



# 9 warning signs your employees need language training

Communication lives right at the heart of every business. It fuels everything you do from strategy to execution. Without clear, effective, and thoughtful communication your entire organization suffers. Everything from expanding your business to day-to-day employee productivity and engagement relies on effective communication.

You've undoubtedly witnessed what happens when communication breaks down:

- A piece of machinery isn't powered down safely
- A cost summary is misreported
- Incorrect prescription information is communicated to a patient

**Best-case-scenario:** the parties involved are frustrated and little work is accomplished.

**Worst-case-scenario:** You incur cost, or even worse, someone's life is at stake.

Regardless of severity, communication breakdowns result in a loss.



- A loss of **revenue**.
- A loss of **productivity**.
- A loss of a **customer**.
- A loss of an **employee**.
- A loss of **credibility**.

These are losses that no organization can afford. And up to this point, we're only talking about miscommunicating in your own language.

Now, let's add a language barrier to the equation. Things get a lot trickier. As we just explored, it's difficult enough to clearly communicate essential information in your own language. What if you're communicating to a coworker, boss, or customers in a language you don't speak very well?

Research from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) shows that non-English speakers receive less safety training than English speakers.<sup>1</sup> The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) also estimates that nearly 25% of all work-related incidents can be directly attributed to language barriers in the workplace.<sup>2</sup>

If you're worried your organization might have a language problem, it's time to do an honest assessment. The best place to start is with your organization's target learners, also known as your employees. Let's take a look at 9 warning signs your employees need language training.

## THE 9 WARNING SIGNS

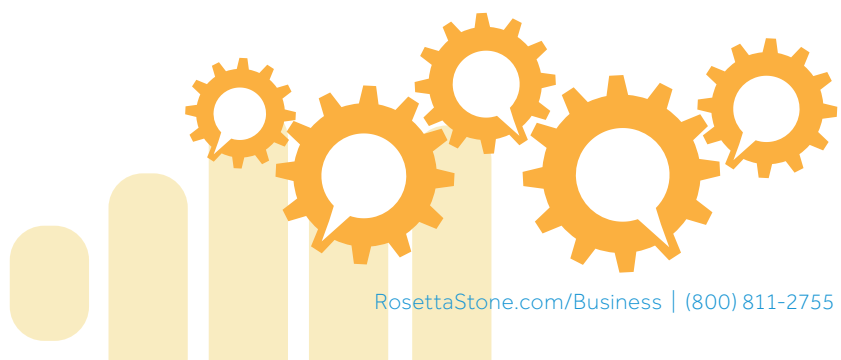
### ① You have a large number of Limited English Proficiency (LEP) hourly employees

A large, multilingual workforce is definitely worth celebrating. Keeping everyone informed about their roles, basic responsibilities, policies, and safety protocols is both a liability and a major challenge for productivity across the organization.

Solving this challenge involves a focused effort across your entire business to shift employees' perception of language training.

### ② On-the-job safety incidents are on the rise

Do LEP employees fully understand safety policies and protocols? How does that impact their daily tasks and your ability to retain LEP employees? Safety compliance in a multilingual workplace is a critical and expensive problem to solve. Depending on the severity of the incident, miscommunicating a seemingly simple safety protocol can cost hundreds of thousands in compliance penalties.



### 3 Customer service is compromised when employees can't speak your customers' language

Are you fully aware of the languages your customers speak? Have you ever lost a customer due to a language barrier that provided a bad experience? Do you understand the role of communication in each of your customers' local cultures?

Your answers to these questions may reveal a clear need for language training that truly immerses your employees in daily speaking practice with native speakers to truly understand the preferences of your customers.

### 4 A large chunk of your voluntary resignations are tied to a lack of professional development

Our latest research shows that 60% of employees will stick with an employer for if they provide language training as part of their professional development programs. Meanwhile, only 30% of companies actively make that investment.<sup>3</sup>

A holistic retention strategy includes language training as an additional element of professional development across your business.

### 5 You have lowered job expectations for LEP employees

Language barriers present in many forms on-the-job. One common result of miscommunication comes in the form of misunderstood job expectations. This often means lowered productivity, more mistakes on the job, and general frustration from your broader teams. Operationally, you may default to lowering expectations for LEP employees, which can damage morale and result in higher turnover.

### 6 Employee onboarding takes longer for LEP hires

Onboarding is already a complex and expensive process that is often included in an employee retention Venn diagram. Simply put, onboarding hourly employees is costly. This is largely due to the fact that about half of your hourly employees will leave their jobs in four months or less.<sup>4</sup>

Since you're already investing time and resources into training LEP employees, it makes perfect sense to retain those employees. Adding language training to your employee development plan can go a long way to show every employee you are invested in their future with your company.

### 7 Your hourly LEP employees are stalled in their careers

If there's a clear trend that LEP workers are at a career advancement standstill, it's probably an indication that you have a language problem. When language barriers are a hurdle for career advancement, your employees will be less engaged in their work and are less likely to pursue advancement within your organization.

It's clear that finding skilled talent is a challenge, but you may have the right people sitting within your organization flying under your radar. Create a win-win situation for your employees. Use language training to help them take the next best step for their career.

### 8 Collaboration is an ongoing challenge across your business

Do you have a collaboration and productivity problem across your global teams? Language barriers could be at play, while your employees look to you for an effective training solution.

A recent survey of Rosetta Stone® Catalyst® users showed two of the most desired outcomes include teamwide collaboration (66% of respondents) and improved verbal communication (68% of respondents) with teammates.

### 9 Future employees will have similar obstacles to overcome

Is your hiring strategy impacted by language challenges across your business? As you look to fill future roles and grow your business abroad, it's critical to take stock of how language barriers will impact employee performance, compliance, retention? and growth.

## Join 12,000+ industry leaders who use language solutions from Rosetta Stone

Regardless of industry, language barriers present a complex problem to solve for any organization. Unfortunately, there isn't a one-size-fits-all solution that will magically solve all of your communication woes.

The good news is that flexible, immersive language learning tools can help set your team up for success and put your organization on the path to evolving communications on a global scale so you can minimize risk and productivity loss and maximize collaboration and employee engagement in a way that aligns with your larger business strategy.

Rosetta Stone® Catalyst® helps every employee within your organization communicate, collaborate, and engage with their work. This ultimately results in significant strategic gains across your business—from reduced retention costs and improved productivity to minimized compliance risk and better customer experiences for all.

### With enterprise language solutions from Rosetta Stone you can:

- Improve retention
- Drive expansion into new markets
- Dramatically improve collaboration across your organization
- Foster a customer-obsessed work culture
- Reduce compliance risk by knocking down communication barriers

Learn more at  
[RosettaStone.com/Business](https://RosettaStone.com/Business)



#### Resources

<sup>1</sup> "Inside NIOSH: Injury from Work-related Assaults Increasing among Law Enforcement Officers" May 2018. <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/research-rounds/resroundsv3n11.html> <sup>2</sup> "CAL/OSHA: Pocket Guide for the Construction Industry" 2019. [https://www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/dosh\\_publications/constguideonline.pdf](https://www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/dosh_publications/constguideonline.pdf) <sup>3</sup> Rosetta Stone Learner Survey Insights Report. July 2019. <sup>4</sup> Onboarding New Employees: Maximizing Success. <https://www.shrm.org/foundation/ourwork/initiatives/resources-from-past-initiatives/Documents/Onboarding%20New%20Employees.pdf>