



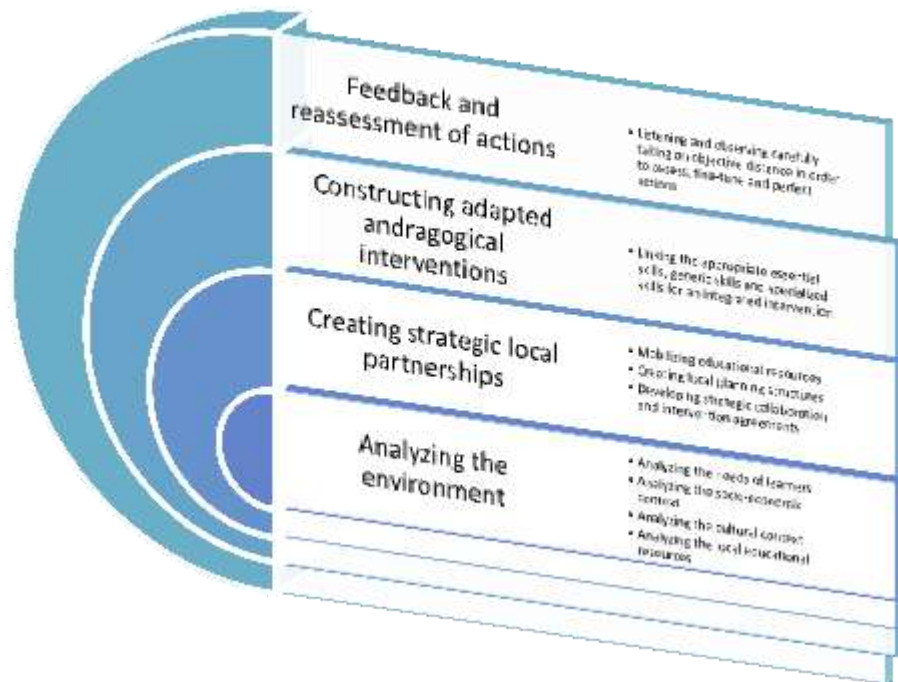
Towards an Integrated Model to support Skills /Competencies Development of adults in Canada

**Toronto, Ontario
March 26th, 2013**



1. Context

An andragogical model of literacy development



Definitions of key concepts

Competency (in general) :

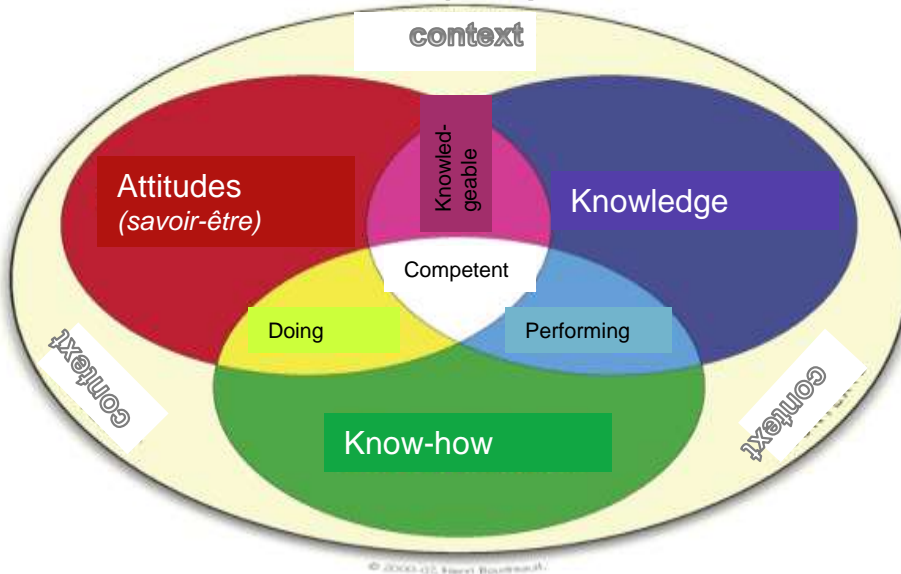
- A person's ability to assume a responsibility or perform a task (Landry, 1987).

