



**Adult Education
A Lifelong Journey**

Preparation booklet
for participants
November 2002



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The Direction de la formation générale des adultes would like to thank everyone who helped produce this brochure.

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ENGLISH VERSION

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RESOURCE PEOPLE AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT

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INTRODUCTION

The objectives of the conference on “**Adult Education: A Lifelong Journey**”, which is intended as a forum for reflection and learning in a continuing education perspective, are the following:

- to explain the impact of the *Government Policy on Adult Education and Continuing Education and Training* and the action plan on adult education services
- to situate the competency-based approach with respect to the new general basic education curriculum for adults
- to recognize our prior knowledge about adult education practices geared to the development of competencies

This **preparation booklet is designed to allow** participants:

- to take stock of the competencies they have already acquired with respect to the topics that will be addressed during the conference
- to define training needs with respect to these competencies
- to actively engage in the training that will be offered during the conference and in subsequent activities

Participants may choose to use this booklet individually, or participants from the same school board may prefer to meet and prepare together. It should be noted that meeting as a group is one of the most effective ways of stimulating reflective learning.

Participants may also prepare for the conference by consulting the *Government Policy on Adult Education and Continuing Education and Training* and the *Action Plan for Adult Education and Continuing Education and Training*.

www.meq.gouv.qc.ca/REFORME/formation_con/index.htm

JUST FOR FUN: WHAT DO I KNOW?

- | | True | False |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. The action plan that accompanies the <i>Government Policy on Adult Education and Continuing Education and Training</i> contains 19 measures that fall under 3 objectives. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 2. The competency-based approach focuses on the objectives of programs rather than on the needs of adult learners. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 3. <i>The Government Policy on Adult Education and Continuing Education and Training</i> is a collaborative effort of the Ministère de l'Éducation and the Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 4. A competency cannot be dissociated from its context. It is the context that guides intervention and stimulates learning. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 5. Learning is designed in such a manner as to take into account the context in which the adult lives. It is thus based on practical situations in either a work context or a personal and social development context. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 6. In the competency-based approach, the concept of academic success extends beyond demonstration by the adult learner of his or her mastery of a sum of knowledge. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 7. <i>The Government Policy on Adult Education and Continuing Education and Training</i> is geared toward lifelong learning. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 8. In 1998, more than one quarter of workers aged 45 to 64 had not finished secondary school. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

CONT.

	True	False
9. The recognition of prior learning and competencies concerns adults in vocational education only.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. Basic education consists of nine years of schooling.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11. Competency and know-how are synonyms.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12. Presently, more than seven out of ten income security recipients under the age of 30 do not have a high school or vocational diploma.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13. Appropriate performance criteria are defined for each competency.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14. Teaching by competencies or by objectives is the same thing.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15. There is no difference between organizing learning according to the logic of a subject and organizing it according to the logic of a competency.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

*The answers to this quiz are available at
www.meq.gouv.qc.ca/DFGA/english/index.html*

PLACING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN CONTEXT

While we may speak, without error, of the method of thought, the important thing is that thinking is the method of an educative experience.

John Dewey, *Democracy and Education*, 1916.

“The globalization of markets, the speed and ease of communications, the rapid pace of change in knowledge and technology, the accelerated rate of social change, the need for job market retention or reentry, and the increasing complexity of social life”¹ are all factors that require us to adopt continuing education practices.

The Government Policy on Adult Education and Continuing Education and Training strongly encourages those who teach adults to participate in the establishment of a true culture of lifelong learning in Québec. Learning throughout life has revealed itself to be an essential condition for adapting to the changes that define today’s society. Teachers are therefore called upon to renew their practices and continue their professional development throughout their careers.

Professional development allows teachers to acquire new knowledge about pedagogical interventions. It can also transform current practices and increase their effectiveness. Due to the ongoing reflection that it stimulates, professional development enables educators to adapt to situations they may encounter in their practices.

Continuing education is based on the assumption that adults who do not have the competencies to satisfactorily perform their occupational duties, participate in learning activities according to their needs and the requirements of their choices. Once they have acquired the knowledge, developed the skills, adopted the necessary attitudes, and can apply this new knowledge when performing their duties or participating in an activity, then it can be said that they have acquired a competency. The new basic education curriculum for adults is based on this approach. Professional development offered to teachers using this curriculum model should be based on the same approach.

¹ QUÉBEC, MINISTÈRE DE L’ÉDUCATION, *Government Policy on Adult Education and Continuing Education and Training* (Québec: Ministère de l’Éducation, 2002), 1.

