

Career Services Evaluation and Planning Tool

Introduction

Over the last several years, the Career Services professionals from a number of the member institutions of the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities have met at various campus sites for purposes of understanding and sharing their broad range of career related programming, operational challenges, “best practices” and mutual vision.

These annual meetings have highlighted a number of areas of common interest that could be enhanced, provided there were assets available to apply to the chosen initiatives.

Among those common interests was one of research and design of a set of standards or practices that, if employed effectively, could;

- A) Provide a self-assessment tool to evaluate the success, quality, and efficiency of the variety of career related disciplines within the host institutions.
- B) Provide a tool that could, from a practical perspective, act as a document for both tactical (short term) and strategic (long term) planning by the career office, its’ management, and the institutional administration.

While there are a number of tools available for this assessment discipline, it was our desire to create a tool that would/could be unique to the make-up of our member institutions. While there may be some similarities to other existing tools, they are more likely due to the general make-up of a career office and it’s general mission than a re-statement of other works.

We have attempted to broaden the scope of each statement to allow for institutional variances and reduce the number of total evaluative criteria to most efficiently help either the career office self-assessment or visiting team assessors.

Within the tool there is ample space, by way of both rating and comment to clarify each criteria assessment item, should the need arise. Comments should be perceived as helpful to the organization under review and supportive to its’ future planning efforts. The over-all emphasis is on programming, not personnel assessment.

Each career related set of disciplines (Mission, Program Management, Facilities, etc.) has the opportunity to rate criteria according to how well the program upholds them.

Please rate the components of the office on each criterion according to this rating scale:

4= Criteria achieved and exceeded.

3= Criteria achieved.

2= Criteria seldom achieved.

1= Criteria not achieved.

NA= Criteria not applicable to the institution.

Career Services Evaluation and Planning Tool

I. Mission

A “mission” or “vision” statement is of paramount importance to any organization. It could be expected that an effective Career office would have such a defining statement and that it would resonate with the goals or mission of the entire organization/institution. It becomes the initial benchmark for operational and programming initiatives for the Career Office. The primary purpose of career services is to aid students, graduate alumni and all other clientele in career and employment decisions.

Annually developed goals, in keeping with the department’s mission, should be documented and appropriately addressed / measured during the school year. They should be communicated to the appropriate departments, both academic and staff.

Mission Criteria	Rating
1. Career services supports the mission, academic programs and the advancement of the university.	1 2 3 4 NA
2. Career services’ goals are identified, reviewed, and updated annually.	1 2 3 4 NA
3. Career services considers the needs of all students in all majors.	1 2 3 4 NA
4. Career services develops future goals to greater serve students, alumni, and clientele.	1 2 3 4 NA
5. Career services help individuals develop self knowledge, understanding of work world, career decisions, and job searching skills.	1 2 3 4 NA
6. Career services help individuals link with alumni, employers and professional organizations in order for them seek their desired employment.	1 2 3 4 NA
7. Career Services help individuals gain career-related experience through student activities, community service, student employment, co-ops, and internships.	1 2 3 4 NA

8. Career services promotes awareness within the entire university community about the work world and the need for career development.	1 2 3 4 NA
9. Career services effectively communicates its goals to the administration, faculty, and staff.	1 2 3 4 NA

Please Record Your Score: _____ Out of 36.

- 32-36 Achieved and exceeded = 4
- 27-31 Achieved = 3
- 18-26 Seldom achieved = 2
- 1-17 Not achieved = 1

Total Ranking: _____

Record the Career Services Office Mission statement in the space provided. Remember that it must be consistent with the mission and goals of the entire university.

Comments/ Questions:

II. Program Components

The overall career office must be intentional, coherent, and tailored to the university with whom it is associated. Career offices must promote career strategy-related development in students by encouraging outcomes such as intellectual growth, effective communication, clarification of values, appropriate career choices, interpersonal skills, and achievement of personal goals.

Program Component Criteria	Rating
1. Key program components are clearly defined by manager or leader of career services.	1 2 3 4 NA
2. Career service staff is knowledgeable of the following:	
a. Academic and occupational interest of the students.	1 2 3 4 NA
b. Current research, theories, and knowledge of career development and learning.	1 2 3 4 NA
c. Economic trends opportunities and/or constraints.	1 2 3 4 NA
d. University priorities.	1 2 3 4 NA
3. Career services works closely with all academic departments.	1 2 3 4 NA
4. Career services promotes career development for students as an integral component to the mission of the university.	1 2 3 4 NA

Please Record Your Score: _____ Out of 28.