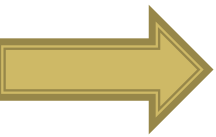
Competency (adult education field) :

- A body of knowledge, know-how and attitudes that helps a person complete, as appropriate, a task or a group of tasks (Legendre, 2005)
- *According to its nature, we can suppose that the efficient development of competency/skills rests upon a strategic to-and-fro between theoretical learning and practical action.*

Henri Boudreault's diagram

Visual representation of a professional competency





According to the surveys

- According to the IALS in 1994 and the IALSS in 2003, basic skills/*competencies* are like muscles: the more they are used, regardless of the context, the better they are maintained and the more quickly they improve.

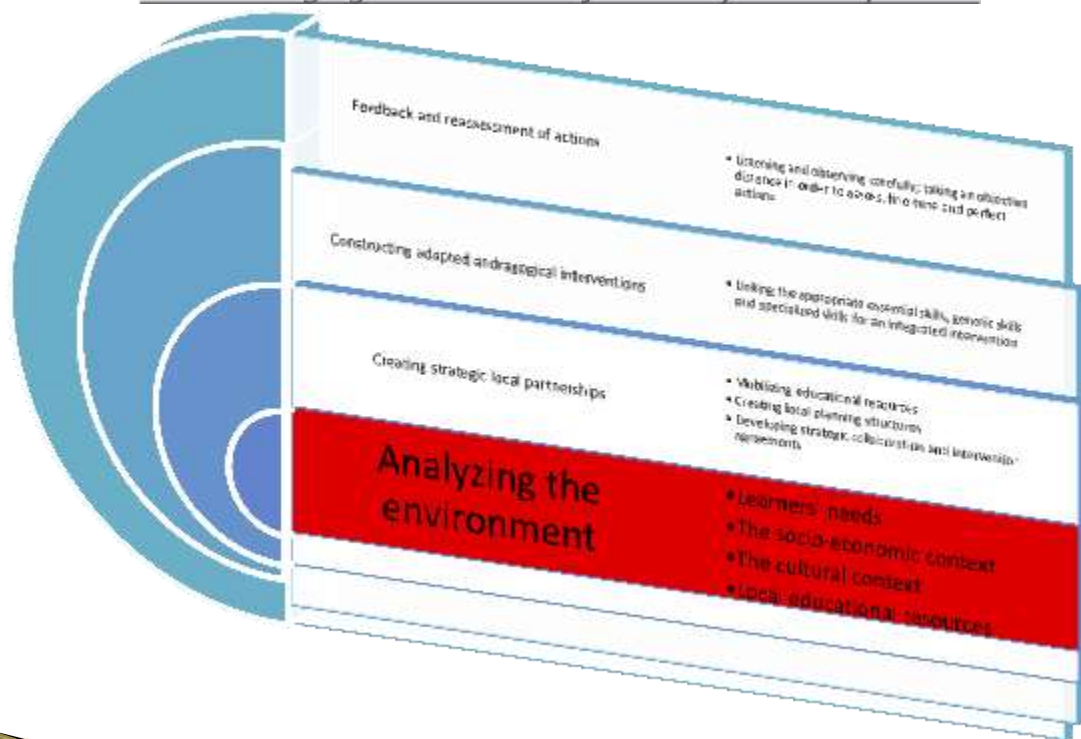
Different categories of skills to support development of tasks

- Essential skills
 - Generic skills (soft skills)
 - Second-language skills
 - Specialized or technical skills
-
- In the context of doing a task, these diverse skills must fit together seamlessly: sometimes one completes the other and sometimes one supports the other, either in the learning process or in action (carrying out a task).

2. Analyzing the environment

»» The model's first component

An andragogical model of literacy development



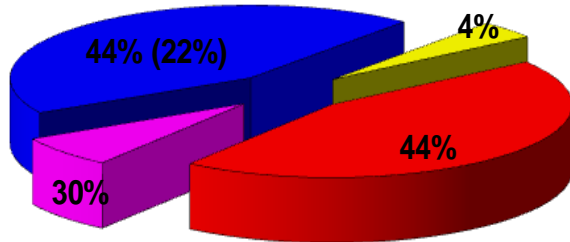
Analyzing learners' needs

Analyzing the needs of adult learners is at the very core of an andragogical intervention:

- Adult learners have **multiple** and **complex** needs.
- Most need to produce and to work, to earn an income for themselves and their family.
- Adults' needs are complex, because they are distinct from one individual to another, or from one group of individuals to another.

