Developing Career Readiness Among Collegiate Student Staff Members

by

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ABSTRACT

Preparing graduates for full-time employment following graduation has become an increasing concern for universities. Student services departments who employ students have been tasked with providing intentional development opportunities for them. At Arizona State University those opportunities have been taken on by professional staff members (PSM) in Educational Outreach and Student Services (EOSS) who have served as the university's support system and connection to resources to ensure student success. Many departments within EOSS have been student led and supported by PSM. This model provided PSM opportunities to work with student staff members (SSM) to ensure they were receiving professional development opportunities to grow professionally and personally. Unfortunately, this development has not always been intentional or targeted. Thus, I developed and delivered workshops, coaching, and facilitated an online community of practice (OCoP) to foster and support PSMs' efforts in teaching transferable, career readiness, skills to SSM. The intervention components were based on three of the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) career readiness competencies including communication, teamwork, and leadership. Participants were full-time PSM within EOSS departments and SSM who were supervised and mentored by PSM. These intervention efforts took place over the course of one academic semester and effectiveness of these efforts was assessed using quantitative and qualitative instruments. Specifically, PSMs' perceptions of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and self-efficacy were assessed to determine the influence of the invention. Moreover, SSMs' perceptions of transferable skills and overall connections to work were also evaluated.

Quantitative results showed modest increases in PSMs' perceptions of skills across the intervention. On the other hand, quantitative results for SSM exhibited very slight changes in their scores about transferable skills. Interview data indicated PSM developed knowledge and skills to share the NACE competencies. Further, in their interviews, students indicated their competencies had grown and they felt better prepared for the future. The discussion was focused on describing complementarity of the data, explaining the findings based on the literature, communicating the limitations, portraying the implications for practice and research, describing the lessons learned, and offering conclusions.

DEDICATION

To my entire family, friends, and loved ones who were there regardless of the moment, big or small. Whether it was solely to lend an ear, to share a kind or encouraging word such as, "take things one day at a time," or to reassure me that I was capable or competent enough to complete my doctoral degree, I could have not completed this without all your love, support, and grace throughout this process, and for that I am eternally grateful. To my mom and dad, Lori and Rick who ensured that all their children knew the importance and value of an education and to never quit or give up, thank you for always being there for me and your unconditional love. To my daughter, Kennedy, although you were born during the final year of doctoral work, you served as a constant reminder and inspiration for me. You helped me persevere as I approached the finish line. I hope this degree and the effort I placed into it can serve as an example as you grow up to always push yourself personally, professionally, and academically and believe in yourself every step along the way. Finally, to my wife, Kelly, I simply cannot say enough. You are my everything and through this entire journey you never left my side. You held my hand and built me up in my darkest and hardest moments, you were my cheerleader and celebrated the small victories and all my accomplishments along the way. Never once, through the countless times that I asked if I could walk away, did you let me give it a second thought. Thank you for being my rock and serving as an example to me on a daily basis. I love you so much and am so grateful for your strength and support throughout this process.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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CHAPTER 1

LEADERSHIP CONTEXT AND PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT

I define connection as the energy that exists between people when they feel seen, heard, and valued; when they can give and receive without judgment; and when they derive sustenance and strength from the relationship.

—Brene Brown

A Tale of Two Students

It was a typical weekday during the academic year. Two students awoke to an early morning alarm. Both students quickly gathered up their laptops and books then headed to the dining hall to grab breakfast before heading to class. Both students were attending the same classes and shared the same major but neither knew each other. After classes were finished for the day, both students went to their on-campus jobs. Andrea showed up to her shift at the department's office. Her role included sitting behind a desk, answering phone calls, and assisting individuals who had questions. It was a glorified secretarial role. Throughout her work, Andrea had limited interaction with professional staff members (PSM) within the department besides a "good afternoon" and "hope you have a great day." Belicia arrived and headed straight to work. She had scheduled tasks, meetings, and obligations awaiting upon her arrival. Belicia's supervisor made it a priority to connect and see how Belicia was doing and whether she needed any assistance. Thus, Belicia was treated as an essential member of the department she was also experiencing opportunities to grow professionally.

Throughout the two students' collegiate careers, both Andrea and Belicia

continued to work with their respective departments. Andrea's role remained lackluster and stagnant. She was comfortable and complacent in her role behind the front desk. Andrea was never challenged to grow professionally, and simply put opportunities for growth and development did not exist. Andrea's supervisor used time at the end of the semester for mandatory "end of semester evaluations," but other than these no discussions about professional development occurred. By comparison, Belicia continued to be challenged throughout her student employment career. Opportunities for advancement and professional growth and development were available. Notably, Belicia's supervisor was intentional with conversations and focused on ensuring they were setting up their student staff members (SSM) for success following graduation.

Every journey began with a first step. Brinkman and Kvale (2015) maintained knowledge and information was obtained when a researcher was engaged as a traveler, acquiring information and constructing knowledge throughout a research journey. Similarly, students' educational paths are no different. The postsecondary experience has been viewed as another step on the lifelong journey for holistic education, growth, and development. Although the purpose of higher education has been questioned (Busteed, 2019), research conducted by the Pew Research Center (2016) revealed a majority of Americans viewed the collegiate experience as an opportunity for job preparation along with personal and intellectual growth. These thoughts have come along side more traditional notions about how a university education fostered academic and social growth. Social growth has been observed through the development of soft skills. According to the National Center for Education Statistics ([NCES], 2020), a total of 16.6 million students

were enrolled in two- and four-year colleges and universities across the country in the fall of 2018. Enrollment numbers were projected to rise over the next several years with the potential to reach 17 million students annually enrolled in higher education institutions as early as 2022.

Although there was no clear or consistent definition or evaluation process for predicting student success in higher education and following graduation, most institutions have considered retention and graduation rates as indicators of how successfully their respective institutions were operating. NCES (2020) statistics from fall 2017 illustrated first-time students enrolled in the fall semester demonstrated an 81% retention rate across all student groups. These numbers ranged between 60 and 97 percent depending on the type of university. Further, data from the NCES (2020) indicated students enrolled within their first semester in fall 2012 had a six-year graduation rate of 62% at four-year universities and a 33% rate at two-year institutions. These data showed an increase of four percent when compared to students who enrolled as first-year students in 2004. Nationally, students continued to graduate at higher rates, which has increased the number of qualified college graduates seeking employment following graduation.

In a national survey conducted by the National Association of College and Employers (NACE), results showed there was a discrepancy with respect to perception of career readiness between graduating seniors and potential employers (NACE, 2018; Bauer-Wolf, 2018). NACE (n.d.) defined *career readiness* using eight competencies, which included career and self-development, communication, critical thinking, equity and inclusion, leadership, professionalism, teamwork, and technology. Bauer-Wolf (2018)

noted additional research from the Association of American College and Universities indicated a similar outcome in 2015 when employers perceived recent graduates were not well prepared for professional employment.

Institutions nationwide and their specific student services teams have endeavored to serve the student population in various ways inside and outside the college classroom. Although universities generally have been dedicated to the academic betterment of students, student affairs/services departments have embraced holistic growth of students, which includes personal development and building of professional skills. The national organization for Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education, NASPA, has been dedicated to the holistic development of students during their post-secondary education journey (NASPA, n.d.). Professionals in student services departments have served as a resource to build connections between students and valuable campus resources. Professional staff members have been expected to serve and connect with students to ensure success. In particular, student affairs/student services professionals nationwide have been encouraged to support students in the career readiness process.

NCES (2020) data illustrated attendance in post-secondary education has been increasing at a rapid rate and was not expected to slow down. The need for intentional education along with professional and personal support of students' journeys will be vital for students' post-graduation successes. University personnel, specifically, student affairs/student services professionals have been challenged to ensure students were equipped with skills to be career ready following graduation. Utilizing NACE career competencies had the potential to serve as a key in fostering students' overall career

readiness. For the purpose of this study, I have used the term transferable skills to refer to these career competencies. This verbiage moved away any potential perception of a deficit perspective thinking model. Both higher education institutions and student services professionals have attempted to support students to develop their career readiness.

Local Context

In the fall of 2019, Arizona State University (ASU) welcomed 74,795 total undergraduate and graduate students to campus (Arizona State University, n.d.-e). Like so many other colleges and universities, the beginning of a new academic calendar year brought thousands of students to or back to campus excited and eager to begin or continue their educational journey. ASU has operated as "one university in many places" (Arizona State University, n.d.-a) with campuses located in Downtown Phoenix, Northwest Phoenix, Mesa, Tempe, and Lake Havasu City. ASU's dedication to its students and communities it has served has been highlighted in the university's charter (Arizona State University, n.d.-b) developed during the administration of ASU's 16th President, Michael Crow. The charter stated,

> ASU is a comprehensive public research university, measured not by whom we
> exclude, but rather by whom we include and how they succeed; advancing
> research and discovery of public value; and assuming fundamental responsibility
> for the economic, social, cultural and overall health of the communities it serves.
> ASU's commitment to inclusion, diversity, and overall student success has set it

apart from other universities nationally and globally. President Crow instituted eight

design aspirations in 2002 when he defined ASU as a New American University. Enabling student success and the commitment to the success of each individual student (Arizona State University, n.d.-b) has served as one of the pillars for this vision.

Educational Outreach and Student Services

Educational Outreach and Student Services (EOSS), has functioned as a multi-unit department consisting of Career and Professional Development Services, Counseling Services, the Dean of Students, Student Accessibility and Inclusive Learning Services, Health Services, Housing, Student Advocacy and Assistance, Student Connection and Community, Student Rights and Responsibilities, Student Unions and Centers, Students with Families, Sun Devil Fitness, and TRIO services. These departments have served a fundamental role within the university's responsibility to ensure all students develop the Sun Devil Way (Arizona State University, n.d.-d) while at ASU. The Sun Devil Way encompassed achievement, engagement, and responsibility, which were employed to foster student development and success. Those staffing EOSS and the various departments have valued how connections, relationships, and experiences shaped individuals' academic, professional, and personal development. EOSS professional staff members (PSM), regardless of role and title have been expected to serve all students. The intentional focus on the holistic development of students supported the important concern for the development of soft skills for students.

Within these teams, students have had the opportunity to connect with professionals who were dedicated to supporting the diverse student population. EOSS provided a plethora of ways for students to involve themselves into the campus

community, including, for example, student organizations, Greek life, and/or intramural sports. Notably, obtaining an on-campus job within EOSS immediately placed students in positions that afforded growth opportunities and leadership development potential. Remarkably, ASU employs over 10,000 students on campus in various roles within its day-to-day operations (ASU, n.d.-f). Many EOSS departments have operated under a student-led, professional-staff-supported model bolstering ownership for student staff members (SSM). Although this model had the potential to assist in the development and growth of students, the student-led model only achieved these outcomes when EOSS professional employees were prepared and offered active support such as mentoring or training to student workers in their supervisory role of EOSS SSM. Unfortunately, I have witnessed high turnover rates and multidimensional work roles coupled with rapid hiring and onboarding processes that left EOSS professional employees at times struggling to fully understand and grasp their roles with respect to student development of skills that were beneficial beyond college.

ASU West Campus

Within EOSS teams across the university, I have witnessed conflicting expectations of what it meant to be a successful supervisor of SSM. The common theme of serving students and assisting them to be successful has always been present even though there were differing opinions about expectations. At the core of serving SSM was the ability to build authentic and meaningful relationships. To successfully enable SSMs' success, EOSS PSM must have been willing to develop, coach, and mentor students. The ASU West Campus was the smallest of the four ASU locations in the Phoenix

metropolitan area as reported in fall 2019 with an enrollment of 4,292 students. The ASU West campus relied on the tight knit community and depended on the work of EOSS PSM to seek out students in need. This family atmosphere should have provided the opportunity for students to build strong relationships with PSM, especially those who serve as their supervisors.

