

# PHILOSOPHY - MATERIALS - TEACHING TIPS

The following topics are covered in this guide:

A. Philosophy & Overview	E. Planning for Workplace Spanish® Classes
B. What is “Workplace Spanish®”?	F. Instructor Do’s & Don’ts
C. Class Training Objectives	G. Recommended Class Activities
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## A. PHILOSOPHY & OVERVIEW – *SPANISH WITH A PURPOSE™*

Workplace Spanish® was developed to help people communicate, SIMPLY and EFFECTIVELY, with Hispanic employees, co-workers, customers, patients and citizens – at work, in Spanish. Our purpose is to “improve understanding and communication” – not to create terrific Spanish speakers.

Today’s time-stressed, adult manager & worker is our sole focus. Many adults need to use Spanish at work, but few have the time or desire to study in the traditional way. They need QUICK, SIMPLE, RELEVANT terms and phrases that they can use daily, without spending months in classes and study.

## B. WHAT IS WORKPLACE SPANISH®?

Workplace Spanish® is a series of job-specific [Spanish \(and English\) learning programs](#) that employ both conversational and work-relevant terms & phrases, in a simple, easy to use format. Unlike traditional language instruction, our objective is to help people communicate in a limited way – primarily at work. Thus, our programs do not include grammar, alphabet list, language rules, verb conjugations, etc.

Each of our job-specific Spanish (and English) [Learning Kits](#) includes:

- o A well-organized, easy-to-use [Learning Manual](#) with:
  - o An Intro Section with learning, culture & language tips and a Spanish pronunciation guide
  - o Spanish Topics & Terms including both job-related and general conversational phrases
  - o Practice Conversations that reflect use in real-world workplace situations
  - o “Drills for Skills” quizzes that can be used in class or for self-study
  - o An Alphabetical Keyword List for fast lookup of the most important terms in the program
- o An [Audio CD\(s\)](#) that covers all of the terms & phrases in the manual
- o A very-helpful [Click It® CD-ROM](#) for use on the learner’s PC. [Click here](#) for Click It® usage tips.

Please note that Workplace Spanish® and Click It® are [registered trademarks](#) of our company, Workplace Spanish, Inc. If you are referring to our materials, you must use the trademark registration symbol.

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## C. CLASS TRAINING OBJECTIVES

1. **Understand the needs & priorities of the class.** Organizations invest in Workplace Spanish® training for very specific business reasons (e.g., improving communication & productivity; providing better service to Hispanic customers & citizens; reducing accidents & mistakes).

If you are conducting business & industry training for a specific client, you should know the client's problems and objectives before the class begins. If you are teaching a continuing education class, you will need to solicit needs and priorities from the students in the class.

2. **Keep in mind that your class is of short duration.** You typically will have 12 to 20 hours to achieve specific learning objectives. That time goes very quickly, and most adults will not do homework or spend much time practicing. Thus, everything you teach must be relevant to the workplace needs of the class.
3. **Teach the terms & phrases that are most important to your specific class.** Unlike traditional Spanish instruction, it is NOT necessary to have a firm lesson plan. Learn the work situations and communication problems that cause the most frustration and focus on those topics.

DO NOT try to cover all the material in the manual – it is far better for your students to master a limited number of important topics & expressions, than to simply cover a lot of material.

4. **Build a level of comfort and confidence on the key topics & expressions.** It's important that class participants gain the confidence to '*Say it in Spanish!*' Keep in mind that it is the use of the material, not the material itself, which is important!

The most difficult hurdle to overcome is “building confidence”. Repetition, practice conversations and cheerleading from the instructor are essential to building student comfort & confidence.

5. **Achieve a high level of customer satisfaction.** The “students” must leave your class feeling comfortable with terms and phrases they need on the job. Their “report card” is their confidence and ability to communicate in Spanish with Hispanic co-workers or customers! Your report card is determined by the students! This is bottom-up teaching!

