Evaluating the Effects of an Employment Skills Building Program on Employability Ratings with Mentally Ill Offenders

by

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The procedures in this staff training manual/workshop are meant to be used by agency staff, as part of the broader services they provide, or under supervision of agency staff.
ABSTRACT

The aim of the project was to test the effectiveness of a five week employability skills program for improving scores on two assessments of employability amongst a group of mentally disordered offenders. A group of six participants, all diagnosed with an Axis I or Axis II disorder, completed the employability group. The participants in the study were all serving a federal sentence at the Regional Treatment Center of Correctional Services Canada in the Ontario region. All offenders were male and between the ages of 25 and 55 years. The group focused on skills relevant to improving employability such as career searching, managing emotions, demonstrating a positive attitude, being adaptable, being responsible, conflict resolution, teamwork and following roles, mental health stigma and continuous learning. The group members were required to complete a workbook, created by the author to facilitate employability skills in the participants. Group members participated in group discussions and practised new ways of improving their skills. The modified National Employability Skills Program and modified the Employability Skills Assessment were used to test the members’ ratings prior to beginning the group and after the completion of the program. The assessment provided ratings of each member’s perception of skill level. Percentage increase and a t-test were used to demonstrate change and relevance in changes scores. The participants displayed an average percent increase of 80 on the modified NESP assessment and a 42 percent increase on the Employability Skills assessment. The t-test confirmed there was a statistically significant difference between the pre- and post-training groups on the NESP assessment but not on the Employability Skills assessment. All members improved in all subscales of the NESP assessment and Employability Skills assessment. Improvements were not found in two of the members on the Employability Skills assessment. Recommendations for future implementation included extending the duration of the group, increasing the number of sessions, and focusing on one skill a session. This study may prove relevant to future studies on male offenders as well as employability groups with participants diagnosed with a mental illness.
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT ............................................................................................................. ii  
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS ....................................................................................... iii  
TABLE OF CONTENTS ...................................................................................... iv  
LIST OF TABLES ................................................................................................ v  
LIST OF FIGURES ............................................................................................... v

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION .............................................................................. 1

   Overview ........................................................................................................... 1  
   Hypothesis ....................................................................................................... 2  
   Conceptual Terms ........................................................................................... 3

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW ............................................................... 4

   Mental Illness ................................................................................................... 4  
   Mental Illness in Corrections .......................................................................... 4  
   Deinstitutionalization ..................................................................................... 4  
   Mental Illness and Crime ............................................................................... 5  
   Effects of Corrections on Mental health ....................................................... 6  
   Employment with Mental Illness .................................................................. 6  
   Employment with Offenders ......................................................................... 6  
   Effects of Employment on Mental Health .................................................... 7  
   Employability Skills ..................................................................................... 7  
   Vocational Programs .................................................................................... 8  
   Group Career Counselling ............................................................................ 8  
   Recovery Model/ Framework ....................................................................... 9  
   Effects of Employment on Recidivism ........................................................ 9  
   Social Benefits of Employment .................................................................. 10  
   Community Benefits to Employment .......................................................... 10

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY ...................................................................... 12

   Participants ..................................................................................................... 12  
     Participant Characteristics ........................................................................ 12  
     Selection Procedure ................................................................................... 12  
     Consent ....................................................................................................... 12  

   Setting and Apparatus .................................................................................. 13  
     Location ...................................................................................................... 13

   Design ............................................................................................................. 13  
     Method of Delivery .................................................................................... 14  
     Format ......................................................................................................... 14  
     Independent Variables ............................................................................. 14
APPENDICIES

A: Consent form ................................................................. 31
B: Pre Selection Checklist ....................................................... 32
C: Revised version of the NESP Assessment.............................. 35
D: Revised version of the Employability Skills 2000+ Assessment .... 38
E: Individual Results of the NESP Assessment ......................... 40
F: Individual Results of the Employability Skills Assessment .......... 43
G: Facilitator’s Manual............................................................. N/A
CHAPTER I

Introduction

Overview

The Canadian Mental Health Association (2002) states that 20 percent of Canadians will personally experience a mental illness (MI) in their lifetime. The mental disorders which are considered to be serious mental illnesses include, but are not limited to, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, personality disorders and anxiety disorders. The rate of mental illness within prison is two to three times higher than in the general population (Davidson, 2010). Additionally, the number of incarcerated persons with a serious mental illness continues to increase (Farnsworth & Muñoz, 2009). MacDonald, Hucker & Hébert (2010) believe the current push to "get tough" on crime will likely increase rates of incarceration even further.

Approximately 75 percent of federal offenders are identified as having employment needs at intake (The Conference Board of Canada, 2000). Employment and enhanced employability skills can effect an improvement in several aspects of an offender’s life. Gillis and Nafekh, 2005 argued that problems maintaining employment have been identified as one of the main contributors to recidivism (As cited in Davidson, 2010). Improving employability skills while incarcerated may increase the likelihood that an offender will seek and maintain employment following release, and consequently decrease the likelihood of reoffending.

Employment has been shown to improve the overall mental health of offenders. Davidson (2010) states that an important part of the recovery process within the prison is work, as it may reduce the risk of decline in mental status of the offender and promote future employment. It is believed that the improvement or maintenance of mental status is the result of time scheduling and social contact (Davidson, 2010).

There are also many community and social benefits that result from improved employment skills. Davidson (2010) states that employment can promote interpersonal benefits like social acceptance and developed support systems. Scott (2010) concluded that not only can the offender benefit from employment, but the community also profits from the decrease in costs associated with recidivism and further incarceration. The economic cost to the health care system in Canada for the treatment of mental illnesses was estimated to be at least $7.9 billion in 1998: $4.7 billion in care, and $3.2 billion in disability and early death. An additional $6.3 billion was spent on uninsured mental health services and time off work for depression and distress that was not treated by the health care system.

The Conference Board of Canada (2000) published a list of over 2000 skills needed to enter, maintain, and progress in the employment world. These skills are divided into three categories, fundamental, personal management and time management skills. Researchers have identified that factors such as psychiatric symptoms, vocational rehabilitation programs and disability benefits can impact the employment status of people with serious mental illness (Abraham & Stein, 2009). Research reveals that employability skills can be learned with appropriate programming that targets skills related to general employment (Latendress & Cortoni, 2005). For offenders, occupational skills are an important part of healthy reintegration into the community. Practising skills through vocational training may have an effect on the offenders’ likelihood of obtaining
and progressing in the work world. Therefore, there is a need to promote employment skills while incarcerated in an effort to improve future employment rates, improve mental health status, and ultimately lower recidivism rates reducing the burden of prior offenders on society.

**Hypothesis**

The focus of the present study was to test the effectiveness of an employability skills program for offenders, which highlighted the skills needed to overcome the barriers of having a mental illness in the workplace. The effectiveness of a skills building program was evaluated using offenders' ratings on both the modified version of the National Employability Skills Assessment and the modified Employability Skills 2000+ Assessment. It is believed that the scores on both assessments are a representation of each participant’s perception of employability skills. It was hypothesized that participation in the Employability Skills Program would result in an increase in post-intervention scores on the two employment scales thus demonstrating an improvement in self reported perceived employability skills learned.

**Rationale**

This project was completed in cooperation and collaboration with the education department, the Chief of Education, and the staff at the institution (Regional Treatment Centre (Ontario) RTC). The Regional Treatment Centre’s policy and mandate requires offenders be taught the skills that promote healing and healthy reintegration. RTC’s population has a high prevalence of mental illness and reintegration attempts focus on employment and the skills that prepare for employment. In talking with the chief of education, the need for a connection between psychological approaches and the education mandate was evidence for a collaboration. Combining the educational department and counselling approaches would become an essential part of preparing RTC’s inmate population with the skills they need for employment. Therefore, prevocational training focussing on skills for an offender with a mental illness was deemed an appropriate study, as part of promoting healthy integration within the mentally ill offender population.
Conceptual Terms

Federal Offender
A person sentenced to custody in a secure federal institution, for a minimum sentence of two years.

Mental Illness (MI)
Mental illness is said to include any of the various conditions characterized by impairment of an individual's normal cognitive, emotional, or behavioural functioning. For the purpose of this program the condition will be limited to those diagnosed with Axis I and Axis II disorders from the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM-IV-TR).

Vocational Training
Prevocational training assumes that people with severe mental illness require a period of preparation before entering into competitive employment (Thompson, & Cummings, 2010).

Employability
The dependant variable within the study was defined as the perceived potential for successful employment, as measured by the modified version of the NESP Self Assessment as well as the modified Employability Skills 2000+ Assessment.

