

ESOL

English for Speakers of Other Languages

Customer Service Training Curriculum

Teacher Guide & Student Book

MontgomeryWorks
Sales & Service Learning Center

11160 Veirs Mill Road, Suite LLH-7
Wheaton, Maryland 20902
240-403-3600

A Montgomery College Partnership Project

2007

ESOL
Customer
Service
Training

This project was developed through funding from the Maryland State Department of Education, Montgomery College, and MontgomeryWorks. It was also funded in part by Abt Associates Inc., under their Adult Education Coordination and Planning Project that was funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Vocational and Adult Education.



MontgomeryWorks



Background and Acknowledgments

In Montgomery County, Maryland, sales and service is a high-growth industry that employs a diverse workforce, including many immigrants. In response to this growth trend in the county, the MontgomeryWorks Sales & Service Learning Center (SSLC) in Wheaton, Maryland, working in partnership with Montgomery College, offered its first Customer Service & Retail Sales ESOL course in 2005. Funding through the national Adult Education Coordination and Planning (AECAP) project and the US Dept. of Education provided resources to develop this partnership and explore strategies to recruit, train, and connect participants with opportunities for employment.

During 2005-2007, the course and curriculum changed and evolved significantly to meet the needs of students and instructors. The first curriculum to be utilized in the course, the *Equipped for the Future (EFF) Retail Sales Curriculum*, was designed for learners of English as a second language. While this curriculum was strong in customer service skill content, students and instructors expressed a need for additional content that met learners' needs as language learners and job seekers. In response, instructors began to change the structure and content of the course, creating and sharing additional materials as the need arose.

The current course is the product of many people. Funding for the writing of the curriculum was provided through the AECAP project, Montgomery College and MontgomeryWorks. The former and current Directors of the SSLC, Rebecca Werley and Mary Ngo, worked with Donna Kinerney, Ph.D., Instructional Dean, and Emma Wilson, Program Administrator, of the Adult ESOL and Literacy-GED Program of Montgomery College, to develop and sustain the innovative partnership that made this course possible. The project also benefited from the support and expertise of Helen Coupe, Workplace Specialist, and Karen Gianninoto, ESL Specialist and Program Manager, of the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation.

There is no single author of this curriculum. The basis for much of the customer service skill content remains the *EFF Retail Sales Curriculum*. A significant revision of the curriculum was made by instructor Keira Ballantyne in 2006, and much of her original work appears here. Instructors Nicole Ring and Anna DeSimon contributed significantly to the curriculum, in terms of activity design, pilot testing, and consultation. Amber Gallup, the first instructor for the program, wrote this Instructor Guide and Student Book, compiled and edited the instructional material, and wrote many of the activities as well. Finally, much content from the *Crisp Learning Series' Retailing Smarts Workbooks* appears in this curriculum by permission of the National Retail Federation.

Thanks are due also to Judith Alamprese, Principal Associate of Abt Associates, for her support and knowledgeable guidance of this project through the Adult Education Coordination and Planning project.