

# AQIP Team 2

## Staff Professional Development Report

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# Executive Summary

Action Team 2 divided its members into two subcommittees to address the separate issues of staff and faculty professional development. Our subcommittee took on the task of assessing the training issues of Evangel's staff to develop an effective training initiative.

The formation of our action team was based on the fact that training is a concern to those working at Evangel; however, we did not know what the training concerns were among the staff. We created a successful, web-based survey to assess training topics and the desire to have a training initiative established. The results indicate that staff members are interested in leadership, communication and computer related training.

To help address the issues of establishing and maintaining a training program, we interviewed other organizations. Combined with our experience and insights gained from the interviews we have proposed a training initiative that will address the training desires of the staff.

Evangel has the resources in place that can address the training issues of leadership, communication and computer training. Not only does Evangel University save money by providing in house training, it can provide relevant training to its staff. Faculty members exist who can create seminars for leadership and effective communication and the Information Technologies department can address the computer related training issues.

With the aid of the annual performance reviews, staff members and their supervisors can actively address any training issues that arise. If Evangel cannot address the issue by an in house method, existing seminars can be utilized.

Staff members will feel empowered by the knowledge they gain and become more valuable to Evangel. Further, morale will improve as Evangel actively pursues the development of its employees.

## Introduction and Staff Survey

The results of Conversation Day caused the formation of our action team to pursue Evangel's interest in training. Action Team 2 deemed it pertinent to divide the team into two subcommittees. Our subcommittee was charged with the assessment and development of a professional development program for Evangel staff members.

We knew there was an overall interest in training at Evangel (faculty and staff); however, we did not know how interested staff members were in training and in what type of training. Therefore, we created a web-based survey (see appendix A). The survey was made to be short (not requiring more than five minutes to complete) and web-based for the convenience of the staff. The survey questions included items assessing interests in various training topics and views of developing a professional development program.

Construction of the survey's introduction made sure the staff knew the survey was about ongoing training as oppose to new employee orientation. Further, it stated professional development could include training topics beyond the scope of only job related training.

The first section of the survey assessed interests in various topics. The training topics assessed in the survey were selected based on what we deemed appropriate for staff and based on the views set forth by Evangel's Professional Development Committee (PDC). Our committee comprises of members from a wide variety of departments and over 60 years of working experience at Evangel. Based on our personal and observed experiences, we selected relevant training topics. After reviewing the PDC's documentation, we broaden professional training topics to include personal and spiritual topics. Finally, we included an open-ended item for training topics to receive feedback from the staff.

The rest of the survey contained items assessing the staff's view of current training and their interests in establishing a professional development program. A general comments section ended the survey to gather any information staff wanted to provide.

# Survey Results

Overall, we were pleased with the response to our survey as well as the results. We had 101 staff members respond to our survey, which is a response rate of 45%. Given the high response rate and consistency of answers, we are confident the data represents the opinion of Evangel's staff. To view all the survey data, consult appendix B.

The first section of the survey assessed training topics. Purposed topics were scored based on how likely the responder would attend the topic. Responses fell into four categories and were scored as follows: Very Likely – 3; Likely – 2; Not Likely – 1; and Would Not Attend – 0. The highly rated training topics included leadership, computer related training and communication, which was echoed in the opened-response (see appendix B).

The rest of the survey dealt with general interest in training and the development of a professional training program. Most responders want training beyond just job related training and the majority also indicated they would like to attend job related conferences. When asked if their department offers enough ongoing training, the responses were split in half.

The final question asked the responder what priority Evangel should give to the development of a professional program. The staff believes an above average priority should be given to the development of the program.

## Organization Interviews

To help us explore the important questions of how to implement a training program, who should be responsible for the program, and how to evaluate its effectiveness; we interviewed various organizations to explore these issues. Major organizations as well as similarly situated organizations were targeted, such as Missouri State University, Bethany College, AG Financial, IBM Business Consulting, and Southwestern Assemblies of God University.

