Canadian Standards and Guidelines
for Career Development Practitioners

Areas of Specialization

Facilitated and Individual
Group Learning

2004

S2 Facilitated and Individual Group Learning

S2.1 Possess Knowledge About How to Facilitate Learning

S2.1.1 describe commonly-accepted principles of learning

Why is this competency important?
- to guide individuals and groups toward learning goals
- to deal with the affective, cognitive and behavioural domains
- to appreciate the importance of facilitated learning
- to empower clients to help themselves

To demonstrate this competency, career development practitioners must:

describe commonly-accepted principles of learning, including that clients:

a) are their own experts about who they are, what they know and what they want to learn
b) bring prior experiences, strengths and challenges with them to learning situations
c) learn best when they create personal meaning
d) need to take responsibility for their own learning
e) are capable of directing their own learning:
   - some clients may need help to develop their own personal agency
f) look to the facilitator for leadership, especially at the beginning of a learning situation when more structure and support are needed
g) have a preferred learning style (e.g., *auditory, kinaesthetic, visual*)
   - a variety of techniques should be used to enhance learning
h) acquire both intentional and incidental knowledge and skills in learning situations:
   - incidental learning can be used to create valuable teaching opportunities called teachable moments
i) will learn better when content is presented in a way that helps them connect new information to previous knowledge

Notes
- Although these are effective learning principles commonly subscribed to in Canada, career development practitioners should recognize and respect the diversity of other effective approaches to learning.
- Learning is more fully integrated and meaningful when it considers the cognitive, behavioural, affective, psycho-motor and contextual domains of clients.

S2 Facilitated and Individual Group Learning

S2.1 Possess Knowledge About How to Facilitate Learning

S2.1.2 define techniques commonly used to facilitate learning

Why is this competency important?
- to promote learning and awareness
- to be able to choose appropriate techniques for the purpose and context of the clients
- to draw on a variety of techniques to address different learning styles
- to make learning relevant and interesting

To demonstrate this competency, career development practitioners must:
define the techniques commonly used to facilitate learning:
a) brainstorming:
  - idea generation within a group without evaluation
b) career fair:
  - representatives from various work and educational environments set up displays to present information about their companies or institutions
c) case study:
  - a scenario based on a real work situation or problem
d) coaching:
  - a collaborative approach used to enhance performance and motivate individuals or groups toward goal achievement
e) demonstration:
  - performing a skill while describing it
f) field trip:
  - a planned visit to a specific area or site to study it
g) game:
  - two or more individuals participate in a fun, hands-on activity
h) group discussion:
  - information is exchanged among group members
i) guest speaker:
  - a knowledgeable person is invited to speak and/or answer questions

j) job shadowing:
  - an individual spends time with a person on the job to observe what the job responsibilities are and what knowledge, skills and attitudes are required to fulfill those responsibilities
k) learning circle:
  - participants sit in a circle and speak in turn without interruption or rebuttal
l) lecture:
  - a verbal presentation to explain and teach
m) mentoring:
  - an individual is matched with a knowledgeable and motivated person who guides the individual's professional and personal development
n) modelling:
  - use of self to demonstrate appropriate behaviour
o) multi-media:
  - a combination of media forms used to stimulate learning
p) panel:
  - a structured presentation that allows a person with expertise to share knowledge, attitudes and/or skills on a given topic with an audience
q) project:
  - an exercise for which participants follow a designated process to come up with individual results, e.g., *marketing plan, student presentation*
r) reflection:
  - thoughtful consideration of one's learning, e.g., *journal writing*
s) retreat:
  - a learning experience that takes place away from the work environment
t) role-playing:
  - an unrehearsed, informal dramatization in which clients act out a prescribed scenario
u) small group activity:
  - dividing a large group into sub-groups of two or more clients to encourage participation
v) storytelling:
  - sharing past experiences about self or others
  - clients are often asked to share success stories to motivate other clients
w) volunteering:
  - individuals provide services to organizations and in return gain work experience and contacts
x) work experience:

Skill Competencies are in bold type, knowledge and attitude competencies are in plain, not bold, type

- individuals spend time on the job to learn through training and experience about the responsibilities, knowledge, skills and attitudes required

Notes
- While these are commonly used techniques, there are many others.
- These learning techniques should be used appropriately for the program being developed and delivered.

