

**Evaluation of Training on Personal Assistance
and Employment
Kirksville, Missouri - August 14 & 15, 2007**



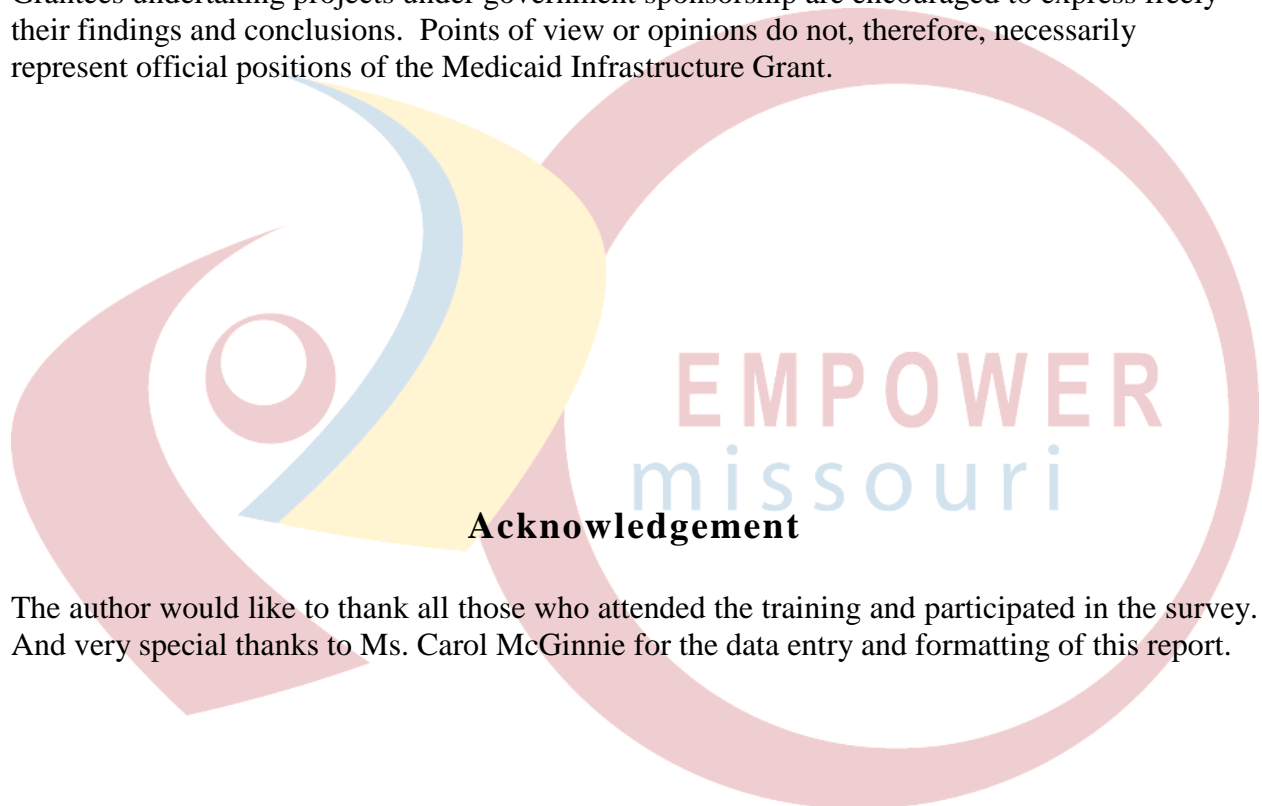
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Preface

