

Hello everyone, and welcome. My name is Summer Burton, and I'm here on behalf of Literacy Link South Central. Today we're going to be talking about Apprenticeship basics – specifically, what clients need to know about pursuing a career in the skilled trades, using the knowledge and opportunities available through Ontario's Apprenticeship system.

Now for the sake of today's presentation we'll call the people you're working with "clients" although we recognize they can also be called learners, students, jobseekers or... well, just "people". So if you support "people" through your role in employment services, adult literacy, continuing education, or social services, we think you will find this presentation particularly useful. We know that people rely on you as a guide, and as a source of good practical information – we hope you can add what we share today to your toolbox of advice.

Why LLSC offers apprenticeship support

- 1. Many literacy learners want to apprentice in the skilled trades
- Clients often work with multiple agencies at the same time, including Literacy and Employment Services
- 3. LLSC shares information about the apprenticeship system to help services work together to support clients effectively

Literacy Link South Central is the regional support network for adult literacy programs throughout a six county area in southern Ontario, including Brant, Haldimand, Norfolk, Oxford, Elgin, and Middlesex. In our role as a support network we do a lot of work with local programs, identifying needs, developing training aids and professional development material, doing presentations and spreading awareness around the important role literacy plays in people's success.

So why are we specifically talking about apprenticeship? First, because the adult literacy programs we support work with people that have (or could have) apprenticeship as a goal. In fact, it's one of the 5 recognized goal paths in the Literacy and Basic Skills (or "LBS") program, and adult literacy programs offer specific activities and lessons based on real-life apprenticeship tasks as a result. Because adult literacy programs can (and do) share clients with employment agencies, many clients who are working with employment counsellors to develop the skills they need for employment, are also working on developing their essential math, reading, writing, interpersonal and digital skills with LBS. This offers an excellent opportunity for coordinated support that moves clients even more quickly toward their goals. Finally, Literacy Link South Central has a history of conducting activity in the area of apprenticeship – doing projects, developing resources, and hosting community conversations. This is a continuation of that important work – work that's becoming more and more critical as we face an impending shortage of skilled tradespeople across Ontario.

About this series of presentations

Part 2 of a 3-part apprenticeship series available at www.llsc.on.ca, where you can find:

- 1. Recordings
- 2. Slides
- 3. Transcripts







Today's presentation is the second in a 3-part series about Apprenticeship, and while it's not necessary for you to have enjoyed the first presentation to understand this one, we encourage you to check it out. Much of what we'll talk about today assumes *you* understand the basics of the apprenticeship system and the general steps involved. If you would like a refresher on those basics, we hope you'll visit us online at www.llsc.on.ca, where you'll find:

- links to this and other recordings in the series
- PDF copies of the slides, and
- a transcript of each presentation.

Before we move on, we'd like to thank the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities for providing the funding for this series of presentations.

In It For The Long Haul

Clients need to:

- Explore whether it's a good fit for them
- Know if they have the essential skills and education they need
- Understand where to go for support throughout the process



Apprenticeship is both a career choice, and a commitment that results in certification. Any credible certification process takes time, and apprenticeship is no different – in fact, it can take anywhere from 3-5 years or more, depending on the trade of choice. But statistics show that Ontario's completion rate for the apprentice process is quite low. As service providers, we shoulder some of the responsibility for a client's lack of success. Are we doing everything we can to prepare clients for the career path they are about undertake? Clients will need guidance and motivation to succeed during the long haul. The better prepared they are, the greater the chance they'll stick with it. We can increase the chances of this happening if clients understand the time, effort and requirements that will be needed during this certification process.

When working with clients that have various employment goals it's not up to us to know all of the ins and outs of each profession. We do, however, need to be able to help clients explore if they are a fit for their career choice, if they have the essential skills and education level they need to succeed, and what supports we can help them access to move forward. We'd like to take some time today to help you understand how to explore these things with clients. And to do that, we'll look at three key questions you can help people answer as they prepare for a possible future as an apprentice.

Question 1: Is apprenticeship the right fit for me?

- Is what I want to do an apprentice-able trade?
- Am I prepared for the commitment?
- Do I know what the job involves?
- Do I believe myths about the skilled trades?