## D. INSTRUCTOR CRITERIA

1. **An Upbeat Personality is a Must!** Instructors must be outgoing, friendly & energetic and must be able to relate to the workplace communication needs of their class. It's difficult for adults to learn a new language, thus the instructor must be more of a facilitator, coach and cheerleader. Instruction must be relevant, interactive and fun.
2. **Be Proficient in Latin American Spanish and English.** Ideally, the instructor should be proficiently bilingual in English and Latin American Spanish and have a good knowledge of Latin American culture and customs. Instructors cannot have a heavy accent – they must be easy to understand.
3. **Be Prepared and Professional.** Instructors must always be professional and dress appropriately – construction trailer dress is different from banking class dress. Arrive early to ensure everything is ready; of course you must be thoroughly knowledgeable with the material that will be taught.

4. **Add your own Value.** Be able to create new role-play scenarios, practice conversations, etc. Do NOT augment the manual with grammar, conjugations, the alphabet, lists of numbers, etc. – keep it simple – focus on conversation and use at work.

## E. PLANNING FOR WORKPLACE SPANISH® CLASSES

1. **Review the materials.** Thoroughly review all materials and training objectives before class begins, including manuals, audio CD(s) and the Click It® CD-ROM. Use Click It® yourself and explain to the class how they can use it to play pronunciations aloud for Spanish-speakers on their PC.
2. **Determine the topics to be covered.** Although the course material is provided in a logical order, instructors must plan their classes based on the needs and priorities of their students. It is your responsibility to learn the class priorities & choose the topics, quizzes and conversations that address those needs. Often less is more – never try to cover all the material in the manual.
3. **Presentation tools.** We strongly suggest using Click It® as the primary presentation method. It enables you to have a “central visual” on a screen for the class to focus on. It also is quite easy to move around the learning content to highlight areas of specific interest.

Click It® functions as a great substitute for PowerPoint. Suggested charts for starting the class are available in the ResourceCenter on our website and can be used in Word format or converted to PowerPoint to fit your needs. Equipment needs are a laptop, LCD projector, and a large “white board” or easel pad with color markers.

4. **Plan energetic, short activities.** Keep the classes moving along! Quiet time is boring – quizzes and role plays should be brief so there is not much “dead time” – think of “2-minute drills” and other quick things to do. Use the materials in the manual (Drills for Skills and Practice Conversations) and build on these activities as necessary to provide “real-world experience”.
5. **Have everyone sign the attendance sheet.** Regardless of who you are teaching, everyone typically needs a table name card and must sign an attendance sheet. Have these ready and give the sign-in sheet to whomever is in charge of the group.

## F. INSTRUCTOR DO'S & DON'TS

### THE DO'S:

#### 1) **Do -- stay away from grammar and traditional academic teaching methods!**

- a. Adults take Workplace Spanish® training to achieve specific business objectives, ranging from improving productivity to providing better service. We cannot repeat it enough – you are not teaching Spanish 101– you are facilitating communication in Spanish.

Do the right thing for your students – stay away from grammar, language rules, verb conjugation, formal vs. informal, masculine & feminine nouns, etc. These elements only add confusion and doubt and are not necessary for workplace conversation.

- b. As questions on these topics arise, they should be answered very simply or deferred until after class. Grammar discussions are the quickest way to complicate learning, create confusion and uncertainty, and lower the confidence level of the students.

**2) Do -- live up to our motto: *You DON'T have to be fluent to communicate effectively*™**

- a. Many adults are intimidated by the thought of “learning Spanish.” Put them at ease by letting them know that they don’t need to learn “the entire language and all the rules that go with it.” They only need to learn the terms & expressions that are important in their job.

**3) Do -- teach Workplace Spanish® orally and phonetically**

- a. By teaching orally and phonetically, you train the student’s ear to learn and repeat “bite-size” terms and phrases. Successful instruction relies upon frequent repetition, quick-paced individual drills, role-play, practice conversations and games.