25-28 Achieved and exceeded = 4
 21-24 Achieved = 3
 14-20 Seldom achieved = 2
 1-13 Not achieved = 1

Total Ranking: _____

Questions/Comments:

III. Career Counseling

Career counseling includes teaching self-assessment techniques, analysis of the individuals needs, interests, skills, abilities, educational background, personality, and academic achievement. Career counseling also provides opportunity for research of career information and vocational testing.

Career Counseling Criteria	Rating
1. How well does the office assist students in the following areas?	
a. Encourage short and long-term God honoring career (life ministry)goals for the students.	1 2 3 4 NA
b. Make an impact on both the mental and spiritual life of each student.	1 2 3 4 NA
c. Help students learn more about themselves so that they can make sensible career choices.	1 2 3 4 NA
2. Career offices encourage students to take full advantage of career services as early as possible in their collegiate matriculation.	1 2 3 4 NA
3. Career staffs are not hesitant to refer students to other counseling and resource agencies.	1 2 3 4 NA
4. Career office maintains accurate, extensive, and confidential counseling/coaching records for ongoing interaction with students and alumni.	1 2 3 4 NA
5. Career services provides career counseling and coaching through scheduled individual and group appointments.	1 2 3 4 NA

Please Record Your Score: _____ Out of 28.

- 25-28 Achieved and exceeded = 4
- 21-24 Achieved = 3
- 14-20 Seldom achieved = 2
- 1-13 Not achieved = 1

Total Ranking: _____

Questions/Comments:

IV. Career Information

The career office has a wide range of resources available in printed form or as data on the Internet that can be valuable tools for student and graduate career informational services. The OOH, DOT provided on the Internet by the U.S. government is one such tool, and it can often be supplemented by a significant number of commercially available software programs.

In addition to those resources, office staff should be able to demonstrate / teach informational access techniques and have competencies in assessment of ever increasing availability with a variety of career information tools.

A plan should be available to provide programs encouraging underclass participation in the information acquisition and job search strategies very early in their matriculation process. Attempts to recruit students into resume and cover letter preparation, initiation, follow-up, and closure techniques as freshmen and sophomores will enhance their potential as well as ease the traditional senior May/June “rush.”

Career Information Criteria	Rating				
1. Accessible career information that is current and comprehensive is made available to all students in all fields of study.	1	2	3	4	NA
2. Career services uses information technology to give students and staff an edge and keep them up-to-date on current changes in the job market.	1	2	3	4	NA
3. Career service facilities are staffed with competent personnel who have counseling, advising, and information technology experience.	1	2	3	4	NA
4. Career service information is easily accessible, user friendly, organized and adaptable to change.	1	2	3	4	NA
5. Career information contains the following:					
a. self assessment and career planning tools or materials, such as Career Direct, Myers-Briggs, Strong's, Campbells, etc.	1	2	3	4	NA
b. occupational and job market information such as FOCUS II, OOH, etc.	1	2	3	4	NA
c. graduate and professional school materials or information	1	2	3	4	NA
d. employment searching technologies	1	2	3	4	NA

e. job, experimental education, and internship listings	1	2	3	4	NA
f. employer information	1	2	3	4	NA

Please Record Your Score: _____ Out of 40.

- 36-40 Achieved and exceeded = 4
- 30-35 Achieved = 3
- 20-29 Seldom achieved = 2
- 1-19 Not achieved = 1

Total Ranking: _____

Questions/Comments:

V. Employment Services

Connection with employment, life ministries, etc. is the most significant responsibility of an effective career office operation. Interaction with employers should be able to be demonstrated/documentated and, where possible, should include staff visits to employer locations in an effort to develop relationships and increase knowledge of working environments that can be used as an asset to educate students in the choice of one organization over another.

Employment Services Criteria	Rating
1. Career services develops and maintains relationships with employers that provide career employment opportunities for students.	1 2 3 4 NA
2. Career services should assist students in the following:	
a. Exploring a full range of career possibilities, developing job search disciplines, etc.	1 2 3 4 NA
b. Connecting with employers through any means that is possible for the university.	1 2 3 4 NA
c. Obtaining, posting information on employment opportunities and prospective employers.	1 2 3 4 NA

Please Record Your Score: _____ Out of 16.

14-16	Achieved and exceeded	= 4
12-13	Achieved	= 3
8-11	Seldom achieved	= 2
1-7	Not achieved	= 1

Total Ranking: _____

Questions/Comments:

VI. Graduate School Services

Optimal career office approaches to graduate school preparation can often be of great assistance to the institution's academic departments. They might include, but are not limited to, availability of graduate school practice exams, tools to understand/investigate graduate school locations, specialties, rankings, and application processes.

