Report on the Assessment of Government Evaluations

Evaluation Title:	Report on the Evaluation of the Training Needs of Senior Managers in the Public Sector
Evaluation Number:	232
Evaluation Completion Date:	30 January 2008
Period of Evaluation:	2007
Submitted:	22 February 2013 by Wilma Wessels-Ziervogel
Approved:	07 June 2013 by Sean Walsh

Evaluation Details

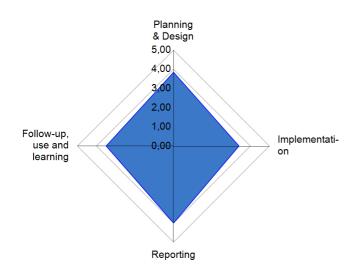|	
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Known Cost:	R 1 200 000,00
Known Cost Type:	Estimate
Initiated By:	Public Service Commission
Initiated By Internal:	
Undertaken By:	PriceWaterhouse Coopers (PwC)
Undertaken By Internal:	

Assessors

Assessment Documents

Document Name:	Document Type:	Added By:	Added On:

Quality Assessment Scores
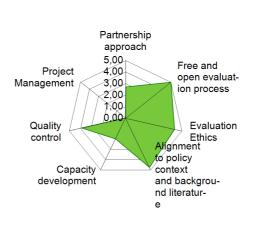
Phase of Evaluation	Score
Planning & Design	3,85
Implementation	3,41
Reporting	4,00
Follow-up, use and learning	3,50
Total	3,76

Overarching Consideration	Score
Partnership approach	2,71
Free and open evaluation process	5,00
Evaluation Ethics	4,33
Alignment to policy context and background literature	4,75
Capacity development	2,00
Quality control	3,89
Project Management	
Total	3,76

Scores: Phases of Evaluation

Scores: Overarching Considerations

Phase of Evaluation	Area of Evaluation	Score
Planning & Design	Quality of the TOR	
Planning & Design	Adequacy of resourcing	
Planning & Design	Alignment to policy context and background literature	4,40
Planning & Design	Appropriateness of the evaluation design and methodology	3,50
Planning & Design	Project management (Planning phase)	

Phase of Evaluation	Area of Evaluation	Score
Implementation	Evaluation ethics and independence	5,00
Implementation	Participation and M&E skills development	3,00
Implementation	Methodological integrity	2,62
Implementation	Project management (Implementation phase)	
Reporting	Completeness of the evaluation report	3,95
Reporting	Accessibility of content	4,64
Reporting	Robustness of findings	4,00
Reporting	Strength of conclusions	4,09
Reporting	Suitability of recommendations	3,62
Reporting	Acknowledgement of ethical considerations	3,80
Follow-up, use and learning	Resource utilisation	
Follow-up, use and learning	Evaluation use	3,50
Total	Total	3,76

Planning & Design

Quality of the TOR

Standard:	The evaluation was guided by a well-structured and complete TOR or a well-structured and complete internal evaluation proposal (e.g. Background, Purpose, Evaluation Questions, Design & Methodology, Deliverables & Timeframes, Resource requirements, Intended Audience & Utilisation, etc).
Comment and Analysis:	The ToR was not made available for this assessment.
Rating:	: N/A
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Standard:	The purpose of the evaluation stated in the TOR (or an internal evaluation proposal) was clear and e
Comment and Analysis:	ToR was not made available for this assessment.
Rating:	: N/A
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Standard:	The approach and type of evaluation was suited to the purpose and scope of the evaluation TOR (or an internal evaluation proposal)
Comment and Analysis:	ToR was not made available for this assessment.
Rating:	: N/A
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Standard:	The TOR (or an internal evaluation proposal) identified the intended users of the evaluation and their information needs
Comment and Analysis:	ToR was not made available for this assessment.
Rating:	: N/A
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Standard:	The evaluation questions in the TOR (or an internal evaluation proposal) were clearly stated and ap
Comment and Analysis:	ToR was not made available for this assessment.
Rating:	: N/A
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Standard:	Key stakeholders were involved in the scoping of the TOR and choosing the purpose of the evaluation
Comment and Analysis:	ToR was not made available for this assessment.
Rating:	: N/A
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Adequacy of resourcing

