

Needs Assessment & Goal Setting

Purpose: To formally assess the student's interests, short and long term linguistic and civic needs and goals, as well as their needs for specific focal skill improvement.

Directions: Administer the needs assessment and goals setting on the first or second session. Depending on your site, you may be holding registration for new students on the first lesson while simultaneously teaching a class. In these situations, it is best to wait until the second lesson so you may be able to assess more students instead of having to do it twice.

I begin by checking the groups understanding for the words: "Listening", "speaking", "reading" and "writing." I bring in four pieces of paper, each with a picture illustrating a separate focal skill (e.g., an ear for listening). I ask the group, "What is this?" Most of the class will respond correctly. I pick a corner of the room and hang it up. I repeat this until all four papers are hanging in separate corners of the room. I then ask the students, "What is the **most difficult** for you?" I emphasize "most difficult" and remind or introduce to them the words illicit a single answer. Once the question is clear and the students understand, I have them stand up and stand in their respective corners. I tally up all the students representative of each corner on the board. I then have them return to their seats and ask them, "What is the **second most difficult** for you?" Here, I emphasize "second" so the students understand it isn't the most difficult but close to it. I have the students stand again and repeat the same process as before. Once completed, we add up the tally marks. I circle the two highest scores and inform the class we will focus on those two specific focal skills more so than the other two (not that the other focal skills will be ignored though).

Next, I write the word "goals" on the board. I ask the students to try and provide a simplified definition of the term. We have an informal discussion about goals. I then introduce the terms, "short-term" and "long-term." Once the students understand these terms, I pass out the *My Goals* handout. Here, the students can write their short and long-term goals. I provide each table with an assortment of pre cut-up possible answers (e.g., "so I can get a better job") so they can get some ideas and/or more answer the questions on the handout if they need some prompts.

Lastly, I hand out the *What Do You Want to Learn* handout to each student. Here, the students have a chance to select their two most important topics of interest to study. I write all the topics on the board and ask each student for their two topics (or I ask for a volunteer). The scorekeeper keeps a tally of the topics. Once completed, I circle the two most important topics and inform the class these are the topics we will cover throughout the quarter.

After the class, I fill out the *Needs Assessment Results Template*. I will list the order of focal skills on the top and write in the topics of interest for the class and for each student. This document then serves as my teaching guideline throughout the quarter as I think about alternative ways to introduce material in order to meet the needs of the students.