



# **Project Information and Instructions**



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### **Dear Participant,**

Thank you for agreeing to participate in the Essential Skills oral communication and thinking skills research project sponsored by the Canadian Automotive Repair and Service (CARS) Council with funding from the Government of Canada's Sector Council Program.

By participating in the project, your name will be entered into a draw to win an iPod (valued to \$500) or \$500 towards the purchase of tools. The winner selects the prize. The name of the winning participant will be drawn in June 2008 and the lucky winner will be contacted by telephone.

This guide provides information about the project and instructions for completing the paper-based or on-line version of the assessment. Sample questions are found on page 2 of this document. Instructions are found on pages 3 and 4.

### **About CARS and the Project**

The Canadian Automotive Repair and Service (CARS) Council is a Canada wide, not-for-profit organization that supports workers and employers involved in the automotive repair and service industry. CARS researches the industry's human resource needs and develops strategies to help employees enjoy safe and rewarding careers, employers to create successful businesses and customers benefit from excellent services.

CARS is sponsoring this project to determine the current level of oral communication and thinking skills (such as problem solving) within the industry's workforce. They will use this information to help employers, provincial apprenticeship departments and trainers ensure workers receive the training they need to fully benefit from all that the trade has to offer.

About 700 workers from across Canada will be involved in the project. The information collected from you and the others will be used for research purposes only and all data will be held in strict confidence. Neither CARS nor your employer will have access to your personal information or your results.

CARS has contracted with Bow Valley College to conduct the study. Bow Valley College will schedule and conduct the assessments and provide results reports to participants.

Every effort has been taken to ensure that your participation is a positive experience. The assessment is interesting, fast to complete and there is no need to study.

Please contact Lauren Wagner toll free at 1-877-410-3023 or by e-mail at [lwagner@bowvalleycollege.ca](mailto:lwagner@bowvalleycollege.ca) if you have questions.

### **Sample Questions**

On the following page are examples of the types of questions you will be asked to answer.

## Oral Communication Questions

The oral communication section is broken into speaking skills and listening skills.

For speaking skills, you are asked to select a statement and answer questions about a particular subject from one of the three selections. Please try to spend about 20-45 seconds answering the questions of your choice. You can preview the actual questions by looking on page 1 and 2 of the Question Booklet that was enclosed in your package.

For listening skills, you will answer questions from a total of six problem sets. You will read scenarios, listen to audio clips and select your answer. Here is an example of this type of problem set:

Scenario - The following scenario involves a taped conversation between an apprentice named Marc and his supervisor named Guy. Guy is providing Marc with a list of tasks he would like him to finish before shift's end. Using information from this conversation, please answer the questions below. The clip will be played twice, if you wish.

Audio clip (Guy's voice) "Marc, please finish balancing the tires on the Ford F150 and sweep the floors before leaving today". (Marc's voice) "My shift is scheduled to end in 30 minutes, but I could stay late and finish the jobs if you like". (Guy's voice) "No that's okay, just balance the tires before you leave." (Marc's voice) "Okay."

Question: What task does Marc have to complete before leaving work?

- a. no tasks
- b. finish balancing tires
- c. sweep the floors
- d. finish balancing tires and sweep the floors

## Thinking Skills Questions

The thinking skill portion assesses your abilities to solve problems, make decisions and think critically. You will be required to answer questions presented in eight problem sets by reading scenarios and selecting the best answer. Here is an example of this type of problem set:

Scenario: You are an automotive service technician who has been asked to perform an out-of-province inspection and issue roadworthiness certificates if no major faults are uncovered.

Question: While inspecting a 1999 Ford you discover the following items: mis-matched door panel colours which indicate the vehicle was previously involved in an accident; ripped rear-seat upholstery; 20 percent worn brake rotors and 20 percent worn brake pads. Based on these inspection findings, would you:

- a. not issue a roadworthiness certificate
- b. issue a road-worthiness certificate after the brake rotors are repaired
- c. issue a roadworthiness certificate
- d. issue a roadworthiness certificate after the repair of the brake pads

## **Instructions**

There is a paper-and-pencil version and an on-line version of the assessment. Both involve a telephone interview.

### **Instructions for those taking the Paper-and-Pencil Version**

#### Before the Assessment

1. Bow Valley College will contact you to schedule your assessment time and to get your mailing address.
2. Bow Valley College will mail you a package which includes the information you are reading now, a Question Booklet containing all of the questions, a Response Booklet that contains a questionnaire and the answer sheet to record your answers, and a self-addressed envelope.
3. Prior to your scheduled telephone call with the evaluator, please complete the questionnaire at the front of the Response Booklet.

#### Day of the Assessment

4. The evaluator will contact you by telephone at the designated time and telephone number. Please ensure that the room where you take the call is relatively quiet and free from distraction. The telephone call will last about 20 minutes.
5. After introducing themselves, the evaluator will answer any questions, review the instructions and then start the oral communication part of the assessment with the speaking skills questions. These tasks will take about ten minutes to complete. After that, the evaluator will play audio clips and have you mark your answers on the answer sheet in the Response Booklet. This part of the assessment will take about 15-20 minutes.
6. After the listening questions have been answered, you will be asked to complete the thinking skills questions on your own. Read the questions in the Question Booklet and place your answers in the Response Booklet. The thinking skills section will take about 30 minutes to complete.

#### After you have completed the Assessment

7. After you finished the thinking skills questions, place your Response Booklet in the self-addressed envelope and mail to Bow Valley College. There is no need to add postage. Bow Valley College will mark the answers in your Response Booklet once it is received. Your results will be mailed after the project is over in June 2008.

## **Instructions for those taking the On-line Version**

### Before the Assessment

1. Bow Valley College will contact you to schedule your assessment time and to get your mailing address.
2. Bow Valley College will mail you a package which includes the information you are reading now and a Question Booklet that has your three-digit identification number on the cover, the speaking skills questions and the workplace documents you will need to answer two questions.
3. You must ensure that the computer you will use for the on-line portion of the assessment has access to the Internet and audio capabilities, with speakers, to listen to the audio clips.

### Day of the Assessment

4. The evaluator will contact you by telephone at the designated time and number. Please ensure that the room where you take the call is relatively quiet and free from distraction. The telephone call will last about 10 minutes.
5. After introducing themselves, the evaluator will answer your questions and then start the speaking skills part of the assessment, which takes about ten minutes to complete.
6. After that, the evaluator will ask you to complete the rest of the assessment by accessing our website at the following URL: [www.towes.ca/cars](http://www.towes.ca/cars).
7. Once you have accessed the website, log in to the assessment by using your three-digit identification number located on the front of your Question Booklet and follow the directions to complete the rest of the assessment.

### After you have completed the Assessment

8. Bow Valley College will mark your test once you log off the website. Your results will be mailed after the project is over in June 2008.