Graduate School Services Criteria	Rating
1. Career services either assists students or cooperates with the academic departments in:	
a. Identifying professional school programs that match their career goals.	1 2 3 4 NA
b. Making themselves presentable as candidates for further study, perhaps by practice tests, etc.	1 2 3 4 NA
c. Connecting with graduate and professional school programs.	1 2 3 4 NA

Please Record Your Score: _____ Out of 12.

11-12	Achieved and exceeded	= 4
8-10	Achieved	= 3
5-7	Seldom achieved	= 2
1-4	Not achieved	= 1

Total Ranking: _____

Questions/Comments:

VII. Program Management

Effective and ethical leadership is essential to the success of all organizations. Institutions must appoint, empower, and position leaders within the administrative structure to accomplish stated goals. The leader of career services must be able to exercise authority over resources for which the office is responsible. Also the leader of career services must work closely with administrators and department heads to ensure that there is a link between career services and the rest of the institution.

Program Management Criteria	Rating
1. There is a leader assigned to manage career services and align the goals of career services with that of the university/institution.	1 2 3 4 NA
2. The leader of career services develops program goals and objectives to fulfill the mission of the program.	1 2 3 4 NA
3. Career services conducts regular program evaluations and adjusts programs to improve their operations.	1 2 3 4 NA
4. Career services is structured purposefully and managed effectively in order to achieve the office's mission.	1 2 3 4 NA
5. Does your office attempt to provide events for all majors at least once a year?	1 2 3 4 NA

Please Record Your Score: _____ Out of 20.

- 17-20 Achieved and exceeded = 4
- 15-17 Achieved = 3
- 10-14 Seldom achieved = 2
- 1-9 Not achieved = 1

Total Ranking: _____

Questions/Comments:

VIII. Human Resources

It is critical that the Career Service office be staffed adequately with individuals qualified to accomplish its missions and goals. There should be established procedures for staff selection, training, and evaluation. Also, appropriate professional development opportunities should be provided for staff members including professional conferences, workshops, and other future continuing educational activities.

Human Resources Criteria	Rating				
1. Career services must develop and maintain job descriptions for all staff members and provide (at least) annual performance appraisals.	1	2	3	4	NA
2. All staff is trained in legal, confidential, and ethical issues related to career services.	1	2	3	4	NA
3. All career service professionals keep current on developments in job market that will affect range of career services.	1	2	3	4	NA
4. Staff training is on-going so that broad skills are developed within the office/campus environment.	1	2	3	4	NA

Please Record Your Score: _____ Out of 16.

- 14-16 Achieved and exceeded = 4
- 12-13 Achieved = 3
- 8-11 Seldom achieved = 2
- 1-7 Not achieved = 1

Total Ranking: _____

Questions/Comments:

IX. Facilities and Equipment

The career office must have adequate, appropriately located facilities and equipment to support its mission and goals. Facilities, technology, and equipment must be in compliance with relevant federal, state, and local requirements to provide for access, health, and safety.

Facilities and Equipment Criteria	Rating				
1. Career office has adequate equipment, technological and otherwise, to fulfill its mission and to perform efficiently.	1	2	3	4	NA
2. Career office is AWDA accessible by persons with disabilities and it's equipment is equally available to all potential users.	1	2	3	4	NA
3. Career office has sufficient private offices for counseling, employer interviews or other confidential / privacy uses.	1	2	3	4	NA
4. Career office is located in a convenient and accessible area of the general campus, hours of operation are posted .	1	2	3	4	NA
5. Career office has access to conference rooms and large group meeting rooms for interviewing, group training, etc.	1	2	3	4	NA
6. Career office is able to provide security to protect the confidentiality and safety of all records.	1	2	3	4	NA

Please Record Your Score: _____ Out of 24.

- 21-24 Achieved and exceeded = 4
- 18-20 Achieved = 3
- 12-17 Seldom achieved = 2
- 1-11 Not achieved = 1

Total Ranking: _____

Questions/Comments:

X. Campus and External Relations

Inter-departmental initiatives are key to the success of effective career operations. Some of the more successful models can demonstrate “partnering” with department heads from such other disciplines as admissions, public relations, alumni, and various academic disciplines.

