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### Illiteracy in the Workplace

In France, the struggle against illiteracy was born from work and reports done on poverty in the 80s. We tend to think that it concerns only those who are excluded from mainstream society and thus relegate it to social programs. Nevertheless, it must not be forgotten that the "discovery" of illiteracy is also contemporary with the rise in unemployment at the end of the 70s: because it was necessary to place workers in retraining programs that we discovered that they lacked the instrumental capacities, necessary for acquiring knowledge and new professional behaviors. This lack, or insufficiency, which shall be called "illiteracy", thus appeared first as a factor of professional, and then social, exclusion. The "struggle" against illiteracy is the political will to avoid that exclusion by offering to those in need, the possibility to acquire the instrumental abilities necessary for their "conversion".

That is to say that all the agents in the struggle against illiteracy have been aware of this problem for a long time. They have, however, fought against a number of obstacles.

1. Ignorance (real or feigned) of the supervisory staff of union organizations for reasons of company and workers "image".
2. Dissimulation behavior of those interested, either because of shame or fear of losing their job.
3. Risks of location in relation to possible plans for restructuring.

Therefore, any mass sensibility campaign about this issue was doomed to failure. It was better to occasionally rely on local partners to advance thinking and develop arguments in light of innovative experiments. And thus, little by little, another approach was developed, an approach of economic usefulness for the training of weakly qualified salaried workers which leads organizations and companies to institute mechanisms which seek to "modernize without excluding".