Research project in New Brunswick

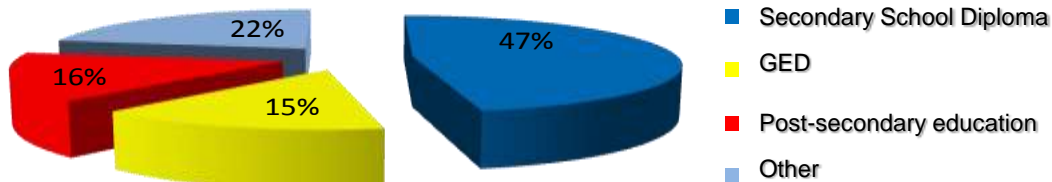
Needs identified by the work place in terms of skills/competencies development



- Essential skills
- Generic skills
- Second-language skills
- Technical skills

Research project in New Brunswick

Needs identified by training and employability practitioners in terms of skills/competencies development



79 responses

Obstacles to skill/competencies building

A. Institutional obstacles:

- the rules and regulations of teaching institutions
- the certification standards and requirements
- the policies of sponsoring organizations

B. Situational obstacles:

- **For the adult:** obstacles related to their economic and social situation
- **For the business:** obstacles related to the economic context, the evolution of technology and market forces

C. Psychosocial obstacles

- **For the adult:** Obstacles related to a commitment towards learning and how education is perceived.
- **For the business:** Obstacles related to how training is perceived and beliefs about its benefits.

Analyzing the socio-economic context

It becomes important for practitioners in adult education **to identify what employment sectors are available in the community and relevant for learners with lower literacy skills.**

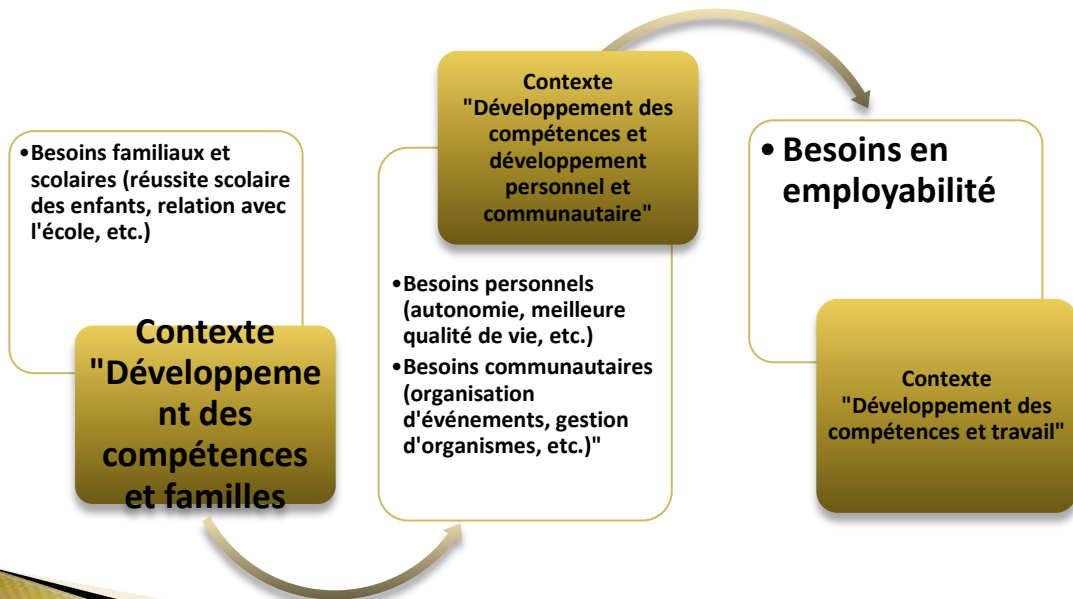
Analyzing the cultural context

- Francophones living in a minority situation must integrate an Anglo dominant environment where available jobs often require a knowledge of English, something that represents an even bigger challenge when they have low literacy skills (Wagner, taken from Corbeil, 2006).
- For minority groups, the status of the primary language in the community and the social relations with the majority group become essential elements to consider when analyzing the environment.

Analyzing local educational resources

- Practitioners and managers have noticed that there are **many educational resources available** in communities, from a variety of sources, and they all have a mission of meeting the needs of adult learners
- However, there is a twofold problem: there is sometimes **duplication** of certain services, but there is sometimes a **vacuum** (a gap) between the programs and the services.

