

# Best Practices from the Federal Mogul Project

*A Re-Employment Program for Dislocated, Limited English  
Proficient Manufacturing Workers in the City of Boston*

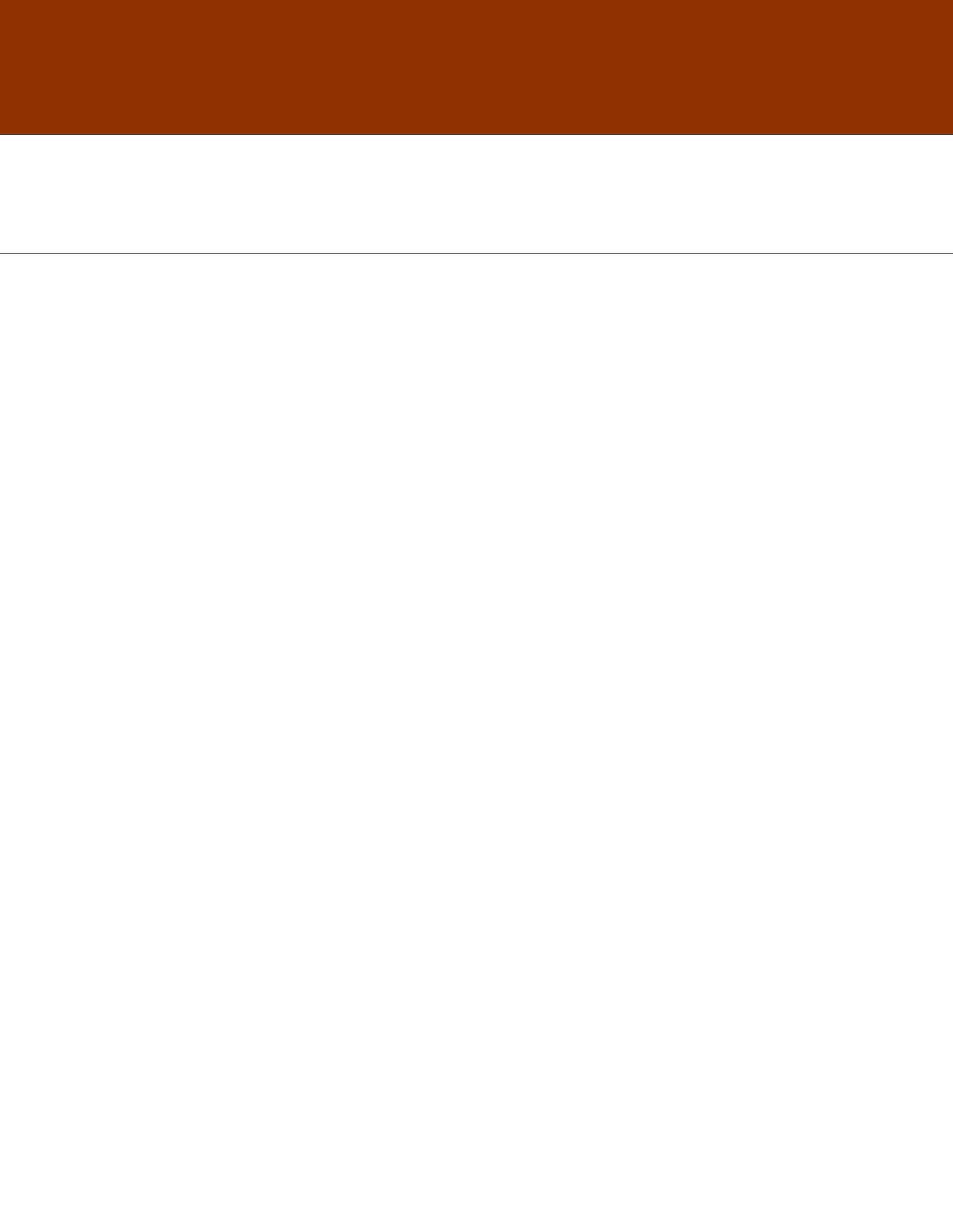


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by **Claudia Green**

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As they recover from job loss, dislocated workers covered under the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Program are provided a significant window during which they can receive cash benefits and acquire new or additional skills toward reemployment. For limited English proficient (LEP) workers, this offers a valuable opportunity to improve their English and in some cases basic skills and while acquiring marketable job skills.

Two recent projects in Boston serving LEP workers laid-off from Power-One International and the Federal Mogul Corporation give valuable insight on how the local workforce development system can best help workers productively use training time and improve their future labor market prospects. The projects were led by Boston's Office of Jobs and Community Services and its workforce development network which is made up of Boston One Stop Career Centers and educational and skills training providers. This network has been providing comprehensive services to the city's immigrant population for many years. Given the populations served, their significance carries over to the City's and state's long-term mandate to serve both employed and unemployed LEP workers.

Recognizing the importance of these initiatives, JCS contracted two pieces of research: The first report<sup>1</sup> focused on Power-One's Chinese immigrant workforce and evaluated the City's overall approach as well as several key design and implementation innovations by local stakeholders. This second report focuses on program models and practices most effective in providing education, retraining and employment services to 152 workers—predominantly Haitian and Latino—displaced from the Federal Mogul disc brake pad plant. These locally implemented strategies mirror the experience and findings of national workforce development practitioners and researchers. They are also new, "on-the-ground" models tailored to the population, the local labor market, and local workforce development networks. Flexibility and the ability to adapt with the participants have been critical. From the examples here, practitioners and policy makers may cull the following lessons on effective programs, competencies, and what more is needed in the way of support and experimentation:

***Career centers and training programs must work closely with each other and with program participants to stay abreast of progress, options and difficulties encountered.*** This is critical at transition points, such as around initial assessment, moving from one service to another, and beginning a job search. LEP workers are likely to be unfamiliar with the workforce development system and labor market, and likely to need a high level of coordination and attentiveness.

***Clear, reliable information on the labor market, career pathways and how to move ahead helps LEP workers make smart choices about training, and stay focused on learning and advancement even after they find work.*** Career centers, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) programs and skills training programs all have a role to play in providing general labor market and occupation-specific information. If necessary, this information should be delivered in the students' native language.

***Training options and training delivery must be customized to the population.*** New training options can often be extended to LEP participants by being flexible with entry requirements, integrating significant ESOL into the curriculum, increasing course length and devising teaching methods appropriate for the population. Trainings for Federal Mogul workers in facilities maintenance and nursing assistant, among others, were developed along these lines. Research and experimentation with new fields is needed. Dislocated workers are well served when they are assisted to enter a field with a stable future, or even to re-enter their own field better prepared. Funders and administrators should recognize, however, that customizing the assessment process and programs to different learner groups takes time and resources.

<sup>1</sup>Evaluation of the Power-One Project: A Re-Employment Program for Dislocated, Limited-English Proficient Electronics Workers in the City of Boston," by Claudia Green for the Mayor's Office of Jobs and Community Services, 2004.

***The value of good planning cannot be overemphasized.*** One of the paradoxes in serving dislocated workers is that while the window during which workers are eligible for services is considerable, planning time is more like a race against the clock due to the Trade program structure. Yet only after collecting reliable data about participant background, skills and interests; labor market trends; and training capacity, can planners and service providers coordinate operations and timing, and stretch the spectrum of training opportunities.

***The overall system and individual programs must be able to accommodate LEP students with a wide range of educational backgrounds and needs.*** Vendors should be selected with an eye toward the breadth and depth of their educational services, including multiple levels of literacy and ESOL courses, flexible program structure and the use of tutorials and tutors.

***Training for LEP workers should integrate ESOL, job readiness and job search skills, and, whenever possible occupational skills.*** Integrating these topics and contextualizing English instruction makes preparation for the workplace more effective, and is of particular benefit to learners with less formal education. Here, too, policy makers and funders must take into account that implementing such curricula can be labor-intensive, particularly since staff generally do not have expertise in both adult education and specific industries or occupations. Auditing, team teaching and frequent teacher coordination are all techniques that may help in delivering an integrated curriculum, and all require resources in excess of a single classroom teacher.

***When possible, occupational training should build on workers' prior labor market or life experience.*** This may be difficult, however, when students can translate experience to the classroom or workplace, they can focus more on learning English and can boast a better résumé to employers. Some skills, such as customer service, may be transferable from one occupation or industry to another. Internships also can help enhance work experience.

***A bi-lingual staff, especially in the areas of rapid response, career counseling and job development, is critical to ensuring that workers' full range of needs are understood and that they are assisted well as they adjust to change and make decisions about the future.*** All staff can help to ease immigrant workers into a new classroom or workplace context by being sensitive to the learning styles, and to their life, school and work experience.

***Programs serving LEP workers need well-developed employer relationships, either directly or through other in-house training programs.*** Much of what employers count on as they hire workers who may lack language skills or work experience is an agency they trust and can call upon to help solve problems should they arise. Programs also need a broad network of employers in order to accommodate students with varying language competency.

***Employers should be closely tied into programs, providing current data on employment and skill requirements, meeting students through classroom visits, conducting mock interviews, internships, and hiring.*** The potential gain for LEP workers from this kind of involvement should not be underestimated: students become familiar with true demands of the job and learn to feel more comfortable talking to employers, and employers get to know potential hires.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Building Capacity for the Future

**More bi-lingual capacity is needed across the local and state workforce development system, particularly in rapid response, career counseling and job development.** New options for addressing this need—such as sharing of key staff among agencies, or client referrals to agencies that offer appropriate services—should be explored. Where they exist, community based groups serving particular ethnic or linguistic communities should be used as a resource.