Standard:	The evaluation was adequately resourced in terms of time and budget allocated
Comment and Analysis:	The evaluation had not taken into consideration the poor response rate/delay in response when using self completion questionnaires. Thus adequate time (of 5 months) was not allocated for the evaluation.
Rating:	3: The evaluation was adequately resourced in terms of time and budget allocated
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Standard:	The evaluation was adequately resourced in terms of original budget
Comment and Analysis:	Since the project manager could not be interviewed, this could not be assessed.
Rating:	: N/A
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Standard:	The team conducting the evaluation was adequately resourced in terms of staffing and skills sets
Comment and Analysis:	According to the Service Provider the evaluation team was competent. The client's perspective was not provided.
Rating:	3: The evaluation was adequately resourced in terms of staffing and skills sets
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Standard:	Where appropriate, the evaluation planned to incorporate an element of capacity building of partners
Comment and Analysis:	This was not indicated in the documents available to the assessor. The interviewee was also unsure. It is therefore uncertain that capacity building was planned, and seems highly unlikely that it took place.
Rating:	2: 2
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Alignment to policy context and background literature

Standard:	There was evidence that a review of the relevant policy and programme environments had been conducte
Comment and Analysis:	The evaluator provided a good overview of the relevant policy related to Public Service capacity development. This was used used to inform evaluation questions.
Rating:	5: 5
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Standard:	There was evidence of a review of appropriate literature having been conducted and used in planning
Comment and Analysis:	The relevant literature was reviewed, although some of this was presented in an appendix.
Rating:	4: 4
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Appropriateness of the evaluation design and methodology

Standard:	There was explicit reference to the intervention logic or the theory of change of the evaluand in the planning of the evaluation
Comment and Analysis:	The report did not clearly stipulate the intervention logic under evaluation, although it did make reference to the general intervention logic for capacity development within the public sector.
Rating:	3: There was explicit reference to the intervention logic or the theory of change of the evaluand in the TOR or the Inception Report
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Standard:	Key stakeholders were consulted on the design and methodology of the evaluation
Comment and Analysis:	The service provider only worked with the PSC who commissioned the evaluation. The DPSA was not included as a key stakdeholder in the design and methodology.
Rating:	3: 3
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Standard:	The planned methodology was appropriate to the questions being asked
Comment and Analysis:	The evaluator planned to use mixed methods in this evaluation (qualitative and quantitative methods) combined with a document review. This was appropriate to address the evaluation questions had all of the methods been applied as intended.
Rating:	5: The planned methodology was creative and very well suited to the questions being asked and should have generated the requisite data to answer the evaluation questions asked completely
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Standard:	The sampling planned was appropriate and adequate given the focus and purpose of evaluation
Comment and Analysis:	The sample was limited to only the Senior Managers. While they were a key stakeholder, especially in assessing the quality of training, it would have been useful to include their managers and subordinates to reflect on the impact of training on their technical and management skills.
Rating:	2: The sampling planned was not entirely appropriate given the focus and purpose of the evaluation
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Standard:	There was a planned process for using the findings of the evaluation
Comment and Analysis:	The interviewee was unsure of this.
Rating:	: N/A
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Project management (Planning phase)

Standard:	The inception phase was used to develop a common agreement on how the evaluation would be implemented
Comment and Analysis:	The scope and other aspects of the evaluation were negotiated and agreed upfront.
Rating:	5: The inception phase was used to maximum effect to ensure a common agreement between all stakeholders and a shared understanding of how the evaluation would be implemented
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Implementation

Evaluation ethics and independence

Standard:	Where data was gathered in contexts where ethical sensitivity is high, informed consent, assurances of confidentiality and appropriate clearance were achieved; e.g. through an ethics review board, in evaluation involving minors, institutions where access usually requires ethical or bureacratic clearance
Comment and Analysis:	Ethical procedures were adhered to in the evaluation. This was endorsed by PSC (the client).
Rating:	5: There was clear evidence that best practice ethical protocols in the sector were observed in all data collection instances including: informed consent agreements; confidentiality; documenting and storing data notes, recordings or transcripts; and ethics review board approvals
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Standard:	Where external, the evaluation team was able to work without significant interference and given access to existing data and information sources
Comment and Analysis:	The client was involved at the right level and did not significantly interfere in the process.
Rating:	5: The evaluation team was able to work freely and independently without interference and significant efforts were documented to ensure unfettered access to all existing data and information sources
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Standard:	The evaluation team was impartial and there was no evidence of conflict of interest
Comment and Analysis:	The evaluation team was impartial.
Rating:	5: 5
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Participation and M&E skills development