The results of the interviews not only helped us with the above questions but also provided discussions on such topics as online training programs, third party trainers, mandatory federal and organizational training, and collaborating with other organizations for training. In the interest of brevity, the findings and discussion outcomes of the organization interviews will not be discussed at length, but will be integrated in the following recommendation section.

# Recommendations

We focused on recommendations that would not only be easy to employ but would result in the greatest impact. Based on the survey, the staff is most interested in leadership, communication skills and computer training as opposed to a whole host of training topics put forth by the PDC. To address the training desires of the staff, Evangel can make use of their current resources as well as using relevant seminars.

Because spiritual and personal training topics were in the lower half of popularity, it is not advisable to pursue these topics at Evangel. Further, it is noteworthy to mention that a responder indicated that enough spiritual training occurs at one's local church.

Evangel has excellent resources at hand to fulfill the leadership training issue in its faculty. Evangel currently offers a graduate degree in organizational leadership, so faculty members exist who could create relevant seminars for interested staff. Along these lines, we thought it advisable to make leadership training mandatory for staff who currently are in supervisory roles. Not only would this be invaluable to those staff members who were promoted into a supervisory role, but also it could be a benefit to current supervisors who may have little to no managerial training. Faculty members running the seminars can be compensated for their efforts, for example, the seminars can fulfill committee requirements. In a similar vein, current Evangel faculty could address communication skills.

To address computer related training, again Evangel has an invaluable resource at hand: The Information Technologies department. We advise that there should be training for Outlook, Excel, Word, CAMS and the Faculty Portal not only at a basic level but also at an intermediate level<sup>1</sup>. The IT department can survey the staff to determine the best time to host these ongoing training sessions. It is also advisable to provide these sessions in a computer lab so the attendees can receive hands on training. It is also advisable to make the sessions directly relevant to tasks performed at Evangel.

For all training at Evangel University, care needs to be taken in selecting trainers, creating effective training sessions, and evaluating the sessions. Trainers not only need to teach effectively and be knowledgeable in their field, but they also need to be aware of issues related to training adults (e.g. providing hands on training and focus on job related issues). In both the leadership and computer training batteries, simple feedback forms need to be used to ensure a successful program. At the end of a training session, the attendees would provide feedback via a form. The trainer can then incorporate the feedback in the next session.

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<sup>1</sup> We are aware of the training concerns regarding EMS (Evangel's master calendar and scheduling system). The conference services department is currently setting up a training program to address this issue.

Other reasonable training solutions Evangel can employ without much effort on the organization is expanding the tuition discounts for staff and make use of job related conferences. Currently, staff can only enjoy tuition discounts if they are pursuing their first undergraduate degree; however, it would be a mutual benefit to the staff and Evangel if staff members were given the opportunity to take classes free of charge if they are deemed job related. This recommendation includes both graduate and undergraduate courses regardless of the degrees held by a staff member.

Making use of affordable job related conferences should be a new focus for Evangel by actively asking its employees to seek out relevant conferences to attend. Our survey indicated that staff members are eager to attend conferences in their field, so Evangel's departments should set aside training budgets to accommodate this desire.

To help ensure staff's training needs and desires are being met, the annual performance reviews should be used to address training issues and goals. Staff members can identify training desires as well as be informed of training opportunities. Once written and affirmed, the staff member along with the department can take the responsibility to pursue the training by the next annual review.

To implement the above recommendations, upper management needs to voice the new focus on training. When new staff members start their employment, human resources can take a few minutes to explain the in house training programs available, the new policy of actively looking for relevant training seminars, and tuition waivers for relevant classes. The director or immediate supervisor should restate this training focus to the new employee. Further, a slight modification to the standard performance appraisal needs to be made to include a training section where an employee and supervisor can state training goals.