There were roughly 30 full-time professional employees within the EOSS department at ASU West. These employees serve hundreds of EOSS SSM. Within the department, the opportunity for professional development along with coaching and mentoring SSM was always present. Unfortunately, I have witnessed many situations where EOSS PSM did not fully understand their role as supervisors with respect to developing SSMs' professional skills for later use in their careers. Students, especially those who worked in EOSS, should have had the opportunity to be mentored, coached, and develop additional skills by working with their supervisors. The lack of intentional conversations about these expectations or professional development opportunities was as Rittle and Webber (1973) stated a 'wicked problem,' one that was complex and challenging. The goal of this action research study was to find innovative solutions to reframe how EOSS PSM perceived their roles and responsibilities within the university, ultimately equipping EOSS PSM to better serve SSM to develop professional skills for later use in their careers.

Problem of Practice/Issue of Concern

Student affairs/student services professionals have been tasked with supporting students' holistic development and success. The ability to create and foster connections and relationships with student employees has been an essential component of professional development. Students who have had the support and guidance of supervisors tended to have higher academic achievement, self-efficacy, and confidence (Burnside et al., 2019). EOSS PSM have had the opportunity to play a substantial role in the professional development of SSM in their local contexts. Specifically, EOSS PSM who have served in a supervisory role to SSM had the opportunity to provide professional development guidance and support on a daily basis. Although this was a possibility, many EOSS PSM across the university were not availing students of this opportunity; thus, EOSS SSM were not being fully prepared professionally for full-time employment after graduation.

The lack of emphasis on the importance of teaching transferable skills to SSM may have resulted from a lack of knowledge and understanding of PSM with respect to their roles in providing professional student development. Although it was evident these career readiness skills have been valued by employers, there was no formal training or network for PSM who supervised student employees to provide this kind of preparation for students. To better serve our students and ensure they reached their fullest potential, we must first have supported our PSM to mentor and develop SSM professionally, assisting them throughout their educational and professional journey.

Previous Cycles of Research—Reconnaissance Research and Findings

In fall 2020, I conducted a Cycle 0 action research study to obtain reconnaissance information about the overall problem of practice and research topic. During Cycle 0, I conducted three interviews with two EOSS PSM and one former SSM. The purpose of this cycle was to serve as an initial investigation into the problem and gain additional insight and support for the problem of practice. Interviews lasted between 30 and 45 minutes. Interviews were conducted and recorded electronically on the Zoom platform. Three relevant themes emerged from these interviews. First, respondents indicated there was a huge opportunity for EOSS PSM to influence and develop SSM. Second, as supervisors, they recognized they needed to build authentic relationships, so they could truly assist students on their academic and professional journeys. The third theme was the need for further professional development of professional staff who supervised students, which would provide preparation to better support the development of transferable skills among SSM. These themes from Cycle 0 provided the clarity needed to design and develop an advisable intervention.

During the spring 2021 semester, a second reconnaissance cycle for this project was conducted to gain an understanding of SSM perceptions of their supervisors' support using an electronic survey. In the first section, I collected demographic data. Then, the participants rated 16 questions about support they received to develop transferable skills using a 6-point Likert type scale from 6 = *Strongly Agree*, 5 = *Agree*, 4 = *Slightly Agree*, … and 1= *Strongly Disagree*. Finally, they provided written responses to some open-

ended items. This survey was sent to about 150 SSM on the ASU West campus and 50 responded.

Results of frequencies for the survey question "My supervisor is playing an active role in my professional development" showed two students disagreed, three slightly disagreed, four slightly agreed, 13 agreed, and 28 strongly agreed. In all, 90% of the participants indicated some level of agreement with the statement that their supervisor was playing an active role in their development. Further, SSM perceived their supervisor as playing a pivotal role in their professional development during their time within their student staff positions. Although it was evident that supervisors were playing an active role, a number of students revealed they would have liked to see additional opportunities for professional development.

Three examples have been highlighted where students would have liked additional support. A 22-year-old, female graduate student with four-plus years in her student staff member position shared, "Advocating for work that diversifies [my] resume, taking notice of duties that have been mastered and enhancing responsibilities by providing more robust/ opportunities to develop new skillsets. Assigning responsibilities that challenge and allow for growth both professionally and personal[ly]." Another 22-year-old, female senior with about 1 year of experience noted, "I think I could use a little more support professionally. More specifically, in regards to post graduate help. For example, I am still lost on a few things that I need to do for Dental school or who to contact. Or if they have connections, that would be essential to me." Finally, a 20-year-old, female senior with 3-4 years of experience wrote, "I think my supervisor does not

provide regular professional feedback. Perhaps providing monthly feedback or even regular leadership seminars could be helpful."

Intervention—A Brief Introduction

The intervention consisted of three components including (a) providing a series of workshops, (b) developing an online community of practice, and (c) coaching/mentoring of PSM designed around transferable skills to support professional employees' knowledge, skills, attitudes, and self-efficacy with respect to supporting student employees. The content of these workshops was focused on the transferable skills. The content was structured; however, the participants were actively participating in the construction of knowledge and developed a shared effort based on previous experiences and beliefs. The community of practice (Wenger, 1998) was established as a collaborative network of professionals who further supported one another throughout the intervention as they implemented these efforts with student employees. Although professional development of PSM was at the center of the intervention, the ultimate goal was to further develop SSMs' transferable skills.

Figure 1

Visual Representation of Intervention
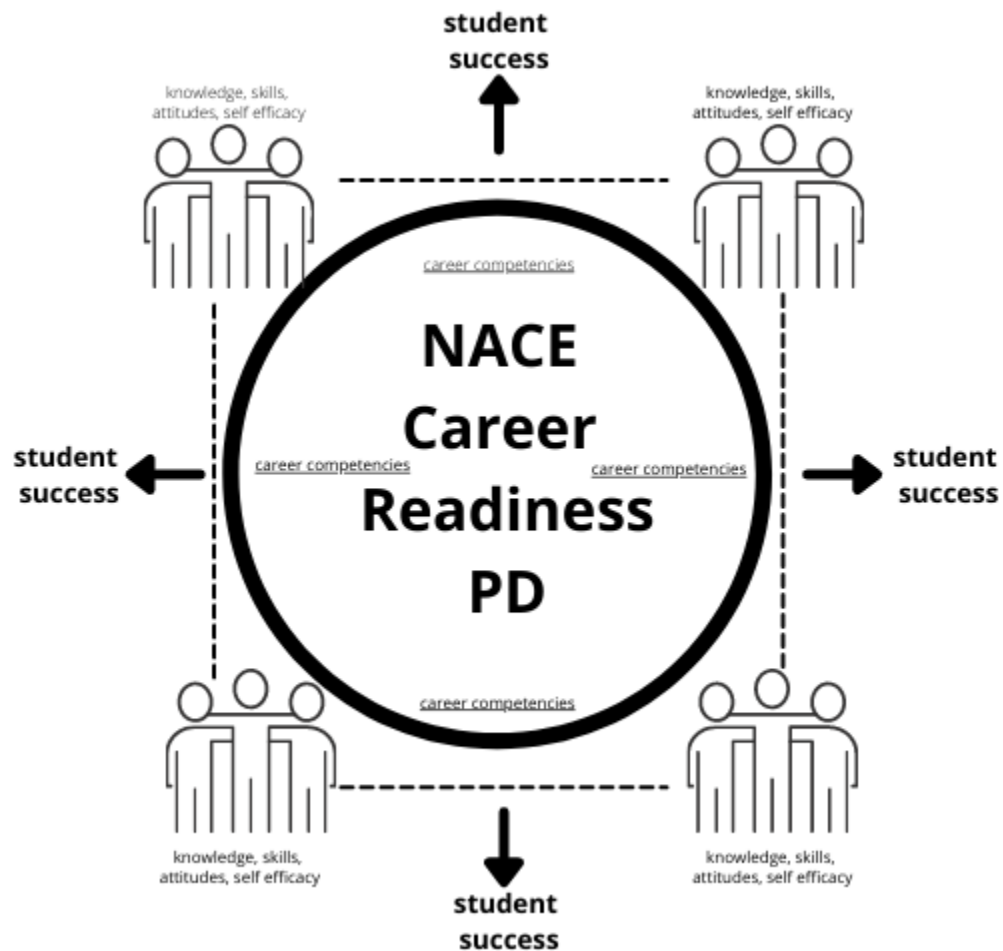
Note. This figure illustrates the professional development intervention focused on career readiness. The knowledge providing the basis of the intervention is the NACE career competencies. Three NACE career readiness competencies including communication,

teamwork, and leadership were taught to professional employees supervising SSM. Further, PSM participants formed a community of practice that focused on ensuring student success.

Purpose of Study and Research Questions

The goal of this action research study was to find solutions to reframe how PSM perceived their roles and responsibilities within the university, ultimately equipping PSM to better serve SSM to develop professional skills for later use in students' careers. Within that overall goal, the purpose of this mixed methods action research study was to (a) analyze the participation of professional employees in a series of professional development workshops and a community of practice (Wegner, 1998) focused on teaching career readiness/transferable skills and (b) understand how implementation of this approach influenced participants' perceptions of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and self-efficacy towards fostering career readiness/transferable skills among SSM. Ultimately, by conducting this work, I expected to additionally support students during their educational journey by intentionally preparing individuals with professional skills for use in their careers after graduation. The following research questions guided the conduct of the study.

> RQ 1: How and to what extent do a series of workshops, coaching, and a community of practice influence EOSS professional staff member participants' perceptions of (a) knowledge and (b) skills to provide transferable skills to student staff members?

RQ 2: How and to what extent do a series of workshops, coaching, and community of practice influence EOSS professional staff member participants' perceptions of (c) attitudes and (d) self-efficacy toward fostering transferable skills?

RQ 3: How and to what extent does EOSS professional staff member participation in workshops, coaching, and community of practice influence student staff members' perceptions of (a) transferable skills and (b) connections to their work?

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES AND RESEARCH GUIDING THE PROJECT

We're here for a reason. I believe a bit of the reason is to throw little torches out

to lead people through the dark.

—Whoopi Goldberg

In this chapter, I have introduced and provided an overview of the theoretical

perspectives and research guiding this project. Initially, I described the National

Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) career readiness and competency skills

along with the benefits of on-campus employment and professional development in

higher education. Next, I have offered a brief introduction to constructivism including the

research on social constructivism and Piaget. Following this, I outlined Vygotsky's

Sociocultural Learning Theory and the importance of scaffolding. Then, I have offered a

brief review of Albert Bandura's work on self-efficacy. Additionally, I have provided an

overview of the GROW theory for coaching and mentoring along with a discussion of

communities of practice. These theoretical perspectives and areas of research have

informed this project in terms of helping me to understand my problem of practice or the

intervention. I concluded with implications for the dissertation.

Current State of Affairs with Respect to Student Employment

In December 2018, the United States Department of Education released a short

report entitled *Rethinking higher education* (U.S Department of Education, 2018).

According to this report, higher education institutions as a whole were not successfully

preparing students for professional careers following graduation. "Despite the

overwhelming emphasis that the United States has placed on a traditional four-year college degree, the return on investment of such degrees has been shrinking since the 1970's" (U.S Department of Education, 2018, p. 1). This was evident in increased student loan debt, the development of fewer skills within degree programs, and overlooking the rigor required for professional careers. According to the U.S. Department of Education (2018), higher education institutions were not empowering students to become career ready, which led to a generation of graduates who were entering the workforce underprepared.

