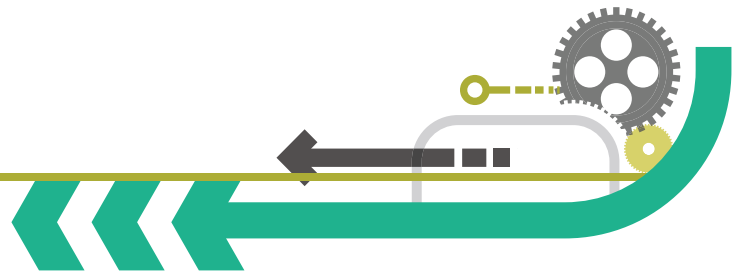
“ [free translation] ... despite a largely unpredictable context and considering the dual need for an organization to incorporate a human resources policy into its strategic plan:

- The effectiveness and efficiency of an HR policy depend in large part on its internal consistency and its relevance to the organization's strategy.
- The reliability of an HR policy is based more on the consistency among its components (recruiting, training, mobility, appreciation, compensation, organization of the work ...), rather than the quality of each of them taken separately. In other words, it is better to have strong consistency among basic decisions than weak consistency among sophisticated decisions.

”

Le Boterf, 2008

# INTRODUCTION



We would like to begin by explaining why we have chosen to use the expression adults with low literacy skills rather than level 1 and 2 adults. These adults have developed some essential skills, yet they are unable to handle tasks beyond complexity levels 1 and 2. However, as stated in the text, these levels should not be assigned to the adults themselves, but rather to the tasks that they are asked to carry out. Therefore, an adult may have level 1, 2, 3 or 4 skills, depending on the skill in question. Our choice of label is aimed at better positioning adults who are limited to performing at those task levels for certain skills. RESDAC and the authors are aware of the limitations of the label and continue to look for words that are even more accurate and suitable.

Adult learners have multiple and complex needs. They have to be productive and they need to work. They also have family responsibilities that include providing the best possible support and parenting to their children. They often wish to get involved in their communities, municipalities, schools and other institutions. They also want to access knowledge so they have a better understanding of the world and the community in which they live.

It is complex to address these adults' multiple educational needs, especially if, as an organization, we factor in the human resources required for coaching, development and progress evaluation. After all, the ultimate goal is still to provide clients with appropriate personal and occupational development geared to their situations. It is even more challenging to try to meet the needs of adults with low literacy skills as part of skill development based on an integrated andragogical approach.

However, this is the challenge that RESDAC has elected to take on by grounding our approach with clients on a model based on integrated services that is more focused on developing literacy skills than on academic literacy training, which is often considered an end in itself. This integrated approach, along with the complex multiple needs of the adult learners we target, requires rethinking the notion of professional development of the sector's human resources.

RESDAC is now approaching this core issue through professional development and strategic re-direction of the human resources who support the adult training process, following the proposed andragogical approach. The reflection that we will refer to throughout this publication is part of a continuous learning process that you will read about in this ***Reference Manual for Developing Professional Skills among Organizations and Practitioners within an Integrated Andragogical Process***. It is a new starting point that will nurture reflection based on the experience of managers and practitioners in the field.

The Reference Manual suggests carefully considering the professional competencies that are required, useful and essential within the context of DESIGNING, MANAGING and carrying out TRAINING interventions intended for adults with low literacy skills. It refers to an andragogical framework that promotes an integrated competency-development approach.

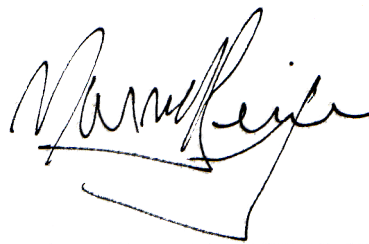
By creating the *Réseau des formatrices et formateurs en éducation et formation des adultes*, RESDAC has partly addressed the needs of professionals in the literacy and basic skills field. However, identifying and finding suitable solutions to the issues related to professional development remains a significant challenge. The Reference Manual adds an essential element to achieving a more inclusive vision. It promotes development of a set of professional competencies among practitioners who are committed to their own career development process while also working to develop the competencies of adults with low literacy skills.

The Reference Manual defines key roles (design, management, and training), proposes a set of functions and competencies associated with the profile of each key role and describes their characteristics according to the parameters of RESDAC's Integrated Model<sup>1</sup>.

Far from being a final document, this new Reference Manual is the start of a knowledge-building process. Feedback from people in the field who use it will ensure that it continues to be refined. Thus, the Reference Manual opens the discussion, while guiding the reflective thinking from a new perspective. It lays the groundwork for a strategic approach in professional development that requires us to revisit our practices in hiring, coaching and evaluating staff members.

It is a task that we need to work on over time through careful, systematic and organized planning. RESDAC is heading in this direction for the sole purpose of providing quality services and programs geared to the actual needs of adults who are undertaking a learning process to improve their quality of life.

**Enjoy your reading!**



Normand Lévesque  
Executive Director, RESDAC

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<sup>1</sup> - LURETTE, Donald, Towards an Integrated Model to Support the Literacy Development of Francophones in Canada, *Fédération canadienne pour l'alphabétisation en français* (FCAF), June 2010.





## SECTION 1

# Background for the Reference Manual



## 1.1 Towards new practices with learners

Socio-economic changes have had an impact on the working world and other areas of life in Canada for the past few decades. The world of work, the family unit and community life are changing quickly and continually. These changes affect the type of jobs that increase and decline in demand and this dynamic then affects the specific skills development needs of the workforce and citizens. In this setting, the adult education world is also experiencing considerable pressure to adapt quickly on an ongoing basis to these socio-economic changes. Adult training systems are becoming increasingly complex (Lurette, 2011) as they attempt to better align adult education initiatives to develop the right skills, thus meeting the workforce's new job demands and at the same time, keeping citizens' needs in mind as they face the challenge of adapting to ever-changing family and community life.

During the 1990s, in Canada and all over the world, solutions were proposed to make adult literacy systems more comprehensive and coherent, based on the need to adapt to socio-economic changes. The *Agenda for the Future* from the Fifth International Conference on Adult Education (Hamburg, 1997), recommends the following:

- Replace the narrow vision of literacy with learning that meets social, economic and political needs and gives expression to a new form of citizenship.
- **Integrate** literacy training and other forms of learning and basic skills into all appropriate development projects ... (Hamburg, 1997, quoted by Hautecoeur, 2000, p. 24, and drawn from Lurette, 2011).

Rowen (1999) pointed in the same direction by suggesting that if an adult learner is a complete person with multiple and complex needs, solutions for meeting those needs must be **complete and integrated**. He proposes various options for adults with low literacy skills:

- Integrate literacy training and employment support programs.
- Integrate literacy and other support services for clients with special needs.
- Integrate literacy and second-language training related to return-to-work needs.
- Integrate literacy training and occupational training.
- Integrate literacy training and accredited training.

## 1.2 Strategic repositioning: Literacy training programs become community leaders in literacy development

In this new context, it is important for literacy training organizations to reposition themselves to deal with constant socio-economic and educational changes. This strategic repositioning means that organizations providing literacy training programs must now define themselves as both organizations that complement other public services and as essential organizations to reach clients with low literacy skills. In fact, it is through their services and expertise that a number of innovative, comprehensive and integrated initiatives will come about for these adults. Thus, the emergence of new services for people with low literacy skills is an especially powerful way for these organizations to develop new expertise, receive the recognition required for fulfilling their mandate and strengthen their position in the community.

We therefore suggest that practitioners who work for these organizations become leaders in their respective communities in order to introduce a local culture of collaboration to develop integrated services intended for adults with low literacy skills. In our opinion, we need to review how we can foster the development of appropriate skills among these adults to ease their integration to work or to any other family or community project. Through projects promoting the integrated development of literacy, literacy training organizations will become more efficient at reaching their usual clientele and providing them with enriched, inclusive services that address their complex multiple needs more efficiently (Lurette, 2011).

## 1.3 RESDAC's strategic repositioning for literacy development

For several years, RESDAC has been attempting to take a fresh look at the situation of Francophone adults with low literacy skills and at the educational resources available to them. In 2007, RESDAC, then called the *Fédération canadienne pour l'alphabétisation en français* (FCAF), published *C'est le temps d'agir, plan de rattrapage pour l'alphabétisation des adultes francophones vivant en milieu minoritaire* (a summary is available in English under the title *It's Time for Action-Summary of a Literacy Catch-Up Plan for Adult Francophones in Minority Settings*). This document outlines the surprising results of the *International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey* (IALSS): 42% of all working-age Canadian adults (aged 16 to 65) have difficulty meeting the requirements of Canada's knowledge society and economy. In other words, they find it difficult to understand what they read (Statistics Canada, 2003). The IALSS's data analysis also reveals that 56% of the population whose mother tongue is French have trouble understanding what they read compared with 39% of the population whose mother tongue is English (Statistics Canada, 2003).

In response to these results, RESDAC reacted swiftly. Among other things, it established a new governance model. It defined and received its members' approval for four distinct and interconnected strategic directions closely drawn from its new vision: *enhanced essential skills, a continuum of services, a social blueprint to improve the essential skills of Francophones across Canada, and finally, partnerships and coalitions*. Moreover, it developed and started network implementation of an Integrated Model fostering skill development among adults with low literacy skills whom the IALSS refers to as level 1 and 2 adult learners. This kick-start is above all intended to improve employability outlooks. The Model is also an attempt to meet learners' needs more efficiently, by proposing an integrated literacy and skill development approach based on, among other things, the integration of adult education services.

## 1.4 New practices proposed by the RESDAC Integrated Model

The Integrated Model put forth by RESDAC is based on a joint, simultaneous approach for developing multiple skills among people with low literacy skills. This strategy addresses the many complex needs of adult learners, some of whose essential skills may be around level 1 and 2 on the IALSS scale. This new way of designing and implementing an andragogical strategy for adults with low literacy skills

combines the development of multiple skills, which translates into a four-component model: **analyzing the environment, developing strategic local partnerships, constructing adapted andragogical interventions** and lastly, **feedback, evaluation and reassessment of actions**. We will discuss these components in more detail in the following sections.

## 1.5 A competency-based Reference Manual aimed at developing professional practices among organizations and practitioners

Many frameworks underlying the policies and programs associated with literacy training and adult education services in Canada are competency-based. Some examples follow: HRSDC's **Essential Skills Framework** that governs adult education programs in a number of provinces; the **Ontario Adult Literacy Curriculum Framework (OALCF)**, built from broad competencies; **Identifier des compétences génériques** (A soft skills Framework) by ICÉA (Institut de coopération pour l'éducation des adultes); and professional skills frameworks that set out occupational training requirements for a number of trades across the country. Finally, we should also mention the Literacy and Numeracy skills Framework on which the international surveys are based. Across Canada and in Ontario, it is clear that skills are ever more present in the world of adult education, particularly for adults with low literacy skills.

The Reference Manual is similar to the above examples. It is a skills framework providing benchmarks to organizations that allows them to develop their professional practices in accordance with an integrated andragogical method. It relies on a competency-based approach proposed by the RESDAC Model. In the same way that we envision developing multiple skills among learners to meet their needs, we are promoting a similar approach for organizations

and their practitioners to satisfy their complex and varied professional needs.

The Reference Manual is an andragogical proposal that frames and supports professional skill development among practitioners. It focuses on the development of collective skills among organizations' entire teams, so they are able to provide more efficient support to the development of literacy skills in adult learners. The Reference Manual can therefore be seen as part of the answer to the following question: ***What skills does my organization need to promote the establishment of andragogical practices that are based on the RESDAC Integrated Model?***

### **Collective skills is not the sum of individual competencies**

Le Boterf (2008) points out that it is always possible to purchase one-off resources or skills as needed, but it is much more difficult to reproduce a combination of skills, the unique make-up of which is a barrier to imitation. Here, he is referring to collective intelligence. Along these lines, he suggests thinking of skill development through expert teams, where [free translation] "the most effective organization widens collective responsibility, increases versatility and reduces hierarchical levels."

It would be unwise to use this Reference Manual as an individual professional development plan. Skill development does not depend only on individuals' motivation, but also on a complete system of interactions and work flow that demands the development and use of competencies within the whole organization. It is only when organizations provide an environment that allows the alternation of reflection and action that adult education practitioners will be able to act competently in various professional situations.

### Collective skills based on three roles

The Reference Manual provides three tables of skills, each specific to one of the key roles found in adult training organizations. These roles were selected to illustrate the types of functions and skills inherent in an adult training organization involved in the adult education approach advocated by the RESDAC model. We will cover these three roles in more detail in section 3.

## 1.6 The limitations of a Reference Manual

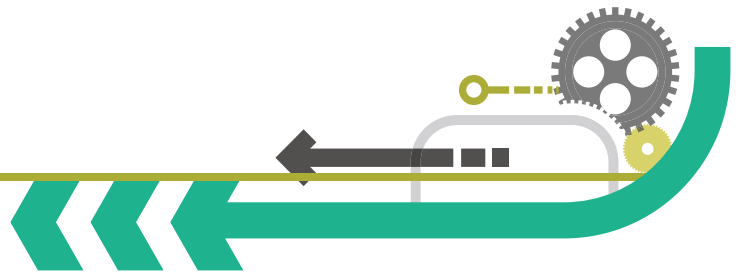
According to Le Boterf (2008), [free translation] *“a reference manual is not a description of the actual work: as their name indicates, reference manuals only provide references. They are benchmarks, guideposts, directions. They should be considered as goals, based on which practitioners and those in their environment will learn to build relevant professional practices. They are targets based on which employees will learn to act with competence. They are something against which competencies are built.”* He adds that *“the work related to designing skill reference manuals is of the utmost use, but has too often been guided by an implicit reasoning that assumes skills exist on their own, independent of the bearer of the skills. However, we only ever encounter people who are more or less competent.”*

Furthermore, according to Le Boterf, we must not confuse personal professional practice with a standard: *“Professional practice is the unfol-*

*ding of decisions, actions and interactions that a practitioner calls into play to carry out a specific activity, to resolve a problem situation, to deal with an event, to meet requirements set out by procedures or indicated in a reference manual.”* Thus, there is a difference between [free translation] *“the task's requirements and the attitudes and operational sequences through which individuals actually fulfil those requirements.”*

Along the same lines, this Reference Manual is a framework for setting the markers and harmonizing the professional skill development of organizations and their practitioners. It is only a starting point, not a finish line. The professional skills of adult training practitioners and organizations will change, adapt and become refined based on the new realities brought about by a society that is evolving at an increasingly faster pace.

## SECTION 2



# Redefining how we work with learners within the Integrated Model

## 2.1 Adults with low literacy skills and the dynamic surrounding skills in our modern knowledge-based society

We believe that in order to adequately position interventions with learners, it is important to fully understand the target clientele, in other words to properly identify the population's literacy and skills levels. The levels set out in international adult literacy and skills surveys shed light on the essential skills profiles of our target clientele. Results of these surveys also indicate the size of the target client group.

The next section briefly describes groups of adults who have shown an ability to perform tasks at a maximum complexity level of 1 and 2 (out of a 5-level scale on these international surveys). We hope that this description provides network members with a better understanding of the target client group and their socio-demographic characteristics, which will lead to new practices, drawn from the RESDAC Model.

### 2.1.1 Observations from the 1994 IALS and 2003 IALSS international surveys

In Canada, we are currently witnessing an unusual problem. Indeed, a large part of the adult population does not necessarily have the essential skills that would enable them to participate effectively in various community activities. That finding is corroborated in a number of successive international surveys. These studies assessed the skills of adults in a number of



countries against a scale that ranked skills acquisition level from one to five, with level three being considered the threshold needed for full participation in one's community and the working world. In the context of these surveys, competence in each area was conceptualized by establishing a broad range of skills that indicate adults' proficiency at using information to function in society and in the economy. In 1994, three literacy-related skills were studied, while the 2003 IALSS zeroed in on four basic skills areas:

The 2003 IALSS focussed on the following four literacy skill areas:

- Prose literacy: knowledge and skills needed to understand and use information from texts including editorials, news stories, brochures and instruction manuals.
- Document literacy: the knowledge and skills needed to locate and use information in various formats such as charts, graphs, job application forms, transportation schedules and maps.
- Numeracy: the knowledge and skills required to manage the mathematical demands of diverse situations.
- Problem solving: goal-oriented thoughts and actions in a situation where there is no common resolution process.

The targeted skills were assessed according to five task-complexity levels. These levels are based on the degree of difficulty of the tasks specific to each skill assessed. In the 1994 IALS and the 2003 IALSS, the complexity levels were determined by a score on a 500-point scale.

#### **Level 1 (0-225)**

- Uncomplicated tasks requiring minimum knowledge

#### **Level 2 (226-275)**

- Uncomplicated tasks requiring a little knowledge

#### **Level 3 (276-325)**

- More complex tasks requiring general knowledge and the ability to incorporate several sources of information

#### **Levels 4 and 5 (326-500)**

- Very complex tasks requiring strong knowledge and skills

We previously mentioned some of the findings from these surveys within the Canadian population. In general, the 1994 IALS and the 2003 IALSS showed very little progress between 1994 and 2003. During that period, the percentage of Canadians who developed certain skills below level 3 did not drop, as one might have expected, given the increase in education levels. Level 3 is considered required for functioning properly in our modern economy and knowledge-society.