**Program planners should set a goal that all participants who want occupational training are offered it.** Combined with ESOL and job readiness, skills training had a positive impact on employment outcomes, consistent with existing research. Federal Mogul workers who went to skills training also exhibited a clearer grasp of career development opportunities. Some participants may have difficulty attaining language skills sufficient to enter training, so new training options and program designs should be explored and participants should be encouraged to maximize time and resources to improve their marketability.

**More targeted, realistic approaches are needed for older dislocated LEP workers.** Again, experimentation is needed. Strategies may include targeting jobs more suitable for older workers, setting the classroom pace more appropriately, and involving linguistically and culturally competent staff. Policy should allow for varied combinations of work, study and cash benefits.

**Temporary or part-time placements should serve only as a bridge to permanent, full-time work, except under specific circumstances.** Some workers who went to temporary or part-time jobs found themselves out of work again, facing uncertainties about employment and benefits. Follow-up by program and career center staff must be vigilant and results-oriented.

**Even after they are placed, LEP workers are still likely to need longer-term support to help improve English, educational credentials and job skills, and to move toward economic self-sufficiency.** Boston and Massachusetts have been in the forefront of workforce development practice and policy that promotes a continuum of education and training for low-wage workers geared toward advancement. Programs for dislocated LEP workers should be linked to the public and privately funded initiatives that support these longer-term efforts.

**Improve data collection and review practices.** State and local officials must do more to ensure that data is collected and reviewed accurately and frequently, and that these tasks are properly funded. Improvement was evident since the Power-One project; more is needed. All programs which include ESOL, for example, should use at least one test instrument that is common across the system and administered at regular intervals, including at the completion of ESOL and skills training. Greater diligence in coding placement occupations and industries is needed as well. Good data contributes to a better understanding of what works and how to continue building capacity.

"Evaluation of the Power-One Project: A Re-Employment Program for Dislocated, Limited-English Proficient Electronics Workers in the City of Boston," by Claudia Green for the Mayor's Office of Jobs and Community Services, 2004.



# INTRODUCTION

In the fall of 2002, the City of Boston and its network of workforce development agencies undertook the second large-scale dislocated immigrant worker retraining project in as many years. The Federal Mogul Corporation closed its manufacturing plant in the city's Brighton neighborhood, laying off its entire 259-person workforce, comprising mainly Latino and Haitian immigrants. This closing came as the City and its training vendors were still engaged in the similar but larger retraining program for 379 predominantly Chinese immigrant workers left jobless by the closing of the Power-One plant the previous year in neighboring Allston.

In response, Boston's Office of Jobs and Community Services (JCS), in consultation with the State's Division of Career Services, launched a second program offering English as a Second Language (ESOL), occupational skills training, counseling and job search assistance to the workers over a period of 18-24 months. The services were designed to assist the laid-off workers in successfully re-integrating into the local labor market.

These major retraining projects are particularly relevant given the fast-growing number of immigrants in the local labor market, and the region's permanent loss of many jobs that are accessible to those with limited English competency. Like other cities across the Commonwealth and nation, Boston is facing head-on the opportunities and challenges presented by a pool of low-skilled, Limited English Proficient (LEP) workers eager to work, and a set of industries ever-more demanding of academic credentials, technical skills and communication skills.

Recognizing the significance of these initiatives, JCS contracted two pieces of research to evaluate and cull best practices from the Power-One and Federal Mogul projects. The first report focused on Power-One and evaluated the City's overall approach as well as several key design and implementation innovations by local stakeholders (see box on next page).

This second report offers stakeholders a more comprehensive analysis of which practices are most effective in providing education, retraining and employment services to LEP displaced workers. The primary focus is on the Federal Mogul project; however, the analysis and the actual services provided were informed by findings and experience from Power-One. The report also draws on a limited but rich body of national literature to show how the experiences with Federal Mogul and Power-One confirm identified best practices in this field and how they point to unique or distinctive local innovations. The project had three main objectives: Expand workers' labor market knowledge and training options; deliver training focused on language acquisition and job readiness; and assist workers to transition into the economic mainstream. JCS, the career centers and training agencies highlighted in this report implemented multiple strategies toward these objectives and the overall goal of helping the Federal Mogul workers return to work.

## Report Overview

The report begins with a description of the Federal Mogul project, funding, and the target population. In this and subsequent sections, we draw relevant comparisons with Power-One. We then present a short analysis of program outcomes broken down by participant and training characteristics. Next, we turn to effective practices using program examples that demonstrate how and why they worked. In the final section we point to additional planning, experimentation and competencies that will strengthen the city's capacity to serve LEP and dislocated workers.

## EVALUATION OF THE POWER-ONE PROJECT: A BRIEF SUMMARY

The Power-One project served 280 dislocated manufacturing workers-nearly all Chinese immigrants and mostly female-who were laid off in Allston, MA in mid-2001. Led by JCS, the project attempted to maximize and customize federal and local resources to meet the population's profound needs. Distinctive design and implementation approaches represented important innovations in serving LEP displaced workers.

Workers were offered career counseling, English for Employment (ESOL and job readiness), skills training and job placement. Over three years after the lay-offs, 61 percent<sup>2</sup> of the workers were re-employed earning an average hourly wage of \$9.29, eight percent more than their Power-One earnings. The language barrier and difficult labor market conditions posed significant impediments to the workers' reincorporation to the workforce. Placement rates were highest for those who did both EFE and skills training, and customized skills training was more successful than enrollment into pre-existing courses. Unfortunately, many workers did not qualify for any available skills program even after a year of ESOL.

The project was notable for the central role of grassroots community-based advocacy. The Chinese Progressive Association (CPA) helped the workers win concessions from Power-One and understand their rights. CPA's work had a tangible, positive effect on program participation levels, the efficiency and coordination of service delivery, and in a more limited way, workers' engagement in decision-making. It helped attune the workforce development system more closely to the particular needs of Chinese immigrant workers. Promoting group cohesion also helped the workers survive a difficult period, though it created some challenges in the classroom and ultimately may have made it harder for workers to go out and find a job independently.

JCS' successes were a result of involving multiple stakeholders in planning; procuring customized services; gathering input on appropriate industry and occupational targets; and hiring culturally, linguistically competent program staff. In turn, the agencies involved were responsive and adapted their programs in various ways: Conducting initial, timely assessments of workers, adjusting entry requirements for skills programs; increasing ESOL content in courses, expanding the pool of employers and jobs targeted for placement; and adapting teaching methods and materials.

The agencies also observed the need for sound approaches to addressing and accommodating language and cultural issues. Providers were challenged to understand the range of strengths and needs of this population, to establish meaningful communication, and to address workers' inexperience and insecurity in job hunting. Over time, providers met with some successes; however, further exploration, sharing of practices, and training on how political and cultural issues affect immigrant workers would help.

Stakeholders agreed that in the future they would need to broaden industry and occupational options; expand and deepen their capacity to serve very limited English speakers; and enhance collaboration between training vendors and career centers. Finally, while federal dislocated worker funds target speedy re-employment, greater emphasis on labor market knowledge and career development would help participants more in the long run.

<sup>2</sup>Figures are as of October 2004. Program services ended in mid 2003.

# FEDERAL MOGUL PROGRAM OVERVIEW

## Background

In the fall of 2002, the Federal-Mogul Corporation shuttered its Friction Products plant in Brighton, Massachusetts, laying off all 259 workers. The global corporation based in Southfield, Michigan closed down the 22-year old disc-brake pad operation as part of cost-saving measures undertaken following a bankruptcy claim in the same year.<sup>3</sup> Left behind was a workforce comprising mainly Latino and Haitian immigrants, relatively well paid by local standards, but sorely lacking English language skills, educational credentials, and marketable job skills.

## Career Services and Retraining

After the lay-off was announced, the State's Rapid Response unit coordinated with City and the One-Stop Career Center staff (some of whom served as interpreters) to provide the workers with information about available benefits, services and retraining options. Workers were registered and directed to one of the city's three career centers for assessment, counseling and referral to services. JCS served as the lead agency for retraining services. JCS and the Massachusetts Division of Career Services applied for and received a National Emergency Grant. The company's successful application for Trade Adjustment Assistance (Trade) status also triggered training funds and enabled the workers to qualify for extended unemployment and training benefits.<sup>4</sup> Trade certification and funding became available in November 2002, and training classes began in February 2003, four months after the first workers lost their jobs.

The career centers-Boston Career Link, The Workplace, and JobNet-each took on roughly 50 of the 152 Federal Mogul workers served. At each center, two to three counselors provided assessment; orientation to the labor market; referrals; one-on-one career counseling and case management including tracking progress; entering data; and handling of all Trade and unemployment insurance paperwork. At the start, career center staff administered a basic English assessment test to get a handle on the overall needs of the population. Testing indicated a need for very low-level English classes and, in some cases, basic literacy training.

JCS contracted with four vendors to provide English for Employment (EFE), typically consisting of traditional ESOL plus world-of-work orientation, job search skills, résumé preparation, basic computer instruction, and job search assistance as applicable. The vendors were the Asian American Civic Association, International Institute of Boston, Jewish Vocational Service, and YMCA International Center, all of whom also ran EFE classes for Power-One workers.

