

Evaluation Plan Reflection

Kenneth Kim
#262276
University of Calgary

Submitted to:
Elizabeth Childs
EDER 675 – Principles of Instructional Development
December 12, 2003

The process of devising an evaluation is a complicated task. When it is not taken from a real world context, the process can be even more daunting. I was fortunate enough to be in a situation that required such action. It began with a simple proposition from my principal. He pulled me out of class one day and said that the Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) was interested in hearing more about my comments on the inaccessibility of computers and how poorly the school was set up to be a leading technology school. Not once did he tell me that I had to take this initiative on, but as a colleague, he advised me that the PAC had the money, but were unwilling to part with it without a plan of action. In the course of our lives, things happen for a reason. The dilemma that was put before me provided me with enough incentive to put my evaluation plan assignment to the test. In working through the process of completing this evaluation, I soon realized that an evaluation is not a one step process, but is composed of a myriad of tasks. An evaluation is merely a blueprint to what actions will be taken. However, the groundwork that is done in the evaluation provides the framework from which sound decisions can be made. With all the meetings, the data collection, the data analysis, the literature research, and the reporting of the data, this evaluation has significantly added to my already overburdened workload. My learning curve in this evaluation was very steep, yet with each challenge, my heart was still in the right place as I was enjoying what I was doing. It also helped that there was much appreciation from staff, parents, and administration for my work, which in itself has added to my confidence as a professional.

Initially the evaluation was a win-win proposition, I got to complete my evaluation plan assignment and at the same time, get much needed funding to rejuvenate

IT at my school. However, as time went by, I took more ownership of this initiative and really took interest in its success. With the true client in mind, the question that went through my mind during the preparation and writing of this evaluation was ‘what do the true client really want to see and hear?’ I wanted this evaluation to be usable. I went through the initial meetings with the stakeholders and took down minutes that were later passed on to the administration. However, during this course of the evaluation, a large national media spotlight was cast on our school when one of our students committed a senseless violent act against another student. As a result, the administration team had little time with this initiative and placed sole responsibility for leading this working group on me. I was quite comfortable with this, as I had put this working group together in the first place.

Although the timeline was tight, the evaluation still had all the critical elements that were needed to shape what our next decisions would be. The data collection and data analysis shone positive light in what I had initially suspected. My colleagues were all in agreement that there needed to be more training on how to use technology effectively, that the school was not adequately set up to support learning with technology, that a strong grasp of pedagogy was important in implementing technology in a classroom, and that the curriculum held many teachers back from using technology. My reaction to the data brought about great relief, as I really had no real idea if I was doing things correctly or not. Knowing that I had a narrow window of time in order to bring this data to the PAC, putting the questionnaire online was a brilliant idea. The short timeframe did not hinder the feasibility of what we wanted to do. In fact, the data

collection methods chosen and the methods in which the data was analyzed met the goals and objectives of the evaluation.

This evaluation has taken on its own life. The transparency that I have injected into this initiative in making sure that all minutes are passed on has made the staff, parents, administration, and district personnel more aware of our goals. The teachers have taken a greater interest in what the working group is trying to achieve. Around the photocopying room and the water cooler, teachers are talking about what they would do if the infrastructure was in place and what else they would purchase to add to their technology lessons. They are excited to see what will happen.

The evaluation is now complete with the final report and presentation given to the staff and the PAC. The evaluation and presentation exceeded what everyone had expected. The rubric that you gave us was a great aid in completing this evaluation. It provided a clear picture to what was required in each task. This showed in the final report. The teachers were very welcoming to the idea of a new direction for IT at our school. The PAC was ecstatic that they were providing money to an initiative that will become a part their legacy. The PAC made a commitment to provide us with \$15,000 in the first year, but was hesitant to make a commitment for later years. Now that I have committed myself to this initiative, I am following through with our intentions. I am in the process of determining the cost/benefit of reorganizing the computers in the library to make it more manageable for the librarians, costing out Ram and the price of computers for each of the lab with our suppliers. As a classroom teacher, this information was previously not privy to me; now that I am in charge, it seems that district personnel are happy to give this information to me. I have had two meetings since the PAC approved

the evaluation. The notes from each meeting have been neatly transcribed and distributed to the stakeholders. They welcome this fresh approach to communication in our school. My goal is to have everything in order by early February. For the following school year, I would like to hear the reactions of students in terms of their learning with technology. From here, we can make an argument for more funding. I am enjoying taking the lead in this initiative and will stay on as long as my heart is into it.

As for the grade that I should receive, I would be comfortable with an 'A'.