

Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP)

**Linda Toms Barker
Berkeley Policy Associates**

**Creating Thriving Communities – One Person at a Time
Heartland Professional Development Symposium
St. Louis, Mo.
June 9, 2004**



Who are LEP Customers?

- People who self-identify on the Census as not speaking English “very well” or “well”
- People recognized by service providers as needing language assistance
- In some states – Deaf/HH for whom ASL is 1st language

Why Reach Out to LEP Customers?

- Attract a diverse pool of job seekers
- Offer employers language skills and cultural background to serve customers
- Fill skill shortages
- Reach job seekers in need of services
- Comply with Title VI and provide “universal access”



Ideas for Successful Outreach

- Research size of population, characteristics, and needs
- Research available resources
- Make services welcoming
- Use multiple communication methods
- Make it everyone's job
- Build partnerships

Ideas for Core Services

- Language friendly environment
- Orientation in other languages or with interpreter
- Assistance in the resource room
- Self-assessment tools in other languages <http://www.careerkey.org/> and <http://mythanks.tripod.com/mycareerlist/>



Core Services cont.

- Translation and interpreting - - trained Bilingual staff, translated materials, interpreter services
- Build on non-U.S. credentials
- Job seeking skills, assisted job search and follow-up

Ideas for Intensive Services

- Assessing language assistance needs
- Career and aptitude testing
- Case management and service coordination
- Pre-vocational, ESL, GED and basic skills training
- Computer literacy

Ideas for Training Services

Combine vocational training with English language instruction to help LEP customers:

- *To get a job:* basic literacy, describe abilities in an interview; soft skills
- *To keep a job:* follow directions, follow safety rules, ask questions, find and interpret needed information
- *To thrive and move up:* direct and teach others, negotiate, understand US workplace, set goals

Ideas for Supportive Services

Throughout service process:

- *Outreach* – advertise health care, money management, service info in other languages
- *Core* – partnerships, resource directory, workshops on U.S. workplace culture
- *Intensive and Training* – assess needs as part of plan, provide transportation, child care, work clothes, etc, help customers develop own skills to find and use supportive services.

Ideas for Business Services

- Resource center for interpreters, translation, ESL and VESL classes
- Customized applicant screening
- Customized training for incumbent workers
- Diversity training
- Foreign language training for supervisors
- Occupational safety training