Occupational Deprivation
An influence of an outside agency, which prevents a person from acquiring or enjoying an occupation over an extended period of time (Farnsworth & Muñoz, 2009).

Occupational Enrichment
A principle for addressing the needs of people facing occupational deprivation and occupational imbalance. Employment and supported employment are encouraged (Farnsworth & Muñoz, 2009).

Occupational Imbalance
Wilcock (2006) described this concept as a “lack of balance or disproportion of occupation resulting in decreased well being” (as cited in Davidson, 2010).

The thesis chapters will include information on the process of creating and implementing the Employability Skills Program. The results and effects of this program will be discussed in the latter part of the paper. Chapter two will review the literature on the relationship between employment and the effects of employment on offenders with an MI, Chapter 3 will review the method and implementation protocol for the intervention. This section will review participants, selection process, design, setting, and treatment procedures. Chapter’s 4 and 5 will review the results of the study and discuss the implications of those results.
CHAPTER II  

Literature Review

Mental Illness

Mental illness affects people of all ages, education, income levels, and cultures. Canadian Mental Health Association (2002) states that 20 percent of Canadians will personally experience a mental illness in their lifetime. Some of the major mental disorders which are considered to be a serious mental illnesses include bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, personality disorders, and anxiety disorders. These disorders are characterized by disturbances in cognitive, emotional, and behavioural functioning and difficulty coping with life stresses. Approximately six million adults in the United States experience a serious mental illness at some time in their lives (Abraham & Stein, 2009). Approximately 8 percent of adults will experience major depression in their lifetime and 1 percent of Canadians will experience bi-polar disorder. Schizophrenia affects 1 percent of the Canadian population and anxiety disorders are thought to affect 5 percent of the household populations, resulting in mild to severe impairment in daily functioning (Canadian Mental Health Association, 2002)

Mental Illness in Corrections

The rate of mental illness within prison is two to three times higher than in the general population (Davidson, 2010). The number of incarcerated persons with a serious mental illness continues to increase (Farnsworth & Muñoz, 2009) and MacDonald, Hucker & Hébert (2010), believe the current push to "get tough" on crime will likely increase the rates of incarceration even further. In the U.S., the Department of Justice stated that more than 700,000 inmates reported symptoms of a mental health disorder or a history of treatment, in the past year. Not only is the number of offenders increasing but it has been documented that more offenders with a serious mental illness were returning to prison faster and at higher rates than those without mental illness. The literature within the last 10 years documents an increase in incarceration of individuals with mental illness and describes and documents the increase in terms of patterns of repeated incarceration and gaps in treatment provided (Cloyes, Wong, Latimer & Abarca, 2010).

Deinstitutionalization and Forensic Treatment

Forensic patients receiving psychiatric treatment in federal institutions are described as most often being “on remand for assessment”, have become psychiatrically ill while institutionalized or prior to conviction, are at high risk for self harm, and can include patients deemed unfit to make a court plea. Farnsworth and Muñoz (2009) state that forensic mental health services have a dual purpose, both to treat mentally ill offenders as well as to protect the community. Correctional Services of Canada practises under a similar policy and believes their duty lies in rehabilitating offenders to become active members of society while protecting the community’s safety Correctional Service of Canada, 2011).
Deinstitutionalization describes a trend that has encouraged community based treatments over institutionalization. This movement has dramatically reduced the number of psychiatric hospital beds and resulted in additional stress on community programs. This a lead to limited access to community mental health treatment (Farnsworth & Muñoz, 2009). People with a mental illness, because of skill deficits often do not succeed in the community. They often become involved in criminal activity and therefore result to receiving mental health treatment while incarcerated. The term criminalization, introduced in 1972, has been used to describe the consequence of psychiatric deinstitutionalization, and refers to the criminal justice sanctions applied in response to behaviour that is the result of a mental disorder (Banks, Pandiani, & Boyd, 2009). Alarid (2010) states that in the US, correctional staff interact and treat more persons with mental illness than any other system, making the criminal justice agency the largest mental health provider in the United States. Vocational programs in prison may help to improve practical skills that encourage healthy reintegration through employment. An added benefit could also be a decreased need for mental health treatment in the community.

**Mental Illness and Crime**

Adults with serious mental illness were more than twice as likely as members of the general population to be charged with a crime and were almost four times as likely as members of the general population to be incarcerated (Banks, Pandiani, & Boyd, 2009).

In 1974 and in 1979 two studies were completed known as the Baxstrom and Dixon studies. These studies were a significant contribution to the creation of risk assessment. Their studies followed mentally ill offenders after incarceration and tracked arrests, offences, and rehospitalisation for a violent incident. They found a low base rate of violence incidents of 7 percent in the Baxstrom study and 15 percent in the Dixon study (as cited in Pozzulo, Bennell, & Fourth, 2006). Because of these low base rates it can be concluded that violent incidents with mentally ill individuals are rare and therefore these types of crimes are particularly difficult to track and predict.

Since the use of risk assessments much investigation has been put towards the link between psychotic symptoms and violence. Link and Steuve (1994) proposed that symptoms that override a person’s self control or that threaten a person’s safety, increase the likelihood of violence (as cited in Pozzulo, Bennell, & Fourth, 2006). Due to the symptoms associated with the disorder, a diagnosis of affective disorders and schizophrenia has been linked to higher rates of violence (Pozzulo, Bennell, & Fourth, 2006). Patients with schizophrenia account for between five percent and 20 percent of all homicides. Nielsen and Large (2009) provided an analysis of homicides during psychotic illness and found that almost 40 percent of those homicides occurred prior to initial treatment. Davidson (2010) states that offenders with a mental illness are not always associated with a more serious criminal history; however they are associated with lifestyles such as homelessness, unemployment and poor hygiene. According to Elbogen and Johnson the risk factors that increase the likelihood of violent behaviour are factors like past violence, clinical state and contextual factors (as cited in Nielsen & Large, 2009).
Effects of Corrections on Mental Health

Farnsworth, Nikitin, and Fossey (as cited in Davidson, 2010) studied individuals housed in hospital based forensic units and use of time. It was found that leisure and personal time were the most common activities, while 89 percent of the patient’s time was spent sleeping. Participants in this study expressed that they were dissatisfied with the way they spent their time and were often bored. Farnsworth’s work suggests poor leisure time use and boredom are associated with an increased risk for poor mental health. This concept is also in line with Davidson’s (2010) idea that employment encourages routine, schedule, and regular activity and consequently better mental health.

Employment with Mental Illness

The National Health Interview Survey on Disability (NHISD) identified the employment rate for individuals with any diagnosed mental illness as 44 percent. It was also identified that the employment rate for those with severe and persistent psychiatric disabilities ranges from 10 to 30 percent (Schutt, 2010). This author states, that at any given time, between one-tenth and one-third of individuals with severe and persistent psychiatric disabilities, are competitively employed.

Almost three-quarters of persons with psychiatric disabilities aspire to maintain employment (Schutt, 2010). Regardless of the employment potential, the desire to work, and the therapeutic value, employment rates for people with a mental illness are still well below the general population (Davidson, 2010). The Public Health Agency of Canada states that people with a mental illness have the capacity to work and employment programs should be encouraged for even the most disabled (The Conference Board of Canada, 2000).

Employment with Offenders

The employment rate for offenders with a mental illness are thought to be much lower than the general offender population, but more research is needed (Davidson, 2010). It has been demonstrated that ex-offenders with mental illness face considerable stigma from the community and potential employers, which contributes to difficulty obtaining and maintaining employment (Thompson, & Cummings, 2010).

``In general, the current offender population is highlighted as a group of individuals with a low level of basic employment qualifications, poor employment histories, and life skills that have contributed to poor job performance, coupled with substance abuse problems and violent behaviour, it is argued that if these deficits are not addressed, it will continue to limit offenders’ ability to find and maintain employment. As such, it is necessary to provide appropriate skills and training while these offenders are imprisoned, so they are better prepared for community re-entry`` (Scott, 2010, p1).

There is a need to enhance the likelihood of obtaining employment, while incarcerated, to help offenders better prepare for the challenges of the workplace.
Effects of Employment on Mental Health

An important part of the recovery process for offenders within prison is gaining skills that will enable them to gain work, as it seems to both reduce the decline in mental status of the offender and promote future employment opportunities (Davidson, 2010). Rehabilitation experts have identified employment as a critical element in improving the quality of life among persons with a severe mental illness (Schutt, 2010).