On-campus employment for students has the potential of connecting students to valuable resources, departments, and higher education professionals, while also providing professional development opportunities for developing career skills. Burnside et al. (2019) in partnership with the Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education, NASPA, released a comprehensive analysis of on-campus student employment. The authors described the benefits of student employment and the opportunities that became available when students immersed themselves in a campus community. One important benefit derived from student employment was professional development and preparation for subsequent employment. NACE (n.d.) defined career readiness as a set of core competencies that prepared college graduates for professional success within their chosen career fields. Burnside et al. (2019) shared that on-campus employers and professional supervisors had the ability to ensure students were graduating with appropriate career-ready abilities.

Although professional development or talent development has been a priority in higher education institutions for those in faculty positions (Khalid, 2018), much less consideration has been devoted to professional development for student services/affairs in higher education institutions. According to Khalid, professional development has assisted in retaining professionals *and* ensured that organizational needs were met by conducting individual development to ensure successful organizational performance. NASPA has served as the guiding organization for student services/affairs professionals in the United States. As a collective group, student services/affairs professionals had the responsibility to ensure students were supported and prepared for personal and professional life following graduation.

NACE Career Competencies

As an organization, NACE (n.d.) defined career readiness as "a foundation from which to demonstrate requisite core competencies that broadly prepare the college educated for success in the workplace and lifelong career management" (para. 1). Within career readiness, NACE (2021) identified eight specific competencies, which colleges and employers agreed graduates should have developed throughout their academic journey. The eight career competencies included:

- career and self-development
- communication
- critical thinking
- equity and inclusion
- leadership

- professionalism

- teamwork

- technology

These eight career competencies along with their attendant skills and behaviors were considered to be valuable skills for graduates in any professional setting and have been presented in Table 1 on the next page. Additionally, student services/affairs professionals should have been aware of and incorporated these competencies into their professional development toolkit for their student employees. Unfortunately, in my professional experience, NACE career readiness and the corresponding career competencies were rarely discussed as a vital component of student success.

Table 1

Outline of NACE Career Competencies

Competency	Related Skills/Behaviors
Career and Self-Development: proactively develop oneself and one's career through continual personal and professional learning, awareness one one's strengths and weaknesses, navigation of career opportunities, and networking to build relationships within and without one's organization.	a) Show an awareness of own strengths and areas for development. b) Identify areas for continual growth while pursuing and applying feedback. c) Develop plans and goals for one's future career. d) Professionally advocate for oneself and others. e) Display curiosity; seek out opportunities to learn. f) Assume duties or positions that will help one progress professionally. g) Establish, maintain, and/or leverage relationships with people who can help one professionally. h) Seek and embrace development opportunities.

<table>
<tr><td></td><td>i) Voluntarily participate in further education, training, or other events to support one's career.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Communication: clearly and effectively exchange information, ideas, facts, and perspectives with persons inside and outside of an organization.</td><td>a) Understand the importance of and demonstrate verbal, written, and non-verbal/body language, abilities.
b) Employ active listening, persuasion, and influencing skills.
c) Communicate in a clear and organized manner so that others can effectively understand.
d) Frame communication with respect to diversity of learning styles, varied individual communication abilities, and cultural differences.
e) Ask appropriate questions for specific information from supervisors, specialists, and others.
f) Promptly inform relevant others when needing guidance with assigned tasks.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Critical Thinking: identity and respond to needs based upon an understanding of situational context and logical analysis of relevant information.</td><td>a) Make decisions and solve problems using sound, inclusive reasoning and judgment.
b) Gather and analyze information from a diverse set of sources and individuals to fully understand a problem.
c) Proactively anticipate needs and prioritize action steps.
d) Accurately summarize and interpret data with an awareness of personal biases that may impact outcomes.
e) Effectively communicate actions and rationale, recognizing the diverse perspectives and lived experiences of stakeholders.
f) Multi-task well in a fast-paced environment.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Equity and Inclusion: demonstrate the awareness, attitude, knowledge, and skills required to equitably engage and include</td><td>a) Solicit and use feedback from multiple cultural perspectives to make inclusive and equity-minded decisions.</td></tr>
</table>

people from different local and global cultures. Engage in anti-racist practices that actively challenge the systems, structures, and policies of racism.

b) Actively contribute to inclusive and equitable practices that influence individual and systemic change.
c) Advocate for inclusion, equitable practices, justice, and empowerment for historically marginalized communities.
d) Seek global cross-cultural interactions and experiences that enhance one's understanding of people from different demographic groups and that leads to personal growth.
e) Keep an open mind to diverse ideas and new ways of thinking.
f) Identify resources and eliminate barriers resulting from individual and systemic racism, inequities, and biases.
g) Demonstrate flexibility by adapting to diverse environments.
h) Address systems of privilege that limit opportunities for members of historically marginalized communities.

Leadership: recognize and capitalize on personal and team strengths to achieve organizational goals.

a) Inspire, persuade, and motivate self and others under a shared vision.
b) Seek out and leverage diverse resources and feedback from others to inform direction.
c) Use innovative thinking to go beyond traditional methods.
d) Serve as a role model to others by approaching tasks with confidence and a positive attitude.
e) Motivate and inspire others by encouraging them and by building mutual trust.
f) Plan, initiate, manage, complete, and evaluate projects.

Professionalism: knowing work environments differ greatly, understand and demonstrate effective work habits,

a) Act equitably with integrity and accountability to self, others, and the organization.

and act in the interest of the larger community and workplace.

b) Maintain a positive personal brand in alignment with organization and personal career values.
c) Be present and prepared.
d) Demonstrate dependability (e.g., report consistently for work or meetings).
e) Prioritize and complete tasks to accomplish organizational goals.
f) Consistently meet or exceed goals and expectations.
g) Have an attention to detail, resulting in few if any errors in their work.
h) Show a high level of dedication toward doing a good job.

Teamwork: build and maintain collaborative relationships to work effectively toward common goals, while appreciating diverse viewpoints and shared responsibilities.

a) Listen carefully to others, taking time to understand and ask appropriate questions without interrupting.
b) Effectively manage conflict, interact with and respect diverse personalities, and meet ambiguity with resilience.
c) Be accountable for individual and team responsibilities and deliverables.
d) Employ personal strengths, knowledge, and talents to complement those of others.
e) Exercise the ability to compromise and be agile.
f) Collaborate with others to achieve common goals.
g) Build strong, positive working relationships with supervisor and team members/coworkers.

Technology: understand and leverage technologies ethically to enhance efficiencies, complete tasks, and accomplish goals.	a) Navigate change and be open to learning new technologies. b) Use technology to improve efficiency and productivity of their work. c) Identify appropriate technology for completing specific tasks. d) Manage technology to integrate information to support relevant, effective, and timely decision-making. e) Quickly adapt to new or unfamiliar technologies. f) Manipulate information, construct ideas, and use technology to achieve strategic goals.

Note. - This table was adapted from *Career readiness competencies for a career-ready workforce*, by National Association of Colleges and Employers (2021). All definitions were verbatim; by comparison skills/behaviors were adapted.

For this dissertation, the focus of this action research project will be on three of the career competencies. Communication, leadership, and teamwork were selected as the areas of focus for the intervention. These were chosen for several reasons. First, the three selected career competencies were more concrete compared to others, which were viewed more general and broader in scope. Second, the three were chosen because they were more easily developed for the intervention and more likely to be used by PSM as they worked with SSM. Moreover, Career and Professional Development Services (CPDS) at ASU has considered these as essential competencies, which employers expected students to have mastered and for which students were to provide examples of how they demonstrated them in a professional work environment. Further, ASU has recognized the importance of such skills when students accepted student staff positions within the

University. Specifically, ASU Student Employment (ASU, n.d. g) stated, "Student jobs are more than just a paycheck … The skills you obtain from working complement your academic performance and communicate to future employers your ability to succeed in a professional setting" (para. 1). Thus, students had opportunities to enhance their fundamental work skills, which would also be beneficial as they moved into employment settings.

Implications Based on the NACE Career Competencies

The NACE career competencies offer clear guidance for developing appropriate, transferable skills for college students. Notably, the NACE career competencies direct the intervention and serve as foundational information for it. Due to time and content constraints, I selected three NACE career competencies—communication, leadership, and teamwork, which serve as the focus of the intervention. These three specific competencies and the related skills associated with each guide development of the instructional component in the professional development workshops associated with this study.

Constructivism

As a theoretical perspective, constructivism has served as a powerful paradigm enabling researchers to consider and explain how knowledge was created. Coghlan & Brydon-Miller (2014), Given (2014), and Mertens (2015) suggested individuals' perceptions of reality were socially constructed. Further, individuals may have constructed their own unique perspectives, which represented similar, but multiple realities. Within constructivism, individuals discovered and defined the world as they

moved through it and knowledge was built in part on interactions with the environment. Moreover, development of knowledge depended on relationships with others individually and within communities, so individuals also interacted to construct their understandings. Notably, knowledge belonged to the specific community but also was unique to individuals within the group.

Some of the early proponents of constructivism included Edmund Husserl, Max Weber, and Jean Piaget. Piaget's work was focused on how learning occurred naturally through individuals' interactions with the environment. Understanding was developed through interactions between the individual and the environment where knowledge was co-created.

Social constructivism, a branch of constructivism, was focused on how individuals worked together to construct knowledge within their social worlds and environments. Each individual has developed unique perspectives because of the situations, environments, and individuals with whom they were connected. Given (2014) and Coghlan and Brydon-Miller (2014) provided further clarification when they explained how all knowledge was influenced by politics, values, ideology, religious beliefs, language, and so on. Individuals' understandings have been viewed as resulting from the social environment in which they were involved, which played an important role in the development of their "truths." Taken together, the creation of individual knowledge resulted from active and ongoing processes between individuals and their social environments.

Implications Based on Constructivism

Throughout the intervention, individuals and the collective group share, acquire, and build knowledge about the NACE career competencies and how to implement those competencies with students who work in student services. Notably, individuals build this knowledge based on their own experiences and consideration of their contextual settings.

Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory

Lev Vygotsky, a Soviet psychologist whose work has gained increasing recognition, has become most well-known for his sociocultural theory and its contributions to the fields of education. The core of sociocultural theory was focused on how interactions with others influenced cognitive and knowledge development. Notably, according to Vygotsky (1978), the acquisition of knowledge resulted from shared experiences in social and cultural contexts. Further, individuals within communities have played an active role in shaping their understanding based on context. Finally, development of knowledge was dependent on language, and language and knowledge mutually influenced each other throughout the process.

Dialogue and Scaffolding

In his important book on learning and development, Vygotsky (1978) discussed the important role of dialogue. Within a social context, collaborative dialogue was an essential component for optimal development. With the assistance of a skillful tutor, mentor, or more experienced individual, both dialogue and modeling behaviors promoted enhanced learning opportunities leading to development, the sociocultural theory (SCT). As learners became more competent and comfortable, teachers have stepped back in their

roles to allow learners more control of the situations. Initially, learners depended on the external input from more knowledgeable others and as they began to absorb and understand the new knowledge, they internalized that information.

Although Vygotsky (1978) never used the terms, scaffolding and apprenticeship referred to individuals' abilities to develop knowledge and skills with the support of an advanced peer, mentor, or teacher by structuring or arranging tasks that were accomplished based on individuals' current ability levels. This model relied heavily on verbal instruction *and* on the teachers' or mentors' abilities to recognize and understand where learners were in terms of their own development.

Zone of Proximal Development

An important tenet of SCT was Vygotsky's notion of the zone of proximal development (ZPD). The ZPD was defined as "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem-solving under adult guidance, or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86). This key tenet underlying SCT and supporting individuals' development highlighted the fact that individuals were able to attain higher levels of development and accomplishment with guidance and support from those who were more capable.