<sup>3</sup> "Boston brake-pad plant closing," Donna Goodison, Boston Herald, September 7, 2002.

<sup>4</sup> Under the Trade Act of 1974, Federal Mogul workers were eligible for up to 78 weeks of cash benefits, and up to 104 weeks of training. The Trade Reform Act of 2002 extended both limits by six months for individuals requiring remedial education benefits, however, Federal Mogul workers were not covered due to their lay-off date. ("Trade Adjustment Assistance Program and the NAFTA Transitional Adjustment Assistance Program," and "Trade Act of 1974 as Amended with provisions of the Trade Reform Act of 2002" internal documents, MA Division of Employment and Training.)

Once they had attained basic English competency, participants could enroll in skills training. Some of the courses available were straight skills training such as refrigeration, heating, ventilation and air conditioning, medical or general office training. Others combined ESOL and skills (facilities maintenance, culinary arts, hospitality, accounting); one combined ESOL and health care skills in a training designed specifically for the Federal Mogul group. Both EFE and skills training vendors also were contracted to provide job placement assistance.

Similarities between the Power-One and Federal Mogul projects included the workers' very low language skills, low education levels, and manufacturing background, as well as many of the same agencies and staff serving them. Main differences related to the community-based advocacy present in Power-One. As noted in the previous box, organizing and advocacy by CPA helped unify Power-One workers and attune the training system to their needs. In contrast, there was no advocacy or Spanish- or Creole-speaking organization with the Federal Mogul group, and most workers had little or no contact with agency staff that spoke their language. These factors affected other areas of the projects, such as how career center services were implemented, overall program participation, and the extent to which workers had a voice in assessing training.

As shown in Table 1, the Federal Mogul program was funded at \$1,220,300 by two different U.S. Department of Labor sources: The Trade Adjustment Assistance Program supported ESOL and skills training, and a National Emergency Grant supported project administration by JCS as well as assessment; career counseling and placement; and case management by career centers and vendors. The average per person cost was \$8,030. EFE courses cost roughly \$2,980 per person and included 520 classroom hours. Two thirds of all EFE students took two cycles (a full year) of EFE. Skills training courses costs varied widely, from \$2,600 to \$12,850, as did classroom time, from 60-1,400 hours. The average skills training cost was \$5,640.

## Funding

**Table 1: Program Costs**

Service	Cost
<b>Overall Program</b>	
Trade Program funds	\$879,050
National Emergency Grant	\$389,000
<i>Total</i>	<i>\$1,220,300</i>
<b>Per person</b>	
Six-month EFE course	\$2,980*
Occupational skills training (avg.)	\$5,640
<i>All Services (avg.)</i>	<i>\$8,030</i>

\* Most EFE participants took 2 cycles (12 months) of EFE.

# FEDERAL MOGUL PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Of 259 workers who were laid off, 246 were registered by Rapid Response; 152 actually went to a career center and received career assistance services; and 148 received some type of training (four found employment before entering training or dropped out of the program). As shown in Table 2, the group was divided roughly even among men and women. Average age was 43, with 14 percent at retirement age (55) or over. The group had an average of 10 years of schooling; 13 percent had a fifth grade education or less and only a handful had studied at the college level. Over half lacked a high school degree or equivalent. Latino workers were generally younger (38) and less educated (ninth grade) when compared to Haitians (46, 11th grade education).

Nearly all (97 percent) of the workers were non-native English speakers (38 percent Spanish and 59 percent Haitian Creole), and LEP (91 percent). Overall, the group had very low English language skills with 43 percent in the SPL 0-1 range.<sup>5</sup> When they entered the program, a full 95 percent were ineligible for most skills training programs, even those that were designed for LEPs (generally requiring an SPL of 5 or higher). Men had slightly higher education and English skills than women. Federal Mogul workers reported that at work they had communicated almost entirely in their native language.

At Federal Mogul, the workers had earned an average of \$11.94 per hour with benefits and had been at the plant an average of six years. The majority held production jobs, while others held clerk, accounting, quality control, shipping and receiving, and supervisory positions. Men earned \$1.82 on average more per hour than women.

The Power-One population was similar, with some key distinctions: The group was larger (280), predominately female and earned \$3.34/hour less. Although both groups had very low English skills, their learning profiles and cultural backgrounds were different. In general, the Chinese immigrants (Power-One) had stronger English reading and writing than speaking skills, while the Haitians and Latinos (Federal Mogul) had more ease speaking English than they did reading and writing it. These factors made for critical differences as programs sought appropriate teaching methods, and as they prepared students for job interviews and employment.

## Population

**Table 2: Participant Demographics—Gender**

	Male	Female	Overall
Number	78	74	152
Percent	51%	49%	100%
Age (avg.)	43	43	43
Age 55 or over	9	13	22
Highest grade completed (avg.)	10	10	10
Percent without high school credential	46%	63%	54%
English level (avg.)	2.3	2.3	2.3
Pre-layoff wage	\$12.83	\$11.01	\$11.94

<sup>5</sup>Student Performance Level (SPL) is an assessment method used by ESOL providers to describe a student's language ability in terms of listening, speaking, reading and writing skills; the ability to communicate with a native speaker; and readiness for employment. At SPL 0, an individual has "no ability whatsoever." At SPL 1 a learner is able to function only minimally in English, understand a few words or very simple phrases, speak just a few words and print out their own name. At SPL 3 an individual can "understand only simple learned phrases" and "handle routine, entry-level jobs that involve only the most basic oral communication and in which all tasks can be demonstrated." At level 5, an individual can also understand "short new phrases containing familiar vocabulary spoken slowly" and perform in "entry-level jobs that involve some simple oral communication but in which tasks can be demonstrated." SPL 10 describes "ability equal to a native speaker of the same socio-economic level." From "Scoring the BEST Plus: Student Performance Level Descriptors," Center for Applied Linguistics, May 2003.



# PROGRAM OUTCOMES<sup>6</sup>

**Federal Mogul workers used the services available to them well. The participation level-59 percent of the 259-person workforce-was high.** While this was lower than the Power-One group (74 percent-likely an effect of CPA's organizing work), it far exceeded state Trade and NEG averages (20-30 percent). Eighty-five percent (126) of the workers took EFE courses. Of those, roughly one-third (41) remained in EFE for six months and two-thirds (85) for 12 months. About two-fifths (62) went to a skills training course, 22 directly and 40 after completing EFE.

**As of April 2005, over two years after services began, 68 percent of the 152 Federal Mogul workers served were working.** The placement rate is higher than it was for Power-One (61 percent after more than three years), and average earnings are \$.71 higher. Among those workers who found jobs, 57 percent had medical insurance and 23 percent also had a pension plan. Forty-three percent had no benefits. Seventy-three percent were working full-time (35 hours or more), 13 percent were working 25-34 hours, and 14 percent were working 24 hours or fewer. At Federal Mogul, all had worked 40 hours or more and earned benefits.

**At \$10.00/hour, the average hourly replacement wage was 84 percent of prior earnings, roughly comparable to results of other dislocated worker programs in the nation and region (typically 84-90 percent).** In terms of a family budget, this is a loss of approximately \$4,160 for full-time employees. Unfortunately, most workers were entering a new field at the entry level, where their years of manufacturing experience had little or no value. One worker described coming to terms with the economic realities of job loss this way:

*We started from zero and then started all over again at another job from zero, so one feels uncomfortable. We are not going to get the same pay we were getting before. So, one worries because we say 'well, I am going to earn less, I am going to have less income at the end of the month' and we have to pay rent and bills. So one worries a lot, but well, we hope that this doesn't happen again in the future.*

*-Former Federal Mogul worker*

Among those who did find jobs, most said that while they were grateful to be employed, they felt their new jobs were worse than their Federal Mogul ones. Not surprising, given the wage differential. They had preferred having the chance to work overtime at Federal Mogul. Some complained that they lacked benefits in their new jobs, or that they were part time, per diem or temporary. On the positive side, for a newly employed nursing assistant, the new job gave her better benefits and a schedule that gave her more time with her family. Two participants working at large institutions-one a hospital and the other a hotel-said they believed they had more opportunity in their new positions, including the ability to take English classes. Those in maintenance jobs also felt they had good training and advancement opportunities.

**Workers who had a full year of EFE and then went on to training had the strongest employment rate of all (90 percent) as was the case in Power-One** (see Table 3, Appendix B). With a fairly small population (148), it is difficult to draw firm conclusions, however, the data show that the greatest investment-12 months of English plus skills training-had a greater impact than either component on its own or simply shorter length services.

**Women's and men's placement rates were roughly the same, but women closed the earning gap from \$1.82 to \$.74 per hour.**

**Compared to their Haitian counterparts, Latinos appeared to have significantly better employment rates (76 versus 62 percent) although average were equivalent** (see Table 4, Appendix B). Latinos were generally younger and had less formal education. Latino men had the strongest re-employment rate (81 percent), and Haitian women had the weakest (58 percent). Analysis conducted for this report did not attempt to explore these differences, but one practitioner speculated that employer bias may be at work.

<sup>6</sup>Inconsistencies in total participant numbers in this section relate to a) the difference between participants who received any services at all versus those who received actual training, or b) reporting errors.

**Younger workers had better employment rates than their older counterparts.** The 22-25 year-old group had the highest employment rate (75 percent), while the 55 and older group did worst (35 percent). These poor outcomes among older workers point to a need for benefits and training approaches targeted more specifically to older immigrant workers.

