

Developing a Training Program for PLA Evaluators

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Who Am I?

- Associate Professor of Adult Education
- Program Professor
- Faculty Advisor
- At MNU for 19 years; taught in Division of Innovative Adult Education the entire time
- B.A. in Religion, M.Div. in Christian Education , Ed.D. in Adult Education
- Adult Educator **and** Adult Learner



Who Are You?

- Name
- Institution
- Title
- Your involvement with the prior learning assessment process at your institution



The Benefits of Training

- Improves the quality of the PLA program
- Improves the service to the adult learners using the PLA program
- Improves the reputation of the PLA program and adult education programs within the institution



The Mandate of Training

" All personnel involved in the assessment of prior learning should receive adequate training for the functions they perform, and there should be provision for their continued professional development. "

--Whitaker, 1989, p. xvii



Current Methods of Training

How do you train the prior learning assessment faculty evaluators at your institution?



Adult Education at MidAmerica

- Began in January 1987
- BA completion program (MHR) and AA completion program (Liberal Arts and Business)
- 10 BA cohorts per year
- Limit of 20 students per BA cohort



PLA at MidAmerica

- Offered in BA degree completion program
- Adults may earn up to 34 hours of PLA credit
- PLA includes testing (CLEP and DANTES), ACE, and faculty evaluation of documented learning



Documented Learning

- Professional Schools and Training Worksheets (PSTs)
 - Question and Answer format
 - Requires at least 20 clock hours of training for 1 semester hour of credit
- Life Learning Papers (LLPs)
 - Academic Paper
 - Kolb Model



Previous Training Method

- Initial Training Seminar in 1987
- One-on-One Method
 - Meeting between Faculty Advisor and new PLA Evaluator
 - Handbook developed in 1993
- Out of the Frying Pan and into the Fire



Development of Formal Training Program

1. Understand the basics of training
2. Determine organizational and individual training needs
3. Develop training objectives
4. Develop measures of learning
5. Design the training
6. Conduct the training
7. Evaluate the training

--Vaughn, 2005, p. 33



Understand the Basics of Training

- One of several HRD interventions
- Used to fill a “performance gap” caused by a lack of appropriate knowledge, skills, or abilities
- “A process of providing information and direction in a planned and structured manner to employees on how to accomplish specific tasks related to organizational needs and objectives” (Vaughn, 2005, p. 2)



Determine Organizational and Individual Training Needs

- Training Needs Assessment
 1. Provides the opportunity to clarify and define the problems that are creating the gaps in performance (Cafferella, 2002)
 2. Provides the opportunity to prescribe appropriate interventions that can close the gaps" (Gupta, 1999, p. 115)



Training Needs Assessment

- Developed with formative and summative committees
- Validated through pilot testing
- Administered to all PLA faculty evaluators at MNU



Develop Measures of Learning

- Define Objectives
- Pre-Test/Post-test
- Mentor Evaluation



Design the Training

- Formative and Summative Committees
- Looked at other institutions
- Gathered input from PLA faculty evaluators on needs assessment
- Developed training program



Conduct and Evaluate the Training



Questions/Comments??

