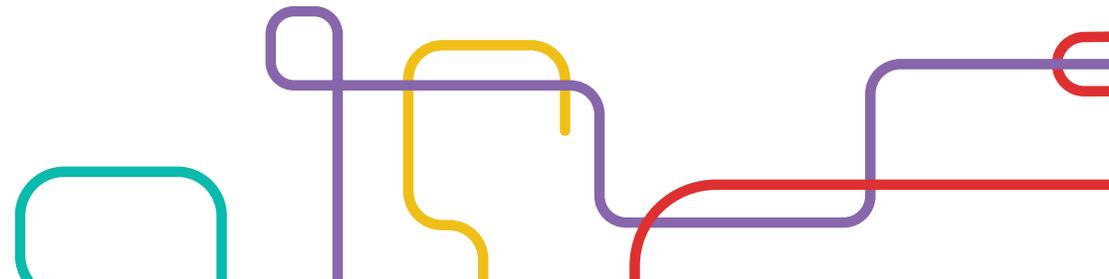




# Helping Internationally Educated Professionals (IEPs) Achieve Success in a Post-COVID World

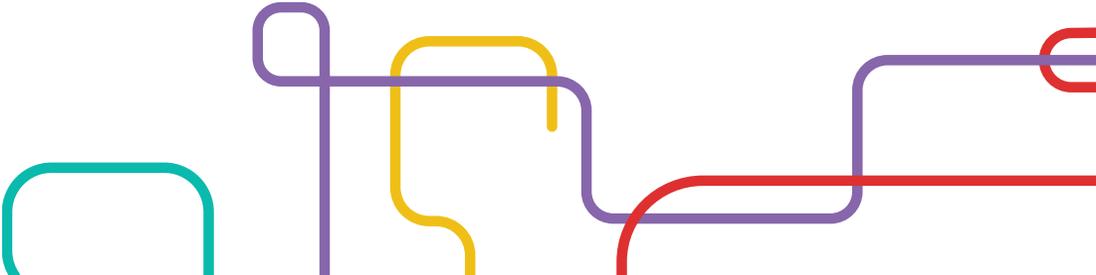


# Land Acknowledgment

We acknowledge we are on unceded, traditional Mi'kmaq territory, and we are grateful for the Peace and Friendship treaties. At ISANS, as we work to settle newcomers to Nova Scotia, we honour and respect the Indigenous people of this land.



# Introductions and welcome

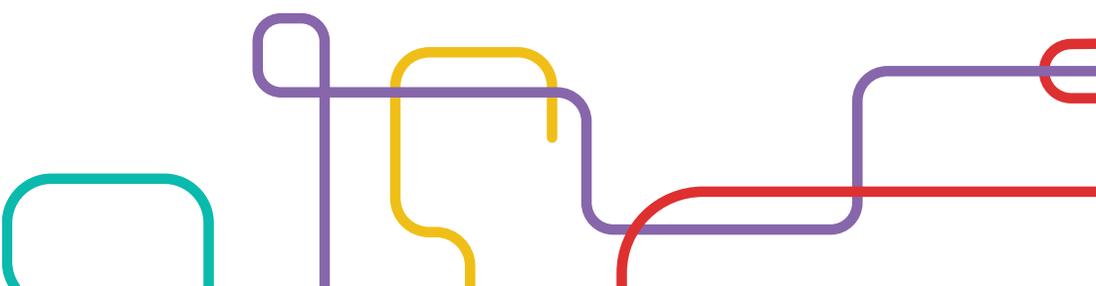




# Employment and Bridging Counselling

**Cassidy Sholl**  
Supervisor, Employment and Bridging

**isans** | Immigrant Services  
Association of Nova Scotia



# Employment & Bridging Counselling

We provide one-on-one, customized support for any client looking for work or guidance through licensure if in a regulated profession.

