

LTI Testing Services

Language Testing International (LTI) is the exclusive distributor of the internationally recognized proficiency assessments developed by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL).

ACTFL is an organization dedicated to the improvement and expansion of the teaching and learning of all languages at all levels of instruction. ACTFL is an individual membership organization of more than 12,500 world language educators and administrators. ACTFL assessments are the products of fifty years of research, development, and application within the academic, government and commercial sectors in the U.S. The validity and reliability of ACTFL assessments are supported by published research studies presented annually at professional conferences worldwide.

ACTFL/LTI is the world leader in the direct assessment of language proficiency in speaking, writing, listening, and reading, and currently offers testing in over 100 languages.

Proficiency Testing

LTI has organized and administered proficiency assessments for over 20% of Fortune 500 companies, as well as countless universities, and government agencies across the globe. In 2023, LTI will have administered over 500,000 language proficiency assessments.

ACTFL develops its assessments through validation studies and reliability evidence, and therefore affirms the appropriateness of the tests and the accuracy of its results to inform the user about language proficiency, and about an individual's skills and abilities in speaking, writing, listening, and reading in the target language.

Before testing begins for the client, LTI will work with the client's Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) in order to set fair and appropriate, legally defensible minimum proficiency levels, as well as confirm/identify the necessary skills to be tested for the position. This standard setting is referred to as an LTI Task Analysis.

LTI will create a customized client utility website to facilitate the online scheduling of the assessments selected. Through this site, the client will be able to order tests, view schedules and retrieve ratings at any time.

In the event of a rating dispute, for a modest fee to cover the associated costs, LTI will retrieve the recording/written copy of the test and forward it to an ACTFL-Certified rater who will blindly rate the test to review the rating. If there is sufficient evidence that the rating should be changed based on the Quality Assurance review, the new rating will be updated in the system and the client will be notified of the change.

LTI Task Analysis Description

Language Testing International (LTI), working with a group of Industrial and Organizational (IO) psychologists, developed the LTI Task Analysis (TA) process to assist companies in establishing minimum proficiency levels for bilingual positions. The process requires the client to carefully select a group of “Subject Matter Experts” (SMEs) who are very familiar with the communicative tasks involved in the positions and represent all stakeholders in the selection of effective bilinguals for those positions. Through a series of data collection activities, the SME group identifies the communicative tasks and functions; range of content/context areas; level of accuracy; and degree of elaboration needed to perform the tasks of the bilingual positions in question. All data collection activities and questions, descriptions and language samples are based strictly upon the criteria of the ten distinct proficiency levels articulated in the appropriate *ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines*. The data collection activities are outlined below:

1. Complete a Task Analysis Survey:

The LTI Task Analysis Survey is carefully constructed to address the major criteria or features for measuring proficiency in a target language: Communication Tasks, Contexts/Content, Accuracy, and Discourse Type. There are questions that address these criteria with a selection of responses that describe language produced at specific levels of proficiency according to the appropriate *ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines*. There is at least one open-ended question asking the SMEs to describe acceptable performance of each feature of proficiency. Finally, there are questions about the target audience, type of new hire training, and in-language job aids available, as these resources influence employee performance in a target language.

The survey is used to gather in-depth information regarding the situations and contexts in which the employee uses the target language; the range of vocabulary needed; the overall accuracy expectations (grammatical, pronunciation, and vocabulary); level of formality; cultural attributes; English tolerance and empathy of the target audience. The questions on the survey and choice of responses directly correspond to the criteria for the ACTFL Proficiency Level. Other information gathered includes the amount of training in the target level received on the job, job aids available in the target language, etc., which might impact the minimum proficiency level finally established.

2. Review of the ACTFL Proficiency Level Descriptors:

The SMEs are given written descriptions of ten proficiency levels based the *ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines – 2024* in the appropriate modality. After reading each description, they are asked whether that description of proficiency would be acceptable or unacceptable to perform the communication tasks of the bilingual positions.

3. Review of Speech and/or Writing Samples in the Target Language:

The SMEs listen to and/or read language samples in the target language at various levels of proficiency according to the ACTFL Proficiency Scale. After reviewing each sample, they are asked to indicate whether the proficiency demonstrated in the speech and/or writing samples is acceptable (or not) for the bilingual positions in question.