The term occupational deprivation has been used to describe the influence of an outside agency that prevents a person from acquiring or enjoying an occupation over an extended period of time. Institutionalization and preventing employment limits the opportunity to develop habits and routines in positive activities and leads to further mental deterioration (Farnsworth & Muñoz, 2009). This phenomenon usually occurs in prison as a result of lack of meaningful programs to enhance employment. Farnsworth and Muñoz (2009) among others believe that employment can have a profound affect on people with a mental illness. It is believed that an imbalance or disproportion in employment results in a decrease in overall well being; this effect has been referred to as occupational imbalance. Consequently, there is a need to address the imbalance of employment in offender populations through vocational programs. In 1999, Whiteford (as cited in Farnsworth & Muñoz, 2009) offered the concept of occupational enrichment as a principle for addressing the needs of individuals facing occupation occupational deprivation and occupational imbalance. These concepts encourage employment and supported employment to improve the likelihood of improved employment and mental health status.

Farnsworth & Muñoz (2009) stated that meaningful occupations are the medium through which people maintain their physical, social, and mental well being. In addition Davidson (2010) stated, human health has been described as the ability to organize one’s occupations, leisure, self care and rest and therefore should be included as a treatment form. Supported employment for individuals with a mental illness provides an opportunity for the person to manage their symptoms and to develop appropriate and manageable coping strategies. (Davisdon, 2010)

Employability Skills

Research reveals that employability skills can be learned with appropriate programming that targets skills related to general employment (Latendress & Cortoni, 2005). Given the employment instability of offenders entering correctional institutions, enhancing vocational skills while incarcerated is an important aspect to address (Scott, 2010). The Conference Board of Canada (2000) published a list of over 2000 skills needed to enter, maintain, and progress in the employment world. People with a mental illness often lack the skills needed to be successful in the workplace. Scott (2010) also identified that personal life skills that transfer to employment are of particularly difficult for people with a mental illness. Therefore, vocational programs for offenders with a mental illness should focus on these skills. The Conference Board defined this set of skills as personal management skills and included managing emotions, demonstrating a positive attitude, being adaptable, being reliable, teamwork and conflict resolution. Scott, (2010) found that offenders who participated in programs targeting employability skills
were more successful at finding work after reintegration. Scott (2010) reports that if the skill deficits of a person with a mental illness have not been addressed, they will continue to limit the offender’s ability to find and maintain employment. Therefore, teaching employability skills to mentally ill offenders while incarcerated may increase the likelihood of successful employment upon release.

**Vocational Programs**

In many correctional settings, programs incorporating psychiatric rehabilitation principles are offered. Classes such as adult literacy, vocational programs, religious services, recovery support groups, and community re-entry education when offered, provide a diversion from the consistent routine and may contribute to the development of new roles, habits and skills (Farnsworth & Muñoz, 2009).

Researchers have identified that psychiatric symptoms, vocational rehabilitation programs, and providing disability benefits can impact the employment status of people with serious mental illness (Abraham & Stein, 2009). Within the prison systems, a lack of targeted programs significantly limits the opportunities to develop habits and routines in pro-social activities (Farnsworth & Muñoz, 2009). It has been found that offenders who participate in programs targeting employability skills are more successful at obtaining work after reintegration (Scott, 2010). Research reveals that employability skills can be learned with appropriate programming that targets skills related to general employment (Latendress & Cortoni, 2005). Prevocational training assumes that people with severe mental illness require a period of preparation before entering into competitive employment (Thompson & Cummings, 2010) and the likelihood of job retention increases with the intensity of support provided (Schutt, 2009). The outcome of rehabilitation with a person who is experiencing a mental illness and criminally charged is to increase the likelihood of becoming a productive, contributing member of society while engaged in meaningful occupations that have personal and positive social purpose as well as positively influence recovery (Farnsworth & Muñoz, 2009). Given the history of employment instability of the offenders entering correctional systems, enhancing an offender’s vocational skills through vocational programs may be an important need to address prior to their reintegration into the community (Scott, 2010).

**Group Career Counselling**

Pyle (1986) pointed out that there are several benefits to conducting career group counselling in such a format, including enhanced career counselling outcomes, time efficiency and cost effectiveness, improved feedback, personalized talk, and improved enjoyment and variety. He also described the goals of group career counselling as improved career decision making and enhanced employment skills. Pyle (1986) reported the mixed feelings within the research on the general effectiveness of group counselling on career enhancement. Several of the studies found little or no differences in comparative studies with group and individual counselling sessions. Bilovsky (1951) found there was no significant increase during group and individual counselling on the reality of vocational goals in high school seniors selected (as cited in Pyle, 1986). Contradictory to other findings, Alken (1970) reported a significant relationship between
group counselling and the change in career information seeking behaviour. And again Krieger (1970) was able to increase career planning behaviour and career planning strategies in mentally retarded adolescents by using group career counselling and reinforcement counselling (as cited in Pyle, 1986). Also, Kelly, Laughlin, Claiborne, & Patterson (1979) conducted a group training procedure including discussions, feedback, and behaviour rehearsals with six formerly hospitalized patients enrolled in a mental health daycare program. All subjects increased their rate of targeted skills as observed in structured interviews following training and demonstrated substantial generalization to the interactions surrounding employment. Which further justifies providing a structure of group counselling to improve employment skills for mentally ill participants.

**Recovery model /Frameworks**

As the number of incarcerated persons with serious psychiatric disabilities continues to increase, concepts such as occupational deprivation, occupational imbalance and occupational enrichment provide useful conceptual frameworks from which to understand the impacts of incarceration (Farnsworth & Muñoz, 2009). These concepts encourage that treatment include employment and employability training. These concepts also encourage that enhanced mental health benefits be probed as a product of employment. The Mental Health Commission proposed a framework that de-stigmatizes mental illness, provides person-centred prevention and care programs, and justifies these programs with appropriate evidence (MacDonald, Hucker, & Hébert, 2010). This framework encourages treatment to focus more specifically on the skills needed for offenders with a mental illness. Correctional Services of Canada endorses this framework and implements a policy mandating the rehabilitation of offenders in order to become active members of society while protecting the community’s safety (Correctional Service Canada, 2011). The current research project was completed in line with CSC’s mandate and the mental health commission.

In effect, currently RTC practice provides an affirmative business model for employment. "The affirmative business approach to vocational rehabilitation is based upon competitive employment and has the potential to empower consumers of mental health services by providing reimbursement at competitive rates" (Davidson, 2010, p8). This research of Davidson which supports employment was also conducted at RTC. Her research described the efforts of a program called Free Spirit Affirmative Business, offered at this institution and was the focus of her study. The program was created as a vocational option to provide self-employment for offenders with mental illness who resided in the prison psychiatric treatment facility (RTC) (Davidson, 2010). Many ideas for future research have come from Davidson’s work and the Free Spirit employment program.

**Social Benefits of Employment**

Employment has many social and interpersonal benefits such as social acceptance and developing support systems (Davidson, 2010) where as unemployment and the break of social contacts at their former workplace may be factors contributing to an individual’s mental illness. According to the Center of Employment and
Reintegration, (as cited in Davidson, 2010) employment provides five factors to recovery; these include time structure, social contact or affiliation, collective effort and social purpose, personal identity and regular activity.

**Effects of Employment on Recidivism**

A number of researchers have documented that the inability to gain employment upon release is related to increased rates of recidivism. (Thompson & Cummings, 2010) Although few studies have focused on recidivism among seriously mentally ill offenders in comparison with offenders without a mental illness, recidivism and repeated incarceration have been described as significant problems for those with a mental illness (As cited in Davidson, 2010).

Maintaining employment and work related problems have been identified as one of the main contributors to recidivism (as cited in Davidson, 2010). Cloyes, Wong, Latimer, and Abarca (2010) conducted a study on recidivism rates for offenders with a mental illness compared to offenders without a mental diagnosis. Recidivism was defined as an offender’s return to prison via a parole violation or a new offence. The amount of time out of prison was measured in days. The results demonstrate that maintaining employment was a particular challenge for offenders with a mental illness and is a main contributing factor to repeat incarceration. Therefore, it is likely that targeting skills while incarcerated may improve recidivism rates by preparing offenders for the workforce.

**Community Benefits to Employment**

As previously stated, given the history of employment instability of offenders entering correctional systems, enhancing an offender's vocational skills is an important need to address prior to reintegration into the community (Scott, 2010).

Not only can the offender benefit from employment, but the community also profits from the decrease in the costs associated with hospitalization, recidivism and further incarceration. In 1999, almost four percent of all admissions in general hospitals were due to anxiety disorders, bipolar disorders, schizophrenia, major depression, personality disorders, eating disorders and suicidal behaviour (The Conference Board of Canada, 2000). From the literature discussed above meaningful employment can reduce the decline in mental status (Davidson, 2010) which could lead to a decrease in reliance on the health care system.