The proposed professional development is therefore based on the following key points:

- analysis and description, based on teachers' perceptions of the situation to be changed or improved
- formulation of the training needs identified in the analysis of the situation, with a view to closing the gap observed between expected competencies and teachers' acquired competencies
- rigorous monitoring of the desired changes and of the acquisition of knowledge directly linked to practice. Teachers' professional practice reflects knowledge that emerges from systematic reflection in and on action. Such reflection enriches their knowledge of intervention and gives teachers additional power and satisfaction with respect to their interventions.
- transfer of learning during the professional development activity related to the situation to be changed or improved

THE POLICY, THE REFORM, THE COMPETENCY-BASED APPROACH AND ME

Learning is an active experience. People who learn have, within themselves, the main resources they need to grow, develop, find their own direction, and express their own choices. They are able to show initiative and autonomy, make personal decisions and actively commit to their training. In all adult education approaches, the focus is on developing, enriching, and improving a person's pre-existing knowledge base.

Learners need content and strategies that have an explicit connection to the situations they experience. The key element or the "trigger" of the learning process is everyday life rather than abstract knowledge. That is why learners need activities that are based on an understanding of the reality they experience.

Learners develop competencies in relation to their reality and occupational experiences. The development of a competency must therefore be based on:

- the main elements of the particular situation that generated the training needs
- the participation of all educators in the main decisions about intervention and the transfer of learning in relation to the given situation

The training strategies must therefore reflect the characteristics of the continuing education plan, which is based first and foremost on an analysis of the situation.

Below are a few questions that may help you draw a portrait of the situation that generated your training needs.

What do I understand about the *Government Policy on Adult Education and Continuing Education and Training*, the reform and the competency-based approach?

What bothers me the most?

What pleases me the most?

What do I already know about the policy, the reform and the competency-based approach?

What are my main training needs with respect to the policy, the reform and the competency-based approach?

MY PRIOR LEARNING WITH RESPECT TO THE COMPETENCY TO BE DEVELOPED

The table below will help you identify what you have already mastered with respect to the competency to be developed and will, at the same time, help you clarify your training needs. This is an essential condition for effective participation in the learning process.

Competency to be developed:

Teachers are competent if they are able to teach the upcoming basic general education curriculum in the spirit of the reform and using the competency-based approach.

Keep in mind that you will develop this competency GRADUALLY by reading in the field, participating in professional development activities, talking with colleagues, and studying and applying the new curriculum once it is available. To develop this competency, you must learn or be able to:

Element of the Competency	Mastery (1 to 10)	Desired (1 to 10)	Difference	Training Needs
1. Explain the competency-based approach in the context of adult education				
2. Analyze the key features of a competency				
3. Analyze the components of the curriculum				
4. Engage in critical reflection individually and as part of a team within my region				
5. Consider adult learning and teaching from a competency-based perspective when planning learning activities				

ADDITIONAL READING MATERIAL

The following selection of books represents a range of views about education and about the larger context of education in western societies.

Bateson, Mary Catherine. (1994). *Peripheral Visions: Learning Along the Way*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers.

Beane, James A. (1995). *Toward a Coherent Curriculum*. Alexandria, Virginia: ASCD.

Berlin, Isaiah. (1996) *The Sense of Reality: Studies in Ideas and their History*. London: Pimlico.

Bohm, David. (1990) *On Dialogue*. Ojai, California: David Bohm Seminars.

Caine, Renate Nummela and Caine, Geoffrey. (1997). *Education on the Edge of Possibility*. Alexandria, Virginia: ASCD.

Cayley, David. (1998). *The Education Debates*. Toronto: CBC IDEAS.

Dewey, John. (1916). *Democracy and Education: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education*. New York: The Macmillan Company.

Evans, Robert. (1996) *The Human Side of School Change: Reform, Resistance, and the Real-life Problems of Innovation*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Fullan, Michael. (1993). *Change Forces: Probing the Depths of Educational Reform*. London: The Falmer Press.

Gardner, Howard. (1993). *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences*. Toronto: HarperCollins Canada.

Giroux, Henry A. (1988). *Schooling and the Struggle for Public Life: Critical Pedagogy in the Modern Age*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Grant, Gerald and associates. (1979). *On Competence: A Critical Analysis of Competence-Based Reforms in Higher Education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Series in Higher Education.

Greene, Maxine. (1988) *The Dialectic of Freedom*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Greene, Maxine. (1995). *Releasing the Imagination: Essays on Education, the Arts, and Social Change*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Harvard Educational Review. (1996). *Working Together Toward Reform*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.

Hurst, David K. (2000). *Crisis and Renewal: Meeting the Challenge of Organizational Change*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.

Ignatieff, Michael. (2000). *The Rights Revolution*. Toronto: CBC IDEAS.

Kingwell, Mark. (2000). *The World We Want: Virtue, Vice, and the Good Citizen*. Toronto: Viking Press.

Kohn, Alfie. (1996). *Beyond Discipline: From Compliance to Community*. Alexandria, Virginia: ASCD.

