

Course
Work Culture
PRS-2121-2
Secondary Cycle One



“Culture is the human force that discovers the requirements for change and helps the world become aware of them.”

Elio Vittorini

Presentation of the Course *Work Culture*

The *Work Culture* course is designed to help adult learners deal competently with real-life situations that involve understanding the cultural characteristics of the working world of Québec.

This course enables adult learners to acquire an objective view of the realities of the workplace in order to understand their impact on working life. It is specifically designed for adults who are interested in the workplace and intend to enter it at the end of their studies.

By the end of the course, learners will be able to interpret the realities of the workplace and anticipate their impact on regional employment opportunities. They will be able to understand basic workplace requirements and construct a concept of work that is adapted to the realities of Québec.

Dealing With the Real-Life Situations

Dealing effectively with real-life situations is based on actions. These actions are grouped into categories and make use of a set of resources that include operational competencies and essential knowledge. During the learning process, adults are expected to construct knowledge related to these resources in order to be able to deal appropriately with their real-life situations.

The class of situations, categories of actions, operational competencies and essential knowledge constitute the compulsory elements of the course. These elements are explained in detail under their respective headings.



Class of Situations Addressed by the Course

This course addresses a single class of situations: *Exploring the work culture of Québec*.

This class of situations includes real-life situations in which adults explore the specific characteristics of the Québec workplace in order to be prepared to meet its requirements.

Situations such as immigrating, moving to a new region or keeping up with technological change all involve adapting to a new environment. It is important for adults to understand the values and requirements of this new environment so that they can adjust their concept of work and their integration strategies accordingly. It is important for adults to quickly grasp the cultural and historical

characteristics of the working world, their dynamics and evolution, if they want to be able to adapt to them. They must be able to interpret these characteristics in light of the political, economic, sociological and technical events that have shaped the history of the workplace and influence its culture.

This course provides a basic introduction to work culture in order to help adults determine the place that work occupies in their personal life and prepare to enter the work force.

Class of Situations	Examples of Real-Life Situations
Exploring the work culture of Québec	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Immigration▪ Moving to a new region▪ Technological change▪ Continuing education and training▪ Desire to enter the work force

Categories of Actions

The *categories of actions* are groups of actions that are appropriate for dealing with the real-life situations addressed in the course. *Examples of actions* are provided to illustrate the scope of the category in a variety of contexts.

Categories of Actions	Examples of Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Analyzing the realities of the workplace 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Interprets current events affecting the local and provincial economy ▪ Determines the economic sectors in his or her region ▪ Perceives the influence of political, economic, sociological or technological events on his or her field ▪ Recognizes regional differences in the job market ▪ Determines how fluctuations in the supply and demand of various products affect the local economy ▪ Explains possible causes of unemployment in his or her region ▪ Examines a local unemployment problem based on unemployment cycles and its causes ▪ Identifies workplace requirements in his or her region
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Analyzing how work contributes to personal life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Considers the consequences of unemployment on his or her personal and working life ▪ Plans potential employment income in accordance with his or her financial needs ▪ Considers how work may affect his or her personal relationships ▪ Considers the importance of social status associated with a job ▪ Discusses with family and friends how a job may affect his or her personal and family life ▪ Considers possible accomplishments at work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Adapting one's concept of work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Selects personal and objective criteria to take into account ▪ Seeks to upgrade his or her competencies ▪ Modifies his or her attitudes and behaviours ▪ Includes continuing education and training in his or her plans ▪ Seeks to integrate into a work environment that meets his or her criteria

Compulsory Elements and End-of-Course Outcomes

The compulsory elements are those that the teacher must absolutely take into account when designing learning situations.

Class of Situations

Exploring the work culture of Québec

Categories of Actions

- Analyzing the realities of the workplace
- Analyzing how work contributes to personal life
- Adapting one's concept of work

Operational Competency

Thinks logically

- Examines current events objectively
- Perceives the cause-and-effect relationship between particular events and employment fluctuations
- Infers trends related to basic workplace requirements
- Compares his or her values, needs and attitudes with workplace requirements
- Plans workplace integration strategies appropriate to the trends observed

Essential Knowledge

- Principles underlying the dynamics of the workplace
- Introduction to the history and realities of the workplace
- Impact of work on personal life

The end-of-course outcomes describe how adults make use of the compulsory elements to deal with the real-life situations addressed in the course.

