

**Tips for Employers** – Using the OSP with learners in co-operative education placements, internships and mentorships gives you a head start in finding and training the right talent! The OSP offers you tools and resources that can save you time, energy and money!

The Ontario Skills Passport (OSP) is a bilingual web-based resource that provides easy-to-understand descriptions of Essential Skills and work habits important for success in work, learning and life. Employers can use the OSP tools and resources to:

- Prepare job ads and job descriptions that focus on the Essential Skills and work habits that are most important for their workplace;
- Record the demonstrations of Essential Skills and work habits in the workplace;
- Provide constructive feedback on job performance; and,
- Plan for workplace skills development.

Essential Skills are:

- Used in nearly all occupations and in everyday life.
- The foundation for learning other skills, such as technical skills.
- Transferable from school to work, further education or training, and from job to job and sector to sector.
- The skills that help people adapt to change and challenging situations.

Work habits are also included in the OSP since it is important for everyone in the workforce to have good work habits as well as Essential Skills.

*“Recent employer surveys identify a set of skills considered critical for the modern workplace. Of greatest interest to employers are general skills and competencies – such as **literacy, numeracy, communication, critical thinking, problem solving** and various personal attributes such as **resilience, creativity** and being effective in **teamwork** ...General competencies provide the fundamental and **foundational skills that are transferable across jobs.**”*

Don Drummond, Ross Finnie and Harvey Weingarten, The Globe & Mail, October 20, 2015

*“What you really want are employees that are very skilled and as skilled as they can be...All the stuff that could be off-shored has been off-shored and basically what we're left with in the 21st century and 21st century economies are relatively complex jobs that are constantly changing. Because of that **you need resilient, adaptable employees that have these foundational skills so that when the demand is there for something new and different, you have the employees who can rise to it.**”*

Gillian Mason, President, ABC Life Literacy Canada

OSP	Description
OSP News	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check out the <a href="#">OSP News</a> on a regular basis to see what tools and resources have been added to the OSP and/or SkillsZone websites. Subscribe to the OSP News to have it sent directly to your inbox.</li> <li>• Check out the <a href="#">Articles on Skills</a> section which is featured in the OSP News. A “new” flag is shown beside each new article posted since the previous OSP News.</li> </ul>

### Create Job Descriptions, Job Ads and Interview Checklists

OSP	Description
Employer Tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• View the <a href="#">Find the Skills You Need</a> video on SkillsZone to see how other employers are using the OSP to find employees with the skills you need.</li> <li>• Use the OSP Employer Tools to create job descriptions, job ads and interview checklists based on Essential Skills and work habits appropriate to your workplace, such as Document Use, Decision Making, Teamwork and Initiative.</li> <li>• Focusing on Essential Skills and work habits in job ads and interviews can help identify how a worker’s transferable skills would benefit your workplace.</li> </ul> <p><i>“Our criteria for selection includes a positive attitude, individuals that love working with customers and have a desire to improve their skill set through continuous learning. The Ontario Skills Passport subscribes to the same philosophy as Home Depot – an environment to develop your skills and be successful in today’s workplace.”</i></p> <p>Kim Forgues, Home Depot Canada</p>

### Track and Plan Skills Development

OSP	Description
Create an OSP Work Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create an OSP Work Plan with students in work experience placements, such as co-operative education placements.</li> <li>• The easy-to-understand descriptions of job tasks will help students understand the expectations of your workplace.</li> <li>• Use the OSP Work Plan to assess and record demonstrations of Essential Skills and work habits and provide constructive feedback on job performance.</li> <li>• The employer signs the work plan authenticating it as a workplace reference.</li> <li>• See the “Tips for using the OSP Work Plan” on page 4.</li> </ul>

OSP	Description
Create an OSP Training Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create an OSP Training Plan that focuses on Essential Skills, job tasks and work habits related to learning activities.</li> <li>• Employers document learners' skill demonstrations in the training plan.</li> <li>• Refer to the "Tips for Creating a Training Plan" on page 5.</li> </ul>