Standard:	Key stakeholders were involved in the evaluation through a formalised mechanism or institutional arrangement
Comment and Analysis:	A steering committee was set up, consisting of the client (PSC) and service provider (PwC).
Rating:	4: Key stakeholders were regularly, actively involved in the evaluation and contributed through a formalised mechanism or institutional arrangement (e.g. a steering committee or reference group)
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Standard:	Where appropriate, an element of capacity building of partners responsible for the evaluand and evaluators was incorporated into the evaluation process
Comment and Analysis:	This was not indicated in the documents available to the assessor. The interviewee was also unsure. It is therefore uncertain that capacity building was planned, and seems highly unlikely that it took place.
Rating:	2: There was some evidence of capacity building of partners responsible for the evaluand or evaluators but this was either unstructured or incomplete
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Methodological integrity

Standard:	The methods employed in the process of the evaluation were consistent with those planned
Comment and Analysis:	The methods were not consistent with those planned. Due to delays in the evaluation, the qualitative component of the evaluation was dropped.
Rating:	2: 2
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Standard:	The methods employed in the process of the evaluation were consistent with those planned and implemented adequately
Comment and Analysis:	The evaluation was limited by the inability to execute the qualitative data collection. The quantitative data collection however covered sufficient ground to answer evaluation questions to some degree.
Rating:	3: The methods employed in the process of the evaluation were consistent with those planned and implemented adequately
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Standard:	A pilot of basic data collection instrumentation occurred prior to undertaking data collection and it was used to inform the research process
Comment and Analysis:	Data analysis seemed well executed given the evaluation purpose. It is not however clear what methods and tools were used for data analysis.
Rating:	3: A pilot of basic data collection instrumentation occurred prior to undertaking data collection and it was used to inform the research process
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Standard:	Data collection was not compromised by fieldwork-level problems or unplanned diversions from origina
Comment and Analysis:	Data collection was compromised due to delays in the fieldwork process. Delays happened as a result of poor response rate. This left the evaluator with only the quantitative data.
Rating:	2: 2
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Standard:	Data was collected from key stakeholders (e.g. implementers, governance structures, indirectly affected stakeholders) as data sources
Comment and Analysis:	The executive summary was well written, however lacked sufficient detail on key findings, and was too detailed on recommendations.
Rating:	3: Data was collected from key stakeholders (e.g. Implementers, governance structures, indirectly affected stakeholders) as data sources
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Standard:	The methodology included engaging beneficiaries appropriately as a key source of data and information
Comment and Analysis:	The context was well outlined.
Rating:	5: Beneficiaries were thoroughly and representatively included as the primary source of data amongst multiple sources of data and information (or if based on secondary data, includes data from beneficiaries and beneficaries consulted on emerging findings and provide meaningful input to recommendations)
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Standard:	Key stakeholders were significantly engaged as part of the methodology
Comment and Analysis:	Only the Senior Managers were consulted as part of the methodology. While they were a key stakeholder, especially in assessing the quality of training, it would have been useful to include their managers and subordinates to reflect on the impact of training on their technical and management skills.
Rating:	2: 2
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Standard:	The methodology included engaging beneficiaries appropriately as a key source of data and informatio
Comment and Analysis:	While Senior Managers were definitely a beneficiary group, other representatives within the public sector (managers and subordinates) should also have been consulted regarding the usefulness, application and impact of skills gained.
Rating:	2: 2
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Project management (Implementation phase)

Standard:	The evaluation was conducted without significant shifts to scheduled project milestones and timefram
Comment and Analysis:	Project time frames were shifted over several months due to poor response rate.
Rating:	1: 1
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Standard:	The steering committee, technical working group and service provider worked together adequately to facilitate achievement of the objectives of the evaluation
Comment and Analysis:	Evaluation questions followed a clear rationale in terms of the overall evaluation purpose.
Rating:	5: The steering committee, technical working group and service provider worked together in a creative, flexible and constructive manner facilitating achievement of a high quality evaluation
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Reporting