As well offenders that have completed programs to target employability skills are more successful at finding work after release. This can reduce the number of people on government assistance and can have a profound effect on the economics of the community. Offenders who are actively employed are more likely to become contributing members of society (Scott, 2010).

**Summary**

A review of the relevant literature suggests that employment can have a profound effect on offenders with a mental illness. The effects of employment can be seen in many dimensions of an offender’s life. A research analysis was conducted for all variables
involved in employment within this population. The effects can be seen in the mental health status, recidivism, community benefits, social growth, and employment rates.

Employment has been shown to improve the overall mental health of offenders. Davidson (2010) stressed that an important part of the recovery process within the prison is work, as it may reduce the risk of decline in mental status of the offender and promote future employment. There are also many community and social benefits that result from improved employment skills. Davidson (2010) stated that employment can promote interpersonal benefits like social acceptance and developed support systems. Scott (2010) emphasized that not only can the offender benefit from employment, but the community also profits from the decrease in costs associated with recidivism and further incarceration.
CHAPTER III

Method

Participants

Participant Characteristics

The participants in the study were six male offenders, serving a federal sentence, at the Regional Treatment Center (Ontario) (RTC). The average age of the participants was 29 and the educational level of the participants ranged from grade 10 to post secondary. The charges of the offenders also varied, including first, second and third degree murder, arson, break and enter, and robbery. Members of the participating group represented a range of security levels from minimum to maximum. All participants had previously been diagnosed with an Axis I and/or Axis II mental disorder prior to inclusion in the program.

Selection Procedure

To define the criterion for inclusion, a Pre-Selection Checklist was created and all participants were assessed against the checklist to ensure they met the inclusion criteria. This checklist can be found in Appendix A. The criterion included in the checklist required participants to have a clinical diagnosis of a mental illness, to be serving a federal sentence of two years or more, to be male and between the ages of 22-55 years, to be eligible for a statutory (supervised) release, to have completed or be currently in the process of completing senior (high school) credits, and finally, to demonstrate a need for employability. A need for employability was defined as a poor past record of employment, a statutory release date within the next three years, or expression of an interest in working in a co-op program. Excluded from the program were any offenders who were considered to pose a security risk, to staff, others, or themselves.

Participants were referred to the program or recruited through an elimination process. Referrals came from the guidance counsellor and parole officers at the institution. The recruitment process involved using the Offender Management System (OMS) to search for offenders that met the criteria listed in the Pre Selection Checklist. The criterion was entered into the database and narrowed a list of potential participants. A part of RTC’s institutional policy requires all offenders participating in group to complete an Inmate Application for Employment. The form must be signed by the offender’s parole officer, the security department and the offender themselves. In order for an offender to be approved for the program, an informal interview was conducted with each parole officer, and approval was given for each offender who participated in the program.

Consent

All participants who met the criteria were then interviewed by the student researcher to determine if they would be interested in participating in the Employability Skills Program. Each informal interview was conducted in the program’s ward of RTC and was approximately 10 minutes in duration. Each offender was informed of activities
in the group and the expectation surrounding their participation. Participants were reminded that their participation was voluntary and they could withdraw from the program at any time. If the participant was interested, both institutional (Inmate Application for Employment) and student consent (St. Lawrence College) forms were signed. The additional remaining potential participants were eliminated randomly to maintain interval validity. Each participant was assigned a number, 1, 2 or 3. All participants’ assigned number 2 were randomly chosen to not be included in the program. A final seven participants were selected for participation and the Inmate Application for Employment forms were then submitted and participants’ names were added to the escort to programs list.

Setting and Apparatus

Location

This study was conducted within the Regional Treatment Center of Ontario (RTC), an accredited psychiatric hospital devoted to providing rehabilitation to the mentally disordered offender population. RTC is located within the walls of Kingston Penitentiary, which has been classified as a maximum security federal correctional institution. RTC houses approximately 150 offenders in two adjacent buildings. The Employability Skills Program was facilitated in a correctional classroom within RTC’s programs department. The classroom was a small room, approximately 20 by 15 feet and was located by the entrance of one of the buildings. The classroom was located directly in front of the correctional officer’s post and the door to the classroom remained open. There was also a camera placed in the room which was monitored by the officer. The officer made forty-five minute rounds through the programs department during the period in which the group sessions were delivered.

Within the classroom, two large whiteboards were mounted on the far wall and the remaining walls were decorated with educational posters. The desks were arranged for each offender to have their desk facing another member, in a circular shape. The facilitator’s desk was left outside the circle to improve mobility in the room. Tools used to facilitate the group were workbooks, facilitators manual, computers, whiteboard, pens, pencils, and dry erase markers.

Design

A descriptive research strategy was used to assess the current state of the individuals participating in the group. A one group pre-test - post-test design was used with assessments before the program and assessments after the program. Paper and pencil assessments completed were the complete the modified version of the NESP self Assessment as well as the modified Employability Skills 2000+ Assessment. The intervention phase of the study was a five week Employability Skills Program. Primary analysis of the data was conducted using a t-test for both assessments. Results were also depicted using total percentage increase and standard deviation between scores.
**Method of Delivery**

The program was provided using a group counselling format that involved several individuals with individual goals moving in a group direction. The program was implemented over five weeks and offered five group sessions. Each counselling session used discussions as the primary mode of delivery. Participants were required to explore concepts and record their findings in their workbook. The workbook was also a major component to the sessions and provided both additional information and a method for recording concepts. Workbook information was read out loud and all discussions were led by the group facilitator.

**Format**

The program consisted of 10 lessons provided over five, two hour sessions. Each session included two lessons and covered several of the skills identified by the Conference Board of Canada, as improving employability. Participants completed the two paper and pencil assessment at the beginning of session one and at the end of session five.

*Table 1.*

**Summary of Group Session Format, Including Lesson Topics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session 1</th>
<th>Lesson 1</th>
<th>Introduction (Assessments)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lesson 2</td>
<td>Career Options</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 2</td>
<td>Lesson 3</td>
<td>Managing Emotions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lesson 4</td>
<td>Demonstrating a Positive Attitude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 3</td>
<td>Lesson 5</td>
<td>Being Responsible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lesson 6</td>
<td>Being Adaptable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 4</td>
<td>Lesson 7</td>
<td>Teamwork and Roles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lesson 8</td>
<td>Conflict Resolution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 5</td>
<td>Lesson 9</td>
<td>Stigma and Continuous Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lesson 10</td>
<td>Conclusion (Assessment)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Independent Variable**

**Facilitator and Support**

For the first trial of the pilot program, the primary researcher facilitated all group sessions. The primary researcher was trained by St. Lawrence College in ABA techniques, group and individual counselling, as well as research protocol. The group also included a co facilitator, who was available for assistance but was not present for the entire duration of the group. The primary researcher also received the support and supervision of Dr. Yolanda Fernandez.

**Facilitator Instructions**

To promote integrity of the program, instructions were provided to future facilitators using recommendations from the Facilitator’s manual. The instructions
outlined the role of a facilitator including some of the characteristics of a good group leader as well as an explanation of positive reinforcement and how to appropriately incorporate positive reinforcement into the sessions. Finally, an outline of how to facilitate the group using the workbook was included. More precise instructions were incorporated throughout the Facilitator’s manual.

**Dependant Variables**

*Employability*

The dependant variable was the potential for future employment as measured by the modified version of the NESP Self Assessment and the modified Employability Skills 2000+ Assessment. An increase in score represents an increase in employability skills.

**Rationale**

The format of the group counselling sessions was chosen as a method of delivery for several reasons. First, with such a large potential population a group format offered a method for maximizing the number of participants. As such a group format is a more productive way of utilising the facilitator’s time. Second, having a group of participants improves the generalizability of the testing results. Finally, the group counselling format provided a supportive environment in which members encouraged each others progress and development.

**Procedure**

*Session One*

The first group meeting was held in one of the classrooms within RTC. Participants arranged their desks into a semi-circle around the room. All members were present for the first meeting. The group started by introducing members to each other, the principal researcher (also group facilitator) and the group co-leader (co-facilitator of the group). The co leader was not present for the entire duration of the group sessions but her assistance was readily available. Members were reminded of the goals of the group, were given a chance to ask questions and were reminded this was a voluntary process. Participants were told about the project and were thanked for their participation. Members received their workbooks and were given their identification numbers for confidentiality on the testing forms. Members were encouraged to collaborate and discuss what they hoped to gain from the group. They were asked to discuss as a group what ground rules they thought were appropriate and to record them in their workbook. Members were also required to provide a signature under their list of goals, acknowledging that they had read and understood the rules. Members were reminded of the expectations regarding attendance, work completion, and behaviour in the classroom. Members were also asked to complete the modified version of the NESP Self Assessment as well as the Employability Skills 2000+ Assessment. Next the group discussed what is meant by employment and the difference between a job and a career. Participants were then asked to answer some questions in their workbook about a possible career option. Prior to the end of the first session, the completed forms for the modified version of the Self Assessment and Employability Skills 2000+ Assessment were collected and each
member’s scores for attendance, classroom behaviour, and work completion were completed by the facilitator.