Schémas illustrant l'évolution possible des intentions de développement de compétences pour les parents (cheminements possibles)



3. Creating strategic local partnerships

»» The model's second component

An andragogical model of literacy development



Mobilizing educational resources

- This mobilization of partners in training and support for learners with low literacy skills under one single collaborative framework can take several forms: a local round table on adult education, a roundtable on local planning, a single entry point for adult education, a training project committee, etc.
- The most important element is to gather together strategic partners in order to conceive andragogical interventions that are appropriate for the target clientele of the community.

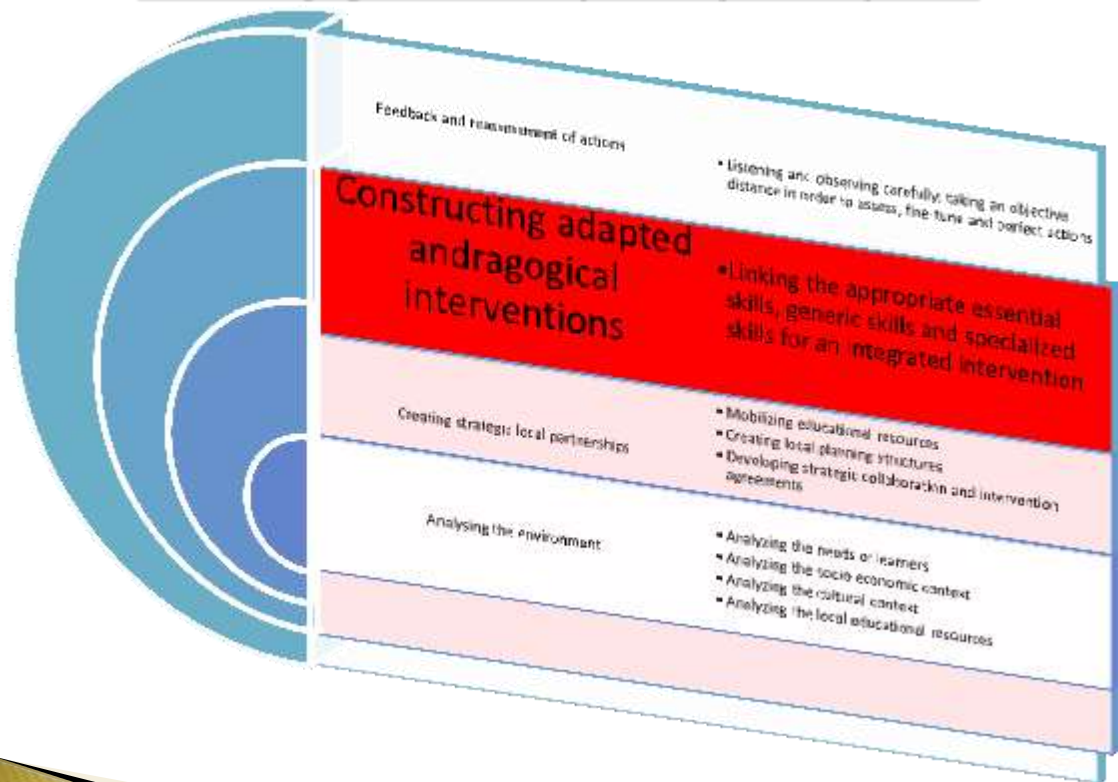
Planning process and collaboration

- Develop a local planning process
- Establish a single entry point for adult training
- Develop cooperative agreements and strategic partnerships

4. Constructing adapted andragogical interventions

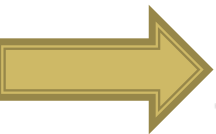
»» The model's third component

An andragogical model of literacy development



Constructing andragogical interventions

- The construction of andragogical interventions that are adapted to the needs of learners, the community and partners
- For the longest time, most literacy programs have focused solely on improving certain basic skills (reading, writing, numeracy, computer use).
- Very few adult education services attempt to **develop more than one type of skill—in an integrated manner—under a single initiative.**



Fundamental question

What skills/competencies to develop
for employment need?

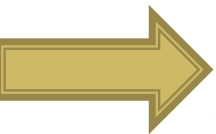
What role do essential skills, generic skills, second-language skills (English as the language of integration) or specialized skills play in meeting the integration needs of the targeted clientele?

Choosing skills

It is the learners' needs, depending on the desired integration project, that determine to what extent each skill type merits being further developed and to what degree the service offering should take this into account.