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Table of Contents

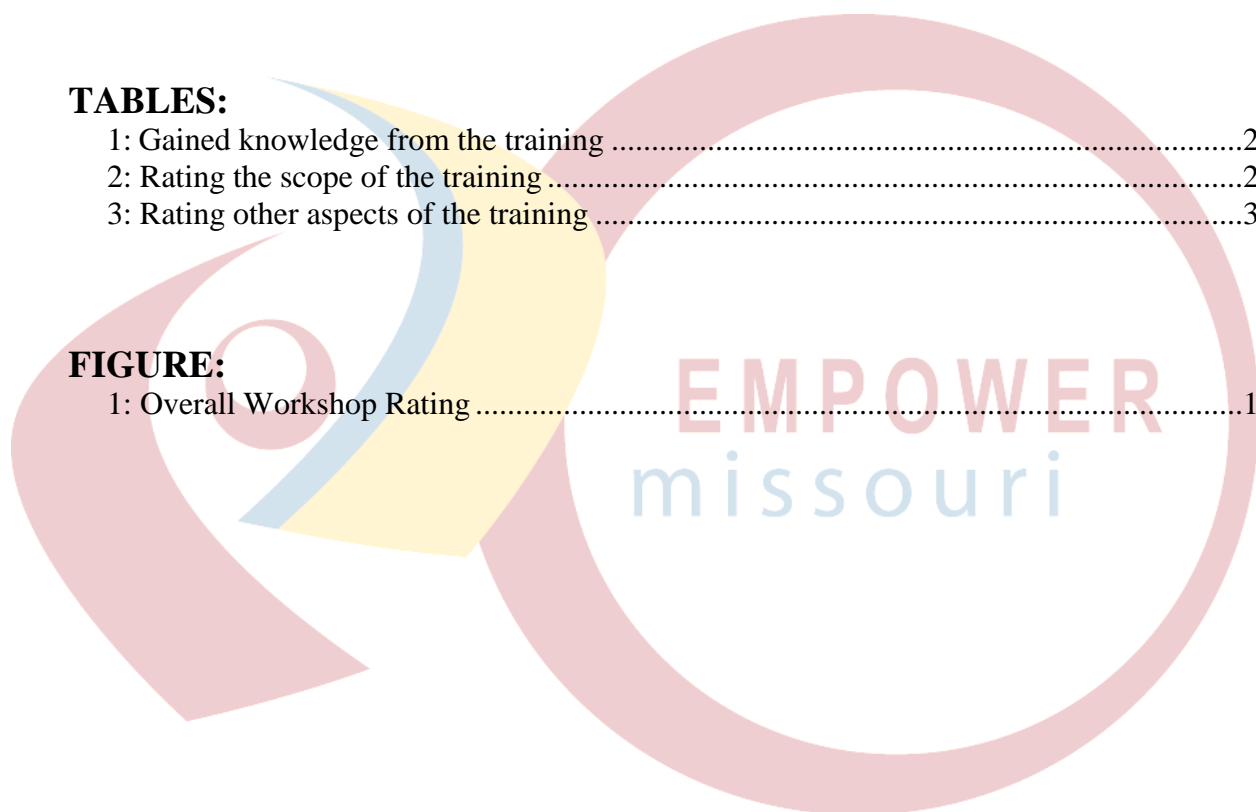
Introduction.....	1
Quality of the Workshop.....	1
Gain in Knowledge	1
Rating the Scope of the Training	2
Rating Other Aspects of the Training	3
Subjective Responses.....	3
Summary.....	5

TABLES:

1: Gained knowledge from the training	2
2: Rating the scope of the training	2
3: Rating other aspects of the training	3

FIGURE:

1: Overall Workshop Rating	1
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Personal Assistance & Employment

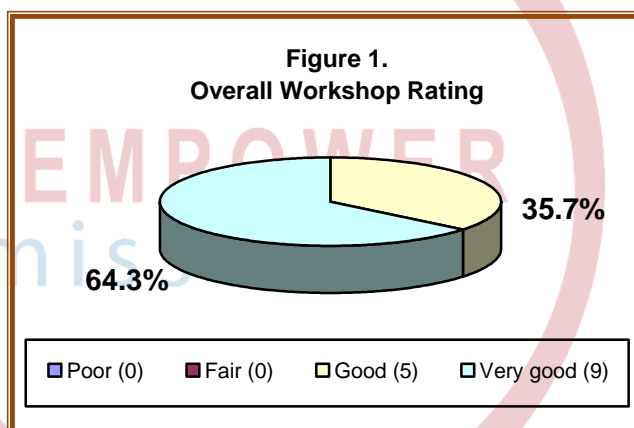
Kirksville, Missouri – August 14 & 15 2007

Introduction:

There were seventeen participants that attended the Personal Assistance and Employment training conducted by University of Missouri – Kansas City on August 14 and 15, 2007 in Kirksville, Missouri. The purpose of the training was: (1) to increase the knowledge and skills of those currently serving as a personal assistant for an individual seeking employment or currently working; and (2) to increase the numbers of personal assistants available who could provide personal assistance in this area. This report describes the findings from the fourteen respondents that completed an evaluation form at the workshop.