Campus and External Relations Criteria	Rating
1. Career services develops and maintains productive relationships with relevant campus offices.	1 2 3 4 NA
2. Career services exchanges information with the academic administration and faculty related to academic planning and curriculum development.	1 2 3 4 NA
3. Career services provides feedback to the faculty and staff concerning changes in job requirements.	1 2 3 4 NA
4. Career services participates in campus activities where appropriate.	1 2 3 4 NA
5. Career services keeps track of alumni so that they can arrange programs and events that utilize their expertise and experience.	1 2 3 4 NA

Please Record Your Score: _____ Out of 20.

- 18-20 Achieved and exceeded = 4
- 15-17 Achieved = 3
- 10-13 Seldom achieved = 2
- 1-9 Not achieved = 1

Total Ranking: _____

Questions/Comments:

XI. Employer Relations and Services

Employers are both vital partners in the educational process and primary customers for college/university career services. Each institution needs to develop policies and practices for employer relations and service. The following criteria may help you develop these policies and practices. Surveys of employer satisfaction with on-campus interaction, career link/job fair participation, response to employer requests, ease and variety of access, etc. should be periodically acquired, evaluated and acted upon.

Of particular importance is the need for a policy regarding “third party” organizations.

Employer Relations and Services Criteria	Rating				
1. Career services develops policies and practices for relations and services with prospective employers.	1	2	3	4	NA
2. Career services demonstrates a general practice of adherence to professional and ethical standards.	1	2	3	4	NA
3. Career services maximizes and documents events that promote students' exposure to employers.	1	2	3	4	NA
4. Career services encourages dialogue between employers, faculty, and the university administration.	1	2	3	4	NA
5. Career services strives to understand the variety of cultures, needs, and other differences of their employee base and respond appropriately where applicable.	1	2	3	4	NA
6. Career services does not give special treatment to any one set of individual employers over another.	1	2	3	4	NA
7. Career services provides employers with vital information concerning policies, procedures, and instructions for using their services.	1	2	3	4	NA
8. Career services provides employers with appropriate information about university curriculum, class profiles, and majors.	1	2	3	4	NA
9. Career services encourages/provides opportunities for employers to support the university, which could range from scholarships to other forms of financial/ networking assistance.	1	2	3	4	NA

Please Record Your Score: _____ Out of 36.

32-36	Achieved and exceeded	= 4
27-31	Achieved	= 3
18-26	Seldom achieved	= 2
1-17	Not achieved	= 1

Total Ranking: _____

Questions/Comments:

XII. Legal Responsibilities

The career office staff members need to be aware and responsive to law and regulations that relate to their respective programs and or services. The institution must provide access to legal advice for staff members as needed to carry out assigned responsibilities.

Legal Responsibilities Criteria	Rating				
1. Career service professionals are knowledgeable about all <i>relevant</i> civil and criminal laws, institutional policies, and any other contractual commitments.	1	2	3	4	NA
2. Career services adheres to:					
a. Career services staff are aware of and adhere to equal opportunity laws concerning employment referral practices	1	2	3	4	NA
b. Family Education Rights and Privacy Act, ERPA, which pertains to disclosure of student information contained in school records.	1	2	3	4	NA
c. Defamation law, pertaining to recommendations for students.	1	2	3	4	NA
d. Affirmative action regulations and laws, regarding students.	1	2	3	4	NA
e. Liability issues pertaining to internship and cooperative education programs.	1	2	3	4	NA
f. Requirements for eligibility of students to work in certain states.	1	2	3	4	NA
3. Career services informs students in a timely fashion about the changing legal issues, obligations, and potential liabilities.	1	2	3	4	NA

Please Record Your Score: _____ Out of 32.

- 29-32 Achieved and exceeded = 4
- 24-28 Achieved = 3
- 16-23 Seldom achieved = 2
- 1-15 Not achieved = 1

Total Ranking: _____

Questions/Comments:

XIII. Ethics

Career services members must adhere to the highest principles of ethical behavior. The office must be able to demonstrate ethical practices addressing the issues unique to each program and service.

Ethical Criteria	Rating
1. Career services strives to maintain the highest standards of ethical behavior.	1 2 3 4 NA
2. Leaders and managers of career services take an active role in providing guidance and education on ethical standards.	1 2 3 4 NA
3. Career services adheres to ethical criteria:	
a. as articulated in the university's handbook or disseminated by the institution's Human Resources department.	1 2 3 4 NA
b. when handling funds and established responsible accounting procedures.	1 2 3 4 NA
c. when referring an employed graduate to another employer one must first have that person's request for referral.	1 2 3 4 NA
d. by refraining from <u>any</u> form of sexual harassment, as defined by school policy.	1 2 3 4 NA

Please Record Your Score: _____ Out of 24.