S2 Facilitated and Individual Group Learning

S2.2 Facilitate Learning

S2.2.1 prepare for program delivery

Why is this competency important?
- to present relevant knowledge and training to clients
- to provide consistency
- to allow flexibility
- to generate thoughtful planning
- to increase the probability of success in the delivery of quality programs

To demonstrate this competency, career development practitioners must:
a) follow the principles of learning (see S2.1.1)
b) respect diversity (see C2.1)
c) allow adequate time for preparation
d) ensure a good knowledge of the content area through research and consultation
e) review past experiences in the delivery of programs with similar objectives and purposes:
   - identify past challenges and options to deal with them
f) create program plans based on a framework:
   - identify the:
     - needs of the clients:
       ➤ consider the prior experiences that the clients bring to the learning situation
     - objectives
   - select the specific content that needs to be presented
   - identify effective delivery processes
   - develop marketing plans for internal stakeholders and external partners
   - determine desired learning outcomes, e.g., *cognitive, emotional*
   - determine and select the evaluation methods, e.g., *surveys, focus groups*:
     - consider the process and content
     - consider the expectations of the:
       ➤ clients
       ➤ sponsoring organization
     - consider their own personal development goals
     - design evaluation instruments, as required
     - determine who will be involved in the evaluation

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– determine when the instruments will be used
– determine what will be done with the results

g) select, review and/or develop materials, as necessary

h) determine program logistics, e.g., *budget, location, size of group, time frame*

i) prepare for program delivery by reviewing:
  • plan
  • content
  • materials
  • evaluation methods

Notes
• A program can be planned for an individual or a group.
• Consult with colleagues, if possible, when using a process or covering content for the first time.

S2 Facilitated and Individual Group Learning

S2.2 Facilitate Learning

S2.2.2 determine clients' existing competencies

Why is this competency important?
• to determine clients' suitability for the program
• to contribute to the needs assessment for program development
• to work with the abilities and strengths of clients
• to help clients experience success

To demonstrate this competency, career development practitioners must:

a) listen to the clients' experiences:
  • focus on experiences, strengths and abilities that reflect and impact learning

b) ask questions to identify the barriers that clients perceive as obstacles, e.g., *age, work history, difficulties finding employment, personal issues*

c) review portfolios, if available

d) review key areas with clients

e) determine the clients' commitment to the project, e.g., *present the clients with a challenge*

f) review assessment results, if available, with clients to determine relevance to the program

Notes
• Career development practitioners need to create learning activities that keep clients' competencies in mind so that individuals will experience success.
• Clients' competencies need to be determined during initial contact so that appropriate learning can be incorporated into clients' interactions.
• It is important to note that sometimes clients have low opinions of themselves and only as the program progresses will their true abilities become obvious. It is important that career development practitioners maintain flexibility and realize that clients' competencies need to be re-evaluated throughout the process.
• Several of the competencies in SSC2 are relevant to this area of specialization.

S2 Facilitated and Individual Group Learning

S2.2 Facilitate Learning

S2.2.3 deliver programs

Why is this competency important?
- to maximize clients' learning
- to meet clients' needs in a timely manner

To demonstrate this competency, career development practitioners must:
a) follow the principles of learning (see S2.1.1)
b) demonstrate group facilitation skills (see SSC2.1.1), if working in a group setting
c) set the stage for the session
d) orient clients to the topic:
   - discuss the purpose of what they are to learn, e.g.,
     – *how can the learning be applied*
     – *where can it be applied*
     – *what does this mean to the clients*
e) use the program plan as a guide:
   - be flexible:
     – adapt the plan to suit any emerging client needs
   - take advantage of teachable moments:
     – build on positive learning
     – address and debrief both positive and negative learning, e.g.,
       ➢ *if clients do not complete an assignment*
f) communicate ideas and concepts effectively, e.g.,
   - *ask questions*
   - *acknowledge clients' comments*
   - *link comments*
   - *build on clients' comments*
   - *summarize*
g) facilitate interpretation and understanding:
   - use analysis and feedback skills
h) support clients' self-directed learning by showing clients:
   - how and where to find information
   - how to use information appropriately
i) implement the evaluation methods
j) close the session, e.g.,
   - *summarize*
   - *make generalizations*
   - *re-frame the information*

- *facilitate clients' reflections on their experiences of the learning and their applications of that learning*

Notes
- A career development practitioner should be aware of the different levels of openness to learning, and be sensitive to the learning capacity of the clients.
- It may be helpful to provide opportunities for clients to explore their preferred learning styles.