### 2.1.2 First component of the RESDAC Model: Analysis of the needs of adult learners with low literacy skills as central to an andragogical intervention

The international surveys have shown that there are many level 1, 2 (or less literate) adults in Canada. In addition, they have multiple and complex needs. Most have to work to support themselves and their families. They seek the best possible job; thus, they have personal plans for finding work or for getting a better job if they are already working. To achieve that, some may have to learn to communicate better in English in an environment where French is a minority language and where the language of work is English. The needs of adults with low literacy skills are difficult to identify because they differ from one individual to another. They also fit into the broader realities of communities. We have to ask ourselves how to develop the skills required by adults with low literacy skills to address their various previously determined needs, while designing plans that will meet the collective needs of the community. Thus, it can be assumed that lesser developed literacy skills in individuals or groups of individuals will require more complex solutions designed to address various needs (Lurette, 2011).

The environmental analysis (the model's first component), needed to effectively address the integration needs of learners is therefore a study of the individual needs of each person, as well as an understanding of those needs in the broader community context.

While carrying out the environmental analysis, we feel it is important that local practitioners fully understand the impacts of the cultural, socio-economic and educational contexts on the local adult training dynamic. They must identify the extent to which certain cultural and social conditions can affect the type of training services that need to be designed for

Francophone adults with low literacy skills. The interventions must take some of those conditions into account<sup>2</sup>. Based on those analyses, it will be easier to plan adult education interventions that address the needs of adult learners with low literacy skills, while being rooted in a socio-economic and cultural context specific to their home community.

We also advocate good local understanding of the various barriers to learning and training that a client group with low literacy skills will need to deal with. This will make it possible to find original, lasting solutions; to reduce adverse effects and to retain the learners in training programs, jobs or other areas of activity in their community. The purpose of the environmental analysis is also to determine any barriers that exist between the potential learner and his/her successful persistence in a course of action that leads him/her to the job market or to other personal plans. Thus, proposed solutions should do away with those barriers or at least minimize their impact. The barriers that emerge between the adult candidate and a conclusive skills acquisition process usually fit into three categories having to do with *institutions*, *situations* and *psychosocial conditions*.

The environmental analysis must also look at the community from the perspective of availability of jobs for adults with limited literacy skills. For members of Francophone minority groups, the predominance of English as the language of work adds to the difficulty of finding work. Lastly, understanding interrelationships, which are often dysfunctional, among various local educational resources is integral to a realistic profile of learners' needs and their environment.

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2 - Among other things, we are referring to some community realities that can greatly impact how adults choose their language of learning (e.g., the social relationships among cultural groups and the predominant language at work).



### 2.1.3 Broadening the intervention framework among learners: Developing new professional skills among practitioners and organizations

A thorough environmental analysis will undoubtedly lead to a broader action framework for organizations and as a result will lead to questions regarding the professional development of practitioners:

- In the current context, what new professional skills must practitioners and organizations develop to support the newly learned competencies in adult learners with low literacy skills?
- How can the professional skills of practitioners and organizations be improved so that they are able to enhance their ability to analyze the needs of adults with low literacy skills for certain basic skills?
- How can professional skills of practitioners and organizations be developed to ensure that they increase their ability to analyze the environment in their community? Should some practitioners learn to master the ability to do an environmental analysis which includes adult needs analyses and socio-economic, cultural and educational context analyses? If so, does that affect the development of practitioners' and organizations' professional skills?
- Is it necessary to ensure that practitioners and organizations have a certain understanding of the *Essential Skills Framework* for levels 1 and 2? Is it also necessary to develop their understanding of the concept of this framework's task complexity so they can better understand the essential skill levels? If so, does that affect the development of practitioners' and organizations' professional skills?
- Is it necessary to see that practitioners and organizations develop a certain understanding of new integrated programming opportunities for adults with low literacy skills? If so, does that influence the development of practitioners' and organizations' professional skills?
- Should practitioners and organizations become familiar with the impacts of adult literacy levels and their learning barriers on meeting their needs and, correspondingly, on their motivation?
- Other

## 2.2 The competency-based approach for adults with low literacy skills

As previously stated, many reference frameworks underlying literacy or training policies and programs for Canadian adults are based on skills. We see that skill permeate the world of adult training. **However, what is skill?**

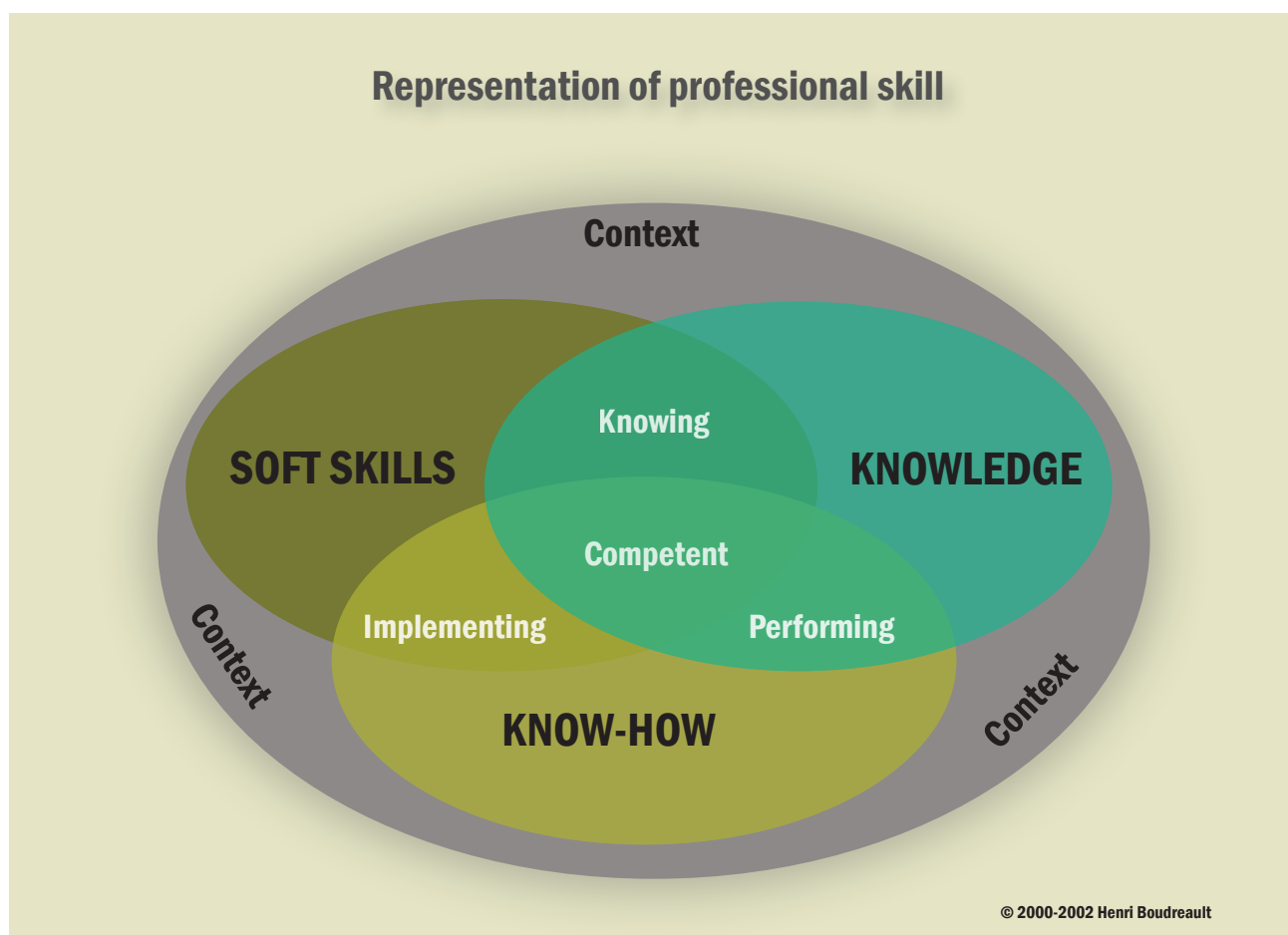
## 2.2.1 The concept of skill and its relationship to task

Note that there are many definitions of the term skill. Nonetheless, most definitions associate it with carrying out tasks. Since skill-building is central to the RESDAC Model, we feel it is important to expand on this concept.

It is hard to give a single definition of the concept of *skill*. We are choosing to stick to simple, familiar definitions.

Skill (general): [free translation] *“ability of a person to assume a responsibility or perform a task”* (Landry, F., 1987).

Skill (from a learning and training perspective): [free translation] *“Set of features (knowledge, abilities and attitudes) that enable an individual to adequately carry out a task or set of tasks.”* (Legendre, 3rd edition)



### The nature of skill

A number of people see skill as [free translation] *“a combination of knowledge, the ability to implement this knowledge, and attitudes, meaning the state of mind needed for this implementation”* (Le Haut Conseil de l’Éducation in France).

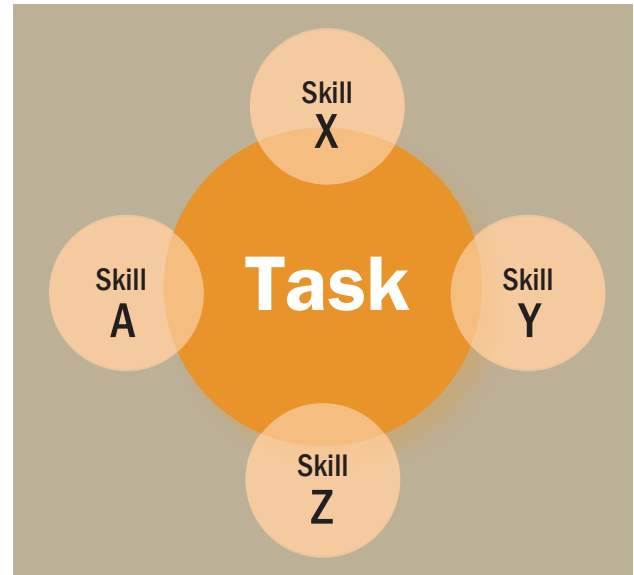
*It breaks down into knowledge, know-how (practices) and soft skills (interpersonal skills, or relational behaviours) along with physical abilities. The three types of knowledge are closely connected.”* The above diagram by Henri Boudreault clearly shows the interrelationship among the

types of knowledge that must be brought into play to enable individuals to develop a skill and implement it in various contexts with the aim of becoming competent (taken from Lurette, 2012).

Le Boterf (2008) states, however, [free translation] *“that an adult may have the resources in terms of knowledge, know-how and soft skills, but he/she still needs to know how to use them properly in specific settings. This is what he would refer to as acting with competence.”* He then states that, [free translation] *“(…) when reduced to its components parts, skill loses its meaning. Skill is not just a compilation of resources or knowledge; in performing a task (as a skill system), each element is affected by the others; there is an interactional dynamic among those elements.”* Le Boterf maintains that, to be competent, you must be able to **pair the fact of being competent with that of having skills**. This concept is defined in greater detail in section 3.

### The nature of a task

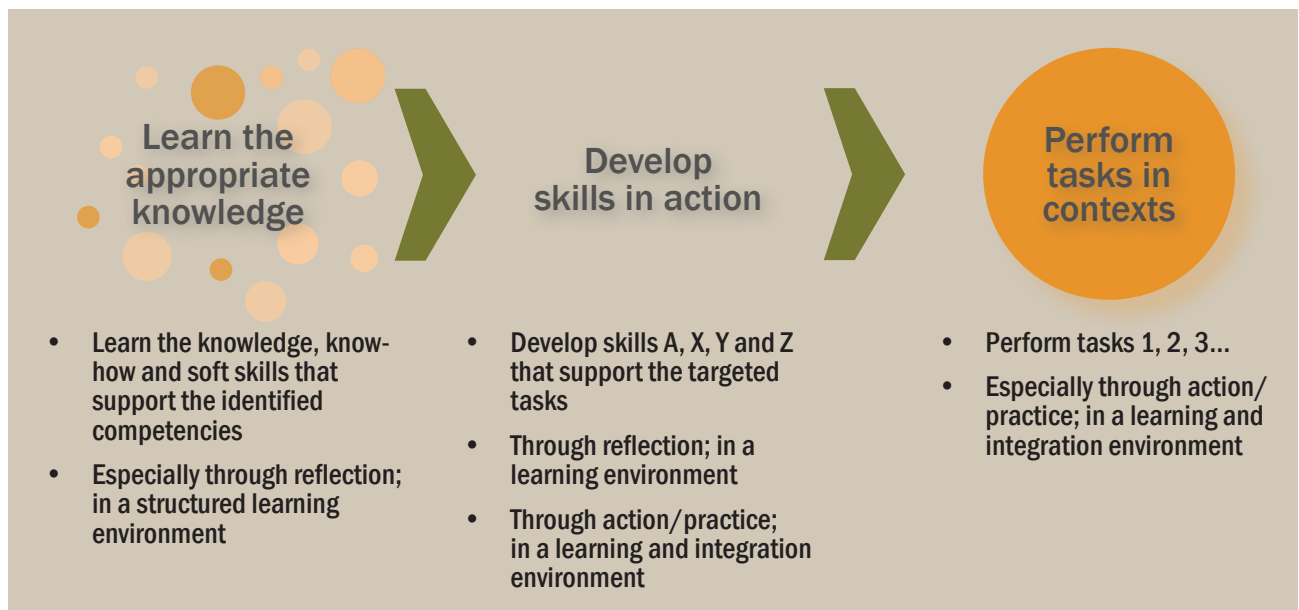
A task is often perceived as a *“combination of various skills that are closely linked”*. The above diagram shows this interrelationship among the types of skills that must be brought into play to enable individuals to perform a task and



implement it in various settings for the purpose of becoming *competent*.

### ***The interactions between knowledge, skills and tasks, in a continuous development dynamic***

The following diagram shows the interrelationships between the types of knowledge and types of skills that must be brought into play to enable individuals to perform one or more tasks and implement them in various integration settings in order to become competent in the desired integrated settings.



## 2.2.2 Horizontal expansion of skills to be developed among learners: Promoting new skills

In our opinion, there are various types of skills that can support the performance of tasks at work, in training, or in family and community life. They fall under four categories, which are detailed below.

### The four categories of skills

Organizing skills in this way has two main objectives. First, this categorization fosters better understanding of the skills that can be developed in adults with low literacy skills, as part of our initiatives for addressing some of the needs identified. Second, it makes the design of andragogical interventions easier, drawing on the development of particular types of skills to carry out particular tasks in specific settings, in order to address learners' needs; each skill type frequently draws on particular knowledge and development contexts.

The four skill categories

- Essential skills
- Soft skills
- Second-language skills
- Technical or specialized skills

### First category: Essential skills

*Essential skills for living, learning and working:* according to the framework and scope assigned to them by OLES (Office of Literacy and Essential Skills<sup>3</sup>). Essential skills are put forward by OLES as the nine basic skills that foster adults' full participation in the labour market and the community. They are necessary for a wide variety of tasks at work or in daily life and they provide adult learners with a foundation to support the learning of new skills. They enhance the ability

to adapt to change. Since they are used in actual situations, the complexity levels differ depending on the type of real-situation task. The following is the list of the nine essential skills:

- Reading Text
- Document use
- Writing
- Numeracy
- Oral communication
- Thinking
- Working with others
- Computer use
- Continuous learning

Today, we differentiate literacy skills, numeracy skills and computer-based skills. Among the nine essential skills, some fall more under *knowledge* while others are more in the nature of soft skills. Thinking, working with others, oral communication and continuous learning are considered essential soft skills.

### Second category: Soft skills

[free translation] *"Soft skills are a set of abilities involving personality more than a specific function. A soft skill develops through action and evolves over a person's lifetime in various life experiences and work situations."* (\*definition drawn from the *Manuel des animateurs de la démarche Nos compétences fortes* (NCF), written under the direction of Rachel Bélisle, 1996).

As is the case with essential skills, soft skills act as common threads between peoples' different experiences (work, family life, personal projects). They are not tied to a specific function in

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3 - This Office comes under Human Resources and Skills Development Canada.

the way that specialized skills are, but they develop in various learning situations and complement each other in action. A number of soft skills play an integral part in professional, social and family involvement. This is why they are considered basic skills (ICÉA, 1995, p. 21). The concept of soft skill used by the ICÉA hinges around the following two realities:

- A given individual may have developed a number of soft skills.
- There are a number of soft skills (the ICÉA's last reference manual lists 22, including organizational skills, sense of responsibility, ability to work under pressure, thoroughness, sense of observation, adaptability, problem-solving ability, etc.).
- Soft skills:
  - Include a set of abilities.
  - Develop through action.
  - Change over an individual's lifetime.
  - Develop through various life experiences and work situations.
  - Are useful in all areas of life (job, school, family or other).
  - Are transferable, i.e., they can be called into play in different application areas, action contexts and situations.

### **Third category: Second-language skills**

This involves [free translation] *“a person's knowledge of a language or his/her ability to use it in context”* (Legendre, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition). These skills are connected with acquiring a second-language, which enables an adult learner to perform tasks requiring the use of a language of communication different from his/her own. In Canada's Francophone communities, this type of skill may prove necessary for learners to perform tasks in an English-dominant environment.

The learnings associated with the second-language skills required for performing tasks

are not to be confused with learning English as a second-language. Here, we are referring to the strategic acquisition of certain functional aspects of English that is similar to the development of first language skills. All of the training must be done in the first language. Studies have shown that adults learn much more effectively in their first language. Newly acquired learnings overlap with previous ones, which are rooted in initial first-language knowledge. The transfer of learning then occurs easily in contexts using either language.

### **Fourth category: Technical or specialized skills**

These skills make it possible to engage in a trade since they are directly tied to a trade or family of trades. They are usually associated with work functions and are offered by specialized agencies in an institutional setting (community colleges and educational institutions) or in the workplace (employers or unions).

