



Using Vocationally-Focused ESL to Fast Track Workforce Development Skills for Refugees

*Office of Refugee Resettlement
Webinar*

May 30, 2013

Overview of Webinar



Kenneth Tota, Deputy Director, Office of Refugee Resettlement

**Lynn Levey, VESL Immersion Program (VIP)
Founding Coordinator, San Francisco Human
Services**

SUCCESSFUL WORK PARTICIPATION OUTCOMES FOR LIMITED ENGLISH SPEAKERS

- History / Student Profiles
- Collaboration
- DVD
- Program Design
- Instructional Component
- Work Participation
- Outcomes
- Contact Information
- Questions & Answers

HISTORY

- **March 2000: Implementation of VIP, Vocational ESL Immersion Program**
 - Response to new welfare legislation
 - Clients needed more intensive, vocationally related classes
- **April 2008: Implementation of Work Participation Program as part of VIP**
 - Response to new federal welfare regulations
 - Clients required to have 20 core hours per week of work participation activity

STUDENT PROFILES

- All receive government assistance:
- CalWORKs – welfare recipients with dependent children
- PAES (Personal Assisted Employment Services) – single adults receiving welfare
- Diverse ages, languages, educational and socio-economic backgrounds
- **Profile A:**
 - Long term residence in US: 5-20+ years
 - Little formal education and often limited work history
 - Congregate primarily within monolingual language clusters

STUDENT PROFILES, cont.

- **Profile B:**

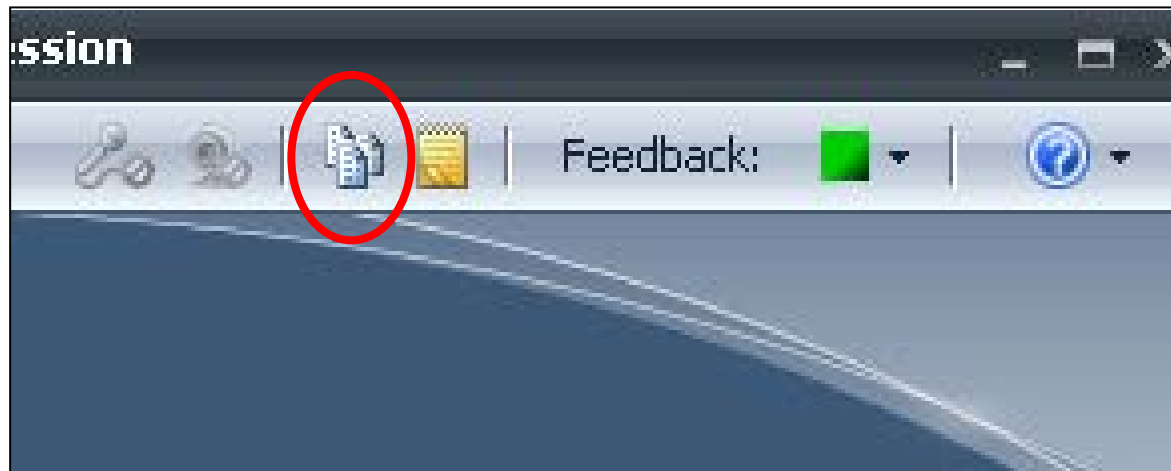
- Recent immigrants and refugees
- Well educated
- Often computer literate with strong work history in country of origin
- Lack knowledge of American work place culture and expectations

COLLABORATION

- **San Francisco Human Services Agency:** referrals, coordination, vocational assessment & counseling, long term case management
- **Arriba Juntos (Community Based Organization, CBO):** overall coordination of VIP, employer for work participation sites, computer lab facilities, daily case management, classroom facilities, development of work participation sites, interpretation services
- **City College of San Francisco:** instruction, curriculum development, language assessment, placement tests
- **Local Employers:** work sites and supervision

VIP Program Video

- To access the video, please use your internet browser to navigate to: <http://tinyurl.com/ORRWebinar>
- The link is also available in a document icon in the handout section in the upper right hand corner of the LiveMeeting Platform.



PROGRAM DESIGN

- **All Students**
 - ESL and Vocational ESL
 - Maximum 20 students in a cohort (not open entry, open exit)
 - Intensive case management
- **Tanf/CalWORKs Work Participation**
 - 20 hours per week (includes 6 hours of workplace VESL)
 - Non-profit work sites with job coach on site

PROGRAM DESIGN, cont.

Work Participation Students, Levels 1,2, 3

- Go to worksite as a cohort
 - Emphasis on English language, employer expectations, soft skills, etc.
 - Often not related to student job goals

Work Participation Students, Level 4

- Targeted Vocational Assessments (TVAs) and Career Counseling sessions to determine short and long term job goals
- Work Participation worksites connected to students' job goals when possible

INSTRUCTIONAL COMPONENT

VESL Component, All Students

- Is not job specific
- Focuses on workplace readiness, general vocational language, cultural understanding, and customer service
- Work Preparation: applications, interview skills, team jobs, job safety
- Work site visits, guest speakers

INSTRUCTIONAL COMPONENT, cont.

Work Participation VESL Component

- For cohort sites with similar jobs, the students learn job specific language as well as general workplace English
 - Level 1: Catholic Chars., Childcare, Clerical
 - Level 2: Arriba Juntos, Clerical
 - Level 3: Food Bank, Warehouse
- Level 4: focus is on general workplace English since students have diverse job titles, duties and work sites

INSTRUCTIONAL COMPONENT, cont.

- Incorporation of SCANS, (Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills)
- Focus on listening & speaking
- Regular, paid teachers' meetings
- Project-based learning
 - Job Fair, Mock Interviews

WORK PARTICIPATION COMPONENT

GOALS:

- Gain familiarity & experience at an American workplace
- Improve English listening & speaking skills
- Build soft skills in English, e.g., following directions, working as a team
- On the job training and employment

JOBS NOW PROGRAM

- Options for Participants
 - Subsidized temporary jobs in the public, non-profit or private sector some of which lead to permanent, unsubsidized positions
 - Weekly job recruitments
 - Participants receive a voucher that they can present to potential employers explaining how they can become part of the Jobs Now program
- Options for VIP
 - Due to limited English skills, most participants work in the non-profit sector
 - Ability to access other options as appropriate

FOOD BANK (Non-profit Employer)

- Food Sorter
- Team Leader
- Maintenance Worker



ARRIBA JUNTOS (CBO)

- **Receptionist**
- **Clerical Assistant:**
filing, organizing,
answering telephones
- **Sales Clerk**
- **Computer Lab
Assistant**
- **Teacher's Clerical
Assistant**



VIP ENROLLMENT & OUTCOME INFORMATION

JULY, 2003 – JUNE, 2009

Average Outcomes

Yearly Enrollments:	190
Completions:	92%
Increased 1 or More ESL Levels per Semester:	81%
Rated Satisfaction with Program at 3 or above, on a scale of 1-5:	98%

CONTACT INFORMATION

San Francisco Human Services Agency

Workforce Development Division

Former VIP Coordinator: Lynn Levey
(415) 401-4905, Lynn.Levey@sfgov.org

Current VIP Contracts Manager: Marlén Sánchez
(415) 557-6267, Marlen.Sanchez@sfgov.org



Ben Miller

703-218-2555

bmiller@icfi.com

Louisa Jones

703-839-6299

louisa.jones@icfi.com