The data collected from these three exercises are compiled and analyzed by LTI language proficiency experts. First, the compiled and tabulated Task Analysis Survey responses are reviewed to develop a language proficiency profile of the bilingual employee in that language based on the correlation of the SME responses to specific language proficiency level criteria and features addressed in the survey. The proficiency profile developed from the survey responses is then compared to tabulated results of the other two exercises, involving identifying acceptable and unacceptable levels of proficiency based on reviewing ten proficiency level descriptions and listening to and/or reading language samples in the target language. Through the analysis and comparison of all data collected from the three activities, the language proficiency experts determine the minimum proficiency level most consistently identified by a majority of SMEs when they describe job performance requirements and acceptable levels of proficiency.

Since 1993, LTI has used this LTI Task Analysis approach with over fifty corporations and government agencies, examining hundreds of bilingual job titles. Originally done face-to-face with SMEs, it is now done remotely via web-based survey, thus enabling SMEs from any region or office to participate in the process.

LTI Task Analysis Leveraging

In addition to offering the service to conduct a full Task Analysis as described above, LTI also offers the option 'to leverage' a minimum proficiency recommendation between two job titles when specific criteria are met. When two job titles are nearly identical in terms of the job tasks, functions, and responsibilities, the minimum proficiency recommendation established for one role (via a full Task Analysis) can be applied to the new role for which incumbents carry out very similar job tasks and functions in the target language. However, the following conditions must be met in order to leverage the minimum proficiency recommendation from one job title to another.

1. The leverage must be based on a job title for which a full Task Analysis was conducted within the past ten (10) years. A job title that was already leveraged cannot serve as the basis for a new leverage.
2. The leverage must be for the same modality (i.e., speaking, writing) and for the same target language.
3. The job descriptions (JD) of both the base role (i.e., for which a full TA was conducted) and the role to be leveraged must indicate that incumbents in both roles carry out very similar tasks and functions. For example, a full TA may have been conducted for the role of **Sales Representative I**. A minimum recommendation of Advanced Low (AL) for Speaking in Spanish may have been established for that role. If at a later time, a new role of **Sales Representative II** is created, the client may wish to request a leverage of the AL minimum proficiency recommendation established for the **Sales Representative I** role to be applied to the **Sales Representative II** role. However, it is essential that the Job Description of the **Sales Representative II** role describe nearly identical speaking tasks in the target language (i.e., Spanish) as those in the **Sales Representative I** role.
4. A Task Analysis is conducted only for those roles for which testing with LTI will be completed.
5. **If a role does not require incumbents to perform their job duties in another language, a Task Analysis will not be conducted.**

In order to provide a more efficient response to a leverage request, we require that the client provide the name of one job title that will serve as the justification for a leverage, along with the target language, modality, and minimum proficiency recommendation. Again, this job title (and job code, if applicable) must have been included in a full Task Analysis within the past ten years. More than one new job title can be leveraged from one original job title if the Job Descriptions for the new roles justify the leverage. Please note that it is not possible to use more than one job title as the base for a leverage. Please see example table below:

Task Analysis Leverage Request (Example)					
Job Title & Code Minimum Recommendation based on a full Task Analysis	Line of Business (LOB) (If applicable)	Language / Modality	Minimum Proficiency Recommendation via Full Task Analysis	Job Title & Code to Leverage	LOB (If applicable)
Sales Rep I (10001) Advanced Low (AL)	Sales	Spanish / Speaking	Advanced Low (AL)	Sales Rep II (10002)	Sales
				Sales Rep III (10003)	Sales
				Sales Rep IV (10004)	Sales
				Sale Rep Manager	Sales

*Total Estimated Delivery Time: 2-4 weeks after all SMEs have completed the online survey (times may vary depending on the nature of the Task Analysis).

**The Task Analysis fee will be determined based on the specific requirements of each client’s TA scenario (e.g., the number of minimum language proficiency recommendations, languages, modalities, etc.). The most common Task Analysis scenarios are charged between \$2,100-\$2,700 per job title or job code.

*** The Leverage is charged at \$560 per title.