

CES Outcomes Report - summary

on training January 2010 – December 2010

'CES is a very professional organisation and I am the first to recommend their courses to other colleagues. Thank you.'

Feedback from participant on *How to demonstrate outcomes (2 days)*

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1. Introduction

Every year, Charities Evaluation Services (CES) carries out an evaluation of our training service by contacting previous course participants. They are contacted by email and are asked to complete an online survey, and asked questions about what they have done with their learning from the course.

This report covers CES open training delivered between 1 January and 31 December 2010. Thirty-six training days within these subjects were delivered within the period. The courses included in the evaluation are:

- *How to demonstrate outcomes – 1 day*
 - *How to demonstrate outcomes – 2 days*
 - *How to demonstrate outcomes – 3 days*
 - *Assessing the outcomes of funded projects*
 - *Implementing PQASSO*
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Thirty-four people completed the survey between 8th February and 16th March 2011. This is a breakdown by subject area and by course:

Quality: 12 (35%)

<i>Implementing PQASSO</i>	12
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Monitoring and evaluation: 22 (65%)

<i>How to demonstrate outcomes – 1 day</i>	2
<i>How to demonstrate outcomes – 2 days</i>	4
<i>How to demonstrate outcomes – 3 days</i>	9
<i>Assessing the outcomes of funded projects</i>	7

This summary report covers some of the key findings from the evaluation.

2. Key findings

2.1 Putting learning into practice

- 88% of participants had put their learning into practice

The top three reasons for coming on our training courses were:

- 62% wanted to gain a better understanding of key terms and concepts
- 41% wanted to implement a new system
- 41% wanted to help others with their monitoring and evaluation/quality systems

2.2 Benefits of implementation

Service improvement

- 45% of those that had implemented their learning in their own organisation thought their services had improved
- 71% of those that said their services had improved linked this to their learning from the CES course (1 said it was linked to a great extent, 9 to some extent)
- 29% said the CES training was a 'catalyst' in service improvement occurring

Improved internal processes

- 65% said they had a more positive approach to monitoring and evaluation/quality/PQASSO
- 35% said that they felt they were clearer about what they are doing and why
- 32% said they had included monitoring and evaluation/PQASSO within planning cycles/planning documents

Improved external communication

- 50% said they are more able to demonstrate effectiveness to others
- 50% used information from monitoring and evaluation/quality to report to existing funders
- 45% felt better able to communicate outcomes to funders/stakeholders
- 10% said they had used the information to obtain further funding

Additional benefits of implementation

- 79% said they had shared learning with colleagues

Methods of sharing learning included presentations, workshops, training, staff meetings, one-to-one discussions, and informally in day-to-day work.

2.3 Difficulties experienced in implementing learning

- 50% of respondents experienced difficulties in implementing their learning

The top reason for them experiencing difficulties was a lack of staff time, which 59% respondents referred to.

Other reasons given included other urgent priorities, resistance from other colleagues, a lack of money/funding, a lack of staff skills, lack of support and commitment from managers and a lack of IT capacity.

Participants were asked if they were overcoming any of their difficulties:

- 35% had overcome them
- 12% said that they had not overcome them
- 53% said it was too early to say if they would overcome them

Some participants commented on how they were going about overcoming difficulties:

“Re-allocation of responsibilities. Priority given to completing PQASSO”

“We are confident staff will learn over the next year how to focus and evidence the work they do with people to achieve the outcomes they want”

2.4 Other enablers to change

- 62% of respondents identified factors other than CES training as enablers to change.

The top other enablers were:

- 52% said commitment from senior managers/leadership
- 33% said support from line manager/supervisor
- 33% said the internet
- 29% said publications
- 29% said other training

2.5 Resilience in the recession

30 of the respondents had put their learning into practice. Of those,

- 11 (48%) said that they did feel they would be better placed to face the economic downturn to some extent
- 6 (26%) said that it was too early to tell
- 4 (17%) said that they did not know
- 2 (9%) said that they did not feel it would make them more resilient

Of the 11 that felt they would be better placed to face the downturn, their reasons were as follows:

- 8 said better relationships with funders/commissioners
- 7 said new skills they had developed or acquired
- 4 said more or different funding they will be able to access

Some of the respondents commented on how they felt the implementation of their learning would assist their organisation in the downturn:

“The public sector cuts are obviously going to make the application process for grants much more competitive and of higher demand.”

The two participants who did not feel that they are better placed to face the economic downturn said it was due to the fact that they are not in a position to bring about change and there are already people in their organisations doing work in this area.

“we have a dedicated team of people who work full-time on Research and Monitoring who are much better placed to deal with economic downturn and ensuring we show the benefits of our work in the best possible way.”

“I am not in a position of power to bring about change, and we already have a team of monitoring and evaluation experts.”

If you have any queries about this report please email jill@ces-vol.org.uk