Finding out whether apprenticeship is a good fit for your client is the perfect place to start.

There are over 150 recognized skilled trades in Ontario, and some people might not even know that their interests or goals can be supported through the apprenticeship system. Knowing what types of careers you can train for through an apprenticeship is a great first step to clients finding their fit. This step may involve some research, as it's not always obvious by the name of the trade exactly what the job involves. For example, if your client knows they want to work with food, they would be wise to read up on what the differences between an Assistant Cook, Baker, Cook, Baker-Patissier, Institutional Cook, and Chef are – each of these are uniquely different, and fully recognized trades in Ontario.

Apprenticeship offers a solid foundation of training, but it's also a "long game," and clients who are living in the moment or seeking a job that offers quick results may be afraid of the commitment it entails. We can help clients maintain their motivation by first being sure that apprenticing in the skilled trades fits their interests, and then being clear about both the commitment and the pay-off. While the commitment can be long, the "earn while you learn" element of apprenticing in your chosen trade has both financial and experiential value that can more than make up for the time commitment.

Clients with a clear understanding of the training and work involved in a skilled trade have a

greater chance for success. The time taken in advance to explore what kinds of things they'll be learning and doing really pays off. By taking away the fear of what's involved and setting accurate expectations of what's to come, you might be able to motivate a client to really consider this opportunity.

And speaking of helping people consider working in the skilled trades, many people have misguided ideas about who is a good fit for this type of job, whether there's either money or job security involved, and what skills are important to be successful in the skilled trades. Your clients have probably heard some of these myths and may believe them – it's worth taking time to dispel them, and help clients gain a new understanding of the realities of this career choice.

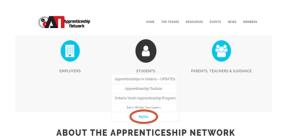


One easy-to-use resource to help determine if a client's employment goal is one they can achieve through an apprenticeship is the list of recognized Trades in Ontario, available on the Ontario College of Trades website.

The trades are separated by sector, and you can click between sectors using the tabs at the top of the list. Any of the trades in blue are actually hyperlinks, which (when clicked) will open a two-page outline that offers a plain-language overview of what's involved in this trade, along with the type of learning and length of time apprentices can expect to experience both on-the-job and in school.

So, if we click Construction Craft Worker from the list on your screen, we'll find out that this trade involves working with concrete, masonry, steel, wood and other materials involved in erecting a building, and often do on-site setup and cleanup, demolition, excavation, and security. Depending on the job, Construction Craft Workers may also operate off-road vehicles, drilling and blasting equipment, sandblasters, high pressure washers, and more. We also learn that the general time-frame to become a Construction Craft Worker is 2,880 hours (approximately a year and a half) consisting of 2,400 hours of on-the-job work experience and 480 hours of in-school training.

Resources to help







https://youtu.be/ZPtP2CV5AUc

There are great resources to help you dispel common myths as well. In fact, the Apprenticeship Network addresses several of them on their website, broken down by myths common to employers, to students and job seekers, and to those who support them, like parents, teachers and Guidance Counselors. Whether your client mistakenly believes that the trades offer nothing but "dirty jobs," or that women can't find work in the skilled trades, this website can help share a different perspective.

Service Canada also has a quick, two-minute video that addresses common myths. This easy-to-understand video can be reviewed with groups or individual clients, and act as the basis for discussion afterwards.

Question 2: Do I have the skills and education I need to succeed?



- Education level (required for the trade)
- Education level (required for employers)
- Readiness for ongoing education
- Essential skills (not necessarily related to education level)

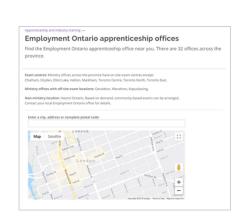
The second question clients should ask themselves is whether they have both the education level, and the skills required, to succeed in an apprenticeship.

The level of education required varies for each trade, so it's worth exploring the specific requirements of the trade your client is interested in. It's an important piece of the puzzle, and it could become a barrier to advancing through the apprenticeship system. A high school diploma, GED or ACE certificate could be the answer to your client's academic needs. It's worth noting that within certain trades there may be specific course requirements or prerequisites – it's an excellent opportunity for research, and your local Employment Ontario Apprenticeship Office is a great resource to help confirm educational requirements.

