Adult Literacy Instruction: Why Soft Skills are Important to All
10:50 am – 12:05 pm

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 Agenda

• Welcome
• Objectives
• Soft Skills
• Instruction of soft skills
• Activity
• Discussion
• Questions
Session objectives

• At the end of the session, participants will:
  – develop a plan for teaching a specific soft skill in their classroom, tutoring and/or mentoring session.
SOFT SKILLS ~ DEFINITION
Examples of soft skills

- ____________________________________________________________________
- ____________________________________________________________________
- ____________________________________________________________________
- ____________________________________________________________________
- ____________________________________________________________________
- ____________________________________________________________________
- ____________________________________________________________________
- ____________________________________________________________________
SOFT SKILLS ~ WHAT DO EMPLOYERS WANT?
“The CEOs tell us, ‘Don’t worry so much about the technical skills... We need you to teach them how to show up on time, how to work in teams, how to take supervision.’”

From *Hard Work on Soft Skills*
What soft skills do employers want?

• In *Are They Really Ready to Work* (2006) employers have indicated the four most important foundation skills needed by employees are:
What soft skills do employers want?

- In *Are They Really Ready to Work* (2006) employers have indicated the four most important foundation skills needed by employees are:
  - Professionalism/Work Ethic
  - Oral and Written Communication
  - Team Work/Collaboration
  - Critical Thinking/Problem Solving
• Do you think instructors can directly, explicitly teach soft skills?
• Do you think instructors can directly, explicitly teach soft skills?
• What are the roles of awareness and assessment in the process?
Instruction of soft skills

• Can you think of any soft skills’ deficits the learner(s) you work with may have?
Instruction of soft skills

• Can you think of any soft skills deficits the learner(s) you work with may have?
• Do you think the learner is aware of the deficit(s)?
Instruction of soft skills

• Can you think of any soft skills deficits the learner(s) you work with may have?
• Do you think the learner is aware of the deficit(s)?
• How do you think the learner could be motivated to improve his/her soft skills?
Instruction of soft skills

• Can you think of any soft skills deficits the learner(s) you work with may have?
• Do you think the learner is aware of the deficit(s)?
• How do you think the learner could be motivated to improve his/her soft skills?
• How can you show him/her where he/she is in terms of soft skills?
SOFT SKILL ASSESSMENTS
Did you know...

**PA Common Core Academic Standards** have a section for soft skills?
Pennsylvania Academic Standards

The State Board approved the final Chapter 4 regulations on September 12, 2013. The Independent Regulatory Review Commission (IRRC) approved regulation on November 21, 2013. With publication of Chapter 4 in the Pennsylvania Bulletin, the new regulations took effect on March 1, 2014.

As part of the new regulations, Pennsylvania’s Core Standards offer a set of rigorous, high-quality academic expectations in English Language Arts and that all students should master by the end of each grade level. The PA Core Standards are robust and relevant to the real world and reflect the knowledge our young people need to succeed in life after high school, in both post-secondary education and a globally competitive workforce.

Overall, Pennsylvania Academic Standards continue to be the foundation upon which to build a locally designed curriculum. The Standards Aligned System offers educators a wealth of resources to support the Pennsylvania Core Standards.
Subject Area - 16: Student Interpersonal Skills

Standard Area - 16.1: Self-Awareness and Self-Management

Grade Level - 16.1.8: GRADES 6-8

Standard

16.1.8.A: Assess factors that influence emotional self-management and impact relationships at home, school, and community.

16.1.8.B: Analyze impact of a variety of personal traits on relationships and achievement throughout life.

16.1.8.C: Analyze adverse situations and identify appropriate protective factors and coping skills.

16.1.8.D: Apply goal setting into academic decisions.

Standard Area - 16.2: Establishing and Maintaining Relationships

Grade Level - 16.2.8: GRADES 6-8

Standard

16.2.8.A: Analyze internal and external factors that influence relationships.

16.2.8.B: Explain individual, social and cultural differences which increase vulnerability to bullying and abuse and strategies for prevention.

16.2.8.C: Analyze factors that impact communication.

16.2.8.D: Analyze various types of conflict and determine appropriate resolutions.

16.2.8.E: Evaluate problems or situations to determine when and what additional support is needed.

Standard Area - 16.3: Decision Making and Responsible Behavior

Grade Level - 16.3.8: GRADES 6-8

Standard

16.3.8.A: Examine the impact of decisions on personal safety, relationships, and group interactions.