**Education appeared to have had little effect on re-employment rates, though it did factor into earnings** (see Table 5, Appendix B). Grade 12 graduates were earning almost one dollar per hour more than the grade 6-11 group. Interestingly, the 20 workers who had a fifth grade education or less had the highest employment rate and wages just below the overall average. This was not the case for Power-One workers, for whom education paid off in reemployment rates and wages.

**Better English skills made for better employment rates.** Of the 118 workers whose English levels were recorded before and after EFE, those in the SPL 2-3 range at program exit had a 53 percent employment rate, while those with SPL 4 or above had a 73 percent rate. Notably, of the 10 workers who remained at SPL 0-1 nine found replacement jobs. Placement wages were roughly the same across English proficiency levels. For the Power-One group, both placement rates and wages were correlated to English skills.

**Certain industries and occupations proved more economically fruitful than others.** Nearly all workers took a pay cut, but those who found replacement jobs in maintenance and repair work ended up earning 23 percent over the average re-employment wage. These workers may have had the advantage of being able to cash in on their manufacturing backgrounds.

**Surprisingly, 21 workers found new jobs in manufacturing, accounting for one-fifth of all replacement jobs.** These positions-mainly assemblers and machine operators-were either directly with the employer or through a temporary placement firm and paid less than Federal Mogul. Most of these workers (72 percent) did not take a skills training course, and those that did took one that was unrelated to the job they eventually secured.

**While they may have experienced an earnings decrease, those who went through training got a foothold in a new industry, one that in all likelihood would not disappear in the near future.** "These are maintenance jobs. They won't go overseas like their Mogul jobs did," said the facilities maintenance program coordinator. "There are more and more hotels and condos, and they will need maintenance people." The health care program and, to a slightly lesser extent, the culinary arts program, also offer students the prospect of better job security.

Helping workers make the transition from declining industries to modern or growing ones- though often missed in evaluation of dislocated worker programs-is no small contribution. National research shows that while training may have minimal effect on actual earnings of dislocated workers (compared to those who have only job search assistance), it does help workers-particularly the most disadvantaged-move into jobs offering greater stability and/or future opportunities.<sup>7</sup> The following section on best practices shows how the Federal Mogul project helped to broaden workers' long- and short-term options.

<sup>7</sup>"Retraining and the New England Labor Market," Yolanda K. Kodrzycki, *Connection*, New England Board of Higher Education, Spring 1997.

# BEST PRACTICES

We began by selecting eight different practices that met at least two of the following criteria: The practice had 1) shown to be effective during the Power-One project, 2) been transferable to implementation of the Federal Mogul project, and 3) been substantiated in national literature on serving LEP workers. While this list of eight is by no means exhaustive in terms of what figures into successful service delivery, it offers a window into how local programs have innovated and customized their approach to meet the needs of dislocated LEP workers.

In order to learn more on how and why certain approaches worked, we then reviewed **JCS'** planning approach, services provided by all three local career centers, and the training programs. **JCS** provided a framework for the overall program. The career centers maintained ongoing contact with the workers and guided them through the local workforce development system. In particular, we focused on services by **Boston Career Link (BCL)**, mainly to look at how having staff capacity that matched the participants' ethnic and linguistic background made a difference.

We then selected five programs that were serving the Federal Mogul workers and that exhibited strengths in one or more area of interest. We based selections on interviews and outcome data from the Power-One evaluation, together with early outcome data from Federal Mogul. We also took into account which programs were serving significant numbers of participants.<sup>8</sup> We selected two **EFE programs**:

- **International Institute of Boston (IIB)**
- **YMCA's International Center (YMCA)**

Both programs were part of the Power-One project and exhibited a high level of sophistication in meeting diverse learning needs and styles. Throughout Power-One, they were flexible, able and willing to adapt when necessary, and, as Federal Mogul got underway, made modifications and built on their successes. IIB's program was also well integrated into the rest of that agency's workforce development programs, and therefore had the benefit of a strong employer network.

We also selected three **combined ESOL - occupational skills training programs**:

- **Certified Nurse's Assistant (CNA) training run jointly by the Somerville Center for Adult Learning Experience (SCALE) and the American Red Cross (ARC)**
- **Facilities Maintenance Program operated by the Asian American Civic Association**
- **Culinary Arts Program operated by Jewish Vocational Services**

The CNA program was selected based on the extent to which program operators customized the program for the population and the high level of integration of ESOL and occupational skills. The other two programs also combined, and partially integrated, the ESOL and skills training. Both the facilities maintenance and the culinary arts courses included partnerships with Madison Park Technical Vocational High School, which conducted the actual skills training components. The facilities maintenance program also demonstrated how a program could build on students' particular vocational skills and experience as factory workers. The culinary arts program, over time, has demonstrated job development and job placement techniques that proved effective in working with populations with a fairly broad range of English language skills.

As of this writing, all five programs selected are showing employment results roughly around the overall program average (68 percent), with the exception of the CNA program, which placed 100 percent of its students. The EFE programs also placed nearly one third (32 percent) of their participants into skills programs, which is an indicator of success in improving English skills.

The examples included here are grouped according to the project's three main objectives: Expand workers' labor market knowledge and training options; deliver training focused on language acquisition and job readiness; and assist workers to transition into the economic mainstream. JCS, the career centers and training agencies implemented multiple strategies toward these objectives and the overall goal of getting Federal Mogul workers back to work.

<sup>8</sup>Finding programs serving significant numbers was of interest due to questions of scale, and to ensure program participants confidentiality in speaking about the programs that served them.

## Expanding workers' labor market knowledge and training options

Most Power-One and Federal Mogul workers faced significant obstacles to reemployment, including very low English skills, a lack of marketable jobs skills, and a lack of information about their options and how to access them. JCS' planning efforts focused on all these barriers, relying on the city's wealth of mature, highly effective ESOL and skills training programs, while also aiming for better coordination and customization to fully address the workers' needs.

By the time the Federal Mogul project began, JCS, the career centers and training vendors already had the benefit of the experience of Power-One. Their staff was better trained, they adjusted their internal procedures, and they had models they could build on. In addition, earlier worker notification from the employer gave all stakeholders more time to plan.

Throughout the project, JCS, the career centers and the training vendors employed three main strategies to provide the workers with greater knowledge of the labor market and to expand their career and training options:

1. Provide career counseling that is consistent, persistent, and well informed.
2. Make the labor market, training options and career pathways transparent.
3. Customize course offerings, entrance requirements, curriculum and training delivery to meet participants' interests and experience

### 1. Provide career counseling that is consistent, persistent, and well informed

Career center services, funded by NEG dollars, included assessment; orientation to the labor market; referrals; tracking of progress and data entry; managing Trade and unemployment paperwork; and one-on-one career counseling and case management including follow-up and regular contact with "customers" and training vendors. Compared to the Power-One project, career counselors and the other career center staff who worked with the Federal Mogul customers were better prepared to serve them. They had more experience under their belts working with the Trade program and could help resolve problems more efficiently. Counselors also had far fewer customers to serve than they had under Power-One (18-25 instead of 90!).

Over the course of the program what participants felt most strongly about was having a counselor that was attentive, and offered them options and sound guidance. The relationships and close coordination were essential to the workers, many of whom were extremely limited by language and lack of experience in the U.S. labor market.

Most of the counselors still struggled to communicate with their customers, relying at times on the customers' family members and others to interpret for them. Particularly when the Federal Mogul workers first came to them and had the weakest English skills, counselors could often do little more than see that their paperwork was in order and that they had been tested and given a referral. BCL was somewhat ahead on language capacity for Federal Mogul, in that it already had a Spanish-speaking counselor on staff, and was able to assign a Creole-speaking manager to the project. The issue of language capacity, addressed later in this report, remains a central one if career centers are to provide career counseling to LEPs as described on the next page.

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## Providing consistent, persistent and well-informed career counseling

In the minds of Federal Mogul program participants, career counselors were most important when the workers first began the program, when they needed to make a transition, and when they had a problem with their benefits. Having an attentive counselor could make the difference in making the right decision for training, or for being able to quickly resolve an issue that affected their semi-monthly benefits check. Early on, counselors met with each worker to look at their strengths, needs and interests, and to determine an initial course of action. Good information and regular communication with EFE providers helped them anticipate learners' progress and needs. *"Some of the programs did good assessments,"* said a BCL counselor. *"IIB and YMCA are tops for me. They really assessed people, in reading and writing, oral. They really knew where people were. For example, they found that someone was a 3 in writing and a 7 in speaking, so they'd work with them on writing."* Then the counselor could help the student move on. The power of this relationship was not lost on students:

*They were very coordinated, my teacher and my counselor from JobNet, and they had good communication about me so between the two of them I found out how things could work out. ...I would tell [the counselor], 'Look I have this problem,' and he tried to solve it right away. That same day or the next day he tried to have a response. And he always told me, 'if this doesn't work out for you, I will try something different. Between JobNet and [the training provider], they were a great help. I was aware of other people that didn't have the same support I had.*

*- Federal Mogul participant*

Attentive counselors worked with their customers as EFE classes came to a close, to steer them to another EFE course, skills training or job search. Program participants said their counselors generally steered them toward making prudent decisions vis-à-vis labor market conditions and their family budget needs.