In the workplace, technical skills are often considered occupational skills. Technical skills are recognized within industry as qualifications for the workplace; in these settings, development of essential and soft skills is complementary to the development of technical skills, but will be unavoidable for adults with low literacy skills. In other contexts, however, some soft and essential skills may be considered as occupational skills for various occupations, especially those connected with service businesses. In this type of business, occupational tasks are often carried out in interactional mode (client service, public relations, etc.) and they draw on the so-called soft and essential skills also to emerge as professional or specialized skills.

In the context of performing a task, we believe that these various types of skills complement or support each other in the learning process or in action (the application of skills in performing a task) (Lurette 2011).

### 2.2.3 Third component of the RESDAC Model: Constructing an andragogical intervention adapted to the skill development needs of adult learners with low literacy skills

The andragogical approach of the RESDAC Model has the benefit of integrating literacy into a broader perspective that better meets the needs of adult learners with low literacy skills. Thus, the literacy process *is integrated* into an overall skills development initiative.

That being said, designing a training plan for people with low literacy skills requires a broad view of their needs to better identify the multiple skills they must develop in order to pursue a satisfying occupational or personal plan. To do so, practitioners must know how to break down the various types of skills that they could aim to instil in adults with low literacy skills, based on their needs.

However, we believe that the traditional approach used by some literacy programs, like that of other types of traditional adult training programs, can be too simplistic<sup>4</sup>; it does not always effectively meet learners' needs nor does it take their life contexts into account. In our view, an effective andragogical intervention for adults with low literacy skills must take into account the multitude of skills that they have to acquire in order to achieve the targeted learnings in their personal plan. Those various skills must dovetail with each other. Practitioners must therefore be able to properly identify those types of skills and understand their interrelationships.

#### **Combining skills development to construct an andragogical intervention**

In constructing an andragogical intervention that aims to address the needs of adults with low literacy skills and those of the community, the integrated training approach promoted here must be developed from two perspectives. The first integration step is part of the instructional package in which the development of multiple skill types is designed in a unified/integrated way within the same intervention, in response to the needs analysis of the targeted adults with low literacy skills. The second integration step is carried out by means of partnerships through which adult training services can be pooled and offered in a simultaneous, integrated way (we will return to this second integration step in the next section).

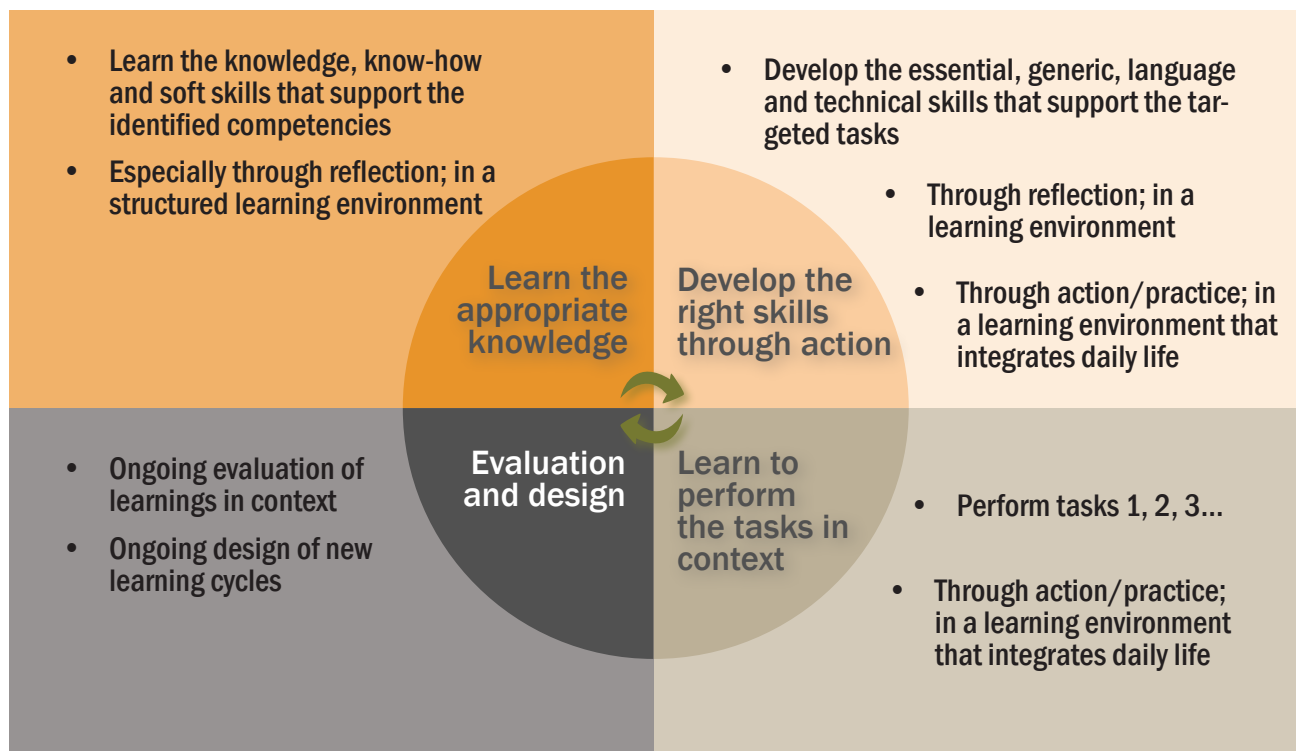
At the first step of integration, practitioners examine what skills the intervention should develop among the targeted adults based on their needs. What place will essential skills, soft skills, second-language skills or technical/specialized skills have in addressing the integration, communication and interaction needs within the various personal and occupational plans of the targeted adults? It is worth noting that for all these skills, the learners' needs determine the extent to which each skill type warrants being developed and the extent to which the service offerings should consider those.

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<sup>4</sup> Programs offered to adults with low literacy skills are often too narrow and do not take all needs into account. Thus, most training services are focussed on the acquisition of very specific skills that are more intended to address the delineated requirements of programs. For example, some services zero in on the development of integration or employability skills; this is especially the case with new worker support programs. Other services favour the acquisition of technical skills like apprenticeship or occupational training programs; still others focus solely on the development of parenting skills. Lastly, most literacy programs focus on improving particular basic skills (reading, writing, math, computers). In short, very few adult education services aim to develop more than one skill type within the same integrated initiative.



## 2.2.4 Example: Interactions between knowledge, skills and tasks, according to a continuous learning dynamic in reflection and action



### Task to be performed:

- An office clerk who must respond to a client having a hard time understanding an invoice received.

### Skills to be called into play:

- This task may draw on soft skills (interactional, problem-solving skills, etc.).
- This task may draw on essential skills (document use, oral communication, numeracy, digital technology, etc.).

- This task may draw on language skills (invoice in English).
- This task may draw on technical skills (applying an internal customer service protocol, technical explanation related to the type of service and billing).

### Knowledge to be called into play:

- Examples of knowledge: understanding the importance of active listening and its methodology, good understanding of the company's billing system and tools, good understanding of the digital client file system and billing systems, some knowledge of technical vocabulary in English, good understanding of internal protocols and procedures, etc.

- Examples of know-how: ability to apply the steps in an active listening process, ability to break down and explain a typical invoice, quickly access a client file in the computer system, ability to break down an invoice in English and explain it in French, ability to apply internal procedures and protocols in context, etc.
- Examples of soft skills: being empathetic towards the client and his/her problem, demonstrating confidence in resolving the situation, feeling at ease with a computerized and digital work environment, being open to asking for help when part of the task requires the use of one's second-language, ability to apply an internal protocol in a potentially delicate interactional situation, etc.

### 2.2.5 Broadening of training practices: The new professional skills to be developed among practitioners and organizations

Broadening of the skills to be developed in learners with low literacy skills raises some questions about the professional development of practitioners and organizations:

- What professional skills must practitioners and organizations develop so they can properly use the competency-based approach in their interventions?
- Should practitioners and organizations develop some understanding of the four skill categories, especially with the aim of supporting interventions requiring the acquisition of multiple skills among learners?
- How do we develop practitioners' and organizations' professional skills that are likely to support their ability to design, implement and maintain integrated programs?
- Should practitioners and organizations cultivate an ability to properly determine and break down the various types of skills that could conceivably be acquired by adults with low literacy skills, based on their needs?
- Should practitioners be able to define these types of skills and properly understand their interrelationships? If so, to what extent does this affect the development of practitioners' and organizations' professional skills?
- Should practitioners and organizations develop some understanding about the issues of learners transitioning to an English-dominant environment and the need to develop second-language skills? If so, to what extent does this influence the development of practitioners' and organizations' professional skills?
- Should practitioners and organizations be encouraged to have some grasp of the new integrated programming opportunities using a broader range of skills than what is found in traditional literacy training approaches? If so, to what extent does this affect the development of practitioners' and organization's professional skills?
- Other



## 2.3 Integrating skills to address the needs of adults with low literacy skills

### 2.3.1 Integrating skills necessarily involves integrating services

Rather than being limited to analyzing an adult learner based on a particular program, the competency-based approach takes into account all the needs of adult learners in their community in terms of skills to be developed. Such an approach ultimately seeks to promote the life-long development of multiple skills in adult learners (skills *continuum*) by offering integrated educational services when needed (*continuum* of learning services) in a given community.

This andragogical approach therefore focuses on the whole learning system for adults: the arrangements and needs of the targeted adults; the type of learning objectives that arise from that; the learning methodologies (methods of conveying the instructional content and methods of developing new skills); the learning environment (community, support mechanisms, etc.); and lastly, potential learning transfers. We believe that all these aspects must be considered when designing a competency-based andragogical intervention.

### 2.3.2 Strategic partnerships

We maintain that it is more effective for a local adult training network to design its training programs as part of a service *continuum*, without distinction as to service providers. In our view, this strategy is more efficient in reaching the pool of adult learners and thereby overcomes a number of return-to-training barriers. In addition, the service *continuum* approach gives preference to providing the target client group with a number of training services within the same offering, which simplifies the perception they may have of the adult education system. To us, this course of action obviously seems more consistent with the perspective of ongoing skills development through training initiatives designed for these purposes..

Community organizations working with adults with low literacy skills have developed better-integrated approaches to help them deal with the many obstacles they have to overcome in their daily environment, but also when adjusting to a changing society. The RESDAC Integrated

Model (Lurette, 2011) refers to the practices of the *Centre d'apprentissage et de perfectionnement* (CAP) whose services are devoted to training adults in Eastern Ontario and seeks to reach clients with low literacy skills. According to Lurette (2011), CAP's practices are based especially on the development of innovative strategic partnership approaches capable of building relevant bridges between, on the one hand, the skills development needs of adults with low literacy skills within a community and, on the other, the adult education resources available in that community. In most cases, the integrated services approach requires various forms of strategic partnerships. Although this mostly seems like a winning approach for reaching adults with low literacy skills and facilitating their development, it does involve a number of challenges:

“ [free translation] ...Partnerships and high-wire acts: This process is demanding, given the diversity of agencies involved (literacy training, vocational training, accredited training, income maintenance, employment integration or employability services...) and the complexity of the links to be made. It is necessary to deal with the terms and conditions related to the accountability and funding of the established partners. Indeed, these partners are beholden to funders from four levels of government: municipal, regional, provincial, and federal.

Dugas, 2005

drawn from Lurette, 2008, p. 24

”

### 2.3.3 Second component of the RESDAC Model: Creating strategic local partnerships within an integrated approach

The second component of the Integrated Model is ***the creation of strategic local partnerships***. This step requires considerable time and open-mindedness and places special value on negotiation and co-operation. Resource-pooling noticeably improves the various phases of analysis leading to preparation of training sessions based both on learners' needs and profiles and on various community needs and contexts. Creating strategic local partnerships also drives the environmental analysis by supplying it with the additional information items that foster a better fit with local circumstances. This results in an increased ability to attract the client group and offer promising andragogical interventions.

Service integration occurs through partnerships that make possible simultaneous, joint offerings of adult training services. With such an approach, these integrated services combine the training steps usually offered separately and in a linear way, thereby enabling learners with low literacy skills to start developing multiple skills at the same time (essential, soft, language and technical skills). These learners can therefore benefit from parenting, occupational or other skills-development programs that they would

normally have difficulty accessing at this stage in their literacy-skills-acquisition process. At this integration stage, practitioners ask what programs or services can be combined for the andragogical intervention to promote the development of skills based on the needs of the targeted adults. This joint inter-program approach facilitates the integration of learners with low literacy skills into training projects that further meet their needs and realities.

Thus, successful dialogue among partners can lead to adjusting of existing training programs or setting up new training programs that address adults' needs while adhering to the mandates of the various partners. From then on, by providing a joint offering of programs, it will become easier to access the various human and financial resources needed to improve adult education services (e.g., smaller student/trainer ratio, personalized training plans, custom training and evaluation modalities, targeted training, etc.) and logistical support (e.g., transportation and childcare services). Ultimately, these elements will considerably increase the community's ability to serve adults with low literacy skills.

### 2.3.4 Redefining how we work with community partners: Developing professional skills among practitioners and organizations

The need to redefine how we work with partners raises some questions about the professional development of practitioners and organizations:

- How to develop practitioners' and organizations' professional skills that are likely to support their ability to design, implement and maintain integrated programs?
- How to develop practitioners' and organizations' professional skills that enable them to support the establishment and continuity of strategic partnerships?
- How to develop practitioners' and organizations' ability to ask themselves about programs or services to be integrated in order for the andragogical intervention to foster the development of skills based on targeted adults' needs? In the same intervention, how to link programs and services fostering the development of literacy skills and appropriate technical skills?
- How to develop practitioners' and organizations' professional skills that facilitate the work involved in intra-organization and inter-organization co-operation?
- How to encourage practitioners and organizations to develop their own professional skills in an integrated manner?
- How to enable practitioners and organizations to develop their professional skills in a co-operative context?
- Other

## 2.4 Designing intervention practices that foster skill development and transfer

According to the definition in the Grand dictionnaire terminologique by the *Office québécois de la langue française*, a skill is [free translation] *"expertise resulting from the effective mobilization and use of a set of internal and external resources in authentic learning situations or in an occupational setting."* (Lurette 2012, drawn from Dignard, ICÉA, to be published). For Le Boterf (2008), a skill assumes [free translation] *"being able to act and succeed competently and relevantly in a situation (work or other; activity to be carried out, event to handle, problem to solve, project to accomplish ...). ... Here, we are referring to the concept of action."*

Thus, based on its nature, we can assume that effective skills development rests on a strategic

interplay between theoretical learning (potential part of resource mobilization) and hands-on action (performing the task in real situations) (Lurette, 2012). This strategic interplay between theory and action is an essential aspect of skills development. Moreover, Le Boterf (2008) says that it is no longer just a question of engineering the training for developing skills, but rather engineering pathways: thus [free translation] *"skill-building is no longer considered as falling exclusively under training; it is rather the result of pathways that include transitions from training to organized work situations or other routes, to optimize learning impacts. Alternated training sessions are valued once again."*

### 2.4.1 Experiential learning or learning through practice

All across Canada, there are *apprenticeship* programs to train adults in specialized trades (“apprenticeable” trades). These *apprenticeship* programs stand apart because of a major hands-on learning component in the workplace that enhances theoretical and institutional training. This is in accordance with a training process that alternates between *school* (about 10% of learning time) and the *workplace* (about 90% of learning time). The *Canadian Apprenticeship Forum* sponsored a project aimed at analyzing the statistical data on four groups of workers and comparing their results. The study appears to indicate a decided advantage for learners involved in these programs that alternated between in-class learning and on-the-job learning:

- People whose training was partly done through on-the-job learning are recognized as more job-ready, either immediately after obtaining their diploma or several years later. They have better short and long-term pay opportunities and report a higher level of job satisfaction and job security.
- Graduates from apprenticeship programs find a job much sooner after receiving their diploma than those in any of the other groups.
- Overall, graduates from apprenticeship programs seem to value their job more and enjoy better job security than individuals in the other groups. (*Canadian Apprenticeship Forum*, February 2011)

Developing skills in a theoretical/hands-on learning context seems to show meaningful results regarding employability. As such, can we imagine that similar skills development approaches can be introduced for adults with low literacy skills who wish to move into employment or carry out some other personal plan?

#### **Hands-on learning to promote the transfer of skills from one setting to another**

Opportunities for knowledge and skills transfers can largely explain the success of programs consisting of hands-on and experiential learning (such as apprenticeship programs for trades). Using data drawn from the International Labour Office (ILO), Dignard (ICÉA, to be published) shows that, to be transferrable, a skill must be exportable, in other words useful and necessary to performing tasks in various settings as well as visible and recognized (in private and public life). From these sources, he draws three factors that affect skill transferability:

- *Experiences gained* that provide information on what did or did not contribute to a skill being successfully transferred. Integrating the knowledge arising from the transfer experience is also valuable in tracking the skill to be put into action and transferred to another setting.
- A skill that is *increasingly mastered* in various settings helps determine the settings into which that skill will be effectively transferred.
- *The setting where the transfer occurs* which consists of various factors identified by the ILO, i.e., institutions, technologies, standardization methods connected with skills recognition, workplaces and industry sectors.

Moreover, Le Boterf (2008) notes that the transfer of knowledge to new situations requires not only resources, but also the recognition of situations in which those resources may be used. In his view, what differentiates an expert from a novice is not just that the expert has a larger library of resources, but that, through their experience, they can recognize those that can be used in a new setting. They will therefore proceed more quickly and effectively in searching for relevant information.

