

# What are Essential Skills?

Essential Skills are the skills people need for work, learning and life. They provide the foundation for learning all other skills and are the cornerstone of lifelong learning.

Through extensive research, the Government of Canada and other national and international agencies have identified and validated nine Essential Skills. These skills are used in virtually all occupations and throughout daily life in different forms and at different levels of complexity.

For example, writing skills are required in a broad range of occupations. Some workers write simple forms while others write complex monthly reports. Although the specific form and complexity level may vary for the workers, the Essential Skill "writing" is necessary to succeed in their occupations.

## Essential Skills and Workplace Literacy Initiative

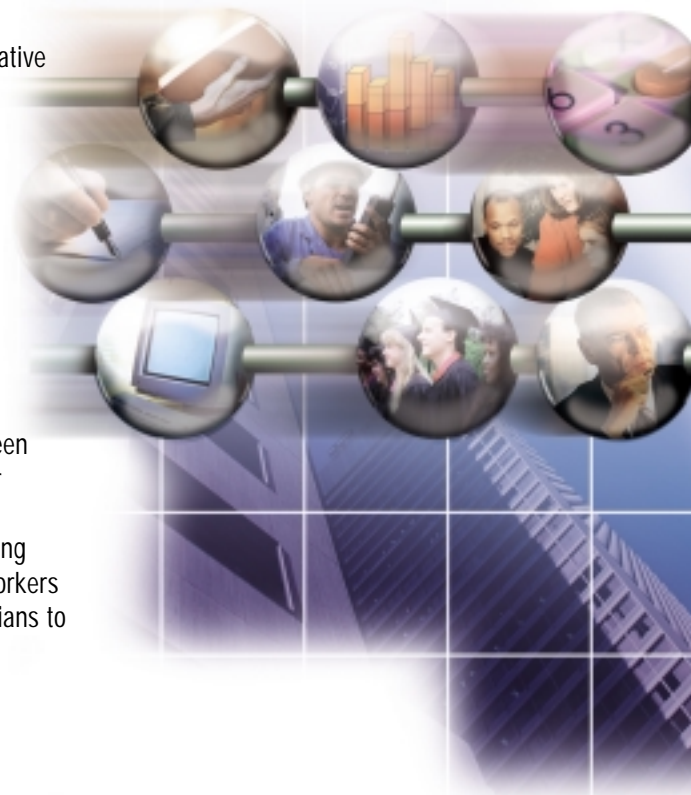
Launched on April 1, 2003, the Essential Skills and Workplace Literacy Initiative helps to ensure Canadians have the right skills for changing work and life demands. Its goal is to enhance the skill levels of Canadians who are entering - or are already in - the workforce. The Initiative does this by increasing awareness and understanding of Essential Skills, supporting the development of tools and applications, building on existing research, and working with other Government of Canada programs.

## Essential Skills Tools

An increasing number of Canadians are recognizing the importance of lifelong learning and workplace skills training as they are closely linked to productivity, adaptability and innovation. The Government of Canada has been working with businesses, labour groups, governments, educators and other stakeholders from across the country to develop a wide range of tools and applications that promote innovative approaches to assessing and developing skills. The ongoing development of these tools is helping employers and workers understand training requirements as well as improving the ability of Canadians to acquire and upgrade the skills they need to succeed in the workplace.

### Nine Essential Skills

- Reading Text
- Document Use
- Numeracy
- Writing
- Oral Communication
- Working with Others
- Thinking Skills
- Computer Use
- Continuous Learning



Visit [www.hrsdc-rhdcc.gc.ca/essentialskills](http://www.hrsdc-rhdcc.gc.ca/essentialskills) to learn more about Essential Skills.