Ministère de l'Éducation. (1997). *Reaffirming the Mission of Our Schools: A New Direction for Success*. Québec: Gouvernement du Québec.

Noddings, Nel. (1984). *Caring, a feminine approach to ethics and moral education*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Nussbaum, Martha. (1997). *Cultivating Humanity: A Classical Defence of Reform in Liberal Education*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.

Popkewitz, Thomas. (2000). *Educational Knowledge: Changing Relationships Between the State, Civil Society, and the Educational Community*. Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press.

Postman, Neil. (1995) *The End of Education: Redefining the Value of School*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

Scheffler, Israel. (1965). *Conditions of Knowledge: An Introduction to Epistemology and Education*. Glenview, Illinois: Scott, Foresman & Company.

Scheffler, Israel. (1991). *In Praise of the Cognitive Emotions and Other Essays in the Philosophy of Education*. New York: Routledge.

Schlechty, Phillip. (1990). *Schools for the Twenty-first Century: Imperatives for Educational Reform*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Schön, Donald A. (1987). *Educating the Reflective Practitioner: Towards a New Design for Teaching and Learning in the Professions*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Senge, Peter. (1999). *The Dance of Change*. New York: Doubleday.

Senge, Peter. (2000). *Schools That Learn*. New York: Doubleday.

Simon, Roger I. (1992) *Teaching Against the Grain: Texts for a Pedagogy of Possibility*. Toronto: OISE Press.

Swift, J. (2001) *Civil Society*. Toronto: CBC IDEAS.

Sylwester, R. (1995). *A Celebration of Neurons: An Educator's Guide to the Human Brain*. Alexandria, Virginia: ASCD.

Wells, Gordon. (1999). *Dialogic Inquiry: Toward a Sociocultural Practice and Theory of Education*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Whitehead, Alfred North. (1929). *The Aims of Education and Other Essays*. New York: The Free Press.

Willinsky, John. (1998). *Learning to Divide the World: Education at Empire's End*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Enter the following words on your SEARCH engine for additional information and links to sites about education and educational reform. Use this page to collect other sites.

- The Challenges of School Reform
- CER'S Education Reform Page for Teachers
- Catalog of School Reform Models
- Think Tanks: Catalysts for Reform
- Brainconnection.com
- ERIC sites
- New Horizons for Learning
- An Educator's Guide to School-wide Reform
- School Improvement Research Series
- In-sites for Brain-Compatible Learning
- In-sites for Developing Habits of Mind
- In-sites for Inclusion Success

FRENCH LANGUAGE READING MATERIAL

A Closer look

Some authors approach professional development from a reflective-practice or action research perspective. Others look at the competency-based approach as applied to professional development. Below is a list of French language resource material.

Bezsonoff, Catherine. *Pratique de la formation: du discours à la réalité.* Paris: Éditions d'Organisation, 2000.

This book addresses two themes: (1) the principles underlying effective needs analysis and the selection of training responses adapted to a given situation and (2) the implementation of these responses. Catherine Bezsonoff discusses combined knowledge, which is an essential characteristic of a competency. "Competency is more than just the sum total of one's knowledge and skills because it relates to an intelligent activity during which the person gives meaning to what he or she perceives and directs his or her action accordingly." Combined knowledge is therefore related to the intelligence of action.

Bourassa, Bruno, and Fernand Serre. *"Rien ne va plus! Comment rétablir l'efficacité de l'action professionnelle."* Cahiers de la recherche en éducation 1, no. 2 (1994): 287-307.

According to Serre and Bourassa, two models are apparent in professional action: one that is applied but difficult to explain, and one that is learned but not applied. The criterion for determining whether an action is valid or not is its effectiveness, which is demonstrated in its outcome. Our models of action emerge from the way we interact with our environment, while trying to meet our personal goals and taking into account the expectations of those around us.

Québec. Conseil supérieur de l'éducation. *Le renouvellement du curriculum: expériences américaine, suisse et québécoise.* Études et Recherches. Québec: Conseil supérieur de l'éducation, 1999.

Faculté d'éducation. Université de Sherbrooke. *Le modèle de réflexion dans l'action d'Argyris et Schön.* Collection of articles, Diplôme de formation en éducation des adultes (DFEA), 1995.

Argyris and Schön examine action as it pertains to the study and development of knowledge for the purpose of taking effective action from a perspective of reflection in action and on action. In action science, the starting point is the situation to be changed and the desired outcome is the change itself. By scientifically controlling the change during intervention, scientific knowledge is acquired.

According to Argyris and Schön, practitioners reach a plateau after a number of years of experience. Reflection in action should be taught as an enquiry model that the practitioner uses in practice.