As for Dignard, he believes that since soft skills can be used in a number of life situations, they are more easily transferred from one environment to another than specific skills are. He therefore recommends focussing on soft skills for establishing a connection between settings and objectives. Those connections facilitate the transfer of skills in an occupational or a personal development environment. This can be done informally, non-formally or even formally (*Dignard, ICÉA, to be published*).

## 2.4.2 From literacy program development to ongoing skills development in various settings

The competency-based approach focuses on developing the skills of individuals with low literacy skills, rather than on strictly literacy training. Essential skills and soft skills are indispensable to a wide variety of tasks in the workplace and in daily life in addition to increasing people's ability to adapt to the changes that occur throughout life: developing these skills amounts to a *continuum* that goes well beyond the skill levels aimed at by traditional literacy training programs. That being said, the essential and soft skills development *continuum* applies to an even broader andragogical perspective. It inspires us to view the literacy skills acquisition process as an inclusive concept, namely a lifelong skills development *continuum*.

In fact, according to the 1994 IALS and the 2003 IALSS, literacy skills are like muscles: regardless of the setting, the more they are exercised, the better they are maintained and the more quickly they improve. Along those lines, the places literacy skills are developed go beyond formal and informal training settings. The ongoing skills development of adults with low literacy skills occurs in several areas of their lives. This confirms that training initiatives for adults with low literacy skills must be designed strategically over time in order to situate them in a sequence of learning that leads to ongoing skills development. Literacy development is a shared responsibility. For adult learners, the time available to them to participate in organized training is usually time-limited and it needs to be related to their goals (Lurette, 2011).

### 2.4.3 Fourth component of the RESDAC Model: Feedback, evaluation and reassessment of actions: an evaluation continuum

The last, but not least, component in the Integrated model involves **feedback, evaluation and reassessment of actions** when tested against reality. The flexibility and ability to revise some of a training program's directions in order to improve it in the best interests of its clients must be an integral part of this innovative approach. This constant concern for fine-tuning is informed by data gathering from various partners and learners in the training program during the development, introduction and implementation stages. In short, integrated training drawing on multiple services must always be observed with the professed goal of creating an ongoing enhancement dynamic, since one of the main virtues of the Integrated

Model lies in its flexibility and constant search for a better fit with learners' needs.

Through their multi-program and multi-partner nature, the proposed integrated initiatives lead to various collaborative and joint action agreements among local bodies. We recognize that establishing such initiatives is no mean feat. However, after one cycle of strategic partnerships and integrated services offering, everything will be easier for all partners. New experiences will build on initial experiences that have been revised and enhanced through reflective reviews. Other partnerships and initiatives will eventually follow, which should help establish a more cohesive learning community (Lurette, 2011).

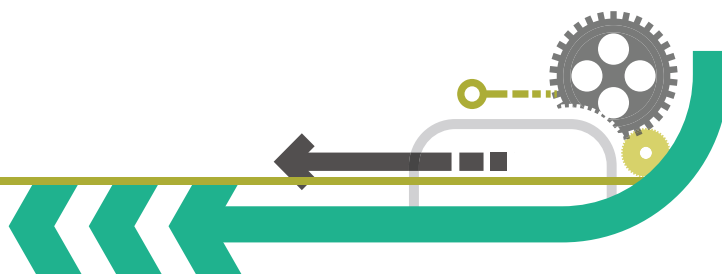
### 2.4.4 Experiential learning or learning through practice for practitioners and organizations

The move to experiential learning or learning through practice raises some questions about the professional development of practitioners and organizations:

- How to develop practitioners' and organizations' professional skills that are likely to support their ability to design and use andragogical strategies that foster experiential and hands-on learning among adults with low literacy skills?
- How to develop practitioners' and organizations' professional skills that enable them to design and use andragogical strategies facilitating the transfer of knowledge for adults with low literacy skills to new settings?
- How to enable practitioners and organizations to acquire professional skills in settings that alternate theory and practice?
- How to encourage practitioners and organizations to develop their ability to transfer professional skills to various intervention settings?
- How to encourage practitioners and organizations to develop their ability to do reflective reviews on projects and on their interventions? How to enable them to draw on those reflective reviews and continually improve their services? How to enable them to draw on those reflective reviews to update their professional skills and thereby enhance their own practices?
- Other



## SECTION 3



# Redefining the desired skills among organizations and their practitioners

## 3.1 A Reference Manual related to skills supporting the development of professional practices among practitioners and organizations

First and foremost, this Reference Manual is defined as a skills framework providing benchmarks to organizations dedicated to literacy development. Its purpose is to enable them to re-frame the direction of their professional development practices according to an andragogical method aligned with the integrated approach advocated by the RESDAC literacy and skills development model. Therefore, this Reference Manual has been designed as a counterpart to the RESDAC Integrated Model which suggests developing multiple skills among learners in order to meet their needs. ***Consequently, it promotes a similar approach for developing multiple professional skills among organizations and their practitioners in order to meet their complex and varied needs.***

### 3.1.1 Towards a new professional development practice model: The competency-based approach

For RESDAC, training initiatives for adults with low literacy skills must be strategically designed. They have to fit into a broader ongoing skills development movement to reflect the fact that adult learners usually have limited time for organized training to meet their objectives. That being said, literacy development is a responsibility shared by all social partners.





### Integrated andragogical proposal<sup>5</sup>

RESDAC suggests integrating literacy and skills development in a more thorough educational package in order to address the varied needs of adult learners with low literacy skills. Integrated initiatives (see diagram on next page) can draw on multiple programs and partners. They gene-

rate various collaborative and joint action agreements among different local bodies. With these in place, local programs can create a *continuum of services* that ultimately leads to more effective integration of learners into their community. That integration contributes to the literacy development of that same community.

## The four-component model



<sup>5</sup> - For more information on this model, see Appendix 4.

### 3.1.2 Towards a new professional development practice model built on the competency-based approach

#### The competency-based approach for this Reference Manual

As we mentioned in sections 1 and 2, the competency-based approach advocated by the RESDAC Model proposes ways to reorganize a portion of adult education services intended for people with low literacy skills. Among other things, that involves engaging a more varied range of educational services in a given community in order to foster the integrated development of multiple skills in adults with low literacy skills. Along with this move to promote the development of tasks and skills in adults with low literacy skills come new needs from practitioners within adult training networks. They involve developing professional skills profiles for practitioners and organizations based on the type of services to be provided.

We felt it was logical to opt for a competency-based approach in order to provide a framework for developing the professional practices of organizations and their practitioners operating in an integrated training context with their client groups.

#### The concept of professional skill and its relationship to task

We chose to develop the Reference Manual by skills unit, since this approach has had much success in some professional training/development settings across Canada in recent decades. In that approach, skills support the performance of professional tasks and are connected with those tasks.

Skills are mostly seen as being generic because they are not connected with individuals, but with the tasks that are assigned to a practitioner's workstation. These tasks are situational or

contextualized because they are determined according to each workstation, by each organization and for each practitioner.

Thus, professional tasks are organized based on decisions made internally; they are assigned to practitioners according to their environments (number of employees, types of services, types of partnerships, etc.). Task assignment hinges around various roles and functions within an organization. The profiles of skills to be developed in practitioners will therefore be defined by their professional tasks.

As mentioned in section 2, most definitions of the term skill relate it to supporting the accomplishment of a task. Skills development for professional practitioners or their organization fits into that same logic:

*From a professional training perspective: [free translation] "Ability of an individual to **perform complex tasks that require the execution of many operations**, tasks similar to those usually involved when practicing an occupation, an art or a profession." (Brien, 1989)*

#### The concept of professional skill and its relationship to knowledge

Le Boterf (2008) maintains that, to be competent, one needs to know the meaning of **being** and **having**: [free translation]

*"**Being competent** means being able to act and succeed relevantly and skilfully in a situation (work or otherwise; activity to perform, event to deal with, problem to resolve, project to carry out ...). It is implementing a relevant professional practice while mobilizing an appropriate combination of resources (knowledge, know-how, behaviours, reasoning methods ...). We are referring here to the concept of action."*

*“Having competence means possessing resources (knowledge, know-how, reasoning methods, physical capabilities, behavioural abilities ...) for acting with competence. Having resources is therefore a necessary but insufficient condition for acting with competence.”*

As such, Le Boterf (2008) asserts that, to evaluate an individual’s competence, is not simply to consider whether this person has the required resources(knowledge, know-how, abilities), but rather to gauge his/her practices in real or simulated situations. The same logic applies to the development of practitioners’ professional skills.

Therefore, it will be recognized that an individual knows how to act relevantly and competently in a given situation if (Le Boterf, 2008):

- He/she knows how to combine and bring into play a set of appropriate personal resources (knowledge, know-how, soft skills, behaviours...) and support resources (databases, colleagues, experts, other trades ...).
- He/she knows how to **carry out** a relevant professional practice through the performance of tasks assigned to him/her:
  - To manage this situation by taking into account the requirements and his/her particular context.
  - To produce results (products, services) that meet certain performance criteria for a recipient (client learner, funder, partners...).

## 3.2 Reviewing the make-up of human resource teams based on organizations’ strategic repositioning

In this section, we outline the skills-based Reference Manual as an organizational tool for the professional development of practitioners and organizations. In our view, this manual provides valuable benchmarks intended to help organizations set up effective work teams geared to the evolving world of adult education.

### Why three roles?

Appendices 1, 2, and 3 present three skills tables, each one specific to a major role in adult training organizations. These roles illustrate the types of functions and skills inherent in an adult training organization involved in the andragogical approach promoted by the RESDAC Model. The functions and skills that we feel are intrinsic to this andragogical approach are listed in detail in the tables to support the many professional tasks required to support such an approach.

We refer to the conventional roles of *training* and *management* but also to the role of *design*, which is less common of course, but has become indispensable in the parameters of the RESDAC Integrated Model. This latter role proves essential for any organization wishing to provide custom, evolving services, designed according to the specific needs of both adults with low literacy skills and the community to which they belong. In this context, interventions must fit into an ongoing design/adjustment dynamic.

The tables outlining the two major roles of training and design are made up of *functions* specific to each of these roles, which are then broken down into *skills* units. We have opted to present these two roles by listing the skills needed to perform the various functions of each role.

An organization will determine how to distribute the roles and functions internally, considering the professional tasks to be performed and the desired skill profiles for supporting the tasks in the interventions implemented.

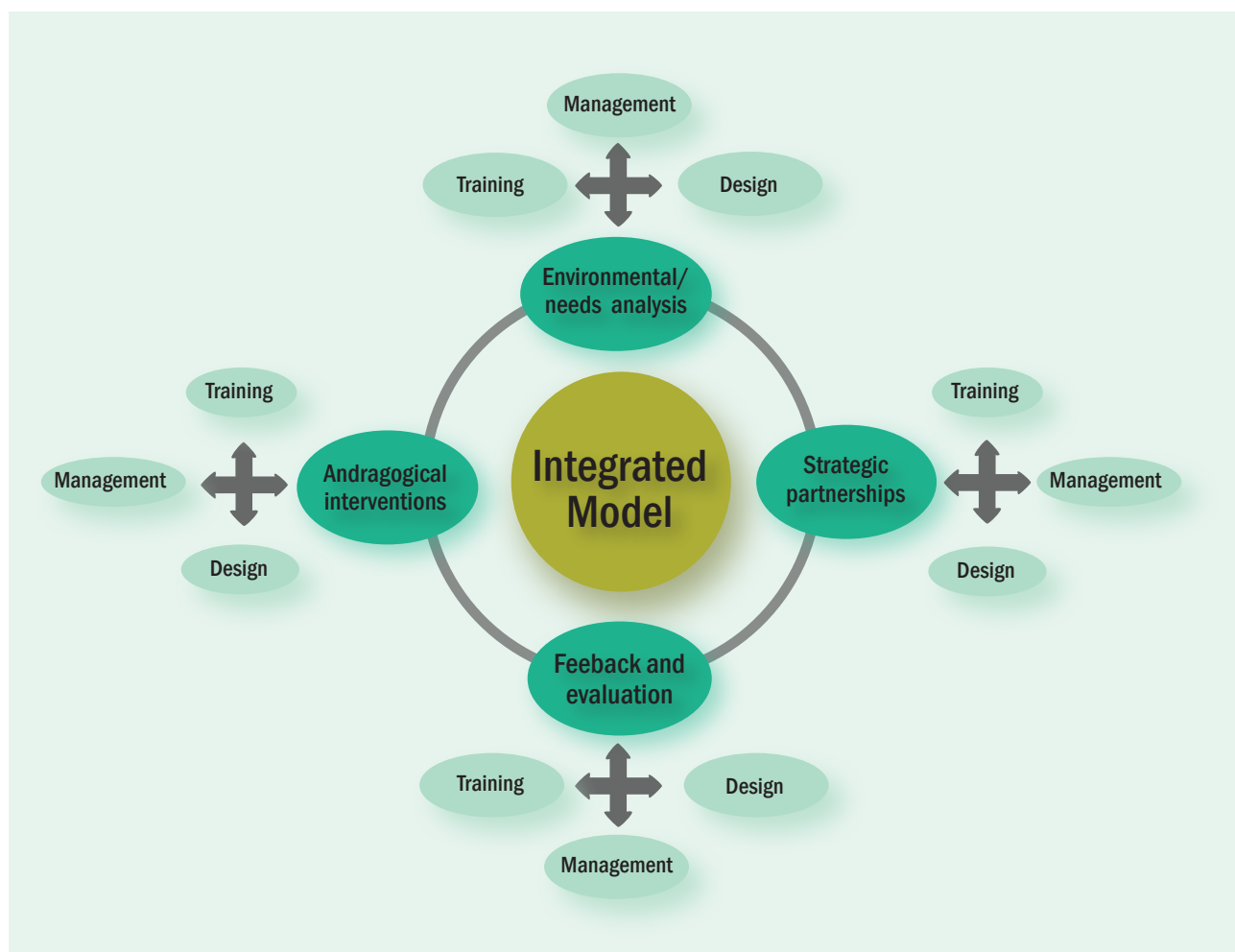
The table presenting the management role differs slightly. On the one hand, it is directly connected to the four components of the RESDAC Integrated Model rather than to functions. On the other hand, a new aspect is added, namely the skills related to project and organization management, given the nature of this role. We felt that this grouping is more functional for the management role. The practitioner responsible for management will work directly with the other two tables, using them to build the human resource team and manage the organization based on the functions and skills it requires.

In **Appendices 1, 2 and 3** are the tables that describe the **management, training and design** roles tied to the professional development reference manual. Its primary objective is to support the andragogical approach promoted by the RESDAC Integrated Skills Development Model.

### The RESDAC Reference Manual and Integrated Model

The three tables highlighting training, management and design roles should be considered a guide whose main purpose is to briefly define the major action parameters outlined for organizations in order to support the andragogical approach proposed by the Integrated Model.

The four components of the RESDAC Integrated Model, namely *analyzing the environment*,



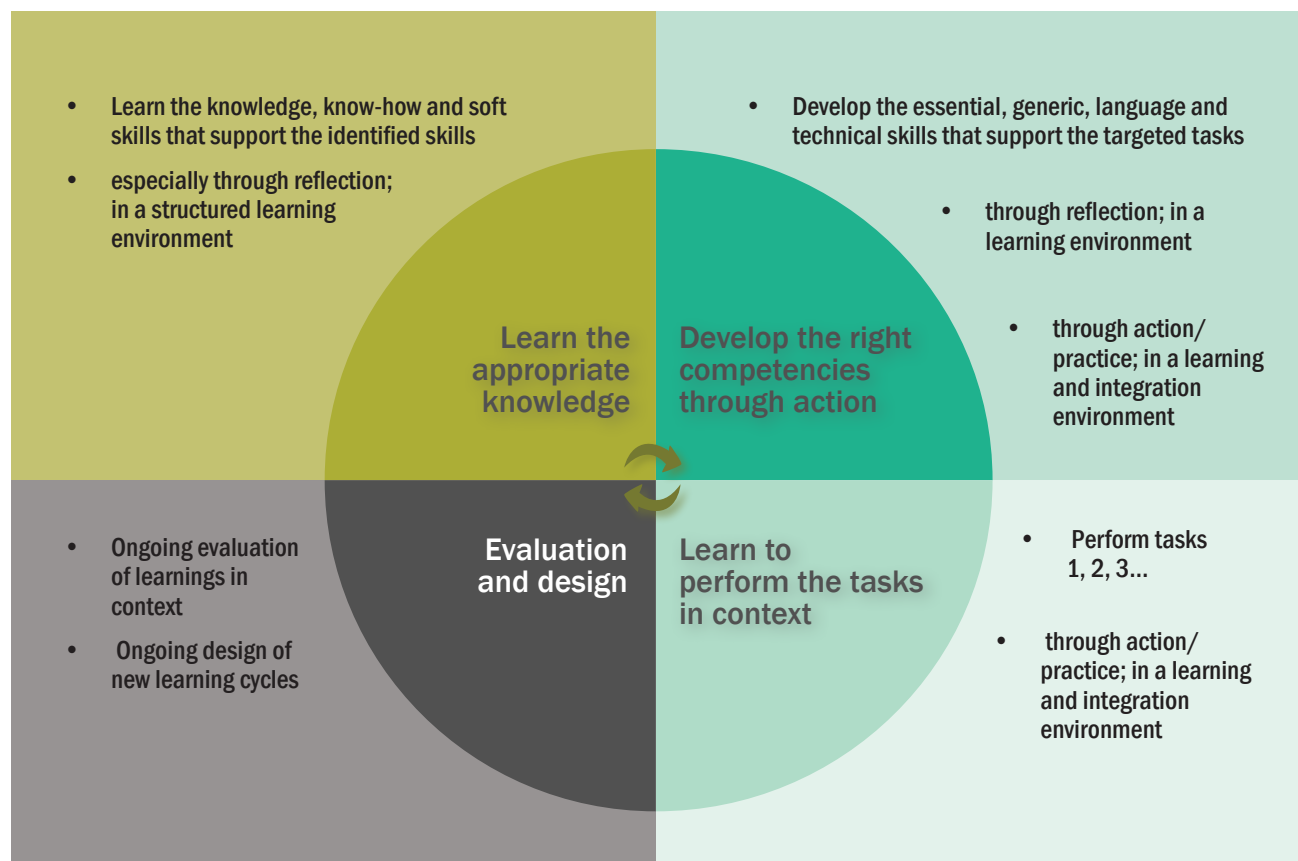
*creating strategic local partnerships, constructing adapted andragogical interventions* and lastly, *feedback, evaluation and reassessment of actions*, intersect with the functions associated with the training and design roles and are fully linked to the management role. In addition, the Integrated Model is based on the strategic learning principle driven by a constant interplay between theoretical learning and hands-on learning. In our view, this dynamic is fully transferable, even necessary, in the context of developing practitioners' professional skills.

