



Building the Basics in Business

Employers tell us that in today's business climate, they need every person who works for them to be skilled. Even in entry-level jobs, workers need to read and express themselves clearly, use a computer, and solve problems. It's getting harder to find people who have these skills . . . and the way business is changing, employers need them more every day.

The lack of these skills hurts business productivity and profitability. A 2001 survey by the American Management Association found that about a third of all applicants are missing the basic reading and writing skills they need for the jobs they seek. Another recent study found that 27 percent of working-age Oregonian adults don't have the foundation they need to succeed in 21st century jobs. In business forums, Oregon businesses consistently list basic skills as one of the top critical workforce needs.

The adult education and literacy provider at your local community college can advance the skills of your workforce. We do more than teach reading, writing, math, and life skills for English and non-native speakers. We also teach computer literacy, problem-solving, teamwork, and communication skills in a way that connects to the working world. All of this helps current and future workers perform their jobs to help you meet your business goals.

Humberto Gutierrez, an orchard crew leader at Bear Creek Corporation in Medford, had never worked on a computer before taking a 10-week basic skills program. Now he has set his sights on becoming an orchard supervisor.

With funds from a U.S. Department of Labor Demonstration Grant, Rogue Community College worked with Bear Creek management to develop a customized training program for Gutierrez and 35 other non-native English speakers. Instructors came right to company worksites to teach English usage, writing, computer skills, interpersonal communication, and math through horticultural content. Workers could see the connection to their jobs and immediately put their new skills into practice.

Taking the course has helped Gutierrez see the career potential in orchard work. He recently purchased a computer to practice his skills at home, and he continues to improve. "I feel much more confident," he says.

Just What Potential and Current Workers Need

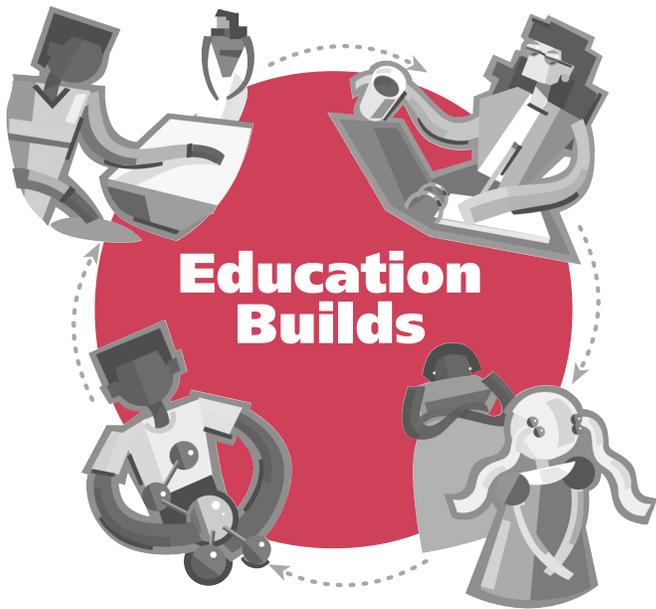
Community college adult education and literacy programs offer tailored instruction focused on improving job performance and helping adults learn how to:

- Read instructions, charts and tables
- Follow step-by-step directions
- Calculate percentages and interest rates
- Communicate appropriately in a work setting
- Work effectively as team members

Just What Employers Need

The local adult education and family literacy provider can help businesses with:

- New hires – we can determine where the gaps are in their skills, and set them up with training to close those gaps.
- Existing employees – we can help them perform their current jobs better or move into positions of higher responsibility within your company.
- Project teams – we can give workers the basic skills boost that will help them understand and apply specialized training in a collaborative work environment and become invaluable partners in your work team.



Adult Education and Literacy Programs Build

Employees who can assume more responsibility and advance to higher-level jobs. They follow instructions and learn new positions and equipment more easily.

Parents who are better able to help their children with school work. They set higher standards for generations to come.

Community Members with comprehension skills to make informed choices – about health and other individual needs, and about our basic rights and responsibilities as citizens.

Learners who are prepared to transition to college or occupational training.