16.3.8.B: Examine how social norms and expectations of authority influence personal decisions and actions.

16.3.8.C: Actively engage in healthy relationships and positive responsibility when observing negative behavior.
SCANS SKILLS ASSESSMENT

STUDENT NAME ___________________________ DATE ______________________

This SCANS’ Skills Self-Assessment lists the individual skills and talents that employers value. Read the list and assess your own strengths. Mark each box that best describes your level of skill.

Skills for Basic Job Performance
(1=needs development; 2=competent; 3=proficient; 4=advanced)

### BASIC SKILLS

You can read, write, speak and listen well. You know your arithmetic.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 Needs Development</th>
<th>2 Competent</th>
<th>3 Proficient</th>
<th>4 Advanced</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Speaking</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learning to speak clearly, audibly and courteously.</td>
<td>Speak clearly and use language appropriate to the environment.</td>
<td>Express complex ideas in an organized and concise manner.</td>
<td>Present effectively to a group using well-organized format, concise language and clear enunciation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Listening</td>
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<tr>
<td>Developing listening skills; working to make eye contact and confirm understanding.</td>
<td>Listen attentively, make eye contact, repeat instruction to confirm understanding.</td>
<td>Listen attentively and demonstrate understanding through relevant responses and questions.</td>
<td>Retain complex information over time and apply it to later work.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
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<tr>
<td>Read written directions and workplace documents with assistance.</td>
<td>Read written directions and workplace documents independently.</td>
<td>Read and understand written materials, including technical documents, independently; ask questions where appropriate.</td>
<td>Read complex written materials and execute related tasks independently.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learning to write clearly with correct grammar.</td>
<td>Write information in clear, logical, legible and grammatically correct manner.</td>
<td>Write clearly using work-related terminology.</td>
<td>Write and develop professional material such as newsletters and marketing brochures.</td>
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</table>
Workplace Skills

Workplace skills are the abilities employees need to successfully accomplish work tasks.

These include: managing time and other resources; understanding, evaluating, and using a variety of information; communicating effectively with others in multiple formats (speaking, writing, listening); understanding relationships among the components of a system; and applying information technology appropriately and effectively.
Click on pieces of the framework below to learn more about the skills required for employment.
Other assessments?

- What have you used?
Instruction of soft skills

Examples of activities:

- “What if ...” scenario or multiple choice questions *(Soft Skills Discussion Resource)*
- Body Language Awareness Activities
- Service learning, projects
- Provide a realistic workplace scenario (i.e. you see someone at work take money that doesn’t belong to them) then ask the questions:
  - What is the problem?
  - What do you need to do?
  - How are you going to do it?
  - Did you fix the problem?
  - Did you do a good job?
- Other
• How can the learner know if he/she is improving in an area?
  – Collaboratively develop a rubric
  – Other
### Soft skills rating rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill to be developed</th>
<th>Needs Development (Beginning)</th>
<th>Competent (Emerging)</th>
<th>Proficient (Developing)</th>
<th>Advanced (Competent)</th>
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SCANS skills activity ~ overview

- Complete the following sections of the assessment on behalf of a learner or group of learners with whom you work.
  - BASIC SKILLS
  - THINKING SKILLS

- Partner with a peer to:
  a) Identify a mutual skill needed by the learners with whom you work
  b) Develop a plan for addressing needed skill (complete back of form)
  c) Share your plan with the group
# SCANS Skills Assessment

**Thinking Skills**

You can think creatively. You can make decisions and solve problems. You know how to learn.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1 Needs Development</th>
<th>2 Competent</th>
<th>3 Proficient</th>
<th>4 Advanced</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Combining Ideas or</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Information in New</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Ways</strong></td>
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<td>Make connections with</td>
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<td>help from supervisor.</td>
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<td>Make connections with</td>
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<td>occasional help from</td>
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<td>supervisor.</td>
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<td>Make decisions with</td>
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<td>help from supervisor.</td>
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<td>supervisor.</td>
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<td>Make decisions with</td>
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<td>independently.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Generate new ideas.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Think abstractly.</td>
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<td>Make multiple decisions</td>
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<td>weighing risks and</td>
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<td>benefits to organization.</td>
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<td>Identify problems with</td>
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<td>help from supervisor.</td>
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<td>Identify and solve</td>
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<td>problems independently.</td>
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<td>Explore cause of</td>
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<td>problems and options</td>
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<td>with team when solving</td>
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<td>problems.</td>
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<td>Demonstrate leadership,</td>
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<td>develop creative</td>
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<td>solutions and systemic</td>
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<td>change, including</td>
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<td>preventive action.</td>
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Example of activity

