

English Language Priorities

This instrument is designed to help you to prioritize your staff in terms of learning needs and to suggest solutions to their specific needs. It does not provide solutions to every case but highlights important issues in determining who should receive training and what form that training should take place. It should be used after the employee has been tested and completed a standard needs analysis.

Part One Background Information

- Name: _____
- Position: _____
- Tested level of English: _____
- When tested? _____
- Test used: _____

Part Two Priority Level

- How often does this employee use English in their current position?
Plot their position on this grid.

Test Level	Constantly	Once a day	A few times a week	A few times a month	Sometimes	Occasionally	(Almost) Never
Level 5							
Level 4							
Level 3							
Level 2							
Level 1							
Level 0							

Key:

High Priority		Medium Priority		Low Priority	
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- This employee's initial priority is: _____

Part Three Other Considerations and Factors

- Why do **you** want this employee to learn English?

How does this change their priority rating? _____

- Is this person being considered for a post where English will be essential? **Yes/No**

If yes, which post? _____

How does this change their priority rating? _____

- Is this person likely to go on a training course held in English? **Yes/No**

If yes, when? _____

How does this change their priority rating? _____

- Does this person need to do specific tasks in English which they **cannot** do now?
Yes/No

If yes, what?

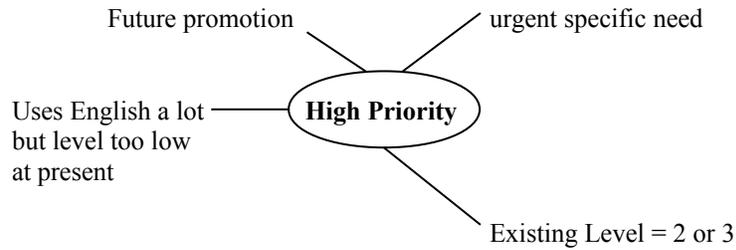
- Make presentations
- Attend training sessions
- Write letters
- Write reports
- Make telephone calls
- Negotiate
- Entertain visitors
- Other

How does this change their priority rating? _____

(Would a specialized course focussed on these specific needs be appropriate?)

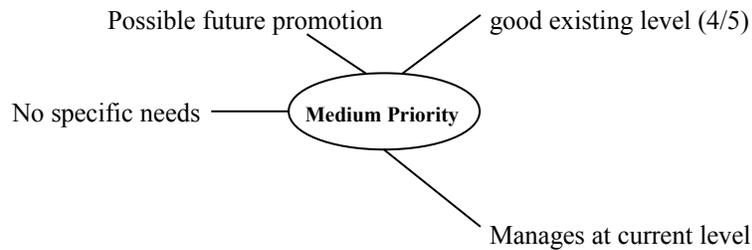
- What is the employee's priority rating after these factors have been taken into account? _____

Part Four Evaluation and Course Solutions



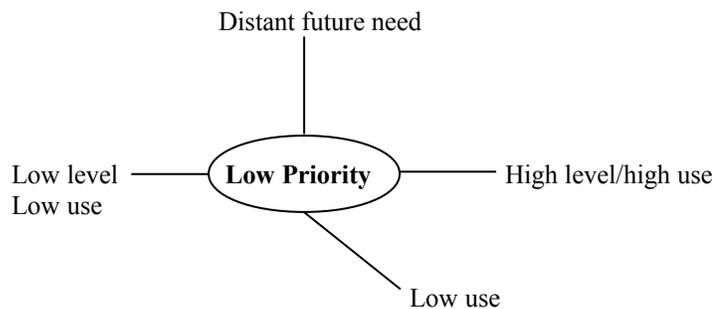
Possible Course Solutions

Short intensive ESP course to address specific need.
Extensive ESP course based on specific need(s) for levels 3 and above.
Extensive General English course for Levels (0), 1 and 2.
Course funded by employer in work hours.



Possible Course Solutions

Extensive General English or ESP course (eg 2 x week)
Tutorial-based ESP course to maintain level or improve a specific area (eg one meeting a week supported by e-mail)
Course held during work hours and part-paid by employer.



Possible Course Solutions

Extensive course paid for by employee and provided by an external supplier.
Course held out of work hours.

Rationale and Notes

This instrument assumes that you have finite resources to commit to English language training, so you should prioritize your employees to ensure the cost-effectiveness of your English Language Programme.

Part 1 Background Information

This is essential background information, which should be held on all employees. Everyone should, ideally, be tested using the same test. A suggested test is the Oxford Quick Placement Test which uses the ALTE five level system used in Part 2.

Note: The levels are very broad levels.

The ALTE Levels correlate with British coursebooks thus:

ALTE Level	Coursebook description	Number of hours tuition typically needed	Total
Level 5	Proficiency	180	960
Level 4	Advanced	180	780
Level 3	First Certificate/Upper-Intermediate	240	600
Level 2	Intermediate	120	360
Level 1	Pre-Intermediate	120	240
Level 0	Elementary	120	120

[Note: the number of hours tuition needed is based on the levels system at the British Council Teaching Centre in Warsaw]

It is strongly recommended that you rank employees by their test scores and the other factors to determine who should receive training first.

Part 2 Priority Level

The three priority levels – **high, medium or low** - are determined by a consideration of the employees current use of English combined with their current level. Obviously if employees rarely use English and their level of English is adequate, then they should be classified as low priority. If they personally want to improve their English then they should arrange it and pay for it themselves. This instrument concentrates in institutional rather than personal priorities.

Advanced speakers (Levels 4 and 5) who use English a lot will not need an extensive language course as their use of English will help to maintain and improve their abilities. A course would be an expensive way to make a marginal improvement. However, they might be considered for a specialist course (see Part 3).

If a Level 0 or 1 employee is using English constantly you should ask yourself why this person is in this post. Perhaps the duties of the post have changed since the person was recruited? These employees will need time to improve their English that is, an **extensive** course. Even for specific needs it will not be possible to prepare such an employee for demanding tasks in English without a huge amount of resources – time and money – being devoted to their learning.

Part 3 Other Considerations and Factors

This part suggests some other factors that might change the initial priority rating of the employee. Are there any other factors, specific to you situation and institution, which should be considered?

Part 4 Evaluation and Course Solutions

This final part suggests some alternative courses to meet the employee and institutional needs. There are several options available – not just a standard 2 meetings per week 60 hour per semester course.

You should also consider these factors:

- How much time can the employee realistically commit to the course?
- How long should the course be?
- What are the precise objectives of the course? Would it be better to do a series of short course rather than one extensive course?
- When will your institution stop paying for English lessons? Or do you want to enter into an open-ended commitment to develop this person's language ability?
- How will the employee's progress be judged? By class tests? By external exams? By portfolio work?