Systematic Analysis of a Training Program: New Career Advisor Training

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Table of Contents

Introduction **3**

Analysis **4**

Systemic Analysis Approach *4*

Systemic Analysis Method 6

Function 1: Improved trainee knowledge, skills, and attitudes. 7

Function 2: Improved workplace performance. 10

Function 3: Improved organizational performance 13

Evaluation Logic Model *16*

Systematic Steps for Evaluation of Training Systems: Logic Model 17

Conclusion **18**

References **19**

Introduction

This paper systemically examines the Career Advisor & New Staff Training program at the Career Center at Florida State University. A systemic analysis of this training program yields all its core components, involved processes, planned outputs, and outcomes. This analysis will be used to develop a methodology and then a full proposal for evaluating this program.

Training Program and Purpose

The Career Advisor & New Staff Training program (referred to from here on as the training program) prepares new Career Advisors (CA) and staff to excel in their roles, providing an overview of the primary functions of the career center, and aligning with the Career Center's mission to serve as the preeminent model for designing and delivering comprehensive, innovative, and inclusive career and employment services. This training program is supported by the Career Advising, Counseling and Instruction (CACI) team, designed for graduate assistances from the Educational Psychology & Learning Systems programs and new full-time staff. The overall program is structured by the Senior Assistant Director of Career Advising, Counseling, and Instruction, with session content developed and delivered by full-time Career Center staff, and returning second-year CAs. Training content, developed by the CACI team and session leaders, covers role overviews, Cognitive Information Processing Theory, career assessments, resources, and administrative procedures.

The program initially spans a full work week, with primarily in-person sessions, supplemented by virtual components and pre-work tasks. Training is continuously supported through weekly supervision meetings throughout the first year, ensuring scaffolded skill

development through milestone checklists. Hands-on activities support learning, with trainees practicing skills through activities such as resume critiques, and role-playing scenarios designed to simulate real advising situations.

Assessment is both formal and informal, with trainers observing and providing feedback throughout trainings sessions and during role-playing scenarios. Assessment continues throughout each semester with supervision meetings, shadowing, and client feedback forms. The training program supports immediate application of knowledge to ensure new staff and CAs feel confident transitioning into independent client advising.

This training program is an essential component of training practitioners to effectively execute and contribute to the mission of the FSUCC and requires inputs from the entire organization to be effective. A systemic analysis approach will be used to understand the components of the training program and how it is a function of the overall organization.

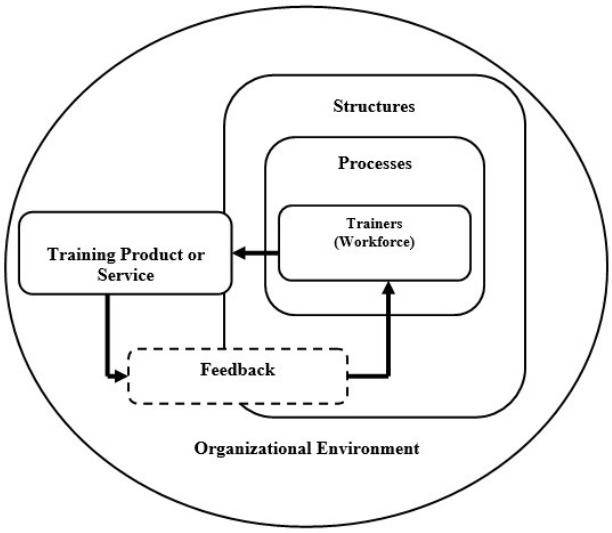
Analysis

Systemic Analysis Approach

The training program operates as a subsystem within the larger system of the FSUCC, as it directly supports the Career Center's mission by equipping new staff and CAs with the skills, knowledge, and attitudes required to deliver comprehensive and innovative career services. It also operates within the larger organizational environment of the Division of Student Affairs, whose mission is to empower and support all students to achieve their full potential, of which career development is an aspect of that. Providing Career Advising to students is a key element of being able to provide comprehensive and innovative career services and ensuring Career

Advisors are trained and well-equipped to provide those services is essential to the functions of the larger purpose of the system.

