LEP GUIDE FOR WORKFORCE PROFESSIONALS

Module 1: Effective Intake & Case Management

TEXAS
WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS

LEP Guide for Workforce Professionals

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LEP Guide for Workforce Professionals

The LEP Guide for Workforce Professionals consists of four individual modules, each a key component of the Texas workforce system.

Each module is meant to assist Local Workforce Development Boards (Workforce Boards), Texas Workforce Center (Workforce Center) staff, and system partners on how best to serve the limited English proficiency (LEP) population from entrance to post employment. The four modules are:

Module 1
Effective Intake & Counseling

Part 1. What Workforce Boards Can Do to Plan and Develop Effective Limited English Proficiency Skills

Part 2. Enhancing Workforce Services

Module 2
Nontraditional Occupations and Entrepreneurial Opportunities

Module 3
Scorecards for Evaluating Training Services for LEP Customers

Module 4
Comprehensive Assessment for Customers with Limited English Proficiency

Contents

Terms Used in This Module

Case Management. Services provided by case management staff include preparing an Individual Employment Plan, identifying barriers to participation, and assisting participants in addressing barriers through guidance counseling and access to services. Assisting in the enrollment of participants in allowable activities designed to enhance employability (i.e., motivation, assessment, job preparation workshops, educational classes and/or training, and/or employment services); providing job development and placement services; and assisting individuals and families in accessing community services, addressing emergency assistance and crisis intervention, and immediate needs (i.e., food, housing, clothing, and transportation).

Counseling. Guidance or assistance to develop a participant's vocational or employment goals and the means to achieve those goals, or to assist the individual with the solution to individual problems that may prevent him or her from accomplishing those goals, including, substance abuse counseling, job counseling, child care arrangements, or any other barrier that prevents the individual's success in becoming self-supporting.

Dislocated Worker. An individual who:

1. has lost his or her job, or has received a notice of termination or layoff from his or her job because of a permanent closure of, or a big layoff at a plant, facility, or company;

2. is a displaced homemaker.

GED Test. General Educational Development (GED) tests are a battery of five tests covering mathematics, social studies, science, and interpretation of literature. The fifth test requires writing an essay. The GED tests measure communication, information processing, problem-solving and critical thinking skills. Passing scores for the GED tests are set at a level above that achieved by one-third of traditional high school graduates who are given the test.

High-growth, High-demand Occupations. High-growth, high-demand occupations and industries are characterized by a high number of new jobs projected or currently being added, or by a large number of existing jobs. Each Local Workforce Development Board develops area-specific lists that are available to the public.

Individual Employment Plan (IEP). A service plan developed by the participant and the case manager to identify the participant's employment goals, the appropriate achievement objectives, and the appropriate combination of services for the participant to achieve the employment goals.

Industry Cluster. Industry cluster means a concentration of businesses and industries in a geographic region that are interconnected by the markets they serve, the products they produce, their suppliers, trade associations and the educational institutions from which their employees or prospective employees receive training. While located in close proximity, these industry clusters are economic in nature and not geographically bounded.

Intake. The process case managers undertake to assess needs and abilities in order to effectively provide services.

Interpreter. An individual who provides an oral translation between speakers who speak different languages.

Job Development. The process of marketing a program participant to employers, including informing employers about what the participant can do and asking the employer for a job interview for that individual.

LMI. LMI is the collection and analysis of data involving labor supply and demand.

Person-Centered Strengths Assessment. This strengths-based approach entails helping the customer realize that he or she has both internal and external strengths. Internal strengths include interpersonal skills, motivation, determination, emotional strengths, and the ability to think clearly. External strengths come from family networks, significant others, community groups, and religious institutions.

Support Services. Services that are needed to help an individual to participate in job training or job search. Support services may include transportation, health care, financial assistance, drug and alcohol abuse counseling and referral,

individual and family counseling, special services and materials for individuals with disabilities, job coaches, child care and dependent care, temporary shelter, financial counseling, and other reasonable expenses required for participation in the program and may be provided in-kind or through cash assistance.

Translator. An individual that translates the written work from one language to another, usually from the translator's native or primary language to a secondary language.

Work Readiness Skills. Businesses understand work readiness skills on a continuum, from the basics of appearance, showing up to work on time, working while you are there, and taking direction from supervisors, to more complex competencies such as commitment to serve a team, taking responsibility, and a drive to learn.

Introduction: Enhancing the Effectiveness of Workforce Services for Customers with Limited English Proficiency

Who Should Use This Module?

Part 1 is intended for use by Workforce Board staff and Rapid Response coordinators and staff. Part 2 is intended for use by Workforce Center supervisors and case managers.

This module is intended to assist Workforce Boards and Workforce Center staff in developing and implementing effective workforce services for customers with LEP, especially Spanish-speaking customers. The module introduces key concepts, promising practices, and strategies that can be used to maximize efforts and, ultimately, enhance the quality of the services provided.

Why Is This Module Important?

The demographics of the United States are rapidly changing with Hispanics becoming the country's fastest-growing minority. Companies throughout the United States are reaching out to a diverse customer base by producing advertising and marketing campaigns in languages other than English, especially Spanish.

In examining future workforce trends, we find that Hispanic workers will be *the* fastest growing segment of the workforce of the future. Consequently, it is important that we face the challenges that our changing demographics bring with creativity. Experts agree that the competitiveness of the Texas economy depends in part on how successfully we adapt services to meet the needs of LEP workers. In fact, the future successes of the Texas workforce system may be measured by its capacity to address the challenges and meet the opportunities of preparing these workers for 21st century jobs.

Questions Workforce Boards Should Ask....

1. Are there lessons we can learn from the private sector that will allow us to more effectively meet employers' needs?

2. What opportunities do our customers with limited English skills bring to the Texas workforce system in terms of skills, education, and talent?

3. Are there specific things we can do to significantly improve our Workforce Centers' abilities to bridge the needs of Hispanic and other LEP workers with employers' needs?

Further Discussions on Important Concepts

Important topics covered in Module 1 will be discussed further in Modules 3 and 4.

Module 3 discusses identifying effective training programs.

Module 4 discusses selecting and using appropriate assessment tools.

As our state's economy expands, employers are going to need to recruit more high-quality employees, including those with limited English skills. For businesses in our state to remain viable, they will need assistance in attracting, hiring, training, and retaining high-quality employees, especially when recruiting LEP individuals.

Many of us in the Texas workforce system often feel challenged—and sometimes overwhelmed—with the increasing number of LEP customers accessing services through our Workforce Centers. To overcome these challenges, workforce professionals need effective strategies and practices that focus on the strengths and capabilities of this population. In addition, Workforce Board and Workforce Center staffs are in need of well-researched tools and information to provide their diverse customer base with high-quality services.

Fortunately, promising practices are emerging throughout the state and the Texas workforce system is responding with new and innovative approaches. This module introduces some of these models and discusses and illustrates strategies to enhance the overall effectiveness of Workforce Boards and Workforce Centers in bringing employment solutions to business, which includes an LEP workforce.

Demographic Trends

By 2020, Hispanics will out-number all other ethnic groups in the state of Texas.

Overall educational attain-ment of Texas' residents is also expected to decline and will significantly impact per capita income.

These losses in earnings can be reversed, but only through successful efforts in increasing the educational levels of Hispanics.

U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) Employ-ment and Training Administration Occa-sional Paper 2007-03

Part 1. What Workforce Boards Can Do to Plan and Develop Effective LEP Services

This part is intended for use by Workforce Board staff and will identify strategies to develop, implement, and monitor effective services.

Topics to be covered include:

- ♦ Section 1. Assessing and Developing Greater LEP Capability

- ♦ Section 2. Setting Standards at the Very Beginning

- ♦ Section 3. Developing a Dream Team of Experts

- ♦ Section 4. Encouraging Rapid Response Teams to Spread Their Wings

- ♦ Section 5. Sharing Information on Economic Trends and High-Growth, High-Demand Occupations with Workforce Center Staff

Why Is This Part Important?

Recent reports state that over the next 20 years, immigrants will account for the growth in the U.S. labor force. Furthermore, to stay competitive, American workers will need to have a minimum of two years of college or training (National Center on Education and the Economy, 2007). Therefore, to adequately respond to these predictions, Workforce Boards will be required to respond to the language and educational needs of the LEP customer.

Self-Assessment

Workforce Boards should consider including the U.S. DOL Language Assistance and Planning Self-Assessment Tool in contracts with service providers. Including this information will help Workforce Boards identify potential issues before they become problems and offer assistance to bring activities to a level that will help LEP participants succeed.

U.S. DOL Civil Rights Center

Section 1. Assessing and Developing Greater Capacity to Serve LEP Customers

Analysis and Guidelines

Workforce boards have a variety of resources and guidance available to assist them in assessing and developing their capacity to serve LEP customers.

Based on Executive Order 13166 that calls for the improvement of services for the LEP population, DOL developed a brief four-factor analysis for nonfederal agencies that receive federal funds. DOL also developed the Language Assistance and Planning Self-Assessment Tool, a checklist tool kit, to help Workforce Boards determine their capacity to meet the new guidelines.

The National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA) has taken the DOL's four factors and developed recommendations for Workforce Boards on how they can accomplish the goals set forth by DOL. NASWA's comprehensive guidelines review each of the factors and give strategies on how to expand on each. The document also helps Workforce Boards by giving suggestions on developing a formal LEP plan.

For example, NASWA encourages Workforce Boards to increase outreach when it seems that LEP individuals' contact with a program is lower than it should be based on population and needs. This strategy responds to factor two of DOL's four-factor analysis, the frequency with which LEP individuals come in contact with a program.

Examining Services

The four factors Workforce Boards need to examine as suggested by DOL guidelines are:

1. The number or proportion of LEP customers served or encountered in the eligible service population;

2. The frequency with which LEP customers come in contact with the program;

3. The nature and importance of the program, activity, or service provided; and

4. The resources available and the cost.

National Association of State Workforce Agencies

Planning Resource

The NASWA guidelines are meant to be a tool to develop your LEP plan. As such, it can be used to help potential partners in planning how they will address the needs of the LEP population they will serve.

This tool will help partners meet the same standards that Workforce Boards must meet. With each partner attempting to meet the same standards, customers will be the beneficiaries.

Translators and Interpreters

Translation and interpretation need to be performed by trained professionals. The NASWA guidelines make suggestions on how Workforce Boards can meet the language needs of LEP customers by suggesting ways to hire and retain bilingual staff. The document also offers suggestions such as offering additional compensation for those who can translate or interpret, as well as offering Workforce Center staff members the opportunity to take classes to become qualified interpreters or translators. Creating a program in which staff members can participate so they can expand their education and move up in their careers could be attractive to many Workforce Center staff members.

There are courses and degrees offered by two Texas universities for language translation (one at The University of Texas at Dallas and the other at The University of Texas at El Paso). The American Translator Association offers certification for those who have completed their degree program. Because the practices are so different (translators work with written documents, interpreters translate spoken language), it is not often that one individual has the language skills to fill both of these roles.

Section 2. Setting Standards at the Very Beginning: Ways to Incorporate LEP Standards into Procurements

Workforce Boards currently are viewed as leaders in addressing the needs of employers, and the ability to assist business in successfully linking to the LEP population is becoming more and more important. To meet this challenge, Workforce Boards are consistently looking at improving the quality, efficiency, and effectiveness of the services they oversee. Procuring Workforce Center services is one of the largest and most important processes undertaken by Workforce Boards.

Translated Materials

NASWA recommends the following documents be considered for translation:

♦ Applications, consent forms, and complaint forms

♦ Written tests (those that do not assess English competency)

♦ Letters containing important information regarding participation

♦ List of partners and services

♦ Notices pertaining to reduction, denial, or termination of services or benefits, and the right to appeal such actions

♦ Notices that require a response from beneficiaries

♦ Information on the right to file discrimination complaints

♦ Information on the provision of services to individuals with disabilities

♦ Notices advising LEP customers of the availability of free language assistance

♦ Explanation of how to file complaints and the complaint process

♦ Other outreach materials

National Association of State Workforce Agencies

With this in mind, Workforce Boards should consider developing Requests for Proposals (RFPs) that include guidance outlined by DOL in the Language Assistance and Planning Self-Assessment Tool.   Including these guidelines and asking partners who potentially will work with LEP customers to address each of the questions will assist Workforce Boards in complying with the recommendations and ensure LEP customers are receiving quality services. An RFP, which clearly defines the standards for services to LEP customers, better ensures compliance with DOL regulations as well as better outcomes for Workforce Center customers.

Section 3. Developing a Dream Team of Experts: Using and Developing Skills and Talents to Deliver Effective Services

As leaders in dealing with the issues of planning and delivering effective workforce services and training, Workforce Boards may want to consider developing a team of experts who can lend support and technical assistance. Ideally, this team would be composed of Workforce Board members and staff, Workforce Center staff, and volunteers from the community such as representatives from training institutions, employers, and community based organizations. At a minimum expert team members would include:

- ♦ **ESL experts from local training providers, colleges, or universities** who could provide assistance in identifying effective training and education solutions.