Since employers play a critical role in the apprenticeship process, it's also important to consider what educational credentials employers require. So for example, while a skilled trade may officially only require a Grade 10 education, the employer sponsoring an apprentice might require anyone working in their business have a Grade 12 diploma or recognized equivalent. Researching not only what the apprenticeship system requires, but what employers in the trade require can help set your client up for success instead of frustration.

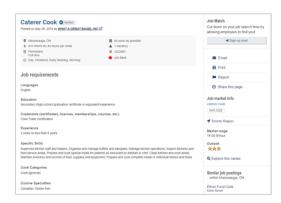
Although much of the learning in an apprenticeship is done on-the-job, clients might be surprised to find out that that between 10% and 20% of their training is done in a more traditional classroom. This in-school training is offered at either a college or another designated Training Delivery site - and clients might question why they have to go back to school, if they've already, in their mind, completed their education. Setting the expectation that "book learning" and written tests are required even in this hands-on skills training environment will be important for your client's success.

It's also important to keep in mind that education levels and academic achievement are not always the same as skill levels. If someone hasn't been in a school for a while, or if they struggled in school but eventually earned a high school credential, or if they've rotated quickly through many jobs before deciding to pursue an apprenticeship, they may lack some of the Essential Skills they need. To be successful, your client might need to build and strengthen these skills as part of their apprenticeship journey.



https://www.ontario.ca/page/employment-ontario-apprenticeship-offices

Resources to help



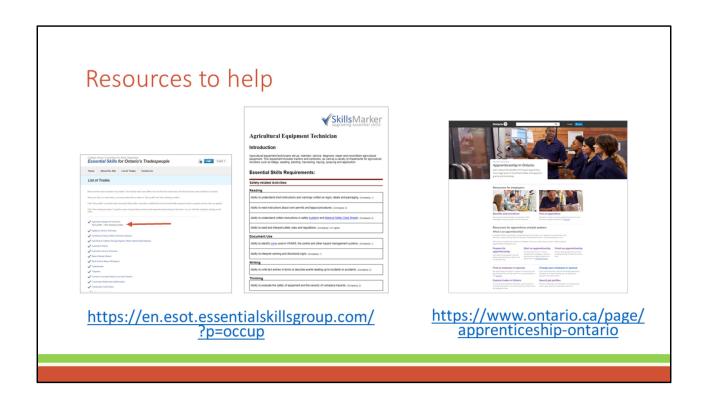
https://www.jobbank.gc.ca/home

We mentioned contacting your local Employment Ontario Apprenticeship Office for more information about the educational levels required in a specific trade, and the listing of office locations complete with contact information, can be found using the link on your screen. Keeping in mind that the requirements of a trade may not necessarily match the requirements of the employer sponsor, the Government of Canada's Job Bank is an excellent place for clients to research. Not only will they find out what education level is required for jobs they may be interested in doing, but also learn more about other requirements (such as having steal-toed boots, or a valid driver's license) and the rates of pay for jobs in the trade they are interesting in pursuing.

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The Government of Canada also has a variety of tools available to help apprentices understand the Essentials Skill they need to participate in the apprenticeship process. Check this free Essential Skill Self-Assessment for the Trades, available online and in a printable PDF format. Because it breaks down each of the Essential Skills into smaller subcategories, clients can more easily understand what these skills actually refer to, and consider if they have the skills they need to be successful.

And if you're looking for a quick way to start your client thinking about the Essential Skills needed along the apprenticeship path, Literacy Link South Central created a desk-top checklist. To access your own downloadable copy, visit our website at www.llsc.on.ca and view Resources for Apprenticeship, or use the link shown on your screen. Print as many copies as you want, and keep them close by as a conversation-starter with clients.



The Essential Skills for Ontario's Tradespeople (ESOT) can be used to explore the skills that contribute to success in specific skilled trades. Using links under each of the listed trades, your clients can view that trade's Essential Skills profile and the names of organizations which provide apprenticeship training for that trade. The detailed list of the Essential Skills required for that occupation is incredibly valuable, and includes suggestions on how they are applied on the job. For example, using this resource we now know how Agricultural Equipment Technicians use the Essential Skills of Reading, Document Use, Writing and Thinking in safety-related activities on the job. The list goes on to outline the specific ways Essential Skills are used in farm equipment repair and administrative duties, and how a variety of mathematical subjects are used on the job.