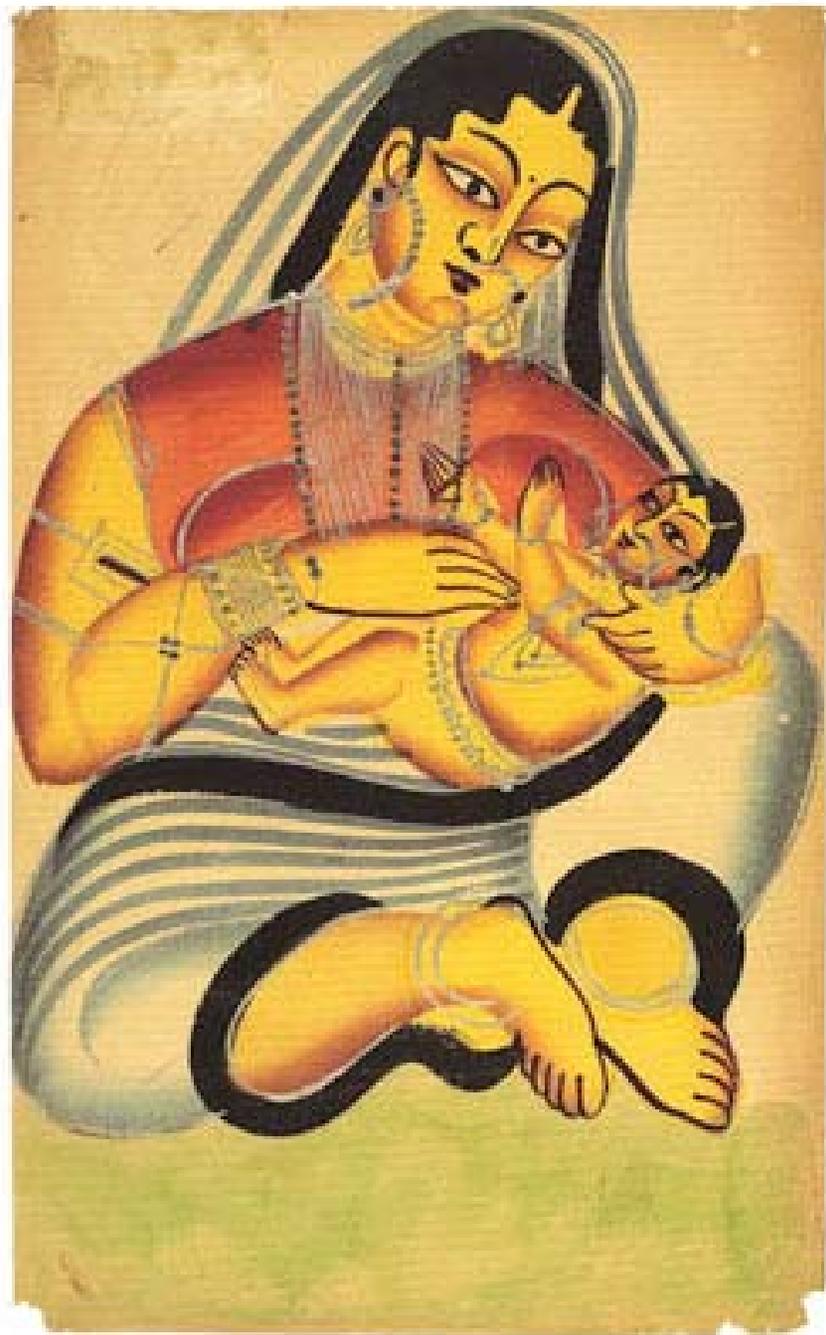


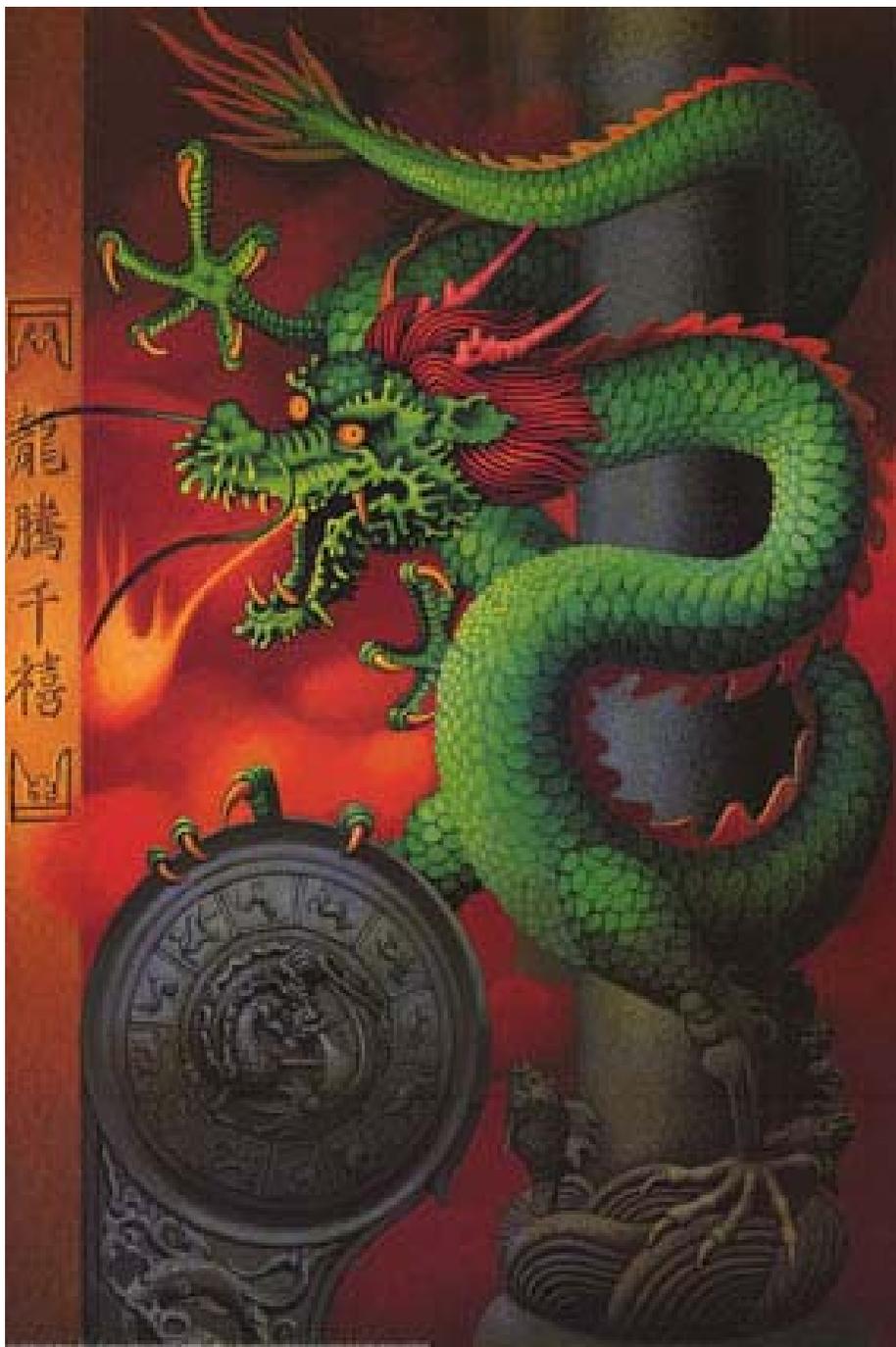
Ideas for Program Management

- Assessing the need
- Goal-setting and planning
- Communication
- Establishing policies and procedures
- Gathering resources and service strategies
- Defining clear roles
- Monitoring progress

LEP Customers Are Not One Group

- Some are born in the U.S.
- Some are immigrants
- Some are refugees/asylees
- Some come from well educated families
- Their English and literacy skills vary
- They come from diverse cultural backgrounds











Promising Practices –3 Keys

- Bi-lingual/multicultural staff
 - can provide meaningful access to services and play a critical role in outreach
 - Bi-lingual staff can be readily trained/certified as translators and interpreters
- Plan, innovate, implement, and monitor success
- Partnerships and collaboration
 - are the key to every phase of implementation and services delivery
 - Obstacles to effective collaboration are surmountable

Examples of Partnerships that Work

- Business partnerships such as those in sector initiatives, labor-management partnerships etc.
- Collaborative efforts with CBOs and FBOs
- Partnerships with community colleges and adult education programs
- Creative strategies for leveraging funds from refugee, education, housing, and other sources

DOL Initiatives for Serving LEP Customers at One-Stop Centers

- Technical Assistance Guide with a focus on promising practices
- Website with database of downloadable materials
- Census data: LEP language subgroups and their characteristics
- Expert directory – where you can find expert and peer-to-peer help
- Glossary in different languages
www.doleta.gov/usworkforce/lep



1. Technical Assistance Guide

Chapters include:

- Outreach
- The service process (core, intensive, training, supportive services, ESL/VESL)
- Business services
- Program planning and management
- Guide to on-line resources



2. On-line Catalogue of Materials

- Outreach materials
- Intake, Registration and Assessment forms
- Curriculum for Job Search and Work Readiness Workshops
- ESL, VESL, Basic Skills programs