Session Two

This session focused on topics covered in lessons three and four, and focused on skills like managing emotions and demonstrating a positive attitude in the workplace. The session began after all members had taken their seats. First the day’s agenda was written on the board and tasks for the class were introduced. Next the class reviewed the major concepts from last week and were reminded of the difference between a job and a career. Then, the group focused on managing emotions. The members read aloud a paragraph on the importance of this skill in the workplace. After, the members collaborated to create more comprehensive definitions of managing emotions and demonstrating a positive attitude. Next, members discussed some signs of emotion and recorded the most common negative emotions in their workbooks. They then completed activities requiring them to match an emotion with the corresponding body language, list signals of emotions, and finally completed two exercises on identifying emotions from pictures of facial expressions. After that, the class read aloud 12 strategies to manage emotions and then discussed how to incorporate these steps in the workplace. The group then reviewed the consequences to avoiding emotions and recorded them in their workbooks. Finally, the participants brainstormed and recorded a list of things that a positive attitude can do in the workplace. A relevant word search was provided at the end of the session but was not required to be completed.

Session Three

This session included work from lessons five and six, and incorporated skills like being adaptable and being responsible in the workplace. The group again began with a review of the day’s agenda. Members then reviewed the topics from the prior week and were required to define managing emotions and positive attitude. The session began by introducing responsibility and accountability. Next, the class reviewed the “Do’s and Don’ts” of being accountable in the workplace. The members then read aloud the strategies of being responsible and discussed them as a group. The group then created a working definition for time management and recorded their definition. Next, members recorded personal time management skills and how to demonstrate these skills at our jobs. The participants then learned about adaptability and completed a paragraph of fill in the blanks. Next, members recorded ways of being adaptable. The subsequent exercise required members to create a morning routine from a case study. They were required to use their time management skills to create and record a routine. Members then looked at their own routine and created a calendar with all events and programs from the next month. And, finally the group discussed ways of balancing social and work life.

Session Four

This session focussed on concepts from lessons seven and eight, focusing on skills like teamwork, roles and conflict resolution. The group began by brainstorming
definitions for the major concepts and recorded these in their workbooks. The group created a definition of teamwork and then recorded some of the benefits of working as part of a team. Next, the group was introduced to the idea of roles and how they impact the way the people act. The group created a list of roles and targeted some roles they might be enacting at that very moment. The group then discussed the role of gender and the role of an offender. Next, the group compared the roles of an employer to the role of an employee. The group then participated in a team building exercise that involved each member taking on a role and working together to complete one overall task. Each participant recorded the role in their workbook and then recorded the order in which each would work on the project. Finally, the group targeted ways of dealing with conflict at work and developed some strategies to confront conflict.

Session Five

This session focused on stigma and again began with key terms and discussion questions. Participants discussed both the stigma of having a mental illness and the stigma of being a reintegrated offender. Strategies to confronting stigma was discussed and how to use this skill in the workplace. The group also defined terms like discrimination and prejudice. The group had a discussion about things they may hold a prejudice about and the difference between discrimination and prejudice. Next the group defined and discussed continuous learning and how to generalize some of the skills they have learned in group. Finally before the group was complete the members completed for a second time the revised version of the NESP Self Assessment and the Employability Skills 2000+ Assessment. Finally, the group enjoyed their success and received a certificate for completing the pilot Employability Skills Program.

Additional information on program and facilitator instructions can be found on page 2 of the Facilitator’s manual in Appendix G.

Measurement Tools

As noted previously, to evaluate the effectiveness of the program, pre- and post-assessments were completed. Both pre- and post-assessments were completed in the classroom in which the program was performed. Instructions were read out loud and the participants were informed of the purpose of the assessment. If at any time a participant required assistance with the material, it was provided.

Quantitative Data

The revised Version of the NESP Self Assessment

All revisions to the scale were to improve clarity and accuracy. Many of the skills not focused on in the Employability Skills Program were not included in the revised version. The structure and instructions were also modified to improve participants’ understanding. The assessment was condensed to approximately three pages. The assessment required members to define and describe eight basic skills identified as
important to successful employment and could receive two points for a correct definition. Participants were then required to rank themselves on how well they felt they could master each skill, on a scale from 0 to 3. Participants could answer (0) for “I am aware of this skill and why it is important”; (1) for “I am aware and understand this skill”; (2) for “I am comfortable with and can demonstrate personal commitment in applying this skill”; and finally participants answered (3) if they felt they consistently applied this skill and demonstrated leadership in this area. Participants could achieve a maximum score of 40.

Each skill was scored within eight subscales. Subscales included managing emotions, having a positive attitude, being responsible, being adaptable, following roles, conflict resolution, teamwork and continuous learning. The ratings provided were subjective assessments and reflect the participant’s perception of their performance in each skill area.

**Employability Skills 2000+ Assessment**

Participants were also required to complete pre-and post-tests of the modified version of the Employability Skills 2000+ Assessment. Again all modification were made to improve clarity and to shorten the length of the assessment. Participants were required to complete 33 multiple choice questions, within 5 subscales. Each subscale represented an employability skill. Participants were expected to rate the perceived skill level on a Likert scale. They could answer (1) I'm not as skilled as I like, (2) I'm skilled, or (3) I'm very skilled. Scores were tallied to computing totals for each subscale, as well as an overall score. Participants could receive a maximum score of 93. Subscales included working with others, participating in projects or tasks, demonstrating positive attitudes and behaviours, being adaptable, and learning continuously.

**Qualitative Data**

**Classroom Assessment**

Continuous data was collected during each session to provide a total classroom score. This score represented an evaluation of each member’s attendance, workbook completion, and classroom participation. Members could earn a maximum of 2 points for each category, for a maximum of 6 points a session. Only one point was given if the offender attended part of the session, if only part of the workbook was completed, or if the member participated in only some of the group discussions as assessed by facilitator. No points were given if participants did not attend, if they did not complete their workbook, and if they did not participate. This assessment was a subjective evaluation made by the facilitator.
CHAPTER IV

Results

All participants completed both pre- and post-assessments of the Modified NESP Self Assessment and the modified version of the Employability Skills 2000+ Assessment. A descriptive analysis of participant scores was completed and is displayed in tables and graphs below. Data depicts changes in total pre/post assessment, improvements in each subscale, as well as individual improvement for each member in each subscale.

Results of the Modified NESP Assessment

The data from this assessment is displayed in tables and a bar graph to demonstrate the improvements in total scores from pre-to post-group on the modified version of the NESP Assessment. Data is also displayed in line graphs depicting each member’s improvement on each subscale of the assessment. Line graphs and individual data for the assessment can be found in Appendix E

Figure 1 provides a visual representation of the overall improvement in mean total pre-score and post-group scores. There is a clear improvement in post scores for the group. Participants’ final scores showed an improvement average of 80 percent from pre-to post-testing. A t-test was completed for the data using a critical region of 0.5. The analysis showed that the t value data fell within the critical region and the null hypothesis was rejected. This test demonstrated significant change in pre/post scores and that the treatment was effective in increasing scores.

Figure 1. Average Total Pre Post Scores in the NESP Assessment

The average increase in score for each member was 13 points. Participants had an average post score of 25.67 out of a possible 40 points. This was an improvement from the average pre-group score of 15 points. Five out of six members were able to increase their post-group scores by one standard deviation. Member 107 demonstrated the greatest percentage increase at 142 percent. Overall, participants’ final scores showed an improvement average of 80 percent from pre-to post-test.
Pre-group scores ranged from 12 to 23 and post-group scores ranged from 23 to 29. The increase in average scores represents a group of members with higher scores and according to the scale, represents an improvement in perceived employability. The data showed a standard deviation (SD) of 4.44 at pre-group assessment and 2.42 at post-group assessment. A lower standard deviation indicated that members’ scores tended to be close to the mean and were consistent.

Scores were then analysed by subscale. Data indicating improvements in each subscale are listed in Table 1 below. All members improved in total scores as well as showing improvements in all subscales of the NESP Self Assessment. Overall there was an increase in average post-group scores across every subscale. Improvements are displayed as average percentage of increase. The subscales teamwork and following roles showed the greatest improvement of 142, and 140 percent respectfully. Managing emotions demonstrated the lowest improvement at 21.4 percent.