Implications Based on Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory

Throughout the intervention process, participants actively learn and acquire new knowledge and information. SCT suggests cooperative and collaborative dialogue afford new opportunities for learning among the group. Additionally, as PSM work with

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students they capitalize on scaffolding to ensure that students are being provided with opportunities based on their current skill and ability levels. The goal is to ensure that students are challenged in their own zones of proximal development transitioning from what can be done without guidance to what can be done with guidance to move their development of transferable skills forward.

Bandura's Self-Efficacy Framework

Albert Bandura (1997) defined self-efficacy as "beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments" (p. 3). Bandura theorized that self-efficacy informed individuals' abilities to control their thoughts, actions, and other events in their lives. In turn, this ability influenced the amount of motivation and effort devoted to accomplish a task/action. Bandura (1997) and Bandura et al (1977) claimed self-efficacy was influenced by information coming from four sources: performance accomplishments also known as mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and emotional arousal.

Performance Accomplishments and Vicarious Experiences

Performance accomplishments and vicarious experiences had the most relevance to this research study and I have reviewed them here. Bandura (1997) and Bandura et al. (1977) noted successful performance accomplishments increased self-efficacy and expectations for success in the future whereas repeated failures decreased self-efficacy and expectations about future accomplishments. Creating opportunities for early successes has been shown to be vital for increasing individual self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997). These performance accomplishments and mastery experience opportunities have

been shown to be influenced by the difficulty of the task, the amount of energy expended on the task, situational support factors, and the pattern and rate of success associated with the task (Bandura, 1997). Along with performance accomplishments, vicarious experiences where individuals were able to observe others succeeding in the task increased individuals' ability to anticipate themselves succeeding as well. Such an approach has created opportunities for individuals to observe modeling of the behavior and replicate it by imitating those actions in their own environments.

Implications Based on Bandura's Self-Efficacy Framework

One of my aspirations for this mixed methods action research (MMAR) project was to influence PSM self-efficacy for teaching the NACE career competencies. During the initial stages of the intervention, I provide opportunities for PSM to observe via modeling and practice skills through role modeling the skills necessary for teaching the NACE transferable skills to students. Additionally, staff member participants learn how to provide opportunities to foster 'early wins' among their student mentees through tasks that are readily accomplished, which supports transferable skill development among student staff member participants.

Whitmore's GROW Coaching Model

Sir John Whitmore first developed and unveiled the GROW coaching model in 1992 in his book *Coaching for performance.* Over the past 30 years, Whitmore's coaching framework has become a globally recognized model for problem solving, goal setting, and performance improvement (Performance Consultants, n.d.). Whitmore (2017)

released a 25th anniversary edition which marked the fifth edition of his GROW

coaching model book.

The GROW model has received wide acceptance because of its direct approach,

easily identifiable and meaningful acronym, and well-developed guiding questions that

have led to organizational and individual professional development across disciplines. G

signified "goal," which has been defined by "what do you want" or "what does your

organization want." R indicated "reality" and meant "where are you currently" or "what

is your current position." O denoted "options" and asked individuals to reflect on "what

could be done." W suggested "will" and was viewed as "what will you do?" This model

served as the coaching and mentoring foundation for the intervention. Additionally, the

questions presented below in the table assisted in the development of the first module that

was focused on orientation to the work and team building. See Table 3 on the GROW

model on the next page.

Table 2

Outline of the GROW Coaching Questions

GROW Acronym	Related Questions
G(oal)	j) What would you like to work on? k) What would you like to have after answering this set of questions (i.e., a first step/strategy/solution)? l) What is your goal related to this issue? m) When are you going to achieve it? n) What are the benefits for you in achieving this goal
R(eality)	g) Who else will benefit and in what

		way?
		h) What will it be like if you achieve your goal?
		i) What will you see/hear/feel?
		j) What is the real issue?
		k) What action have you taken so far?
		l) What is moving you towards your goal?
		m) What is getting in the way?
O(ptions)		g) What different kinds of options do you have to achieve your goal?
		h) What else could you do?
		i) What would you say to somebody else with the same goal?
		j) What are the principal advantages and disadvantages of each option?
		k) Which options will you choose to act upon?
W(ill)		i) When are you going to start each action?
		j) What could anyone else do to give you support and when will you ask for it?
		k) How committed are you, on a scale of 1–10, to taking each of these actions?
		l) If it is not a 10, what would make it a 10?
		m) What will you commit to doing?

Note. This table was adapted from "Self-Coaching using the GROW Model: Worksheet" by Performance Consultants. All questions were copied verbatim.

Implications Based on Whitmore's GROW Coaching Model

The GROW coaching model serves as the model for my coaching and mentoring approach throughout the intervention process. "G" (goal) l stands for our ultimate goal of both increasing staff members' knowledge, skills, attitudes, and self-efficacy towards

teaching career competencies skills, but also to further students' successes in developing these skills. "R" (reality) represents our current organization's position and allows staff member participants to reflect our current positions. "O" (options) provides the opportunity for staff member participants to reflect on the different options available and how the intervention materials serve as an added resource for their toolkit. "W" (will) serves as a constant reminder throughout the intervention about the choices we as student services professionals have and our opportunity to influence, develop, and professionally prepare students for professional careers following graduation.

Wenger's Communities of Practice Framework

Wenger (1998) described communities of practice (CoP) in *Communities of practice: Learning, meaning, and identity*. Wenger defined CoP as a group of people who shared a common interest dedicated to learning and contributing to their community through shared experiences and mutual learning. Wenger et al. (2002) indicated three main components were associated with CoPs including the (a) domain (b) practice, and (c) community. Each of these components served an important role.

More specifically, Wenger et al. (2002) indicated the three main components were, "a *domain* of knowledge, which defines a set of issues; a *community* of people who care about this domain; and the shared *practice* that they are developing to be effective in the domain" (p. 27, italics in original). Wenger et al. (2002) maintained the *domain* created a mutual space allowing "members to contribute and participate, guide their learning, and [give] meaning to their actions" (p. 27-28). These common interests within the domain afforded community participants opportunities to hold thoughtful discussions

as they collaborated on relevant topics (Wenger, 1999). For this study, the domain consisted of knowledge about the three transferable skills and teaching those skills to students.

With regard to community, Wenger et al. (2002) noted, "The community creates the social fabric of learning. A strong community fosters interactions and relationships based on mutual respect and trust" (p. 28). The community afforded opportunities to build relationships, work together, and learn from each other. By comparison, "The *practice* is a set of frameworks, ideas, tools, information, styles, language, stories, and documents that community members share. … the domain denotes the topic… [however] the practice is the specific knowledge the community develops, shares, and maintains" (Wenger et al., 2002, p. 29, italics in original). The practice part of the CoP included information, procedures, and so on relevant to teaching the transferable skills and mentoring the student staff members (SSM). Notably, CoP members worked together and devised a shared practice by drawing on each other's experiences.

In recent years, Wenger and his colleagues (2009) have revisited CoPs, specifically by employing technological advancements through which online CoP have been developed. Online communities of practice (OCoP) emerged as a new form of CoPs usually being conducted on an internet-based platform. These platforms have allowed CoPs to move forward by providing environments that were always available. The engagement and participation within OCoP afforded a more convenient, collaborative learning environment where participants did not have to interact in a face-to-face setting to obtain the benefits associated with traditional CoPs. By capitalizing on the use of

OCoP, participants have attained added conveniences while still achieving the benefits of CoP.

Implications Based on Wenger's CoP Framework

Although the workshop portions of the intervention are offered five times over the course of 15-week intervention, the OCoP serves as a continuously available resource for staff member participants throughout the research process. This online network among participants provides a place where individuals can virtually gather, collaborate, and obtain additional information and resources, collectively.

Implications for the Dissertation Study

The table below highlights the key theoretical perspectives and research guiding this MMAR project and the corresponding implications for each. This table is a reinforcement of the main purposes each plays in the larger vision of the work related to this dissertation.

Table 3

Comprehensive Table of Theoretical Perspectives and Corresponding Implications

Theoretical Perspective or Area of Research	Implication(s)
NACE Career Competencies	- NACE transferable skills serve as the intervention's educational foundation. - The communication, leadership, and teamwork career competencies serve as the core content for the five workshops as part of the intervention.
Constructivism	Constructivism serves as the guiding paradigm of the acquisition and development of knowledge.

Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory	● Sociocultural theory offers as a complementary tool which capitalizes on dialogue and scaffolding during the dissertation work.
Bandura's Self-Efficacy	● The ultimate goal of this project is to increase professional staff members' (PSM) self-efficacy associated with teaching the NACE career competencies.
Whitmore's GROW Coaching Model	● The GROW model serves as the model for my coaching approach throughout the intervention.
Wenger's Communities of Practice	● The OCoP serves as a place to gather virtually and collaborate with the other participants to form a network and community. The OCoP provides an additional resource and offers ongoing support for the PSM participants during the intervention.

CHAPTER 3

METHOD

Education is the kindling of a flame, not the filling of a vessel.

—Socrates

In this chapter, I have begun with a brief discussion of action research including a presentation of mixed methods action research and its use in the study. Then, I provided a description of the research setting followed by a short narrative discussing the participants in this action research project. I also discussed my role as a researcher in the study and how that relates to the larger problem of practice. Then, I provided a detailed description of the intervention, instruments, and data sources for the study. Finally, I concluded the chapter with a written and visual representation of the procedures that were followed.

Action Research and Mixed Methods Action Research

According to Mertler (2020), action research was a systematic inquiry conducted in the educational setting by educational professionals to benefit their local academic community. Four steps constituted the action research process including (a) planning, (b) acting, (c) collecting and analyzing data, and (d) reflecting on the outcomes. In the first step, planning consisted of identifying a specific topic, gathering information about that topic, reviewing corresponding literature, and developing a research approach. The practitioner entered the acting stage, the second step, as they implemented the plan. In the third step, data were collected and analyzed. The reflecting stage was last; in it the researcher was able to reflect on the entire process, prepare for next steps, and share and

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communicate results. Bradbury et al. (2019) claimed action research relied on individuals within a local context to understand deep, complex, multifaceted problems and to develop creative and innovative solutions based on experiences in local settings. This action research professional development project was a cumulation of the previous cycles of planning, acting, gathering data, and reflecting. Ivankova (2015) defined mixed methods action research (MMAR) by referencing Greene's (2007) work when she stated,

> mixed methods is a form of inquiry that "actively invites us to participate in dialogue about multiple ways of seeing and hearing, multiple ways of making sense of the social world, and multiple standpoints on what is important and to be valued and cherished." (p. 5)

In MMAR, researchers have collected and analyzed quantitative and qualitative data. By using both qualitative and quantitative data, researchers were able to gain breadth and depth of knowledge capitalizing on the strengths of both approaches. By gathering a combination of qualitative and quantitative data along and using multiple data sources, researchers were able to enhance the credibility of the data through triangulation. Ivankova (2015) shared how triangulation was a "combination of multiple data sources [which] enhances the credibility of research findings, and results in developing more feasible and more reliable action plans" (p. 46).

In this MMAR project, I used a concurrent MMAR research approach where both qualitative and quantitative data were simultaneously collected. Both data sets were equally weighted. The data were collected and analyzed separately; however, both

qualitative and quantitative data were merged and integrated to provide a more holistic picture of the findings.

Setting

This MMAR study took place within Educational Outreach and Student Services (EOSS) at Arizona State University's (ASU) West campus located in Phoenix, Arizona. EOSS served the uniquely diverse student body at ASU through various departments focused on the holistic success of students. Many of these departments were led by student staff members (SSM) who were supported in their efforts by professional staff members (PSM). This afforded the opportunity for SSM to develop professionally, if they were assisted by PSM. The added value of having a part-time, on-campus job was that students were surrounded by higher education professionals who were there to serve students and who offered additional support to develop non-academic skills in students.