End-of-Course Outcomes

In order to deal with the class situations *Exploring the work culture of Québec*, adults learn to construct and adapt their concept of work by basing their point of view on a coherent analysis of the realities of the workplace, both locally and in a broader context.

To analyze the realities of the workplace, adults look specifically at current events, which they analyze objectively while taking into account Québec's cultural and historical context. They establish cause-and-effect relationships between specific events and employment fluctuations, in light of what they know about the history and realities of the working world. Based on phenomena such as the globalization of markets, technological change and population aging, adults can infer about trends regarding basic workplace requirements and understand their principles. They associate the characteristics of political, economic, sociological or technological events in order to explain where these requirements come from and what effect they have at the local and regional level.

Analyzing the way in which work contributes to personal life entails comparing one's values, needs and attitudes with workplace requirements. By explaining the impact of work on their life and specifying in what way their personal characteristics correspond to or differ from basic workplace requirements, adults are able to understand the importance of upgrading their competencies through continuing education and training.

By understanding the phenomena behind job market fluctuations, adults can broaden their perceptions and adapt their concept of work while taking into account the cultural realities and requirements of the workplace. This conception includes future workplace integration strategies that are appropriate to the trends observed and take into account personal and objective criteria.

Throughout this analytical process, adults produce documents that demonstrate how their concept of work is evolving. These documents serve as a guide in defining the place that work will occupy in their personal life and allow adults to reinvest what they have learned to keep pace with changing requirements.

Evaluation Criteria

- Analyzes objectively the realities of the workplace
- Recognizes how work contributes to his or her personal life
- Adapts his or her concept of work to the realities of the workplace

Operational Competencies

The contribution of each operational competency is described in terms of the actions that are appropriate for dealing with the real-life situations in this course. These operational competencies are addressed in other courses and therefore all of the courses taken together contribute to their development.

In this course, only the following operational competency is addressed: *Thinks logically*.

Contribution of the Operational Competency *Thinks logically*

The operational competency *Thinks logically* is the ability to use analytical reasoning in order to construct and adapt one's concept of work when dealing with real-life situations related to the class *Exploring the work culture of Québec*.

To construct their concept of work, adults need to be able to examine current events objectively. This allows them to establish cause-and-effect relationships between specific events and employment fluctuations and thus infer about trends in basic workplace requirements. For example, they may explain the evolution of employment sectors in their region or the effects of competition. By comparing their personal values, needs and attitudes with workplace requirements, they can plan workplace integration strategies that are appropriate to the trends observed. For example, adults may be able to find effective solutions to potentially difficult situations, such as prolonged periods of unemployment, by adapting their strategy to focus on jobs with good employment prospects.

Essential Knowledge

The text in parentheses defines the scope and meaning of the essential knowledge listed below.

Principles underlying the dynamics of the working world

- Supply and demand (competition)
- Types and cycles of unemployment:
 - economic and structural
- Distribution of economic sectors
- Regional employment differences
- Job market fluctuations

Introduction to the history and realities of the workplace

- Work culture in Québec:
 - basic workplace requirements (required attitudes, competencies, level of schooling and values)
- Historical context specific to Québec:
 - transition from agriculture to industrialization and to information, communications and production technologies
- Characteristics of events behind job market fluctuations:
 - political/economic (globalization of markets)
 - sociological (population aging, multiculturalism and immigration, participation of women in the work force)
 - technological (automation and information in a given sector)
- Links between the historical context and different events
- Links between the historical context and job market fluctuations
- Links between job market fluctuations and basic workplace requirements

Impact of work on personal life

- Financial contribution
- Relational aspects
- Social role (status)
- Time and space management
- Personal and professional development (accomplishments and continuing education and training)
- Integration strategies (coherent criteria for adapting one's concept of work):
 - personal criteria (attitudes, needs and values)
 - objective criteria (employment opportunities, job requirements)

Attitudes

The following attitudes are provided as suggestions only. The development of these attitudes can help adults become more competent in dealing with the real-life situations in this course.