### The Reference Manual presented according to three roles

In the next sections, we briefly present the three roles illustrated in the Reference Manual.

This does not involve describing all of the skills specific to the management, training and design roles. We aim to highlight, for each function of these roles, the skills connected to the four components that make up the RESDAC Integrated Model. It is all of those skills, plus some unique functions, that make the Model relevant and effective when dealing with the ongoing challenge of skills development among adults with low literacy skills.

We reproduce here, in the form of a learning cycle, the previously presented diagram of the ongoing professional development dynamic in thought and action. It applies to each role, whether tied to management, training or design, and it shows the interactions among knowledge, skills and tasks.



### 3.2.1 Management role: Table of functions and related skills

In a management role, a person must master basic management principles common to all non-profit organizations. In the context of the Integrated Model, one must also possess an essential familiarity with **integrated andragogical approaches** and a willingness to promote and create **strategic partnerships**.

This table, unlike the ones for training and design, is not broken down into functions, but according to four components: the skills related to project and organization management and the skills related to the four components of the Integrated Model (two of which have been merged). These four components that are constantly interacting define the versatile role of a manager, according to the requirements of the Integrated Model:

- Skills related to project and organization management
- Skills related to environmental analysis and the creation of strategic partnerships
- Skills related to constructing custom andragogical interventions
- Skills related to feedback and reassessment of actions

#### A. Skills related to project and organization management

We have included a list of rather general skills needed to support management practices. This list attempts to identify the management skills required of a non-profit adult education organization, without necessarily linking it to an integrated approach and the RESDAC Model.

We also felt it would be helpful to include a short list of theoretical knowledge needed to acquire or improve these skills. While

not comprehensive, this list addresses the theoretical knowledge related to management practices needed in a non-profit adult education organization.

- Understanding the importance of the organization's values and vision as well as the methods and process of developing and promoting the vision.
- Understanding the political situation at the federal, provincial and local levels and its potential impact on adult training and on the organization.
- Having an in-depth understanding of the procedures of granting agencies and their requirements.
- Having an in-depth understanding of management principles.
- Having an in-depth understanding of strategic human resource management concepts and of the practices required to foster a productive environment and satisfied participants.
- Understanding the reality of a linguistic and cultural minority and the impact this has on integration into the community and on learning.
- Having an in-depth understanding of teamwork techniques and dynamics.
- Having an in-depth understanding of the planning, development and management of training programs.

#### B. Skills related to environmental analysis and the creation of strategic partnerships

The **environmental analysis** is of prime importance in managing an organization devoted to developing literacy and skills of adults. It represents the foundation for strategic planning. According to the Integrated Model, the deve-



development of relevant management skills occurs through an in-depth knowledge of the various aspects involved in effectively integrating an adult with low literacy skills into the job market or ensuring that he/she has the tools needed to carry out any other personal, family or community project. Among other things, several factors influence the managing of adult training services: the socio-economic context, job opportunities in the community, the cultural and community contexts, other educational resources and the cultural and language differences of Francophone learners who have to adapt to the specific conditions of an Anglophone-majority environment.

The task of creating effective **partnerships** ensuring the coherence and relevance of all aspects of the training services offered to the target client group also comes under well-informed management in an organization. This role involves the task of setting up co-operative arrangements within internal work teams, as well as among inter-organization work teams. The management role must help to redefine ways of working with community partners, in order to enable andragogical interventions that draw on the resources and expertise of multiple partners, when necessary.

### **Professional skills specific to a management role and related to the environmental analysis and the creation of strategic partnerships component**

We firmly believe that practitioners taking on a management role must develop skills that enable them to set up arrangements that ensure ongoing analysis of the environment, needs of target client groups and community contexts. These arrangements will be particularly helpful in establishing relevant integrated programming for adults with low literacy skills; they will take into consideration the philosophical, political, administrative and instructional issues

that affect any training program intended for adults with low literacy skills.

We also feel it would be wise for practitioners in a management role to develop skills to support the development and continuity of strategic partnerships, which are the cornerstones of integrated programming. To do so, they must, among other things, introduce conditions that ensure the development of practitioners' professional skills that foster intra-organization and inter-organization co-operation work (e.g., to enable practitioners to develop their own professional skills in an integrated way in supportive contexts).

### **C. Skills related to constructing an andragogical intervention**

This third component of the Integrated Model comes into play in a number of functions specific to a management role. According to the Model, andragogical interventions are implemented with a view to foster dual-level integration. The first integration level deals with the instructional arrangement where multiple types of skills are developed in an integrated way within the same intervention. The second integration level relates to partnerships that simultaneously offer adult training services that can be pooled.

### **Professional skills specific to a management role and related to the andragogical intervention component**

We feel it is useful for practitioners in a management role to also develop skills that help them support the creation of andragogical interventions, which are central to integrated training sessions. To do so, they must introduce conditions that will ensure the development of professional skills in the organization and its practitioners, fostering the creation of andragogical

interventions that take into consideration the results of the environmental analysis, address the complex and varied needs of the target client group and respect partners' different mandates.

#### **D. Skills related to feedback and reassessment of actions**

Within an organization, adopting the Integrated Model changes the management role significantly. The Reference Manual was designed to serve as a guide for organizations responsible for establishing effective, meaningful paths for client groups with low literacy skills. The constant interplay between the data provided by field experience and the theory underpinning the andragogical interventions creates a feedback loop as actions are reflected on and reassessed. This in turn creates the necessary validation tools to look at preferred andragogical approaches. Willingness and ability to solicit feedback from colleagues, partners and client groups is part of a real commitment to use reflective practice as a tool for questioning, development and continuous improvement for training programs offered to adult learners.

#### **Professional skills specific to a management role and related to the feedback and reassessment of actions component**

We advocate that practitioners in a management role acquire skills that promote the establishment of mechanisms that are likely to ensure ongoing evaluation of the multiple practices needed for integrated programming. These mechanisms will foster the systematic use of reflective review practices on projects and interventions. On the one hand, these reviews aim to improve the professional skills of the organization and its practitioners. On the other hand they aim to provide evaluation data that is essential to the ongoing enhancement of

services. This component will help maintain the sustainability of integrated programming for adults with low literacy skills, through systematic consideration of feedback and suggestions for improvement.

#### **Example – Management role**

##### **Task to be performed:**

A practitioner in a management role must convince community partners to be actively involved in preparing and delivering an intervention that is several weeks long. The training offered to a group of learners will have to incorporate the development of multiple skills for a job in the customer service or public service sector (office clerk in a tourism business, in a health agency, in a public institution, etc.).

##### **Skills to be called into play:**

This task may draw on soft skills: interactional skills, sense of initiative, sense of persuasion, ability to listen.

This task may draw on essential skills: written communication, document use, oral communication, numeracy, digital technology.

This task may draw on technical skills: meeting facilitation, ability to prepare financial packages, ability to write technical specifications.

##### **Knowledge to be called into play:**

*Examples of knowledge:* good understanding of the characteristics of the partners involved (respective mandates, resources available, limitations), good understanding of budgets and financial package models in adult training, good understanding of one's environment, good understanding of group dynamics and group facilitation strategies, good understanding of the local job market (especially in the service sector).



*Examples of know-how:* active listening ability, ability to run meetings among partners, ability to prepare appropriate financial packages for intervention purposes and based on the partners' realities, ability to do environmental analyses.

*Examples of soft skills:* showing confidence in designing complex financial packages (drawing on various sources), feeling at ease with a partnership approach, showing empathy towards partners and practitioners involved in setting up an intervention, ability to receive constructive criticism from partners.

### 3.2.2 Training role: Table of functions and related skills

In an integrated approach, the training role is definitely more complex because it now incorporates new skills. It is greatly enhanced in the Reference Manual since it is closely connected with the specific needs of adult learners in search of targeted training that can address their needs effectively.

According to the proposed Reference Manual, the following eight complementary functions define the training role that supports the andragogical approach promoted by the Integrated Model:

- Professional development, self-study and research
- Reflective practice
- Communication, co-operation and interpersonal relationships
- Planning the learning/teaching
- Training/teaching
- Group facilitation and management
- Advice (support, learning guide, educational assistance relationship)
- Evaluation

Each of these functions encompasses many skills, some being more typical of the training role and others specific to the new practices advocated by the Integrated Model. Two relatively new functions, namely *reflective practice* and *advice*, have been added to the training role to make them fully consistent with the ambitious objectives of this new approach.

Since a number of these skills are new to the training role, we felt it would be helpful to include a short list of theoretical knowledge needed to acquire or improve these skills. This list is not comprehensive, but covers the theoretical knowledge related to the new practices needed to establish and support the Integrated Model.

- Having an in-depth understanding of andragogical principles.
- Having an in-depth understanding of the RESDAC Integrated Model and all related documents.
- Having an in-depth understanding of the essential skills framework, its levels and the task-based approach.
- Being familiar with the latest research on andragogy, adult training, literacy and the competency-based approach.

- Having an in-depth understanding of the reality of being part of a linguistic and cultural minority and the impact this has on integration into the community and on learning.
- Having an in-depth understanding of the individual and collective aspects of literacy training for adults with low literacy skills.

Instead of commenting on all the skills identified for each function arising from the requirements of the Integrated Model we have focused on four components of the Model that make it stand out.

### **A. Skills related to the environmental analysis**

The environmental analysis is the base that supports these components of the Integrated Model: available community resources, types of client groups, needs of the client groups, local job market, etc. – and becomes essential to a number of functions that the trainer must carry out.

#### **Professional skills specific to a training role and related to the environmental analysis component**

We believe that practitioners taking on a training role must develop skills that support the learning of adults with low literacy skills within the current environment where client groups must continually adapt to changes. These practitioners must therefore develop an ability to analyze the needs of adults with low literacy skills and the community contexts in which they live, so they can constantly adjust their interventions. These skills will have an impact on all of their functions. They will influence the planning of learning activities, and they will determine educational support to learners.

We also believe that practitioners responsible for training must acquire abilities that enable them to support interventions that fit naturally into a competency-based approach. To do so,

they must have a relatively good understanding of the essential skills framework for levels 1 and 2, as well as sufficient knowledge of the concept of task complexity inherent to this framework. In their professional practice, they will thus be able to identify the abilities to be developed in their target client group. They will also be able to develop andragogical interventions that reflect adults' literacy and skill levels, as well as their multiple barriers to learning.

### **B. Skills related to creating strategic partnerships**

The second component of the Integrated Model impacts several functions in the training role. Co-operation among trainers is essential when creating partnerships with organizations that have different organizational cultures. Co-operation will strengthen the ongoing interactions required for the cohesion of projects managed in partnership as well as the collective evaluations of learning, resources and training tools. All these initiatives become essential to the training role in an integrated approach to develop the skills of adults with low literacy skills. Strategic partnerships have a particular impact on reflective practice, communication, co-operation, interpersonal relationships, planning and evaluation.

#### **Professional skills specific to a training role and related to the creation of strategic partnership component**

We believe that practitioners taking on a training role must develop skills to support the development and maintenance of integrated programs. To do so, they must master professional skills that are essential to the co-operation required for development and smooth operation of strategic partnerships (i.e., the professional abilities that foster intra-organization and inter-organization

co-operative work). We suggest that these practitioners acquire their own professional skills in an integrated way, within co-operative contexts.

### **C. Skills related to constructing an andragogical intervention**

The third component of the Integrated Model, constructing an andragogical intervention, reminds trainers of the need to adopt teaching techniques specific to the type of skills targeted by the intervention for adult learners with low literacy skills. Within an integrated intervention, learners can develop four types of skills: essential skills, soft skills, second-language skills and technical or specialized skills. In addition, the basic principle of an integrated andragogical intervention using the competency-based approach emphasizes hands-on experience focused on the application of skills, as opposed to learning that favours the acquisition of theoretical knowledge.

#### **Professional skills specific to a training role and related to constructing an andragogical intervention component**

We believe that practitioners responsible for training must develop skills that enable them to design interventions that are based on integrated programming for adults with low literacy skills. They must therefore get involved in a skills-acquisition process that creates and maintains programs that foster the development of multiple skills among learners. To that end, practitioners must be efficient in using the competency-based approach in their interventions. Naturally, a good understanding of the four skill categories and their interactions is also a prerequisite to this particular training process.

Practitioners must also develop the professional skills needed to prepare and use andragogical strategies that promote experiential learning

with adults with low literacy skills; this approach will facilitate the development and transfer of knowledge and skills in this client group. Lastly, these practitioners must grasp the impacts of a transition to an Anglophone-dominant environment and the need to have second-language skills.

### **D. Skills related to feedback and reassessment of actions**

The new approach proposed by the Integrated Model leans toward andragogical coherence: in accordance with one of its underlying principles, namely reflective practice, it is considered an on-going process, open to improvements and one that takes on its full meaning in an evolving dynamic. The last component of the Integrated Model, feedback and reassessment of actions – which could also be called “reflective review on experience” – applies to all functions that fall to the training role.

#### **Professional skills specific to a training role and related to the feedback and reassessment of actions component**

We feel that practitioners taking on a training role must develop their professional skills in alternating theory/practice contexts. Through this method, practitioners can transfer their professional skills to various intervention contexts, where applicable.

To do so, practitioners must cultivate the ability to do reflective reviews on projects and on their interventions. They will be able to draw on the reviews and continuously improve training and learning support services provided to their clients. Practitioners must be able to use those reflective reviews to round out their own professional skills and refine their practices from an ongoing professional development perspective.

## Example – Training role

### Task to be performed:

A practitioner taking on a training role in his/her organization has to set up, facilitate and coach simulations with a group of learners in a sensitive customer service context (communication with a dissatisfied customer) or in a difficult public service context (communication with a concerned citizen).

### Skills to be called into play:

This task may draw on soft skills: interactional skills, sense of organization, sense of observation, ability to learn from one's experiences.

This task may draw on essential skills: oral communication, teamwork, ability to reason.

This task may draw on technical skills: group facilitation, learning activity planning, designing observation checklists, and ability to give feedback.

### Knowledge to be called into play:

*Examples of knowledge:* an understanding of

the importance of active listening and its methodology for good communication, good understanding of group dynamics and group facilitation strategies, good understanding of the principles and protocols of good customer or public service, good understanding of feedback techniques, etc.

*Examples of know-how:* ability to apply active listening, ability to manage the right to speak in a small learning group, ability to use observation checklists effectively and strategically, ability to use feedback at the right time and in the right way, ability to set and express clear learning objectives.

*Examples of soft skills:* showing empathy towards learners in a group learning situation, showing confidence in setting up, facilitating and coaching a simulation, feeling comfortable with a learning group, showing openness to asking for help when part of the task draws on the expertise of a colleague or learner, good mechanisms for providing feedback.

## 3.2.3 Design role: Table of functions and related skills

The design role acts as a bridge between training and management roles in an organization. The RESDAC Integrated Model attributes more importance to this role than traditional models do since all of its components, used optimally, serve to round out its various functions.

In the Integrated Model, the design aspect has a stand-alone role, since it is essential in establishing the integrated andragogical approach.

Because of its nature, we felt it necessary to include a short list of theoretical knowledge needed to acquire and improve some of the skills specific to this role. This list is not comprehensive, but it outlines the theoretical knowledge directly connected to the new practices required by the Integrated Model.

- Having an in-depth understanding of andragogical principles.
- Having an in-depth understanding of the RESDAC Integrated Model and all related documents.
- Having an in-depth understanding of the individual and collective aspects of literacy for adults with low literacy skills.
- Having an in-depth understanding of the socio-educational needs of learners with low literacy skills, based on the reality and resources of the environment.
- Having an in-depth understanding of the socio-cultural reality of learners with low literacy skills.
- Having an in-depth understanding of relevant andragogical approaches for adults with low literacy skills.
- Having an in-depth knowledge of the relevant instructional resources needed for the competency-based approach for adult learners with low literacy skills; understanding the possibilities for using, adapting or creating resources to address the learning contexts promoted by the andragogical interventions.
- Being familiar with the latest research on andragogy, adult training, literacy and the competency-based approach.
- Having an in-depth understanding of the competency-based approach to support andragogical interventions.
- Having an in-depth understanding of the concepts of skills, essential skills, soft skills, second-language skills, technical skills, the transferring process of acquired skills, self-directed learning, all of these serving to support andragogical interventions/designs.
- Having an in-depth understanding of the various issues that affect learning: the psychological and cognitive reality of learners with low literacy skills, their multiple and complex needs in terms of skills development and the learning difficulties they may have (e.g., addiction problems, health problems, difficult family situation, housing needs, disabilities, etc.).
- Having an in-depth understanding of the reality of a linguistic and cultural minority and its impact on integration into the community and on learning.
- Having an in-depth understanding of the strategic partnership approach to support andragogical interventions.
- Having an in-depth understanding of the learning opportunities and training options in the community that support andragogical interventions.
- Having an in-depth understanding of instructional approaches, methods and means that are beneficial in various learning contexts for adults with low literacy skills in support of andragogical interventions.