- Completed assessment for learner being tutored
- Focusing on the result: Needs Development in Reading – Read written directions and workplace documents with assistance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Needs Development</th>
<th>Competent</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>![Checkmark] Read written directions and workplace documents with assistance.</td>
<td>![Checkmark] Read written directions and workplace documents independently.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Specific learning objective

• By the end of this activity I would like the learner to be able to:
  – Read a one paragraph description of a workplace task to be completed and restate the directions to demonstrate his understanding of the task.
Measurement of objective

• I will know that this objective was met when the learner reads me his restatement of the task and it indicates the appropriate steps for the task.
Achievable

- Yes
What is the activity and is it relevant?

• I will use directions for a work-related activity which the learner brings to our session.

• The activity will involve the learner reading the directions to me then restating them in his own words. We will continue this activity until his restatement accurately reflects the original directions provided.
Authentic materials

• Directions being used for activity are from learner’s current job.
Time frame

• The goal is to accomplish this activity within one hour.
Transfer of skill

• The learner understands that this is a skill he needs in order to be successful at his job. After we work on this activity we will discuss how he can practice the steps on his own in order to be better prepared when receiving written instructions at work.
SCANS skills activity ~ Your turn

- Complete the following sections of the assessment on behalf of a learner or group of learners with whom you work.
  - BASIC SKILLS
  - THINKING SKILLS

- Partner with a peer to:
  a) Identify a mutual skill needed by the learners with whom you work
  b) Develop a plan for addressing needed skill (complete back of form)
  c) Share your plan with the group
Plan

- Learning objective
- How will you determine and measure if objective(s) have been met?
- What contextualized activities can you develop that will provide measurable outcomes?
- What authentic materials are being used?
- Is the activity challenging for the learner yet not too difficult?
- Timeframe?
- Transfer of skills?
DISCUSSION
Resources

- Are They Really Ready to Work? Employers’ Perspectives on the Basic Knowledge and Applied Skills of New Entrants to the 21st Century U.S. Workforce


- Equipped for the Future Resources

- Guide to Adult Education for Work, Transforming Adult Education to Grow a Skilled Workforce
Hard Work on Soft Skills, Creating a “Culture of Work” in Workforce Development, Working Ventures

“Keep that Job”, article from the May, 1936 issue of Current Psychology and Psychoanalysis

O*Net OnLine

Workforce Skills Self-Appraisal and other PA Workforce Education Resources including Foundations Skills materials

Soft Skills Discussion Resource (Brief), Learning Resources, Inc.
New Ways to Work

- Quality Work-Based Learning Toolkit, Kansas City, Kansas Public Schools
- Creating Quality Work-Based Learning
- How-To Guides for Workplace Tours, Job Shadows and more
- Building the Classroom Connection
- Teacher Guide to the Work-Based Learning Plan
- Workplace Partner Guide to the Work-Based Learning Plan
- Student Guide to the Work-Based Learning Plan
- Tools
- Factsheets
- Resources
Please remember to complete the evaluation at the end of the day.

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/tinstitute2014
THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME!

Feel free to contact me at:  
kim@tlcliteracy.org  
or visit us at:  
www.tlcliteracy.org
Everyday materials for developing life skills

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<tr>
<th>Public School Materials</th>
<th>Employment Material</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Registration forms</td>
<td>Applications</td>
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<tr>
<td>School handbooks</td>
<td>Job Manuals</td>
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<td>Parent-teacher communications</td>
<td>Report Forms</td>
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<td>Homework</td>
<td>Time cards</td>
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<td>Excuse forms</td>
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<td>Lunch menus</td>
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<td>Permission slips</td>
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<th>Medical Information</th>
<th>Newspapers</th>
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<td>Forms</td>
<td>Want ads</td>
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<td>Insurance</td>
<td>Community announcements</td>
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<td>Prescriptions</td>
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<td>Over-the-counter medicine instructions</td>
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<td>Poison or hazardous materials information</td>
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<th>Transportation Schedules</th>
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<td>Bills</td>
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<td>Check writing</td>
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<td>Account balancing</td>
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<td>Shopping</td>
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