Participants

Participants in this study included six, full-time PSM within EOSS and six SSM. Nevertheless, only four SSM completed both surveys and interviews. See Chapter 4 for details. Participants were specifically targeted based on the number of SSMs they supervised along with the nature of their work. I personally reached out to all potential PSM participants individually and ensured that each participant was willing to fully invest and participate in the study. Additionally, there were four SSM participants who were supervised by the PSM participants. These students were purposefully selected to participate in the study. Each PSM participant was asked to provide the name(s) of one to two SSM whom they supervised and whom they mentored to be surveyed and

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interviewed. Throughout the course of the intervention the PSM purposefully and intentionally were tasked to mentor these specific SSM in communication, teamwork, and leadership transferable skills.

Role of the Researcher

My role as a researcher included serving as facilitator, observer, and coach/mentor.   I served as the facilitator of the intervention by providing content and information to PSM participants. This allowed me to carefully co-create and communicate all workshop content to the participants and control the implementation of the intervention. Additionally, I observed throughout the intervention process and adapted to the situation as warranted. My flexibility as a coach/mentor allowed me to concentrate efforts on those participants who were not fully engaging or participating in the process. Along with observations within the workshops, I monitored and observed the OCoP that used SLACK, an online digital messaging platform that served as a connection point for PSM participants throughout the intervention process to provide support to them as they conducted their mentoring efforts with SSM. In another role, I served as a coach/mentor for PSM participants. I served as a resource throughout the intervention as I shared knowledge, skills, and modeled coaching behaviors for PSM participants. Finally, I developed the survey instruments and interview questions; gathered data through field notes, surveys, and interviews; and conducted qualitative and quantitative analyses.

Intervention

The intervention consisted of a multi-faceted and multi-dimensional approach to professional development for full-time PSM with the ultimate goal of further supporting

and developing SSMs' transferable skills. The core component of the intervention was a five-part professional development workshop focusing on three of the eight NACE career readiness competencies, transferable skills. In addition to the workshops, I also led and supported an OCoP and coached PSM during the intervention.

The workshop sessions portion of the intervention was focused on three transferable skills—communication, teamwork, and leadership, which were provided between an introductory workshop and a concluding workshop. The workshops were held in-person on the ASU West campus every other week for eight weeks with the final concluding workshop being held on week 12. The workshop sessions were approximately 30 minutes in length and were used to provide knowledge and skills to the participants about transferable skills. The goal was that PSM participants would subsequently employ these resources in their own workplace settings to develop skills among their SSM. For example, following Workshop 2 on communication, PSM participants were expected to work with their students to develop students' communication skills, which could be used following graduation by students in new job settings. The content and nature of the workshops has been described in the next sections.

Workshop 1

In workshop 1, I introduced the intervention, discussed expectations of participants, and provided the schedule for the semester. This workshop primarily serves as an opportunity to build trust and comradery among PSM participants along with setting goals and conveying the purpose of the intervention. I conducted a brief teambuilding activity for the participants along with an introduction to NACE, career

readiness, career competencies, and the three transferable skills that were the primary focus for the intervention. This workshop ended with participants sharing about their general knowledge and experiences related to transferable skills and I answered any questions the participants had.

Workshop 2

In the second workshop, I focused on the transferable skill, communication. The communication transferable skill was defined by NACE (2021) as one's ability to clearly and effectively exchange information, ideas, facts, and perspectives with persons inside and outside an organization. In addition to understanding this definition, participants learned or expanded several skills associated with this specific transferable skill. Examples of these skills included understanding the importance of and demonstrating verbal, written, and non-verbal body language, and the ability to promptly inform relevant others when needing guidance with assigned tasks. There was an open dialogue and discussion about these specific skills and how we as PSM could best develop communication skills among SSM. Following this conversation there was a brief interactive activity where participants tried out their knowledge and skills associated with the communication transferable skill. The workshop ended with a brief 'takeaway' conversation and each participant was provided a one-page document with key highlights from the workshop.

Workshop 3

In the third workshop, I focused on the transferable skill, teamwork. Being able to work as a member of a team was defined by NACE (2021) as one's ability to build and

maintain collaborative relationships to work effectively toward common goals, while appreciating diverse viewpoints and shared responsibilities. Along with this definition the participants learned or expanded their skills associated with this specific transferable skill. Examples of these skills included collaborating with others to achieve a common goal, and being accountable for individual and team responsibilities and deliverables. There was an open dialogue and discussion about this specific skill and how PSM could best develop teamwork skills among SSM. Following this conversation there was a brief interactive activity where participants tried out their knowledge and skills associated with the teamwork transferable skill. The workshop ended with a brief 'takeaway' conversation and each participant was provided a one-page document with key highlights from the workshop.

Workshop 4

In the fourth workshop, I focused on the final transferable skill in the intervention, leadership. Leadership was defined by NACE (2021) as one's ability to recognize and capitalize on personal and team strengths to achieve organizational goals. Along with this definition participants learned or expanded their skills associated with this specific transferable skill. Examples of these skills included serving as a role model to others by approaching tasks with confidence, demonstrating a positive attitude, and motivating and inspiring others by encouraging them, and building mutual trust. There was an open dialogue and discussion about these specific skills and how PSM could best develop leadership skills among SSM. Following this conversation there was a brief interactive activity where participants tried out their knowledge and skills associated with the

leadership transferable skill. The workshop ended with a brief 'takeaway' conversation and each participant was provided a one-page document with key highlights from the workshop.

Workshop 5

Workshop 5 served as a final wrap up and conclusion to the formal intervention. This workshop provided an opportunity to thank each individual for their participation in the process. Additionally, this time allowed for reflection, and the sharing of stories and overall experiences while they participated in the project.

Online Community of Practice (OCoP)

Additionally, throughout the intervention an online Community of Practice (OCoP) was available to PSM participants through SLACK. This part of the intervention afforded PSM participants a point of connection and provided a community between workshops to support participants as they implemented the three transferable skills with their SSM mentees. I also provided additional resources on the platform weekly and stimulated conversation among the participants by posting provocative questions or prompts.

Coaching of PSM during the Intervention

I also served as a coach and mentor to the PSM participants to provide additional resources and support as participants implemented their new understandings with their student charges. In this portion of the intervention, I met individually with participants on a bi-weekly basis and provides support and strategies for implementing the three career strategies with their SSM. The entire intervention was focused on development of

community and knowledge with the ultimate goal of better serving and preparing SSM

for professional success after graduation by affording opportunities for SSM to develop

the three transferable skills—communication, teamwork, and leadership.

Instruments and Data Sources

The following research questions guided the study.

RQ 1: How and to what extent do a series of workshops, coaching, and a

community of practice influence EOSS professional staff member participants'

perceptions of (a) knowledge and (b) skills to provide transferable skills to student

staff members?

RQ 2: How and to what extent do a series of workshops, coaching, and

community of practice influence EOSS professional staff member participants'

perceptions of (c) attitudes and (d) self-efficacy toward fostering transferable

skills?

RQ 3: How and to what extent does EOSS professional staff member participation

in workshops, coaching, and community of practice influence student staff

members' perceptions of (a) transferable skills and (b) connections to their work?

Notably, instruments and data sources were used to obtain in-depth knowledge to aid in

answering the research questions. Moreover, I used multiple data sources to triangulate

the findings.

Quantitative Data

Quantitative data were collected from PSM and SSM participants using two

surveys, a post-intervention survey and a retrospective, pre-intervention survey. The post-

intervention survey was completed immediately following the conclusion of the intervention. The retrospective, pre-intervention survey was administered one week following the conclusion of the intervention and asked participants to think back and consider their perspectives "prior to participating in this project." These surveys were constructed using 6-point Likert scales with responses ranging from 6 = *Strongly Agree*, 5 = *Agree*, 4 = *Slightly Agree*, … to 1 = *Strongly Disagree*. The PSM surveys assessed PSMs' participant perceptions of their knowledge and skills for providing the three transferable skills to students; and their attitudes and self-efficacy about fostering transferable skills in SSM; and demographic data. The SSM surveys assessed students' perspectives of each of the transferable skill along with students' overall connection to work. Examples of items from the PSM post-intervention survey included, "I have a sound awareness of transferable skills;" "I have the aptitude to provide transferable skills;" and "I am confident I can teach transferable skills." See Appendix D for the complete survey. Moreover, examples of items from the SSM post-intervention survey included, "As I communicate, I adjust my communication style to accommodate others' needs;" and "As opportunities present themselves, I take a leadership role;" and "I have developed good relationships with others at work allowing me to connect with them." See Appendix H for the complete survey. A full list of the PSM and SSM post-intervention and retrospective, pre-intervention surveys have been provided in Appendices D and E, and Appendices H and I, respectively. Both surveys were administered using Qualtrics.

Qualitative Data

Qualitative data were collected in several ways throughout the intervention process. An initial source of qualitative data was postings from the Online Community of Practice (OCoP). The OCoP was conducted using SLACK and after the completion of the intervention, I downloaded the entire conversation participants had on the online messaging board. Additionally, participants posted entries to a journal as they responded to bi-weekly reflection prompts using a Google form sent out on the SLACK channel. Participants were prompted with the same questions every two weeks. Examples of these items included, "Over the last two weeks, how did the workshops, Online Community of Practice, and coaching benefit you, as you supervised student staff members in your department or in other work;" and "How did you incorporate the content from the workshops or Online Community of Practice into your work supervising student staff members or in other ways." See Appendix C for the complete list of items. After the last reflection was completed, these responses were downloaded to HyperRESEARCH. Additionally, two sets of interviews were conducted following the intervention. First, six PSM participants were interviewed to gain insight into the overall experience and obtain a deep and broad understanding of the participants' experiences serving as mentors to their students. Examples of items from the PSM interview included, "Tell me about your understanding of the transferable skills we worked on this semester;" and "What skills/abilities do you feel you have to teach transferable skills to student staff members." See Appendix B for the complete set of interview questions. Second, I conducted four interviews with SSM whom PSM participants mentored in their local context. These

students were nominated by the PSM participants as individuals with whom they implemented the content of the intervention to determine how students' transfer skills developed because of their interaction with PSM participant mentors. Examples of items from the SSM interview included, "Tell me about your teamwork skills;" and "To what extent were these skills preparing you for professional employment following graduation." See Appendix G for the complete set of interview questions. Finally, I recorded notes in a researcher journal, which served as a point of reference throughout the research process.

Procedure

During the fall 2022 academic semester, I conducted a 12-week intervention that began in late August. In the initial step of the intervention, I introduced the intervention by providing a schedule to the participants and opening the OCoP SLACK channel. This process was conducted simultaneously. An email notification was sent to all participants providing instructions to check the SLACK channel. This initial message served as a welcome and introduction into the next several weeks. The first of five, 30-minute workshop sessions was offered the following week. This initial session was focused on a holistic overview of NACE career readiness, all eight related career competencies, and an introduction to the three transferable skills that were the focus of this study. Additionally, the first session included a teambuilding component to serve as a general way to connect and an opportunity to build rapport among the group along with goal setting.

Over the course of the next eight weeks, the following activities were conducted. Three workshops were conducted. Each one focused on one transferable skill as

described in an earlier section. These workshops were focused on communication followed by teamwork and then leadership. Each session was approximately 30 minutes in length and was interactive focusing on high levels of engagement among the participants. Between each workshop, PSM participants were asked to engage in the OCoP where they were provided additional information and resources based on the specific transferable skill presented in the previous workshop session. Additionally, participants were alerted in SLACK to complete an online e-journal entry, a bi-weekly reflection on their efforts with respect to implementing the transferable skills with SSM participants.