- ♦ **Workforce specialists from CBOs or workforce intermediaries who are involved in workforce development and Workforce Centers,** and could provide assistance in assessing services, developing programs, and monitoring performance.

- ♦ **Employer representatives** from key industries and business advocacy organizations such as the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce.

- ♦ **Local Business Services liaisons** who can outreach employers and share information on what they are learning from the field.

LEP Dream Team

For many Workforce Boards, building an LEP dream team may take time and all the potential members, particularly the workforce specialists, may not be readily available. However, as our demographics continue to shift, there will be greater demands for workforce specialists who possess special skills and training in providing services to LEP customers. Building the LEP dream team could provide the perfect opportunity to begin developing this capacity.

Education Committee

Understanding the need to address the issues of high school dropouts as well as a growing LEP immigrant workforce, the Gulf Coast Workforce Board has formed a special education committee composed of Gulf Coast Workforce Board members as well as key community partners. This committee will be looking specifically at improving the Gulf Coast local workforce development area's (workforce area) training and education system.

Identifying, Tracking, and Monitoring Services: Learning More about the Types of Services LEP Customers Need

Building an LEP team will allow you to explore ways to identify and track services as well as monitor their effectiveness. Examples of activities undertaken by the LEP team include:

♦ identifying training programs for LEP customers;

♦ monitoring the use of Workforce Center services;

♦ developing benchmarks to measure program performance;

♦ identifying professional development offerings for Workforce Board staff and Workforce Center staff; and

♦ evaluating the effectiveness of workforce and training services.

Section 4. Encouraging Rapid Response Teams to Spread Their Wings: Enhanced Services and Offerings

LEP customers, especially dislocated workers, face specific challenges because of the anxiety of dealing with a language in which they have limited skills, and in many cases, limited education. In addition to the challenge of learning a new language, being displaced can be mentally, emotionally, and financially devastating. Workforce Boards may want to consider expanding Rapid Response services to include offering a short series of classes or workshops focusing on building self-esteem and planning goals and objectives.

Suggested workshops would allow customers to:

- explore their strengths;
- discuss their fears; and
- identify life goals and objectives.

Workforce Boards also may want to consider encouraging staff to implement strategies that will make it easier for the dislocated worker to transition into the Workforce Center.

Rapid Response coordinators who have extensive experience working with this population suggest that Rapid Response team members and case managers assigned to dislocated workers meet several times during the course of Rapid Response services. These meetings can serve as an efficient approach to assisting case managers with learning more about their new customers as well as increasing their appreciation of the customers' strengths and work histories.

Rapid Response

Innovative Rapid Response services take into consideration the specific needs of customers with limited English skills, such as developing workshops on:

1. building confidence;
2. assessing strengths; and
3. identifying life goals.

Another strategy could include establishing meetings between Rapid Response and Workforce Center staff.

Advancing Rapid Response

At the 2006 National Rapid Response Summit, extensive discussion took place around advancing the role of Rapid Response units in workforce areas, particularly regarding economic development.

For example, Oregon and Maine are using Rapid Response units to increase trainings, extend partnerships, and develop and fortify relationships with economic development groups and businesses to assist in the efforts to meet the demands of employers.

Customizing Rapid Response

When faced with a plant closure, Cameron County Workforce Board coordinated with the employer to deliver Rapid Response services through their mobile units. These services included language and educational assessment, GED preparation, English language training, and tax information. Services were delivered early in the morning and late at night, as needed, to accommodate the workers' shift schedules.

Section 5. Sharing Information on Economic Trends and High-Growth, High-Demand Occupations with Workforce Center Staff

As Workforce Boards continue to play an important role in economic development, they may want to consider inviting Workforce Center staff, particularly case managers, to learn more about their local workforce development area's (workforce area) economic forecasts and outlooks. In fact, when asked whether this information would be helpful, case managers working with LEP customers were extremely interested in learning more about the bigger economic picture as well as becoming more versed in their workforce area's workforce studies.

The cluster analyses that many Workforce Boards have conducted provide a wealth of information and are a great place to begin. For instance, in the Upper Rio Grande workforce area, a cluster analysis study conducted in 2005 includes a link to a Web site, http://tools.utep.edu/iped/ that can be researched by occupation or industry and provides workforce trends into the next decade (McElroy, Olmedo, Feser, & Poole, 2005). By introducing case managers to this information, a Workforce Board ensures that the information being distributed to customers is accurate, up to date, and in line with the workforce area's economic goals. Workforce Board staff also can incorporate information about the high-growth, high-demand occupations list into labor market training. This planned exchange of information will provide customers with quality career exploration services.

High-Growth, High-Demand Occupations

Case managers should have knowledge about the research conducted that determines jobs on the high-growth, high-demand occupations list. Knowing why jobs are on the list helps case managers guide customers toward growing industries and better opportunities. Additionally, Workforce Center staff must be aware of any updates to the high-growth, high-demand occupations list.

Understanding Economic Trends

Training in understanding research such as cluster analysis studies prepares case managers for questions that customers have about job trends in the community and helps case managers understand key concepts like career clusters. All of this can lead to better results for LEP customers by providing solid career counseling and exploration.

Review Part 1: What Workforce Boards Can Do to Plan and Develop Effective LEP Services

Meeting the challenges and opportunities of successfully working with LEP customers provides Workforce Boards with opportunities to build new and innovative practices. In summary, these could include:

1. Providing guidelines for the recruitment and retention of bilingual staff. This should include a review of NASWA's guidelines (National Association of State Workforce Boards, 2004).

2. Hiring at least one qualified staff translator and interpreter who may be able to provide cultural training and language assistance to colleagues, contractors, and customers. If possible, hire bilingual staff to work with LEP customers.

3. Requiring that contractors follow DOL's Language Assistance and Planning Self-Assessment Tool for Recipients of Federal Financial Assistance checklist that is provided for Workforce Boards.

4. Recommending that contractors implement the NASWA guidelines and take into consideration other special accommodations needed to effectively provide services to LEP customers.

5. Creating and maintaining an LEP team with representatives from Workforce Boards, CBOs, community colleges, universities, business advocacy organizations, Workforce Center staff, and employers.

6. Considering expanding services such as Rapid Response to include workshops on self-esteem and other topics that assist LEP customers with evaluating and realizing their strengths.

7. Encouraging collaboration between case managers and the Business Services representatives as well as build the capacity of case managers to support regional economic development.

Language Certification

Workforce Board and Workforce Center staff willing to return to school to learn a new language should consider coursework to become an interpreter or a translator.

Ideally, Workforce Boards and Workforce Centers should develop strategies that encourage staff to become multilingual.

NASWA Guidelines

NASWA suggests promising practices such as offering current employees the opportunity to take classes leading to certification as well as offering a higher salary to bilingual Workforce Center staff.

Part 2. Enhancing Workforce Center Services: The Right Tools of the Trade for Frontline Staff

This section of the module is intended for use by Workforce Center supervisors and case managers and will identify strategies to increase the overall effectiveness of services.

Topics to be covered include:

- Section 1. The Importance of Case Managers

    - building a strengths-based approach

    - ensuring customer confidentiality

- Section 2. Key Steps in the LEP Customer's Individual Employment Plan

- Section 3. Getting the Message Across

- Section 4. Bringing All the Pieces to the Table

- Section 5. Having Friends in the Right Places

- Section 6: Finding the Right Job and Keeping It

Why Is This Part Important?

Case managers play a very important role in the workforce delivery system. Each is a guide, expert, and counselor for customers. The approach of a case manager plays an important role in how successful a customer is in transitioning into a new career. Case managers working with LEP customers require a unique set of skills. They have to approach various aspects of case management differently than they would with English-speaking Workforce Center customers because of LEP customers' unique set of characteristics and needs.

> **Dictionary**
>
> Case management is a collaborative process of assessment, planning, facilitation, and advocacy for options and services to meet an individual's needs through communication and available resources to promote quality cost-effective outcomes.

Section 1. The Importance of Case Managers: Building Models That Support LEP Customers

Keeping Things Positive, A Basis for Success: Developing a Strengths-Based Case Management Model

Experts as well as seasoned workforce professionals agree that effective case management begins with a strengths-based approach. This means focusing on the strengths the customer brings rather than the deficits—such as the loss of a job that brought the customer into the system.

Many times Workforce Center staff and the customer concentrate on limited English language and education skills, rather than on the abilities, positive traits, and transferable job skills a customer brings.

Central to a strengths-based approach is a deeply held belief that the customers you serve are trustworthy and committed to the process. This will enhance communication and facilitate an appropriate Individual Employment Plan (IEP).

To a great extent, the success of a working relationship is based on a foundation of mutual trust and respect, and there are additional strategies that can be used to build a strengths-based case management model.

Discovering Things That Count: Person-Centered Strengths Assessment

When literacy or skills assessment is an early intake activity, the first experience an LEP customer may have with the workforce system can begin with a focus on their academic or language deficits. When properly conducted during initial intake, a comprehensive well-structured assessment interview can yield positive results and information, rather than underscore potential employment or training challenges early on.

Module 4 provides further information on the Person-Centered Strengths Assessment during intake and counseling.

Person-Centered Assessment

This type of assessment is different from the literacy and academic assessments that need to be administered, which often highlight customers' deficiencies in language or educational attainment rather than their strengths.

This assessment is more holistic in scope and focuses on a variety of topics. An example tool is included in the Appendix B.

Saleebey, D., *The Strengths Perspective in Social Work Practice*

In addition to gathering important information, an in-depth assessment interview during intake allows the case manager and customer to establish a relationship based on mutual respect. Gathering information specifically focused on the customer's assets also sets a positive tone and builds trust and open communication among all concerned. To address this important issue, consider adding a person-centered assessment questionnaire to the case management process (Saleebey, 2002). Sample questions can be found in Appendix B and include topics such as:

- ◆ Vocational/Educational information

- ◆ Financial/Insurance information

This strengths-based approach entails helping the customer realize that he or she has both internal and external strengths (Saleebey, 2002). Internal strengths include interpersonal skills, motivation, determination, emotional strengths, and the ability to think clearly. External strengths come from family networks, significant others, community groups, and religious institutions.

Seasoned case managers using the strengths-based approach suggest completing the assessment and any future progress notes in the presence of the customer. Although the strengths-based approach requires asking the customer personal questions, it allows the relationship and the approach to be based on individual needs and abilities.

In some cases, if the case manager happens to know that the customer has strong reading and writing skills, or if the customer seems hesitant to answer (either in English or the customer's native language), the case manager can encourage the customer to take a copy of the assessment home to work on at his or her own pace, as well as to involve family and friends in helping complete the assessment questions.

Case managers who have done this type of assessment report that they are amazed with how many additional details customers provide when they take the time to write down their own thoughts about their current situation. If customers are unable to do this, then complete the assessment in their presence using a conversational approach (Saleebey, 2002).

Working from a Strengths-Based Approach

In a Houston adult education program, participants work on IEPs and report in many cases that this is the first opportunity they have had to set goals and objectives. Participants also have a chance to consider career clusters and career ladders. This is all done from a strengths-based perspective.

Case Managers

Case managers who partici-pated in our focus groups indicated they wished they had more time to spend with their LEP customers who re-quired extra explanation and guidance in the service deliv-ery process.

Additional Strategies to Support a Strengths-Based Approach

Some of the additional strategies that are discussed in the this section are presented in *The Strengths Perspective in Social Work Practice* by Dennis Saleebey (4th Edition). These strategies cover a range of areas meant to assist the case manager in more effectively delivering services.

Recognize the Customer's Interpretation of Their Circumstances

One strategy toward establishing a strengths-based model is to identify ways in which you can validate the customers' feelings and attempt to represent a positive force in their lives (Saleebey, 2002). A case manager's approach and initial assessment of a customer's needs must look beyond literacy and English language skills.

The case manager's role is to assist customers in successfully meeting their employment goals as well as realistically and positively assessing their relationship to the job market and then developing a comprehensive IEP.

This means that the customer's view of the situation and the feelings or emotions related to the situation are the central focus of the discussion and interaction. Enabling customers to have a clear understanding of the facts related to their situation is equal to validating the feelings associated with it (Saleebey, 2002).

When working with dislocated workers, it may mean validating their sense of fear, loss, and anger regarding their situation; however, it also means helping them realize that this unfortunate circumstance could also provide new opportunities for them.

Customers often perceive the case manager as the decision maker with regard to delivery of support services and approval for training. Along with this responsibility, the customer assumes the case manager to be knowledgeable about all aspects of the Texas workforce system; therefore, it is important for case managers to recognize that this type of dynamic can create an imbalance of power that inhibits

communication. Developing open communication and mutual respect and trust is an effective way to address these barriers.

Find Ways to Establish Common Ground

Case managers need strategies for better communication. They also need effective strategies to find ways to have customers open up and provide the type of information needed to deliver the best possible services. A deeper understanding of the LEP customer is an important step in establishing open communication.

Finding common ground can lead to greater interaction, a more relaxed customer, and a deeper commitment to accomplishing goals. Work toward finding ways in which you and the customer can effectively communicate to reach desired outcomes.

