

Video Clip Transcript – SkillsOne Program

‘The Lucky Country’

Speaking with:

**Michael Cox, General Manager Government Programs
Shanan Hassan, ACL IHSS Case Coordinator
Niyanta Patel, ACL AMEP student**

with

Rodney Meier, SkillsOne Video Journalist

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Duration: 6 minutes

[Introduction to the ‘The Lucky Country’]

The Lucky Country

ACL provide training and job placements for skilled and unskilled migrants. Due to the skills shortage, it is necessary to get skilled workers into the workforce, however it is also important to ensure that they are prepared for work in this country and possess an acceptable level of English. Thus, skilled migrants are an important addition to Australia's work force, provided they can assimilate through functional language and understanding of Australian work culture

About the program which is providing migrants with skills...

The main program ACL provide is the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP), a consortium which has provided English language tuition and support to migrants and refugees since 1998, enrolling over 89,000 participants. Learning options offered by the AMEP include college and community-based tuition, multi-media and Individual Learning Centres, distance learning and home tutoring. Learners have access to onsite or locally-based childcare, counselling and referral support, and a range of other settlement services. The AMEP is an Australian education and settlement program for newly arrived migrants and refugees. As the only language program of its kind in the world, it is hailed internationally for its contribution towards the successful settlement of migrants and refugees. AMEP is administered by the Australian Government's Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC), and is delivered throughout Australia by various providers. Under the program, eligible migrants and refugees are provided with reading, writing, speaking and listening skills to a level of 'functional' English, that is, to a level that will assist each client to settle satisfactorily and improve their chances of finding a job in Australia. All clients have less than functional grasp of the English language, this is a requirement for entry. These skills are based on the nationally accredited Certificates in Spoken and Written English - a competency-based curriculum framework specially developed for the AMEP. Clients also receive information on the Australian way of life and advice on accessing essential services

In this feature, clients undergo language tuition in a large classroom while Michael Cox, ACL Government Programs General Manager, talks to us about the programs on offer at ACL. We also have Shanan Hassan, a Case Coordinator, who arrived in Australia 5 years ago as a refugee fleeing the civil war in his homeland of Sudan, Africa. Whilst participating in the ACL program he was identified as a strong and valuable worker and consequently offered a position within ACL. Shanan has been working within the Blacktown community, assisting people with settlement on arrival in Australia. Also, we speak to Niyanta Patel, 27-year old AMEP student who originates from India, about the kinds of skills that the program develops e.g. resume writing and interview techniques, and what she and other students hope to do once they have finished training.

[Transcript starts]

[Screen reads: 'The Lucky Country' A SkillsOne video]

[ACL AMEP student Niyanta Patel sits at a computer working on her resume]

Rodney: Niyanta what are you working on here today?

Niyanta: I'm preparing my resume and cover letter because I'm applying for the jobs.

[Michael Cox, General Manger Government Programs, in an ACL classroom of students learning the AMEP]

Michael: ACL delivers a range of programs to refugees and migrants settling in Australia and specifically in NSW metropolitan area. The main program that we deliver is the Adult Migrant English Program and that's designed specifically for settlers in Australia, who need assistance, in terms of their English language and learning, in terms of their settlement, and also the IHSS program for refugees and humanitarian clients settling in NSW.

[ACL AMEP student Niyanta]

Rodney: What have you learned as part of the Adult Migrant English Program here?

Niyanta: I have done a mock interview, also the resume and cover letter and after this I'm going to do a finance course this July, and SPARK (St Vincent de Paul Society Assisting Refugee Kids) training it's a program... a volunteer program.

Rodney: What do you do as part of SPARK, what kind of work do you do?

Niyanta: It's volunteer work, I have to go to school and play games with the children and share my knowledge with the children.

[ACL IHSS Case Coordinator Shanan Hassan]

Shanan: I came originally from Sudan in Africa. I came to Australia as a refugee, to get security and to get opportunity and to find a good job.

[Shanan speaks with a Case Coordinator at his desk]

Case Coordinator: They are quite okay, and the shuttle bus is just standing in front of the office. I have to open bank account for them...

Shanan: Show them about the shopping centre, about how they can use a train, how they can catch the bus ticket...

Case Coordinator: Okay.

Rodney: Shanan what's your role as a Case Coordinator?

Shanan: My role as a Case Coordinator, we are picking the family humanitarian refugees people from the airport, and we settle them to the short term accommodation, and we give them support for settling and other services like Centrelink, Medicare healthcare card, and enrol the children to school and the adults in the AMEP program and, to help find a job for them through the other agent services.

[ACL AMEP student Niyanta]

Rodney: What kind of career would you like to get into when you finish your English classes here?

Niyanta: Nowadays I am applying for the administration position, and my long term goal is to become a teacher. I was a mathematical and science teacher, so I want to continue with this field.

Rodney: So how is the Adult Migrant English Program helping you towards that goal?

Niyanta: It helps me a lot, in each and every way. When I came here my English was too bad. I have been in ACL for five to six months and I improve my English a lot. I can talk with the people, I can apply for the resume, I can face interview.

[Michael Cox in an ACL classroom of students learning the AMEP]

Michael: ACL assists migrants and refugees with gaining the language skills for work in a range of ways. Firstly, in terms of being able to vide through the Employment Pathways Unit, additional training in terms of skills and qualifications, also we look at the soft skills around employment. How to write a resume that works in Australia, going to an interview and the particular way to approach going for an interview in Australia. We also look at the language and the language skills that are appropriate in the work place.

[Shanan in an ACL AMEP classroom]

Rodney: Did you learn English through AMEP?

Shanan: Yes. I learned English through the AMEP program, and they help me to find a job and after that I just continue to TAFE for English for further study, and I continue to welfare diploma... welfare community service.

[Michael Cox in an ACL classroom of students learning the AMEP]

Michael: It's a constantly changing profile of refugee and migrants coming in, and they bring a range of skills and personal qualities with them to Australia in terms of their settlement. 70 per cent of the clients actually are looking for work, or looking for a better job, and one of our goals is actually to assist the clients in terms of achieving their needs and aspirations, particularly around employment. One of the largest groups of clients in the AMEP is actually accountants and we have teachers, bakers, hairdressers and they are people who are coming to Australia and making it a home, with the intention of actually being able to participate fully both socially and economically here in Australia. The great opportunity is actually being able to overcome the various barriers that they might have around skills, qualifications, the employability skills and also the English language.

[ACL AMEP student Niyanta]

Rodney: Have you made many friends here?

Niyanta: Yes, I have made many friends here. Lots of people from different... different countries in your class, so you can know about their culture.

Rodney: Do you and the other students help each other out... with the work?

Niyanta: Oh yes of course.

[Shanan in an ACL AMEP classroom]

Shanan: I got positive feedback from my community and they thank me about what we assist them and some of them, they said 'God bless you'.

[Michael Cox in an ACL classroom of students learning the AMEP]

Michael: The wonderful thing about the AMEP, and why I enjoy working in the area so much, is that it's an opportunity for those clients and an opportunity for the Australian economy and employers to maximize the skills and the social inclusion and economic inclusion for those people.

[Shanan in an ACL AMEP classroom]

Rodney: Do you feel like you are giving something back to the community?

Shanan: Yes, I really enjoy working with the community...helping, assisting them for finding a job, learning, encouraging them to get the skills to learn English, to find a job, to get opportunity in Australia.

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