The seven main functions in the design role break down as follows:

- Personal development and self-study
- Reflective practice
- Work group facilitation and management
- Environmental analysis
- Relationships with partners
- Design of andragogical interventions or projects
- Evaluation of the interventions

### **A. Skills related to the environmental analysis**

The **environmental analysis** is a component of the Integrated Model that gives a well-defined direction to the role of designing **andragogical interventions**. Practitioners in the design role have to be able to rely on an in-depth knowledge of the socio-educational needs and socio-cultural reality of adult learners, as well as the multiple factors that determine their ability to become fully involved in a successful learning process. It is a prerequisite to preparing a training session that adheres to the realities of a client group faced with multiple adaptation and performance challenges. A careful reading of the Integrated Model reveals the importance of this component in the process leading to the design and set-up of effective andragogical interventions. It is both tightly aligned with the opportunities that the community offers and based on the specific needs of the client group.

#### **Professional skills specific to a design role and related to the environmental analysis component**

We believe that practitioners taking on a design role must develop skills that enable them to accurately read the environment, analyze the needs of the target client group and the environment's community context (analyses of the socio-economic, cultural and educational contexts) and to design custom, relevant training projects for adults with low literacy skills.

We also believe that practitioners taking on a design role must draw on skills specific to designing interventions that fit easily into a competency-based approach. To do so, they must demonstrate a satisfactory understanding of the conditions needed to develop skills (alternating theory/practice, ongoing construction of knowledge in various contexts, etc.). They must also have an adequate knowledge of the essential skills framework (especially levels 1 and 2), and

exhibit sufficient understanding of the concept of task complexity inherent in that framework to better evaluate the abilities of their client group. To that end, it will be helpful for them to develop design skills that consider the negative effects of low literacy levels on adults and the learning barriers they face. Those two factors have considerable impact on their motivation to learn and on the andragogical strategies intended to remedy them.

Lastly, these practitioners have to develop abilities to design integrated programming for adults with low literacy skills. Those skills will have to reflect actual knowledge of the philosophical, political, administrative and instructional issues that come into play when preparing an integrated training session partly driven by the environmental analysis.

### **B. Skills related to the creation of strategic partnerships**

Creating **strategic partnerships** also involves its own logic and requires flexibility, openness and motivation. The teamwork and co-ordination involved in choosing and developing instructional tools and resources will have an impact on the design and set-up stages of an andragogical intervention geared to the needs of adults with low literacy skills.

#### **Professional skills specific to a design role and related to the creation of strategic partnership component**

We feel that practitioners responsible for a design role must develop skills to improve their ability to design, implement and maintain integrated programs, in the context of strategic partnerships. In preparing their intervention, they must combine the resources of various programs or services in order to foster the development of appropriate skills, based on the needs of



the target adults. They must combine programs and services devoted to developing literacy skills and specialized skills within the same intervention. They must also put together andragogical interventions that encourage intra and inter-organization co-operation work.

### **C. Skills related to constructing an andragogical intervention**

The third component of the Integrated Model, constructing an andragogical intervention, suggests that the design role requires awareness of the environment and an in-depth understanding of the competency-based approach, since interventions need to target the appropriate skill categories. The goal of these interventions is to align the kinds of targeted skills and needs identified by the analysis, with the learners having low literacy skills. Within an andragogical intervention, four types of skills may be targeted among learners: essential skills, soft skills, second-language skills and technical or specialized skills. In addition, the basic principle of an integrated andragogical intervention, focused on the competency-based approach, always relies on the strategic interplay of theory and practice to ensure the harmonious development of skills and emphasize real life experience. The goal of this role is to plan andragogical interventions that result in successful learning experiences that are also economical time-wise.

#### **The professional skills specific to a design role and related to the construction of an andragogical intervention component**

We believe that practitioners taking on a design role must acquire specific professional skills for designing andragogical interventions or projects that are based on integrated programming, targeting multiple skills for adults with low literacy skills. Practitioners must therefore develop skills that will help them be more efficient in

using the competency-based approach in the various stages of designing their interventions. In cases where interventions require that learners acquire multiple skills, they must also possess an adequate understanding of the four skill categories and their interactions. Along with that understanding, practitioners must be able to establish and break down the various types of skills that can be instilled in adults with low literacy skills, depending on their needs.

These practitioners must exhibit a good understanding of the new integrated programming opportunities that use a broader range of skills than those used in traditional adult literacy training approaches. Moreover, development of those professional skills is essential in order to support the practitioners' abilities to design and use andragogical strategies focussing on experiential learning and hands-on learning. This direction is a prerequisite, not just for skills acquisition in the learners, but also for transferring knowledge and skills to them.

Lastly, these practitioners must be aware of the impact of learners' transitioning to an Anglo-dominant environment and their need to develop some second-language skills. That awareness is essential in order to provide learners with a smooth transition towards their goals (e.g., particular jobs, training and trade apprenticeships). It rests on the assumption of a number of contextual aspects: the learning can be done in French even if adult learners must then transfer their learning to another cultural and linguistic environment (namely English). English is frequently the language that paves the way to the job market, which obviously increases the value of being a Francophone with English language skills. English is also often the language that facilitates integration into society and the community to which one belongs; it only adds to the value of being a Francophone with English language skills, when necessary.



#### **D. Skills related to feedback and reassessment of actions**

From the perspective of the Integrated Model, **feedback and reassessment of actions** applied to the design of a training program acquire a greater, much more demanding dimension than what is seen in conventional literacy training. The four components of the Integrated Model ultimately have only one overall goal: to firmly align learning methods with the complexities of the environment by maximizing its potential for the benefit of a client group that faces significant personal and occupational challenges. Feedback and reassessment of actions, tailored to the design role, form a large share of the skills required in carrying out this role.

#### **The professional skills specific to a design role and related to the feedback and reassessment of actions component**

We are convinced that practitioners responsible for design must exhibit skills specific to constructing andragogical interventions or projects that seek to develop skills in contexts that alternate between theory and practice. That alternation framework is also needed to foster the transfer of their own professional skills to various intervention contexts. Along the same lines, interventions require that practitioners in a design role conduct reflective reviews of projects so they can ensure ongoing improvement of the services they provide. These reflective reviews also ensure the development of their own professional skills and, thereby, the constant improvement of their practices.

#### **Example – Design role**

##### **Task to be performed:**

A practitioner playing a design role in his/her organization has to design a multi-week intervention targeting a group of learners with low literacy skills in a training context. The training incorporates multiple skills for working in customer service or the public service sector (clerk in an office, in a tourism company, in a health agency, in a public institution, etc.).

##### **Skills to be called into play:**

This task may draw on soft skills: interactional skills, teamwork, sense of creativity, sense of initiative, overall vision.

This task may draw on essential skills: written communication, digital technology, reasoning ability.

This task may draw on technical skills: andragogical design techniques, program planning, schedule design, ability to do documentary research.

##### **Knowledge to be called into play:**

*Examples of knowledge:* good understanding of the characteristics of the partners involved (respective mandates, resources available, limitations, etc.), good understanding of the competency-based approach and the nature of the various skill categories, good understanding of andragogical design methodology, good understanding of group dynamics and group facilitation strategies, good understanding of the principles and protocols of good customer or public service.

*Examples of know-how:* ability to manage group work among partners, ability to use andragogical models that are appropriate for intervention purposes and for partners' realities, ability to determine the skill categories to be developed based on the purposes of the intervention, ability to set and share clear, consistent learning objectives aligned with the purposes of an andragogical intervention.

*Examples of soft skills:* showing confidence in designing interventions that are complex (drawing on the development of various types of skills) and multi-faceted (drawing on the involvement of multiple programs/partners), feeling comfortable with a partnership approach, showing empathy towards partners and practitioners involved in constructing an intervention, exhibiting openness to asking for assistance when part of the task calls for a partner's expertise, ability to receive constructive criticism from partners.

### 3.3 Profiles of predominant professional skills for performing functions specific to each major role

This Reference Manual contains descriptions of various types of professional skills that can support the performance of tasks for each of the three major roles. Those skills are also identified based on their *predominance* for the *training* and *design role*. Presenting the professional skills under four categories according to their predominance helps to illustrate the diversity of professional skills to be developed in an organization. The adapting and setting up of internal professional skills development initiatives is then facilitated.

These four skill types are thus referred to by the term **professional skills** and are categorized in two separate groups: technical or specialized skills are on their own, while essential, generic and second-language skills are referred to as core skills.

The Reference Manual therefore contains four types of professional skills to be developed by practitioners in an organization:

- Technical/specialized skills
- Core Skills :
  - Essential skills
  - Soft skills
  - Second-language skills

When an adult education practitioner carries out a task, we believe that the four types of professional skills delineated according to their predominance all dovetail – with one skill complementing or supporting another, regardless of its type – as part of the various professional practices specific to the assigned roles and functions. (Those skills are also defined in section 2.2.2 on page 26.)

### 3.3.1 Technical or specialized skills

The first category of professional skills refers to technical or specialized skills.

For the training role, they are skills that support such things as the application of andragogical methodology, means and techniques with learners. For the management role, they are skills that support such things as the ability to recruit, train

and recognize competent staff. Lastly, for the design role, they are skills that enable the design of andragogical interventions or projects for adults in training. These types of skills are specific to the various roles found in adult education organizations and practitioners.

### 3.3.2 Core skills

The second major professional skills category includes soft skills, essential skills and second-language skills.

Research tends to show that soft skills are indispensable professional skills for effective human resources development, especially in the service sectors such as the adult training environment. In some settings, they act as trade or occupation-specific professional skills (e.g., in the sense of observation for the evaluation function in the training role) and, in other settings, as core skills supporting the development of other types of professional skills.

#### Soft skills:

Research tends to show that soft skills are essential professional skills for effective human resources development, and even more so in the service sectors such as the adult education sector. In some settings, they act as trade or occupation-specific skills (e.g., in the sense of observation for the evaluation function in the training role) and, in other settings, as core skills supporting the development of other types of professional skills.

#### Essential skills:

Among the nine essential skills, some fall more under *knowledge*, while others are more like *soft skills*. Reasoning ability, teamwork, verbal communication and ongoing training are essential soft skills that are gaining importance in the working world, just like the essential skill in computer use or digital technology. As with other generic skills, these skills may sometimes be like trade or occupation-specific professional skills (e.g. *working with others* for the *Relationships with partners* function in the design role).

#### Second-language skills:

Practitioners have to be aware of the special needs of Francophone learners in a minority language setting and be aware that they are exposed to two languages that do not occupy the same public and private spaces (work, advertising, day-to-day, media, social life, recreation, economy, politics, etc.). They must therefore support Francophone learners in developing their language skills so that they can carry out their personal and occupational plans and contribute actively to their community. To that effect, second-language skills become professional skills for practitioners and organizations operating in these communities.



## CONCLUSION

This Reference Manual is first and foremost a framework providing organizations with markers to help them facilitate and guide the development of professional practices for work teams based on an integrated andragogical approach relying on the RESDAC Model.

As such, the Reference Manual is primarily intended for organizations rather than individuals. We recognize that professional skills development is a shared responsibility and that, as such, everyone should take the initiative to be informed, update their skills and commit to self-study. However, responsibility for suggesting training and skills development is usually seen as an organization's responsibility. Generally speaking, such training is tailored to the workplace's specific needs. It is then important to ***organize work in ways that foster the development of its members' skills, both individually and collectively.***

### The Reference Manual: A skills framework and a guide for thought and action

Both the Integrated Model and the Reference Manual are intended to be constantly evolving and developing in response to what is happening in the field. Neither is meant to be an instruction manual that applies in all circumstances. The Reference Manual does not simply provide new ideas; it is a collection of tried and true recipes and directions guiding and driving a process that is as necessary as it is demanding: the process of updating and rethinking the fundamental nature of the three roles of **management, design** and **training**, which are essential

to the smooth operation of organizations devoted to adult learners with low literacy skills.

Five basic features set this Reference Manual apart from other similar tools:

- 1) An emphasis on taking into account the specific aspects contributed by the four components of the Integrated Model: **analyzing the environment, creating strategic partnerships, constructing andragogical interventions, and feedback and reassessment of actions.**
- 2) An obvious propensity to favour an ongoing skills acquisition process among organizations and their practitioners.
- 3) A clear emphasis on the design role, which has been rather neglected to date in adult education contexts.
- 4) The addition of functions pertaining to each of the three roles, aligned with the elements of the RESDAC Integrated Model.
- 5) A description of original skills that faithfully reflect the four components of the Integrated Model.

It is important to mention another central aspect of this Reference Manual resulting from the principles advocated by the Integrated Model: encouraging organizations to ***organize work in such a way that fosters the development of its members' skills, individually and collectively.*** The ongoing and often problematic challenge of skills development must fit into a

collaborative perspective and framework, which *de facto* transforms it into a value-added process that can then be described as group skills acquisition (Le Boterf, 2008). The Reference Manual can therefore be considered as part of the solution to the following question: ***What skills does my organization need to promote the establishment of andragogical practices that are based on the RESDAC Integrated Model?***

### **The Reference Manual: A tool for organizations to promote ongoing skills development and the constant use of reflective reviews**

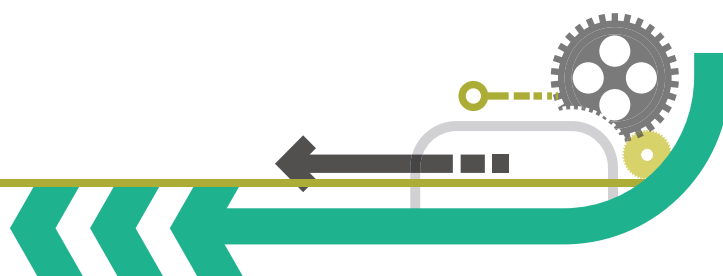
Another crucial contribution that the Reference Manual makes while redefining the complex dynamic involved in skills acquisition processes is that it proposes that the component related to evaluation and reassessment of actions is an important dimension of professionalism.

To promote the ongoing development of individual and collective skills, organizations must provide spaces that encourage reflection and skills transfer among their employees. They will thus be able to enhance their professional skills and behaviours – not just knowledge – since they will benefit from being in different settings

that encourage them to examine their own newly developed skills. **It is only in conditions conducive to an interplay of thought and action, promoted by their organizations, that adult education practitioners will be able to act with competence and relevance in various professional situations.** According to Le Boterf (2008) [free translation] “*it is operating in a spiral that enables gradual knowledge accumulation and building. A sequential flow where you do not review past steps would result in poor collective learning.*” For this reason, we feel that reflecting upon past experience are an essential fine-tuning strategy, at the very heart of the Reference Manual.

The systematic encouragement to turn to constructive questioning clearly illustrates the nature of the Reference Manual, inspiring rather than limiting, stimulating and mobilizing rather than constraining and narrowing. In keeping with the logic that it advocates, the Reference Manual calls for its own improvement and invites its designers as well as its users to set new milestones in the search for winning strategies focussed on developing the professional skills of adult training organizations and practitioners.

## APPENDIX 1



### Table of Skills Required for the Management Role

Related to project and organization management
Ability to identify and clearly express to the Board of Directors the issues facing the organization and to provide the information and training needed to support the Board in its decision-making.
Ability to communicate the impact of the Board of Directors' activity and decisions to employees to facilitate internal alignment.
Ability to optimize the potential of all human resources (staff, volunteers and Board members).
Ability to use oral and written French as a communication tool.
Adequate proficiency in English to be able to participate in meetings of key community players.
Ability to apply effective communication techniques with one's staff members.
Ability to create and motivate teams within and outside the organization.
Proficiency in digital technologies.
Ability to position interventions within a research process.
Ability to resolve conflicts.
Ability to prepare an orientation and training process to help volunteers in their role.
Ability to recruit, train and acknowledge competent staff.
Ability to support staff in their various tasks.
Ability to develop program objectives and structure business plans and work plans.
Ability to act various intervention steps or functions.
Ability to gather, prepare and report statistical and program information.
Ability to act effectively and creatively in the best interest of the organization and work at establishing policies that will have a positive impact on the target client group and the community.
Ability to provide the organization with leadership regarding ethical issues.
Ability to foster a workplace and organizational environment where learning, in all its various forms, is permanent and ongoing.
Ability to assess opportunities and actions against trends and conditions specific to the organization's environment, vision and values.
Ability to apply decision-making tools in preparing problem-solving strategies using a systemic approach.
Ability to optimize the use of various approaches in searching for funding and multiple public relations and marketing programs.