Completeness of the evaluation report

Standard:	The scope or focus of the evaluation is apparent in the report
Comment and Analysis:	Evaluation objectives were outlined upfront, and each chapter outlined the relevant evaluation questions dealt with. This gave one a clear understanding of the scope/focus of the evaluation. The scope of the "impact evaluation" component of the evaluation was however not clear in the report, and seemed very limited.
Rating:	4: 4
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Standard:	A detailed methodology is outlined in the relevant section of the report to the point that a reader
Comment and Analysis:	Methodology and sampling was generally clearly indicated in the report. It can be assumed that a self completion survey was used for data collection, although this is not clear from the report. It is also not clear who else was intended to be interviewed for the qualitative component. Detail on analysis was limited to scales used for analysing questions.
Rating:	3: 3
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Standard:	Acknowledgement of limitations of all aspects of the methodology and findings are clearly and succin
Comment and Analysis:	The limitations were acknowledged, however the limitations to the research design could have been further considered. For example while consultation with Senior Managers was central to the evaluation process, the data could have been deepened through triangulation. This was not acknowledged.
Rating:	3: 3
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Standard:	Key findings are presented in a clear way; they are made distinct from uncertain or speculative find
Comment and Analysis:	Findings were very well presented.
Rating:	5: 5
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Standard:	Conclusions and recommendations are clear and succinctly articulated
Comment and Analysis:	The study concluded the findings succintly. Recommendations were very detailed, and while they could have been more concise, they were well structured to guide implementation.
Rating:	4: 4
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Accessibility of content

Standard:	The final evaluation report is user-friendly, written in accessible language and adequate for publication (e.g. adequate layout and consistent formatting; complete sentences and no widespread grammatical or typographical errors; consistency of style and writing conventions; levels of formality; references complete and consistent with cited references in reference list and vice versa; etc.)
Comment and Analysis:	Data analysis seemed well executed. Disaggregation categories were clear and used consistently throughout the report.
Rating:	5: The final evaluation report balances an impressive depth of work with excellent writing that is accessible to the common reader and reflects an excellent publishing standard
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Standard:	Figures, tables and appropriate conventions are used in presentation of data (e.g. use of appropriate statistical language; reporting of p-values where appropriate; not reporting statistically insignificant findings as significant; clarifying disaggregation categories in constructing percentages; not using quantitative language in reporting qualitative data, etc.) and are readily discernible to a reader familiar with data presentation conventions
Comment and Analysis:	There was sufficient analysis of the evidence to support the argument, although qualitative data would have deepened the analysis.
Rating:	4: Figures, tables and conventions are well used for a variety of types of data presentations and supporting explanations make them accessible to readers
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Standard:	Quality of writing and presentation is adequate for publication including: adequate layout and consi
Comment and Analysis:	The report is adequate for publishing. It is well written, no grammatical issues and well structured and formatted for easy reading.
Rating:	5: 5
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Standard:	Appropriate conventions are used in presentation of data (e.g. use of appropriate statistical langua
Comment and Analysis:	The appropriate statistical language was used, however no confidence levels or margins of error were reported.
Rating:	4: 4
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Standard:	The use of figures and tables is such that it supports communication and comprehension of results; a
Comment and Analysis:	Figures and tables were used throughout the report and assisted with the simple illustration of data.
Rating:	5: 5
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Robustness of findings

Standard:	Data analysis appears to have been executed to an adequate standard
Comment and Analysis:	The self-completion method, lack of qualitative data and triangulation limited the methodology and analysis. Although, for the quantitative component of the evaluation, no analytic or methodological flaws are evident.
Rating:	3: Data analysis appears to have been executed to an adequate standard for most datasets
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Standard:	Findings are supported by available evidence
Comment and Analysis:	Findings were supported by evidence, although there was perhaps insufficient evidence on the impact related findings due to over reliance on reported changes and lack of triangulation.
Rating:	4: 4
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Standard:	Findings are supported by evidence which is sufficiently and appropriately analysed to support the argument, integrating sources of data
Comment and Analysis:	Conclusions covered only the findings of this evaluation.
Rating:	3: The evidence gathered is analysed to support the argument to an adequate standard and integrates sources of data
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Standard:	There is appropriate recognition and exploration of the possibility of alternative interpretations
Comment and Analysis:	The conclusions mostly addressed the evaluation purpose and questions. Information on "impact" and "best practices" were however limited. Best practices was covered in the appendix.
Rating:	4: There is clear recognition of the possibility of alternative interpretations and these are concisely presented without detracting from other findings
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Standard:	The report appears free of significant methodological and analytic flaws
Comment and Analysis:	The relevant aspects of the theory of change under evaluation were concluded, however this was not made very explicit.
Rating:	3: The report appears free of significant methodological and analytic flaws
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Standard:	There is appropriate recognition of the possibility of alternative interpretations
Comment and Analysis:	There was recognition of other angles to an argument made.
Rating:	5: 5
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Standard:	Limitations of all aspects of the methodology and findings are clearly articulated (e.g. limitations of scope or evaluation design, recommendation for additional research, data collection challenges, etc)
Comment and Analysis:	Recommendations were derived from evaluation findings only and no sectoral partners/experts.
Rating:	2: There is some acknowledgment of the limitations of the methodology and findngs but these are not clear or exhaustive
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Strength of conclusions