- Occupational Training curriculum
- Professional development materials
- Business services

3. New Census Data

- English language ability for each of 39 different language groups
- Characteristics of LEP population (education, employment status, income...)
- By state and LWIA
- In Excel (on-line and CD-ROM)

Language Ability

STATE	NAME OF LWIA [or "STATE TOTALS"]						LWIA # #####			
	Speak English									
Language Spoken at Home	"very well"		"well"		"not well"		"not at all"		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Total population										
English only										
Language other than English										
Armenian										
Cambodian										
Chinese										
Gujarathi										
Hindi										
Hmong										
Japanese										
Korean										
Laotian										



Characteristics of LEP Population

STATE	NAME OF LWIA [or "STATE TOTALS"]						LWIA #:	
LEP POPULATION (Speaks English "Not Well" or "Not at all")								
Characteristic	Language Spoken at Home							
	English		Other than English		Armenian		Cambodian	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
AGE								
Total population								
18 years and over								
65 years and over								
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT								
FOREIGN BORN POP. BY YEAR OF ENTRY								
EMPLOYMENT STATUS								
OCCUPATION								
INCOME IN 1999								
POVERTY STATUS IN 1999								
LINGUISTIC ISOLATION								



4. LEP Peer Expert Directory

- Type of expertise (policy and planning, budgeting and management, services to job seekers, business services)
- Years of experience (workforce system, LEP, consulting/training)
- Training, background, other qualifications
- Specific language or culture focus
- Methods of TA
- Nominate at www.doleta.gov/usworkforce/lep



Contact us:

Linda Toms Barker, Project Director
Berkeley Policy Associates
440 Grand Avenue, Suite 500
Oakland, CA 94610
(510) 465-7884

For additional questions about the project feel free to contact me at linda@bpacal.com or (808) 934-9297.

To share ideas about Peer Experts or promising practices contact Maria at mryan@bpacal.com or (510) 465-7884.