Table 2
Average Group Scores on Subscales on the modified NESP Self Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Manage Emotion</th>
<th>Positive Attitude</th>
<th>Being Responsible</th>
<th>Being Adaptable</th>
<th>Following Roles</th>
<th>Conflict Resolution</th>
<th>Teamwork</th>
<th>Continuous Learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average Pre score</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td>1.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Post score</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>3.16</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>3.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent Increase</td>
<td>21.46</td>
<td>36.05</td>
<td>26.40</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>143.97</td>
<td>63.64</td>
<td>139.52</td>
<td>100.55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Subscale 1: Managing Emotions
During group session members learned the importance of managing emotions in the workplace. Member’s demonstrated an increase of 21.4 percent pre- to post-group on this subscale.

Subscale 2: Demonstrating a Positive Attitude
Members reported learning how to display a positive attitude and behaviours in the workplace, as well as the effects of these behaviours on others. Members demonstrate a percentage increase of 36.05 from pre- to post- group scores.

Subscale 3: Being Responsible
Members were expected to learn the qualities of being responsible for their lives and for their employment. On this subscale members demonstrated a percentage increase of 26.4 from pre -to post- score.

Subscale 4: Being Adaptable
Being adaptable was also highlighted as an importance concept in employment; members displayed an average percentage increase of 100 from pre-to post-group.

Subscale 5: Following Roles
The members were introduced to the idea of roles as an importance concept of employment. Members displayed a 143 percentage increase from pre-to post-group.

Subscale 6: Conflict Resolution
The members reviewed the value of conflict resolution in the work place and strategies to resolve conflict. Members were able to improve their definitions and skill ratings achieving a final average score by 63.64 percentage from pre- to post-group.

**Subscale 7: Teamwork**

During group sessions members practised the skills of being a good group member. The members demonstrated an increase of 139 percent from pre-to post-group.

**Subscale 8: Continuous Learning**

Finally, as way to improve maintenance of the overall skills learned in group, members explored the idea of continuous learning in everyday life as well as the workplace. Members displayed an overall improvement of 100 percentage from pre- to post-group.

Overall, each subscale demonstrated an improvement from the average pre- to post-group scores. Following rules showed the greatest improvement in scores from pre-to post-group. The subscale managing emotions displayed the lowest percentage improvement.

**Summary of the modified NESP Self Assessment**

This scale reflected an 80 percent mean improvement in pre- to post-group total scores. The members had a pre-group total score of 15 and a post-group total score of 25.67. A t-test was completed and there was sufficient change to determine treatment was statistically improved. Subscales including following roles, conflict resolution, teamwork, and continuous learning all had improvements 100 percent or above. The greatest improvements in subscales were seen in following roles and teamwork. Improvements in individual members is summarized in Chapter V and represented in a visual in Appendices E and F.

**Results of the modified version of the Employability Skills 2000+ Assessment**

Again, tables, line graphs, and bar graphs were used to depict the data from the employability skills assessment. Data was collected and analysed to evaluate the increase in total scores, and improvement in each subscale of the assessment. The line graphs and individual data for the assessment can be found in Appendix F.

The assessment was completed by participants prior to and after the intervention. Data support an improved average final score for the participants. Overall, participants’ scores demonstrated an average of 42 percent increase from pre-to post- group testing. Figure 2 provides a visual representation of the overall improvement in mean total pre- and post-scores. There is a slight improvement in post score results for the total group. A t-test was completed for the data using a critical region of 0.5. The analysis showed that the t value data did not fall within the critical region and the null hypothesis should be accepted. This test demonstrated that the change in scores was not significantly effective.

The average post-group score was 67.7. This is an improvement from an average pre- group score of 55. Two out of six members were able to increase their scores by one standard deviation. Two members had scores that showed no improvement pre-to post-group and member 103 had a 12 per cent decrease in score.
Pre assessment data depicted a standard deviation (SD) of 20.21. The (SD) of 10.7 found at post assessment indicates a decrease in variability in scores and demonstrates that individual scores are closer to the mean score in post assessment. Since 68 percent of the data falls within one standard deviation 4 of 6 members scored within one standard deviation.

Figure 2
Average Total Pre/ Post Score in the Employability Skills Assessment

Data was then analysed across the total scores for subscales. Overall, each subscale showed a slight improvement from the average pre-group score to the average post – group score. Being adaptable showed the greatest improvement in subscale scores from pre- to post-group, and very little improvement was seen in the subscale participating in projects and tasks.

Table 3
Average Group Scores on Subscales on the modified Employability Skills Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Working with Others</th>
<th>Participation in Projects</th>
<th>Positive Attitude</th>
<th>Being Adaptable</th>
<th>Learning Continuously</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean Pre Score</td>
<td>17.83</td>
<td>11.00</td>
<td>9.50</td>
<td>9.83</td>
<td>8.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Post Score</td>
<td>18.83</td>
<td>11.17</td>
<td>12.00</td>
<td>12.50</td>
<td>9.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage Increase</td>
<td>5.61</td>
<td>1.52</td>
<td>26.32</td>
<td>27.16</td>
<td>15.65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Subscale 1: Working With Others
Each member practised teamwork within the group. Members pre scores for working with others averaged at 17.33 and by post assessment had only improved to 18.83. This was a slight improvement of 5.6 percent pre- to post- group.

Subscale 2: Participating in Projects and Tasks
The members reviewed the value of participation in the work place and strategies to demonstrate work ethic. Members were able to improve their skill ratings to improve their final scores by 1.5 percentages pre- to post- group.

Subscale 3: Demonstrating a Positive Attitude and Behaviour
The members were taught how to depict positive attitudes and how to present themselves in the employment world. By post assessment members had improved their score by an average of 26 percent pre- to post- group.

Subscale 4: Being Adaptable
Being adaptable was also highlighted as an importance concept in employment. When tested member’s displayed a 27 percentage pre- to post- group increase in scores.

Subscale 5: Learning Continuously
Members discussed the concept and were tested on the skills in the final subscale of the assessment. Member’s had a average pre score of 8.5 and final score of 9.83. This was a total average increase of 15 percent from pre- to post- group.

Summary of the modified Employability Skills 2000+ Assessment
The scale demonstrated a 42 percent mean improvement in post scores. Member had an average pre score of 55 and a post of 67.7. A t test was also completed for the scale and demonstrated that there was not a significant change was and the null hypothesis was applied. The greatest improvements in subscales were seen in demonstrating a positive attitude and being adaptable with an average percent increase pre- to post- group of 26, 27 percent respectfully.

Results of the Classroom Assessment
The classroom assessment showed that the average total score for member participation, attendance and workbook completion was 22.16 out of a possible 30. The standard deviation for the scores was 4.75. Table 1 demonstrates individual member scores for each session as well as total classroom scores. Session scores depict total of the points for attendance, behaviour and work completion. None of the members received a perfect score or attended all sessions. The classroom assessment was not used to assess any correlation with the result of the NESP Self Assessment and Employability Skills Assessment. Participation scores were not compared to improvements in other two assessments. The assessment was only used to demonstrate treatment adherence with facilitator as well as track tracks members adherence.
Table 4.  
*Results of the Classroom Assessment*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member</th>
<th>Session 1</th>
<th>Session 2</th>
<th>Session 3</th>
<th>Session 4</th>
<th>Session 5</th>
<th>Total Classroom Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>101</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>103</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>105</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
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<td>106</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER V

Discussion

Evaluating the Effects of the Skills Group

Each member completed two pre- and post-group assessment measures to evaluate the effectiveness of employability skills. Overall, from the data it appears that the five week Employability Skills Program did have an effect on improving scores from pre- to post-group on the modified version of the NESP Self Assessment, however significant improvements were not seen in scores from the Employability Skills Assessment. The data demonstrated a mean 80 percent increase on the NESP Self Assessment. The t-test on the NESP Self Assessment indicated effectiveness of the program at improving employability scores. The members were able to achieve higher scores in their definition as well as recorded higher perceived skills ratings. According to the scale this demonstrates an improved comprehension of the material covered and improved potential for successful employment. The greatest improvements in subscales were seen in demonstrating a positive attitude and being adaptable with an average percent increase of 26, 27 percent respectively.

While scores on the modified version of the Employability Skills 2000+ Assessment did not demonstrate a statistically significant change, a mean 42 percent increase for the group was shown, which suggests that scores were improving. The subscales including following roles, conflict resolution, teamwork, and continuous learning, all had improvements of 100 percent or above. Demonstrating an improvement in self reported perceived employability skills.