Spend More One-on-One Time

Case managers who work with LEP customers may require smaller caseloads that allow them to spend extra one-on-one time with their customers. Culture, limited English language skills, limited ability to read, and limited access to Internet-based, self-directed job search create additional barriers to employment for this population.

The language barrier faced by someone with limited English skills will require case managers to spend extra time with their customers to ensure the customers fully understand the rules, regulations, and processes associated with the full array of services available to them. Establishing a good rapport with customers helps ensure that they will comply with all applicable program requirements. In the case of working with LEP customers, this generally takes more time.

Balancing the relationship between the customer and the case manager is essential in establishing a strong relationship. In business, it is common to have meetings on neutral sites, or to vary the location, so that each partner feels equal. This is a great practice to adopt for a population that comes from a culture of respect and formality. Meeting customers away from Workforce Centers, such as at a training provider's facility, allows them to see that they are not the only ones who are willing to make accommodations.

On the Move

In San Antonio, case managers met participants at the training site where they attended class every day. This increased accessibility and allowed for more one-on-one meetings and improved communication.

In El Paso, Project ACHIEVE case managers meet with the staff of training providers and participants on-site to discuss progress and issues as well as deliver funding stipends. Participants, training staff, and case managers all reported that this method has enhanced the partnerships.

Taking What You Have and Using It Correctly: Making the Most of the Initial Intake

Using the strengths-based approach a case manager can discover what the customer wants (Saleebey, 2002). Using all the tools available to them, including the customer, case managers can find solutions to the problems facing their customers.

There are two components to this task. The first is to determine what they want from services. The second is to identify what they want to happen in relation to their current problem or situation.

The strengths-based approach places emphasis on service delivery that is customer-centered (Saleebey, 2002). Although exactly what customers want may not be entirely achievable based on service delivery rules and regulations, it is imperative for the case manager to be creative in using allowable services to help them achieve specific steps in their overall goal.

For example, a customer may want to become a pharmacist and the case manager is aware that this course is not available under federal, state, or local restrictions. Searching for related fields that are available and will allow the client to complete the coursework in the allotted time frame is one method of working through an obstacle from a strengths-based approach.

Meeting in the Middle: Agreeing on Results and Next Steps

Because assessments are used to guide the IEP, it is important for customers to understand the assessment results and agree with them. All assessment results in written form should be shared with the customers and translated into a language and manner they can understand (Saleebey, 2002). Customers' ownership and understanding of their assessment results is a first step in a successful IEP.

Once a good initial interview and intake have been conducted, the case manager has probably gained significant insight into the strengths, attributes, and aspirations of the customer. By taking the information gathered in the Vocational/Educational section of the person-centered strengths assessment, a comprehensive IEP can be developed.

Ensuring Customer Confidentiality: Keeping a Lid on Things

Because a strengths-based approach is grounded on mutual respect and trust, case managers must make every effort to ensure that all customer information, including conversations, written documents, and records, is maintained with a high level of confidentiality and customers, are aware that their information is protected. When working with LEP customers, there are unique aspects to consider because of issues of translation and interpretation.

♦ Confidentiality agreements should be negotiated and enforced with both translators and interpreters who do work for Workforce Boards in accordance with DOL guidelines.

♦ Workforce Centers that use contracted translators and interpreters must ensure these providers are complying with confidentiality statements.

♦ Because of the technical language associated with workforce services, Workforce Centers should rely on qualified in-house staff to translate and interpret for customers in accordance with the Workforce Board's submitted workforce plans.

♦ Documents requiring translation should be secured. Care should be taken that sensitive information is not left unsecured—e.g., in the fax machine or on voice mail.

♦ Case files should always be secured and never left open on a case manager's desk, even if documents are in a language other than English.

♦ When sharing customer information during staff meetings, speak quietly, especially if sharing that a customer has limited English skills or if sharing the customer's ethnicity could compromise his or her identity.

♦ When using an interpreter, introduce the customer to the interpreter and explain the interpreter's role. Also, let customers know that the interpreter will maintain their confidentiality.

♦ Adherence to Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act regulations for health information, which includes any oral statements and written documents (U.S. Dept. Health & Human Services, 1996).

Review Section 1: Importance of Case Managers

Delivering effective Workforce Center services to LEP customers requires unique strategies:

1. Approach everything based on the customer's strengths and talents by building on the customer's strengths, talents, and abilities;

2. Find ways to incorporate person-centered assessments in your service-delivery strategies by asking questions that allow you to build rapport and trust with your customers;

3. Use an understanding of other cultures to improve service delivery and build a more effective relationship with your customers;

4. Ensure worker confidentiality by developing in-staff translating and interpreting capabilities, as well as instituting strict policies on how sensitive and personal customer information is shared; and

5. Use assessments, IEPs, and appropriate training programs to provide the best outcomes.

Section 2. Key Steps in the LEP Customer's Individual Employment Plan

Positively Approaching the Basic Skills Assessment

Assessing English language and literacy skills is one of the most important processes in developing the LEP customer's IEP. The results of the assessment are used in determining the appropriateness of training and career opportunities. In fact, many experts believe that the quality of the assessment is an important contributing factor in the overall quality of the IEP. Experience suggests that for many customers, if not approached with a positive attitude, the results of the assessment will only reinforce their fears and feelings of inadequacy. Some experts in assessment are advocating for Workforce Centers and training providers to incorporate a portfolio approach, which measures skills beyond just language and literacy (Ananda, 2000). If properly modeled, assessment can play a key role in building a strengths-based approach to delivering workforce and training services. Assessment plays such an important role that an entire module of this guide has been devoted to the topic. Module 4 provides important information about assessment options for LEP customers.

Because important decisions such as career training options are going to be determined through the customer's assessment results, case managers need to assist the individual in approaching this step positively. The case manager should explain to customers that the assessment is not pass or fail, but rather a glimpse of their skills, interests, abilities, etc., at this time. They also need to assure customers that all results are confidential and will only be discussed with them privately (TWC, 2005).

If training is deemed necessary for employment, the customer may look to the case manager for guidance in selecting a school. *Module 3 of this guide is devoted to identifying effective training.* Customers also may be seeking a clearer understanding of what the assessment results mean and how they were determined. Case managers should be prepared to have these discussions with their customers. This is an area in which the results need to be translated into the customer's native language and conveyed in a culturally sensitive manner.

Positive Assessment

Assist customers in staying positive regarding assessment results and use this momentum to move forward in building an effective IEP.

Relaying Results

The goal of assessment is to assist customers in exploring their strengths and gaining an understanding of where their strengths lie and what areas may need further development to attain employment.

Career Exploration: Examples of Computer-Based and Pen-and-Paper Tools

Career opportunities should be explored in clusters. This will allow the customer to consider career paths and set goals that allow for lifelong learning and promotion. It is also important to keep in mind that some of the career exploration tools may not be the most appropriate to use with individuals who have limited English skills or low literacy skills in their native language. If your customer has limited English skills, yet is literate in Spanish, instruments such as SAGE and SPOC (*Sistema de Preferencia Ocupacional de Carreras)* — provide career assessments in Spanish (more information on these can be found in Module 4). Whatever tool you use, it is important that the assessment be administered by an individual who is certified to administer the assessment and trained to interpret the results. An assessment tool is not useful to anyone if both the test and its results are not available in the customer's language. The companies that create assessments have training and technical assistance available to help translate, and this information usually can be found on the company's Web site.

> ### Online Resources
>
> America's Career InfoNet at www.acinet.org has a helpful link on career options in Spanish in video format. The Web site has videos that describe various careers and their responsibilities as well as educational requirements. It is important to note that some customers may be computer savvy and able to do research on their own. Others may need assistance exploring these Web sites.

Online Resources

One way to help in the career exploration process is to encourage your customers to visit one of the following Web sites (TWC, 2005):

♦ www.twc.state.tx.us/customers/jsemp/jsempsub1.html

♦ www.onetcenter.org/tools.html

♦ www.quintcareers.com/career_assessment.html

♦ www.careerbuilder.com/Jobseeker/Resources/CareerResources.aspx

Because LEP customers may not have the same level of comfort with the Internet as English-speaking customers, they may require additional assistance from their case managers and Workforce Center staff.

A Road Map for the Future: Developing an Effective Individual Employment Plan

The information gathered from the initial interview and assessment is the basis for developing the customer's IEP. Different Boards may use different names for this tool (TWC, 2005) such as:

- ◆ Service delivery plan

- ◆ Employment plan

- ◆ Employability plan

- ◆ Individual development plan

- ◆ Individual action strategy

Whatever term is used, this plan is the customer's road map for obtaining employment. Be sure that the IEP is developed to allow full customer participation. Many customers may not be familiar with concepts like goal setting and employment planning. If properly explored, developing an IEP can be an exciting exercise for customers, and can be used to monitor their progress and celebrate their accomplishments.

Translating the IEP into Spanish or any other language is going to take additional time and effort. The benefits of translating the IEP include:

- ◆ Customer participation and empowerment in its design; and

- ◆ Realistic customer expectations regarding training results and career options.

The Place to Start: Finding the Best Training Fit

Many LEP customers, including dislocated workers, will be eligible for training. Finding an appropriate training model for LEP customers can be a complicated process. Some LEP customers have experienced success in meeting their employment needs through training; however, many have not. Fortunately, there are successful models throughout the state and country that effectively integrate various aspects of working with LEP customers in delivering English language development and vocational training.

Planning for the Future

The development of the IEP alone can be viewed as a significant accomplishment because this is an opportunity for customers to take charge of their future.

TWIST

The Workforce Information System of Texas (TWIST) is the management tool for case management. This system hosts all information on customers during their time in the Texas workforce system. Though the TWIST screens are in English, case managers who can translate can enter information in Spanish.

A translator may be needed to translate the IEP/Service Plan in its entirety.

Module 3 of this guide has been designed as a direct response to challenges that Workforce Boards are facing in identifying and procuring appropriate and effective training.

Once training has been approved, customers will likely look to their case manager for guidance in choosing the best training and training provider for them. Encourage customers to visit sites to determine the best fit, but guidance in this area will help to eliminate any problems that may develop in the future. The Appendix has an example handout customers can use when visiting training providers. The handout lists a series of questions that can assist them in finding the school that is going to fit all or most of their needs.

LEP customers are going to need ongoing support, which may extend beyond gas vouchers and child care. They are going to need constant positive reinforcement as well as assistance in meeting other personal or family challenges. Effective interpersonal communication will establish the trust necessary to open the door for customers to confide in their case managers and turn to them for assistance and guidance.

Other effective strategies to support customers include:

♦ Assisting customers in revisiting their IEP from time to time to monitor their progress toward goals

♦ Establishing a point of contact among the various training providers to establish rapport

♦ Setting appointments with customers specifically to look at progress and acknowledge accomplishments

♦ Assisting customers with accessing culturally appropriate social or health services

♦ Assuring customers that their case manager is their advocate

Section 3. Getting the Message Across:
Improving Communication with LEP Customers

Workforce Boards from around the state have recognized the positive impact that effectively communicating with their customers has on Workforce Board performance. In response, they are developing promising practices by offering training to Workforce Center staff on how to effectively work with LEP customers. This training varies from language skills (occupational Spanish) to phone intake, and applicant and customer contact skills in compliance with Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and Section 188 of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA).

LEP Customer Communications

Working with LEP customers provides opportunities to interact with different cultures and use a wide variety of written, oral, and nonverbal communication strategies.

The Keys to Effective Communication:
Understanding the Power of Language and Culture

The issue of linguistically and culturally appropriate communication deserves special attention and consideration. This section will identify some strategies that case managers can employ to assist them in serving LEP customers.   Communication comes in many forms: written, oral, and nonverbal. However, communication works well and conveys the necessary messages only when it is in a form that both parties understand.

Because cultural context cannot be separated from effective communication, cultural considerations for the Hispanic population are critical to productive case management. The majority of LEP customers have cultural roots in Latin American countries, where familial ties are often very strong. Families function interdependently; therefore, validating the strengths within their family network is important.

Researchers and counselors who are experts in working with Hispanic families highlight the importance that cultural sensitivity and interpersonal etiquette plays in establishing good rapport. These experts have identified six characteristics that are most valued in Hispanic interpersonal relationships. They are *personalismo, respeto, dignidad, simpatia, confianza,* and *cariño* (Santiago, Arredondo, & Gallardo-Cooper, 2002).

Dictionary

For some words, simple translation does not give a true understanding of their meaning—the best understanding comes from context:

Personalismo: Making a relationship personal

Respeto: Respect

Dignidad: Dignity

Simpatia: Pleasant, kind

Confianza: Confidence

Cariño: Affection

Personalismo (personal relationship) represents an orientation in which the person is always more important than the task at hand, including the time factor. In other words, always make the time to listen to and interact with customers.

Interviews with case managers indicate that they experienced better outcomes with customers when they were able to spend more time getting to know them and assess their needs on a frequent basis. An effective approach is to use more conversational skills than interviewing skills when meeting with the customers. For example, always begin meetings with questions about their well-being, families, and other significant things in their lives.