The final session served as an opportunity to thank the participants, to allow PSM participants to reflect on their efforts and the project, and to share experiences as we wrapped up the intervention. The group also reflected on the original goals that were created at the beginning of the semester to determine the extent to which they viewed the effectiveness of working with SSM. In final workshop, participants completed a post-intervention, 6-point Likert scale survey which assessed their perceptions of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and self-efficacy towards 'teaching/coaching' the transferable skills covered in the workshops. A week later, the participants were emailed a link and asked to complete a retrospective, pre-intervention survey. Following the surveys, I conducted interviews with the PSM participants who took part in the intervention. I also gathered qualitative and quantitative data from SSM participants. Additionally, I collected final data from the OCoP, bi-weekly journal reflections, observations, and field notes.

Table 4

Intervention and Data Collection Timeline and Procedures for the Study

Time Frame	Actions	Procedures
August 22, 2022	Introduced intervention to participants and opened OCoP	- Created SLACK channel and add PSM participants - Provided schedule for the intervention
August 26, 2022	Workshop 1 - NACE Introduction and Team Building	Conducted initial, 30-minute professional development workshop with PSM participants
September 9, 2022	Workshop 2 - Transferable Skill 1, Communication	Conducted second, 30-minute professional development workshop with PSM participants
Weeks of Sept. 9 – Nov. 4	PSM participants mentored SSMs	Coordinated selection of students and supported implementation of efforts
Week of September 12, 2022	Shared Resources in OCoP and coaching of other half of participants	- Provided resources and information about Leadership to PSM participants via SLACK - Reminder sent to PSM participants about completing bi-weekly reflection e-journal using

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September 23, 2022	Workshop 3 - Transferable Skill 2, Teamwork	● Conducted third, 30-minute professional development workshop with PSM participants
Week of September 26, 2022	Shared Resources in OCoP and coaching of other half of participants	● Provided resources and information about Communication to PSM participants via SLACK ● Reminder sent to PSM participants about completing bi-weekly reflection e-journal using prompts.
October 7, 2022	Workshop 4 - Transferable Skill 3, Leadership	● Conducted fourth, 30-minute professional development workshop with PSM participants
Week of October 10, 2022	Shared Resources in OCoP and coaching of other half of participants	● Provided resources and information about Teamwork to PSM participants via SLACK ● Reminder sent to PSM participants about completing bi-weekly reflection e-journal using prompts.
Week of October 17, 2022	PSM participants mentored SSM	● Final week to mentoring SSM.

October 21, 2022	Workshop 5 - Wrapped Up and Collected post-intervention survey	- Conducted final, 30-minute professional development workshop with PSM participants - Administered post-intervention survey to PSM and SSM participants
November 3, 2022	Collected PSM and SSM retrospective, pre-intervention survey and setup interviews with participants	Administered retrospective, pre-intervention survey to PSM and SSM participants
Week of November 14, 2022 and November 21, 2022	Interviewed PSM participants and SSM participants	Conducted interviews
Week of November 28, 2022	Collected final data	Collected OCoP data, bi-weekly reflection journal data, and compiled notes

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Education is for improving the lives of others and for leaving your community

and world better than you found it.

—Marian Wright Edelman

In this chapter, I written about the data analyses and results based on the

methodology presented in Chapter 3. I have discussed qualitative and quantitative data

sources, their analysis, and the corresponding findings. In the first two sections of this

chapter, I have reported on the data sources and the data analysis process. Afterwards, I

described the quantitative data and the corresponding results followed by the qualitative

data and key assertions.

Quantitative and Qualitative Data Sources

Quantitative data were obtained from five sources. The first source for

quantitative data was derived from a bi-weekly e-journal that was sent to the professional

staff members (PSM) participants three times throughout the course of the intervention.

Participants rated how beneficial the workshops, Online Community of Practice, and

coaching were to their work with student staff members (SSM) on a 6-point Likert scale

ranging from 6 = *Strongly Agree*, 5 = *Agree*, 4 = *Slightly Agree*, … to 1 = *Strongly*

Disagree. The other four sources were a set of corresponding surveys for both PSM and

SSM. These surveys were conducted as a post-intervention and retrospective, pre-

intervention surveys for both groups. The PSM and SSM surveys each assessed four

constructs related to perceptions of participants and were aligned with the research questions.

Qualitative data were derived from four sources. In the bi-weekly e-journals, in which PSM participants provided qualitative data by answering questions about how the intervention benefited their work with SSM, how they incorporated the content with SSM, and the opportunity to provide any further feedback or comments. The second source of data was the SLACK data from the OCoP. The final two sources of qualitative data resulted from the 1:1 PSM and SSM interviews.

Data Analysis Procedures

Quantitative and qualitative data were analyzed after the data collection concluded. In all, twelve individuals participated in this study including six PSM and six SSM. Quantitative data were collected from ten participants including six PSM and four SSM. Of the six SSM participants, only four entirely completed the two surveys. Because two participants did not complete the retrospective, pre-intervention survey, those participant's corresponding post-intervention surveys were not used. Data from both PSM and SSM sets of surveys were collected in Qualtrics, downloaded and cleaned in Microsoft Excel, and then transferred to SPSS. Once in SPSS, each construct was assessed for reliability using Cronbach's alpha reliabilities. Then, individual item scores were combined to create constructs, then average construct scores were computed. Following this, descriptive statistics were calculated for post-intervention and retrospective, pre-intervention constructs from the respective data sets. Given the sample size for PSM, $n = 6$, and SSM, $n = 4$, descriptive statistics were used to examine the data

and were the most appropriate way to present the results. Quantitative data from the bi-weekly reflection journal were downloaded from Google Forms to a Microsoft Excel sheet. It was then cleaned for interpretation. Descriptive statistics were calculated to determine the mean score for the single quantitative question on the form.

Qualitative analyses for PSM and SSM interviews were conducted in HyperResearch. First, the six PSM and six SSM interviews, which were conducted on Zoom, were downloaded and reviewed to correct the transcripts. The interview transcripts were then uploaded to HyperResearch and analyzed using a grounded interpretive approach, (R. Buss, personal communication, January 15, 2023) in which I incorporated a constant comparative method (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). In this method, I constantly compared new inputs whether it was text/theme-related components/themes with existing codes/theme-related components/themes. If the new inputs fit an already existing code/theme-related component/theme, it was added to that area. If it did not, I created a new code, etc. Due to the limited amount of data in each source, these data were used as a supplemental source of data to the interview data.

Quantitative Results

Quantitative data results were used to aid in answering RQ1, RQ2, and RQ3. The PSM data and analysis addressed RQ1 and RQ2 while the SSM data and analysis addressed RQ3. The quantitative aspect of the PSM bi-weekly reflection journal served as complementary analysis for RQ2.

PSM Retrospective, Pre-Intervention and Post-Intervention Surveys

Reliabilities were calculated in SPSS using Cronbach's alpha coefficient before conducting descriptive statistics. The retrospective, pre-intervention values ranged from .81 to .96 and all exceeded .70 which has served as a baseline level for acceptable levels of reliability (Nunnally, 1978). See Table 5 for the complete set of reliabilities. The values for the post-intervention constructs ranged from .74 to .90. These values indicated scales demonstrated acceptable reliability.

Table 5

Cronbach's Reliability Values for PSM Retrospective Pre-Intervention and Post-Intervention Surveys for the Four Constructs (n=6)

Construct	Retrospective, Pre	Post-Intervention
Knowledge	.81	.83
Skills	.93	.74
Attitudes	.90	.90
Self-Efficacy	.96	.82

*—*Note*. Cronbach's alpha values attaining or exceeding .70 indicate reliable scales.

Following the reliability assessments of each construct, I conducted descriptive statistics for constructs from the retrospective, pre-intervention and post-intervention surveys. Generally, results showed mean scores increased from the retrospective, pre-intervention to the post-intervention for each construct. These increases were modest and ranged from 0.50 to 0.83. See Table 6 for the means and standard deviations for the PSM data. Result indicated and showed a slight increase in perceptions of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and self-efficacy from pre- to post-intervention assessments.

Table 6

Means and Standard Deviations* for PSM Retrospective, Pre-Intervention and Post-Intervention Surveys for the Four Constructs (n=6)

Constructs	Retrospective, Pre	Post-Intervention
Knowledge	4.47 (0.96)	5.30 (0.58)
Skills	4.37 (0.96)	4.87 (0.60)
Attitudes	5.33 (0.78)	5.83 (0.41)
Self-Efficacy	4.17 (1.25)	4.97 (0.94)

*—*Note*. Standard deviations have been presented in parentheses.

SSM Retrospective, Pre-Intervention and Post-Intervention Surveys

Cronbach's alpha reliabilities for SSM constructs on the retrospective pre-intervention assessment ranged from .69 to 1.00. The values for the post-intervention assessment ranged from .63 to .96. See Table 7 for the complete set of reliabilities. Although .63 and .69 fall slightly below .70, which is generally treated as the acceptable level for reliability (Nunnally, 1978), these two scales were within reasonable levels given the small sample size, $n = 4$. The retrospective, pre-intervention reliability score for "connection to work" of 1.0 was a result of all the variables for this construct being rated the same across the five questions by all four participants (5, 6, 6, and 5).

Table 7

Cronbach's Reliability Values for SSM Retrospective Pre-Intervention and Post-

Intervention Surveys for the Four Constructs (n=4)

Constructs	Retrospective, Pre-Intervention	Post-Intervention
Communication	.69	.89
Teamwork	.86	.96
Leadership	.95	.63
Connection to Work	1.00	.91

*—*Note*. Cronbach's alpha values attaining or exceeding .70 indicate reliable data.

Then, descriptive statistics were calculated for each construct of the retrospective, pre-intervention and post-intervention surveys. Given the sample size, descriptive statistics were used to examine and present the data. Within the results, means showed a very slight increase from the retrospective, pre-intervention survey to the post-intervention survey for each construct. These increases were quite small and ranged from 0.05 to 0.25. Due to the small changes, the effect of the intervention as it related to participant perception of transferable skills and connection to work seemed not to be influenced by the intervention with their supervisors. In Table 8, I have presented the means and standard deviations for the four constructs.

Table 8

Means and Standard Deviations* for SSM Retrospective Pre-Intervention and Post-Intervention Surveys for the Four Construct (n=4)

Variable	Retrospective, Pre	Post-Intervention
Communication	5.15 (0.55)	5.40 (0.59)
Teamwork	5.45 (0.60)	5.50 (0.76)
Leadership	5.15 (0.72)	5.20 (0.43)
Connection to Work	5.50 (0.58)	5.60 (0.57)

—Note. Standard deviations have been presented in parentheses.

PSM Bi-Weekly Reflections

Over the course of the intervention, PSM participants were given the opportunity to complete bi-weekly e-journal entries on a Google form. There were three opportunities for each of the six participants, totaling 18 potential reflections. Of the possible 18 entries, participants completed 13 responses in all, a 72% response rate. Results from the following question, Over the last two weeks, using the scale from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree" rate the following item. "The workshops, Online Community of Practice, and coaching were beneficial to my work supervising student staff members in my department." resulted in a mean of 4.85 out of 6 and a standard deviation of 0.38. These results indicated PSM participants "agreed" the contents of the intervention were benefiting their work of supervising student staff members within their departments.

Qualitative Results

The qualitative data results from the PSM and SSM interviews, PSM bi-weekly reflection open-ended questions, and PSM Online Community of Practice (OCoP) were used to answer all three research questions. PSM qualitative data results were related to RQ1 and RQ2 whereas SSM qualitative results were associated with RQ3. I approached and analyzed the qualitative data using the constant comparative method (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). During my first analysis of the interviews, I listened to the entirety of recordings and created initial codes in HyperResearch. After this cycle of coding, I read through the original interview transcripts with a new lens, creating a second set of codes. These two sets for codes were then cross referenced for consistencies and comparisons. Prior to moving on to my next step of analysis, I referenced the research questions to determine what codes corresponded to which questions. This step allowed me to move my codes into categories which were then used to generate theme-related concepts. These categories also assisted as I developed themes for the data. After all codes, theme-related concepts, and themes were developed, key assertions were established based on the themes.