Current Literature

When compared to results of similar studies found in the literature, it is evident that the results of this study are similar. Both the research literature and the current research reveal that employability skills can be learned with appropriate programming that targets skills related to general employment (Latendress & Cortoni, 2005). Similar to the 1970 findings of Krieger, in which using group career counselling demonstrated an increase in career planning behaviour and career planning strategies in mentally retarded adolescents (as cited in Pyle, 1986). The five week group counselling sessions used in the present study, demonstrated enhanced post assessment scores in employability and demonstrated an improvement in post-test employment skills.

The current study assessed an offender’s perception of their employability skills. This only targeted what they thought they were capable of achieving, with respect to employment and work places skills. Follow-up studies would need to be conducted to demonstrate that the members perceived employability skills led to an actual increase in employment skills. Scott, (2010) found that offenders who participated in programs targeting employability skills were more successful at finding work after reintegration. This author also argued that if the skill deficits of a person with a mental illness have not been addressed, they will continue to limit the offender’s ability to find and maintain employment. Again, the confirmation of offenders’ increased employability following
group participation in employability enhancement skill training would have to be confirmed with future investigations.

**Strengths and Limitations**

One of the greatest strengths of the program was that the group format provided modelling of employment skills and reinforced these same skills learned in the group. Members were reinforced throughout the group for demonstrating skills that reflected employment strategies like being on time, being responsible and adaptable. Also, the facilitator’s manual encouraged intervention adherence, and ensured that all topics in the workbook were discussed and completed by all group members. The manual also allowed for future facilitators’ implementation adherence. The collection of classroom data encouraged treatment adherence for both the facilitator and members. In order to gather the classroom data, it was required that the facilitator teach all of the components and that each participant complete every component of the exercise.

The limited time allowed for the implementation of the group was a significant limitation to the data analysis as well as the overall group outcome. The short duration required the content to be condensed and provided less of an opportunity for members to practise the skills presented in group. This is believed to have had an effect on the total percentage increase on both assessment tools. Another limitation to the study was the design of the assessment scales. The employability Skills 2000+ Assessment and the modified version of the NESP Self Assessment both had a multiple choice format. This may have resulted in some response bias (i.e., members responding with the same rating for each question within the subscales). The scores for several members’ demonstrated a middle bias with a modal answer of two and one respectfully. Consequently it is possible the data did not reflect the true effect of the program. Also, the group should be completed with another population to compare scores of mentally ill offenders to those of other populations; for example, conducting the program with a group of developmentally delayed individuals.

**Multilevel Challenges to Service Implementation**

There were several challenges faced in implementing the group that could have not only influenced the results of the study but affected all aspects of implementation. These challenges represent the client, the program, the institution, and the community levels.

For this project the client challenges included a lack of understanding of mental illness and the influence of the clients’ disorder on their employability. Clients’ behaviours may be attributed to their mental illness and as a consequence environmental contingencies have a tendency to be ignored. The clients faced environmental restrictions and delays not within their or the facilitator's control. This may have contributed to lower motivation among the clients. Finally the facility in which the study was conducted housed individuals with a range of age, health, and developmental levels which may have resulted in tensions between non-compatible members both within and outside of the group.
Challenges with the implementation of the program included the minimal priority that was given to rehabilitation in comparison to other activities in the facility. Structure and routine is difficult to achieve and maintain within a secure prison environment. Programs are necessarily structured and implemented according to certain protocols when provided in such a secure environment, which can distract from a client-centered approach. Additionally, potential cohort effects within the group may have limited participation and productivity (i.e., younger participants may feel less comfortable participating in the absence of older role models participating).

Institutional challenges include safety as a priority. Safety requirements sometimes conflict with program mandates. Poor communication between program coordinators and safety staff only exaggerates the challenges. Additionally, limited resources allocated for programming can result in limited space for delivery.

Finally challenges in the community include limited output of information from the institution. Poor communication between the public and the prison creates fear and stigma about mentally ill offenders and the treatment they receive. For example public assumptions about mental ill offenders and violent recidivism rates affect the productivity of the individuals released.

**Implications for the field of Behavioural Psychology**

This study has several implications within the field of behavioural psychology. The research from the study demonstrated some of the influential variables involved within this population. The research not only adds to the limited studies conducted with offenders with a diagnosis of mental illness, but demonstrated the positive effects of that group counselling sessions on employability skills can have on future employment. Furthermore, the research highlighted the struggles involved with this population when trying to work towards a career upon release from the institution. The study also demonstrated the challenges of implementing programs with this population and limitations that should be addressed in future implementations of this or similar programs.

**Recommendations for Future Research**

To follow are some recommended modifications for implementing this or similar programs in the future. It was felt that two facilitators in the room at all times would have been an asset to the group's functioning. At times when members needed extra assistance, the group’s momentum and productivity suffered only having one facilitator. Also the length of the program should be extended, preferably to ten weeks minimum, to facilitate adequate focus on each topic. Each session should focus only on one lesson and one skill. This would promote a greater understanding for the members. Also, a ten week format would allow more time for members to practise the skills in group. Future research in this area should be focussed on new and empirically supported ways of teaching occupational skills. More information is needed on empirically supported exercises and additional methods to utilize in teaching employability skills beyond the use of group discussions. Also more research is needed to on how to adapt vocational programs for individuals with a diagnosed mental illness. Ongoing research should be conducted on how mental
illness and having the status of an offender affects not only vocational skill acquisition, but also may be more responsive to certain types of instruction and/or teaching strategies.
REFERENCES


Appendix A: Pre Selection Checklist

All participants must meet the required criterion before being selected to be included in the program.

✔ Serving a federal sentence at the Regional Treatment Center (2 years plus a day)

✔ Be male and between the ages of 25 and 55 years

✔ Clinical diagnosis of a mental illness

✔ Must have completed or are completing their senior credits (grade 10-12)

✔ All participants must demonstrate a need for employability training with either,
  ✔ A poor past record of employment,
  ✔ A stat release date within the next three years,
  ✔ An expression of an interest in working in a co-op program within the institution

✔ Must agree to the consent terms

✔ Not currently enrolled in the Sex Offender Rehabilitation program

If more than the eight people required for the program meet the requirements. Selection will be made by random draw.

Offenders that pose a security risk to staff, others, or themselves will not be included in the program
Appendix B: Consent Form

**TITLE:** Evaluating the Effects of an Employment Skills Building Program on Employability Ratings in Offenders with a Mental Illness

**STUDENT:** VICTORIA CARTWRIGHT

**COLLEGE SUPERVISOR:** YOLANDA FERNANDEZ

**Invitation**

I am a student in my 4th year in Behavioural Psychology at St. Lawrence College and I am currently on placement at the Regional Treatment Center. As a part of this placement, I am completing a special project called an applied thesis and am asking for your assistance to complete this project. The information in this form is intended to help you understand my project so that you can decide whether or not you want to participate. Please read the information below carefully and ask all the questions you might have before deciding whether or not to participate.

**WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY?**

I am creating a program for my applied project and I am in need of your help. The focus of the study is to create an employment skills program that highlights the skills needed to overcome the barriers of having a mental illness in the work place. You will learn more about possible career options, how to approach stigma regarding mental illness at work, how to regulate emotions, how to be reliable, as well as more generic work skills. The study is designed to demonstrate the effectiveness of the skills as assessed by a measure that provides a rating of employability.

**WHAT WILL YOU NEED TO DO IF YOU TAKE PART?**

If you agree to take part in the program, you will be required to attend ten, one hour sessions. Each session will be held once a week. You will be asked to actively participate in class seminars and complete the exercises in a corresponding workbook. As a part of the program you will be asked to complete several in class exercises as well as a writing exercise. Prior to the first day you will be asked to complete a questionnaire to test your knowledge the skills targeted in the program. You will be asked to complete the same questionnaire again after completing the program to assess any improvements in your knowledge gained in each skill. After finishing the program. The program will require you to devote approximately 15 hours of your time over ten weeks.
WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO ME OF TAKING PART?

There are several possible benefits to participating in the program. These benefits include, learning more about your career interests, learning how to manage mental health symptoms at work, dealing with mental health stigma in the workplace, and increasing your chances of getting involved in a co op program in the institution. Finally completing this program may improve your employment skills and improve your chances of working both within the institution and after release.

WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE DISADVANTAGES AND RISKS OF TAKING PART?

There are very minimal risks involved in participating in the group. The group focuses on characteristics of mental illness and speaking about mental illness may make you feel uncomfortable. Becoming upset or angry may also occur as a result of the material discussed. If at anytime someone reacts strongly during the session, they can speak to the student researcher, Nancy or arrangements can be made with the psychology department of the institution for a meeting with a mental health care provider.