Respeto (respect) represents sensitivity to the individual's position and creates a boundary within which conversations should be contained to avoid conflict. The Spanish language has both formal and informal systems of communication (i.e., use of the formal pronoun *usted* and the informal pronoun *tú*). The structure of language reinforces the hierarchical position among individuals.

> **Example:** Using *usted* when working with Hispanic customers is more appropriate than using *tú.*

Dignidad (dignity) is linked to the first two characteristics: Hispanics believe in actions that embrace a sense of pride, regardless of the individual's position. This entails embracing the belief that a person is worthy and respected at all levels. Therefore, it is extremely important for case managers to understand the cultural context of *dignidad* and the importance their Hispanic customers place on this attribute.

> **Example:** Many dislocated workers experience difficulty in coming to the Workforce Center to ask for assistance. Assure them that their work history is appreciated and valuable and that the assistance is not a *handout,* but needed to help get them back to work.

Simpatía (pleasant, kind) relates to what many call *buena gente* (good people). Also, some Hispanics who strive to embrace *simpatía* and to be seen as *buena gente* often will avoid conflict and want to preserve harmony at all times. As a result, they may lack the skills or experience to speak up about situations in which they are experiencing challenges. Customers who may

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Respeto

It is essential to address adults with the terms *Señor* and *Señora* before their last names, e.g., *Señor Garcia* or *Señora Rios,* unless invited to address them informally.

Dignidad

Case managers who have seen TANF Choices and Food Stamp Employment and Training customers return for further services may need to refocus and reevaluate their approach with different customers, such as dislocated workers, who have strong work ethics and experience.

Asking for assistance may be contrary to these workers' sense of self-reliance and dignity.

seem to be holding back verbally may be doing so out of *simpatía.* In this case, reading nonverbal cues may be more important.

> **Example:** A Hispanic customer may not want to worry the case manager with their home or school troubles.

Confianza (confidence) refers to the development of trust and familiarity in a relationship. The term implies informality and ease of interpersonal comfort. Establishing *confianza* allows Hispanic customers to be more direct and open in conversations. Customers respond best to case managers who come across as real people. As many seasoned case managers have learned, the result is trust and collaboration. It may be difficult to effectively communicate with another person if you are not willing to disclose information about yourself. *Confianza* also helps discover and establish the common ground discussed earlier in the module. Hispanic customers routinely withhold frank conversations until after they are satisfied that a trustworthy relationship has been established.

> **Example:** If a customer has children, share a little about the experiences, joys, and challenges of parenting, if applicable. Or, if the case manager has experienced a job loss, share a little about that experience.

Cariño (caring) represents a demonstration of endearment in verbal and nonverbal communication. Case managers may work with customers who will verbally apply *cariño* by adding the suffix *ito* to certain words and phrases to indicate a closer relationship with an individual.

The nonverbal use of *cariño* also may be expressed by customers through personal contact, including kissing the cheek when greeting and touching the person while talking. However, there are variations in how Hispanics conduct themselves interpersonally. For example, Hispanics may offer gifts or food in appreciation for help and guidance.

Dictionary

Expressions of *Carino*

Mijita: My little one (feminine)

Mijito: My little one (masculine)

Senorita: Little Miss

Besitos: Kisses

Abrazos: Caring Embrace

Cultural Knowledge

Case managers at Upper Rio Grande @ Work in the Project Achieve program had an opportunity to meet with former displaced workers as part of cultural sensitivity training. The case managers felt these events offered a valuable understanding of their customers' culture and attitudes. This improved communication and led to a better understanding of the customers and their issues.

Understanding the Unique Aspects of Mexican Culture

The Hispanic population that comprises the majority of LEP individuals in Texas comes from Mexico, the largest minority immigrant group in the state (Urban Institute, 2003). Therefore, understanding the unique aspects of this culture will help case managers implement effective strategies for working with these customers.

The Mexican culture is one based on class structure (Gudykunst, Ting-Toomey, & Nishidia, 1996). Although times have changed, this traditional understanding of rank continues to have an effect on interpersonal communications, such as the customer-case manager relationship, according to Adler (1979), Atwood & McAnanay (1986), and Delgado (1994) (as cited in Gudykunst et al., 1996). Because class distinction is a historical and integral part of Mexican culture, case managers should be aware of how this cultural dynamic affects their communication with LEP customers (Gudykunst et al., 1996).

Case managers have control over many aspects of the IEP, so according to Mexican societal norms, the case manager is considered the member of a higher class (Gudykunst, Ting-Toomey, & Nishidia, 1996). This is an important dynamic for the case manager to recognize because based on the customer's cultural framework, gestures first must be made by the member of the higher class (i.e., case manager). This understanding can go a long way in developing the type of relationship needed to assist the customer in succeeding.

> **Mexican Culture**
>
> Case managers are responsible for reaching out, developing, and nurturing the customer-case manager relationship because based on Mexican class structure, they may be the only ones in the relationship who are allowed to do so.

Gender-Based Considerations

Because Hispanic women represent a majority of the dislocated garment worker population in Texas, it is important to keep in mind that, in some cases, they may encounter challenges participating in activities such as training and job search, because their spouses may not look favorably on outside activities aside from employment.

If they do attend training, spending extra time outside of the classroom to study or do homework also may be difficult for these women because they are expected to continue their role as homemaker, mother, and wife, leaving little room or support for activities outside of that. These cultural conflicts could lead to marital problems and even family violence.

Therefore, case managers should be prepared to provide resources and referrals when necessary. TWC and Workforce Boards have developed guidance to assist case managers in addressing family violence.

Understanding the Written Word

A considerable amount of information is provided to LEP customers as they begin to interact with the workforce delivery system. There is much they may not understand because of their limited English skills and literacy and education levels in Spanish.

The important issue to remember is that just because a person is able to speak in a second language does not mean they are able to read in that language. Some may not have the literacy levels necessary to complete routine forms properly in either Spanish or English.

Customers may assume that completing documents is the only way to ensure they will receive assistance, and, as a result, they may readily comply and sign consent forms they cannot read (Santiago, Arredondo, Gallardo-Cooper, 2002). Thus, it is important for them to receive as much of the information in written form translated in their native language, but also in a manner that those not able to read can understand and that complies with WIA Section 188 guidelines for limited English proficiency.

Technical Terms

Consider using certified professionals to translate and interpret technical terms, words, and phrases because not all Spanish speakers have the skills necessary to accurately convey these concepts.

Family Violence Counseling

Make sure the agencies you are referring LEP customers to have the ability to provide linguistically and culturally appropriate services. Gender also may play a role in how willing customers are to accept assistance, so be sure that the agency has female counselors.

To find out more information, visit the Texas Workforce Commission at www.twc.state.tx.us.

Identifying all documents and having them translated into the appropriate language is essential. Additional strategies include:

♦ Providing and reviewing with LEP customers a copy of their IEPs translated into their native language. This ensures that they are aware of the time frames and goals associated with their IEPs.

♦ Providing qualified staff to translate and interpret assessment results.

♦ Results then need to be shared with customers so they can use the information to develop their employment goals and objectives.

Materials

Though it is a mandate from DOL, it is worth repeating that Workforce Centers should ensure that all documents related to programs that have a high contact rate with limited English skills participants are translated into the appropriate language and available to all case managers.

Also, it is important to realize that just because a form is in the language spoken does not mean it is understood. Case managers can use nonverbal cues to detect whether a customer is having difficulty reading and completing the forms.

Communicating at All Levels: Improving Verbal and Nonverbal Communication

Verbal and nonverbal communications are fundamental elements of exchanging information and ideas. They also are essential in building a strengths-based case management approach to achieve successful outcomes and improved performance in key areas such as entered employment and employment retention. Working with LEP customers requires strategies that can facilitate the exchange of concepts as well as technical language.

Speaking To Be Understood: Effective Verbal Communication

Case managers must be able to communicate with their customers. Verbal communication is one of the primary building blocks of a strengths-based approach; establishing a relationship with an LEP customer can be difficult because of the language barrier.

Language barriers can be frustrating and result in the exchange of little or no useful information. Case managers must either possess the language skills or have access to qualified interpreters to facilitate a meaningful conversation with their customers. Even if individuals are not Hispanic, if they are fluent in Spanish they will be effective in working with Spanish-speaking customers.

Another aspect to consider is the ability to communicate technical terms. Even native Spanish-speakers may need some assistance in translating and interpreting workforce terminology.

What *Is Not* Said Is Just as Important as What *Is* Said: Reading Nonverbal Cues

Case Managers and Their Nonverbal Cues

Communication through body language is called nonverbal communication. When case managers communicate verbally, it is important to keep in mind that they also communicate through facial expressions, hand gestures, eye contact, and tone of voice.

Nonverbal Cues

- Refusing to make eye contact (this also may be a cultural factor)
- Sighing
- Exhibiting no curiosity beyond page 1
- Shaking head no
- Just smiling
- Not writing
- Answering orally in own language (instead of writing)
- Repeating same English word ("yes, yes")

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Actions to Avoid

- Placing an interpreter or customer on a speaker phone
- Allowing family members of friends to act as interpreters
- Allowing another customer to act as an interpreter
- Having conversations regarding customer interactions in public places
- Sharing assessment scores without the customers consent.

It is important to keep in mind, however, that eye contact and body position have different meanings in different cultures.

Case managers who are unfamiliar with some of the subtleties of nonverbal cues in a particular culture should:

♦ ask a trusted person from the cultural group to share any insights they may have

♦ be aware of body language such as posture, crossed arms, or head shaking.

♦ make sure that the customer has your complete attention by avoiding looking at your computer or otherwise appearing distracted.

Things to Avoid

♦ Assuming that if customers speak Spanish they can read Spanish

♦ Assuming that customers will admit to being unable to read or write

♦ Assuming that staff with Spanish surnames speak Spanish fluently

♦ Assuming that co-workers who speak Spanish are qualified interpreters

Graphic Organizer

To help customers understand the system in visual context, case managers can use graphic organizers such as the one below. This illustration should be translated into Spanish and be written at an educational level the customer will understand. As case managers review services with the customer, they can use this organizer as a visual road-map for the conversation.

Initial Contact with Customer
Contacto inicial con el cliente

↓

Intake & Assessment
Entrevista y Asesoramiento

↓

Vocational ESL & Job Training
Ingles Vocacional y Entrenamiento de Trabajo ⟷ **Individual Employment Plan**
Plan Individual de Empleo

↓   ↓

Monitoring Progress
Revisar el Progreso ⟷ **Job Search & Job Placement**
Busque da de Empleo y Colocación

↓

Entered Employment & Follow-Up
Colocación en el Empleo y Seguimiento

Case managers not only should be aware of their own nonverbal communication styles, but should also be aware of the nonverbal cues of their customers. Gestures or facial expressions can have unintended messages when communicating with a person from another culture.

Reading the Nonverbal Cues of Customers

After carefully studying the nonverbal cues of the customer, case managers should make accommodations to ensure that the customer understands the information provided by:

♦ requesting the assistance of a co-worker who is more fluent in the customer's native language or using an interpreter

♦ simplifying some of the key concepts into very basic language or even creating a visual chart to help explain a particular service delivery process

♦ responding in a reassuring manner if the customer seems nervous

Capture, Clarify, and Confirm

There are three practical rules to ensure better cross-cultural communications:

1. Capture. To avoid misinterpretations that may offend and confuse others—pay close attention to the conversation. Key in on specific words or phrases that give cultural understanding and maintain the meaning of what is being said.

2. Clarify. When unable to fully interpret what is being said, look for nonverbal cues to explain the message, then restate the information.

3. Confirm. To ensure understanding, give the customer an opportunity to restate what has been said. At the next meeting, make sure to follow up on the previous meeting's discussions.

Adapted from Prince, D.W., & Hoppe, M.H.

Strategies for Individuals with Lower Educational Attainment

As noted, it is important to keep in mind that adults who have limited English skills also may have lower literacy skills (reading and writing) in their native language. Therefore, Workforce Center staff may have to make special efforts to ensure that customers are able to understand the information they are presented with. The following are strategies for working with populations with lower educational attainment (Brown, 2001):

♦ For individuals who have limited reading and writing skills, use graphics to explain tasks and processes.

♦ For individuals who have difficulty understanding English, maintain eye contact during conversations and have them restate instructions in their own words.

Preparing to Improve Communications

Preparing for an initial intake or counseling session with an LEP customer is an excellent strategy for developing effective interpersonal relationships. The following concepts for case managers on how to improve rapport with customers has been adapted from Paniagua (1998), Sue & Sue (1999), and Zuniga (1992) as presented in Counseling Latino and *la Famila* (Santiago, Arredondo, Gallardo-Cooper, 2002):

♦ Begin sessions by setting boundaries and establishing roles before becoming familiar with customers.

♦ Make sure to address customers with titles using the formal Mr. and Mrs (or *Señor* and *Señora)*.

♦ Avoid using formal physical boundaries, such as desks, when meeting with customers.

♦ Use a formal hierarchical system when meeting with mixed groups—start with older men and end with children.

♦ Note how customers refer to themselves and use that variation—formal names recorded on documents are not always the names used in everyday conversation (e.g., Maria del Carmen shortens to Carmen).

