

Teaching Communication and Cultural Awareness: Online Supplementary Curriculum

A report on teaching socio-cultural competencies and skills to health care and business professionals using adjunct curriculum that is online and interactive.

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Pilot of Supplementary Online Curriculum April 2013-2014

VCC Courses in Professional and Career English:

English for Health Care

Business Readiness for New Canadians

VCC Courses in Health Sciences:

Communication Skills for Occupational Therapists

LearningBranch supplementary online courses:

Communication Skills for Health Care Professionals-Patient Centred
Communicating Professionally at Work – Team Centred

Why create online adjunct curriculum?

- * Classroom time is limited
- * interaction with the teacher is limited

Supplemental materials provide :

- individual listening and speaking practice,
- more time with the audio and video scenarios,
- preparation for classroom role-plays.

LearningBranch provides:

- the learning platform,
- video and lesson creation,
- Shopping cart and registration.

What are socio-cultural competencies?

- * making social contact and social conversation
- * asking for information
- * receiving feedback
- * giving feedback
- * refusing a request
- * expressing disagreement

(* The model is based on the work of Dr. Ishu Ishiyama (UBC, Canada), Dr. Marvin Westwood (UBC, Canada), Dr. Anita Mak (University of Canberra, Australia), and Dr. Michelle Barker (Griffith University, Australia).

About the curriculum

- * scenario based
- * focus on 1 or 2 competencies per interaction
- * Breakdown competencies into learnable skills or strategies.
- * focus on the specific language choices
- * non-verbal communication tactics

Key elements

- * Video and/or audio of a typical workplace situation
- * An unprofessional “bad” version and a professional “good” version.
- * Practice recording and playing back your voice
- * Practice recording the appropriate response based on what you hear.
- * Learner-centred – the learner can repeat and review as much as desired.
- * Short chunks

Curriculum Grid

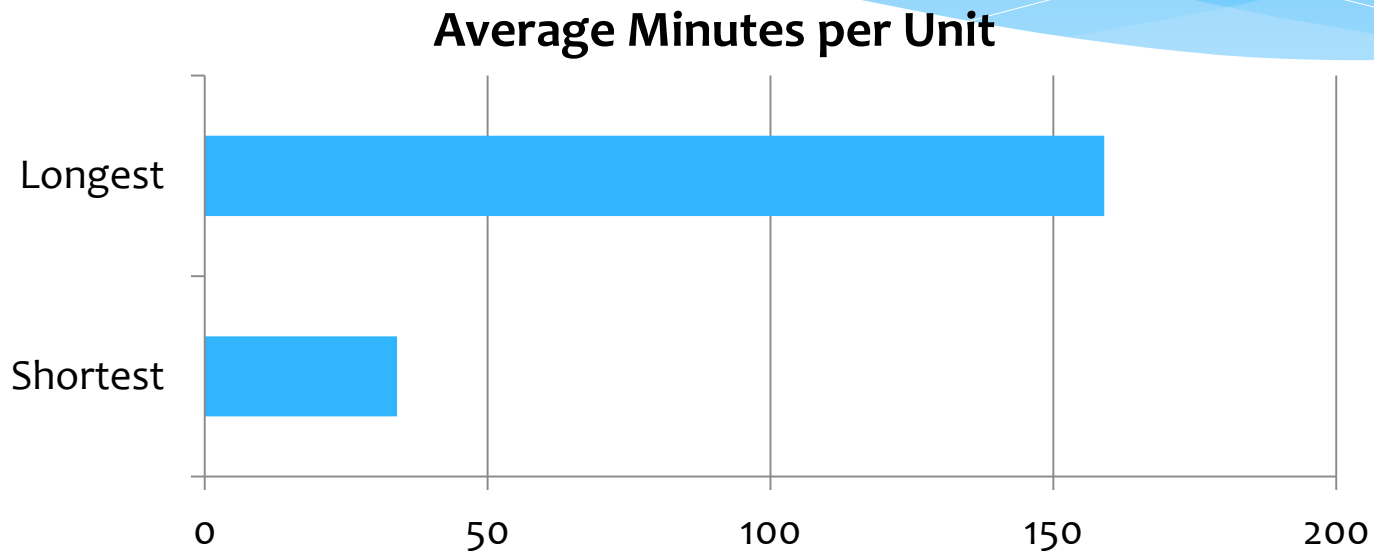
Mix and Match the Modules to meet your program duration and objectives.

Lesson Name	focus	SCC1	Skill1	Skill2	Skill3
Showing Empathy	client	Social Contact &Conversation	Small Talk	Reflective Questions	Acknowledging
NUC Clarifying Acknowledging an Error	team	Asking for Information	Checking understanding		
Working Out a Problem A	team	Receiving Feedback	Acknowledging	Apologizing	
Gaining Cooperation	client	Giving Feedback	Clarifying	Active Listening Open-Ended Questions	Acknowledging
Assertiveness on the Phone	client	Persuading	Active Listening	Describing Feelings	Empathy
Assertiveness in Action	client	Refusing a Request	Clarifying Using "I" Statements	Body Language	

Results from students and instructors

- * 40 students completed anonymous surveys
- * Time on task and scores are from the Learning Management System
- * 2 instructors provided feedback

Are the students engaged?

