

Case Study 2

This case study explains how the Career Centre at the University of Toronto has been evaluating their career counselling service.

This case addresses the evaluation of:

Inputs	no
Processes	yes
Outcomes	yes
• Learning outcomes	no
• Personal attribute outcomes	no
• Impact outcomes	yes

Evaluating Career Counselling at the Career Centre, University of Toronto

We decided to create a career counselling feedback form in order to measure the effectiveness of our counselling sessions and to provide support and information in our annual report regarding the effectiveness of our counselling appointments. Our hope was that this would serve as an initial benchmark or metric of the effectiveness of our career counselling sessions (we had never done anything like this previously).

The Evaluation Tools

The career counsellors at the Career Centre, University of Toronto (St George Campus) created a Counselling Feedback Form.

Counselling Feedback Form



Logistics

Who the tool(s) were used with	The tool was used with students.
When the tools were administered	For a two-week period during October 2009 and February 2010.
How the tools were administered	During the specified time periods, students coming in for 1-1 counselling appointments were informed, at the end of that particular counselling appointment, about the survey and provided with a paper copy of the feedback form. Students could complete the form at their leisure and drop their completed form in a receptacle available at the front desk.
Response rate	The goal was for each counsellor to distribute between 10-20 forms within the two-week period. For the two assessment periods during 2009, 93 students returned completed surveys (52, 41 respectively). This represents approximately a 70% response rate.
Summarizing and analyzing data	The career counsellors summarized and interpreted the data using an Excel spreadsheet.

Our Results and Learnings

The feedback collected confirmed that students find counselling sessions to be effective in helping them address their concerns and identify and achieve their goals. Data was included in our annual report to support the measurement of outcomes for career counselling appointments

The strengths of the Counselling Feedback Form were that the tool was clear, straightforward, and easy to administer. One weakness is that it does not measure learning.

Reflecting on the overall approach we took, a strength is that this approach resulted in a higher than anticipated response rate. This was possible because the form was administered directly after the counselling session. A shortcoming is that while the tool we developed provides us with useful feedback, it does not fully “measure” career counselling effectiveness or outcomes.

There is still a need to find a better tool for assessing the effectiveness of counselling interventions. The counselling relationship is less learning driven and more process oriented, thereby making the assessment of learning outcomes a bit problematic. Client outcomes are not pre-determined by the counsellor, but the counsellor can have an impact on the outcome if s/he employs effective listening, intervention, or whatever is needed by the client to move them to the next step.

This tool and overview were submitted by the Career Centre at the University of Toronto.