Standard:	Conclusions are derived from evidence
Comment and Analysis:	Conclusions were based on evidence.
Rating:	5: 5
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Standard:	Conclusions are derived from evidence
Comment and Analysis:	Senior managers and PSC's recommendations were taken into account in shaping final recommendations. No other government departments/institutes were however included, despite that they were meant to implement the findings.
Rating:	2: Conclusions are derived from some evidence but do not encompass all of what was presented
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Standard:	Conclusions address the original evaluation purpose and questions
Comment and Analysis:	Recommendations were very clear and detailed to guide implementation.
Rating:	5: The conclusions are exceptional in the manner that they address the evaluation purpose and questions
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Standard:	Conclusions are drawn with explicit reference to the intervention logic or theory of change
Comment and Analysis:	The limitations were acknowledged, however the limitations to the research design could have been further considered. For example, while consultation with Senior Managers was central to the evaluation process, the data could have been deepened through triangulation. This was not acknowledged.
Rating:	3: Conclusions are drawn with explicit reference to the intervention logic or theory of change
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Suitability of recommendations

Standard:	Recommendations are made in consultation with relevant government officials, stakeholders and sectoral experts
Comment and Analysis:	Ethical considerations were not included in the report.
Rating:	1: There is no evidence that recommendations were made in consultation with relevant government officials, stakeholders or sectoral experts
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Standard:	Recommendations are useful- they are relevant, specific, feasible, affordable and acceptable
Comment and Analysis:	Results were presented to the client only. It is unclear whether these were further shared with other stakeholders.
Rating:	3: Recommendations are useful- they are relevant, specific, feasible, affordable and acceptable to an extent
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Standard:	Recommendations are relevant to the current policy context
Comment and Analysis:	Recommendations were aligned to policy and strategy.
Rating:	5: 5
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Acknowledgement of ethical considerations

Standard:	The full report documents procedures intended to ensure confidentiality and to secure informed consent where necessary (in some cases this is not needed - e.g. evaluation synthesis - in which case N/A should be recorded)
Comment and Analysis:	This information was not available.
Rating:	: N/A
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Standard:	There are no risks to participants or institutions in disseminating the evaluation report on a public website
Comment and Analysis:	The report is publicly available on the Public Service Commission's website and Government website.
Rating:	5: All participants and institutions to the evaluation were formally informed that the original report would be disseminated on a public website and no risks exist
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Standard:	There are no risks to participants in disseminating the original report on a public website
Comment and Analysis:	There did not seem to be any risk related to dissemination.
Rating:	5: 5
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Standard:	There are no unfair risks to institutions in disseminating the original report on a public website
Comment and Analysis:	There did not seem to be any risk related to dissemination.
Rating:	5: 5
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Follow-up, use and learning

Resource utilisation

Standard:	The evaluation was completed within the planned timeframes
Comment and Analysis:	The evaluation was delayed by several months, and so was not completed within the timeframes allocated.
Rating:	2: 2
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Standard:	The evaluation was completed within the planned timeframes and budget
Comment and Analysis:	The study was reportedly of conceptual value although the client was not interviewed and so their perspective is not reflected.
Rating:	3: The evaluation was completed within the planned timeframes and budget
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Evaluation use

Standard:	Results of the evaluation have been presented to relevant stakeholders
Comment and Analysis:	Since the client was not interviewed, it is not clear how this information was used.
Rating:	: N/A
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Standard:	A reflective process has been undertaken by the steering committee (if no steering committee exists
Comment and Analysis:	This was not clear from the assessment.
Rating:	: N/A
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Standard:	The evaluation study is seen by interviewed stakeholders as having added significant symbolic value
Comment and Analysis:	According to the Service Provider the evaluation was reportedly of symbolic value to the client, however the client was not interviewed on this.
Rating:	3: 3
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

Standard:	There is clear evidence of instrumental use - that the recommendations of the evaluation were implem
Comment and Analysis:	Since the client was not interviewed, it is not clear how this information was used.
Rating:	: N/A
Moderation:	Accepted
Approval:	

References

Public Service Commission, 2008. Report on the Evaluation of the Training Needs of Senior Managers in the Public Sector. Public Servcice Commission Directorate: Communication and Information Services: Creda Communications.

Price Waterhouse Coopers, 2006. Proposal Presentation on the "Evaluating Training Needs of the SMS".

List of Interviewees

Michele Doyle, Evaluation Team Member: Price Waterhouse Coopers (Service Provider), Telephonic Interview, 22/2/2013.