Figure 1
Systemic View of Training Program



Systemic View of Training Program

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The structure of the subsystems of the larger organization of the FSUCC include both the physical settings as well as the organizational frameworks. Training takes place primarily in-person within the FSUCC office settings, utilizing our office space, technology, resources, and staff. Structural systems also establish the framework of how advising services are provided to students, how programs and services are organized and distributed among staff, and thus how training is designed and delivered to ensure training is aligned with services provided, who will design, develop, and lead the training, and how training will continue to be supported by supervision throughout each academic semester.

The processes involve the design, delivery, and assessment of training. Full-time staff and returning CAs contribute to content creation and facilitation, ensuring coverage of key topics relevant to career development, advising, and programming. Processes of instructional delivery

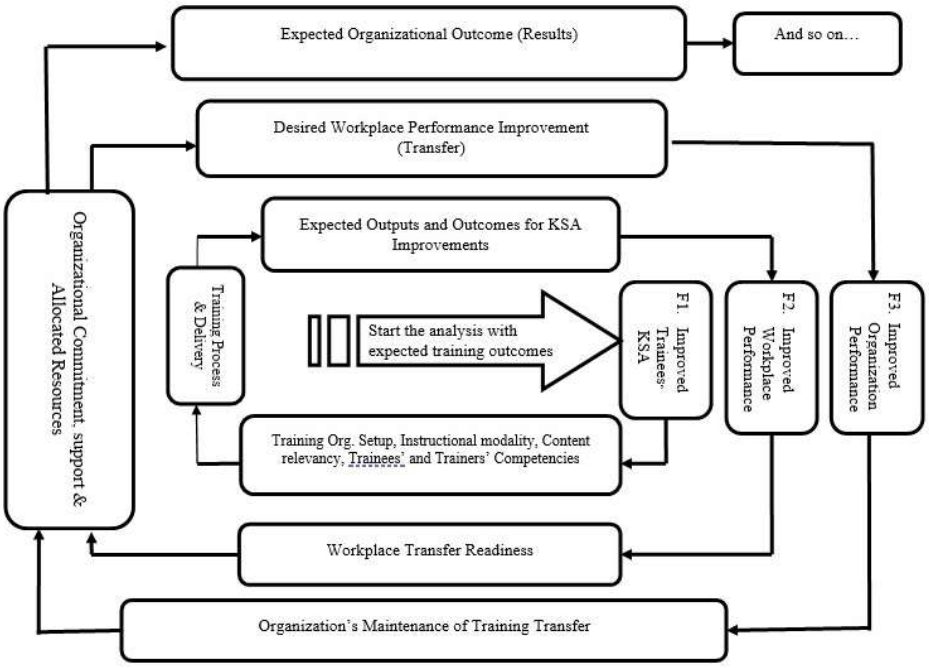
include presentations, hands-on activities, role-playing scenarios, allowing for immediate skill application. These processes are iterative, creating a feedback loop between trainees and trainers, enhancing instructional effectiveness. The trainers are an integral part of the instructional process, as both subject matter experts and mentors, bringing practical insights and tailored guidance into sessions, and ensuring that content is relevant and responsive to organizational needs as well as the development of the trainees.

Deconstructing these systems helps understand how they function interdependently of each other. The environment, structures, processes, and trainers all support the training program to ensure that trainees can adequately support the organizational outputs and goals. Feedback is immediate within the training, but ongoing as well, as strong performance from the CAs and staff contribute to efficient execution of career center services. The training program itself is an integral part of the larger system, as it contributes to the Career Center's success, ensuring new staff and CAs are prepared to provide holistic and comprehensive career services.

Systemic Analysis Method

It is important to analyze the training program as a system, identifying the components and assessing their impact through Iterative Analysis of Training Systems framework by Aubteen Darabi. This analysis will be detailed based on this framework across three key functions: improved trainee knowledge, skills, and attitudes (F1); improved workplace performance (F2); and improved organizational outcomes (F3).

