Breaking New Ground:
'Framing' English for the construction sector

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WHY ENGLISH FOR THE CONSTRUCTION SECTOR?

- Labour shortage
  - 200,000 construction job vacancies in next 6 years
  - Northward migration of construction workers
  - Increasing housing starts
  - Aging labour workforce
- Underemployment of skilled immigrants in the construction trades
THE PROJECT
PARTNERS

• MOSAIC
  • a Vancouver-based non-profit agency that serves the needs of immigrants and refugees
    • settlement, integration, translation, and English language training

• Industry Liaison
  ◦ Olaf Neilsen, Trades Training and Development Coordinator, Camosun
THE CURRICULUM “CREW”
RESEARCH PHASE

◦ Consultation
  • Focus group
  • Industry experts / liaison
  • Other programs
  • Lit review

◦ Direct observation
  • Construction worksites
  • Job Activity Language Analysis

◦ Key findings
Effective integration of skilled workers into the construction workplace

- Authentic workplace language
  - General construction language enhancement
  - Common terms – tools, safety, materials

- “Workplace” fit
  - Socio-cultural competencies
  - Participating in workplace interactions
Research-based curriculum development process

- Five key areas of competencies → Curriculum Modules
  - Getting a job and getting ahead
  - Learning on the job
  - Team work – doing tasks and getting along/fitting in
  - Safety
COURSE GOALS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

• **Course goal #1**: Fit into the Canadian construction workplace effectively and safely by using communication strategies

• **Course Goal #2**: Re-engineer / adapt one’s occupational persona through increasing knowledge of the Canadian construction sector
CURRICULUM DELIVERY

• Classroom application
  ◦ Scenario approach – Willis Method
    • Audio materials
  ◦ Sector resources and experts
  ◦ Student centered projects and case studies

• Pilot program delivery - Oct 2012 – Feb 2013
  ◦ Participants
  ◦ Timing
NEXT STEPS – CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

- Deliver pilot
- Audio materials
- Gather Feedback
- Revise curriculum
- Revise handbook
- Implement changes
IMPLICATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

- Sustaining this type of programming
- Partnerships
- Eligibility
Questions / comments?
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