Curiosity	Coherence
Adults who are curious try to understand the dynamics of the working world and develop the tools they need to anticipate the realities they will have to face and be better prepared to face them.	Adults who are coherent in their analysis will be able to adapt their concept of work and avoid inappropriate strategies that can negatively affect their career. For example, they will realize that a lack of education may lead to prolonged unemployment and financial problems or negatively impact their personal and professional development.

Complementary Resources

The following resources are provided as suggestions only and consist of references that may be consulted in learning situations.

Social Resources	Material Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Human Resources Canada▪ Private companies▪ Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale▪ Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles▪ Sectoral and joint committees	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Newspapers▪ Television or Internet newscasts▪ Studies on the effects of unemployment and the benefits of work▪ Company newsletters▪ Regional directories of businesses and organizations▪ Sample company policies▪ Documents on the history of the workplace in Québec▪ Specialized magazines on the workplace▪ Government or institutional Web sites:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- <www.conferenceboard.ca>- <www.cnt.gouv.qc.ca/en/index.asp>- <www.emploiQuebec.net/anglais/index.htm>- <www.oecd.org/home>- <www.publicationsduquebec.gouv.qc.ca/accueil.en.html>- <www.rhdsc.gc.ca/en/home.shtml>- <www.statcan.ca/start.html>

Contribution of the Subject Areas

The contribution of other subject areas, in particular knowledge related to Languages and to Mathematics, Science and Technology, is also useful for dealing with the real-life situations in this course. The elements identified for each subject area are not compulsory and do not constitute prerequisites.

Subject Area: Languages

Program of study: *English, Language of Instruction*

- Oral interaction to exchange information and discuss issues related to the characteristics of the Québec workplace
- Reading and listening to informative texts on the history and cultural realities of the Québec workplace
- Writing informative texts to record personally relevant information (e.g. about job market fluctuations, regional employment opportunities, potential employment income, personal criteria, etc.)

Subject Area: Mathematics, Science and Technology

Program of study: *Mathematics*

- Interpreting, organizing and comparing qualitative and quantitative data on the workplace
- Using percentages, proportions/ratios and graphical representations of data (histograms, charts or graphs) on the distribution of the labour force by economic sector

Program of study: *Computer Science*

- Basic use of a word processor for writing documents
- Searching for information in databases or on the Internet

Andragogical Context

The *Introduction to the World of Work* program enables adult learners to take a critical look at the working world, particularly that of Québec. Legal issues, the value of work, as well as the evolution and realities of the workplace are all endowed with cultural attributes specific to a given context. In fact, the workplace is a hierarchical world governed by a cultural code. It gives rise to numerous expectations and may be the setting of important disputes.

Like the Presecondary course *Rights and Responsibilities at Work*, the course *Work Culture* provides an opportunity for adults to explore the dynamics of the working world, this time by analyzing the cultural realities of Québec from a historical perspective. Because adults are preparing themselves to enter the work force and confront situations that are relatively new to them, the course focuses on constructing knowledge that is essential for understanding the basic factors affecting the job market and perceiving the benefits of work on personal life. It also contributes to the development of logical thinking skills, which help adults infer or deduce how cultural realities of the workplace affect their personal and working lives.

Adults explore the culture of work in Québec and define their own concept of work by examining current events, in print or on television. Various activities such as guided searches, presentations, case studies, comparisons of points of view, testimonials or personal reflections may be used to support adults in their learning. The concepts presented are simplified by the teacher and concern the basic rules governing the workplace, the major

trends behind regional and local market fluctuations, and the impact of work on personal life. The goal is not to turn adult learners into job market analysts, but to prepare them to anticipate how certain cultural realities may affect employment opportunities and make them aware of the value they attribute to work in their personal life.

The teacher's role consists above all in providing a framework for observing and analyzing political, economic, sociological and technological events that will help adults situate these events in a historical context. It also involves guiding adults who are learning to think logically, by providing them with checklists with which to interpret objective facts. Adults will thus practise predicting the impact of certain events on employment as well as the changes they are likely to bring about at the local and regional level. To explain the dynamics of the working world, the teacher may refer to major macroeconomic principles, texts on the history of the Québec job market and its current state, news articles on regional job market fluctuations and studies on the impact of unemployment on personal and working life. To help orient their future workplace integration strategies, the teacher guides adults during various learning activities where adults consider the impact of work on their life.

