Steps to Success: Outreach

**Step 1**. Create a contact list of organizations, agencies, groups, and individuals who are likely to have employees or clients interested in or needing digital literacy trainings. Consider drawing from a variety of community groups in which employees are likely to need computer training for professional development as well as for their job performance.

Examples include:

* City, state, and other government offices
* Foodbanks and other assistance programs
* Community college students, especially Adult Basic Education
* Adult Basic & Literacy Education Programs (ABLE) (visit https://www.ohiohighered.org/able/locations)
* Adult Workforce Education Centers (AWE) (visit <https://www.ohiohighered.org/workforce>)
* ESL and literacy programs
* Business organizations, such as the local Chamber of Commerce
* Senior Centers
* Community health centers
* Rotary, Kiwanis, and other groups.
* Local industries, companies, and small businesses
* One Stop Job and Family Services locations

**Step 2.** Ask your Site Supervisor: Who has worked with the library before? Is there an organization that would be open to expanding a partnership?

**Step 3.** Develop outreach materials that you can use to support these outreach and awareness efforts. Begin with the templates at GuidingOhioOnline.org/marketing. This includes:

* A brief description of your classes.
* A copy of your training schedule or list of future classes.
* Information about the library’s resources.

This will help explain your efforts and show that you are planning well. Your goal is not just to have people register for your classes, but to spread awareness about the importance of the work you are doing by delivering these trainings.

**Step 4**. In the space below, prepare a written text or script to ensure you will mention all pertinent information to organizations you call.

**Step 5.** Make initial calls to agencies, organizations, or offices to discover the name and contact information for individuals best able to provide you with a means for contacting employees. Division leaders, managers, or human resource representatives can guide you towards the best ways to promote the trainings in their particular organization.

Be succinct but informative, emphasizing how the classes can help employees or staff, and therefore be a benefit to the organization as whole. Ask if there are options for marketing, such as posting fliers on bulletin boards, adding a notice to the website, leaving brochures or informational sheets, putting a brief article in the company newsletter, setting up table tents, or making a brief presentation to an employee or management group. Make sure you indicate that you are willing to undertake these tasks yourself, so the company or organization understands that you are not asking them to invest valuable time or staff in these efforts.

**Step 6.** Once you have made the initial contact, follow up with an email. This is the opportunity to ask your contact if there is anything else they would recommend in order to generate interest in classes. Asking a question invites them to respond and helps establish an ongoing relationship. This can lead to further conversation, discovering new community needs, and participation in future trainings. If possible, arrange a brief face to face meeting, perhaps when you drop off materials. This personal contact is another important strategy for continuing communication, and face to face meetings add legitimacy to your program and your intention.

**Step 7. Evaluate.** Six months after your first contact, ask yourself: which organizations worked well? Who was a good contact for distributing marketing materials? Who invited you to speak?