<b>Related to project and organization management (cont'd)</b>
Ability to ensure the wise use of funds and resources.
Ability to create an organizational environment where people exhibit creativity and innovation in performing their tasks and dealing with challenges.
Ability to ensure the effective use of research and information technology tools to achieve goals and fulfill the organization's mission.
Ability to provide leadership in preparing plans and evaluating program effectiveness and ensure a high level of commitment within and beyond the organisation.
Ability to anticipate, react and adjust the approach and style to different leadership tasks.
Ability to make difficult staffing decisions (e.g., vacation preferences, salary increases, layoffs) based on logic and a coherent philosophy.
Ability to assess the relationship between economic and political systems and the organization and its mission.
Ability to move from theory and knowledge to action to manage the organization efficiently.
Ability to act independently, to be self-motivated and demonstrate one's commitment to the organization.
Ability to position interventions within a research process.
<b>Related to the environmental analysis and the creation of strategic partnerships</b>
Ability to conduct environmental analyses based on the socio-economic context, cultural context and educational resources in the community and to consider them during strategic planning.
Ability to establish a vision with stakeholders and guide individuals and groups in promoting and sharing and achieving the vision.
Ability to be alert to changes in the community, the workplace and in the surrounding training environments and to take these changes into account during strategic planning.
Ability to recognize the continued viability of current programs in meeting the needs of the client group and the community.
Ability to act wisely and sympathetically in relationships and never lose sight of the political repercussions of one's actions.
Ability to represent the organization effectively, as a public figure.
Ability to establish and maintain effective links among people, the organization's members and the community.
Ability to optimize the use of communication technologies.
Ability to build a stronger organization and community using multiple talents and qualities.
Ability to find creative ways to resolve problems while keeping a global perspective.

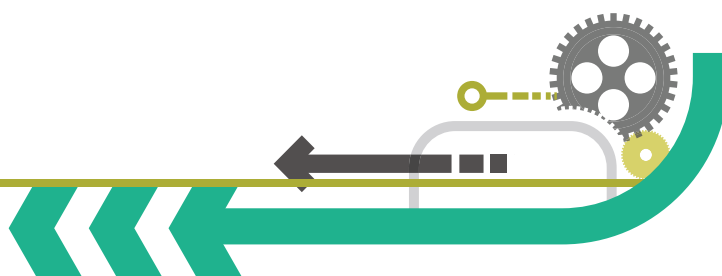


<b>Related to the environmental analysis and the creation of strategic partnerships (cont'd)</b>
Ability to apply integrative strategic analysis to the evaluation of products, services and processes.
Ability to adjust one's leadership style to fit the public and the context.
Ability to act quickly and firmly in crises situations.
Ability to recognize phases in the change process and the importance of flexibility and negotiation.
Ability to be flexible when reviewing plans and strategic objectives to reduce the impact of negative trends or to leverage new opportunities.
Ability to react and report to multiple people, organizations and partners.
Ability to critically analyze prior outcomes and the viability of current programs in the context of a changing external environment (e.g., demographics, economy, funding) and to leverage the potential of each program.
Ability to set high standards for oneself and others and to monitor practices.
<b>Related to constructing custom andragogical interventions</b>
Ability to develop an informal network of reliable advisors, within and outside of the organization, to request advice and support as needed.
Ability to identify the different types of skills to be developed in a group of learners based on their needs (educational, socio-economic, cultural, language-related...), and to consider them during strategic planning.
Ability to gather, prepare and report ongoing information regarding the job market, educational resources, socio-economic and cultural contexts.
Ability to facilitate staff meetings and meetings with partners.
Sensitivity to the cultural, linguistic and personal diversity of partners.
Sensitivity to different ways of participating in partnerships.
Ability to establish and promote an atmosphere of mutual trust, understanding and co-operation among partners.
Ability to apply effective communication techniques among partners.
Ability to collaborate efficiently with partners.
Ability to apply ongoing evaluation techniques to assess programs and partnerships.
Ability to establish measures and practices to track and assess plans and related processes.
Ability to adopt a continuous improvement approach to review plans and comment about them.
Ability to evaluate initiatives in order to offer relevant and timely quality training programs; through benchmarking, identify opportunities for improvement.

<b>Related to the environmental analysis and the creation of strategic partnerships (cont'd)</b>
Ability to apply integrative strategic analysis to the evaluation of products, services and processes.
Ability to adjust one's leadership style to fit the public and the context.
Ability to act quickly and firmly in crises situations.
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<b>Related to constructing custom andragogical interventions</b>
Ability to develop an informal network of reliable advisors, within and outside of the organization, to request advice and support as needed.
Ability to identify the different types of skills to be developed in a group of learners based on their needs (educational, socio-economic, cultural, language-related...), and to consider them during strategic planning.
Ability to gather, prepare and report ongoing information regarding the job market, educational resources, socio-economic and cultural contexts.
Ability to facilitate staff meetings and meetings with partners.
Sensitivity to the cultural, linguistic and personal diversity of partners.
Sensitivity to different ways of participating in partnerships.
Ability to establish and promote an atmosphere of mutual trust, understanding and co-operation among partners.
Ability to apply effective communication techniques among partners.
Ability to collaborate efficiently with partners.
Ability to apply ongoing evaluation techniques to assess programs and partnerships.
Ability to establish measures and practices to track and assess plans and related processes.
Ability to adopt a continuous improvement approach to review plans and comment about them.
Ability to evaluate initiatives in order to offer relevant and timely quality training programs; through benchmarking, identify opportunities for improvement.

Related to feedback and reassessment of actions
Ability to design operational systems and mechanisms that incorporate a regular procedure for evaluating projects, interventions or programs within a collaborative process.
Ability to adjust operational systems and mechanisms, taking into account the results from training program, intervention or project evaluations.
Ability to ensure that adjustments made based on project, program or intervention evaluations meet internal expectations and those of partners.
Ability to provide regular and frequent feedback to partners about the results of the organization's evaluations.
Ability to gather, prepare and report statistical information about the organization's progress.
Ability to assess the needs of one's organization based on the community's socio-economic context, the cultural context and the organization's and partners' mandates and resources.
Ability to apply ongoing evaluation techniques to assess the organization.
Ability to confirm that the organization's evaluation tools meet the criteria required to obtain valid results.
Ability to select suitable evaluation activities to reflect expected results for the organization.

## APPENDIX 2



### Table of Skills Required for the Training Role

Function	Skill	Predominant Skill
<b>Professional development/ Self-study/ Research</b>	Proficiency in oral and written French.	Essential skills (reading, writing and oral communication)
	Proficiency in digital technologies.	Essential skill (computers)
	Ability to be alert to new technological developments that can be incorporated into training.	Technical skill
	Proficiency in second-language skills needed to support and train learners.	Second-language skills
	Proficiency in essential and soft skills required to support and train learners.	Essential and soft skills
	Ability to be alert to changes in the workplace, community and surrounding training environments, to prepare the integration of learners into these settings adequately.	Technical skill
	Ability to position andragogical practices within a research process.	Soft skill
	Ability to set realistic objectives to pursue one's personal and professional development.	Soft skill
	Ability to get involved in professional development activities on a regular basis.	Essential skill (continuous learning)
	Ability to integrate one's professional development objectives and activities into a self-study plan.	Technical skill
	Ability to stay current on the latest research in andragogy, adult training, literacy and essential skills.	Essential skill (continuous learning)
<b>Reflective practice</b>	Ability to look critically at training tools and resources (in paper, digital format or otherwise) belonging to one's organization and to partners based on learning contexts, learners' needs, work or training contexts in the surrounding community.	Technical skill
	Ability to accept constructive criticism from learners, colleagues and partners and to give constructive criticism.	Soft skill
	Ability to take a critical look at one's professional practice.	Soft skill
	Ability to evaluate one's professional practice based on an established, recognized ethical framework.	Technical skill

Function	Skill	Predominant Skill
<b>Reflective practice</b>	Ability to reflect on one's place as a Francophone in a minority setting and on the role of the French language and Francophone culture in one's own life and in one's professional practice.	Soft skill
	Ability to draw on andragogical research to improve interventions.	Technical skill
	Ability to adjust interventions and practices based on evaluations, feedback, reflective reviews and research.	Soft skill
<b>Group facilitation/management</b>	Ability to facilitate small groups of learners.	Technical skill
	Ability to engage in active listening and open and closed questioning.	Technical skill
	Sensitivity to the cultural, linguistic and personal diversity of learners.	Soft skill
	Ability to encourage and respond to feedback from learners.	Technical skill
	Sensitivity to different ways of participating depending on individual and cultural factors.	Soft skill
	Ability to make adjustments in learning groups that align with the learning styles and behaviours of individuals.	Technical skill
	Ability to create and promote an atmosphere of mutual trust, understanding and partnership in groups of learners.	Technical skill
	Ability to encourage learners to share their ideas, ask questions, make comments and work together.	Technical skill
<b>Communication/co-operation/interpersonal relationships</b>	Ability to apply effective communication techniques with learners.	Technical skill
	Ability to use French as a communication tool.	Essential skills (writing, oral communication)
	Ability to use clear, simple language in one's oral and written communication.	Technical skill
	Ability to present information in an appropriate tone, style and pace to train adults and learners in the group.	Technical skill
	Ability to participate in teamwork, with staff in the organization and partners and other resources in the community.	Essential skill (teamwork)
<b>Planning the learning</b>	Ability to plan training and learning activities alone, in a team and with partners.	Technical skill
	Ability to plan training in connection with the learner's plan, the program mandate and available resources.	Technical skill
	Ability to plan training in connection with that provided by partner organizations.	Technical skill
	Ability to break down the skills to be developed into knowledge (knowledge, know-how and soft skills).	Technical skill

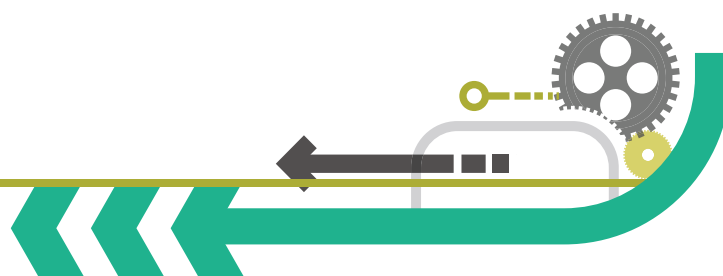
Function	Skill	Predominant Skill
<b>Planning the learning</b>	Ability to design learning activities based on the objectives in the learner's plan, on the skills to be developed and the implicit knowledge of those skills.	Technical skill
	Ability to design learning activities based on assessment activities planned to demonstrate progress.	Technical skill
	Ability to design the most genuine learning activities possible in connection with the learner's goal.	Technical skill
	Ability to design learning activities that incorporate the knowledge required to develop second-language skills, where relevant.	Technical and second-language skill
	Ability to plan learning activities that enable the learner to engage in self-study.	Technical skill
	Ability to plan activities that enable the learner to use his/her essential, soft and second-language skills.	Technical and second-language skill
	Ability to organize learning activities into manageable and sequential units.	Technical skill
	Ability to incorporate the use of computer and information technology into the design of learning activities.	Technical skill
	Ability to design learning activities that match different learning styles.	Technical skill
	Ability to design learning activities that ensure the learning is transferred to the learners' daily activities.	Technical skill
	Ability to incorporate cultural pride and membership in the Francophone community into learning activities.	Technical skill
	Ability to consider the psychological and cognitive reality of adult learners when planning learning activities.	Technical skill
	Ability to select and use authentic materials to support learning activities, when possible and relevant.	Technical skill
	Ability to select, use and create teaching materials to support learning activities, when relevant.	Technical skill
<b>Assessment and evaluation</b>	Ability to set learning goals and objectives for the learner along with him/her and based on his/her literacy level in various skills and in accordance with the requirements of his/her goals.	Technical skill
	Ability to gather information about the learner's employment, educational and learning experiences.	Technical skill
	Ability to determine the learner's literacy level in the skills needed to reach his/her goal.	Technical skill
	Ability to evaluate learners' needs based on their community's socio-economic and cultural contexts as well as the mandates and resources of one's organization and those of partners.	Technical skill

Function	Skill	Predominant Skill
<b>Assessment and evaluation</b>	Ability to apply ongoing evaluation techniques to the newly developed learnings.	Technical skill
	Ability to confirm that evaluation tools meet the criteria required to obtain valid results.	Technical skill
	Ability to select suitable evaluation activities that reflect the learner's progress and his/her ability to transfer the newly developed learnings to concrete, real applications related to his/her goal.	Technical skill
	Ability to ensure that learning evaluation tools are geared towards significant tasks relating to the learner's goals.	Technical skill
	Ability to ensure that evaluation activities meet funders' and partners' requirements.	Technical skill
	Ability to ensure that the knowledge and skills included in evaluation activities have been covered in learning activities.	Technical skill
	Ability to make the connection between exit evaluation activities and the learner's objectives as defined in his/her learning plan.	Technical skill
	Ability to ensure that evaluation processes are confidential.	Technical skill
	Ability to encourage regular evaluation within a co-operative process with the learner.	Technical skill
	Ability to provide opportunities to help the learner evaluate his/her own strengths and needs.	Technical skill
	Ability to provide learners with regular and frequent feedback on their progress in a formal and informal way.	Technical skill
	Ability to detect learning difficulties in order to act accordingly with learners.	Technical skill
	Ability to ask for feedback from learners on the learning process and to change the process if necessary.	Technical skill
	Ability to integrate the results of the diagnostic assessment into a learning plan approved by the learner.	Technical skill
	Ability to gather, prepare and report statistical information on learners' progress.	Technical skill
<b>Training</b>	Ability to use a variety of training methodology.	Technical skill
	Ability to use oral and written French as a training tool.	Technical skill
	Ability to use digital technologies as teaching tools.	Technical skill
	Ability to implement andragogical approaches and methodology.	Technical skill
	Ability to help the learner transfer the skills developed into daily life, when relevant.	Technical skill
	Ability to gear training towards skills development through tasks.	Technical skill



Function	Skill	Predominant Skill
<b>Training</b>	Ability to use genuine resources during training, when relevant.	Technical skill
	Ability to gather, prepare and report statistical information about learning activities.	Technical skill
	Ability to consult relevant research to support training.	Technical skill
<b>Advice (support, learning guidance, education helping relationship)</b>	Ability to apply and limit helping and interpersonal relationship techniques to an educational role.	Technical skill
	Ability to associate with learners as partners in all steps of the learning process.	Technical skill
	Ability to involve the learner in preparing and modifying his/her learning plan to clarify his/her learning objectives and explore training options.	Technical skill
	Ability to help the learner identify learning objectives that are measurable and realistic.	Technical skill
	Ability to help the learner develop a realistic vision of his/her optimum potential.	Technical skill
	Ability to work with the learner to set out learning activities and evaluation activities.	Technical skill
	Ability to equip the learner so that he/she can apply the developed skills in concrete, actual applications connected with his/her goal.	Technical skill
	Ability to facilitate independent and self-directed learning through structured learning activities.	Technical skill
	Ability to provide direction and address the learner's needs appropriately.	Technical skill
	Ability to take into account the various issues that affect learning (e.g., addiction problems, health problems, difficult family situation, housing needs, disabilities, etc.) and point the learner to support services when necessary.	Technical skill
	Ability to take into account the psychological and cognitive reality and learning difficulties during interventions with learners.	Technical skill
	Ability to gather, prepare and report statistical information about the referral of learners.	Technical skill

## APPENDIX 3



### Table of Skills Required for the Design Role

Function	Skill	Type of Predominant Skill
<b>Professional development/ Self-study/ Research</b>	Proficiency in oral and written French.	Essential skills (reading, writing and oral communication)
	Ability to use writing in designing andragogical activities.	Technical skill
	Have the level of essential and soft skills required to design andragogical interventions or projects.	Essential (reading and writing) and soft skills
	Ability to use digital technologies as a tool to design andragogical activities.	Essential (computers) and technical skill
	Ability to get involved in professional development activities on a regular basis.	Essential skill (continuous learning)
	Ability to set realistic objectives to pursue one's own professional development.	Soft skill
	Ability to integrate one's own professional development objectives and activities into a self-study plan.	Technical skill
	Ability to get involved in reflective practice processes.	Soft skill
	Ability to stay current on the latest research in andragogy, adult training, literacy and essential skills.	Essential skill (continuous learning)
	Ability to position andragogical practices within a research process.	Technical skill
<b>Reflective practice</b>	Ability to look critically at training tools and resources (in paper, digital or other format) and andragogical practices of one's organization and those of partners based on learning contexts, the type of interventions (and partners, if applicable), learners' needs, skills to be developed or work or training contexts in the community.	Soft and essential skills
	Ability to accept constructive criticism from colleagues and partners and to give constructive criticism.	Soft skill
	Ability to adjust the interventions and practices based on evaluations, feedback, reflective reviews and research.	Soft skill
	Ability to take a step back and reflect critically upon one's professional practice.	Soft skill

