

Second Language Training Guide for supervisors and employees

Official Languages and Diversity
Finance and Treasury Board
June 2021

BACKGROUND

As employees of the Government of New Brunswick (GNB), we share a commitment to the *Official Languages Act* as well as the Language of Service and Language of Work policies, as set out in [AD-2919](#) and [AD-2920](#). All public servants are required to make an active offer of service to clients in both official languages and all employee must have the opportunity to work in the language of their choice.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to ensure that the GNB and its organizations are making **targeted investments** based on team linguistic capacity while ensuring fiscal responsibility. Second language training (SLT) is then concentrated in areas where it has been determined a need exists for improved organizational performance and/or effectiveness within a branch, region, functional area or line of business.

GNB SECOND LANGUAGE TRAINING PRIORITIES

It is the objective of the GNB to ensure the necessary conditions are in place to provide capacity to offer services in both official languages to comply with the provisions of the *Official Languages Act*.

The following training priority categories were established to assist departments and governmental organizations in determining their second language training requirements and participant selection:

Priority 1	Ensure that direct client facing services are available in a client's official language of choice. (Linguistic profile does not meet requirements)
Priority 2	Ensure the department / organization can conduct all aspects of its business and respond to inquiries in both official languages. (Linguistic profile is meeting requirements, but additional bilingual resources are required to complement the team)
Priority 3	Need of the department / organization to develop additional capacity in terms of availability of services in both official languages and to ensure future assignments of employees will complement team profile. (Linguistic profile already meeting or exceeding the requirements)

TEAM LINGUISTIC PROFILES

Governmental organizations and departments must have the linguistic capacity to fulfil their duties in communicating with, or providing services to the public and/or other government employees. This means that some, but not all employees must have the required language skills to perform their responsibilities in both official languages.

A linguistic profile defines the language capacity that is required of a team to provide essential and quality service to internal and external clients in the language of their choice. A team that is in constant contact with the public may require a higher capacity for both official languages than another team that works in the same region. These profiles are determined at the departmental level in consultation with their Human Resources team.

Individual positions are not designated as bilingual or unilingual. If a bilingual employee ceases their employment, the position may be filled with a unilingual employee or bilingual employee, depending on the requirements of the linguistic profile and current team capacity. It is also important to note that linguistic profiles can be changed based on the needs and services delivered to an ever-changing client population.

PROCESS FOR SECOND LANGUAGE TRAINING REQUESTS

The process for SLT requests first involves reviewing the linguistic capacity of the team. The Human Resources team will work with management to determine whether teams are meeting linguistic capacity and if a business case exists for the department or organization to support formal training to meet departmental and legislative obligations.

ELIGIBILITY, PROFICIENCY AND MAINTENANCE

To determine whether or not an employee is eligible for training based on the requirements of the team, immediate supervisors must complete the SLT Management Approval Form included in the [SLT Registration Kit](#).

Level of proficiency required

The level of proficiency required depends on the type and extent of communication needed in the second language (example: employees who present and discuss more complex information and concepts will likely require a higher level than those who have brief interactions involving minimal usage of their second language).

Proficiency Testing

An oral linguistic evaluation completed by Linguistic Services, Finance and Treasury Board (FTB) is required for all employees registering for the first time in the SLT program. Employees who have been away from their training for more than 12 months will also need a new language evaluation before resuming their training.

This will improve the GNB's ability to measure the results of employees attending language training and the effectiveness of the current language training program. A recent linguistic evaluation will also help the service provider register the employee in the proper class according to his/her second language proficiency.

An employee will not be required to be evaluated:

- if they have identified, on the registration form, their current knowledge/understanding of their second language as "Nil";
or
- if they have been evaluated within the 12 months previous. Note: There may still be a brief placement interview by the training provider.

Frequency of linguistic evaluations for employees participating in the SLT program

Time and practice are key to successfully meet language requirements. The number of hours listed below represents an average of hours necessary to obtain a certain proficiency level.

Training Objectives	Hours of Training	Levels to Reach	Frequency of Linguistic Evaluations
Basic Program OF 1-12	+ / - 250	Basic	Annually
Basic Program OF 13-23	+ / - 250	Basic +	Annually
Basic Program OF 24-32	+ / - 250	Basic + / Intermediate	Annually
Basic Program OF 35-40	+ / - 250	Intermediate	Annually
Improvement 2	+ / - 300	Intermediate +	Every 3 years
Improvement 2+	+ / - 300	Advanced	Every 3 years

It should be noted that learners **must** actively take part in class activities and to **seize every opportunity** to use the target language outside the classroom if they want to reach the desired level.