Employment Counsellors can support *all* immigration categories including:

- Permanent Residents (PRs)
- Refugees
- Citizens
- Temporary Foreign Workers (TFWs) with Open Work Permits (OWPs)
- Dependents
- International Students and Dependents
- International Graduates
- Atlantic Immigration Program (AIP)\* Nominees/Dependents
  - \*Former: Atlantic Immigration Pilot Program



# About Employment & Bridging Counselling

- Client-centered, strength based – “meet clients where they are”
- Use Skills for Success Profiles and develop a Return to Work Action Plan (RTWAP)
- Counsel based on existing skills and experience
- Help clients recognize how prior experience applies to the current labour market
- Refer to appropriate programs and continue to meet on an ongoing basis



# Our Employment & Bridging Counselling Approach: How We Do It

- Customized, adaptable and strategic
- Offered:
  - pre and/or post-arrival
  - online, onsite or blended
  - based on client preferences, program needs and circumstances
- Process-oriented, with specific goals along the way
- Trauma-informed
- Grounded in partnerships



# Case Management Cycle



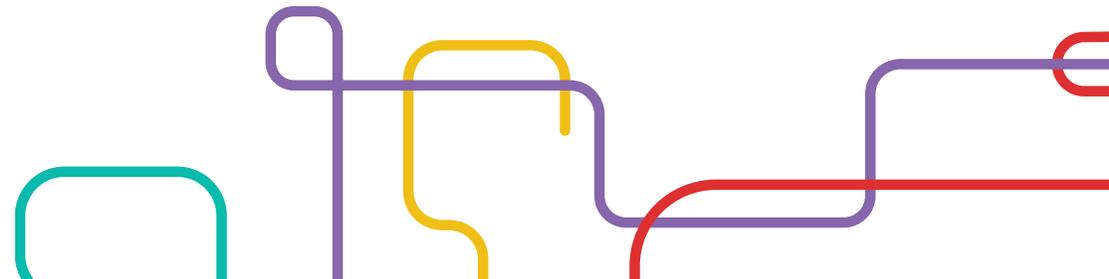


# Occupation Specific/Bridging Programs

**Tanja Matthews**

Supervisor, Pre-Employment and Bridging

**isans** | Immigrant Services  
Association of Nova Scotia



# Internationally Educated Professionals Challenges

- Navigating and selecting the appropriate pathway to licensure
- Accessing free and trusted resources for exam preparation
- Understanding the professional scope and cultural competency in the fields
- Profession-specific communication skills
- Financial challenges to pay for the expensive certification process
- Difficulty building professional network in their fields
- Difficulty identifying meaningful alternative careers without guided support



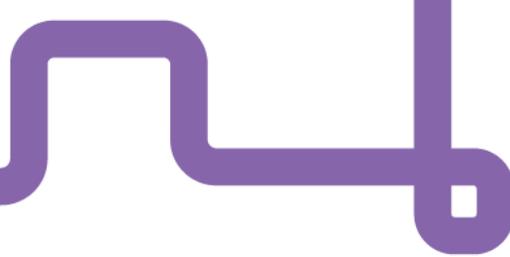
# Bridging and Competency Assessment Programs

- **Bridging programs:**
  - Medicine (IMGs)
  - Pharmacy (IPGs)
  - Dentistry (IEDs)
  - Nursing (IENs)
  - Finance (FSBP)
- **Competency assessment programs:**
  - Engineers & Architects
  - Early Childhood Educators (ECEs)
  - Long-Term Care Aides (LTCAs)
  - Accountants (IEAs)
  - Trades
  - Carpenters
  - Professional drivers



# Bridging Programs: Fun Facts

We help immigrants to be independent and effective in their job search.



All bridging and competency assessment programs include:

- delivery by Subject Matter Experts (SMEs)
- 10-18 weeks of programming per cohort (IENs, Financial Services, etc.)
- Study Groups and access to field-specific resources
- Exam preparation to facilitate licensure process
- Mock Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCEs)

Bridging programs have proven success!

- Significantly higher exam passing rates than national average for those who participate

# Competency Assessment Programs



All competency assessment have been developed in partnership with regulatory bodies and programs consist of:

- A combination of three components
  - Communication (language)
  - Job Search Strategies (Skills for Success)
  - On the job supervised work experience (competency assessment)

Competency assessment programs have proven success!