♦ Customers may need extra time; be flexible and make sure that the meeting is productive for both parties.

♦ Allow the customer time to adjust to the setting and make small talk to set the tone.

♦ Use their language and vocabulary so the IEP is self-explanatory and easy to understand, and avoid workforce development acronyms with which they may be unfamiliar.

♦ Acknowledge that because of the value of *respeto*, many customers may avoid conflict. Although you may attempt to explain things, customers may state that they understand, but won't.   Therefore, find opportunities to ask questions or have them restate their understanding of the material.

♦ Respond to nonverbal cues to enhance interpersonal communication.

♦ Determine whether processes and concepts are best conveyed through illustrations and other visuals aids.

Review Section 3: Getting the Message Across: Improving Communication with LEP Customers

Communication is essential to the delivery of effective workforce services for LEP customers. Below is list of concepts covered in this section.

1. Communication needs to be both culturally and linguistically appropriate.

2. Hispanic culture has distinct characteristics:

   ♦ *Personalismo*: Making a relationship personal

   ♦ *Respeto*: Respect

   ♦ *Dignidad*: Dignity

   ♦ *Simpatia*: Pleasant, kind

   ♦ *Confianza*: Confidence

   ♦ *Cariño*: Affection

3. Hispanic culture has unique aspects that are important to developing effective customer relationships.

4. Communication comes in various forms: written, oral, and nonverbal.

5. Case managers should provide and review an LEP customer's IEP in the customer's native language.

6. Assessment results should be translated and communicated to customers in their native language.

7. Technical words, terms, or phrases may need to be translated or interpreted by qualified professionals.

8. Case managers should be aware of their own nonverbal cues as well as those of their customers.

9. Case managers should respond to their customers' nonverbal cues to enhance interpersonal communication.

10. Concepts are best communicated to customers with lower educational attainment through illustrations.

11. Case managers should prepare for the LEP interview for the most-effective results.

12. Case managers should use the form of communication that is going to work best with each customer.

Section 4. Bringing All the Pieces to the Table: Leveraging Information to Better Assist Customers in Exploring Employment and Training Options

Why Is This Section Important?

Meeting the employment goals of LEP customers requires leveraging all of the resources and information available through the Workforce Center. Central to this is close collaboration among case managers, job developers, and Business Services representatives.

Connecting Case Managers with Employers

Case managers always should remember that the goal of the Workforce Center is to get customers employed. Arranging regular meetings between case managers and the Business Services representatives is a good strategy toward achieving this outcome.

Monthly meetings can be scheduled to discuss information such as: *What jobs are currently available? What qualities are employers searching for in new employees? Are businesses looking for Spanish-speaking employees?*

Assisting Customers Who Are Exploring Training Options

All LEP customers need to explore their career options and some also may need to research available occupational training. Most of these individuals do not fully understand the process of developing an IEP, and also may need more information about the tie between high-growth, high-demand occupations and training options.

Interviews conducted in developing this module also found customer confusion with the relationships between the high-growth, high-demand occupations list and the IEP. Case mangers should have sufficient understanding of high-growth, high-demand list.

> **Matching Employers and Customers**
>
> Most LEP customers need to get to work as quickly as possible. Identifying employers who need to and are willing to readily hire LEP individuals provides everyone with options and demonstrates the value of leveraging resources and information.

Strategies that provide case managers with opportunities to stay connected to this important area include:

♦ Gaining greater insight into economic forecasts through workshops and classes

♦ Scheduling regular meetings to stay in close contact with Business Services representatives to identify employers who are flexible in their English language and educational requirements

♦ Keeping abreast of pending and actual changes in the Workforce Board's high-growth, high-demand occupations list through ongoing updates from the Workforce Board

Weekly Staff Gatherings

In the Lower Rio Grande workforce area, case managers gathered weekly to share information and discuss successful practices in handling difficult cases. The case managers reported that these meetings were helpful in providing a needed support system. The meetings also helped to establish and reinforce a team approach to problem solving that went beyond the meetings.

Review Section 4: Bringing All the Pieces to the Table

Workforce Center staff should look for ways to leverage resources and share information. Topics in the section include:

1. Developing approaches to connect case managers with employers by arranging regular meetings between Business Services representatives and case managers

2. Allowing case managers opportunities to attend after-hours and lunchtime business events to gain greater insight into employers' requirements

3. Leveraging information to build the case manager's ability to assist customers with career exploration by inviting case managers to labor market information workshops that present findings from local industry cluster studies and other economic analyses

Brown Bag Meetings

Case managers may consider gathering at least once a month for a brown bag breakfast or lunch meeting to talk about cases and introduce specific case studies. This opportunity to review specific cases allows knowledge and experience to be shared in an open and free discussion among peers. Confidentiality rules still apply, in particular to changing the customers' names. However, knowledge shared about what is happening in the real world will assist case managers to better prepare for their own cases.

Section 5. Having Friends in the Right Places: Building a Robust System of Support for All

Supporting Each Other

Working with Spanish-speaking and other LEP customers gives case managers and other Workforce Center staff valuable experiences in learning different cultures and languages. However, managing all aspects of being effective professionals, including incorporating culturally and linguistically effective practices, staying "strengths based" and "customer centered," delivering quality customer services, and ensuring that all of the bureaucratic and performance requirements of the Texas workforce system are met can be stressful (Moxley, 2002). Therefore, establishing a strong support network for case managers can be a successful strategy.

Developing Support Networks for Limited English Proficiency Customers

LEP customers may experience a variety of barriers to employment beyond transportation and child care. Many may experience difficulties in paying their rent or utilities or in accessing health services. Participating in training can be a challenge for many customers. They may experience high levels of stress and anxiety in trying to acclimate to a new learning environment.

Many customers have been away from school for a long period or may never have been in the classroom. Added to this pressure is the fact that they are facing the challenge of learning a new language. Chances are they also may need to learn good study habits and test-taking skills. Many will need to adopt time-management skills, which will allow them to successfully balance school and home.

Supporting Trainees

Collaborate with staff from training institutions to coordinate on-site mini-workshops in stress management and study habits. Coordinate occasional ceremonies to commemorate the students' accomplishments during their training.

Leveraging Resources

Alamo Community College District has developed a partnership that includes the Alamo Workforce Board and a broad base of community partners to address the issues of access to health care for Hispanics. This effort is being funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation and is an effective means of leveraging resources to meet the needs of an underserved community.

Organizing Information and Access to Services

To determine the appropriate types of services customers may need to successfully address various barriers, consider developing instruments that can be used to survey their concerns. The results of the surveys then can be used to identify any gaps in support services as well as reinforce existing referrals. The Workforce Center should provide all case managers a listing of community nonprofit agencies that provide culturally and linguistically appropriate services.

Building a strong network of contacts within the social services community, including community-based workforce intermediaries, helps case managers to be ready to assist customers looking for services not available through the Texas workforce system. Because many LEP customers have concerns about accessing community resources, be sure and assist them in overcoming their fears.

Online Application

Consider printing the screens of some employers' online applications to help customers get acquainted with their format and language. Incorporate this into job readiness classes by having customers practice completing them in class. The customers then could move into the resource room to practice online.

Lifelong Learning

It is important for case managers to discuss the importance of lifelong learning with LEP customers, which includes strategies for promoting and encouraging participants to continue attending classes that improve their English and employment skills.

Case managers also should stress that continued improvement of customers' English skills is a means to career advancement.

Review Section 5: Having Friends in the Right Places: Building a Robust System of Support for All

Support systems are fundamental to strengthening relationships among staff members and assisting customers in addressing barriers to employment. Concepts covered in this section include:

1. Providing opportunities for case managers to support each other through regular meetings and social events

2. Attending workshops and conferences on topics related to the challenges customers are facing

3. Surveying customers regarding the types of services they are interested in and inviting representatives from corresponding agencies

4. Building an extensive network of personal contacts to connect customers to the services they need

Section 6. Finding the Right Job and Keeping It

Why Is This Section Important?

Case managers are powerful partners in job development and retention. Opportunities for case managers to assist customers in these important functions exist and can greatly improve the customers' employment outcomes and job retention rates.

Enhancing Job Readiness to Fit the Needs of LEP Customers

Job readiness can take on some additional dimensions when working with LEP customers, and go beyond what is routinely delivered. Traditional offerings such as interviewing skills, dressing for success, and résumé writing may need to be complemented with classes specifically targeting the LEP customers. Additional workshops could include:

♦ Introduction to online applications and demonstrations on how to complete them

♦ Employers sharing information on the behavioral assessments and tests they may use and require

♦ Employers sharing information on career clusters or ladders within their companies, and speaking realistically with customers about job requirements

Getting a Job Is Not the End: Improving Job Retention Rates

Job retention is an important measurement of the Workforce Center's performance. Once a customer has secured employment, it is important to maintain contact to ensure that the transition is successful and the customer is able to retain the job.

Employer Connections

Case managers expressed an interest in attending events that are held after hours by businesses and local chambers of commerce as well as job fairs. These events allow case managers to come in contact with key employers, better understand the job environment, and, in the end, do a better job of steering participants in the best career directions.

Job Search

Employer data and information from Business Services can be used to identify employers that are flexible in their requirements for English skills and educational attainment.

Assisting Customers in Continuing Their Personal Development

There are several ways case managers can assist customers in continuing their personal development. Some customers want to continue their studies or feel they may not have had sufficient time during training to learn all they could about their job, or perhaps they were not able to attain their GED credential prior to accepting employment. Many customers may want to continue sharpening their skills to pursue jobs with career ladders. Supporting these efforts will help them retain their current employment and secure higher-wage jobs in the future.

Encouraging customers to continue improving their English skills also could present opportunities for case managers and Workforce Boards to collaborate with employers to establish skills training at their worksites specifically for employees who desire to increase their English language proficiency. Strategies that support incumbent worker training allow Workforce Centers to continue to assist customers and employers. Ultimately, incumbent worker training can result in decreased employee turnover and competitive advantages for employers.

Continuing Education

To assist a customer in continuing his or her education, case managers can use community resource guides to search for ESL or GED classes near the customer's home or workplace. Community colleges, municipalities, churches, and other CBOs may offer free ESL or GED classes. The effective use of ESL and GED classes is covered in Module 3.

Job Coach

Case managers should not stop interacting with the participant once a job is found. The bond that leads to successful job placement also can help the participant reach full self-sufficiency with follow-up services. Workforce Centers should include follow-up services in case managers' job descriptions and duties.

Lending an Assist: Post-Employment Services

Customers who have entered employment may encounter some challenges adjusting to a new work environment, especially if they are new to the job market or have worked most of their adult life for only one employer. Some of these challenges may include:

♦ Adjusting to a different work schedule

♦ Meeting the new employer's expectations

♦ Working with a new group of co-workers

♦ Learning new rules and policies

♦ Learning workplace vocabulary and etiquette

A case manager may play the role of a job coach once a customer has obtained employment. In this role, the case manager will continue frequent contact to assist the customer in the transition to work. In some cases, case managers may need to intervene with employers on behalf of customers experiencing problems on the job. Job coaching is usually supported through follow-up services in the first 90 days after customers enter employment.

Review Section 6: Finding the Right Job and Keeping It

Job placement and retention are important performance areas for Workforce Boards and TWC. Concepts suggested in this section to enhance these performance measures include:

1. Enhancing job readiness to meet the needs of LEP customers by offering workshops on completing online applications and understanding behavioral testing

2. Inviting employers to conduct workshops on career ladders, language, and educational requirements

3. Assisting customers with continuing their education to enhance their career opportunities and earning ability

4. Working with employers to develop incumbent worker training

5. Implementing job coaching after a customer enters employment to improve retention rates

Appendices

Appendix A: Guidance to School Selection

Appendix B: Person-Centered Strengths-Based Assessment

Appendix C: Department of Labor, Language Assistance and Planning Self-Assessment Tool for Recipients of Federal Financial Assistance

Appendix A: Guidance to School Selection

Part 1: English, Pages 58–59
Part 2: Spanish, Pages 60–61

Guidance to School Selection

The following questions were taken from the Upper Rio Grande Workforce Development Board, Guidance to School Selection. The can be used by case managers to help customers in their search for appropriate training providers. They are provided here in English and Spanish sections.

Classes

1.   What is the class schedule?

2.   How many times is this class offered per semester?

3.   How long is a semester?

4.   How many classes are required per semester?

5.   How much homework can be expected for each program?

6.   What is the ratio of students per instructor?

7.   How many ESL levels do you offer?

8.   Is ESL class combined with vocational training?

9.   Do you offer ESL classes until a certain level of English proficiency is reached or do you offer only so many hours of ESL instruction?

10. Do you offer several ESL levels in the same classroom? If so, does instructor have an assistant in the classroom at all times?

11. Do I have to complete ESL classes before entering vocational training?

12. If training is offered along with ESL and the entry requirement is 5th grade reading level and I am currently at 3rd grade level, how can this school assist me?

Logistics and Supplies

1.   Do you have any problems with parking in the school?

2.   How many locations do you have? Are all classes offered at this location?

3.   Can I take classes at different locations?

4.   If tools or supplies are included as part of the training, who do I request them from and how soon in training do I request them to receive them in time to use them in the classroom?