Data from the PSM bi-weekly reflections and OCoP were limited; however, after initial analysis, these proved to be complementary to the interview data. Thus, these data were used to supplement the results of the PSM interviews. All participants were given pseudonyms to protect and respect their privacy.

PSM Data Results from Interviews, Bi-Weekly Reflection, and OCoP

       All qualitative results for PSM have been presented in this section. The results

were based on gathering the results across the PSM interviews, bi-weekly reflection

responses, and OCoP data. A majority of the results were associated with the interviews.

Themes, theme-related concepts, and assertions have been presented below in Table 9.

Throughout the section below, I presented the assertions, corresponding theme-related

concepts, and themes. These results were supported by participant quotes and brief

responses from the other qualitative data sources.

Table 9

Themes, Theme-related Components, and Assertions from Professional Staff Members'

Interviews

Themes and Theme-related Components	Assertions

PSM knowledge and skill development
  1. Understanding the importance of transferable skills
  2. Using intervention resources and knowledge
  3. Employing strategies during implementation
  4. Improving skills
	1. Participants who actively engaged in the process gained knowledge and skills which they implemented with SSM throughout the intervention.

Feelings and emotions about the intervention
  1. Having good attitudes and mental outlooks
  2. Increasing confidence
  3. Using self-reflection
  4. Understanding the importance of student development
	2. Approaching teaching SSM transferable skills with the right attitude and confidence was beneficial to both PSM and SSM participants.

Intervention experience and future use
  1. Focusing on relationship building
  2. Placing students first
  3. Concluding thoughts
	3. The intervention content and the coaching experience for developing SSM transferable skills proved to be a valuable experience to participants.

*Note: Themes are presented in italics font.

Theme 1—PSM Knowledge and Skill Development. *Assertion 1 – Participants who actively engaged in the process gained knowledge and skills which they implemented with SSM throughout the intervention.* This assertion was developed and supported based on the following themes understanding the importance of transferable skills, using

intervention resources and knowledge, employing strategies during implementation, and improving skills. These themes have been discussed in detail in the sections below.

Understanding the Importance of Transferable Skills. When participants were asked to share about their understanding for transferable skills, respondents indicated a general consensus of their importance and their value in preparing students for success after graduation. Although this appeared to be the general understanding, one participant, Simon, shared how the importance has not always been at the forefront of our thoughts. In explaining his understanding, when he shared,

> From my understanding is that it's something that we don't always take into account with our students, but it's something that is very beneficial as they move on in their careers, how to excel in their careers and what to put on their resume. As well, to show other employers and … what they have done in their current student employment or even in their other employments, such as communication, leadership, adaptability, all that type of stuff that you can learn in transferable skills.

Another participant Rachel, highlighted that prior to the intervention she wasn't fully aware of what a transferable skill was and what makes it "transferable." She described her growth in understanding as a result of the intervention. Rachel said,

> I think prior to starting, I had a very hard time understanding when you can actually transfer them [skills] and what a transferable skill is to begin with. So, after the workshops, I definitely had a better understanding. And I feel like I'm able to point it out better when I see it in other people around me, such as the

student workers or even within my peers. So, I definitely think it was very

helpful.

    Using Intervention Resources and Information. Participant use of information

and resources from the intervention varied. Conversations with some individuals revealed

very little use of information provided whereas others seemed to benefit from the content.

In general, the participants integrated the content directly into their daily work with SSM.

One participant, Doug, took the approach of taking activities we completed in a

workshop and put them to direct use with his SSM. Doug affirmed, "I simply copy and

paste it a little bit, took some of those kind of different activities that we did as an

example and utilized them with the student that I was working alongside." Another

example of direct 'copy and paste' use of the resources provided was observed in one

participant's response during the bi-weekly reflection. Simon described how they,

"...used the content from the online community of practice in my 1-on-1 meetings with

my student leader. I walked through tips on leadership that she can take in[to] her

career." Simon also shared how he chose to use the ice-breaker question from the

previous workshop with his SSM. He described that he "…also asked her the same

question Mitch asked us "Are you a leader?" She hesitated but then answered yes. That

showed me how much she has grown as a leader and with her confidence in the past

year." Another participant, Santiago, shared how they utilized the content of the

intervention in real time. When a learning opportunity presented itself in the workplace,

Santiago used the experience as an opportunity to discuss the importance of teamwork.

He claimed,

[It] was actually during a time that we had an incident at our front desk which

helped exemplify [teamwork]. My student staff was instructed to work together to

ensure that everyone worked together to document some incidents that had been

occurring.

Employing Strategies during Implementation. There were several consistencies

across participants on how they chose to implement their efforts with SSM. Every

participant shared some details about one-on-one meetings with SSM and how those

interactions offered time for intentional conversations. During these meetings,

participants were able to have honest conversations with SSM. Simon shared the

following about spending time having intentional conversations with SSM when he said,

ongoing conversations of how are you in your current role utilizing some type of

transferable skills, whether it be leadership, for example, and do you feel like

where you can grow in that area?...So we would just walk through different steps

there, different opportunities they can do, whether it be career or professional

development, or other avenues that they can take to build upon their leadership or

their communication skills.

Elizabeth shared during their bi-weekly reflection that the opportunity to have

intentional conversations with SSM resulted in determining areas of growth and

strategies for improvement. She wrote,

I asked her where she honestly felt she lacked in communication. She mentioned

that if she does not know the students/staff or if the environment is new for her,

she becomes more reserved and she does not feel comfortable to ask any

questions. So little by little, I try to push her out of her comfort zone. If needed, I ask her to SLACK some members and ask questions on behalf of myself. But in the future, I will ask her to meet certain people on my behalf and ask those questions. This will allow her to connect with new people and become more comfortable asking any questions, if any.

Two participants shared another strategy they utilized about simplifying the content and building a step-by-step foundation. For example, Rachel asserted,

So, the biggest thing that I did to implement is basically going to the basics, which is breaking down what the skill was. Because I feel like once you break down what the skill is, it's a lot easier to have others understand.

Another participant, Elizabeth, alluded to a similar approach and how the "little steps that we did take, it meant a lot for her and she has grown a lot as an individual."

All participants shared how they attempted to provide and recommend intentional opportunities for growth for SSM. These took place in the form of sending emails, building connections to various departments, collaborating on events, and networking. Elizabeth highlighted the specific intentional opportunities they provided during a bi-weekly reflection when they wrote,

[I] have been having my student reach out to her coworkers and deliver messages on my behalf. Examples include: updates on time worksheets, creating when2meets to schedule trainings, filing and renaming purchasing card transactions, etc. This may be simple tasks, but these are tasks that she has not had the opportunity in doing. We have also talked about how she wants to improve on

her communicative skills and little by little I am pushing her out of her comfort zone.

Improving Skills. All participants expressed some level of improvement or development of skills as a result of the intervention. Participants indicated they perceived their confidence in teaching transferable skills had increased. Several participants also noted an improved understanding of being patient. Two participants specifically described the importance of being patient while teaching transferable skills to SSM. For example, Elizabeth shared the SSM with whom she was working "wanted to work on communication skill" but she also "knew she didn't want to push her buttons." In his interview, Doug expressed his thoughts on being patient when asked about his skills and abilities to teach transferable skills. Specifically, Doug said, "a lot of patience, a lot of practicing what you preach, a lot of recognition that it's not going to be something that happens immediately, where somebody can get those transferrable skills overnight."

Participants also described the importance of listening and how being 'present' afforded opportunities for insights on how to help develop SSM. Elizabeth claimed, "the main thing was for me to gain her trust and find out their goals." This was similar to the comments Rachel made when she ensured she was "listening and understanding what they're going through and how I can work with them."

Another participant suggested an improved skill was putting knowledge into practice. When discussing transferable skills, Simon shared his beliefs that he did not always think about professional development for SSM when he declared,

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I think initially when I came in, I didn't always think about it. I thought it was just

more of a natural thing that we work on as pro[fessional] staff to students. But

going through this intervention has kind of made me think, it's important to talk

through those.

Doug also shared similar thoughts about transitioning from a place of having knowledge

to practicing it in the workplace. Doug stated, "[It] went from me having, I guess the

knowledge or understanding of what the specific topics were to how to actually utilize

them to your advantage in the workplace and make a successful workplace."

       Theme 2—Feelings and Emotions about the Intervention. The second theme,

resulted from the affective developments as a result of the intervention. *Assertion 2 -*

Approaching teaching SSM transferable skills with the right attitude and confidence was

beneficial to both PSM and SSM participants. This assertion is supported by four theme-

related components emerging from the data such as having good attitudes and mental

outlooks, increasing confidence, using self-reflection, and understanding the importance

of student development.

       Having Good Attitudes and Mental Outlooks. This theme-related component

proved to be crucial for several of the participants. Having the 'right' attitude or mental

outlook assisted in the development of PSM and SSM. Elizabeth claimed how she

"always made sure to go in with an open mind." This was similar to Rachel's response

when she shared the following comment in her personal reflection,

So, I will say I had a bit of a hard time at first understanding how I even was

going to teach them because I felt that I personally have never been in that

position where I have to teach someone else. But then once the workshops progressed, I realized that it was very natural and it was something that we were doing on a regular day-to-day [basis], regardless of if it was a new skill or not. It was just a matter of breaking it down and saying, "Hey, we're actually already doing this. We do this on a day-to-day [basis] with teamwork, or we do this every day when we're communicating with clients." So, it was just a matter of finding a way to adapt to our every day and realizing, "Hey, this is actually something we're already doing."

Simon shared a similar attitude, highlighting that, "initially when I came in, I didn't always think about it. … it gave me an awareness of what impact that we can have in their lives". This type of positive and optimistic attitude was also shared by Doug who claimed,

I would say for me; overall attitude would just be going into it with that growth mindset and understand that transferable skills aren't something that people are going to acquire overnight. It's going to take time, it's going to take a lot of patience.

Increasing Confidence. Increased PSMs' confidence was common as a result of the invention. Every participant shared they had an increase in confidence as a result of the invention and the time we spent together. Elizabeth stated, in ranking herself on a scale from one to ten, "when I first started, if we were to rate it from one to 10, it was a one" she went on to say "but now I can, I want to say I'm at a good eight." This progress

was evident among other participants, and several admitted that time and the community that developed was crucial in their increased confidence. For example, Doug maintained,

I would say over time I definitely have become more confident. It takes time because the last thing that I would want to do is try to teach something in an incorrect way or teach something that I'm not fully aware about.

Santiago, who admitted at the start of his interview that he was "distracted," struggled to answer several of the questions; however, in regards to his confidence he stated,

I think confidence. These workshops helped a lot with, I guess, understanding how to push forward this movement of transportable skills. So, over the weeks [of] meetings with you and other colleagues, I think [that] helped [me] get an idea of different areas and how they [students] can use these transferable skills and how effective they are or what way to push it forward is effective and what works and what doesn't. So yeah, I would say confidence is a big one.

Rachel perfectly summed up the testimonies of the group when she asserted,

My confidence. I would say it definitely progressed. In the beginning, I was not very confident because I felt that I didn't have a lot of understanding about transferable skills. But as we went towards the last workshop, I was 100% confident. If a student came up to me and asked me, "Hey, can you help me with my transferable skills? I'm trying to write

it for my resume." I would feel really confident in breaking it down and

helping them fill that out.