Skills integration

- Integration of literacy skills and technical / professional skills;
- Integration of literacy skills and employment abilities or academic abilities;
- Integration of literacy skills and second-language skills;
- Integration of several of these skills



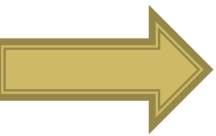
Integration of skills and resources

- The first level of adaptation was based on a **comprehensive identification of the type of skills** that the program needed to develop, taking into account the target clientele and the nature of the occupation (**competent food services assistant**, able to find a job).
- The pursuit of this didactic model involves a second level of integration: **the establishment of strategic partnerships to ensure appropriate services are shared and offered in a simultaneous and integrated manner**. At this second level of integration, practitioners must ask **which resources must be integrated in order that the intervention allows for the development of the previously identified skills?** How could these programs and services be integrated into a single intervention so they would allow for the simultaneous development of all the targeted skills?

Comprehensive solutions and integrated services for complex needs

This approach allows learners to :

- Benefit from the many educational resources of different partners;
- Receive instructional and logistical support adapted to the learning obstacles they face and their complex needs;
- Receive an education that is adapted to their level of literacy and relevant to their needs for socio-economic insertion;
- Obtain formal certification or recognition for their learning;
- Participate in a preparatory process with a view to integrating the labour market or another project important to them; and,
- Promotes participation in various aspects of community life.



Intention of integration in a job sector (qualifying training)

- **Technical, specialised or professional skills are at the core of the intervention**, because they are the basis of recognition of the skill by the targeted job sector. Recognition often hinges on the professional tasks to be accomplished.
- The development of other types of skills is also encouraged, because such skills support professional tasks in concrete situations: essential skills, generic skills, and second language skills are therefore skills needed to do tasks, rather than learning objectives in and of themselves.

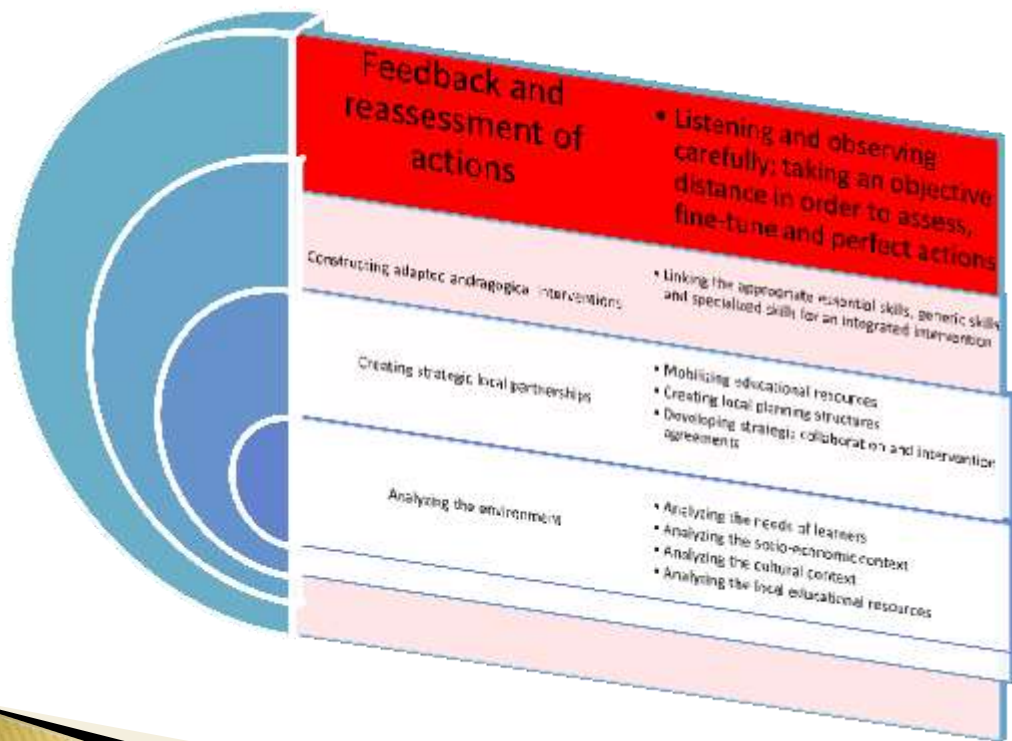
His view on integrated training

« This **integration** of literacy and mathematics training serves several purposes. First, by teaching basic skills within the context of technical course content, students can understand the functional utility of reading and mathematic concepts. Hence, they are motivated to increase both their technical skills and their literacy and math skills. Just as technical topics are connected with something students already know about. Second, the presentation of technical and basic skills instruction together eliminates the need for remedial courses students might need to take **before** receiving technical instruction. Combining the two types of training shortens total training time. This is of special importance for out of school youth and adults because it permits them to move out into the labor market sooner, and it gives learners less time to get frustrated and drop out of training. » (Sticht, T., *Functional Context Education; Making learning relevant*)