5. If for whatever reason it takes too long to receive tools or supplies, what arrangement does the school have to make sure all students have all the tools needed to continue learning?

6. If tools are not included, is there financial assistance available?

7. When are schoolbooks or uniforms provided?

Policies and Procedures

1. What is your absence and tardy policy?

2. What happens if in the middle of the semester the instructor clearly sees that no progress has been made due to my limited English?

3. How do you measure progress, and how often do you measure?

4. What happens when an instructor leaves? How soon can he/she be replaced?

5. For GED classes, do you offer an entry pre-GED exam and from then on how often do you administer another one to monitor progress?

6. How often do students meet with instructors for reports?

7. Do instructors meet with case managers to discuss my coursework?

Extra Curricular

1. If needed, do you offer tutoring?

2. What is the schedule for tutoring?

3. Request curriculum for training(s) of interest.

4. Do you offer externships? Where? Does the student have to search for the location?

5. Do you have a breakroom; does it have a refrigerator, microwave for public use? At what times are breaks?

6. Are sanitary/maintenance conditions on school kept up for the comfort of students?

Guía Para La Selección De Escuela

Las siguientes preguntas fueron adaptadas de la *"Guía Para La Selección De Escuela"* publicada por el Upper Rió Grande Workforce Development Board. Las siguientes preguntas pueden ser usadas por los Manejadores de Casos para ayudar a los clientes a buscar proveedores de entrenamiento apropiado a sus necesidades. Aquí están proporcionadas en las secciones de Ingles y Español.

Clases

1. ¿Cual es el horario de clase?

2. ¿Cuantas veces se ofrece esta clase por semestre?

3. ¿Qué tan largo es el semestre?

4. ¿Cuántas clases son requeridas por semestre?

5. ¿Cuánta tarea es esperada por cada programa?

6. ¿Cual es la proporción de estudiantes por cada instructor?

7. ¿Cuantos niveles de Ingles como segundo lenguaje son ofrecidos?

8. ¿Están las clases de Ingles come segundo lenguaje combinadas con entrenamiento vocacional?

9. ¿Ofrece clases de Ingles hasta llegar a cierto nivel de pericia de Ingles o ofrece no mas ciertas horas de instrucción de Ingles come segundo lenguaje?

10. ¿Ofrece diferentes niveles de clases de Ingles en el mismo salón de clase? ¿Y si ese es el caso, tiene el instructor un asistente en el salón de clase todo el tiempo?

11. ¿Tengo que completar las clases de Ingles como segundo lenguaje antes de empezar el entrenamiento vocacional?

12. ¿Si el entrenamiento es ofrecido junto la clase de Ingles como segunda lenguaje y el requisito para ser aceptado a la clase es leer al nivel de quinto año y estoy leyendo al nivel de tercer grado, como puede ayudarme esta escuela?

Logísticas y Suministras

1. ¿Tienen algún problema con el estacionamiento de la escuela?

2. ¿Cuántos locales tiene? ¿Son todas las clases ofrecidas en este local?

3. ¿Puedo tomar clases en diferentes locales?

4. ¿Si el entrenamiento ofrece herramientas y suministras, a quien se lass pido y que tan pronto las pido para recibirlas con tiempo para usarlas en la clase?

5. ¿Si por cualquier razón se toma mucho tiempo para recibir las herramientas o suministras, que clase de arreglos hace la escuela para asegurarse que todas todos los estudiantes reciban las herramientas necesarias continuar su aprendizaje?

6. ¿Si las herramientas no son incluidas, hay ayuda financiera?

7. ¿Cuándo son los libros y uniformes proporcionados?

Regulaciones y Procedimientos

1. ¿Cual es la regulación respecto a las faltas o llegadas tarde a clase?

2. ¿Qué es lo que pasa si durante el medio de semestre el instructor obviamente ve que no he progresado por mi limitación en hablar el Ingles?

3. ¿Cómo mide usted el progreso y cuanta veces lo mide?

4. ¿Que es lo que sucede cuando un instructor se va? ¿Que tan pronto puede ser reemplazado?

5. ¿Para clases de GED, usted ofrece un pre-examen de GED y después de eso cada cuando administra otro examen para observar el progreso?

6. ¿Cada cuando se juntan los estudiantes con los instructores para los reportes?

7. ¿Se juntan los Manejadores de Casos con los instructores para hablar acerca de mis deberes estudiantiles?

Fuera Del Programa De Estudios

1. ¿Si es necesario, puede usted ofrecer clases privadas?

2. ¿Cuál es el horario para las clases privadas?

3. Pida el currículo para el entrenamiento(s) de interés.

4. ¿Ofrece puesto externo? ¿Donde? ¿Tiene que buscar el estudiante el lugar?

5. ¿Tiene un cuarto para descansar; tiene refrigerador o microondas para uso publico? ¿A que horas son los descansos?

6. ¿Son las condiciones sanitarias y el mantenimiento de la escuela adecuado para que los estudiantes se sientan confortable?

Appendix B: Person-Centered Strengths-Based Assessment

Part 1: English, Pages 64–65
Part 2: Spanish, Pages 66–67

Person-Centered Strengths Assessment

The following assessment is adapted from *The Strengths Perspective in Social Work Practice* by Dennis Saleebey, Fourth Edition (2002), and the Learning Disabilities Association of Western New York (2007).

Housing/A Sense of "Home"

1. Where are you living now?

2. Do you rent or own your own home?

Transportation/Getting Around:

1. What are all the different ways you get to where you want or need to go?

2. Would you like to expand transportation options?

3. What are some of the ways you have used in the past to get from place to place?

Financial/Insurance

1. What are your current sources of income, and how much money do you have each month to work with?

2. What are your monthly financial obligations?

Vocational/Educational

1. What does your job mean to you?

2. What activities are you currently involved in where you use your gifts and talents to help others?

3. What kinds of things do you do that make you happy and give you a sense of joy and personal satisfaction?

4. If you could design the perfect job for yourself, what would it be? Indoors or outdoors? Night or day? Travel or no travel? Alone or with others? Where it is quiet or noisy?

5. What was the most satisfying job you ever had? If you worked primarily with one employer most of your life, was there a specific task or job responsibility you found most satisfying?

6. What would you like to learn more about?

7. How far did you go in school? What was your experience with formal education?

8. Have you received special education services or remedial/tutorial assistance in school?

9. What are your thoughts and feelings about returning to school to finish a degree, learn new skills, or take a course for the sheer joy of learning new things?

10. Do you like to teach others to do things? Would you like to be a coach or mentor for someone who needs some specialized assistance?

Think about your school and experiences in life. Tell me if any of these describe you.

1. I am good at following directions.

2. It is easy to read and fill out forms for work.

3. Writing a letter is easy for me.

4. In school I always finished my work on time.

Family and Social Support?

1. Describe your family. Are you single or married or divorced?

2. Do you have children?

3. What are the ways that members of your family provide social and emotional support for you, and help to make you feel happy and good about yourself?

4. Is there anything about your relationships with family that make you feel fearful, angry, or upset?

Health

1. How would you describe your health?

2. Do you or have you ever worn glasses?

3. Do you or have you ever worn a hearing aid?

4. What limitations, if any, do you experience as a result of health circumstances?

5. What do you want and believe that you need in the area of health?

6. Have you ever had a head injury?

7. Did you reverse letters or numbers as a child?

Leisure Time, Talents, and Skills

1. What are the activities that you enjoy and give you a sense of satisfaction and personal fulfillment?

2. What are your skills, abilities, and talents? These may be tangible skills such as playing a musical instrument, writing poetry, dancing, singing, painting, etc., or intangible gifts such as a sense of humor, compassion for others, kindness, etc.

3. What are the sources of pride in your life?

Evaluaciónes Centradas En Las Fuerzas De La Persona

La siguiente evaluación es adaptado de el libro *The Strengths Perspective in Social Work Practice* de Dennis Saleebey, Cuarta edición (2002), y Learning Disabilities Association of Western New York (2007).

Envoltura/Un sentido de "Casa"

1. ¿Donde vive ahora?

2. ¿Usted renta o es dueño de su casa?

Transportación/Viajando:

1. ¿Que son todos los diferentes tipos de transporte que usted usa para llegar a donde quiere o donde necesita ir?

2. ¿Le gustaría tener mas opciones de transporte?

3. ¿Que son unas de las formas que usted a usado en el pasado para ir de un lugar a otro?

Financias/Aseguranza

1. ¿Cuáles son los sus recursos finánciales y cuanto dinero tiene con que trabajar cada mes?

2. ¿Cuáles son sus obligaciones financieras al mes?

Vocacional/ Educacional

1. ¿Qué significa su trabajo para usted?

2. ¿En que actividades esta usted involucrado donde usa sus dones y talentos para ayudar a la gente?

3. ¿Qué clase de cosas hace usted para sentirse feliz y darse un sentido de alegría y satisfacción personal?

4. ¿Si usted pudiera diseñar un trabajo perfecto para usted, que seria? Adentro o afuera? ¿Día o noche? ¿Viajar o no viajar? ¿Solo o con otros? ¿Donde hay silenció o hace ruido?

5. ¿Qué fue el empleo que le ha dado mas satisfacción? Si no mas a trajado en un solo empleo toda su vida, había un trabajo especifico o una responsabilidad que usted encontró muy satisfactoria.

6. ¿Que le gustaría aprender?

7. ¿Hasta que año fue a la escuela? ¿Cuál fue su experiencia con educación formal?

8. ¿Ha recibido educación especial o clases remediales/privadas en la escuela?

9. ¿Qué son sus pensamientos y sentimientos acerca del regreso a la escuela para completar su licenciatura, aprender nuevas habilidades, o tomar una clase no mas por aprender nuevas cosas?

10. ¿Le gusta enseñar a otros a hacer cosas? ¿Le gustaría ser maestro o mentor de alguien que necesite asistencia especializada?

Piense en sus experiencias de la escuela y de la vida. Dígame si cualquiera de éstos le describe.

1. Soy bueno para seguir direcciones.

2. Es fácil leer y llenar formularios para mi trabajo.

3. Escribir una carta es fácil para mi.

4. En la escuela siempre terminé mi trabajo a tiempo.

Apoyo Familiar Y Social

1. Describa su familia. ¿Esta usted soltero o casado o divorciado?

2. ¿Tiene usted hijos?

3. ¿Cuáles son los modos que su familia usa parar brindarle apoyo social y emocional, y ayudarlo a sentirse feliz?

4. ¿Hay algo en sus relaciones con su familia que lo hacen sentir miedo, enojo o sentido?

Salud

1. ¿Describa su salud?

2. ¿Usa o ha usado lentes?

3. ¿Usa o ha usado un aparato auditivo?

4. ¿Que limitaciones, si alguna, tiene por circunstancias de salud?

5. ¿Que es lo que usted quiere o piensa que necesita en la área de salud?

6. ¿Ha tenido una lesión/herida de la cabeza?

7. ¿Ponía letras o números al revés cuando era niño?

Tiempo Libre, Talentos, y Habilidades

1. ¿Qué son las actividades que le gustarían y le darían un sentido de satisfacción y cumplimiento personal?

2. ¿Cuáles son sus habilidades y talentos? ¿Estas pueden ser habilidades palpables como tocar un instrumento musical, escribir poesía, bailar, cantar, pintar, etc. o talentos palpables como un buen sentido de humor, compasión hacia otros, bondad, etc.?

3. ¿Qué son sus fuentes de orgullo en su vida?

Appendix C: Department of Labor, Language Assistance and Planning Self-Assessment Tool for Recipients of Federal Financial Assistance

Purpose

This two-part document is intended to assist organizations that receive Federal financial assistance in their strategic planning efforts to ensure that program goals and objectives address meaningful access for all of the people they serve or encounter, including those who are limited-English proficient (LEP). This tool will assist recipients in assessing their current other-than-English language service capabilities and in planning for the provision of language assistance to LEP individuals they serve or encounter. As recipients develop performance measures to assist them in evaluating the effectiveness of their program and program delivery, by using this tool, they will be able to assess the effectiveness of performance measures relative to individuals who are LEP.

Part A provides a framework for the development of a Language Assistance Plan in light of the general Title VI requirements. The planning and self-assessment questions in Part B of this document, intended as a follow-up to Part A, are guided by the requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, and Title VI regulations, as set forth in 29 CFR Part 31; Section 188 of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and its implementing regulations at 29, CFR Part 37 (available on CRC's website at http://www.dol.gov/oasam/programs/crc/).