Figure 2
Iterative Analysis of Training Systems



Function 1: Improved trainee knowledge, skills, and attitudes.

The training program must have well-organized inputs, processes, and outcomes to enhance the trainees' knowledge, skills and attitudes (KSA) and ensure effective service delivery. This section will analyze these aspects of the training program that contribute to achieving this goal.

Need for training.

The training program is designed to address identified gaps in knowledge, skillsets, and attitudes essential for providing comprehensive career advising. Trainees are newly hired graduate students and staff, and are often entry-level employees, or have limited knowledge of the Career Center's services, techniques, and tools. Targeted training is essential to ensure they

have all the knowledge and skills necessary to perform their roles effectively. The FSUCC relies heavily on proprietary technology platforms to manage career services and data tracking, and new trainees require hands-on training to learn these systems.

Trainees bring diverse professional knowledge and experiences, but may not be familiar with the FSUCC's frameworks, specifically the Cognitive Information Processing (CIP) approach. Trainees must have a foundational knowledge of CIP principles to effectively assess client needs, evaluate complexity, and provide effective guidance and resources (Sampson et al., 2024). The training program is necessary to standardize processes across all employees, regardless of their academic training and professional background, to maintain the FSUCC's reputation as a leader in innovative and inclusive career services while empowering new employees to perform their best.

Trainees' and trainers' competencies and qualifications.

The competence of the trainers and trainees' prior knowledge are critical factors in determining the efficacy of any training program. Trainers are selected for their subject matter expertise and practical experience. Trainers are full-time staff and returning CAs who have demonstrated success in their roles, and keen knowledge of the subject matter. Trainers have advanced knowledge of CIP theory, career assessments, advising techniques and tools, and the ability to facilitate learning through a variety of instructional methods.

Trainees include both graduate students from the Educational Psychology & Learning Systems programs, as well as newly hired full-time staff, whose competencies have been assessed prior to training and their academic and professional experiences give them a foundational skillset enabling them to be effective in career advising.

Instructional context.

The physical space that training takes place is within well-equipped office spaces within the Career Center, utilizing classrooms, meeting rooms, and the central advising space where tools and resources are housed. Classroom spaces have comfortable furniture, modern technology (including computers and projectors). For online and hybrid components, Zoom and Microsoft Teams are used, as well as functional internet, supported by clear navigation instructions and technical support. Resources such as printed guides, digital modules, assessment tools, and worksheets are available to ensure that instructional content is interactive and comprehensive.

Instructional modality, content, strategies, and assessments.

The training program employs a variety of instructional modalities, supporting primarily in-person sessions with initial virtual orientation sessions and digital pre-work tasks. A well-organized and sequential instructional structure begins with foundational topics such as career development theories and progresses to more hands-on applications like resume critiques and role-playing advising sessions. Strategies such as lectures, group discussions, and simulations are integrated to support engagement. Assessments are embedded throughout the training program through practical exercises that allow trainees to demonstrate their skills learned in real-world contexts and receive immediate constructive feedback.

Expected outputs.

The program aims to produce measurable and intangible outcomes from the training program. Measurable outcomes include the number of successfully trained Career Advisors, and the completion of milestone checklists during each semester of employment. Intangible

outcomes, such as increased trainee confidence, decision-making capabilities, and improved interpersonal skills are evaluated through client feedback forms and supervisor observations.

Training process, delivery, and monitoring plans.

Recruiting trainees is the first step in the multi-stage process of training delivery. CAs are recommended to apply to the position by their graduate program advisors and faculty, and new staff hired through traditional HR channels. Trainees are given a detailed schedule outlining the topics, dates, and times of training sessions. Availability of training rooms, equipment, and other logistical concerns are considered and planned for well in advance. Schedules are communicated, and materials are provided for virtual sessions. Throughout the training program, trainers modify instructional methods in response to trainee engagement levels and feedback. Monitoring is ongoing and involves check-ins during training, as well as evaluative supervision meetings. This iterative approach ensures both trainees and trainers receive continuous feedback for improvement.

Function 2: Improved workplace performance.

Workplace transfer readiness.

The training program ensures trainees are prepared to effectively transfer their skills and knowledge into the workplace through integrating the following strategies, tools, and environmental factors to promote workplace transfer readiness.

Workplace tools.

The FSUCC provides trainees with a wealth of tools including physical resources, communication systems, and assessment programs. The physical resources such as individual

offices, meeting spaces, and designated working space for graduate assistants create a professional and collaborative work setting. CAs and staff have access to essential office equipment including printers, computers, and office supplies to ensure tasks can be performed efficiently. To ensure continuous communication trainees have access to the Microsoft Teams platform and an email account.

The available assessment tools are career evaluations such as the Self-Directed Search (SDS) and the Career Thought Inventory (CTI), career guides, and referral protocols are all covered in the Career Counselor Manual, which is a resource for trainees. In addition, it discusses CIP in theory and in practice (FSUCC, 2024, pp. 3-5). Learners will find individualized materials, assessment methods, decision-making aids, and structured client encounter support in this handbook.

Technology.

Trainees have access to technical resources that will help them become proficient users of a wide range of digital tools and resources in the workplace. Trainees are trained on key technology platforms like NoleNetwork and PaRiConnect to support service delivery and manage advising responsibilities efficiently. Internet platforms, including MentorFSU, CareerShift, Firsthand, Peterson's, GoinGlobal, Artsearch, and Backstage offer the trainees access to numerous tools that can be leveraged to help clients connect to key career resources. A further perk is that learners can use Microsoft Teams to remain in continual touch with their work team throughout training, which allows for the sharing of information and cooperation in real-time (FSUCC, 2024).

Incentives.

Trainees are explicitly informed that the primary focus of their role is to support students' needs and foster a student-centered approach. The supportive environment and explicit emphasis on professional conduct motivate CAs and staff to excel in their roles.

Expectations.

The expectations are structured and clearly outlined helping participants understand their specific responsibilities in the counselor role and promoting professional conduct. This includes specific expectations for managing shift transitions, maintaining counseling schedules, and completing required assessments, which reinforces accountability and encourages counselors to meet high performance standards (FSUCC, 2024). Full development of participants' counseling talents is facilitated by the program's consistent monitoring and feedback. Additionally, participants are helped to fulfill the high standards set by the Career Center through frequent supervision sessions that follow training. These sessions allow participants to discuss and address concerns, ultimately leading to their improvement. Guidelines for professional dress (with occasional "Jeans Days") are explained in detail Timekeeping is well explained and punctuality is emphasized (FSUCC, 2024). CAs are to arrive 5 minutes before their shift, maintain detailed hour logs, and make up any missed hours before the semester's end, ensuring accountability and consistency. (FSUCC, 2024)

Other contributions.

FSUCC offers a Differentiated Service Delivery Model, so that the workplace prioritizes tailoring services to meet unique client needs, and training ensure CAs and staff learn to adapt their approaches to diverse client scenarios (FSUCC, 2024). Whether in the classroom or on the

job, trainees benefit from the supportive environment fostered by the FSUCC. Through team-building activities, collaboration with colleagues, and regular feedback sessions, participants have multiple chances to speak and exchange ideas during the program. (FSUCC, 2024)

Consultants can openly share their experiences, insights, and anecdotes in this supportive environment. Regularly scheduled supervision meetings and informal mentoring opportunities help create a workplace culture that values continuous learning and application of skills. The role of career counselor is usually supervised and guided by senior staff or mentors to ensure that trainees receive adequate support in real consulting situations (FSUCC, 2024). This supportive environment helps trainees not only adapt to the work quickly, but also gain a sense of belonging and continuous learning opportunities in the career center team.

Function 3: Improved organizational performance

Organization's supporting environment.

FSUCC's commitment to comprehensive, innovative, and inclusive career services is reflected in its mission, and is supported by allocation of substantial resources. These resources include staff development programs, training manuals, state-of-the-art technology, and career resources to enhance training transfer by ensuring employees have access to the tools and knowledge necessary to be successful career services practitioners Per the FSUCC (2024), from the beginning of the semester "Supervision will be provided…" formally and informally by a primary supervisor. (p. 15) The management uses a supportive, hands-on, and comprehensive style to encourage an environment of open communication. Besides face-to-face communication, staff also has use of Microsoft Teams and FSU email. The career center fosters an understanding and inclusive workplace, which further facilitates transfer of training knowledge. Open

communication is offered and valued along with a culture of collaboration. Trainees are encouraged to be self-critical and participate in constructive discussions, promoting continuous improvement. The workplace embraces and expects ethical practices and nurtures an open and responsible culture where trainees feel included and supported. (FSUCC, 2024)

Organization's mission and commitment to innovation.

From the FSUCC website, the organization's vision is to be an exemplary "career center model for designing and delivering comprehensive, innovative, and inclusive career and employment services (n.d.) ." FSUCC is also committed to developing "career service practitioners," and researching "life/career development," and dispersing this knowledge to others to benefit humanity (n.d.). The mission of Career Advising, Counseling & Instruction Team (CACI) supports that vision in two ways. First, "by providing career instruction, drop-in advising, counseling, resources, and badges (Florida State University Career Center [FSUCC], 2024, p.3)." Secondly, by instructing and guiding "career professionals in training including student workers, practicum and internship students" (FSUCC, 2024, p.3). The team also uses the "Cognitive Information Processing (CIP) approach" to "…assist individuals in solving current career problems and making appropriate career decisions, as well as improving their skills in solving future career problems" (FSUCC, 2024, p.3).

Organization's maintenance of training transfer.

The FSUCC has a robust plan in place for maintaining the transfer of training by utilizing the Cognitive Information Processing (CIP) framework as a foundation for the program. This evidence-based model CIP is a systematic way to help individuals resolve career problems and make informed career decisions (Sampson et al, 2024). For the person seeking assistance, the

CIP process should help them “to arrive at informed and careful career choices” (Sampson et al, 2024, p.38). CIP theory has several decades of research and detailed framework for career professionals to follow (Sampson et al, 2024). CIP also provides guidance for career professional duties that further enforce the transfer of training.

Expected organization outcomes.

FSUCC’s strategic plan has seven areas of priorities with qualitative and quantitative outcomes, and a sampling of them is provided to show the scope of the plan. For “Strategic Priority 1.1: Enhance student career advising and counseling to ensure career readiness leading to positive post-graduation outcomes,” the goals are to; increase graduate and pre-professional school admissions by 72%, increase pre-professional/graduate school programming attendance 20%, and enhance programs and services as needed to increase student career readiness and knowledge of post-graduation options (FSUCC, n.d.).

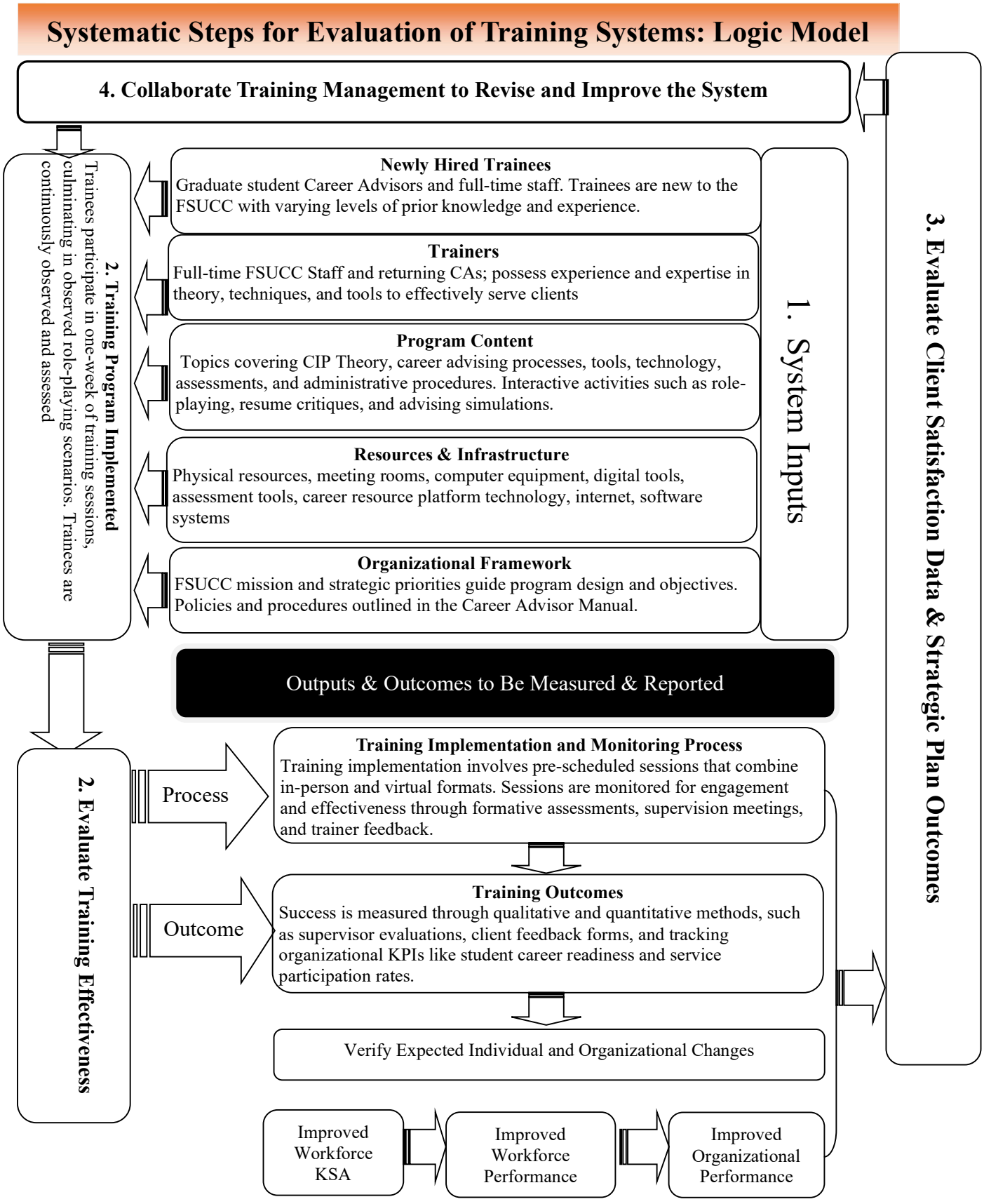
For “Strategic Priority 6.3: Assess and report effectiveness of and student satisfaction with Career Center programs and services to maintain high standards for the provision of services: establish a baseline to be used as metrics for results, implement new data entry and analysis process, maintain a 90% rate of mock interview participants who describe the experience as meeting or exceeding their expectations and a 95% rate of student workshop attendees who describe the workshop as being “helpful” or “very helpful”. (FSUCC, n.d.)

The organization uses these broader goals to guide the structure of the workplace and trainees’ performance improvement. By using measurable objectives, the organization can set benchmarks and track whether the employees are meeting the assigned metrics. The qualitative data will present nuanced information that can be used to evaluate and revise the program.

Evaluation Logic Model

Following a comprehensive program analysis, the next step is to organize these components using an Evaluation Logic Model. The purpose of this tool is to map the inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes of the training program to effectively guide the evaluation process. By providing a clear framework, the logic model ensures alignment with organizational goals, identifying strengths and gaps, and supporting continuous improvement.

Figure 3.
Logic Model



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Conclusion

The systemic analysis of the Career Advisor & New Staff Training Program provides valuable insight into the components that drive its effectiveness as a critical contributor to the FSUCC's mission to provide innovative, inclusive, and comprehensive career services. Analyzing the programs inputs, processes, and expected outcomes demonstrates how the program aligns with organizational goals while addressing trainee needs. This examination will guide the development of an effective evaluation methodology to measure the programs key elements effectively, ensuring continuous improvement and alignment with organizational priorities.

References

Florida State University Career Center. (2024) *Career advisor manual 2024-25*. [Brochure]

Florida State University Career Center. (n.d.) *2019-2024 Strategic Plan*. https://www.career.fsu.edu/sites/g/files/upcbnu746/files/CC%20Strategic%20Plan_2019-2024_1.pdf

Sampson, J. P., Jr., Lenz, J. G., Bullock-Yowell, E., Osborn, D. S., & Hayden, S. C. W. (Eds.). (2023*). Cognitive information processing: Career theory, research, and practice*. Florida State Open Publishing. https://doi.org/10.33009/fsop_sampson1123

Self-Review

Table 1
Self-Review

Section	Item	Grade	Justification for grade
Introduction (10 points total)	Training Program Introduction and Purpose	10	The full program name was provided, and the name of the training program was provided.
Systemic Analysis Approach (20 points total)	Systemic Analysis Approach	20	Description of how FSUCC fits into Career Center and Division of Student Affairs. Explained interactions with processes, trainers and structures.
	Systemic Analysis Method: Iterative Analysis Technique	13	Missing description of program interacts with other processes.
Systemic Analysis Method (75 points total)	Function 1: Improvement of trainees' knowledge, skills, and attitudes (KSA)	75	All major components identified. Sources are cited and there is a detailed description of components and subcomponents. Did not use bullet points for functions. Provided background on process model Career Center uses and organizational outcomes.
	Function 2: Improvement of trainees' job performance		
	Function 3. Improvement of organization's performance		
	Organization's supporting environment		
Evaluation Logic Model (50 points total)	*Evaluation Logic Model*	50	Describe purpose of the logic model and utilized word template with system inputs, training process and expected outcomes and outputs.15
Conclusion (15 points total)	*Conclusion*	15	The analysis was summarized and connected to the intended evaluation method guided by organizational goals.
Format, grammar, style (10 points total)	*References, in-text citations, appendices, tables, figures, etc.*	10	Presentation follows standard formatting, there are separate headings, few errors and has met or exceed criteria for professional report writing.

Instructor-Review

Section	Item	Grade	Justification for grade
Introduction (10 points total)	Training Program Introduction and Purpose	10	Justification is acceptable.

Systemic Analysis Approach (20 points total)	Systemic Analysis Approach	9	Most of the justification is acceptable; the overarching system could be discussed from whole FSU instead of from Career Center and Division of Student Affairs.
	Systemic Analysis Method: Iterative Analysis Technique	6	Acceptable justification; scaled down considering the total points in this category.
Systemic Analysis Method (75 points total)	Function 1: Improvement of trainees' knowledge, skills, and attitudes (KSA)	75	Acceptable justification.
	Function 2: Improvement of trainees' job performance		
	Function 3. Improvement of organization's performance		
	Organization's supporting environment		
Evaluation Logic Model (50 points total)	*Evaluation Logic Model*	50	Acceptable justification.
Conclusion (15 points total)	*Conclusion*	15	Acceptable justification.
Format, grammar, style (10 points total)	*References, in-text citations, appendices, tables, figures, etc.*	5	There are some unstructured paragraphs; misaligned heading structure; and formatting issues in APA style writing. Please make sure to check where/what I edited and the eight comments in this doc. My feedback could be greatly helpful in finalizing your final paper if you all pay enough attention to each item. Carry on!
Self review (20 points total)	*Grade and justifications*	19	Generally acceptable.
Total points: 189			