

Case Study 6

This case study describes the approach the Student Success Centre at The University of Western Ontario has used to evaluate their Job Prep 101 program.

This case addresses the evaluation of:

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

Evaluating the Job Prep 101 Program at the Student Success Centre, The University of Western Ontario

Job Prep 101 is a one week program designed to support students who will be completing their degree within three months and who are actively seeking non-academic employment. The program runs 5 full days from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm. Participants work in large and small group formats with other students, staff, and employers to prepare them for the job search process.

This program was initiated in 2007 as a research project for the Career Counselling team to help determine how career support could be provided to a large group of students in an effective and efficient way, while meeting program and student objectives. Because of this, program evaluation was extremely important for determining whether we would integrate this program into general practice in the future.

There were two main reasons for evaluating this program:

1. To inform program development and services provided to students.
2. To demonstrate how career services contributes to student and graduate success.

The Evaluation Tools

The tools that we used and developed were:

- Pre and post tests
- Daily reflections
- Pre and post resume evaluation rubric (from: http://academics.smcvt.edu/cbauer-ramazani/BU113/Rubrics/resume_rubric.htm)
- Testimonials

The career counselling team developed the tools with the help of an Educational Researcher from Western, and utilized one external resume evaluation tool, to which we made a few changes.

Job Prep Pretest



Job Prep Daily Reflection



Job Prep Resume Rubric



Job Prep Registration form: The program registration form is also



provided for your information.

Logistics

Who the tool(s) were used with	Students
When the tools were administered	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pre and post tests – administered at the beginning and the end of the program (100% response). 2. Daily reflection – administered at the end of every day (5 days) (100% response). 3. Pre and post resume evaluation rubric – administered at the initial and the final stage of resume development (80% response).
How the tools were administered	Paper and pen.
Response rate	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pre and post tests – 100% 2. Daily reflection – 100% 3. Pre and post resume evaluation rubric – 80%
Summarizing and analyzing data	Microsoft Excel was used for data collection and data comparison. An administrative assistant entered and summarized the data. In 2008, collection and interpretation of data was approved by the Research Ethics Board at Western and was interpreted by an Educational Researcher. After interpretation, the counselling team decided that based on the overwhelmingly positive results the program would be integrated into career services as standard practice for supporting graduating students. Data continues to be collected and interpreted to inform future program development.

Our Results and Learnings

The first statistical interpretation of the Job Prep 101 program in 2008 confirmed that it was effective in meeting program objectives and desired outcomes.

For each question in pre/post test, we report the results of a paired t-test (a statistic which compares two means which are paired in some way: pre/post data collected from the same participants). The t statistic in our case is negative because the mean from the post test is larger than the mean from the pre-test. The p value indicates if the t is significant or not. In each of our questions the difference is significant. The findings were very impressive and all of the items from the pre- and post test showed a statistically significant difference.

Reviews of pre and post test evaluations and daily reflections indicate students' high levels of satisfaction and a marked increase in confidence and content knowledge. Written student testimonials also support the findings of the pre and post test evaluations.

The strength of the tools used include the ability to capture change that the program caused, as well as the opportunity to reflect on the program immediately after the intervention was presented (daily reflection). For research based evaluation, we need to secure more resources and staff for the future.

Developments

There have been a total of seven Job Prep 101 programs offered since its inception in 2007. The Job Prep 101 program has since been tailored to specific groups such as Masters, PhD, and Postdoctoral students; students in the faculty of Arts and Humanities and Social Science; and in a modified format to a group of students who were laid off from an on-campus employer.

Every variation of the Job Prep 101 program has seen outstanding success. Evaluations, daily reflections, and testimonials continue to be extremely positive, and students report that the experience has increased their self-esteem, self awareness, and their readiness for job search.

Each year a report summary of the Job Prep 101 Program is developed and shared with the staff at the Centre as well as with the Western Career Partners. Each year, we use the data collected and participants' recommendations to make minor program adjustments to content and format to continually enhance the quality of the program.

This tool and overview were submitted by the Student Success Centre at the University of Western Ontario.