

Case Study:

CraigOwl Communities – Employability Programme “Skills for Success”

+ Logic Model Insert



Background

CraigOwl Communities is a charitable company that supports people with a range of disadvantages to participate in learning. We operate from four community based learning centres in Dundee and have around 30 staff. Two of our main programmes have been operating since April 2008 and relate to employability – aiming to move people towards being “work ready”. 85% of staff are involved in delivering these programmes. Following a review with staff of the programmes’ strengths and weaknesses, it was decided to restructure the two programmes into a single programme and make a number of improvements. These included:

- Increasing the emphasis on client individual needs and providing appropriate delivery pathways
- Improving our ability to ensure that what we are delivering is effective (i.e. developing a comprehensive way to evaluate our outcomes) and linking this to collection of management information
- Restructuring use of staff and premises
- Refocusing staff on the needs of the client rather than the needs of externally imposed management information and “outcomes”

The development work is being led by a group of four project co-ordinators.

The programme model developed (attached) is not a pure logic model. It uses some aspects of the logic model methodology – clarifying programme inputs and outcomes – but is primarily a mapping of the delivery of the programme. The model was used for the practical purpose of framing the redevelopment of the programme content and structure.

Focus on one method

Key to improving the programme was the need to develop a better way to identify clients’ needs/expectations (the Initial Assessment), linking to a way of ensuring that we meet those needs/expectations (the Personal Development Plan). The specific aims were to:

- Increase the person-centred approach of the service
- Improve the ability of clients to reflect on their own progress
- Improve our ability to evidence client progress where that progress is “movement towards work readiness” – the funder’s objective.

We intend to adopt a two part approach to the initial client assessment.

(i) A computer-based initial assessment questionnaire will be completed by the client to gauge their views about their own capabilities in relation to the programme outcomes. The questionnaire has 20 questions, each with 3 levels of response indicating whether the client believes they have a development need in that area. The questions, and therefore the development areas, relate either to the outcomes of the programme or are designed to help identify literacy/numeracy needs. A voice-over ensures that clients with literacy difficulties are able to use the tool. Staff will be around to assist.

(ii) A face to face discussion with a project worker to talk through the report from the computer-based questionnaire, record their goals in each development area, prioritise their goals and develop a Personal Development Plan – linking directly to the eight programme outcomes. The PDP records the client’s initial score for each area and provides for a review period after which the computer based assessment may be carried out again and second results recorded – hopefully showing client progress. The client is asked to record numerically the extent to which they feel they have achieved their original goal for that development area.

We intend to support this new assessment method by introducing a case load approach so that each client has an identified project worker who sees them through the programme. The use of this initial assessment process will allow us to better engage the client with the aims of the learning opportunities on the Skills for Success programme and, where the clients’ needs do not match our programme outcomes, to identify where clients should be referred to other specialist service providers. It will enable staff to tailor PDPs to the client. By collecting information in the database on (i) initial assessment and PDP and (ii) reviewed assessment and reviewed PDP, we will be able to show client progression.