- Significantly higher retention rates (70-95%) in employment – clients *stay* in host company

# Multi Stakeholder Working Groups



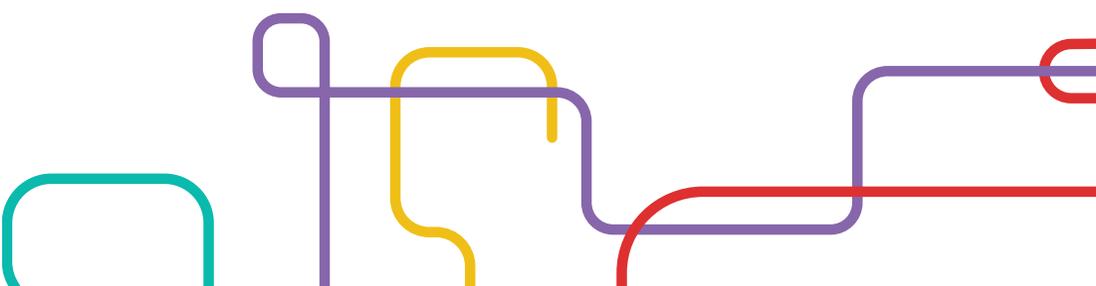
- Address licensing challenges so that IEPs may enter the occupations they have been trained in as efficiently as possible (protecting the public interest by maintaining appropriate standards of practice)
  - The Multi-stakeholder Work Group model is unique to Nova Scotia and has been recognized nationally as a best practice to address international qualifications challenges.
- Regulatory authorities
  - Professional associations
  - Educational institutions
  - NGOs, immigrant-serving organizations
  - Representatives of internationally educated professionals
  - Employers and employer organizations
  - Unions
  - Sector councils
  - Government departments
  - Community champions



# Language Counselling

**Andrea Taylor**  
Language Counsellor

**isans** | Immigrant Services  
Association of Nova Scotia



# Language Counselling

A language counsellor works with a language learner to raise awareness of strengths and needs along with appropriate strategies which will better work to meet the learner's goals.

Source: [www.sisajournal.org](http://www.sisajournal.org)

At ISANS, language counselling is a service available to clients who need support, information and guidance around their learning goals.



# Language Counselling

Language counselling is critical to help clients navigate their language learning effectively and integrate more quickly, both in the community and the workplace.

Clients may need guidance in setting realistic expectations and choosing the most appropriate programs to meet their needs.



# Language Counselling

- Assess language learning needs and discuss challenging skills
- Explore options for studying specific skills or topics
- Outline details of language programs
- Prepare an accurate timeline for taking programs (a learning plan)



# Changes to Language Counselling

- Adapting quickly to online delivery
- Ability to be more flexible (early morning or evening appointments)
- Less scheduling and childcare issues for arranging appointments
- Maintaining quality of service



# Language Counselling

## Highlights of Language Counselling:

- Creating individual learning plans for clients and adapting plans based on successes and changes
- Working one-to-one with clients
- Connections with teams/staff across ISANS
- Connections with external service providers across Nova Scotia
- Ability to be creative



# Collaborative Language Counselling

- Assisting program coordinators with screening potential participants
- Program promotion to new and existing clients
- Clarifying and discussing program details (content, time requirements, participant responsibilities, time line, expectations)