Faculté d'éducation. Université de Sherbrooke. *La science-action selon St-Arnaud. Collection of articles*, Diplôme de formation en éducation des adultes (DFEA), 1995.

Gilet, Pierre, ed. *Construire la formation: [outil pour les enseignants et les formateurs]*. CEPEC, Collection Pédagogies. Paris: ESF, 1994.

The editor describes this book as “an invitation to work together to develop true educational citizenship that goes beyond evaluation methods, frameworks and checklists.” Teachers and those who train them can use this book to develop their competency to prepare a training plan. It discusses certain key terms such as competency, capacity, indicator and criterion. It also proposes a work method.

Le Boterf, Guy. *L'ingénierie des compétences*. Revised edition, Paris: Éditions d'Organisation, 2000. <www.editions-organisation.com>

In this book, the author explains how he went from the concept of designing education to the concept of designing competencies. He then presents some 200 worksheets that propose approaches, tools, guiding principles and methods. According to Guy Le Boterf, the concept of “competency” as applied in many companies and organizations dates back to the late 1960s—a total sum of one’s knowledge, know-how and skills. The risk of such an approach lies in “building an array of competencies that are unreliable.” The reality of competencies is much more complex and therefore it is necessary to examine the concept more closely.

Meirieu, Philippe. “Stratégies d'apprentissage – Les chemins de l'apprendre.” *Cahiers pédagogiques*, no. 246, September 1986.

Morin, Bernard. “Programme d'études et compétences des étudiants.” *Pédagogie collégiale* 2, no. 4 (May 1989).

“Competencies are essential to one’s personal and professional esteem, motivation and pursuit of excellence.” The author insists that analyzing education from the angle of competencies is not reductionist. He proposes a framework for curriculum materials. He discusses the impact of the competency-based approach on pedagogical practices and the conditions required for the competency-based approach to serve the quality objectives set for college-level education. He examines a program approach that integrates the concept of competencies.

Patry, Jean. *La science-action en bref*. October 1995.

Action science is a true form of continuing education that allows practices to be converted into practical courses. Action science is an approach that makes it possible to exercise rigorous control over the change that an intervention is meant to produce and to frame practical theories in the process. Action science does not destroy, in the name of methodological requirements, the situation being studied. Action science is more a matter of attitude. The person carrying out the intervention is constantly (and sometimes systematically) concerned with reflecting in action and on action.

Perrenoud, Philippe. *“Du curriculum aux pratiques : question d’adhésion, d’énergie ou de compétence?”* Paper presented in Québec City, October 10, 2000.

This paper discusses new or more specific professional competencies that teachers need to develop in order to implement the Québec Education Program (June 2000 version). The author looks at questions that were put to him and attempts to answer them. Is this the beginning of an extensive redefinition of the teacher’s role? If so, what are the consequences that we will have to face?

Pôle de l’Est. *Processus de planification d’un cours centré sur le développement d’une compétence.* December 1996.

St-Arnaud, Yves. *S’actualiser par des choix éclairés et une action efficace.* Boucherville: Gaëtan Morin éditeur, 1996.

St-Arnaud, Yves. *L’interaction professionnelle: efficacité et coopération.* Collection Intervenir. Montréal: PUM, 1995.

St-Arnaud, Yves. *Connaître par l’action.* Collection Intervenir. Montréal: PUM, 1992.

St-Arnaud’s work, like that of Serre and Bourassa, is based on Argyris and Schön. The author describes praxeology, namely a method for analyzing the actions of a practitioner and identifying errors he or she may have made in light of his or her intentions. St-Arnaud attempts to answer certain questions raised by the adult education practices linked to the principle of “learning to learn.” According to him, the most difficult problem practitioners face is that each situation is unique (the idiosyncrasy of their interventions).

Tremblay, Denyse. *“Aborder l’enseignement et l’apprentissage par le biais des compétences: les effets dans la pratique des enseignants et des enseignantes.”* Pédagogie collégiale 13, no. 2 (December 1999): 24-30.

This article is based on the author’s experience in training and helping teams of vocational education, technical education and social studies teachers to implement competency-based programs. The author presents observed effects on educational planning (programs and courses), teaching style and evaluation approaches. She links observed effects on evaluation approaches with five specific points: academic success, the minimum performance standard, the characteristics of evaluation, the interpretation of results and the new mindset.

Tremblay, Gilles. *“À propos des compétences comme principe d’organisation d’une formation.”* Bulletin d’information du Fonds pour la reconnaissance des acquis 6, no. 9 (April 1990).

After providing a brief history of the competency-based approach and discussing the pedagogical implications of this approach, the author offers a few definitions of “competency.” He also attempts to answer two questions, the first of which relates to the history of the movement in favour of competency-based education, and the second, to the meaning or implications of this concept.

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throughout life