Maintenance and Follow-up Training

Employees who have been supported by their department or organization to participate in language training are expected to maintain the language proficiency levels achieved. Should an employee wish to continue training and be part of a maintenance program, supervisors must complete the SLT Management Approval Form included in the [SLT Registration Kit](#) and include a rationale on why employee is requesting further training or wanting to participate in a maintenance program.

Note: Training alone is often not sufficient to improve/maintain second language skills. Approved participants will be required to complete a learning agreement which is part of the SLT Employee Request Form included in the [SLT Registration Kit](#), indicating other specific activities they will commit to, in order to put their learning into practice in their role.

Learner Progress

Please keep in mind that learners will require approximately 250 to 300 hours to increase from one proficiency level to another. This can impact what type of program should be suggested to an individual and the timeframe allotted for them to meet expectations with respect to the program.

Training for Approved Participants

The [SLT Departmental Coordinator](#), who is part of the Human Resources team, will work with the employee approved to participate in the training and their immediate supervisor to determine the most cost effective and appropriate training option. The training programs (Basic, Improvement, Maintenance, Tutoring and Immersion) are offered for both official languages, French and English, and all delivered through the approved service provider, Centre international d'apprentissage du français (CIAF). More information about the different programs is available in the [SLT Registration Kit](#).

The training year is divided into three (3) sessions:

- ✓ Fall (September to December)
- ✓ Winter (January to March)
- ✓ Spring (April to June)

The immersion programs are offered during the summer months (June, July and August).

MONITORING AND REPORTING

To ensure resources are allocated strategically and that the department is achieving a good return on its financial investment in second language training over both the short and long-term, the department will be responsible to monitor, report and assess overall learner results.

Attendance Reports

At the end of each month, the service provider sends an attendance report to FTB for review. Then, FTB sends it to the [SLT Departmental Coordinators](#) to follow-up with employees and their immediate supervisors.

Progress Reports

At the end of each year (end of June - early July), the service provider sends an individual progress report for each learner to FTB for review. These reports will be forwarded to learners and their immediate supervisors by their [SLT Departmental Coordinator](#).

Employees being supported by the department to participate in the SLT program are expected to fully participate in training, to make adequate progress, and to attend classes regularly. This information will be summarized at the end of the training cycle (September to June annually) and reported to senior management for consideration and assistance with decision making as to whether an employee will be approved to continue with their language training.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Human Resources

- Assist managers/directors in determining their second language training needs based on the team linguistic profile requirements.
- Assist managers/directors in determining the level of language proficiency required for various jobs and assist in the coordination of the evaluation of language proficiency.
- Coordinate with management to ensure that priority is given to the linguistic profile requirements when making language training and evaluation decisions.
- Help foster and maintain a work environment conducive to the effective use of both official languages by providing tools and advice.

Second Language Training Departmental Coordinators

- Assist employees with the SLT registration and/or withdrawal process.
- Liaise between the employee, management and the Official Languages and Diversity Unit of FTB.
- Follow-up on employees' comments and complaints regarding language training and seek to resolve them in a timely manner with Official Languages and Diversity Unit of FTB.
- Provide monthly attendance report to the employees and their immediate supervisors and

follow-up with learners on attendance or other issues as required.

- Distribute annual progress reports to employees and their immediate supervisors.

Immediate Supervisors

- Ensure employee participation in the SLT program is targeted annually and aligned to meet the needs of the organization.
- In conjunction with the employee, develop a plan outlining how they intend to apply, improve and/or maintain their second language proficiency (see Learning Agreement part of the SLT Employee Request Form).
- Ensure that employees approved for SLT are made available to fully participate and transfer their learning to the workplace.
- Monitor employee progress and attendance; ensure employees are aware of the benefits of regular participation as well as any factors which may jeopardize their own progress or that of others such as absence, lateness or other reasons.
- Withdraw employee when it is determined, in consultation with the employee, Human Resources and the service provider through FTB, that they are unlikely to attain training objectives or that work commitments will not allow for full participation.
- Ensure opportunities are available for employees who participate in the language training to use and improve second language skills and provide them with reasonable assistance in this regard.
- Evaluate outcomes of employees' training and development efforts and document details in annual performance review and learning and development plan.

Employees Approved for Training

- Ensure regular attendance and active participation in SLT classes.
- In conjunction with the immediate supervisor, develop a plan outlining how they intend to apply, improve and/or maintain their second language proficiency (see Learning Agreement part of the SLT Employee Request Form).
- Commit to acquiring the desired proficiency level in the recommended timeframe.
- Commit to using, improving and maintaining their achieved proficiency.

NOTE: The department is required to pay for all scheduled classes regardless of learner attendance. The department of Finance and Treasury Board maintains attendance reports and provides a summary copy to each [SLT Departmental Coordinator](#) on a monthly basis.