The Adult Basic Education System: Gateway to Prosperity in the 21st Century

For statewide information :

<http://www.odccwd.state.or.us/>

In your community:

Leading the charge to adult literacy and lifelong learning

Helping You Do More for the People You Serve

Public service practitioners know the necessity of strong basic skills as they try to help clients find work, access health care, and meet other needs on the road to self-sufficiency. If clients have solid communication skills, basic competencies in math, and enough technical knowledge to use a computer, the journey is easier.

The adult education and family literacy provider at your local community college can be a valuable partner. We do more than teach reading, writing, math, and life skills. We give people the confidence that they can succeed – not only in our classes, but in all the phases of their progress toward more successful careers and satisfying lives.

Our services are individualized to help your clients with barriers and learning problems. We fit a variety of timelines, offer contextual basic skills instruction, and complement your services to employers. By adding our resources to yours, we can help your clients take full advantage of the services you provide as well as help you meet your performance goals.

Cheri Post loves her accounts payable job at Flightcraft in Portland. She should – she took a difficult road to get to it! A mother at 15, Cheri had three children and a lifetime of experience in the welfare system when she enrolled in the Life Skills program at Mt. Hood Community College. She told her counselor she wanted to climb out of her black hole, get her GED and be the first in her family to finish school.

With pooled resources – a Pell grant, welfare assistance, Head Start for her youngest child – Cheri set out to change her life. She worked her way through Life Skills and Adult Basic Education classes, earned her GED, and gained office training and work experience. Two years later, with the help of caring professionals along the way, she started her job at Flightcraft and left welfare forever.

Confident in her education and experience, Cheri sees a bright future for her family. “I always wanted my children to be successful. I felt that if I could be a success, my kids could too.”

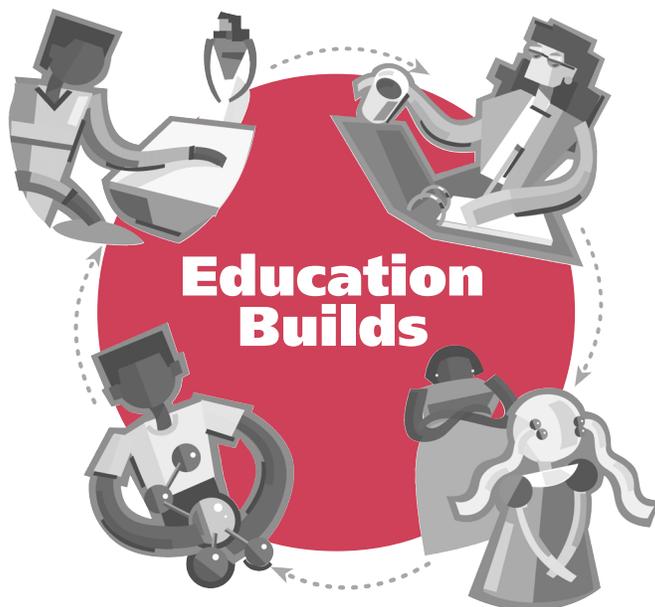
A Core Component of Self-Sufficiency

While it's difficult to sort out cause and effect, we know that low basic skills often accompany the problems that bring clients into public agencies. Poverty, welfare dependency, crime . . . these and other social issues are more common among people who don't have the academic fundamentals and job skills they need to function in our increasingly complex society.

Research shows:

- Persons with higher literacy proficiencies are more likely to be employed at any given time, are more likely to obtain full-time jobs, and are likely to have higher weekly earnings when employed.
- 39 percent of Oregon adults on welfare do not have a high school diploma or GED.
- Welfare recipients with low education skills stay on welfare the longest; those with stronger education skills become self-sufficient more quickly.
- Children's literacy levels are strongly linked to the educational level of their parents, especially their mothers.
- 46 percent of inmates entering Oregon prisons lack a high school diploma or GED.

In 2000-01, Oregon adult education and literacy programs helped more than 25,000 people, including more than 13,000 non-native English speakers. More than half of those we served were 25 years or older. 40 percent were employed.