Finally, the course *Work Culture* is part of a developmental approach that aims to help adults upgrade their competencies through education and training and through personal and professional development. All of its activities should enable adults to determine what work means to them and how they will integrate and evolve in the workplace.

Learning Situation

The learning situation that follows is provided as an example to show teachers how the principles of the education reform can be applied in the classroom.

It is authentic in the sense that it addresses a real-life situation (taken from the class of situations in the course) that adults may find themselves in. It is sufficiently open and comprehensive to allow adult learners to explore several important aspects related to dealing with this real-life situation.

The examples of actions presented in the course help the teacher to identify those actions that an adult would take to deal with the real-life situation. The teacher can then refer to these examples in order to develop pertinent learning activities.

The learning situation is organized in terms of the three steps of the teaching-learning process, which are as follows:

- planning learning
- actual learning
- integrating and reinvesting learning

These steps highlight the principles of the education reform insofar as they encourage adults to be active, to reflect on their learning and to interact with their peers when the learning context is suitable. They include learning activities and may also include evaluation activities intended to support adults in the learning process.

These activities help learners to construct knowledge related to the compulsory elements of the course that are targeted by the learning situation concerned: one or more categories of actions, essential knowledge and the actions of the operational competencies associated with the categories of actions.

The example provided also refers to certain teaching strategies—pedagogical methods and techniques—that can be selected according to the learners, the context and the learning environment. Certain learning strategies may also be suggested, as well as a variety of material and social resources.

Example of a Learning Situation

Current Events and Employment

The learning situation chosen for the class *Exploring the work culture of Québec* involves the situation *Desire to enter the work force*.

In order to contextualize this situation, the teacher asks adults to analyze the realities of the workplace by predicting how a current event may affect regional employment, and to draw conclusions about the way work contributes to their personal life. Dealing with this situation requires the use of the operational competency *Thinks logically*.

Adults will be required to analyze and interpret a current political/economic event, such as a massive layoff or a plant closure, which is likely to cause the regional unemployment rate to rise. The analysis will have to include the event's causes, its effects on regional employment and the possible consequences for the individuals involved. During a final learning activity, adults will reflect on the effects that such an event could have on their lives.

The first learning activity consists of a group discussion during which the teacher presents the characteristics of a current political/economic event and explains how such an event can affect the region's basic workplace requirements. He or she answers questions and then hands out an article about another event. Working in pairs and using documents and course notes from previous learning situations, participants determine the type of unemployment the event brings about, its causes, and its effects on employment distribution and job requirements in the region.

During the second learning activity, participants analyze the event itself, and identify the main features that characterize it. They base their analysis on their perception of the region's job market and its requirements—a perception they have acquired in previous learning activities on employment fluctuations and types of unemployment. The teams identify, for example, the type of unemployment the event causes, and the consequences on the region's population. They may also observe changes with regard to the education and competencies required to find a job. During the activity, the teacher circulates among the various teams, answering questions, spending time with adults who have the most difficulty analyzing and understanding the event. Exchanges among the teams allow adults to validate their understanding and agree on a common interpretation. Once the analysis is done, the teacher asks each team to present its results to the rest of the class.

In the third learning activity, the teams present their analysis and conclusions in a written text or using a diagram or visual aid to the teacher and their classmates, who ask questions and provide feedback. Using peer comments and the help of the teacher, each team reviews its analysis and fills in the missing information. By discussing and sharing information, adults are able to compare their interpretations and validate the probable causes and effects of the event.