**4) Do -- explain how to use the phonetic column in the manual**

- a. Usually the class will be looking at the phonetic pronunciation (not the Spanish word) as they learn the Spanish expressions. Teach them how to **use the phonetic column** to pronounce a word they are unfamiliar with. Point out that the key mistake most people make is trying to pronounce the syllables too quickly – thus mispronouncing them.

**5) Do -- focus on REPETITION OF PHRASES**

- a. With our method of teaching, it is CRITICAL to have everyone REPEAT the phrases ALOUD as often as possible. Repetition and speaking the terms and phrases aloud is essential to building confidence and memory retention. Coach the students on their pronunciation as they repeat individually. Make sure the student will be understood by a Spanish-speaker but do NOT insist on perfect pronunciation (it won’t happen).

**6) Do -- have fun, high-energy classes!**

- a. Classes must be upbeat & energetic. If the instructor sets an energetic pace and attitude, the class will respond accordingly. Too much “dead or quiet time” or a “lecture style” will destroy a class – don’t talk too much – lead and let the students “do the work”.

**7) Do -- include cultural tips that add additional value**

- a. Add value by discussing cultural questions that arise. Understanding why Latinos act or think in certain ways is helpful in building cultural understanding, teamwork and respect.

**8) Do -- develop rapport and maintain relevance**

- a. Your ability to develop rapport and relate the material to student needs is much more important than your academic qualifications. Remember, these programs are all about communication – not about language proficiency or knowledge.

**9) Do -- be prepared and professional**

- a. Instructors must always be prepared and professional. Dress appropriately – different locations have different requirements. Above all, arrive early to ensure everything is prepared and ready to go! Cell phones and pagers off (yours too)!

## THE DON'TS:

### 1) **Don't -- place emphasis on excellence or proficiency – they are NOT the goal**

Workplace Spanish® materials are NOT intended for developing proficient or fluent speakers of Spanish. Our objective is to help adults attain basic, business communication skills. Class duration is short – be realistic in what can be accomplished.

### 2) **Don't “augment” the manual with lists of verb conjugations, the alphabet, numbers, etc.**

You must understand the objective of the class FROM THE STUDENT'S VIEWPOINT – it's not to learn Spanish, it's to learn to communicate with Spanish-speakers at work. Keep the focus on what they need to say, not what you would like to teach in an academic environment.

### 3) **Don't -- spend class time answering questions on grammar or language rules**

Students interested in learning Spanish in the traditional manner can be referred to other courses offered by your organization, or to the many excellent books & tapes that are available.

### 4) **Don't -- try to teach everything in the manual!**

- a. There is too much material in the manual to teach in a 12 to 20 hour class.
- b. Learn the priorities and expectations of the class and spend the bulk of your time on those topics and expressions. Leave the balance of the material for reference or “phase 2”.

### 5) **Don't -- follow the flow of the manual if it doesn't fit the class needs**

The flow of topics in the manual is based on our own teaching experience. However, it may not reflect the needs of your group. Feel free to skip around to the topics and exercises that are most relevant to your group.

### 6) **Don't -- give much homework, if you give any at all**

Adult students expect instant results from a professional language course – they do NOT want to study and do homework. Homework assignments, if any, should be short, quick and totally relevant to workplace usage or needs.

### 7) **Don't -- let one or two individuals dominate the class**

Always remember that the purpose of the class is group learning. Although it is tempting to spend more time with struggling individuals or those who repeatedly ask questions, the group must take priority. Defer complex or lengthy questions & answers until class is over.

### 8) **Don't -- do all the talking**

Don't let the class become a lecture! After covering the basics of pronunciation and leading the group in pronouncing the expressions in Spanish, let the class do the talking through group repetition, round-robin individual repetition, practice conversations & role-play.

