



Designing and Implementing Workplace Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition

WPLAR is a business, labour and government partnering to oversee workplace PLAR activities in Manitoba. WPLAR is responsible for implementing and marketing Manitoba's approach to industry-based PLAR. This includes researching best practice, guiding the development of PLAR workplace practitioners and supporting industry-based projects.

WPLAR promotes the potential for PLAR to save employees and employers time and money by recognizing existing skills and shortening training time.

PLAR can assist employees to:

- demonstrate what they know and are able to do
- clarify employment goals
- gain academic credits, occupational certification or promotion within the workplace

PLAR can assist employers to:

- understand employees' skills, knowledge and training needs
- recruit, develop and retain a workforce
- clarify learning goals and outcomes
- define, document and verify processes

The recognition of prior learning for industry purposes stems back to WWII. It was recognized that Veterans had undergone considerable learning while with the military, and there was a desire by governments to identify this learning so as to better position Veterans for employment. While industry-related interest is considered to be fairly new in the field of PLAR today, the need is remarkably similar – better understanding the knowledge and skills of individuals and finding ways to fully use their potential.

Since 2001, WPLAR has developed a number of PLAR models which directly reflect organizational need. In 2006, WPLAR has decided to develop a training session specific to business, with the following objectives:

- To help participants understand PLAR and how it applies to business
- To facilitate a networking opportunity for participants
- To provide onsite mentorship to participants in determining the feasibility and sustainability of PLAR processes and tools for their organizations
- To assist companies in outlining a project plan for developing and implementing PLAR processes and tools suitable to high-priority business needs

This course is aimed at individuals who need to understand the fundamentals of creating and implementing the recognition of prior learning for business-related usage. This can include organizational needs like recruitment, internal progression, occupational profiling for regulation and certification, and training and development. Participants will examine many facets of business which need to be considered when designing a plan and will come away with tools and strategies for creating effective solutions.

The course will cover the scope of:

- *Understanding PLAR philosophy and practice.*

- *Responding to the workplace context.* ISO requirements, unionized environments and concerns, performance management systems, competency-based training, and stakeholder needs.
- *Creating Effective Solutions.* Feasibility studies, information gathering techniques, developing skill competency frameworks – amount of detail, assessing and assessor training, recording and logging results, and communicating the concepts to get buy-in.
- *Creating Effective Implementation Strategies.* Pilots and prototypes, validation strategies – measuring effectiveness, and organizational capacity.

The training methods used to achieve this will include:

- Selection of six participants from business with complementary needs
- Needs assessment of six participants to customize training
- Presentation of WPLAR projects by company representatives and the consultants involved in development with lessons learned. Potential projects include:
 - New Flyer – Skills Passport
 - Manitoba Hydro – Human Resource Advisors
 - Boeing Canada Technology – Job Descriptions
 - Bristol Aerospace – PLAR for Process
 - Kraus Global – Performance and Recognition for Education Credit
 - Occupation Specific PLAR: regulation, certification – Millwrights, Ironworkers, Security Guards, Midwives
- Presentation across five Fridays over a number of months with onsite mentorship in between

The first scheduled date is Friday 29 September 2006, location to be determined. Other dates include 27 Oct., 17 Nov., 15 Dec and 19 Jan. For questions or to apply, please contact Sandi Howell, Coordinator, WPLAR at 945-1682 or showell@gov.mb.ca no later than 6 September 2005.