

4.6.2 Targeting Skills Requirements

To identify future opportunities and markets and to ensure that their training services are indeed those demanded by the market, trainers must keep up to date on the skills requirements and on the retraining needs of the Canadian labour force.

Industry Canada's 1996 market assessment study for NMLM mentioned above, which is partially based on the Canadian Occupational Projection System (COPS), analyses skills requirements in 18 strategic Canadian industrial sectors and occupational categories. Most industries cite the need for management and computer skills training, for training to increase knowledge about foreign markets and for trade promotion skills. Training needs relating to health and safety are common to a number of industries. A large number of industries express a need for skills related to changing regulatory requirements specific to each industry. Other skills listed include technical skills, technology skills and marketing skills.

Labour market studies as well as sectoral analyses conducted by the HRDC sector councils identify skills shortages across a wide range of industrial sectors. For example, a study examining skills shortages (Society of the Plastics Industry of Canada, People in Plastics : Creating the Competitive Advantage, cited in HRD & Training Executive Update [NewsUpdate Communications Inc., Toronto], August 1996, p. 3) finds that the plastics industry is one of the fastest growing industries in Canada and uses more than 25 different types of skilled labour. Because its main source of skilled labour — immigration from Europe — is decreasing and because of increased automation and industry growth, the sector's requirements for skilled workers has jumped by 53 percent since 1988. Major investments in training will be needed over the next 10 years to keep up with the sector's growth. A second study, initiated by the Industrial Biotechnology Association of Canada (cited in HRD & Training Executive Update [News Update Communications Inc., Toronto], August 1996, p. 3), expects that about 1 300 research, technical and support jobs, 700 management positions, and 2 000 jobs resulting from new commercial applications of biotech research will be created by the end of the century.

4.6.3 Technology based Training

All client industries are looking ever more closely at their bottom line while requiring their employees to be educated in an ever wider group of subject areas. More firms are