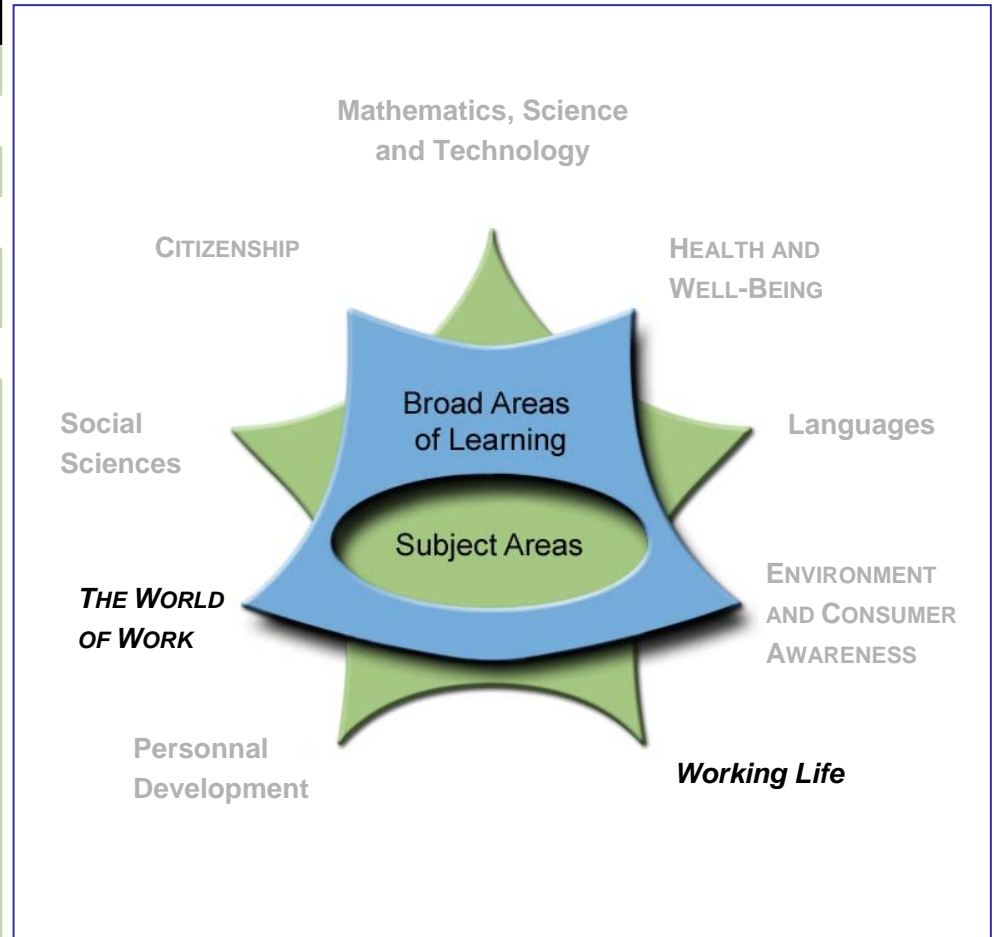
In the final learning activity, the teacher asks the adults to reflect on the consequences that such a situation could have on a worker's personal and working life. This could include financial consequences, as well as effects on relationships, on a person's

role in society or social status, on time and space management, or on a person's personal and professional development. After providing examples of possible effects, the teacher then asks the adults to consider how their own lives would be affected if they found themselves out of work. The teacher circulates through the class, helping adults clarify their thoughts and take into account all of the elements analyzed. The results of this reflection are then recorded in a document, such as a logbook.

This learning situation allows adults to analyze how work contributes to personal life. The same process may be applied to other events that affect the workplace. It may also be used in other learning situations aimed at helping adults define the strategies to adopt and the actions to take in order to minimize the effects of unemployment on their future working life. Such reflection will guide adults in their first steps in adapting their personal concept of work.

Elements of the Course Addressed by the Learning Situation

Class of Situations	
Exploring the work culture of Québec	
Learning Situation	
Current Events and Employment	
Categories of Actions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyzing the realities of the workplace Analyzing how work contributes to personal life 	
Operational Competency	Essential Knowledge
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thinks logically 	<p>Introduction to the history and realities of the workplace</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Characteristics of events behind job market fluctuations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> political/economic (globalization of markets) Links between job market fluctuations and basic workplace requirements Impact of work on personal life Financial contribution Relational aspects Social role (status) Time and space management Personal and professional development (accomplishments and continuing education and training)



Complementary Resources

- Newspapers
- Television or Internet newscasts
- Studies on the effects of unemployment and the benefits of work
- Government or institutional Web sites:
 - <www.conferenceboard.ca>
 - <www.oecd.org/home>
 - <www.statcan.ca/start.html>