Finally, we encourage anyone considering a career in the skilled trades spend some time reviewing the information shared on the Government of Ontario's Apprenticeship site. Resources to help people prepare for, start and complete an apprenticeship are included, and as changed occur, this site is likely to have the most up-to-date information.

Question 3: Do I have the supports I need to succeed?

- For both education and Essential Skills upgrading
- To access accommodations for a disability
- To connect with potential employers / sponsors



After considering their own skills and education level, your client may recognize that he or she needs to work on some Essential Skills before becoming employed, before returning to school or starting a job in a new workplace. Ontario's Literacy and Basic Skills program offer free training in Essential Skills, based on individual need. Maybe a client wants to practice math, learn how to read documents, fill out forms or become more confident using a computer. Literacy programs can help. Maybe a client hasn't finished high school and isn't sure what the next step should be. Literacy programs can help. And maybe a client is feeling unsure about returning to a school environment where they will have to study college-level material and write tests. Again, literacy programs are ready to help.

Did you know that Apprenticeship-bound clients who have disabilities could might be able to access extra support to help them succeed? If your client has a challenge related to physical abilities, mental health or learning abilities, know that there's a variety of opportunities available to help them be successful. While doing the in-school component of their apprenticeship, students with disabilities can connect with their onsite Accessibility Services department to inquire about accommodations in the learning environment. Colleges have been given funding to offer extra supports to people in the apprenticeship program who may be affected by disabilities. Not all trades require that an apprentice complete their training by writing a Certificate of Qualification exam (or as we commonly refer to it – the "C of Q"). But if your client does need to write a C of Q and that client also

has a disability, then it's worth contacting the Ministry's office to find out if accommodations (for example – having extra time to write, completing the exam in a separate room to reduce distractions, or using an interpreter or a reader) can be provided for the exam. Medical notes or other supporting documentation may be required to access any of the accommodations available to people with a disability.

Anyone who wants to be an apprentice needs to find a sponsor - which could be an employer, a "group" sponsor or an individual - to support and mentor them throughout their apprenticeship. Employment Ontario's employment agencies offer free services to anyone who needs support in this process – in fact, the Province of Ontario funds employment agencies to help people create resumes, practice interview scenarios and connect to potential employment opportunities. If your client needs support in their job search, or is unsure of how to connect with a potential mentor, an Employment Ontario employment agency can help.

Question 3: Do I have the supports I need to succeed?



- Financially
- To pursue apprenticeship training while accessing other programs (like OW or ODSP)
- To find help when needed

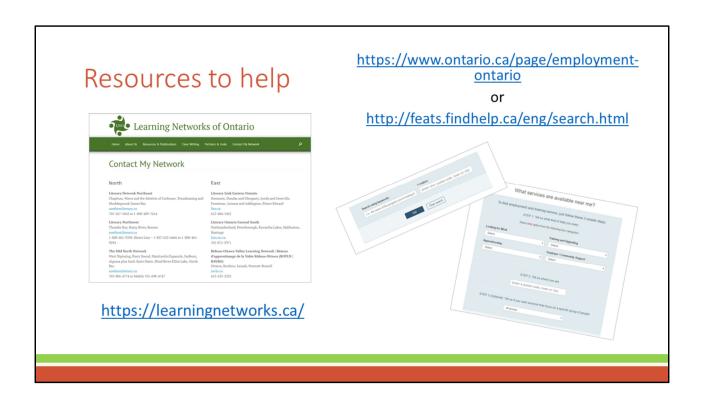
There are financial incentives available to clients on their journey to apprenticeship, to motivate them to complete their training, and to give them supports to be successful. Grants and loans are offered through the government, and because they can change we won't go into detail about each opportunity for financial support. But you and your client should be aware that loans, grants and completion bonuses are available not only for employers, but also for apprentices.

