

Needs Assessment Overview Assignment

1. Situation:

I will be conducting a needs assessment for Northwest Arkansas Community College's Health Information Management Program. This is a large community college located in Bentonville, Arkansas that offers over 75 different degrees and certificates. The Health Information Management (H.I.M.) program is a preparatory program for students pursuing careers in informatics and information management in healthcare settings. Part of this program includes a series of internship opportunities with local hospitals, clinics, and health related organizations.

Students in the H.I.M. program are assigned to preceptors at their internship location and are expected to communicate with them to arrange their internship schedules, and throughout their internships to ask questions and gain needed information. Most of this communication occurs through email. Since the beginning of the internship program, several preceptors have noted to the H.I.M. faculty that the majority of students entering their internship experience do not successfully communicate with their site host in a professional manner. This lack of professionalism has been exemplified by emails that contain numerous grammatical errors, lack of capitalization and complete sentences, use of slang terms, and other email errors not appropriate for workplace communication.

2. Problem Statement:

Internship students are not communicating in a professional manner to site mentors via email.

3. Optimals:

Internship students are successful in communicating with site mentors via email in a way that is professional. Data collected from site preceptors indicates that at least 90% of emails sent by students use a tone appropriate for work settings, and follow proper grammar rules.

4. Actuals:

Internship students do NOT communicate with site mentors via email in a way that is professional. They frequently send emails that are incorrect grammatically, include slang terms, and other include errors that are not appropriate for workplace communication.

5. Feelings:

I would like to gather information from internship students about how comfortable they feel with professional communications, how well prepared they feel to communicate in this manner, and how their past experiences communicating with

professionals have made them feel. I would also like to gauge internship student's feelings on what professional vs unprofessional communication looks like, and their attitudes on its importance. Internship students are the best source for this information because they are the ones writing the emails that are problematic.

6. Causes:

I am seeking to find the cause of student's lack of success in writing professional emails. I plan to seek information about student experiences with, knowledge of, and feelings about professional communication. They are the best source of information for this because they are the ones who would best be able to describe their current level of knowledge, experience, and attitudes about this subject.

I will also seek out the cause of this communication breakdown by talking with faculty. I plan to seek knowledge about which preceptors have noted issues and from which internship sites. I also want to gain information on which courses or trainings in the H.I.M. program cover information on professional communication (if any), when students take these courses/trainings, and how this information is taught to them. The faculty would be the best source of this information because they have direct knowledge of curriculum and course sequence, and are the college's approved communication avenue to the site based mentors.

7. Solutions:

Depending on the data collected, I plan to seek information primarily from faculty in order to determine a solution no matter the cause. They are the best source for information on coming up with a solution to this problem because they are directly in charge of the curriculum/trainings etc. that students receive and are in charge of monitoring the preceptors and communicating with them on behalf of the program, as well as choosing internship locations.