Quality of the Workshop:

Participants rated the quality of the workshop on a four-point scale (1=poor to 4=very good). The training received an overall rating of 3.64, which indicates that the workshop was rated highly. The majority of the participants (9 or 64.3%) rated the workshop as being “very good.” (See Figure 1.)



Gain in Knowledge:

This part of the survey assessed whether the participants gained any knowledge as a result of this training on a four-point scale: (1=gained little or no knowledge; 2=gained some knowledge; 3=gained a fair amount of knowledge; 4=gained a lot of knowledge). (See Table 1.) The highest mean score occurred for the item *strategies for the job search* had the highest rating (mean of 3.71) followed by *the potential role of a personal assistant in seeking employment* receiving the second highest rating (mean of 3.54). *The overall career planning process; strategies for learning about the person; strategies for career exploration; the importance and potential value of personal networks; and the process of job selection* were highly rated as well (mean of 3.50) each. *Self directed services* received the lowest rating (mean of 3.21), which is still high. Of the fourteen participants that completed the survey ten (or 71.4%) felt they *gained a lot of knowledge*. For the item *strategies for the job search* nine (or 64.3%) stated they *gained a fair amount of knowledge* from the item *self determination*.

Table 1: Gained knowledge from the training.

Item	1 Little or no	2 Some	3 Fair amount	4 A lot	Mean ^(a)
Self determination		-0-	9 (64.3%)	5 (35.7%)	3.36
Self directed services		2 (14.3%)	7 (50.0%)	5 (35.7%)	3.21
The roles and functions of a personal assistant		2 (14.3%)	6 (42.9%)	6 (42.9%)	3.29
The potential role of a personal assistant in seeking employment		2 (15.4%)	2 (15.4%)	9 (69.2%)	3.54
The overall career planning process		2 (14.3%)	3 (21.4%)	9 (64.3%)	3.50
Strategies for learning about the person		1 (7.1%)	5 (35.7%)	8 (57.1%)	3.50
Strategies for career exploration		1 (7.1%)	5 (35.7%)	8 (57.1%)	3.50
The importance and potential value of personal networks		1 (7.1%)	5 (35.7%)	8 (57.1%)	3.50
Strategies for the job search		-0-	4 (28.6%)	10 (71.4%)	3.71
The process of job selection		1 (7.1%)	5 (35.7%)	8 (57.1%)	3.50

(a)=Scale: (1=gained little or no knowledge...4=gained a lot of knowledge)

Rating the Scope of the Training:

Another section of the survey asked participants to rate the extent to which the training has prepared them to use the information and/or strategies presented, on a four-point scale: (1=not at all prepared; 2=somewhat prepared; 3=fairly well prepared; 4=very prepared). All of the items were rated highly. The item *to learn about a job seeker's conditions, preferences, contributions and support needs* received the highest rating with a mean of (3.71). The items *to function as a personal assistant for someone seeking employment* and *to support a job seeker in the job search process* was received as having the lowest rating (mean of 3.50) each, still high ratings. Of the fourteen participants that completed this part of the survey (10 or 71.4%) specified they were *very prepared* to learn about a job seeker's conditions, preferences, contributions and support needs. None of the participants listed *not at all prepared* as their preference. This indicates the scope of the training was received successfully. (See Table 2.)

Table 2: Rating the scope of the training.

Item	1 Not at all	2 Somewhat	3 Fairly	4 Very	Mean ^(a)
Function as a personal assistant for someone seeking employment		1 (7.1%)	5 (35.7%)	8 (57.1%)	3.50
Support someone in career planning		-0-	6 (42.9%)	8 (57.1%)	3.57
Learn about a job seeker's conditions, preferences, contributions and support needs		-0-	4 (28.6%)	10 (71.4%)	3.71
Develop and use a job seeker's personal network		-0-	6 (42.9%)	8 (57.1%)	3.57
Support a job seeker in the job search process		1 (7.1%)	5 (35.7%)	8 (57.1%)	3.50

(a)=Scale: (1=not at all prepared...4=very prepared)

Rating Other Aspects of the Training:

A third part of the evaluation looked at rating other aspects of the training on a four-point scale: (1=poor; 2=fair; 3=good; 4=very good). The item *usefulness of handout materials* received the highest rating with a (mean of 3.71) and *workshop location* received the lowest

Table 3: Rating other aspects of the training.