## G. RECOMMENDED CLASS ACTIVITIES

If you have not taught adults before, you need to know that they are tired, stressed, have short attention spans, and may not want to be in your Workplace Spanish® class. Instead of assuming the traditional role of “The Teacher,” you need to be a coach, cheerleader, facilitator and entertainer!

There are 3 secrets to a successful class:

1. Make it fun and interactive (no lectures, no grammar, no language rules)
2. Make it energetic – keep the pace moving and the activities changing
3. Make it relevant to work needs. Your students aren’t there to “learn Spanish”; they are there to learn “how to communicate” with Spanish speakers – simply and effectively.

Here are some different activities you can do in class; please feel free to modify them to fit your class needs and by all means, create your own activities!

**1) General Questions on Index Cards:** *Write brief questions on index cards, such as:*

- *How do you tell someone “nice to meet you”?*
- *How do you ask somebody what their name is?*
- *How do you tell someone “you speak a little Spanish”?*

Use the index cards as a review for the students at the beginning of each class – using terms from the previous class. You can also use them at the end of the class – reviewing material from today’s class. Keep them all for use on the last day of class (see #8 below).

You can switch modes by asking individual students a question; asking the whole class and waiting for volunteers; or, dividing the class into groups and asking different groups to answer the questions.

**2) Work Expressions Index Cards:**

Write different work situations on index cards (e.g., quality mistake, customer complaint, etc.) and have the students come up with a brief, appropriate Spanish translation.

***For example:***

*What would you say to an employee who frequently arrives late to work? The answer should be something like: “No llegue tarde.”*

**3) Work Situations Index Cards:**

Create real-world work situations in English on index cards. Divide the students into pairs and ask them to make up a short conversation in Spanish using the information you have given. Make sure they can find the expressions in the manual (**Do not use expressions that are not in the manual**).

***For example:***

*- It’s noon and a customer comes in to the store and tells you he is looking for a door. You greet him and ask him what size he needs. He needs 4’ x 7’, etc.*

*- The Spanish version will go something like this:*

*Buenas Tardes. Ando Buscando una puerta. ¿Qué tamaño? Necesito cuatro pies por seis pies.*

When the groups have finished creating their scenarios, they go to the front of the class and role-play their dialogues in Spanish. The rest of the class listens and interprets the conversation into English. Be sure that the dialogues come from the manual and are related to the classes' work environment.

#### **4) Play Money:**

When you are reviewing the numbers give students play money and ask questions such as:

*How much is this? ¿Cuánto cuesta? The students must answer in Spanish giving the correct amount of money they are holding. **For example:** Cuesta veinte dólares.*

**5) Flyers, Store Ads:** Pick up flyers from stores and ask the students questions about the products advertised. Make it relevant to the needs of the class.

#### **For example - for Home Builders:**

*Take a flyer from a home improvement store, give it to the students and ask them questions in English such as: What is this? (Flooring). How do you say this in Spanish? (Carpet). What color is the paint? (Blue). Or ask questions in Spanish such as: ¿Cuánto cuesta el martillo? (How much is the hammer?)*

#### **6) Spanish Expressions:**

Write down Spanish expressions on small color cards and give them to the students. Their challenge is to read them aloud in Spanish and give you the appropriate English translation.

**7) Pictures:** Have the students bring in pictures depicting work situations. Hold them up in class and ask them to come up with an appropriate Spanish expression covering the situation.

#### **For example:**

*A health care picture could show a nurse examining a patient. What would she be saying? A banking picture could be of a person cashing a check. What would the teller be saying? A factory picture could show a crew of workers on an assembly line. What would a supervisor say to them?*

*Many pictures can be downloaded from clip art software on the internet.*

#### **8) Final Class Game:**

At the end of the last class, and as a general review of the material, you can divide the class in two or three teams depending on the number of students. Ask them to come up with a name for their team in Spanish (popular names are Los Amigos, Las señoritas, Los Ganadores, etc.).