Program operators and career center staff alike emphasized that communication was the main ingredient in their interactions and in making things run smoothly for the participant. *"The key is staying on top of each person's situation and trying to make sure that everybody on all ends is informed about what is going on,"* said a YMCA job developer. *"The school sees the students every day, and in that sense can be an intermediary to the counselors who need to guide the students through this process from a different location."* From a BCL career counselor's perspective, the YMCA's approach made her better able to do her own job supporting students. The relationship is one that can be mutually beneficial. In turn, the program staff relies on the counselors to help their students stay on track and to resolve often time-consuming program eligibility and benefits issues.

## 2. Make the labor market, training options and career pathways transparent

By design, Trade and NEG programs focus on the goal of securing a next job, rather than long-term career development. Funding typically does not support labor market orientation, career advancement or post-placement support once retrained workers enter a new job. Yet throughout the Federal Mogul project, agency staff at all levels made concerted efforts to provide the laid-off workers with an understanding of the labor market and how they fit into it. Through the Power-One experience, staff saw that expanding workers' familiarity with the U.S. and local labor market had been particularly critical, given the sharp contrast with the employment system in China and the significant language barriers the workers faced.

Like their Power-One counterparts, Federal Mogul workers lacked skills and resources. By the time EFE classes began in February 2003, they had begun receiving unemployment benefits, but had to calculate whether to try to find a job quickly or to invest time in improving their English and, hopefully, their employment prospects. One woman described that initial period this way:

*"One feels impotent at the moment they are told (of their lay-off). ... We were like, 'should I get another job or should I wait, and then what?'... You can imagine, one has to pay rent and we have children and we have to find a job. ... I don't know what to put for references, well, now we have the schools. When they let us go, three months later the phone was disconnected and nobody was there that we could call. We didn't have anything."*

Some laid-off workers did not wait for retraining services. But as this young man described, most decided they had a limited window of opportunity, and that they should take advantage of it: *"Sometimes one says, 'no, this is my opportunity to study something and not stay behind. For example, I was a mechanic and that was all I learned. I need to seek more in order to get ahead and find other avenues. This is what I talked about with (the career counselor), and he told me about the programs, the different schools, and where I could be situated."*

The case for ensuring that the workers understood the broader picture was compelling: They had been displaced from manufacturing, an industry in which most were unlikely to find work again. Their options would be limited and whatever new jobs they would secure likely would be entry-level. Having information about which industries and jobs were here to stay, which ones offered advancement opportunities, and how to pursue them could make a difference in workers' ability to move toward economic self-sufficiency. Assisting low-skilled workers-LEP and native English speakers alike to plan and train for a career rather than simply a job, is becoming widely accepted as good practice in workforce development programming, policy and funding.

### Making the labor market, training options and career pathways transparent: Office of Jobs and Community Services, Career Centers

JCS staff developed a short series of labor market sessions to be delivered by career center staff to the Federal Mogul workers. The sessions included a brief overview of the Boston economy and descriptions of various industries, the types of jobs within them, the skills, language and educational background required and typical wages. The curriculum also covered how to go about setting an individual career plan.

Toward the end of the first six-month cycle career center staff went out to each of the four EFE programs where participants were, and presented the information. Where possible, they conducted the sessions in Spanish or Creole. Following these, participants in the EFE programs were asked to complete a written survey in their native language in which they indicated the industries and occupations that interested them. Results of the survey helped form the basis for JCS' exploration of appropriate training options, as discussed below. It also assisted career counselors and EFE program staff in referring the workers to training programs.

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Once students had narrowed in on a particular set of occupations, programs could help them articulate possible career paths and necessary steps to pursue them. Skills programs were more able and likely than EFE programs to stress career advancement with students. For example:

## Making career pathways transparent to participants: AACA Facilities Maintenance Program

The Facilities Maintenance training enabled some Federal Mogul workers with fairly low levels of English and, in some cases, without a high school degree, to enter permanent, full-time jobs paying \$10-12.75 an hour (\$10.25 for custodian positions; \$12.15 for maintenance positions). What the program also offered was an entrée into an industry, as well as a modest but existent occupational pathway and the information they needed to pursue it. "It's not a huge career ladder, but it's something," said the instructor. He talked to the students frequently about increasing their earning power by investing in their education and by staying alert for opportunities for advancement through vertical or lateral moves in the field. He showed them higher positions such as maintenance supervisor and maintenance manager, while their shop skills instructors modeled possibilities for becoming an independent contractor.

Participants in the Facilities Maintenance program had clearly benefited from this orientation. One graduate said he hoped to obtain his license in electricity and plumbing by taking courses and gaining the required number of hours at his maintenance job. He had already received application materials for the required courses. Others said they had already gotten onto waiting lists for GED programs so that they could continue studying and move ahead at work.

"The job I have is something I like," said one program graduate. "...You know it's one of those jobs (in which) you have the opportunity to become a supervisor, so we have to learn more English, to write it. I want to become somebody. It's okay to start from the bottom like I did but I want to get ahead, get promoted, you know, not get stuck." This former Federal Mogul worker had not finished elementary school in his country, but now that he had studied English and a trade and become re-employed, he had signed up for a GED program.

Some vendors said they felt that additional program development and funding for post-placement support would be helpful. For the most part, their students are just getting a toehold in the labor market, and while they have been given a solid foundation (and a longer period of services than most who use the public workforce development system), they will need additional English and educational credentials to advance. A good first program renews students' interest in learning and gets them connected, vendors say, but they need better-coordinated services to continue after they gain employment.

*"How do (workers) move ahead? (Power-One and Federal Mogul) were step one. There should be funding for the second step. More technical training, junior colleges. That's what makes a difference in them being economically independent. Some of that does exist, but the dollars need to come down. You've got them (students) out there, and now they're interested in learning in a way that makes sense. Career ladders are important, but there are steps to doing that, like getting a GED. We do talk to students about career ladders and the steps they need to take."*

*Director of Adult Education,  
Madison Park High School*

Fortunately, all the agencies Federal Mogul workers attended continue to provide services, allowing graduates to return to them for informal advice and job referrals if needed. A more comprehensive approach built into the Trade or NEG program would allow them to go further. Though not funded under NEG or TRADE, on-the-job or post-placement support has been shown to be a key element in helping LEP workers gain secure footing in the labor market.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup>See "Getting to Work: A Report on How Workers with Limited English Skills Can Prepare for Good Jobs," Working for America Institute, 2004.

### 3. Customize course offerings, entrance requirements, curriculum and training delivery to meet participants' interests and experience

Both the Power-One project and national research on serving LEP workers have shown that the development of programs customized to the target population is more effective than trying to prepare the target population for existing programs.<sup>10</sup> In reviewing effective service delivery to LEPs, researchers have found that programs may need to make adjustments in the criteria they use to screen candidates, the staff they use to deliver training, and actual teaching methodology.

In the case of Power-One, there was a core of five agencies that ran programs almost exclusively for those students. Staff made frequent adaptations to their courses to meet the learning styles and needs of the students. An analysis of employment outcomes showed that those Power-One workers who went to customized group trainings established for them had better placement rates than others who went on their own using a training voucher.

From a planning perspective, JCS attempted to accommodate the Federal Mogul group by providing a range of programs that was as broad and as customized as possible. Options are somewhat constrained by the use of Individual Training Accounts (ITAs), whereby consistent demand figures prominently in the availability of programs. Existing programs that did enroll Federal Mogul workers were customized in a variety of ways to meet the workers' needs. While program staff note that with every new cohort of students they adapt and adjust anyway, attuning program design and curriculum to respond to this group should not be understated. In one case, JCS contracted with a set of vendors to design a program expressly for the limited English former Federal Mogul workers. Development of a combined ESOL/Health Care training exemplifies how options were expanded, entry requirements were re-conceived, and training redesigned to fit the Federal Mogul population.

#### Customizing training: SCALE/American Red Cross Nurse's Assistant Course

**Expanding training options** When JCS assessed the group's employment interests, staff found that a considerable number of the Federal Mogul workers were interested in the health care field. While most health occupations were likely off-limits for entry-level workers with low English levels, Certified Nurse's Assistant is a position requiring only short-term training and about an eighth grade English reading level. JCS staff knew that the workers would need significant work on their English and job skills, but at the time, there were no agencies in the area providing this mix. JCS put a notice out to a handful of potential vendors, and two ESOL and two skills agencies came forward, ready to partner. Scheduling issues and customer demand later narrowed the field to the Somerville Center for Adult Learning Experience (SCALE) and the American Red Cross (ARC) in Boston.

**Expanding curriculum** SCALE and ARC had not worked together before, but they had experience in workplace education/vocational ESL, and C.N.A. training, respectively. ARC also had run C.N.A. courses that included ESOL in the past. ARC typically operates a 4-6 week, 100-hour C.N.A. course. When the agencies put their heads together, they agreed to run a 7-month, 550-hour course that would begin with four weeks of intensive health care-related ESOL and then gradually introduce skills training toward an integrated ESOL/skills training/job readiness model. *"It's different from straight teaching,"* explained the SCALE program coordinator. *"In the intensive C.N.A. course, they do it in 4-6 weeks. For these learners that wasn't going to work. They needed a lot more time to roll it all around in their heads and absorb the material."*

<sup>10</sup>The Language of Opportunity: Expanding Employment Prospects for Adults with Limited English Skills," 2003, Center for Law and Social Policy.

