

How English for Latin America supports workforce development.

Current studies show that the most effective models of workforce development integrate the teaching of language and literacy skills with the development of employability skills. ELA builds on EDC's experience in youth livelihoods to combine English language learning and workforce development.

Conventional classes or on-line learning in second language and literacy are often not sufficient to meet the requirements of the service industry. Youth engaged in work that includes interaction with customers need to have socio-linguistic competence as well: They need to know how to respond to others when communication does not go as expected or "by the book." They must know how to use language in ways that don't offend and build relationships.

In cases where youth may not yet be fully proficient, "repair" strategies such as knowing how to apologize, express regret, and ask that something be repeated may be particularly important.

ELA offers students opportunities to practice these skills in situations by creating role plays using appropriate phrases and responses, moving beyond the pre-scripted dialogues traditional texts offer.

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ELA integrates the employability skills of EDC's proven workforce development curriculum into each language lesson, providing the opportunity for effective and efficient training in two skills via one course.

--Heide Spruck Wrigley, PhD

Work Readiness

ELA begins with Spanish-language lessons in basic employability, financial responsibility, and entrepreneurship topics such as:

- Skills assessment and goal-setting
- Identifying and Obtaining Work Opportunities
- Work Habits, Communication, and Conduct
- Leadership, Problem-Solving, and Team-Building
- Safety and Health at Work
- Worker and Employer Rights and Responsibilities
- Exploring Entrepreneurship
- Financial Fitness

English for the Workplace

ELA then weaves in key English proficiencies for the service industry as identified by EDC's key consultant, Heide Spruck Wrigley, including:

- job specific technical and service industry essential vocabulary.
- practice in understanding spoken English or Spanish, including regional accents.
- opportunities to build the oral communication skills, such as using appropriate tone and employing "repair strategies" (apologizing/asking for information repeated).

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