*Set up a score sheet in the front of the room and ask questions to each group using your index cards or just picking up expressions from the manual. The group that correctly answers the most questions wins the game. Offer some sort of small prize (bag of candy, etc.). This is a fun activity that creates lots of competition and ends the classes on a high note.*

## **H. CONDUCTING THE CLASSES – STEP BY STEP**

1. Pass out the learning kits, name cards, and attendance sheet
2. Greet the class and introduce yourself – talk about your background. Review housekeeping tips (i.e., cell phones and pagers off, location of restrooms and water fountains, etc.)
3. Use the Opening Charts (see the Resource Center on our website) to give basic info about Workplace Spanish®, discuss class training objectives and tips on getting the most from the class, etc. Use the “Culture & Language” quiz to help break the ice and get people talking.
4. At the end of the “Culture & Language” quiz – have each student briefly introduce themselves with name, location, department, etc., and their expectations OR their Spanish frustrations. Emphasize the importance of putting their inhibitions aside and having fun. Ask for their buy-in.
5. Follow with Spanish pronunciation. Teach and coach the class through basic vowel and consonant sounds in Spanish. Don't worry about trilling “R's” – it's hard to do and not necessary.
6. Explain the use of the phonetic column – encourage them to go slowly, syllable by syllable – the biggest mistake people make is trying to read the syllable pronunciation too quickly (often getting the vowel endings incorrect or skipping syllables).
7. Have the class repeat after you. Get them energized and have them repeat “loud and proud.” Use words such as fantastico, excelente, and perfecto to encourage them and build their confidence.
8. After group repetition, go around the room and have everyone repeat individually – let them practice pronunciation aloud while you coach them.
9. Start with Meeting & Greeting expressions and continue on to the topics that are most important to the class. If you don't know the class priorities, this is a good time to have them look through the manual to identify what is most important to them.
10. Switch teaching methods frequently – especially if it seems like you're losing the class. Do a 2-minute round-robin drill, do a practice conversation, do a role-play, give a culture tip or take a short break. Play a game or ask someone who is good to lead the class for a few minutes.
11. Have fun and be creative. Use treats as incentives to motivate your students. Chocolate works well. (Example: Reward your students with a Hershey's kiss for an excellent answer or good effort). Make it fun by insisting that they ask for it in Spanish.

You'll have to teach them how to say, “Give me a kiss” in Spanish. This is always fun! Students learn quickly. Before you know it, all your students are saying “Dame un beso” and having fun.

12. At the end of the class go over the using the audio CD(s) and Click It® CD-ROM. The audio CDs can be used in car, stereo, PC – users should listen to one track at a time and then repeat it – the second time, they should repeat the Spanish with the American speaker who is speaking phonetically.
13. At the beginning of each new class, ask for “success stories” or experiences of those who used Spanish successfully. Use these stories as examples of what everyone can achieve.
14. At the final class, pass out Certificates of Achievement or similar recognition for participation.

# **INSTRUCTOR FEEDBACK FORM**



We are very interested in your comments and suggestions. Please take a minute to jot down your thoughts along with any additional phrases we should add. We strive very hard to make our programs meaningful and easy to use; your feedback will help us to constantly improve. Thank you.

<b>NAME:</b>		<b>DATE:</b>	
<b>COLLEGE OR ORGANIZATION:</b>		<b>E-MAIL ADDRESS:</b>	
<b>PROGRAM TAUGHT:</b>			

**GENERAL COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS:**

<b>TERMS / PHRASES TO BE ADDED:</b>	

<b>FOUND ANY TYPOS? (PLEASE GIVE PAGE NUMBER)</b>	

**PLEASE FAX TO: Workplace Spanish, Inc. at (866) 772-0228 (no cover sheet necessary)  
OR email to: [info@WorkplaceSpanish.com](mailto:info@WorkplaceSpanish.com)**