Introduction

Executive Order No. 13166

Executive Order No. 13166, "Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency," (available electronically at http://www.dol.gov/oasam/regs/statutes/Eo13166.pdf) was created to "... improve access to Federally conducted and Federally assisted programs and activities for persons who, as a result of national origin, are limited in their English proficiency (LEP)..." President Bush affirmed his commitment to Executive Order 13166 through a memorandum issued on October 25, 2001, by Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights, Ralph F. Boyd, Jr. Federal agencies were directed to provide guidance and technical assistance to recipients of Federal funds as to how they can provide meaningful access to LEP users of Federal programs. In addition, Federal agencies were told to look at how they served people who were limited in their English proficiency and to see what measures they could take in their direct contacts with LEP individuals that would increase meaningful access. In addition, a Federal Interagency Workgroup on Limited English Proficiency was formed to coordinate guidance and technical assistance efforts throughout the Federal government in support of Executive Order 13166. One of the Workgroup's first accomplishments was the creation of a Federal web site (http://www.lep.gov). The site is a work in progress and is designed to be a one-stop referral shop for recipients, Federal agencies, and communities in the quest for LEP information and technical assistance. It is through the coordinated efforts of the Workgroup that this planning and self-assessment tool was created.

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

The basis for Executive Order 13166 is Section 601 of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. 2000d, (hereinafter Title VI), which provides that no person shall "on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance." Section 602 authorizes and directs Federal agencies that are empowered to extend Federal financial assistance to any program or activity "to effectuate the provisions of [section 601] …by issuing rules, regulations, or orders of general applicability." 42 U.S.C. 2000d-1. WIA Section 188 mirrors the requirements of Title VI.

The Supreme Court, in *Lau* v. *Nichols*, 414 U.S. 563 (1974), affirmed then Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW) policy (in line with HEW's Title VI regulation which is similar to that of DOJ, 45 CFR 80.3(b)(2)), stating that a recipient's failure to ensure meaningful opportunity to national origin minority, limited-English proficient persons to participate in the Federally funded program violates Title VI and Title VI regulations. In the *Lau* case, a San Francisco school district that had a significant number of non-English speaking students of Chinese origin was required to take reasonable affirmative steps to provide them with a meaningful opportunity to participate in the Federally funded education program. The requirement to provide meaningful access under Title VI applies beyond the education context to include all of the programs and activities of all recipients of Federal financial assistance.

Limited English Proficiency Self-Assessment Tool
Part A: Developing a Language Assistance Plan

This section is intended to provide a general overview for the development of a Language Assistance Plan for LEP beneficiaries or potential beneficiaries. Each Federal recipient may choose to develop a Language Assistance Plan differently. Regardless of the format selected, careful consideration should be given to whether their Language Assistance Plan is sufficiently detailed to address the questions set forth in the self-assessment (Part B,).

Recipients have considerable flexibility in developing a Language Assistance Plan. The development and maintenance of a periodically-updated Language Assistance Plan for use by recipient employees serving the public will likely be the most appropriate and cost-effective means of documenting compliance and providing a framework for the provision of timely and reasonable language assistance. Moreover, such written plans would likely provide additional guidance to a recipient's managers in the areas of training, administration, planning, and budgeting. These benefits should lead most recipients to document in a written Language Assistance Plan their language assistance services, and how staff and LEP persons can access those services. Despite these benefits, certain recipients, such as those serving very few LEP persons and recipients with very limited resources may choose not to develop a written LEP plan. However, the absence of a written LEP plan does not obviate the underlying obligation to ensure meaningful access for LEP persons to a recipient's programs or activities. Accordingly, in the event that a recipient elects not to develop a written plan, it should consider alternative ways to articulate, in a reasonable manner, a plan for providing meaningful access. Entities having significant contact with LEP persons, such as schools, religious organizations, community groups, and groups working with new immigrants can be very helpful in providing important information into this planning process from the beginning.

Good Language Assistance Plans should be:

♦ Based on sound planning;

♦ Adequately supported so that implementation has a realistic chance of success; and

♦ Periodically evaluated and revised, if necessary.

The first topic covered in this part is the establishment of goals in a Language Assistance Plan. The second topic in this part is a brief overview of points that may be considered in developing a comprehensive Plan.

Section I: Goals

The process of developing goals flows directly from the self-assessment that has been conducted. Goals should reflect the recipient's circumstances. It is recommended that the recipient's design be based, at least in part, on the results of focused research and benchmarking and on best practices identified by community organizations, other Federal recipients, professional organizations, advocacy groups, and experts in the language assistance field.

The fundamental Title VI requirement is that Federal recipients ensure meaningful access for LEP individuals to the Federal recipient's programs and activities. Therefore, the goals for the provision of language assistance to LEP individuals should relate to a thorough assessment of the target population for each program and activity, the geographical location where the programs and activities will take place, and the expected outcome(s) of the programs and activities.

Generally, goals that are effective indicate:

♦   to whom they apply;

♦   the expected outcome;

♦   when the outcome is expected to materialize; and

♦   how success will be measured.

Effective goals for the provision of language assistance to LEP individuals address the language as well as the cultural context within which the service is provided. To enhance language assistance capabilities, recipients may also choose to have goals in such areas as basic language training for staff, language assistance policy design and implementation, and outreach initiatives for language isolated communities.

Section II: Planning

Many Federal recipients have found that it is useful, when developing or revising a Language Assistance Plan, to establish a committee or work group that includes administrators, professional and administrative support staff, potential beneficiaries, and members of community organizations. By working with a diverse group that includes stakeholders, recipients can gather comprehensive input from those whose support and efforts may be important to their Language Assistance Plan's success. Inclusive approaches in plan design and development tend to promote overall community awareness and support. In addition, these groups will be valuable resources to draw upon during plan evaluation and plan improvement activities.

One of the first steps toward developing a plan is to take the information the recipient has gained through the self-assessment (Part B), combine it with the recipient's goals, and convert it into a vi-

able plan or roadmap that helps the recipient identify and address gaps, while at the same time moves the organization towards a coordinated and comprehensive approach to meeting its needs.

Have you developed a comprehensive plan for language assistance to LEP persons?

☐ YES   ☐ NO

If not, or if you just want more information to consider in assessing the comprehensiveness of your already existing plan, there are some useful pointers on http://www.dol.gov/oasam/regs/fedreg/ notices/2003013125.pdf as well as on www.lep.gov.

Briefly, in designing a comprehensive Language Assistance Plan the recipient should follow the following five steps: 1) Identification of LEP Persons; 2) Language Assistance Measures; 3) Training Staff; 4) Providing Notice to LEP Persons; and 5) Monitoring and Updating the Language Assistance Plan.

1.   *Identification of LEP Persons*

This first step comprises the recipient's consideration of the information obtained from the first two self-assessment factors: the number or proportion of LEP individuals eligible to be served or encountered, and the frequency of encounters. This information identifies LEP persons with whom the recipient has had, or could have contact.

In refining the recipient's assessment of the target LEP population, the recipient can use language identification cards (or "I speak cards"), which invite LEP persons to identify their language needs to staff. Such cards, for instance, might say "I speak Spanish" in both Spanish and English, "I speak Vietnamese" in both English and Vietnamese, etc. The recipient can access examples of such cards, at no cost on the Internet at http://www.dol.gov/oasam/programs/ crc/ISpeakCards.pdf, and also at www.lep.gov. In addition, when records are kept of interactions with members of the public, the language of the LEP person can be included as part of the record. In addition, posting notices in commonly encountered languages notifying LEP persons of language assistance will encourage them to self-identify.

2. *Language Assistance Measures*

In developing an effective Language Assistance Plan, the recipient should also consider including information about the ways language assistance will be provided. For instance, the recipient may want to include information on:

♦ Types of language services available;

♦ How staff can obtain those services;

♦ How to respond to LEP callers;

♦ How to respond to written communications from LEP persons;

♦How to respond to LEP individuals who have in-person contact with staff; and

♦How non-Greek alphabet words will be entered into the computer systems.

3. *Training Staff*

It is essential for the members of the recipient's organization to be knowledgeable about the organization's obligations to provide meaningful access to information and services for LEP persons. It is, therefore, recommended that the recipient's Language Assistance Plan include training to ensure that:

♦   Staff know about LEP policies and procedures.

♦   Staff having contact with the public (or those in a recipient's custody) are trained to work effectively with in-person and telephone interpreters.

The recipient may want to include Language Assistance Plan training as part of the orientation for new employees. The more frequent the contact with LEP persons, the greater the need will be for in-depth training. The manner in which the training is provided is within the organization's discretion.

4. *Providing Notice to LEP Persons*

Once the recipient has decided, based on the four-factor self-assessment in Part A, that provision of language services will be implemented, it is important to let LEP persons know that those services are available and that they are free of charge. The recipient should provide this notice in a language LEP persons will understand. Some ways of accomplishing this objective include:

♦   Posting signs in intake areas and other entry points.

♦   Placing notices that that language services are available in outreach documents (brochures, booklets, recruitment information, etc.) in appropriate languages that language services are available.

♦   Working with community-based organizations to inform LEP persons of the language assistance available.

♦   Using a telephone voicemail menu in the most common languages encountered.

♦   Including notices in local newspapers in languages other then English.

♦   Providing notices in non-English language radio and television stations about the availability of language assistance services.

♦   Making presentations and/or posting notices at schools and religious organizations.

5. Monitoring and Updating the Language Assistance Plan

The recipient should, where appropriate, have a process for determining, on an ongoing basis, whether new documents, programs, services, and activities need to be made accessible for LEP individuals, and provide notice to the LEP public and to employees of any changes in programs or services. In addition, the recipient should consider whether changes in demographics, types of services, or other needs require annual re-evaluation of your Language Assistance Plan.

One good way to evaluate a Language Assistance Plan is to seek feedback from the community, and assess potential plan modifications based on:

♦   Current LEP populations in service area or population encountered or affected;

♦   Frequency of encounters with LEP language groups;

♦   Nature and importance of activities to LEP persons;

♦   Availability of resources, including technological advances, additional resources, and the costs imposed;

♦   Whether existing assistance is meeting the needs of LEP persons;

♦   Whether staff know and understand the Language Assistance Plan and how to implement it; and

♦   Whether identified sources for assistance are still available and viable.

Exemplary practices and further policies with regard to written Language Assistance Plans can be found at http://www.lep.gov. The following questions are designed to assist in assessing the recipient's planning needs.

a)   Does your organization have a written policy on the provision of language interpreter and translator services?

☐ YES   ☐   NO

b) If so, is a description of this policy available to the general public?

☐ YES   ☐   NO

If so, how and when is the policy available?

In what languages other than English is the written policy on language interpreters and translation services available?

c) Do you inform your employees of your policies regarding LEP persons?

☐ YES   ☐   NO

If so, how? How often?

d) Do you inform your subcontractors of your policies regarding LEP persons?

☐   YES   ☐   NO

If so, how?   How often?

e) Do you inform your subcontractors of their obligation to provide language assistance to LEP indi-
viduals who participate in their programs and activities and/or who use their services provided?

☐ YES   ☐ NO

If so, how?   How often?

f) Do your subcontractors have a written policy on the provision of language interpreter and transla-
tor services?

☐ YES   ☐ NO

g) If so, is it distributed to the general public?

☐ YES   ☐ NO

h) If so, when and how is it made available?

i) In what languages, other than English, is it made available?

j) Are beneficiaries informed that they will be provided interpreting services at no cost?

☐ YES   ☐   NO

k)   How are they informed and at what points of contact?

l) Do you ensure that your translators and/or interpreters are qualified to provide interpreting services (which is a different skill than being bilingual) and understand any confidentiality requirements?

☐ YES   ☐ NO

If so, how?

m) Is ability to speak a language other than English a factor in hiring decisions in your organization?

☐ YES   ☐ NO

If so, how do you identify which languages are needed?

n) Do you ensure that your bilingual staff are qualified to provide services in another language?

☐ YES   ☐ NO

If so, how? How often is it reviewed or re-evaluated?

o) List the written materials that you provide to the public.

p) Do you provide written materials to the public in languages other than English?

☐ YES   ☐ NO

If so where are they located?

q) Is the public notified of the availability of the translated materials?

☐ YES   ☐ NO

r) List all written materials provided to the public in languages other than English and the languages for which they are available.

s) Are there set criteria for deciding:

Which materials will be translated?

☐ YES   ☐ NO

Who will translate the materials?

☐ YES   ☐ NO

How you will assess competency to translate?

☐ YES   ☐ NO

Who will provide a second check on the translation?

☐ YES   ☐ NO

Into which language(s) will the materials be translated?

☐ YES   ☐ NO

t) Are all translated materials pre-tested before they are finalized?

☐ YES   ☐ NO

If no, which materials are not pre-tested and why?

Section III: Language Assistance Plan Evaluation

The following information is provided to assist the recipient in identifying methods and approaches for evaluating a Language Assistance Plan. The recipient is encouraged to review the Language Assistance Plan annually and to develop approaches for evaluation that are consistent with the respective Language Assistance Plan designs, organizational needs, and circumstances. The evaluation process creates quality feedback for recipient's organization. Also, the evaluation process can be used as a sentinel to detect problems before they grow, and to confirm best practices.

Federal law does not prescribe a particular program model or evaluation approach; therefore, the approach to, and design of, an effective Language Assistance Plan evaluation will vary for each Federal recipient. The questions set forth below are provided as primers for the recipient to use in developing an approach.

1. Do you have and use a tool for collecting data on beneficiary satisfaction with interpreter services?

☐ YES   ☐ NO

2. Have any grievances or complaints been filed because of language access problems?

☐ YES   ☐ NO

If so, with who?