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S2 Facilitated and Individual Group Learning

S2.2 Facilitate Learning

S2.2.4 evaluate programs

Why is this competency important?
- to constantly improve content and delivery of programs
- to evaluate clients' responses to programs
- to provide feedback to stakeholders and partners on program results and feedback
- to ensure the quality and responsiveness of programs

To demonstrate this competency, career development practitioners must:
a) implement the evaluation
b) analyze the evaluation responses
c) draw conclusions
d) take action:
  - incorporate the feedback into future learning situations
  - follow up with original groups/individuals, if necessary

SSC2 Group Facilitation

SSC2.1 Facilitate Groups

SSC2.1.1 describe the principles of group facilitation

Why is this competency important?
- to increase interaction among all group members
- to increase the facilitator's confidence and competence in dealing with groups
- to anticipate behaviours in group settings
- to adjust interventions to different types of groups and to individuals within those groups
- to enhance client learning in a group setting

To demonstrate this competency, career development practitioners must:
describe the principles of group facilitation:
a) a group's atmosphere and performance will change as it goes through stages:
   - recognize that each group progresses through stages differently
   - describe different stages, e.g., *initial, planning, working*
   - describe models of stages:
     - forming, storming, norming, performing
     - Bridges transition model
     - the job loss cycle
     - the grief cycle
b) the group members take on roles in the group (e.g., *blocker, gatekeeper*):
   - there is value in all roles
   - the roles that group members take on will vary from group to group
   - group members can take on multiple roles
   - group members may change roles during the process
c) facilitators will need to adjust their strategies and approaches to meet members' needs and roles
d) a facilitator's behaviours have an impact on the group dynamics:
   - a facilitator should be aware of his or her own behaviours and beliefs and how they impact on the group
   - a facilitator should demonstrate respect for all group members
e) the facilitator's role is to serve as the process expert:
   - a facilitator should use his or her knowledge and skills to guide the group members toward their goals
f) the clients act as content experts:
   - a facilitator should respect and draw upon members' experiences, knowledge and expertise
g) the most productive groups are those that exist in an environment:
   - that is safe and comfortable
   - where expectations and desired outcomes are clear

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SSC2 Group Facilitation

SSC2.1 Facilitate Groups

SSC2.1.2 facilitate groups

Why is this competency important?
- to create conditions of safety, comfort and clarity for participants
- to understand the importance of building a sense of community in a group situation
- to determine the group members' needs
- to understand and agree to the purpose of the interaction
- to achieve both the clients' and the organizations' goals

To demonstrate this competency, career development practitioners must:
a) determine the needs and composition of the group, e.g., *youth, special needs, adult learners*
b) design and/or adapt a process tailored to the purpose and composition of a group, e.g., *learning, information gathering, therapeutic*
c) review the goals of the process, e.g., *information gathering*:
   - if the goals are pre-determined, practitioners will verify them with the group:
     – ensure the goals match the expectations of the group members
   - if the goals are not pre-determined, practitioners will establish them with the group:
     – clarify the expectations of the group members
     – determine what the desired outcomes are
d) help the group members establish how they will treat each other
e) identify the environmental preferences, values and beliefs of group members
f) develop and maintain a rapport with group members
g) initiate and maintain group members' involvement
h) facilitate communication among group members, e.g.,,
   - *pose questions*
   - *acknowledge group members' comments*
   - *link group members' comments*
   - *build on group members' comments*
   - *summarize*

i) listen and observe:
   - monitor the process and content
   - monitor the dynamics between themselves and the group members, e.g.,
     – *be aware of how their own behaviours and reactions impact the group*
     – *model the desired behaviours through anecdotes, self-disclosure and other communication skills*
   - monitor the dynamics between the group members:
     – encourage productive behaviours
j) be nonjudgmental:
   - remain neutral about content issues
k) solicit group members' feedback regularly
l) monitor progress towards goals:
   - make appropriate interventions
   - revisit the group expectations and the desired outcomes to focus discussions
   - use strategies to guide the group to the next stage, e.g., *summarize the problem and then pose a question to generate solutions to it*
   - follow the planned process, but be flexible as needs emerge:
     – adapt the approach as necessary
m) evaluate group outcomes