<sup>11</sup>Consistent with the ARC/SCALE experience, the Center for Law and Social Policy found that the English requirements for training programs are often much higher than for the actual jobs for which they are preparing students. As ARC/SCALE did, programs interested in serving LEPs may be able to use multiple assessments to determine language proficiency and predict an individual's ability to succeed in the classroom and on the job. (IBID)

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## Customizing training: SCALE/American Red Cross Nurse's Assistant Course (continued)

**Modifying entrance requirements** Given the need for students to use a trade text book and pass a written state exam, the agencies set the minimum requirements at a sixth grade English reading level. When they sought student referrals from career counselors and program operators, there was a great deal of interest, but no Federal Mogul candidates met the requirements. SCALE and ARC looked again at how they might be able to relax the reading requirements and use other indicators of potential success.<sup>11</sup> They used a combination of the TABE test, oral interviews, and a directions-following test. They ended up selecting mostly candidates with third and fourth grade reading levels, but who demonstrated strong interest, motivation and good ability to follow directions. Final decisions were made jointly between the academic and nursing staff, as they considered carefully whether or not particular weaknesses would actually block the candidate's success.

**Flexibility in training delivery** When they planned the course, the agencies laid out a schedule that would begin with intensive ESOL, then go to a 50-50 time split of ESOL-CNA instruction that involved vocabulary prep, reinforcement, and "auditing" by the ESOL instructor of the skills course and vice versa. Instead, however, the teachers ended up working very closely together, and sometimes teaching side by side. *"We turned to co-teaching. It was what was needed,"* said the SCALE program coordinator, noting that budget flexibility was critical in reallocating teacher hours and covering real costs like additional teacher prep time. They gave students opportunities to master concepts and practice English—for example, researching and making a presentation on a particular human body system and a disease that would affect it.

SCALE/ARC's results were impressive. Of the eight Federal Mogul students in the course, all passed the home health exam, all but one passed the C.NA exam, and all were re-employed as of September 2004. All students contacted gave it high marks, and said it had met their expectations around gaining a skill and being able to get a job quickly. Program administrators and staff attribute their success to the assessment process they used, their ability to be flexible in how they delivered the curriculum, and the students' commitment to good attendance, hard work, and attaining their goals for economic self-sufficiency.

While this review of best practices was not intended to address the debate over ITAs versus contracted training services, it shows that the main concern for LEPs is that diverse options exist, and that there is flexibility within the program design to meet students' comprehensive needs.

JCS and the provider community were able to add some new options to the menu of skills training choices for very low-level English speakers. It remains a goal to be able to offer occupational skills training to all workers who desire it. In some cases, agencies that had been involved in the Power-One project determined that relaxing their entry requirements to accept students with low English levels into skills training courses had proven unsuccessful for both participants and the agency itself. Students had difficulty keeping up during class and agencies had trouble placing them. In response, the agencies resumed using more rigid

entry standards. IIB, for example, went back to accepting students at SPL 5 or above into the agency's hospitality program. Among the Federal Mogul group, five were accepted and three were placed.

Just over 40 percent of those enrolled in Federal Mogul services attended skills training. Some may not have wanted or been eligible for it, but others did want training.<sup>12</sup> Interestingly, several workers contacted for this report spoke out on this issue, lamenting the lack of options for those among them who progressed more slowly in English because they had had little schooling in their home countries. JCS, the state, and interested training vendors should continue efforts to identify occupational options and appropriate employers, and to build training capacity for workers with very low English and literacy skills.

<sup>11</sup>Some participants did not attend training because Trade funding ran short at the time they were ready for it (in early 2004). When funds did become available again later on, some of the affected participants proceeded to training, but others had already moved on to job search and/or employment. Exact figures of how many workers this affected were not available.

## Delivering training focused on language acquisition and job readiness

JCS tried to ensure that workers would maximize the time and resources at their disposal before re-entering the labor market. This was accomplished in large part by offering a mix of ESOL and occupational skills training, and by requiring that all ESOL instruction include job readiness. As a result, nearly all (86 percent) of the Federal Mogul workers enrolled in retraining services received some mix of both English and job preparation. The expertise of some of the ESOL and skills training providers in carefully assessing participants and designing services to build on their strengths and experience contributed significantly to these efforts. The following three training-related strategies demonstrate how individual programs and the Federal Mogul initiative overall helped to give each worker a better set of tools with which to return to work:

1. Be prepared to meet a broad range of educational needs.
2. Emphasize contextualized English, and integrate language, occupational skills and job search skills.
3. Build on workers' prior labor market experience, existing skills and education.

### 1. Be prepared to meet a broad range of educational needs

As data shown earlier in this report indicate, the Federal Mogul students had a broad range of past experience in the classroom. In their home countries in Latin America and Haiti, some had had a very limited formal education, and thus came to the EFE classes with little knowledge of grammar, reading, writing and math. IIB and the YMCA were able to serve these students because of the agencies' depth and breadth in ESOL and adult education.

## Meeting a broad range of educational needs: YMCA and International Institute of Boston

Once they had assessed the Federal Mogul workers, YMCA staff divided the 34 students into different levels, creating new classes to accommodate them: Beginner 1, Beginner 2 and "Beginner Beginner." The latter group started out with the others, but teachers quickly realized they were unable to keep up. A new teacher was assigned to them, and tutors provided some 200 hours of assistance to these three students. In the second cycle, staff created yet another new level, "Intermediate 3," which consisted of students who were beyond the agency's second intermediate level, but not ready for "advanced." The difference between them and the YMCA's regular tuition students, the teachers discovered, was that they were older, had less formal education, and were not working at the time, meaning they didn't have many outlets to practice their English outside of class. With this group, too, YMCA assigned them a teacher who could go more slowly than the other classes.

IIB also has a depth of adult education classes and the ability to add new ones that allow the agency to serve students with little or no formal education. Over a period of six to 12 months, instructors were able to place and move students through the following content and levels:

1st period:	Speaking and listening (Levels I-IV)
2nd period:	Reading and writing (Levels I-IV) or Basic literacy (Levels I-II)

IIB also provided small-group tutorials for low-literacy students.

The learning environments at both agencies were respectful, supportive and encouraged students to take risks. IIB students with very low education levels reported that they felt that their teacher there had been supportive and had helped them overcome their lack of experience in the classroom. A YMCA student said: *"I could spend a week feeling very proud of myself and it is a continuous learning experience. [The instructors taught us] how to ask questions when you don't understand what they are saying to you. They have a good idea about what they are doing and had a lot of respect for us."*

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## 2. Emphasize contextualized English, and integrate language, occupational skills and job search skills.

Similar to the issues local practitioners raised in the Power-One evaluation, national research indicates that providing English, literacy, training and job search in an integrated rather than sequential form is most effective.<sup>13</sup> First, evaluations have shown over time that programs that combine education and training and job search outperform those that emphasize job search assistance and immediate employment, and those that combine education with training outperform stand-alone ABE or ESL programs. Second, pushing LEP workers to become fluent-or more fluent-in English before they access training has shown to be an often-unwarranted barrier, and one that would be particularly untenable for dislocated workers needing to secure new work as soon as possible.<sup>14</sup> The challenges, of course, are great considering current employer demand for communication and other "soft skills."

Several of the Federal Mogul agencies offered a seamless curriculum of ESOL and job readiness, or ESOL and skills. With students' English skills so low and the pressure to reintegrate them into the labor market so great, programs went to considerable lengths to get their English instructors, trainers and job developers working toward the same goals and familiar with the curriculum, and the employment background and interests of the group.

<sup>13</sup>See, for example, "Getting to Work: A Report on How Workers with Limited English Skills Can Prepare for Good Jobs," Working for America Institute, 2004; and "The Language of Opportunity: Expanding Employment Prospects for Adults with Limited English Skills," 2003, Center for Law and Social Policy.

<sup>14</sup>The Center for Law and Social Policy conducted a review of evaluations of programs serving LEPs and reported the findings in "The Language of Opportunity: Expanding Employment Prospects for Adults with Limited English Skills," 2003.

### Integrating ESOL with job readiness: International Institute of Boston

The International Institute of Boston has many years of experience teaching ESOL to refugees and immigrants, and more recently providing skills training to native and non-native English speakers interested in entering the hospitality industry. Only more recently, however, has IIB offered ESOL with general job readiness and job placement assistance as it did for the EFE programs under Power-One and Federal Mogul. Based on their experience with Power-One, IIB staff redesigned their program to more fully integrate-rather than just combine-the ESOL and job readiness components. In the past, students had gotten together with the job developer once a week to work on developing résumés, practice interviewing, etc. With the Federal Mogul group, the ESOL courses contained more job related topics and job search skills, and job readiness exercises helped to reinforce English skills. A teacher explained the changes:

*The content is more specific and upgraded. The teachers are more informed on labor market information. They had the students' résumés, so they could say, 'oh, you did this kind of work;' they could teach the student to speak about it. It gives them more time to practice, rather than just working with the job developer. Working in a group instead of meeting on their own with the job developer, they're exposed to more information, terminologies and a wider range of jobs.*

Staff felt that one positive result was students' increased depth and comfort in talking to a prospective employer about what they had done in the past and what they could do in the future. "Due to the coordination between the English and the job readiness, their interview answers are not programmed," noted the job developer.

Whether they were later able to enter a skills training program or not, LEP participants acquired the vocabulary and knowledge with which to negotiate the labor market. "The jobs they offer with those kinds of training are very far off for me," said a worker who attended IIB's program, "but it has been good for us because now we can explain ourselves and (the staff) talk to you to see how you can proceed."