Taken together, the participants' statements suggested the intervention, community,

coaching, and time spent together growing and developing benefitted individual's

confidence in teaching transferable skills to SSM.

    Using Self-Reflection. Participants were given the opportunity to discuss the

perceived benefits of the intervention during the bi-weekly reflections. Answers varied,

but participants consistently described how the workshops and intervention changed their

perspectives, challenged them, and afforded opportunities to reflect. One example of this

personal reflection was highlighted by the participant's answer below where they noted,

    This week's workshop helped me think about my own communication style with

    my student staff. I have made more of an effort to sit down and talk through

    certain duties, such as reviewing diagrams that were made by the student staff. I

    am also more aware of the way that I am communicating information to them to

    make sure that they fully understand what I am trying to get across.

    The workshops and content of the intervention resulted in additional participants

questioning and challenging themselves. Another individual shared how, "The workshop

on teamwork really challenged me to think about how my students under the SDFC are

working together to effectively engage students." Finally, a participant said in their

reflection on the workshops,

"The tools we learned in our workshops were good to help guide us through developing our students in leadership. The question ""Am I leader?" made me really evaluate myself and my student workers."

Understanding the Importance of Student Development. Near the beginning of the intervention, following Workshop 1, each participant was asked to use the OCoP SLACK channel to share an example or experience where a student employee, or themselves, had made strides professionally. Participants shared unique stories, but each highlighted the importance of student professional development. The following responses demonstrated participants general understanding of the importance of student development in the workplace. The shared stories all highlighted growth and development occurring in a SSM job position. For example, Doug wrote,

> I can share a story about a student worker I worked alongside during my undergrad who had a very straightforward, militaristic leadership style. He flourished in the entry level, sports programming assistant role, consistently picking up shifts, plugging in where we had gaps and holes, showing up early, leaving late, and being an astounding official. When he made the transition to Manager - we quickly recognized that he did not have an empathetic or sympathetic approach, rather he barked orders at the staff he was managing. After taking months to work alongside him and have him recognize the importance of asking, rather than telling, he began going outside his comfort zone and really training his own emotional intelligence. He was able to overcome his own natural leadership style, and adjusted to ensure he was not making staff feel

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unappreciated. This change in mentality and approach allowed him to flourish in his future leadership roles outside of ASU!

Similarly, Simon authored,

The story I would like to share is from a former student employee of ours who began as a wellness supervisor. The student wellness coordinator at the time was still working for us but did not perform their duties. However, this student employee/wellness supervisor at the time took on the responsibilities of the student coordinator without complaining. She performed these duties so much so that the other employees went to her. Long story short, her initiative and drive to make the program function earned her the coordinator position. In the coordinator position, she flourished and grew the wellness department. The wellness department is now one of our strongest teams at Sun Devil Fitness and Wellness. After graduating this last spring, she was recently offered multiple professional positions and accepted a job in her field. Her initiative, selflessness, and commitment to the program led her to the role she is in today.

Rachel's shared story was about herself and how she had grown in an SSM position, when she scribed,

Hi Everyone!! I hope this week has been going well so far! The story I would like to share is actually of myself. I am in no way trying to brag but I definitely feel I have come a long way from where I was when I had started working with SACS […. write out SACS in words] as an RS […. write out RS in words]. When I had begun my role, I was pretty quiet and liked to keep to myself most of the time.

Through my time at SACS I learned the importance of teamwork and communication. When I had started, I avoided answering the phone at all costs because I dreaded communicating with others. It was a lot easier for me to hide behind the computer screen and avoid any possibility of in-person interactions. After we had come back from being online during COVID, I felt a strong urge to push myself more to ensure I was able to communicate with others effectively. I was given the opportunity to assist with training new employees and that was something very new to me. Pushing myself through situations that made me feel uncomfortable helped me develop better social skills, which translated into better teamwork and communication. Thanks to that I have been able to be successful in my current role and I am actually able to approach people now.

Theme 3—Intervention Experience and Future Use. *Assertion 3 - The intervention content and the coaching experience for developing SSM transferable skills proved to be a valuable experience to participants.* The three theme-related components related to this assertion included building relationships with SSM, placing students first, and concluding thoughts. Tell me about your experience mentoring student staff members. These generally highlighted the need to have intentional student development along with truly placing students and the forefront of student services.

Building Relationships with SSM. The experience proved to be beneficial for participants and this opportunity afforded them the opportunity to build and develop more meaningful relationships with the SSM who participated. When asked about his experience mentoring student staff members, Simon declared,

It was kind of rewarding and made me feel like a better connection and

relationship with my student that I was working with. And I feel like going

forward, they feel like they can come to me more and ask me those questions or

just a recommendation, or should I go this route or anything like that. I think that

relationship is definitely better.

For Gustavo, he really wanted to ensure he had a good relationship with the SSM

participants to develop them to the best of his ability. He stated, "[I] would try to

understand them, and so I really try to focus on who they are as a person and what are

their goals." Further, he claimed, "[I] want to be that coach for them where I'm helping

them, and be that resource as well." Doug suggested he had a similar approach, especially

in regard to supporting the SSM with their holistic development and having a good

relationship. Doug shared he always tried,

to see what it is specifically that they are needing support in, whether it's

transferable skills that they're looking to kind of gain or if it's something on the

flip side where it's something maybe a little more personal or academic that they

were struggling with.

Placing Students First. Although there were participants who indicated time was

a constraint, like Elizabeth who "only saw her [SSM participant] once a week" results

from the intervention revealed the desire to place the students first, regardless of the

limitations. Gustavo echoed this sentiment when he noted, "maybe they're having issues

within their lives that we can help out, or I can help out." This desire to place students in

the foreground was also shared by Doug when he acknowledged, "What else are we

doing to foster an environment when they can really achieve the goals and gain different pieces that are going to help them once they graduate, move on to bigger, better plans?"

Participant desire to place students first was evident from the beginning of the intervention. When asked to share their goals in the OCoP on SLACK, all of the participants shared goals that directly affected SSMs' success. Among the goals shared were the following that illustrated PSMs' commitment to students. One PSM suggested, "Provide the student with the tools to develop interpersonal communication skills (as identified by the student as a goal of theirs)." A second staff member noted, "Focus on a developmental topic bi-weekly, covering aspects of different transferable skills to benefit the student as they move into a full-time role within the next (projected) 6 months." A third offered, "Encouraging students to find ideal career positions and discovering the skills needed to be successful in those positions."

Concluding Thoughts. Several participants offered concluding remarks about how they valued the project. For example, two participants summed up their experiences throughout the intervention. First, Rachel maintained, "Overall, it was a good [experience]. It was definitely a very good experience." She went on to say that, "It was really helpful for the student and myself," and she was already thinking about how she could implement it with "other students." Second, Elizabeth shared her belief that this content "should be taught more, and the simplest things, it can really shape a student's life for the better." Simon summed up his interview by giving a concluding remark about the intervention as a whole. He shared "It just gave me clarity on what the importance of transferable skills."

SSM Data Results from Interviews

Results presented in this section emerged from SSM 1:1 interviews. Themes, theme-related concepts, and assertions have been presented in Table 10. Throughout the discussion, I presented participant quotes to support the themes and assertions.

Table 10

Themes, Theme-related Components, and Assertions from Student Staff Members'

Interviews

Themes and Theme-related Components	Assertions
Knowledge acquisition and growth, and skill development 1. Working on skill development 2. Attaining personal and professional growth	1. SSM experienced growth and development.
Professional opportunities and preparation for the future 1. Experiencing professional opportunities 2. Understanding use of skills in the future	2. Working closely with a PSM assisted students as they prepared for post-graduation success.
Benefits and reflection 1. Receiving benefits of PSM support 2. Considering personal reflections	3. Working alongside a PSM and intentional professional development opportunities were beneficial for SSM.

*Note: Themes are in italics.

Knowledge Acquisition and Growth, and Skill Development. *Assertion 1 – SSM experienced growth and development.* This assertion was developed based on theme-related components such as working on skill development and attaining personal and professional growth.

Working on Skill Development. Participants were provided opportunities to describe their transferable skills, communication, teamwork, and leadership, and if they had changed from the beginning of the semester. Although several participants shared specifics about their skill development, such as improved relationship building, the ability to work on diverse teams, and accepting leadership, one participant Suzie shared her thought about development in the workplace. Suzie stated, "in the job, there's no way you're not growing your leadership skills." Suzie later reiterated her feelings that her student position naturally presented skill development opportunities.

Other participants shared specific examples and situations where they experienced skill development over the course of the semester. When asked about her communication skills, Candice stated,

> I feel, yeah, I feel like they have changed. And I think especially on how direct I am. I feel like I used to be ... I don't know, I used to be more of a ... I don't know the exact word for it. But I don't know, make everything more soft and oh, don't worry, because of this, this, and this. And I feel like now, I don't know. I feel like because of being in a more of a leadership position, it has helped me be a little bit more direct and understanding. Oh, you don't have to make everything super blah, blah, blah. You can just get to the point and then if people have questions, then you can explain and expand on that.

Later, Candice went on to highlight specific changes in her leadership abilities. Over the course of the semester, similar to her communication skills, she felt a growth in ability to be more direct in her style and approach. Candice shared,

I feel like one of the things that has changed the most is my ability to make decisions. I feel like before I was, I don't know, kind of scared, more scared of making the wrong decision. And like I said, I really like to take into consideration everyone's opinion. So, I was kind of scared to, oh I'm going with this decision and not the other one, the other person's going to get upset. And that used to scare me a little bit. I didn't want anyone getting upset or feeling like they aren't being heard. But I feel like that has changed a lot this semester. I feel like I'm able to not be as afraid to make decisions. I feel like I've learned that I have more experience. I know what I'm doing, so I know the decision that I make is to make everyone better off. So, I feel like that really has helped me just make decisions faster and more efficiently, I guess.

Another participant also indicated he had grown and shared his thoughts on his leadership skills. Frank discussed how he has gained more confidence in his abilities as a leader and tended to have more ownership and awareness in his role. Frank declared,

I do think I am a good leader just because I'm very knowledgeable about, yes, with the jobs here, but just about a lot of things in general. And so, I do tend to take on the leadership role just because like I said previously, I'm a very personable person. So, I do like talking and communicating. And not a lot of people are like that, so I feel like since I'm able to do that, it gives me some or a sort of a leadership role.

Attaining Personal and Professional Growth. Over the course of the semester, participants offered stories of personal and professional growth. Not all development took

place at the participant's on campus job with their respective PSM supervisor. Suzie, described how she saw professional growth within another leadership job she has on campus with a student organization. Suzie reflected on her growth from when she started the position in August when she noted,

> Teamwork skills. I feel like I'm a lot better at team working now. Definitely, I remember when I applied to my job, I told them that I had trouble working in teams, just because I'm really bad at delegating. I feel like I take on a lot of the workload and I just tend to power through stuff on my own … But I feel like throughout the semester I learned to rely and have trust in my team

Candice also testified about growth outside of her student position. She claimed her graduate degree has provided intentional opportunities to develop due to the structure of many projects. Candice reflected on this and stated,

> I think especially with school, because I started my master's program this semester, and for all my classes I've been having so many different team projects. I do two to three group projects every week. It's crazy. It's a lot about, I feel like they emphasize teamwork a lot. So, I definitely have gotten a lot more practice in my master's project with team projects. And I feel like that's helped me a lot with understanding different kinds of teams and how to work in those different scenarios.

Although the content of the intervention was focused on professional development of transferable skills, participants also disclosed examples of personal

growth over the course of the intervention. When asked about how her communication

skills had changed, Caitlyn maintained,

> I feel like before I started working on this research, I didn't have a lot of
> confidence in my communication skills, just because I do suffer from social
> anxiety and speaking in general. But after this, I think has definitely improved …
> