

Student Evaluation of Career Coaching Survey Report

PA TAACCCT Consortium

*TAACCCT Round 1
Community College of Philadelphia*

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TAACCCT Career Coaches work closely with students to assess skills, and provide coaching and career planning assistance to develop pathway entries to credit or non-credit enrollment. They serve as a primary point of contact for students from initial inquiry through job placement. Career Coach tasks include recruitment and vetting potential students, assisting students with identifying appropriate training and, coaching and support throughout training. Career Coaches also prepare students for job search and job placement as well as conduct follow up and job retention support. Each college had at least one Career Coach during the grant period of performance.

Career Coaching was an integral aspect of the TAACCCT Round 1 Consortium project aiming to provide increased academic and career support to participants entering this workforce development program.

Job Developers were present at 5 of the 14 consortium colleges. Generally, Job Developers worked with area employers to locate open positions and with TAACCCT students to prepare for applications to job opportunities.

The Survey

In May 2013, the TAACCCT grant administration office at Community College of Philadelphia began issuing a Career Coaching Evaluation survey to students who completed TAACCCT (JobTrakPA) training.

The purpose of the survey was to evaluate how Career Coaches and Job Developers interacted with participants, how often they interacted and how participants rated those interactions. The survey was distributed 5 times between May 2013 and July 2015.

The survey had four question areas- career coach services, job developer services, additional comments and student use of the grant's online platform. Results of the first three question areas are provided in the section below. The last question area's responses- student use of the online platform- are not included in this report and have been incorporated into a separate evaluation report of the online platform.

The TAACCCT Grant Administration Office distributed the survey to all TAACCCT completers entered into the TAACCCT central database through June 30, 2015.

Overall, we received a small percentage of surveys - 13% - 438 out of 3349 sent (The survey was sent to students who completed training as of June 30, 2015. Some colleges continued to train beyond that date but those students were not included). Additionally, while we received responses from students at each college there was not a balanced number of responses from each school. For example, the highest number of responses came from Delaware County Community College where 94 students (22% of all respondents) took the survey compared with 1 from Penn Highlands and 2 from Westmoreland County Community College. The image below lists the number of responses per school. An additional 42 students opted not to identify which college they attended.

What college did you attend?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Community College of Allegheny County	4.3%	17
Community College of Beaver County	1.5%	6
Bucks County Community College	16.7%	66
Butler County Community College	7.1%	28
Delaware County Community College	23.7%	94
Harrisburg Area Community College	6.8%	27
Lehigh Carbon Community College	7.1%	28
Luzerne County Community College	1.0%	4
Montgomery County Community College	15.9%	63
Northampton Community College	5.6%	22
Penn Highlands Community College	0.3%	1
Community College of Philadelphia	5.1%	20
Reading Area Community College	4.5%	18
Westmoreland County Community College	0.5%	2

There was an oversight in disseminating the survey which resulted in a small numbers (estimated at 5) of students completing the survey more than once.

The overall student satisfaction rate was reported to ETA in the Quarterly Narrative Reports.

The SurveyMonkey results can be found here: <..\FINAL REPORT\Career Coach Survey Results Summary 07202015.pdf>

Additional detailed answers to questions 12, 17 and 18 can be found here:

..\FINAL REPORT\Q12_07202015.pdf

..\FINAL REPORT\Q17_07202015.pdf

..\FINAL REPORT\Q18_07202015.pdf

Survey Results

Career Coach Questions

Respondents were asked to indicate how many times they met (in-person or via phone) with their Career Coach while they were enrolled in training. Of the 418 who responded to this question, 36% met with their Career Coach 1-2 times, 25% met 2-4 times, 25% met 5 or more time and, 14% or 60 of the respondents indicated that they never met with a Career Coach.

Using this information and looking at the average number of weeks needed for students to complete a core curriculum of study - 20.5 weeks as of June 30, 2015 (as reported by the consortium in their

quarterly reports) we can estimate that 38% of students met with their Career Coach once every 10 weeks, 25% met once every 7 weeks and another 25% met at least every 4 weeks.

Comment: The estimation above is based on the average weeks reported by the colleges. In reality, program length varied from 5 days to 2 years. Nonetheless, it is helpful to add context to the responses to see how often, in weeks, students and Career Coaches were interacting.

About how many times did you meet with the Career Coach while you were enrolled in training/classes? (A meeting can occur in-person or via phone)		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Never	14.4%	60
1-2	35.9%	150
3-4	25.1%	105
5-6	13.4%	56
6 or more	11.2%	47
<i>answered question</i>		418
<i>skipped question</i>		20

A related question asked how often students had been in contact with the Career Coach since completing training. Of the 403 respondents, 34% indicated they had contact between 1-2 times, 16% 3-4 times and, 13% 5 or more times. Thirty-Six percent (36%) indicated that they had no contact with a Career Coach after completing training.

The results show that Career Coach contact decreased after training completion.

Comment: This may be due to several factors such as a Job Developer taking over contact with students, workload or lack of follow up by the student.

**Note: At the time of the survey, the TAACCCT grant was still active. Students could have been contacted by a Career Coach after completion of the survey.*

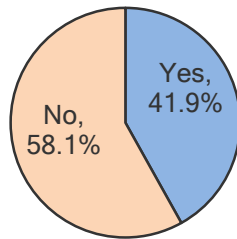
Since completion/graduation, how often have you been in contact with the Career Coach?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Never	36.0%	145
1-2	34.2%	138
3-4	16.4%	66
4-5	6.7%	27
6+	6.7%	27
<i>answered question</i>		403
<i>skipped question</i>		35

In an effort to identify what type of support Career Coaches provided, students were asked whether they discussed academic advising, career exploration and job readiness with their career coach. Students were also asked how satisfied they were with the results of these interactions.

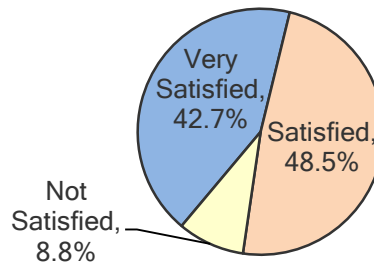
Students identified career exploration as the support most discussed. This was followed by job readiness and academic advising. Overall Students' satisfaction rate with these three services, when received, was rated as either very satisfied or satisfied.

Academic Advising

Did you discuss academic advising with the Career Coach?

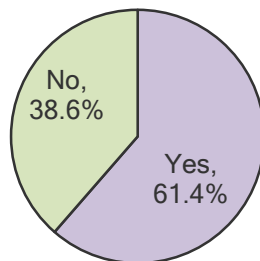


How satisfied were you with the results of the discussion on academic advising?

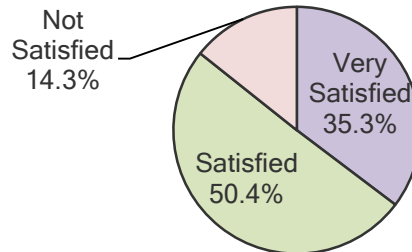


Career Exploration

Did you discuss career exploration with the Career Coach?

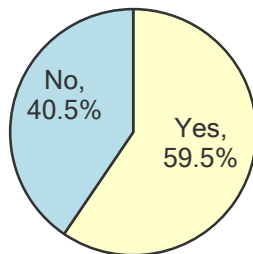


How satisfied were you with the results of the discussion on career exploration?

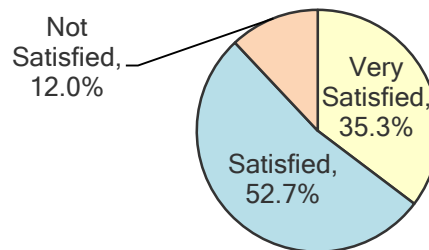


Job Readiness

Did you discuss job readiness with the Career Coach?



How satisfied were you with the results of the discussion on job readiness?



Respondents were asked to list services provided by the Career Coach. Three hundred eleven (311) students responded to this question. The most frequently stated services were resume' and job search assistance noted 175 and 116 times respectively. Interview preparation was the third most stated service. Respondents also indicated that Career Coaches provided personal support and connections to community resources. A small number wrote that Career Coaches acted as a reference for the student. Forty-eight (48) students or 15% of those responding to this question indicated they did not receive any services from the Career Coach.

In addition to stating or listing the services received, some respondents took the opportunity to include detailed comments. Some positive comments included:

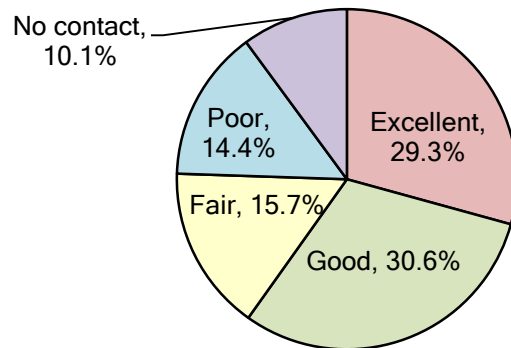
- "She has gotten me to the next step of obtaining education to get a job."
- "Overhauled my resume, was probably the biggest help anyone could have offered me and I'm positive it led to my job offer."
- "She was very hands on with her involvement in my training and follow-up after completing the program."
- "She was everything I needed when I needed."
- "He was a great asset and very helpful in helping me prepare myself to acquire employment in the oil and gas field....I am pleased with his overall consistent guidance and help. He has done and continues to do a great job."

Other detailed comments illustrate difficulties and disappointments experienced by the respondents. Several expressed frustration at not being contacted by the Career Coach or at not receiving information that was relevant to their situation. Other similar comments included:

- Job search information that was not in the field of study,
- Not receiving a call or email after being told the s/he would,
- Services were only offered during business hours and therefore could not be attended,
- Not knowing who the assigned career coach was and,
- Information provided was not useful.

Students were also asked to rate their overall satisfaction with the support provided by the Career Coach. The responses show that of 396 responding, 60% found the support to be either excellent or good. Another 30% rated it as fair or poor and 10% indicated they had no contact with a Career Coach.

Overall, how would you rate the support provided by the Career Coach? Please consider any contact from your initial interest to training completion.



Job Developer Questions

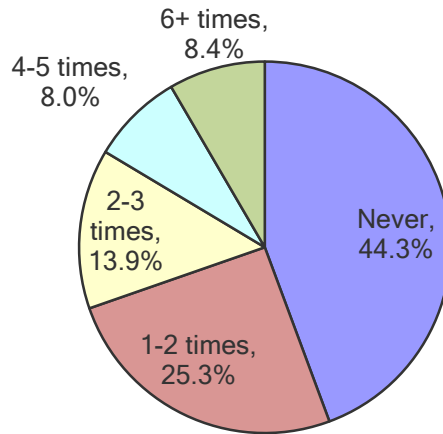
Students from the 5 colleges that hired a TAACCCT Job Developer were asked two additional questions to gauge the Job Developer's level of contact with students. These schools include Bucks County Community College, Community College of Philadelphia, Delaware County Community College, Montgomery County College and, Northampton County College.

When asked whether students had been contacted by a TAACCCT Job Developer, 237 students responded presenting a 50/50 split. Fifty-percent (119) indicated they had been contacted and 50% (118) stated they had not been contacted

Comment: When we think about the 50% that indicated they did not have contact with a TAACCCT Job Developer several possible reasons come to mind - the Job Developer did not reach out to the student, the student found a job on her/his own and did not need the assistance of the Job Developer or the student was unreachable. Even with the possibility that the student did not want contact, these statistics are disappointing.

Survey responses to how often students were contacted by the Job Developer indicate that 25% of respondents were contacted 1-2 times, 14% 2-3 times, 8% between 4-5 times and another 8% more than 6 times.

How often has the Job Developer contacted you since completion/graduation?



Comment: *These results raise questions about the Job Developer strategies employed at the schools. Considering the length of time it can take to find employment, we would expect more contact than reported. Furthermore, it is more difficult to assume the reasons for these statistics. For example, at one college, the Job Developer worked more closely with employers while the Career Coach worked with the students. Additionally, it would be remiss not to consider the DOL placement definition and how it impacted how TAACCCT staff engaged students after training completion. As per TAACCT guidelines, placements are counted when they occur in the first quarter after the quarter of training exit. Once this “first “quarter is over, any student who found employment could not be counted toward our metrics. This may have impacted the length of time a Job Developer actively worked with a student.*

Services provided by the Job Developer, according to the 146 students who responded, were very similar to those provided by the Career Coach. They included job leads, resume and cover letter assistance and, personal support and encouragement. Two positive comments stood out:

- “The Job Developer from JobTrakPA provided new tools for me to use in resume writing, free computer classes for Microsoft Office and Excel, many job opportunities that I qualify for, how to dress for and answer interview questions, and most importantly regaining self-confidence and self-worth after being out of the job market for 4 years.”
- “She was very helpful and informative, provided resume review and writing, job leads, cover letter, listening and offering advice.”

Students also shared their frustrations regarding services provided by the Job Developer. Of note, one felt “lost in the crowd” and another wrote that “everything was a rush to get completed”. A third wrote that he was never able to get his resume to the Career Coach because “I was not good at computers and

he would not accept a hard copy to scan.” Others said that job leads were not related to the training received and that they had difficulty distinguishing the roles of the Career Coach and Job Developer.

Additional Comments

The final career coaching survey question asked for additional comments about students’ interactions with the Career Coach and other staff – 197 students responded to this question. Comments varied from discussing training, Career Coach support, project administration/leadership, equipment status and staff personalities. One student is grateful for the assistance and the continued contact but believes he is still under-employed. At least two students wrote that the staff were helpful and did a good job but that staff were overwhelmed and couldn’t provide the needed level of support.

Highlights of comments include:

- “It was a great experience and everyone did what they were supposed to do to help us achieve our desired career.”
- “I owe a lot to my Career Coach, I ended up with a job climbing cell phone towers and owe it to the classes.”
- “The most important thing I can emphasize is the simple fact that I received and accepted a job offer from the exact company I was interested in working for. I firmly believe the program was pivotal in enconcing me in the industry I currently work in.”

Several students wrote comments regarding how they were promised a job at the end of training and were therefore frustrated that it did not occur. Several others shared that the course content did not provide training in the skills needed to find jobs in their field of choice, that equipment was broken and could not be used and, that there was a disconnect between the training and what employers wanted. Others felt their concerns were not heard or taken into account by the college when they were voiced.

Final Thoughts

Based on the low number of responses (438 out of 3349) we need to note that while the results are helpful in understanding how students viewed TAACCCT career coaching, they may not provide a true picture of students’ interaction with the Career Coach at their college.

Overall, career coaching was evaluated positively by students. The results provide some key practices and offer a look into students’ needs and expectations.

At the onset of the grant, a statewide Career Coach job description was developed (Attachment 1). Colleges either adopted this in whole or incorporated it into their own job description due to colleges having slightly different expectations for the position based on budget, project design and staffing structure. For example, some colleges may have included job placement tasks in the job description while other may have not. Due to this and to the fact that each college TAACCCT project was unique and

developed differently over the four year grant, Career Coach tasks and responsibilities as well as student interaction, services and support varied across the state.

Since the survey was distributed at different times throughout the grant, we know that in some cases, students completed training before, for instance, the Job Developer was hired or they were in training when a Career Coach left her/his position. These events impacted the career coaching received. Additionally, each student came with her or his own expectations. When reviewing comments provided by the respondents, the variance of responses is somewhat striking and speaks to the variables listed above.

Due to the variables listed above, the results of this survey should be viewed with a broad brush. But, even with all of the above considered, students did provide key feedback about differing expectations- among students and between students and staff. The responses also provide insight into students' support and training needs which is valuable information that can be reviewed and considered in future program development.

Attachment 1

Statewide Career Coach Job Description

TITLE: TAACCCT Career Coach

DEPARTMENT: _____

DATE PREPARED: _____

DIVISION: _____

POSITION #: _____

GRADE/RANK: _____

REPORTS TO: _____

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The goal of the Trade Adjustment Assistance community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) Grant Program is to “increase attainment of degrees, certifications, and other industry-recognized credentials and better prepare the targeted population, and other beneficiaries, for high-wage, high-skill employment.”

The Career Coach for the TAACCCT Grant Program works closely with TAACCCT-eligible students to assess skills, and provide coaching and career planning assistance to develop pathway entries to credit or non-credit enrollment. The Career Coach will track student progress ensuring development and implementation of an intrusive student support model that includes employment preparation. The Career Coach works closely with CareerLink Centers and other agencies to determine student eligibility for the TAACCCT program and to provide a seamless transition to [NAME OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE]. In addition, the Career Coach will work closely with college offices to identify students, ensure student enrollment and ongoing retention.

SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES (ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS)

- A. Collect TAACCCT grant identified student data and compile data in the appropriate format as stipulated by data standards.
- B. Provide necessary reporting data compiled from TAACCCT grant eligible students to [FISCAL AGEND/LEAD COLLEGE] in order to meet reporting requirements stipulated in the grant.
- C. Assess TAACCCT eligible student skill levels in reading, writing and mathematics using various resources available at the CareerLink Centers or through the grant resources.
- D. Provide coaching and career planning assistance to students.
- E. Provide students with information related to statewide programs available through the TAACCCT grant.
- F. Track student progress ensuring development and implementation of an intrusive student support model that includes educational planning to accelerate progress in the program and employment preparation.
- G. Coordinate the delivery of “life skills” to help students address potential barriers to success.

- H. Conduct outreach to employers to engage students in mentoring and employee readiness skills.
- I. Collaborate with external agencies, such as CareerLink
- J. Ensure students are enrolled in the appropriate credit or non-credit programs.
- K. Utilize on-line platform, as well as face-to-face time, to ensure students are meeting the required steps throughout their participation in the program.
- L. Utilize labor market information to help students to develop their understanding of the local job market.
- M. Encourage and assist students in utilizing self-service features available through the online platform
- N. Work closely with College offices to ensure student success and retention of grant participants.

QUALIFICATIONS

- Bachelor’s degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher learning required; Master’s degree preferred.
- Minimum two years direct experience working in an education or social service environment along with experience working with at-risk youth and culturally diverse populations required.
- Program or grant management experience required
- Demonstrated competency in organizing data, maintaining files, and preparing reports required.
- Excellent interpersonal and oral/written communication skills to effectively interact with individuals from diverse backgrounds required.
- Exceptional organization and planning skills required.
- Ability to collaborate with others required.
- Proficiency with Microsoft Office applications including Word and Excel required.
- Ability to work independently.

SIGNATURES (Please print or type name below signature)

DATES:

Prepared by	_____	_____
Human Resources Officer	_____	_____
Affirmative Action Director	_____	_____
Senior Officer	_____	_____
President	_____	_____