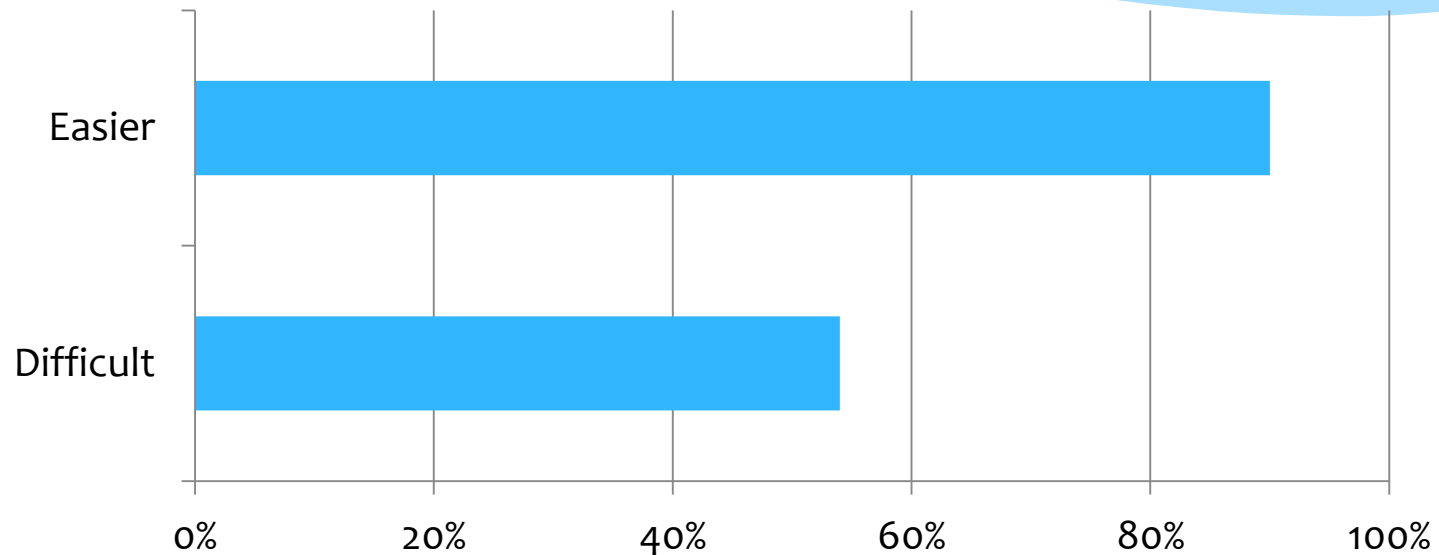


Data from Communication Skills for Health Care Professionals – Patient Centred VCC January to April 2014

Longest = The Interview Shortest = Using Courtesy

Do scores matter?

Average Scores per Unit



Data from Communication Skills for Health Care Professionals – Patient Centred VCC January to April 2014

Easier = Using Courtesy Difficult = Greetings

Do the students find it helpful?

- * This will help my English communication skills in the workplace. 100%
- * I would be interested in taking the next course. 81%
- * If I had \$40 to spend, I would buy:
 - * An online course 43%
 - * A textbook 35%
 - * Neither 23%

Students comment.

“ I really like the course. They teach first then you get a chance to record yourself then listen and choose what kind of strategy they said/did.”

“ I like this course. What I learned from this course is not just about communication skills, in addition, this course helps me to understand deeply about Canadian culture. So, this course is a practical navigation to help newcomers to adapt in the workplace in Canada.”

Communication Skills are important for everyone.

“Yes, I learned a lot of useful and practical tips how to communicate with not only patients but also ordinary people.

Since I have taken this course, I have noticed that many people need to attend this course because they don't know how to have a successful communication despite the fact that they speak fluently.”

Instructor Feedback

- * *Preparation for classroom role-play*
- * *Practice skills in a non-threatening way*
- * *Slow down and focus on breaking skills down*
- * *Think about your words and pronunciation*
- * *Practice recording helps the language roll-off-the-tongue*
- * *Texts can go more deeply into theory*
- * *Does not replace the classroom*

Key strengths of the curriculum

- * Authenticity
- * Relevance to workplace
- * Ability to record and listen to yourself
- * Instruction in communication skills
- * Exposure to cultural behaviours

Does Online Learning work?

Strengths

- * More interactive
- * Video and audio
- * More skills and variety of exercises
- * Portability

Limitations

- * Limitation of access (must be online)
- * Technical difficulties
- * Duration of access (subscription based)

Summary

The online, interactive approach to teaching SCCs:

- * is well-received by students,
- * has many benefits,
- * makes class time more effective.

We will continue to:

- * expand the catalog of relevant scenarios,
- * continue to address student issues.

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Thank you!

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For more information visit: www.learningbranch.com