



Facts about literacy

Labour force

A strong economy needs a highly skilled work force.

Literacy skills

We need high literacy skills to get good jobs.

Keeping jobs

Employees must adapt to change and learn new skills to keep jobs and advance in today's workforce.

Nova Scotia has moved from a resource-based economy to a knowledge-based economy. This means many people must be trained to function in the new economy. There is an aging workforce in Nova Scotia. Employers need to provide upgrading and retraining for employees who will be with them for a long time.

Literacy and employment

As the skills required for jobs increase and change, literacy becomes more important to getting and keeping a job. We need a way for people to take advantage of life long learning and training. This will help meet the demands of constant change in the workplace driven by technology.

Fact

The unemployment rate for people with low levels of literacy is about 26%. It is 4% for people with high levels of literacy.

Literacy and the workforce

- ◆ Literacy skills are essential for getting into the workforce.
- ◆ A highly skilled work force is essential for a strong and competitive economy. We must have literacy skills to get into the high-tech workforce.
- ◆ Making sure that people have the skills to get and keep decent, quality jobs benefits all of us.
- ◆ Globalization and technology drive the work environment, demanding high literacy skills from workers.
- ◆ Low-level jobs are being automated or need higher levels of literacy than ever before due to technology.

Workplace literacy

- ◆ The work environment demands that employees learn new skills often and quickly.
- ◆ People who don't get to learn new job skills will not advance as quickly and may not be paid as well.

Fact

70% of Canadian jobs require college-level reading skills. Less than 48% of the Nova Scotia workforce has college-level reading skills.

Literacy is for life.



What is literacy?

Literacy is **the** essential skill. It is the ability to use printed information to function in society, at work and in the family. It is the combination of thinking and social skills we need to analyze and use information to control our own lives, achieve our goals and develop our knowledge and potential.

Literacy Nova Scotia (LNS) supports the literacy community in Nova Scotia. Our mission is to make sure every Nova Scotian has access to quality literacy education.

How to reach us...



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Resources

ABC Canada, 1.800.303.1004 or www.abc-canada.org

Movement for Canadian Literacy
www.literacy.ca or call 613.563.2464

The Canadian Association of Municipal Administrators (CAMA) – Literate Cities Project
www.camacam.ca

Unemployment

- ◆ There is a strong link between a person's literacy level and his or her ability to get a job.

Fact

Education is only one factor. Not using our skills can lead to lower literacy. It's the "use it or lose it" principle.

- ◆ Unemployment leads to poverty and financial strain. This can make it harder for people to learn or get into learning programs.
- ◆ Poverty can lead to health problems. Health problems affect our ability to get and keep stable jobs.

Challenges

- ◆ We need programs that will increase literacy and prepare people for learning new skills so they can get and keep jobs.
- ◆ We must lobby the business community to create stable jobs with opportunities for lifelong learning at all literacy levels. This will create a highly skilled work force.
- ◆ Continuing to learn long after leaving school should become part of Canadian culture.
- ◆ All learning must be respected.

Fact

People with higher levels of literacy participate more in the community and society. This benefits others.

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