As mentioned before, an element of most apprenticeships is in-class training. According to the government of Ontario's website, "Most trades require you to do two or three levels of classroom training during an apprenticeship. Each level lasts eight to 12 weeks, depending on the trade." There are other formats for in-class training as well, including single-day release, and the length of time may change depending on whether the in-class training is offered full or part time. Either way, it's important to consider whether your client financially prepared for the time when they are in school and may not be earning an income? Some people can get Employment Insurance for financial support while studying full-time, but if they don't qualify for Employment Insurance, there could be additional opportunities for financial support.

Clients that receive financial support from Ontario Works or the Ontario Disability Support Program need to be clear on what's permitted and supported through these programs

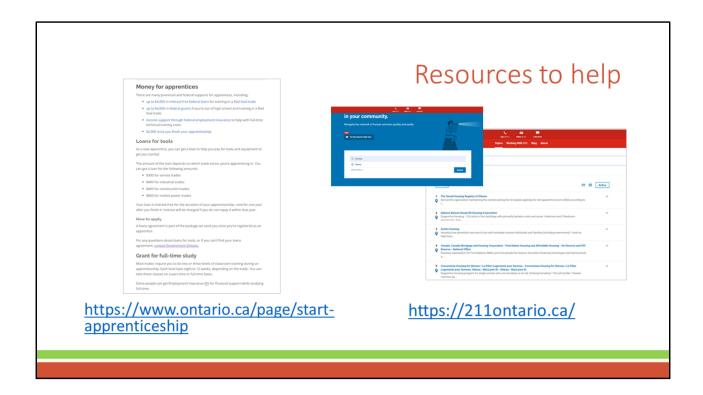
before they begin their apprenticeship. And be aware that your client might have some misconceptions about what supports people on OW or ODSP are "allowed" to access, so it's a really good idea to get clarification from a caseworker.

For anyone to be successful in pursuing a career, there's a need to address outstanding or ongoing personal issues that may present as a challenge down the road. Often, in community services we help clients find and access what we call "wrap-around supports". Clients need to take time to make sure they are meeting their personal needs, both physically and mentally.



If your client needs to upgrade their education or essential skills, and you're not sure where to find an adult literacy program that fits your client's needs, the Learning Networks of Ontario are here to help. If you visit their website and click "Find My Network" you'll be brought to a complete list of every literacy network across the province of Ontario, and their contact information.

Employment Services agencies are funded by Employment Ontario to help clients develop resumes, practice key employment skills, and find an employer sponsor. Using this website , which is available from either of the website addresses shown on your screen, can help your client find an employment agency near them using either a proximity search, or a broader service search.



It's well worth your client's time to explore the Government of Ontario's "Start an Apprenticeship" website. Not only will they find helpful information about how apprenticeship works, opportunities to look at different trades, and tips on how to both prepare for and complete an apprenticeship, but this is where current information on what financial incentives are being offered can be found.

Finally, if you or your client are unsure of what wrap-around supports are available in your area, a good place to start is Ontario 211. Using pre-populated categories, or searching by key word and area as shown above will lead clients to a host of resources to support their needs, from housing to addiction to education and more.

As Easy As 1-2-3 (Questions)...

- Is an apprenticeship the right fit for me?
- Do I have the skills and education I need to succeed?
- Do I have the supports I need to succeed?



No matter what big decisions people make in life, there's a huge benefit to doing some self-analysis and research into possible options and their impact. And it's no different with the decision to pursue training in the skilled trades through an apprenticeship. Clients who do research and make sure they have all the information they need to move forward successfully, including asking themselves...

- Is an apprenticeship the right fit for me?
- Do I have the skills and education I need to succeed? and,
- Do I have the supports I need to succeed?

... will increase their chances of apprenticeship success.

What's Next?

Other presentations in this series in the Resources section of our website, available at www.llsc.on.ca



Contact us at 519-681-7307 or literacylink@llsc.on.ca

The third and final entry in our "A" Word series of presentations is "Building a Strong Apprenticeship Pathway," where we will explore a community approach to attracting new apprentices, and supporting them to the successful completion of their training. You can find that presentation and many other helpful documents in the Resources section of our website www.llsc.on.ca.

Thank you for joining us today. If you have any questions about this presentation, or any of our other work, please don't hesitate to contact us using the information on your screen.