

Promoting workplace wellbeing through
enhanced communication practices
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What is this project about?



Does the Skills For Work (SFW) literacy program offer a way to promote wellbeing, through improving workplace communication practices ?



Mental health in the workplace: Consensus paper

European Trade Union Confederation, 2008

- Preventing stress:
- "...a key point of the approach...remains the preventive aspect...The workplace should be able to provide a healthy environment of health and safety that is psychologically and socially helpful for all workers".
- Recognised that "better dialogue and collaboration between managers and employees or enhanced use of teamwork" can prevent stress and mental health problems at work (p.15)

Prevention is better than cure

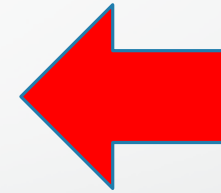
ENCHP (2011) identified workplace practices that can prevent stress.





Employers can prevent stress by:

- Improving communication and feedback
- Encouraging and strengthening social support
- Access to further training and qualifications
- Increase control over work - autonomy and initiative.
- Reorganise poor work processes
- Include employees in decision making and problem solving
- Balance effort and reward



Our research
focused on
these
strategies.

- Does the SFW program give access to further training and qualifications? ✓
- Is the SFW literacy program of benefit to participants in terms improved communication and feedback?
- Is the SFW literacy program of benefit to participants in terms of social support?

THE SKILLS FOR WORK PROGRAMME



Skills for Work is a national programme aimed at providing training opportunities to help employees deal with the basic skills demands of the workplace. The initiative is funded by the Irish Government under the Department of Education and Skills, and delivered by the newly formed Education & Training Boards (ETB) across the country. The project is managed nationally by Dublin & Dún Laoghaire ETB.

WHAT ARE THE AIMS OF THE SKILLS FOR WORK PROGRAMME?

- Promote an ethos of lifelong learning in the workplace
- Contribute towards the creation of a well educated and highly skilled workforce
- Raise the competency level of employees with low levels of educational qualifications
- Develop initiatives to enhance employees communication and basic IT skills
- Enable employees to cope with frequent and ongoing changes in work practices

Student Diversity

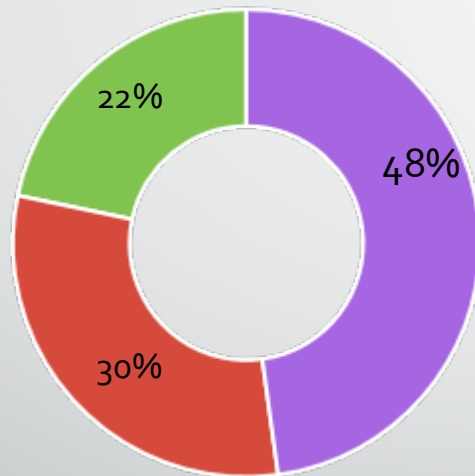


A survey was conducted on learners at QQI levels 1-3

- To assess how participating in an English communication class has improved their social support in both society and work.
- To see if improvements in their ability to communicate has led to a positive effect in their work environment.
- Would the students access further education and training courses.

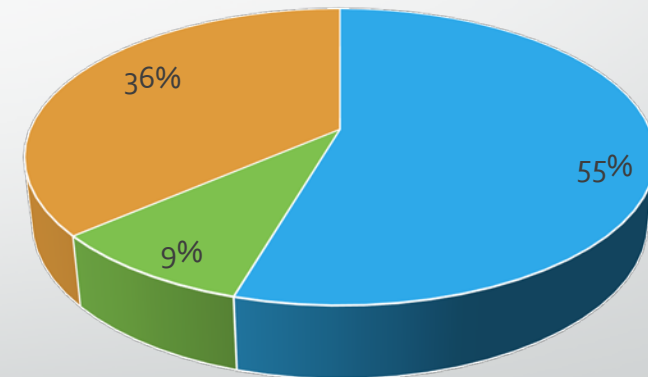
Social Support

Motivations to Come to Class



■ Learn English ■ Improve English ■ Communicate

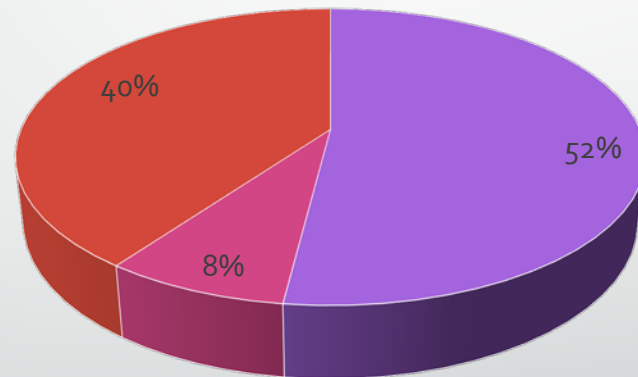
Interaction in Classroom



■ Meeting People ■ Participating ■ Good Teaching Practice

Social Interaction

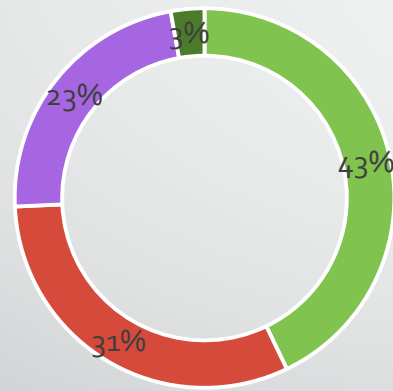
Communicating with Colleagues at Tea Break



■ Yes ■ No ■ Sometimes

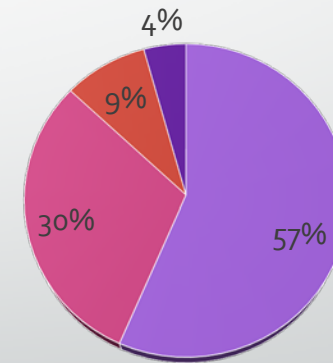
Work Based Communication

Understanding of Workplace Materials



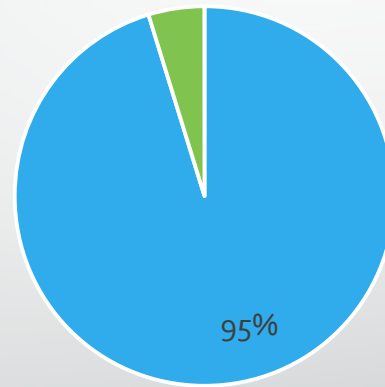
■ Signs ■ Notices ■ Letters ■ Reading Email

Communicating with Colleagues and Peers



■ Team ■ Supervisor ■ HR ■ Wages

Would you like to access more training ?



■ Yes ■ No ■

Employer Feedback

- These classes have greatly benefited communication on site, which in turn has led to a more proficient and productive environment.
- It has greatly benefited our supervisors as they are able to give basic instructions and they are now being understood.
- When employees are able to communicate with their colleagues, they are happier in their work environment.

Video



- Does the SFW program give access to further training and qualifications? Yes
- Is the SFW literacy program of benefit to participants in terms improved communication and feedback? Yes
- Is the SFW literacy program of benefit to participants in terms of social support? Yes

This project has identified several positive effects of the SFW program within both the employees and the companies involved and reflects the many gains that literacy education can contribute to workplace health promotion.