A new simple three-member committee can be established to create and maintain leadership and communication seminars, which are taught by faculty. The team members should include two staff members and one faculty member. The staff members should be aware of training issues in general as well as Evangel's training issues. The faculty member should be aware of faculty resources available at Evangel and appreciate training issues. This committee will be responsible for determining the specific aspects of leadership and communication that will benefit Evangel's staff. The committee will also recruit faculty as trainers and oversee the development of the seminars. Further, this committee will be responsible for the continual improvement of the seminars by making use of attendees' feedback. Finally, the committee would occasionally survey the staff to determine if other topics should be included or terminate current ones.

To address the computer related training, the Information Technologies department can be formally asked to create ongoing training sessions. The director of Information Technologies, Danny Chastain, is currently planning to implement training sessions and is aware of the staff's training desire.

An organization can expect many benefits from a well-employed training initiative. A few of the more important perceived benefits are intrinsic value of competency, improved performance and increased tie in with Evangel. With training comes a sense of competency that will allow staff members to operate not only more effectively within Evangel, but with a higher morale. Further, staff members will be appreciative of Evangel for fostering their professional development.

The above recommendations not only meet the assessed training needs, but also are easy to implement. Evangel University is poised to use its existing resources to make a substantial positive impact for its staff members and enjoy the benefits of a trained staff.

## Appendix A — Staff Training Survey

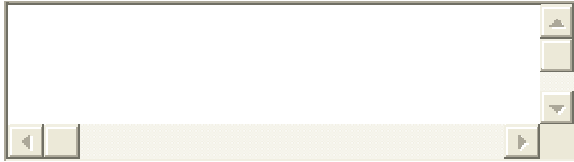
Based on the results of the AQIP Conversation Day, an interest in creating a professional development program was discovered. Professional development is not limited to learning technical skills to perform a job better. It includes helping staff to grow personally, spiritually and professionally. We need your help to determine where your interests lie.

**Please Note:** The questions below are about ongoing training only, not new employee training.

Please tell us how likely you would attend the following training topics. If a training topic does not apply to you (e.g. Managerial Skills), please skip it and move to the next topic.

Topic	Very likely	Likely	Not Likely	Would not attend
Communication skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Time management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Leadership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Managerial skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
General computer skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Microsoft products	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Office Ergonomics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Evangel's crisis plan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Self esteem	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Integrity and ethical choices	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Christian world-view	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Integration of faith and discipline	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Spiritually nurturing others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Spiritual fruits and gifts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please list other training topics you would be interested in attending:

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Should Evangel focus **only** on job related training and not on spiritual or other types of training?

Yes  No

Would you like to attend job related conferences?

Yes  No

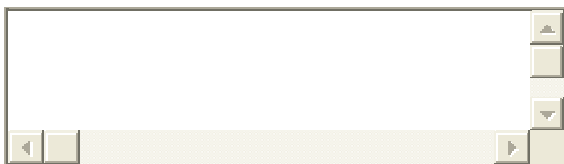
Do you feel your department currently does enough ongoing training?

Yes  No

What priority should Evangel give to developing a professional development program?

Very High  High  Average  Low  Very Low  None

Comments:

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## Appendix B — Survey Results

### Training Topic results

Topic	Total Responses	Average Score	Rank based on Average Score	Very likely Responses (Scored as 3)	Likely Responses (Scored as 2)	Not Likely Responses (Scored as 1)	Would not attend Responses (Scored as 0)
Communication skills	99	1.83	4	22	47	21	9
Time management	98	1.68	5	24	34	25	15
Leadership	97	2.02	1	34	36	22	5
Managerial skills	87	1.94	3	30	30	19	8
General computer skills	97	1.65	6	27	25	29	16
Microsoft products	99	1.99	2	42	26	19	12
Office Ergonomics	95	1.21	13	7	29	36	23
Evangel's crisis plan	95	1.51	9	12	36	35	12
Self esteem	94	0.97	14	7	12	46	29
Integrity and ethical choices	95	1.48	10	12	36	33	14
Christian world-view	95	1.39	12	14	28	34	19
Integration of faith and discipline	94	1.54	8	14	37	29	14
Spiritually nurturing others	95	1.60	7	14	45	20	16
Spiritual fruits and gifts	93	1.42	11	11	36	27	19

### Responses to other training topics you would be interested in attending

The responses below are not altered in any way.

how to have effective team meetings, how to get ideas implemented, marketing training-what and where to use money, website training

1. CAMS, full use and development of tools provided therein.

Proper communication across campus (channels). EMS training.