# Communications Courses

**Sarah Sampara**

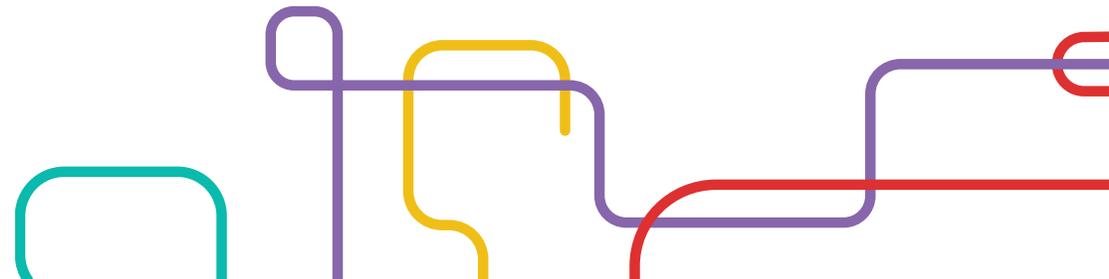
Language Services, Team Lead

**isans** | Immigrant Services  
Association of Nova Scotia



# Stages

1. Development
2. Implementation



# Development Approach

Recommended Practice: Teach language in the context of real world tasks

## Consult:

- Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLBs)
- Skills for Success
- Subject Matter Expert (SME) Input

# Development: Skills for Success

## Recommended Practice: Reference Skills for Success

### Our process includes:

- Locate the Skills for Success Profile
- Consider language and non-language skills, e.g. *Problem-Solving. Realize there are skill shortages within their project teams. They alert management and discuss whether or not funding will be made available to recruit team members with the expertise needed. (2)*
- Group related skills into lessons and units
- Identify which can be realistically taught and which require coping strategies



# Development: Subject Matter Expert (SME) Input

## Recommended practice: Involve external partners

- Governing and licensing bodies
- Professional associations
- Apprenticeship agencies
- Multi-stakeholder working groups
- Employment counsellors
- Sector councils
- Community colleges
- Non-sector partners, such as Nova Scotia Rainbow Action Project (NSRAP)



# Development: Subject Matter Expert (SME) Input

## Our process includes:

- Request input
  - At the beginning: guide and select content
  - Throughout: ensure the curriculum is valid, relevant and accurate
- Ask targeted questions, e.g. *Knowing what you know about the sector:*
  - *Is anything included that should be omitted or omitted that should be included?*
  - *Are all the terms and contexts reflective of the sector?*
  - *Does anything require rewording?*
  - *Are there any other changes you suggest?*



## Development: Subject Matter Expert (SME) Input

### Our process includes:

- Request input
- Ask targeted questions to receive focused input
- Evaluate the feedback
  - Apply whatever you can
  - Reference additional supports from non-profession-specific EAL courses

### Example: Engineers Nova Scotia

- Reviewed the *Communication Skills for Engineers* curriculum
- Credit it as one-year of Canadian experience for licensure process



## Development: Subject Matter Expert (SME) Input

Recommended Practice: Work closely with the bridging coordinator

- Engage their expertise
- Negotiate curriculum content
- Develop a competency-based curriculum
- Align with the *Competency-Based Job Placement*

## Development: Asynchronous Format

### Recommended practice: Apply adult education principles

- Discussion – involve their prior knowledge and experience
- Teaching Points – ensure we're all on the same page
- Practice – give authentic, real-world examples
- Assignment – demonstrate a Skills for Success task

# Implementation: Synchronous Tasks

## Recommended Practice: Complement asynchronous materials

- Engage in discussions to highlight cultural practices/norms
- Incorporate additional activities to address common challenge areas
- Identify related role-plays/tasks to expand on skills taught
- Provide targeted feedback on what learners should continue to do and what they can improve on for the future

# Implementation: Taking it Forward

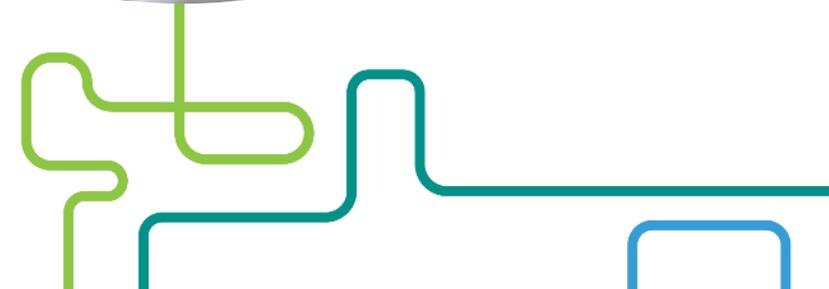
## Recommended Practice: Be modular

- Provides easy-access
- Is more learner-centred

## Recommended Practice: Keep synchronous portion online

- Provides easy-access
- Eliminates common concerns (transportation, child care, etc.)
- Allow for optional in-person meetings to increase connection

