

Why Should *Business* Care About Workplace Literacy?

“Employers gain higher profits and a host of other bottom-line benefits from improving employees’ literacy and basic skills. More skillful employees save employers time and money, and improve performance and productivity. Other benefits include:

- Reduced error rates
- A better health and safety record
- Reduced waste in production of goods and services
- Increased customer and employee retention

“These benefits translate into financial savings, productivity gains and higher profits. On top of all that, employees with better basic skills tend to learn more and faster when they take job-specific and technical training.”

-- *Conference Board of Canada,*

www.workplacebasicskills.com/non_frame/wep/employer_benefits.htm

“With the currently difficult economic and business climate, employers must seek new ways to remain competitive. This includes having a highly literate workforce ... While there is some attention being paid by large employers to Workforce Literacy, not enough employers are involved. Over the longer term and as the economy rebounds, the issue of a literate workforce *will not go away.*”

-- *Raising the Bar: Advancing Workforce Literacy in BC*, Business Council of BC, November 2003

“Employers often gain because more skillful employees are more confident employees. Confidence translates into creativity and initiative that, in turn, contributes to the overall performance of the organization.”

-- *Conference Board of Canada,*

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“We all know that ... small-sized and medium-sized enterprises are the major creators of jobs in Canada today. As such their success is going to be essential to the well-being of Canada’s

economy. If these businesses are to survive and to increase productivity, employers must ensure that their employees have the necessary basic workplace skills to learn new technology and the high performance work processes of modern society.”

-- **Gerald Brown**, President, Association of Canadian Community Colleges, April 2003

“Employers who support literacy and basic skills development enjoy a more conscientious, resourceful, loyal and dependable workforce as a result. When employers learn that high-quality work is crucial to the success of the organization and to their own job security, they often become more conscientious. Once they become fully aware of what is expected from them and how their efforts fit into the big picture, and then gain the skills to meet those demands, the quality of their work generally rises.”

-- **Conference Board of Canada**,
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“Higher income generated through improved labour force participation contributes to higher government revenues. Even a small increase in national productivity through improved literacy will have a relatively large impact on public revenues. For example, a 2 percent increase in wages and earnings from improvements in national literacy would provide approximately a 1.8 percent increase in revenue in a country that is dependent primarily on value-added tax.”

-- **The Economic Benefits of Improving Literacy in the Workplace**, Conference Board of Canada, 1997

“Some people believe employers are not aware of the need because employers are under the impression they only hire people with literacy skills so there should be no need to upgrade. Employers are aware of the issue but are not committed enough because they do not realize it impacts their bottom line.”

-- **Raising the Bar: Advancing Workforce Literacy in BC**, Business Council of BC, November 2003