Function	Skill	Type of Predominant Skill
<b>Reflective practice</b>	Ability to assess one's professional practice based on an established, recognized ethical framework.	Soft skill
	Ability to reflect on one's place as a Francophone in a minority environment and on the role of the French language and culture in one's own life and in one's professional practice.	Soft skill
	Ability to include andragogical interventions or projects into a continuous development process.	Soft skill
<b>Work group facilitation/management</b>	Ability to facilitate small work groups with colleagues or partners.	Technical skill
	Sensitivity to the cultural, linguistic and personal diversity of partners.	Soft skill
	Sensitivity to different ways of participating, depending on the partners.	Soft skill
	Ability to create and promote an atmosphere of mutual trust, understanding and co-operation among partners.	Soft skill
	Ability to encourage partners to share their ideas, ask questions, make comments and work together.	Soft skill
<b>Environmental analysis</b>	Ability to design andragogical interventions or projects based on the skills to be developed to meet the needs identified for groups of learners and for the environment.	Technical skill
	Ability to do environmental analyses based on the socio-economic and cultural contexts, and educational resources in the community, and to consider them when designing andragogical interventions or projects.	Technical skill
	Ability to identify the different types of skills to be developed in a group of learners based on their needs (educational, socio-economic, cultural, language-related), and to consider them when designing andragogical interventions or projects.	Technical skill
	Ability to design andragogical interventions or projects, that take into account the psychological and cognitive reality of the targeted adult learners.	Technical skill
	Ability to be alert to changes in the community, workplace and surrounding training environments and to take these changes into account in the andragogical interventions or projects.	Soft and essential skills
	Ability to be alert to new technological developments that may be integrated into the andragogical interventions or projects.	Soft and essential skills
	Ability to gather, prepare and report ongoing information about the job market, educational resources, socio-economic contexts and cultural contexts.	Technical skill
<b>Relationships with partners</b>	Ability to design andragogical interventions or projects connected with the mandate of one's organization, the interventions' objectives and available resources.	Technical skill
	Ability to design andragogical interventions or projects alone, in a team and with partners, when relevant.	Soft skill

Function	Skill	Type of Predominant Skill
<b>Relationships with partners</b>	Ability to design andragogical interventions or projects taking into account the various resources provided by partners, each partner's mandate and their existing andragogical resources and common objectives with the target client group.	Technical skill
	Ability to apply effective communication techniques with one's team members and with partners.	Technical skill
	Ability to work as part of a team, with the staff of one's organization and that of partners and other resources in the community.	Soft and essential skills
	Ability to adjust one's interpersonal skills based on the sensitivity and diversity of representatives (e.g., Anglophone or Franco-phone, institutional or community-based, public or private).	Soft and second-language skills
<b>Design of andragogical interventions or projects</b>	Ability to design andragogical interventions or projects, using adult education learning situations and contexts that are as authentic as possible and which are consistent with the competency-based approach.	Technical skill
	Ability to design andragogical interventions or projects that organize the concepts and skills to be developed into manageable, sequential units (through cycles of learning).	Technical skill
	Ability to design andragogical interventions or projects that help focus the training on skills development through tasks.	Technical skill
	Ability to design andragogical interventions or projects that enable the participants to practise the skills to be developed in authentic situations (real situations, role-playing, laboratory, etc.)	Technical skill
	Ability to design andragogical interventions or projects based on integrated approaches that foster the development of several types of skills to address a set of identified needs in targeted groups of learners.	Technical skill
	Ability to design andragogical resources that incorporate, when relevant, the various types of skills (essential, soft, second-language, technical) to meet the needs of a group of learners.	Technical and second-language skills
	Ability to design andragogical interventions or projects that ensure that the learning is transferred to activities that are consistent with the objectives of the intervention.	Technical skill
	Ability to design andragogical interventions or projects that are based on skills development learning objectives that are measurable and realistic.	Technical skill
	Ability to design andragogical interventions or projects that foster the development of self-study and independent learning skills among participants.	Technical skill
	Ability to design andragogical interventions or projects that take into account approaches, methodology and means specific to andragogy and that are relevant to the learning contexts, targeted needs and skills to be developed.	Technical skill

Function	Skill	Type of Predominant Skill
<b>Design of andragogical interventions or projects</b>	Ability to design andragogical interventions or projects that take into account digital technologies that are relevant to the learning contexts, targeted needs and skills to be developed.	Technical skill
	Ability to design andragogical interventions or projects that take into account the need to incorporate cultural pride and membership in the Francophone community based on the learning contexts, targeted needs and skills to be developed.	Technical skill
	Ability to design andragogical interventions or projects that take into account instructional or learning resources that are relevant to the learning contexts, targeted needs and skills to be developed.	
	Ability to design andragogical interventions or projects that suit different learning styles.	Technical skill
	Ability to consult relevant research to support the andragogical products.	Technical skill
<b>Intervention evaluation</b>	Ability to design andragogical interventions or projects that incorporate a regular process for evaluating projects, interventions or programs in a co-operative process with partners.	Technical skill
	Ability to design andragogical interventions or projects that take into account the results of training program, intervention or project evaluations.	Technical skill
	Ability to ensure that the project, program or intervention evaluation activities meet partners' expectations.	Technical skill
	Ability to give regular and frequent feedback to partners about the results of program, intervention or project evaluations.	Technical skill
	Ability to gather, prepare and report statistical information about the progress of programs, interventions or projects.	Technical skill
	Ability to gather information about the training intervention, program or project experiences.	Technical skill
	Ability to assess people's needs based on their community's socio-economic and cultural contexts as well as the mandates and resources of one's organization and those of partners.	Technical skill
	Ability to apply ongoing project, intervention and program evaluation techniques.	Technical skill
	Ability to confirm whether the evaluation tools for projects, interventions and programs meet the criteria required to obtain valid results.	Technical skill
	Ability to select appropriate evaluation methodologies to support effective assessment and analysis of projects, interventions and programs.	Technical skill
	Ability to ensure that the learning evaluation tools are focused on significant tasks related to the goals of the projects, programs or interventions.	Technical skill

A decorative graphic at the top right of the page. It features a green curved line that starts from the right and curves upwards. Along this line, there are several elements: a black arrow pointing left, a grey gear, a yellow gear, and a yellow key. The key is connected to the grey gear by a dashed yellow line. The entire graphic is set against a white background.

## APPENDIX 4

### **Brief presentation of the RESDAC literacy and skills development model**

The model that we are proposing focuses more on competencies related to having literacy skills than on developing so-called academic literacy skills, which are sometimes considered an end in themselves. Indeed, in a paradigm that first and foremost supports the development of literacy among adults with low literacy skills, all programs can address this need: literacy programs, general training or school education programs, vocational training programs, parental skills or family literacy skills development programs, and income maintenance and employment support programs alike. In the new model being proposed, literacy programs – like other programs being offered to adults – become complementary ways to ensure the flourishing of adult literacy. We therefore want to move away from interventions that are unilateral, carried out in silos, overly concerned with internal accountability, and that are too focused on the programs and institutions whose own survival becomes all too often the ultimate goal.

#### **The four-component model**

The proposed model is constructed around integrated services and is based on a finding from the most recent international surveys on adult literacy, where literacy skills are compared to muscles: the more they are used, regardless of context, the better they are maintained and the more quickly they improve. This is why we believe that an integrated educational services approach does not curb the development of literacy skills, compared to a traditional full-time literacy training program. Indeed, literacy skills can be maintained and developed as much in a real context (e.g., personal and professional development, real communication or parental development) as in a more academic-style literacy training context, where the focus is exclusively on the more abstract learning of reading, writing and mathematics. The model's four components are as follows: analyzing the environment; creating strategic local partnerships; constructing adapted andragogical interventions; feedback and reassessment of actions.

Even though they are presented one after the other, the model's four components should not be perceived in a linear fashion. A sound approach to developing interventions based on the model would be to analyze and work on each of the components simultaneously and in an interconnected manner. The components should influence each other in a continuing dynamic of service development. In this respect, one component does not necessarily stop where another one begins because there are areas of overlap and interdependence between each. The model should therefore always result in dynamic and evolving andragogical analyses and interventions within a community.



### First component: Analyzing the environment

All across Canada and around the world, we see that a large proportion of the so-called “natural” clientele for adult literacy training programs has only minimally been reached through traditional recruitment efforts (OECD, 2003, taken from Gobeil, 2006). It seems therefore that the strategies used have been unsuccessful in getting around the training barriers facing adult learners, particularly those learners with low literacy skills. The recruitment and retention of learners in training, and more specifically in literacy training, remain problematic; thus there is a constant need to try new methods. The socio-economic conditions of communities and the needs of the local population remain critical challenges for reaching people. This first component, which is too often ignored or taken for granted, is to make learners needs more explicit in order to better articulate them with proper training activities (Bélanger and Voyer, 2004). Moreover, we believe there is a vital link between gaining a better understanding of the environment in which adults with low literacy skills are living and developing new training services that are better integrated and better adapted to their needs.

### Second component: Creating local strategic partnerships

The proposed literacy development model involves developing novel approaches in order to create appropriate links between the needs of adults with low literacy skills within a community and the available adult education resources. From this perspective, it is important that practitioners in adult education fully understand the needs of adults with low literacy skills and the contexts in which they could address them. To do this, we propose implementing a local collaboration process. This would help to ensure a more in-depth analysis of the local environment through the sharing of various viewpoints. It would also help to create new alliances between organizations planning to offer local adult education programming that is more relevant to and consistent with the needs of adults with low literacy skills.



### **Third component: Constructing an andragogical intervention adapted to the needs of learners, the community and partners**

Dialogue between partnering organizations could lead to the adaptation of existing training programs or the implementation of new training programs that meet the needs of adults, while still respecting the mandates of the various partnering organizations. By organizing a joint program offering, it would then be easier, to access the diverse human and financial resources needed to provide even more educational services to adults (e.g., smaller trainer-learner ratios, individualized training plans, adapted training and assessment arrangements, targeted basic training, etc.) and logistical support (e.g., transportation and childcare services). In the end, all of this leads to a greater collective capacity on the part of the community to offer better services to adults with low literacy skills.

When designing such projects, it is important to maintain a broad perspective of the needs of adults with low literacy skills, so as to better identify the multiple skills they must develop in order to pursue a professional or personal project that interests them and that meets their needs.

### **Fourth component: Feedback and reassessment of actions as part of the model**

Despite all the goodwill on the part of local adult education partners to create initiatives based on the literacy development model and its integrated approach to services, the biggest challenge for adult learners and adult education networks will continue to be adjusting to socio-economic changes caused by situations over which local practitioners have little control, but which may significantly influence both their ability to take action and the lives of adult learners.

During economic cycles, as with social and political movements, there will always be periods when unemployment and job losses will be higher, and when the needs of adult learners will be significant, but short-term solutions will be more difficult to find. There will always be complex geography that poses enormous challenges, large distances to cover, isolation of certain Francophone populations, etc. There are no miracle solutions to these challenges; we can only hope that the proposed model will make it easier to implement part of the answer.

### **Guiding questions for each component**

The intent of this section is to revisit each of the elements in the four components of the proposed model and suggest key questions to guide practitioners in their thinking and during their trial implementation of the model in their communities.

## First component: Analyzing the environment

### Analysis of adults' needs

- What is the literacy profile of community members?
- What are the needs of adults with low literacy skills in the community?
- How could I learn more about their needs (e.g., meet with the adults, focus group)?
- Are there specific integration needs that warrant more attention (e.g., integration into employment sectors, family support for a specific group, needs related to basic knowledge of English, etc.)?
- What types of psychosocial barriers are adults with low literacy skills in the community facing?
- What types of institutional or structural barriers are adults with low literacy skills in the community facing (e.g., transportation, childcare services, presence or absence of programs in the community, recognition of prior learning by the community)?

### Analysis of the socio-economic context

- What available employment sectors in the community are relevant to learners with low literacy skills?
- What are the relevant trades for learners and for the community?
- What accessible (in terms of literacy levels) training programs are likely to lead quickly to a job?
- Who are the important partners with whom I can discuss these questions (e.g., employment centre, community college or school board, community organization, elementary school in the case of a very small minority, etc.)?
- How can we explore the creation of new quality adult training programs that meet the socio-economic needs of the local community at an affordable price for the partners involved?

### Analysis of the cultural context

- What is the local profile of the Francophone community?
- Are there integration projects that would be beneficial to those in the Francophone community with low literacy skills?
- Who are the key players in the community (school, library, bookstore, Francophone association, etc.)?
- What role does English play in the community?
- What measures need to be implemented locally to promote and improve the literacy of Francophones, and not just promote French-language literacy training?
- How do we consider the linguistic dimension when delivering training programs?

## **Analysis of local educational resources**

- What community and educational resources are available for adult learners who might be interested in the creation of adapted andragogical interventions?
- How are referrals between programs and between organizations currently being done?
- What is the history of collaboration between organizations?
- How can we maximize the use of existing resources in a given area in order to offer quality and affordable training to learners with low literacy skills?

## **Second component: Creating local strategic partnerships**

### **Mobilizing community resources**

- Which partners are most likely to work with us?
- What is the partner's prevailing ideology?
  - What impact does it have on its organizational culture and its ability to participate in partnerships?
- What is the partner's vision of the partnership?
- What framework could we implement or use in order to boost collaboration?
- What partnerships are needed to develop integrated interventions and to promote them in the labour market?

### **Developing a local adult education planning process**

- Are the jurisdictions of training programs well defined?
- Is there duplication or a continuum of services in adult training?
- How can we facilitate the planning of local adult training services, while respecting the jurisdictions and accountability requirements of everyone?
- Is there a need to harmonize the jurisdiction of the literacy program with that of other training programs?
- Is the literacy program as attractive as other training programs?
  - If not, how can we enhance our interventions with adults with low literacy skills in order to make these programs more attractive?
  - In this respect, are there strategic partnerships to be developed with certain natural partners in adult training (vocational training or educational training programs, employability services, etc.)?

- Are there strategic partnerships to be developed with certain natural referral partners (income support, employability services, compensation, etc.)?
- Is it necessary to create a forum for pooling resources (e.g., single entry point, joint committee for a specific initiative, round table, multi-service centre, etc.)?
  - If so, how does one convince partnering organizations to set up such a centralized system?
  - If so, what activities or services should be pooled (e.g., intake, registration, assessment of literacy levels, identification of learner needs, and management of teaching/administrative files)?

### **Developing collaborative agreements and strategic partnerships in order to make andragogical interventions operational**

- How can we mitigate structural barriers that limit the participation of adults with lower literacy skills?
- How can we mitigate psychosocial barriers that limit the participation of adults with lower literacy skills?
- How do we implement a joint program in which all partnering organizations will feel that success has been achieved on the following fronts: respecting administrative requirements; respecting jurisdictions; respecting intervention philosophies (training, integration, etc.)?
- Can we define with all partnering organizations what forms of certification will be recognized for the new joint training program (e.g., college certificate; certification from a professional association or any other government agency; educational certification within the framework of earning a secondary-level diploma, etc.)?

## **Third component: Constructing an andragogical intervention adapted to the needs of learners, the community and partners**

### **Thoughts on developing literacy skills and other types of skills**

- What are your thoughts on the literacy skills presented in section 2.3.1 of the document?
- What are the needs of adults with respect to these skills?
- Which of the most important skills do we want to develop in the new intervention, based on adults' needs?
- What role will second-language skills play in meeting the integration, communication and interaction needs in the various personal and professional projects of the targeted adults (Francophones in a minority situation, who must learn English as the language of integration)?

## **Linking the development of literacy skills to the development of other types of skills in order to construct an andragogical intervention**

- Within a single intervention, how do we link the development of literacy skills with other skills?
- Can educational interventions be designed that will allow literacy skills to play a fundamental and strategic role in the acquisition and development of specialized skills?

## **Fourth component: Feedback and reassessment of actions**

- Once it has been established, how is the collaborative process working?
  - What are the contentious points, or elements that need improvement?
- How well are the partnering organizations communicating?
- How well is the referral or single entry point system working?
  - What aspects require improvement?
- What was the outcome of the first integrated program?
- Are the adults satisfied? What would they like to improve?
- What are the success rates and dropout rates?
- What improvements should be made to the second integrated project, if applicable?

### ***For more information***

*For more information about the RESDAC model, we encourage you to read a comprehensive document on the RESDAC website: <http://resdac.net/>.*

*In the third part of that document, you will also find an illustration of such an approach adopted in Hawkesbury, Ontario, based on roughly 20 years of action research and field practice.*



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- Voyer, Brigitte. **Formateurs et formatrices d'adultes : identités professionnelles, pratiques et conditions de travail**. Montreal, ACFAS, 2002.

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<http://catalogue.cdeacf.ca/Record.htm?idlist=6&record=19106028124919242009>

- Wagner, Serge; Turgeon, Marc. **La scolarisation de l'éducation des adultes au sein du réseau scolaire du Québec et son impact sur la formation des formateurs**. Montreal, Université du Québec à Montréal, Laboratoire de recherche en éducation et alphabétisation des adultes, 1998.

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<http://catalogue.cdeacf.ca/Record.htm?idlist=6&record=19106660124919248429>

## Case study / Recommendations

- **L'appropriation de la lecture et de l'écriture [ressource électronique] : comprendre le processus et accompagner sa redynamisation : une recherche-action-formation en alphabétisation populaire**. Longueuil (Québec), La Boîte à lettres, 2002.

Links to the document:

<http://bv.cdeacf.ca/documents/PDF/rayonalpha/24416volume1.pdf>

<http://bv.cdeacf.ca/documents/PDF/rayonalpha/24416volume2.pdf>

Link to the notice:

<http://catalogue.cdeacf.ca/Record.htm?idlist=6&record=19236070124910542529>

## Other links

- Frontier College resource list "Best practices"  
[http://www.frontiercollege.ca/english/learn/literacy\\_resources.html](http://www.frontiercollege.ca/english/learn/literacy_resources.html)
- Materials of the Office of Literacy and Essential Skills (OLES)  
[http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/workplaceskills/LES/tools\\_resources/trainers.shtml](http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/workplaceskills/LES/tools_resources/trainers.shtml)
- Exemples de compétences recherchées en alphabétisation (FAQ of the Centre de documentation sur l'éducation des adultes et la condition féminine - CDÉACF) :  
<http://cdeacf.ca/questions-frequentes/voudrais-travailler-alphabetisation-adultes-devrais-faire>



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