# Job Search Strategies Workshops



# Job Search Strategies Workshops

- “On site” (live facilitation) or self-guided online
- Occupation-specific
- Varies in length – 3-6 weeks
- **All learning activities are based on:**
  - Skills for Success framework
  - Core Competencies in target field
  - Bridging the gap between previous experience and current Canadian labour market expectations and requirements



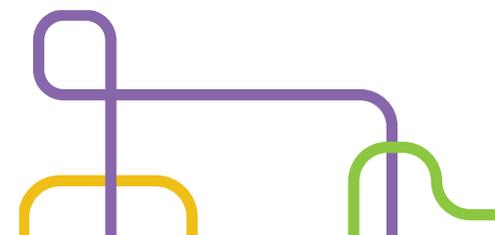
# Job Search Strategies Workshops

- **Content covers strategies and required labour market skills needed to secure employment successfully such as:**
  - resume and cover letter writing
  - networking in target field
  - Interviewing
  - Canadian workplace culture
- **Content includes:**
  - culturally relevant material
  - diverse learning activities, appealing to different styles of learning
  - activities that help clients self-promote





# Competency Placement



## The Internationally Educated Engineers (IEE) Bridging Program

- 12-week placement at no cost
- the opportunity to assess the engineer's engineering competencies on the job and provide feedback
- IEEs gain valuable Canadian work experience, local references, experience towards their Canadian P.Eng license, and the opportunity to network and showcase their skills
- All participants are job ready and legally eligible to work in Canada



# Competencies- Engineering

- A. Apply Engineering Knowledge, Methods and Techniques
- B. Use Engineering Technology, Tools and Equipment
- C. Protect the Public Interest
- D. Manage Engineering Activities
- E. Communicate Engineering Information
- F. Work Collaboratively in a Canadian Environment
- G. Maintain and Enhance Engineering Skills and Knowledge

**A. Apply engineering knowledge, methods and techniques**

Solves engineering problems using appropriate theoretical and practical engineering principles.

**Give a brief overview of the project used to demonstrate the competency**

**For each indicator describe What did you do? How did you do it? Why did you do it?**

**Defines the engineering problem to be solved. *What did you do?***

*How did you do it?*

*Why did you do it?*

**Analyses relevant data. *What did you do?***

*How did you do it?*

*Why did you do it?*

**Identifies alternate solutions based on feasibility, technology and economic assessments. *What did you do?***

*How did you do it?*

*Why did you do it?*

**Develops the solution that best meets system requirements and specifications. *What did you do?***

*How did you do it?*

*Why did you do it?*

**Tests the solution to verify that it meets system requirements and specifications. *What did you do?***

*How did you do it?*

*Why did you do it?*

**Evaluates and verifies the practicality and effectiveness of the engineering solution. *What did you do?***

*How did you do it?*

*Why did you do it?*

# Digital Upskilling:

Basic Digital Literacy

Keyboarding

Word I and II

Excel I and II

PowerPoint

Social Media

Google Docs

Google Sheets

Google Slides



# Successes: Big and Small

- **70%** of job seekers became employed in their or related field
- All **16** Longer Term Care Assistant project participants are completing final language instructions and all 16 are starting on-the-job training on February 28 with Northwood
- **73%** of Engineers are retained by their host employer
- **7 out of 9** IPGs passed OSCE on first try, while **100%** passing rate for those taking Qualifying I and II

# Successes: Big and Small

- Clients having to travel home overseas, are still joining us on Zoom twice a week for the language classes and completing required independent work in a timely manner.
- Significant increase in digital competence for staff and clients
- Flexibility, Innovation, and expertise allows for quick and efficient service delivery



Questions?



# Thank You

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