Technical training related to my field

more specific: CAMS, inter- & inner-office politics, etc.

I worked at AG Headquarters in fall of 2003 and found their system of ongoing training to be the best I've ever seen. I strongly recommend checking with them for input in how to put a training program together. Their general knowledge of computer software is also a cut above anything I've ever experienced. Their helpdesk assistance is phenomenal! They always knew exactly what I was talking about when I encountered a problem and could fix any problem I had without losing all my settings, etc. I learned a ton while working there both in the classes offered as well as the helpdesk assistance.

EMS

managing and motivating others (work study people) hiring the right personnel being as efficient as possible

Perhaps how to deal with spiritual "fruits" :)

Specific training in Excel

Alternative Dispute Resolution / not causing unnecessary conflict.

Technical advancement programs, new business programs like SPSS for Windows etc,

In Design

In depth training in specific computer programs to make full use of the equipment I have. Outlook, Excell, Word, Power point...etc etc

Excel, word

Computer programs (Word, Excel, etc.

design software

Anything computer or tech related

Orientation to Campus--Understanding Faculty/Staff departments and processes Online Knowledge Sharing Communities-- How to build culture between faculty, staff and students

## Yes and No responses

Item	Total Responses	Average Score	Yes Responses (Scored as 1)	No Responses (Scored as 0)
Should Evangel focus only on job related training and not on spiritual or other types of training?	97	0.21	22	75
Would you like to attend job related conferences?	96	0.83	80	16
Do you feel your department currently does enough ongoing training?	93	0.48	45	48

## Response to: What priority should Evangel give to developing a professional development program?

Total Responses	Average Score	Very High Responses (Scored as 5)	High Responses (Scored as 4)	Average Responses (Scored as 3)	Low Responses (Scored as 2)	Very Low Responses (Scored as 1)	None Responses (Scored as 0)
99	3.82	18	50	28	2	0	1

## Responses to Comments

The responses below are not altered in any way.

Technical training is need for my staff to keep us current with the current technology.

updates are sometimes done without letting people affected know about them or how to use them correctly.

I want to become better skilled at doing my job in the most efficient way possible. I think the other areas are valuable but I receive plentiful training at church and in personal reading. Past experience and training have been more than adequate. I currently receive ongoing training opportunities in my department but not in the actual technical(computer)skills I need to run my office with maximum efficiency.

some good thoughts and intentions with such developmental programs...but make sure they are necessary, valuable and don't waste the time of those involved

Thanks for asking!

Times that the trainings are offered would be a huge factor in my availability to attend.

I think options should be made available to those interested in varied opportunities

Evangel's crisis plan should be a mandatory training for all employees.

I believe we need to be aware of how much time this could take individuals away from their job responsibilities.

I would feel uncomfortable attending classes that I could not apply to my work here at Evangel, even if I were very interested in them.

with a changing world we need to keep with changing trends. Ongoing Professional development must be a part of evangel to stay competitive.

Upper Level Management should be required to receive ongoing training.

I am new and don't have a good feel for what Evangel needs at this time.

Unless Evangel is in a position to hire additional personnel for this office, I would not have time to attend seminars. I feel it should not be Evangel's responsibility to give any more training than what may be necessary to function on certain equipment to do one's job. If we are careful to only hire people who have the proper training for a job, it would not be necessary to offer extensive training beyond what may be necessary for one to use specific equipment or systems to perform the specific functions of one's job. Seminars on Christian topics are offered in all of our churches. I don't feel this is something for which Evangel's limited resources should be used. If there is information that is needed, it could possibly be supplied through distribution of literature.

Sounds like a great idea!

Glad to see professional development is being addressed more proactively...keep up the good work

Have a nice day.