5. Feedback and reassessment of actions

» The model's fourth component

An andragogical model of literacy development

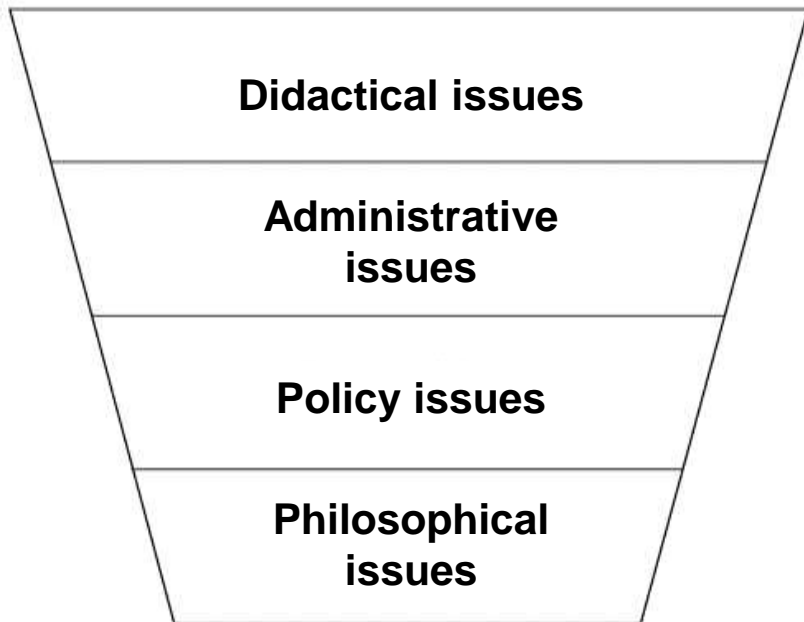


Feedback and reassessment of actions

After creating a mechanism for the continuous collection of information, the data that has been gathered (such as outcomes, comments and criticism from learners, practitioners and partners) should help **readjust the activities and perfect the model, according to the context.**

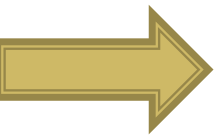
Everything must remain flexible and open to improvements. Some trial implementations will work well, others less so. A **dynamic of openness and of willingness to adapt to change** should be established among the partnering organizations involved, **especially during the first stages of constructing the intervention.**

The CAP's analytical framework of andragogical issues



6. Conclusion

»» Towards a learning community

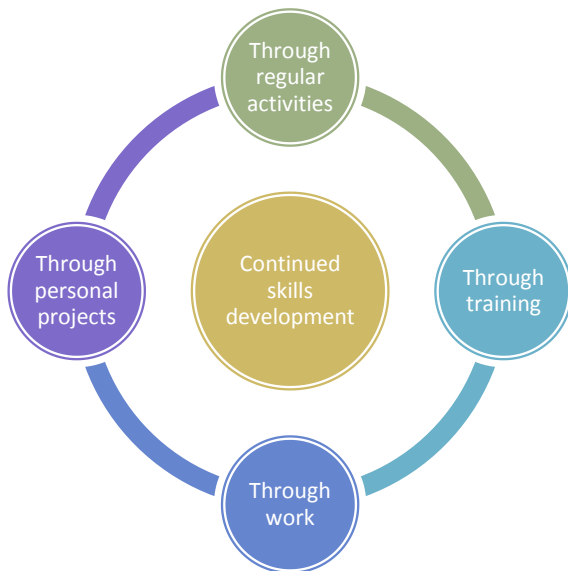


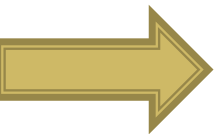
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6.2 Moving towards...

Towards a learning community





Thank you for your interest!