Item	1 Poor	2 Fair	3 Good	4 Very Good	Mean ^(a)
Workshop location	2 (14.3%)	8 (57.1%)	2 (14.3%)	2 (14.3%)	2.29
Workshop setting	2 (14.3%)	5 (35.7%)	7 (50.0%)	-0-	2.36
Knowledge of trainers	-0-	-0-	2 (14.3%)	12 (85.7%)	3.86
Clarity of information	-0-	-0-	2 (14.3%)	12 (85.7%)	3.86
Media used	-0-	-0-	6 (46.2%)	7 (53.8%)	3.54
Usefulness of handout materials	-0-	-0-	4 (28.6%)	10 (71.4%)	3.71

(a)=Scale: (1=poor...4=very good)

rating (mean of 2.29). Over 85% of the respondents rated the *knowledge of trainers* and *clarity of information* as being *very good*. (See Table 3.)

Subjective Responses:

The following describes the subjective responses to the follow-up survey.

Effective information and/or skills needed to function more effectively in serving as a personal assistant for a job seeker:

There were many skills that the participants felt they needed in order to be more effective in serving as a personal assistant for a job seeker. These are listed below:

More Information/Training: There were some requests for more training *I can always use more training*. Another stated *more training*. One person wanted more *information on job development*.

More Experience: There was a request for more experience. *Experience on the job. Classrooms can only teach so much*.

Career Plan: One person more help with *writing a career plan*.

Miscellaneous: There were two miscellaneous requests.

- How it all relates/works with the more severely disable (sic). Seemed somewhat unrealistic we work with reality.
- I work a lot with VR and do assessments before Job Development. This becomes a challenge due to HIPPA (because of assessment segments).

Liked Best About Training:

There were a number of reasons that the participants like the workshop. There were a number of different responses.

Knowledge: There were comments about *all the information*. Another thought that the talk was *informative* and that *the trainers were open*. Two individuals discussed the knowledge they gained. One talked specifically about Michael and Darla. The trainers were seen *as knowledgeable*.

Interesting: Two participants mentioned that the talk was interesting. *It was very interesting*.

Miscellaneous: There were some miscellaneous responses:

- All the handouts and computer usage.
- Focus on how to talk to employers in effective and productive way.
- I really liked the interactive parts and handout to utilize in our job seekers.
- Participation and instructors.

Liked Least About Training:

There was numerous explanation on what was least liked about the training. These are described below:

Temperature: The temperature and *heat was uncomfortable and the chairs made it difficult to focus the whole time* for one person. Another cited *the heat and small room*. Yet two more discussed *the heat*. One said *it was too hot*.

Location: Four individuals did not like the location. As one said, *I did not like the training location*.

Miscellaneous: There were two miscellaneous responses.

- In relation to more severely disabled.
- Knowledge of personal assistant, because I already had the information and in field for several years.

Suggestions for Improvements for Future Trainings:

There were a several ways in which the meeting could be improved. Following are the four comments that were made.

- Better building and cooling system.
- How and what paperwork to fill out for employment services - all of the phases.
- More on the job support. How should you support, how much, how long etc.
- Use more scenarios for utilizing the job seekers personal network (e.g. what if the network doesn't produce any results).

SUMMARY

Seventeen participants attended the Personal Assistance and Employment training on August 14 and 15, 2007. The following is a summary of the findings.

- The training received an overall rating of 3.64 (scale: 1=poor to 4=very good), which indicates that the workshop was rated highly.
- There were many gains in knowledge. The highest rated gain was for strategies for the job search followed by the potential role of personal assistant in seeking employment.
- Approximately 17% felt they gained a lot of knowledge from the training. For the item *strategies for the job search*, nine (64.3%) stated they *gained a fair amount of knowledge* from the item *self determination*.
- All items about the scope of training were rated highly. The highest rating was for *learn about a job seeker's conditions, preferences, contributions and support needs*.
- The *usefulness of handout materials* received the highest rating and *workshop location* the lowest rating of other aspects of the training.
- There were many skills the participants felt they needed in order to be more effective in serving as a personal assistant for a job seeker: (1) more information/training; (2) more experience; and (3) career plans.
- The participants liked best the following aspects (1) knowledge learned; (2) the fact that the training was interesting; and (3) other miscellaneous aspects.
- The two things that were liked least were the temperature (too hot) and the location.
- There were four suggestions for improvement: (1) better building and cooling system; (2) how and what paperwork to fill out for employment services – all of the phases; (3) more on the job support. How should you support, how much, how long, etc; and (4) use of more scenarios for utilizing the job seekers personal network.