3. Do you monitor the system for collecting data on beneficiary satisfaction and/or grievance/complaint filing?

☐ YES   ☐ NO

If so, how? How often?

4. Is data used as part of a review by senior management of the effectiveness of your organization's language assistance program implementation?

☐ YES   ☐ NO

5. Do you regularly update your Language Assistance Plan and assess for modifications given changing demographics, or changes or additions to your programs?

☐ YES   ☐ NO

If so, how? How often?

6. Do you obtain feedback from the community?

☐ YES   ☐ NO

If so, how? How often?

Generally, organizations measure "success" in terms of whether a plan, when implemented, leads to the achievement of the particular goals the organization has established. If the organization has established no particular goals, it can still be successful if the results are in concert with the organization's desired outcomes. In this case, the desired outcome is the provision of language assistance, when necessary, to ensure that LEP persons are able to participate meaningfully in the Federal recipient's programs and activities.

The recipient should modify the Language Assistance Plan if it proves to be unsuccessful after a legitimate trial. As a practical matter, the recipient may not be able to comply with this Title VI requirement unless it periodically evaluates the Plan.

Part B: Self-Assessment

The questions in this part are intended for use by recipients of Federal financial assistance in conducting a self-assessment of their progress in providing language assistance to LEP persons. The questionnaire is divided into four sections and is designed to assist in a balanced assessment of access based on the following four factors: (1) Demography - the number or proportion of LEP persons eligible to be served or likely to be encountered; (2) Frequency of Contact - the frequency with which LEP individuals come in contact with the program and/or activities; (3) Importance - the nature and importance of the program, activity, or service to people's lives; and (4) Resources-the resources available and costs.

Section I – Demography

The determination to provide language assistance services should include an assessment of the number or proportion of LEP persons from a particular language group served, or encountered in the eligible service population. The greater the number or proportion of LEP persons served or encountered, the more likely language services are needed.

According to the 2000 Census, Profile of Selected Social Characteristics, Supplementary Survey Summary (Table QT-02), English is the only language spoken at home by an estimated 82.4% (209,860,377) of the population 5 years of age and over (254,746,174). The remaining 17.6 percent (44,885,797) speak a language other than English at home. Of those U.S. residents five years of age and older who speak a language other than English at home, the same Census 2000 Survey estimates that 43.4 percent (19,492,832) speak English "less than very well." For these people—approximately 7.7 percent of the total population of persons five years of age or older—language can be a barrier to obtaining meaningful access to programs and activities conducted, or services or information provided by recipients of Federal financial assistance.

There are a variety of sources for demographic information. As noted immediately above, the Bureau of Census is one potential source. Detailed information about the racial and ethnic populations a recipient serves or might serve, including their languages, can also be inferred from Department of Education data. A recipient can link directly to the Bureau of the Census, Department of Education, and other demographic data through http://www.lep.gov by selecting the Demographic button.

The following questions are aimed at identifying who the recipient serves. Please note that the term "serve" is used to include not only those who are often considered direct beneficiaries or recipients of government programs and activities, but also those individuals at a Workforce Investment Act One-Stop Center that may only use self-services. Job Corps recipients should also consider LEP

parents' or guardians' access when their English proficient or LEP minor children and dependents encounter their programs, activities, or services.

1. Has your organization developed a demographic profile of the population served or likely to be served by your DOL funded programs and activities?

☐ YES   ☐ NO

If no, consider utilizing the demographic information from the U.S. Census Bureau available for your particular geographical area (see the following sample data sheet) available at http:// quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/index.html.

2. Where the service area your program serves spans multiple labor market areas, have demographic profiles been developed for each labor market or local area?

☐ YES   ☐ NO

If no, consider utilizing the demographic information from the U.S. Census Bureau available for your particular geographical area (see the following sample data sheet) available at http:// quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/index.html.

3. Has your organization developed a profile of the primary languages spoken by the population served or likely to be served by your Federally funded programs and activities?

☐ YES   ☐ NO

If no, you can begin to develop such a profile now by going directly to http://www.doleta.gov/ reports/CensusData/ or to www.lep.gov in order to access demographic data including LEP statistics. In addition to the Census, you can identify and clarify language needs by calling on the Department of Education or community-based organizations in your service area.

4. Is your organization working with any community-based organizations that are familiar with the language needs of individuals participating in any of your programs and activities, or to whom you provide services or encounter?

☐ YES   ☐ NO

5. If applicable, are local workforce areas, local offices, Job Corps Centers, Unemployment Service Centers, or sub-recipients working with any community-based organizations that are familiar with the language needs of individuals participating in any of your programs and activities, or to whom you provide services or encounter?

☐ YES   ☐ NO   ☐ NOT APPLICABLE

Once the recipient has completed an overview and identified general demographic data, it is in a better position to move to an analysis of the language access the recipient provides to the people it serves.

Section II- Frequency of Contact

The following questions are designed to help recipients assess the frequency with which LEP individuals are contacted or encountered and their respective language groups The more frequent the contact with a particular language group, the more likely that enhanced language services in that language are needed. It is also advisable to consider the frequency of different types of language contacts. For example, frequent contacts with Spanish-speaking people who are LEP may require certain types of assistance in Spanish. Less frequent contact with different language groups may suggest a different and less intensified solution. If an LEP person accesses a program or service on a daily basis, a recipient has greater duties than if that same person had unpredictable or infrequent contact with a recipient's program or activity. Notwithstanding, recipients should consider whether appropriate outreach to LEP persons could increase the frequency of contact with LEP language groups.

1. Does your organization have a process for surveying, collecting and/or recording primary language data for individuals that participate in your programs and activities?

☐ YES   ☐ NO

If no, consider what process would be used for collecting such information, including: the method of collection and/or recording the data, the categories that would be used in collection, where the data would reside, and who could access the data.

2. To assist in determining the frequency of the contacts or encounters by respective language groups, you may wish to consider: the prevalent language group(s), the number of contacts or encounters with a language group in a week, month or other time period, the type of non-English assistance provided and by whom, and the person with access to such data.

3. Are the percentages of those LEP groups in the general population (Section I) fairly consistent with the frequency percentages encountered by your organization?

☐ YES   ☐ NO

Section III: Importance

Once the recipient has assessed, both through an analysis of the demographics and frequency of contact, the languages to consider with regard to access, the recipient can then look at the nature and importance of specific programs, activities, or services.

As a rule of thumb, the more important the activity, information, service, or program, or the greater the possible consequences of the contact to the LEP individuals, the more likely language services are needed. The recipient should determine whether denial or delay of access to services or infor-

Table 2. Ability to Speak English by Language Spoken at Home   **Example**

Universe: Population 18 years and over

Geography: New Mexico | New Mexico Eastern Area | 35040 | LWIA#

Language Spoken at Home	Speak English "very well"		Speak English "well"		Speak English "not well"		Speak English "not at all"		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total population 18 and over	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	239,155	100.0
Speak only English	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	166,720	69.7
Speak language other than English	46,150	63.7	13,845	19.1	8,525	11.8	3,915	5.4	72,435	30.3
African languages	15	50.0	15	50.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	30	0.0
Arabic	35	58.3	25	41.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	60	0.0
French (incl. Patois, Cajun)	385	79.4	60	12.4	40	8.3	0	0.0	485	0.2
German	1,190	55.4	645	30.0	300	14.0	15	0.7	2,150	0.9
Italian	90	90.0	10	10.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	100	0.0
Japanese	220	86.3	35	13.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	255	0.1
Other and unspecified languages	25	75.8	0	0.0	4	12.1	4	12.1	33	0.0
Other West Germanic languages	50	63.3	25	31.7	4	5.1	0	0.0	79	0.0
Spanish or Spanish Creole	42,095	63.7	12,170	18.4	7,935	12.0	3,845	5.8	66,045	27.6

mation could have serious implications for the LEP individual. The more important the activity, information, service, or program, or the greater the possible consequences of the contact to LEP individuals, the more likely language services are needed. For example, the requirements for eligibility for a workforce program, or filing a claim for unemployment insurance or Trade Adjustment Assistance programs must be effectively communicated. Recipients need to determine whether denial or delay of access to services or information could have serious or even life-threatening implications for an LEP individual. Decisions to make an activity compulsory, such as job training and/or job search certification in the Unemployment Insurance Program can also serve as strong evidence of the program's importance.

1. Do you conduct compulsory activities? For example, do you require applications, registrations, consent, interviews, or other activities prior to participation in any of your programs and/or activities, in order to obtain some benefit, service, or information, or in order to participate in a higher level program?

☐ YES   ☐ NO

2. In addition to the above, do you conduct programs or activities that have serious consequences, either positive or negative, for a person who participates? For example, some consequences of not having access to unemployment benefits may potentially include not being able to support one's self or family in terms of food, shelter, etc.

☐ YES   ☐ NO

3. Have you determined the impact on actual and potential beneficiaries of delays in the provision of services or participation in your programs and/or activities (economic, educational, health, safety, housing, ability to assert rights, transportation costs, etc.)?

☐ YES   ☐ NO

4. For those programs or activities with serious consequences, has your organization translated vital documents into various languages other than English for LEP customers or beneficiaries, for the purpose of reducing the negative impact of potential delays in the provision of services or participation in your programs and/or activities?

☐ YES   ☐ NO

Section IV: Resources

Once the recipient has reviewed the demographics, frequency of contact, and importance of programs, activities, or services, a good self-assessment will identify the resources (dollars and personnel) available to ensure the provision of language assistance to LEP persons participating in the recipient's program and/or activities. The level of resources and the costs may have an impact on the nature of the language assistance provided. Smaller recipients with more limited budgets are not expected to provide the same level of language services as larger recipients with large budgets. In addition, "reasonable costs" may become "unreasonable" where the costs substantially exceed the benefits.

Reduction of costs for language services can be accomplished by such options as the use of technology (such as through the internet, telephonic language lines, etc.); the sharing of language assistance materials, and services among and between recipients, advocacy groups, and Federal grant agencies; and through reasonable business practices. The recipient should carefully explore the most cost-effective means of delivering competent and accurate language services before limiting services due to resource concerns.

1. Have you identified the resources needed to provide meaningful access for LEP persons?

☐ YES   ☐ NO

If no, consider the following when identifying the resources needed: the type of assistance necessary and resources available, the possible sources of the assistance, the associated costs, and the language groups assisted.

2. Is there a staff member in your organization assigned to coordinate language access activities?

☐ YES   ☐ NO

3. Have you identified the points of contact where LEP persons interact with your organization?

☐ YES   ☐ NO

If no, consider the various points where an LEP person may come into contact with your organization. In such cases, who will assist the person? How often does it occur and how long might the visit last? How will the visit be recorded?

4. Given all of the possible points of contact, is language assistance available at each of those points?

☐ YES   ☐ NO

5. By language spoken, how many employees in your organization fluently speak a language other than English?

6. What percent of the total employees in your organization are bilingual and able to competently assist LEP persons in the LEP person's language?

7. Do you utilize employees in your organization as interpreters? (Interpreting is a different skill than being bilingual and able to communicate monolingually in more than one language. Interpretation requires particular skills. For more information, see http://www.dol.gov/oasam/regs/fedreg/notices/2003013125.pdf)

☐ YES   ☐   NO

8. Employees within our organization provide interpreter services (check one):

☐   Some of the time

☐   Most of the time

☐   Always

☐   Never

9. What outside sources for interpreter services do you use?

☐   Contract Interpreters

☐   Telephone Services

☐   Community-Based Organizations

☐   Language Banks

☐   Other (please specify)

10. For what languages (other than English) are outside sources of language interpreters most commonly used?

11. Although you should not plan to rely on a LEP person's friends, family members, or other informal interpreters in order to provide meaningful access, are there times when you appropriately allow use of such informal interpreters? (See http://www.dol.gov/oasam/regs/fedreg/notices/2003013125.pdf)

☐ YES   ☐   NO

 If yes, under what circumstances?

12. Are minors used as interpreters? If so, under what circumstances and how are issues such as competency, appropriateness, confidentiality, and volunteerism assessed?

☐ YES   ☐   NO

13. If additional resources are needed to ensure meaningful access, have you identified the cost of those resources?

☐ YES   ☐   NO

14. Are there currently any limitations in resources (dollars and/or personnel) that could impact the provision of language assistance services?

☐ YES   ☐   NO

15. If there are currently limitations, have you explored all options available to you in order to ensure the provision of language assistance services?

☐ YES   ☐   NO

For example, if there is a significant LEP population that speaks one language, you may wish to look at the option of hiring staff who are bilingual, bi-cultural, and knowledgeable in the particular area for which you provide a service, i.e., health care, education, science, etc. If there is a very small language population, you would not necessarily need to hire staff to meet that need; instead, you may wish to contract for that assistance. (See http://www.dol.gov/oasam/programs/crc for more specific help)

16. What is the total annual funding spent on provision of services in languages other than English? Consider categorizing the expenses as those related to: publications, website development and maintenance, outreach activities, translation activities, language line contractors, etc.

17. Does your organization have a written LEP Plan?

☐ YES   ☐   NO

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Notes