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In your community:

Investing in Oregon's Adults



To continue to prosper in today's complex world, Oregon needs educated adults who have living wage jobs, are active citizens and responsible family members. An investment in adult literacy will support our state's growth in the 21st century. Research shows:

- 58 percent of young Americans enter adulthood without the skills to begin college work, yet 80 percent of new jobs will require post-secondary education.
- There is a strong relationship between parents' education and the success of their children in school.
- 38 percent of adults in Oregon are at the two lowest levels of literacy.
- 39 percent of Oregon adults on welfare and 46 percent of inmates entering Oregon prisons do not have a high school diploma or GED.
- In 2000, U.S. workers who lacked a high school diploma or GED earned a median monthly income of \$360, compared to \$506 for those with a high school diploma, and \$588 for those with some college.

The adult education and literacy programs in Oregon's community colleges are an essential component of Oregon's education and workforce system. Coordinating with public and private agencies around the state, we are increasing the number of adults who possess the necessary education and skills to take advantage of the opportunities Oregon offers.

Victor Tezanos is on the path to lifelong learning after getting a fresh start from the Klamath Adult Learning Center. A high school dropout, Tezanos came to the Learning Center at the age of 27 to complete his GED. This year, he will graduate from Klamath Community College. In addition to being a full-time student, husband, and father of four, he edits the KCC Student Newsletter and serves on the KCC Learning Affairs Council. He also volunteers his time with Junior Achievement and the Klamath Adult Learning Center's English as a Second Language program.

"I've broken the barrier," says Tezanos. "No one in my family has ever even considered college an option. Now, I plan for my children to graduate from college."

Tezanos was recently selected as a Ford Scholar from a field of more than 3,700 applicants. After his graduation from KCC, he plans to attend Southern Oregon University to major in bilingual education.

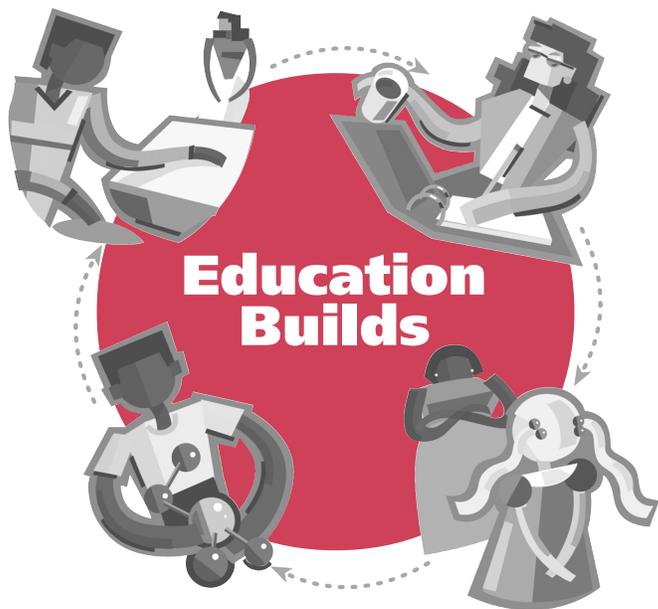
The dividends of an investment in adult education and family literacy:

- Programs that help Oregon adults gain the basic skills they need to move into the workforce or post-secondary education. In 2000-01, Oregon adult education and literacy programs helped more than 25,000 people, including more than 13,000 non-native English speakers. More than half of those we served were 25 years or older and 40 percent were employed.
- Higher business productivity and profitability, increased personal earning power, a more educated citizenry, and stronger families.
- A unified system to ensure programs maintain the highest standards of quality. This system allows us to measure skill gains and track students' progress through our programs and beyond.

Building the Basics for Oregon's Workforce

Over the last two decades, what is needed from Oregon's workers has drastically changed. Unskilled jobs in resource-based industries are dwindling, replaced by faster-paced, fast-changing jobs in both the white- and blue-collar sectors. These jobs demand more literate workers who can think and read critically, express themselves persuasively, solve problems, and master sophisticated technology.

Adult education and literacy providers at Oregon's local community colleges can help bridge the education and job skills gap. We do more than teach reading, writing, math, and life skills for English and non-native speakers. We also teach computer literacy, problem solving, teamwork, and communication skills – all of which help Oregonians get a solid start in the working world and make the connection to further education for lasting, satisfying careers. Building basic skills is a critical step that will keep Oregon's economy competitive in the global marketplace.



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