WHAT HAPPENS IF SOMETHING GOES WRONG?

In the event that something goes wrong during one of the seminars or if someone reacts strongly to the material they can speak to student researcher or Nancy immediately and arrangements can be made with the psychology department for a meeting. A correctional officer will be present outside the room for the duration of the program and will react accordingly to security and safety concerns.

WILL MY TAKING PART IN THIS PROJECT BE KEPT PRIVATE?

All precautions will be taken to ensure that all identifying information is kept confidential. All participants’ names will be changed and each participant will be assigned a numerical code to remain anonymous as well as to evaluate pre and post scores on the questionnaire. All data will be stored electronically and no information that may lead others to identify you will be released. All hardcopy documents will be disposed of properly or kept in my supervisor’s locked file cabinet. All data will be stored on the computers for a minimum of 7 years. Information will not be released unless required by law.

DO YOU HAVE TO TAKE PART?

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part, you will be asked to sign this consent form. If you do decide to take part, you are still free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason, and without incurring any penalty.

CONTACT FOR FURTHER INFORMATION.

This project has been approved by the Research Ethics Board at St. Lawrence College. The project has been developed under the supervision of Yolanda
Fernandez, my supervisor from St. Lawrence College. I really appreciate your cooperation. If you have any additional questions or concerns, feel free to ask me, Victoria, or you can contact my College Supervisor, Yolanda at 613-536-6786 you may also contact the Research Ethics Board at appliedresearch@sl.on.ca.

CONSENT
If you agree to participate in the project, please complete the following form and return it to me as soon as possible. A copy of this signed document will be given to you for your own records. An additional copy of your consent will be retained at the agency and in a secure location with the Research Ethics Board at St. Lawrence College.
## A Revised Version of The NESP Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Improvement</th>
<th>Scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>What managing emotions means to me …</strong></td>
<td>Check the statement that best applies to you.</td>
<td>Overall I feel….</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ I am aware of this skill and why its important (0)</td>
<td>□ I’m really good at this</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ I am aware and understand this skill (1)</td>
<td>□ I’m okay this for now</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ I am comfortable with and can demonstrate personal commitment in applying this skill (2)</td>
<td>□ I need to improve this skill</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ I consistently apply this skill and demonstrate leadership in this area (3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What having a positive attitude means to me …</strong></td>
<td>Check the statement that best applies to you.</td>
<td>Overall I feel….</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ I am aware of this skill and why its important (0)</td>
<td>□ I’m really good at this</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ I am aware and understand this skill (1)</td>
<td>□ I’m okay this for now</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ I am comfortable with and can demonstrate personal commitment in applying this skill (2)</td>
<td>□ I need to improve this skill</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ I consistently apply this skill and demonstrate leadership in this area (3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What being responsible means to me …</strong></td>
<td>Check the statement that best applies to you.</td>
<td>Overall I feel….</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ I am aware of this skill and why its important (0)</td>
<td>□ I’m really good at this</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ I am aware and understand this skill (1)</td>
<td>□ I’m okay this for now</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ I am comfortable with and can demonstrate personal commitment in applying this skill (2)</td>
<td>□ I need to improve this skill</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ I consistently apply this skill and demonstrate leadership in this area (3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What <strong>being adaptable</strong> means to me …</td>
<td>Check the statement that best applies to you.</td>
<td>Overall I feel….</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ I am aware of this skill and why its important (0)</td>
<td>□ I’m really good at this</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ I am aware and understand this skill (1)</td>
<td>□ I’m okay this for now</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ I am comfortable with and can demonstrate personal commitment in applying this skill (2)</td>
<td>□ I need to improve this skill</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ I consistently apply this skill and demonstrate leadership in this area (3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What <strong>following roles</strong> means to me …</th>
<th>Check the statement that best applies to you.</th>
<th>Overall I feel….</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□ I am aware of this skill and why its important (0)</td>
<td>□ I’m really good at this</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ I am aware and understand this skill (1)</td>
<td>□ I’m okay this for now</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ I am comfortable with and can demonstrate personal commitment in applying this skill (2)</td>
<td>□ I need to improve this skill</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ I consistently apply this skill and demonstrate leadership in this area (3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What <strong>conflict resolution</strong> means to me …</th>
<th>Check the statement that best applies to you.</th>
<th>Overall I feel….</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□ I am aware of this skill and why its important (0)</td>
<td>□ I’m really good at this</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ I am aware and understand this skill (1)</td>
<td>□ I’m okay this for now</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ I am comfortable with and can demonstrate personal commitment in applying this skill (2)</td>
<td>□ I need to improve this skill</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ I consistently apply this skill and demonstrate leadership in this area (3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What **teamwork** means to me ...

Check the statement that best applies to you.

- I am aware of this skill and why it's important (0)
- I am aware and understand this skill (1)
- I am comfortable with and can demonstrate personal commitment in applying this skill (2)
- I consistently apply this skill and demonstrate leadership in this area (3)

Overall I feel....

- I'm really good at this
- I'm okay this for now
- I need to improve this skill
Appendix: D

Employability Skills 2000+ Assessment

Answer the questions the best you can. Rate yourself against the skills employers say are needed in today's workplace. There are 33 questions. Approximate time to complete: 5 minutes

Rate your skill level against these employability skills:

1. I'm not as skilled as I'd like
2. I'm skilled
3. I'm very skilled

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Working with Others</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I understand and work within the dynamics of a group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I ensure that a team's purpose and objectives are clear</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am flexible. I try to respect, be open to and supportive of the thoughts, opinions and contributions of others in a group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I recognize and respect people's diversity, individual differences and perspectives</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I accept and provide feedback in a constructive and considerate manner</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I contribute to a team by sharing information and expertise</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I lead or support when appropriate, motivating a group for high performance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand the role of conflict in a group to reach solutions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I manage and resolve conflict when appropriate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participating in Projects &amp; Tasks</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I plan, design or carry out a project or task from start to finish with well-defined objectives and outcomes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I develop a plan, seek feedback, test, revise and implement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I work to agreed quality standards and specifications</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I select and use appropriate tools and technology for a task or project</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I adapt to changing requirements and information</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I continuously monitor the success of a project or task and identify ways to improve</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Demonstrating Positive Attitudes &amp; Behaviours</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feel good about yourself and be confident</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I deal with people, problems and situations with honesty, integrity and personal ethics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I recognize my own and other people's good efforts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I take care of my personal health</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I show interest, initiative and effort</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Being Adaptable</strong></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I work independently or as a part of a team</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I carry out multiple tasks or projects</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am innovative and resourceful: identify and suggest alternative ways to achieve goals and get the job done</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am open and respond constructively to change</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I learn from my mistakes and accept feedback</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I cope with uncertainty</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Learning Continuously</strong></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am willing to continuously learn and grow</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I assess personal strengths and areas for development</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I set my own learning goals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I identify and access learning sources and opportunities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I plan for and achieve your learning goals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix E:  
Individual Results for the NESP Assessment

**Summary of Pre and Post Total Scores and Percentage Increase on the modified NESP Assessment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member</th>
<th>Pre Score</th>
<th>Post Score</th>
<th>Percentage Increase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>101</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>103</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>105</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>106</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>115%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>107</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>142%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>25.67</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Deviation (SD)</td>
<td>4.44</td>
<td>2.42</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Bar Graph of Each Member’s Pre and Post Scores on The Modified Version of the NESP Assessment*
Individual Graph for Each Member’s Scores on each subscale of the NESP Assessment

This visual depicts the changes in each member scores in each subscale of the assessment. Pre data is represented by the square symbol and the triangle represents the post data. Member could earn a possible score of five in each subscale.
Appendix F:  
Individual Results for the NESP Assessment

Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member</th>
<th>Pre Score</th>
<th>Post Score</th>
<th>Percentage Increase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>101</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>103</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>-12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>105</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>138%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>106</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>107</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>67.67</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Standard Deviation (SD)  
20.21  
10.7

Figure 3. Bar Graph of Each Member’s Pre and Post Scores on The Modified Version of the NESP Assessment
Figure 4
Individual Graph for Each Member’s Scores on each subscale of the modified Employability Skills 2000+ Assessment

The visual depicts the changes in each member scores in each subscale of the assessment. Pre data is represented by the square symbol and the triangle represents the post data. Member could earn a possible score of five in each subscale.
Member 105 Employability Assessment

Member 106 Employability Assessment

Member 107 Employability Assessment
Appendix G
Facilitators Manual

To view the contents of the facilitators manual, as well as details of the lesson plans, please contact the author.