

## **Workplace Appraisal of Informal Learning**

Phase One: (2003-05)

The Centre for Education and Work conducted a qualitative research study in 2003 and 2004 in partnership with the Saskatchewan Labour Force Development Board to identify specific skills and knowledge that employees acquire informally in the workplace.

This research included surveys, participant observations, and interviews with both management and employees. The CEW sought to identify the specific skills, knowledge, and abilities learned informally in small and medium sized workplaces and determine how employees were learning these specific skills. In all over 48 jobs were audited in 12 different workplaces including manufacturing, health, banking, entertainment, and tourism.

Phase Two: (2005-07)

As a result of the first phase of the project, the CEW developed protocol and evaluative tools which we are now calling the WAIL (Workplace Appraisal of Informal Learning). We will now refine the WAIL and apply the WAIL to supervisors and middle managers.

In particular, the CEW will work with the construction sector and some apprentice programs to provide information to them about the range and depth of informal learning currently in their workplaces.

The resulting package of materials will include a DVD for promoting the WAIL as well as information about how to use the WAIL in a variety of workplaces. The WAIL will be useful to Human Resource personnel and other decision makers when developing job descriptions, recruitment and retention policies, and opportunities for progression within a company.

This project will widely promote and disseminate the WAIL as a tool for evaluating workplace learning.