



Welcome to the SHIFT Guidebook that will provide you with comprehensive course outlines for arts-based, soft skills training workshops designed, tested, and developed over the last four years with over 600 youth and employment professionals across Ontario.

### **What is SHIFT?**

SHIFT is an innovative employment training program for youth that utilizes the arts to teach the soft skills that are crucial to employment success. SHIFT uses art to engage and facilitate learning among youth and allows them to embody soft skills linked to situational awareness, time management, self-regulation, and effective communication that will assist them in navigating the workplace landscape, improving job retention, and overall career success.

### **Who is Centre[3] for Artistic and Social Practice?**

Centre[3] for Artistic and Social Practice is the backbone organization that developed SHIFT. It is a charitable artist-run centre and its mission is to support artists and collaborate with communities to create social change through art.

### **History of SHIFT**

SHIFT was piloted in 2016 with funding from the Ontario Trillium Foundation. It was a response to the realization that the lack of soft skills was the number one barrier to youth obtaining and retaining employment.

Centre[3] developed a theory of change that art is an effective vehicle for skills development as it engages youth and facilitates the embodiment of soft skills. Youth would be trained to communicate assertively, handle conflict, receive criticism, work in teams, and manage their time and emotions. This would build resiliency within the youth and result in increased job retention and employment success.

Centre[3] collaborated with local employment agencies, youth and artists to design, implement and evaluate the programs over one year. The feedback and outcomes from the programs were so positive that the Ontario Trillium Foundation supported the expansion of the program for another three years that would see the SHIFT team co-design, deliver and refine the program in collaboration with employment agencies throughout Ontario including; Hamilton, Brantford, Kitchener, Peterborough, Haliburton, and North Bay.

These proven lesson plans are the product of four years of testing, evaluation, and refinement. We welcome you to use these guidelines as a foundation for creating soft skills training courses in your organization.

Enjoy the guidebook and we wish you all the best.

The [shift] Team