### Integrating Language and Occupational Skills: SCALE/American Red Cross Nurse's Assistant Course

SCALE and ARC began their program with four weeks of intensive ESOL, but from there, every week, every day and nearly every hour was an integration of ESOL and health care training. On a given day, said the nursing instructor, she would begin by sitting down and highlighting words in the day's chapter that the students might not understand, or might interpret literally instead of the way it was intended, such as "head of the bed." She would pass the words on to the ESOL teacher, who would introduce them during class using the board, a game, etc. When it came time for her to teach the nursing chapter, *"I went slowly with them, and I didn't take anything for granted."* The ESOL instructor would stand behind her at a flip chart jotting down additional words the students wouldn't recognize. During the last 20 minutes of class, the ESOL teacher would define the words, and then the nursing instructor would define them in medical terms.

*"They were with us," said a program participant. "We did the nursing and at the same time we were with the ESL teacher. The words we didn't understand she helped us with a lot."*

### Contextualizing English to the workplace: AACA Facilities Maintenance Program

The Facilities Maintenance Program took fairly low-level English speakers and put them into an English class that emphasized tool names, shop math, workplace and sports-related small talk, and even slang.

Each week, the ESOL instructor attended classes in carpentry, electricity, HVAC, plumbing and appliance repair with the students. Back in the ESOL classroom he would review the technical handouts and ask the students to explain what they had done in class, step by step and tool by tool. *"I was constantly backing up what was happening in the shop to make sure they understood it,"* said the instructor. He also taught them to use idioms, slang and shop talk, as modeled by their carpentry instructor. *"I taught them 'Vinny's English.' We would practice saying it they way Vinny says it."* Vinny's English included such phrases as "out of juice," *"the whole nine yards,"* and *"right on the money."*

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## 3. Build on workers' prior labor market experience, existing skills and education

Building on LEP workers' existing work and educational experience is another strategy that has proven effective.<sup>15</sup> The Federal Mogul workers all had manufacturing experience, some in production, others in more administrative or quality-control type positions. Unfortunately, many, though not all, manufacturing jobs have disappeared from Boston as companies have gone the way of the Federal Mogul Corporation and Power-One International.

As part of its planning process, JCS sought to expand training options that would a) allow workers to apply their mechanical background if they had one, and b) allow them access to decent-paying jobs even with their low English levels. Staff met with potential vendors about developing courses that would combine ESOL with machining, auto repair, or a commercial driver's license. These efforts were not fruitful, but a new facilities maintenance course operated by the Asian American Civic Association proved to be an excellent match for nine male Federal Mogul workers.

### Building on workers' prior labor market experience and skills: AACA's Facilities Maintenance Program

With its facilities maintenance program, the Asian American Civic Association enabled some of the Federal Mogul workers to capitalize on their experience with manual labor and operating machinery. When the program coordinator opened the program to Federal Mogul students, like his counterparts in the CNA program, he hoped to enroll students with stronger English and academic skills. When he found that was not feasible, he looked carefully at their work experience and at differences in their reading and writing versus speaking ability in English. *"I had to lower the standards a lot to get these "Moguls" in. Ordinarily I look for an SPL of 5. Some of these were 3. Interestingly, they could speak pretty good colloquial English, better than they could write. ...Clearly these guys were good with their hands. They were factory workers. I looked at what prior skills they had. Could they fix a toilet? It worked out pretty well."*

Of the nine workers enrolled in the program, one had prior experience in construction, one in home remodeling, and another as a mechanical engineer in addition to their factory experience. For the rest, a four-week internship provided them with some on-the-job experience. Workers reported that the internships allowed them to learn the ropes and the pace of work, and to and see for themselves about job quality. In some cases, the internship also led directly to employment, as in the case of this graduate:

*It was an important base, the internship, because that is where we got our experience in order for us to get a job. As all beginners, we started from the bottom, sweeping, mopping, cleaning, vacuuming and then fixing the lights. ...We cleaned the first two weeks, and then we did other types of work where we learned. ...At least I learned a lot by doing the internship and I am working for the same company now. I didn't have to go out looking for a job.*

Another strength the coordinator was able to draw on was the men's history of holding down a job. *"They've all worked. They are not the hardcore unemployed. They know how to get a job, and how to get to work on time. I don't have to hit them over the head with that."*

Program graduates who are now working report job satisfaction and are earning an average of \$12.00 an hour. Median wages for maintenance jobs in Massachusetts are \$16.60 per hour<sup>16</sup> with benefits, although there is wide variation by workplace, position and length of tenure. Maintenance positions offer some advancement opportunities including supervisory and management positions, as well as becoming an independent contractor.

<sup>15</sup>The Language of Opportunity: Expanding Employment Prospects for Adults with Limited English Skills," 2003, Center for Law and Social Policy.

<sup>16</sup>Massachusetts Career Information Systems, MA Division of Unemployment Assistance, 2004.

In addition to building directly on workers' experience and skills, there may be transferable skills that workers can use to enter a new field. Career center and program staff can help tease out these areas, and participate in discussions regarding training selection and design.

Interestingly, as noted in the previous section on program outcomes, some 20 percent of all replacement jobs were in manufacturing. Most of the workers who secured these jobs went straight from EFE to re-employment, and all took a pay cut. It would be valuable for JCS and others to explore alternative services for LEP workers with similar backgrounds and interests.

They might be better served through a customized ESOL-manufacturing course that would assist them in re-entering the manufacturing field at a higher level.

### Assisting workers to transition into the economic mainstream

With the lay-offs at Power-One and Federal Mogul, workers were left fairly stranded in a local labor market they did not fully comprehend and that held few opportunities for them. For many, the bulk of their employment experience in the U.S. was in a job they had gained access to through a friend or relative, and where they needed little English to survive. It was the task of the agencies involved to help the workers go forward in a world where neither of these aspects was likely to continue. To do so, career center and training provider staff had to successfully communicate with and understand the workers, help them understand the labor market and employment culture in Boston, and to help them connect to employers. This section focuses on two approaches that contributed to success in achieving these objectives:

1. Seek to understand and explicitly respond to cultural issues that bear on participants' classroom experience and re-entry into the labor market.
2. Implement job development strategies that draw on deep and broad employer networks, and that help enhance the match between employer and LEP employee

### 1. Seek to understand and explicitly respond to cultural issues that bear on participants' classroom experience and re-entry into the labor market.

Helping LEP workers to integrate into the mainstream labor market requires understanding who they are and where they have been. In this regard, having bi-lingual staff can be invaluable. During the Federal Mogul project, BCL had bi-lingual staff, both Spanish- and Creole-speaking. JVS also had a bi-lingual instructor/job developer. These staff members said that speaking the customers' language helped them to properly determine their needs, to know what was going on at home, and to understand what was affecting attendance, progress, etc. They also were able to bridge some of the cultural divides around social norms in the workplace and making a difficult transition amidst a difficult labor market. Bilingual staff also served as interpreters while the actual lay-off was in progress, and explained to workers the services available.

During Power-One, there was one Chinese counselor at each career center, and JCS itself had bi-lingual staff working on the project at different times. In addition, CPA had the linguistic capacity and provided much of the community support the workers needed to weather a difficult period. CPA also helped the workers to have a direct voice in program service through a worker advisory group. As noted earlier, the Federal Mogul project did not involve any type of Latino or Haitian community based or advocacy group.

Both bi- and mono-lingual staff involved in these projects observed different cultural factors that affected the workers' learning and employment efforts. For example, as a group, the Power-One workers had greater difficulty mastering spoken English and felt less comfortable going out and "selling themselves" to an employer. They also were less likely to want to take on unfamiliar tasks associated with a particular job. The Federal Mogul group had greater facility with spoken English. The transition from Creole and Spanish was less difficult than from Cantonese or Mandarin. They were more comfortable giving a job opportunity their best shot, and were fairly flexible about the types of jobs they would consider. Common to both groups, though, was the need to adapt to and learn the cultural norms for going out and finding employment in a very competitive, Boston job market. Participants shared the following comments:

# BEST PRACTICES

*"Before the training I didn't know what an interview was, I didn't know what a résumé was, I never had one. Because we have friends that tell us 'look, I have a job for you, you want to come to work' and that is it, so one doesn't know. ...The teacher put another person to practice with us, you know, what you are supposed to say, how to sit down, what movements you shouldn't do, you know, all of these orientations..."*

*"It is also part of our culture that we don't look at the eyes of the employer and this says a lot because the American says that if you don't look at the eyes you are lying. So the teacher told us, 'you have to look at the eyes when you are doing an interview.'*

To address these issues, programs used strategies such as mock interviews, employer presentations, and job fairs to get their students feeling more comfortable meeting and talking with employers. Mock interviews were done with other students, staff and real employers. Some agencies videotaped them. They also taught them how to apply for jobs on-line, a skill they had not needed in the past or in their home countries. To accommodate learners with less education, they incorporated hands-on learning techniques into their classes each day.