- 21-24 Achieved and exceeded = 4
- 18-20 Achieved = 3
- 12-17 Seldom Achieved = 2
- 1-11 Not Achieved = 1

Total Ranking: _____

Questions/Comments:

XIV. Self Research, Assessment, and Evaluation

An organization best succeeds when it can gather quantitative and qualitative information about the degree to which its programming meets the targeted audience, is perceived by that audience in terms of “customer satisfaction” and can demonstrate responsiveness to input from its clientele. Evidences of a systematic approach to gathering such analytical data should be present.

Self Research, Assessment, and Evaluation Criteria	Rating				
1. All self assessments and evaluations are conducted with the thought of testing to see if the mission and goals of the office are being met.	1	2	3	4	NA
2. Several methods of evaluation and assessment are explored to ensure that the findings will be objective and comprehensive.	1	2	3	4	NA
3. Data collected from these various methods include responses from students, employers, academic divisions, and all others involved with career services.	1	2	3	4	NA
4. Results of these assessments must not be ignored, they should be used in making changes, adjustments, and modifications to meet the mission and goals of the office.	1	2	3	4	NA
5. Career services prepare and distribute annual and special reports concerning the goals, objectives and current updates of services offered by the office	1	2	3	4	NA
6. Comparing data with other collegiate career service offices is used to evaluate your programs effectiveness and efficiency.	1	2	3	4	NA

Please Record Your Score: _____ Out of 24.

- 21-24 Achieved and exceeded = 4
- 18-20 Achieved = 3
- 12-17 Seldom Achieved = 2
- 1-11 Not Achieved = 1

Total Ranking: _____

Questions/Comments:

Criteria Totals

Enter the “Total Ranking” number from each individual discipline (Mission, Facilities, Legal, etc.) into its appropriate section below. Then add the rankings, entering a “total.” Then divide the total by the number of individual disciplines (14). That “averaged” number becomes the over -all Career Services operational / programming assessment ranking .

Program Disciplines	Ranking
I. Mission	
II. Program Components	
III. Career Counseling	
IV. Career Information	
V. Employment Services	
VI. Graduate School Services	
VII. Program Management	
VIII. Human Resources	
IX. Facilities and Equipment	
X. Campus and External Relations	
XI. Employer Relations and Services	
XII. Legal Responsibilities	
XIII. Ethics	
XIV. Self Research, Assessment, and Evaluation	
Total	_____
Overall Rating 3.5-4.0= Achieved and exceeded 3.0-3.4= Achieved 2.0-2.9= Seldom Achieved 1.0-1.9= Not Achieved	____ / 14= ____

Career Services Evaluation and Planning Tool

Summary Observations

1. After the completion of the assessment, some areas (Scores of 3.5 and above) will stand out as strengths of your program. Briefly describe the reasons for such strengths.

2. There will be some program and practices that seem to be operating at a satisfactory level, but show potential for improvement? (Scores of 3.0 - 3.5.) In what ways could they be strengthened?

3A. Which service categories or disciplines of your operation have a demonstrated need for improvement? (Scores 1.0 – 2.9)

3B. Of the disciplines that required improvement, which fall into the below listed categories?

1. Attainable within reasonable time and resource constraints.

2. Attainable only by access to additional finance and personnel resources.

4. Articulate your action plans for solutions to both 3A and 3B. They could include, but are not limited to, formal presentations to immediate upper management, trustee or advisory board awareness, need for development assistance, plans for partnering with employers, preparation of grant requests, etc.

All questions and comments concerning the content or use of this assessment and planning tool should be directed to Cedarville University Career Service Office at career@cedarville.edu. Or you may call 1-888-562-4811.

References

Basil, Frank. **Personal & Professional Effectiveness**. Carmel, Indiana: Guild Press of Indiana, 1995.

IBM Service Division. **Operational Assessment Tool and Guide**. May 1986.

National Association of Colleges and Employers. **Professional Standards for College and University Career Services**. May 1998.

The Council for the Advancements of Standards in Higher Education. **The CAS Book of Professional Standards for Higher Education**. 1997.

Zeithaml, Parasuraman and Berry. **Delivering Quality Service**. New York, NY: The Free Press, 1990.

Special Thanks to our Career Services Peers

Deb Hoffman, Director

Messiah College

Larry Mealy, Director

Taylor University

Dawn Mulholland, Director

Greenville College

Jack Stewart, Director

Abilene Christian University

Their friendship, interest, and review of this work was invaluable.