*"We've proven there's a 1.49 dollar r.o. — return on training investment with skilled trades apprentices ...So you need to come into the workforce with the expectation that you will be continually learning, learning new things, employers need to bring in the new technologies, or we won't advance and we won't be producing in this country."*

David Suess, Director of the Manufacturing Skills Centre with Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters

*Globally, Huawei is one of the world's largest manufacturers of telecommunications equipment. We have shipped over 100 million smartphones around the world in 2015, having the 3rd largest market share after Apple and Samsung. Huawei offers a Language in the Workplace Training Program for newcomer employees, specifically tailored to meet the needs of the employer, the learner and the workplace. Participants have provided very positive feedback coming out of the program, they have all improved and developed more confidence in their business communication skills, and said this is also a great opportunity to network with cross functional departments.*

Grace Su, Manager, Human Resources, Huawei Canada

The Conference Board of Canada\* interviewed employers who were providing Essential Skills training to their employees. Benefits that employers reported included:

- safer workplace – fewer accidents
- higher productivity and more efficiency
- greater retention rates
- lower absenteeism
- greater employee initiative
- better problem solving

\*["Building Essential Skills in the Workplace"](#), (Human Resources and Skills Development Canada publication HIP-028-03-05E)

## Tips for Using the OSP Work Plan in Work Experience Placements

### **Before the work experience placement:**

- Review the work plan with the student. Focus on a few skills to demonstrate during the placement.
- Confirm with the student and the teacher that the work plan is realistic in its expectations.

### **During the work experience placement:**

- Use the quick and easy checklist format of the work plan to help you and the student have focused discussions about the skills and work habits demonstrated as well as your expectations.
- Help create a situation in which students feel comfortable receiving regular feedback. Here are some ways you can start a conversation with students about their performance:

*I know you want to do a good job here so let's talk about your skills development.*

*So far, I think you are really doing well with the following skills and work habits:*

\_\_\_\_\_.

*Today, I'd like you to focus on \_\_\_\_\_ (fill in skills/tasks).*

*I think you would really benefit from improving your \_\_\_\_\_ (fill in appropriate work habits).*

*I'd like to have regular discussions with you about your performance. We can meet again on \_\_\_\_\_.*

- You may even suggest including different skills and tasks in the OSP Work Plan. The student can work with the teacher to generate another page to add to the work plan.

### **At the end of the work experience placement:**

- Encourage students to continue to develop their Essential Skills and work habits by creating new work plans which focus on different skills and tasks, perhaps at higher levels of complexity.
- Keep a copy of completed OSP Work Plans so you have a record of skill development.

Only employers can complete the entries and sign the OSP Work Plan.

## Tips for Creating an OSP Training Plan

### Employers can use the OSP Training Plan to:

- Familiarize new employees and/or student interns, apprentices and work experience students with the kinds of tasks experienced workers perform on-the-job.
- Design opportunities for your employees and student trainees to practice and build their Essential Skills using real workplace tasks.

Encourage your employees and student trainees to continue working towards the skill level demands of an occupation(s) with the understanding that while they may not be required to satisfactorily demonstrate the most complex tasks when first entering a job, they need to continually develop their Essential Skills and work habits to keep a job and progress in the workplace.

1. Start by reviewing the OSP Training Plan with your employee or student trainee. Check off Essential Skills tasks and work habits to focus on during training. You may want to begin with a few skills and work habits at first, allowing trainees to experience success and then check off more tasks at higher levels as the training progresses.
2. Employers record the trainees' demonstration of Essential Skills and tasks in the right column of the OSP Training Plan and can write in the date demonstrated if appropriate.
3. Trainees are encouraged to keep a copy of their OSP Training Plan(s) in their portfolio. They can use their OSP Training Plans to help prepare for job interviews and to show their supervisors what they can do. Trainees can also use the OSP Tracker to track and plan their skills development over time.

### TO LEARN MORE:



[ontario.ca/skillspassport](http://ontario.ca/skillspassport)



[skillszone.ca](http://skillszone.ca)