## 2. Implement job development strategies that draw on deep and broad employer networks, and that help enhance the match between employer and LEP employee

The EFE and skills programs with longstanding, active employer networks have an easier time helping their students to find employment. These networks are usually the product of several years of job development efforts, meaning that newer programs still seeking to establish a track record with employers may have a harder time helping their students find jobs. For EFE programs, having a strong link to an employment program within the same agency also helps. EFE programs linked to skills programs can draw on the skills programs' employer networks, and refer their students internally to skills training.<sup>17</sup>

The International Institute's Employment and Training Services unit, for example, includes adult education, a large hospitality training program, and an employer advisory committee. *"We shared the general profile of the Federal Mogul students with (the advisory committee) to see the possibilities for the (students) in their industries,"* said the Director of Employment and Training Services *"We also held a job fair, and we worked to match the learners with specific openings the employers had."* Ultimately a few of the Federal Mogul students gained employment with companies that hire food service or hospitality workers and have been involved with IIB over the years. Skills programs such as JVS' Culinary Arts program further demonstrate the effectiveness of an extensive employer network in placing LEP workers.

Good, well-planned job development strategies are essential, particularly for dislocated LEP workers who have little cause to practice their English outside of class or work. When not used, their English skills can deteriorate rapidly. Programs that have strong employer relationships can help participants connect quickly with work, through internships and permanent placement.

<sup>17</sup>EFE programs can successfully complete service to a participant with a placement to either employment or to a skills program.

## Job development strategies: Jewish Vocational Service's Culinary Arts Training Program

Jewish Vocational Services has operated its culinary arts program in partnership with Madison Park Technical Vocational High School for four years. The program director and job developer have worked together for longer-seven years-building their employer relationships together over time. To understand the agency's success in placing limited English speakers in jobs in the food service and hospitality industries one need look no further than these sets of relationships.

In Madison Park, the program boasts a state-of-the-art kitchen training site, which is a draw for employers. It helps engage them in the program. *"We bring employers into the kitchen to do demonstrations,"* explained the job developer. *"It's an instant sell for our program. We bring them out to see our program. They come as guest speakers and they interview our students."*

Visits from enthusiastic chefs and human resource directors benefit the students. For one participant, visits from professional chefs helped put her at ease in the presence of a prospective employer, and helped lead her toward actual employment:

*At the kitchen school they run a lot of open houses and people from hotels would go to offer jobs they have available. ...It took away my fears. You know, when we see the person as 'larger than life' we get nervous...but they were friendly. The chefs were very nice. We see their faces ... they came every week so this helped. (The instructors) would point out, 'this one is good for this,' and they would say, 'OK, we want to see her.' I was sweating. ...The chef was interested since the first day he saw me doing something on the grill. He told me, yes, he is still interested in getting me another position with a friend of his.*

The culinary arts course is taught by two chef/instructors who themselves offer another connection to employers. Each is a working chef, with contacts and inside knowledge of the industry. *"The chefs become part of our placement team,"* explained the job developer. *"They talk to chefs at the hotels. We ask them who they think would be appropriate for what."*

As the staff explains, they take the long view toward working with employers, being sure to find the right match so that the employers will come back the next time. *"Sometimes they ask for our best English speakers. Sometimes leaders emerge and they're hired as interpreters. Sometimes they'll go as a pair-one who's good at English and one who's not. ...We get our top English speakers in there first. We only send the best to some places. We have to match the job to their ability. We are honest with the employer about what they can do."* The best English speakers might be referred to the Park Plaza Hotel, The Ritz Carlton, or the Four Seasons for jobs as line cook, gamanger or "presentation." Those with lower English skills might be referred for positions as a dish washer in a hotel or a university, or in food prep at a supermarket.

# BUILDING CAPACITY FOR THE FUTURE

The locally implemented strategies highlighted here and in the Power-One report mirror the experience and findings of national workforce development practitioners and researchers. They are also "on-the-ground" models tailored to the population, the local labor market, and local workforce development and community organizing networks. Flexibility and the ability to adapt and to the participants have been critical. From the examples here, practitioners and policy makers may cull lessons as to what type and mix of programs work well, and how to allow for such flexibility. This final section points to additional planning, experimentation and competencies that will help strengthen the city's capacity to serve LEP and dislocated workers.

***More bi-lingual capacity is needed across the local and state workforce development system, particularly in rapid response, career counseling and job development.*** While all agencies cannot feasibly maintain staff ready to serve the wide range of linguistic groups in the city, new strategies should be explored. For example, career centers or programs might be able to share key staff, or clients could be referred to agencies that have a particular language competency. Where they exist, community based groups serving particular ethnic or linguistic communities should be used as a resource, as they were in the Power-One project.

***Program planners should set a goal that all participants who want occupational training are offered it.*** Combined with ESOL and job readiness, skills training had a positive impact on employment outcomes, consistent with existing research. Federal Mogul workers who went to skills training also exhibited a clearer picture of future opportunities and how to pursue them. Since some participants may have difficulty attaining language skills sufficient to enter training, new training options and program designs should be explored as noted above, and participants should be encouraged to maximize time and resources to improve their marketability.

***More targeted, realistic approaches are needed for older LEP dislocated workers.*** Again, experimentation is needed. Strategies may include targeting occupations more suitable for older workers, setting the classroom pace appropriately for them, and involving linguistically and culturally competent staff. Policy measures should allow for varied combinations of work, study and cash benefits.

***Temporary or part-time placements should serve only as a bridge to permanent, full-time work, except under specific circumstances.*** Some workers who went to temporary or part-time jobs found themselves out of work again, facing uncertainties about employment and benefits. Follow-up by program and career center staff should be more vigilant and results-oriented.

***Even after they are placed, LEP workers are still likely to need longer-term support to help improve English, educational credentials and job skills, and to move toward economic self-sufficiency.*** Boston and Massachusetts have been in the forefront of workforce development practice and policy that promotes a continuum of education and training for low-wage workers geared toward advancement. Several public and privately funded initiatives have supported these efforts. As possible, funding and programs for dislocated LEP workers should be linked to them.

***Improve data collection and review practices.*** State and local officials need to do more to ensure that data is collected and reviewed accurately and frequently, and that these tasks are properly funded. Improvement was noted since the Power-One project, but as models for serving LEP and dislocated workers become more sophisticated, data collection must keep in step. All programs that include ESOL, for example, should use at least one test instrument that is common across the system and administered at regular intervals, including at the completion of ESOL and skills training. Greater diligence in coding placement occupations and industries is needed as well. Good data contributes to efforts like this report to learn what works best and continue building capacity.



# APPENDIX

## APPENDIX A: METHODOLOGY

Analysis for this report relied on various sources of data. Participant demographics and outcome data were drawn mainly from the State's MOSES system, as collected by JCS staff from training vendors and one-stop career centers. They were compiled by JCS and analyzed by the evaluation consultant. Background and contextual information was drawn from interviews with program staff. Qualitative data on participant and program experience were collected through focus groups and individual interviews with 27 former Federal Mogul workers, conducted in Spanish and Haitian Creole. The sample included a cross-section of participants enrolled at one of the three Boston career centers and at least one of the five training programs under study. Additional qualitative data were collected through an initial focus group and individual, in-depth interviews with staff at JCS and selected career center and vendor agencies to learn about what factors contributed to their success. Interviews included one to five staff members per agency.

## APPENDIX B: OUTCOMES DATA TABLES<sup>18</sup>

Analysis for this report relied on various sources of data. Participant demographics and outcome data were drawn mainly from the State's MOSES system, as collected by JCS staff from training vendors and one-stop career centers. They were compiled by JCS and analyzed by the evaluation consultant. Background and contextual information was drawn from interviews with program staff. Qualitative data on participant and program experience were collected through focus groups and individual interviews with 27 former Federal Mogul workers, conducted in Spanish and Haitian Creole. The sample included a cross-section of participants enrolled at one of the three Boston career centers and at least one of the five training programs under study. Additional qualitative data were collected through an initial focus group and individual, in-depth interviews with staff at JCS and selected career center and vendor agencies to learn about what factors contributed to their success. Interviews included one to five staff members per agency.

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<sup>18</sup>Figures are based on data from February 2005. Slightly more updated (April 2005) figures are used in the "Program Outcomes" section of this report. The overall placement rate rose just one percent over that period.

**Table 3: Employment and Wage Outcomes by Service Mix**

Services	Total	Entered Employment	Wage	Age	Highest Grade	SPL
1 session EFE	22	73%	\$9.93	43	10	3
2 sessions EFE	64	64%	\$9.30	46	9	2
1 session EFE+ skills	19	58%	\$11.22	41	10	3
2 sessions EFE + skills	21	90%	\$9.66	42	10	3
Skills only	22	55%	\$11.61	38	12	3
<i>Total*</i>	<i>148</i>	<i>67%</i>				

\* Total does not include 4 individuals who had no training.

**Table 4: Placement Rate by Primary Language**

Primary Language	Total	Males	Females	Non-English	Entered Employment	Males Entered Employment	Females Entered Employment	Wage	Age	Highest Grade
English	5	4	1	1	60%	50%	100%	\$10.00	47	12
Haitian Creole	89	53	36	73	62%	64%	58%	\$10.09	46	11
Spanish	58	21	37	55	76%	81%	73%	\$9.89	38	9
<i>Total</i>	<i>152</i>	<i>78</i>	<i>74</i>	<i>129</i>						

\* "Non-English" excludes those participants who are competent in English though it is not their primary language.

**Table 5: Placement Rate, Wage by Education Level**

Grade	Total	Entered Employment	Wage	Age	SPL
0-5	20	80%	\$9.66	39	3
6-11	61	67%	\$9.57	44	3
12	63	63%	\$10.52	43	3
13-15	3	67%	\$10.50	44	2
16 & Over	2	50%	\$8.60	37	3
<i>Total</i>	<i>149</i>				



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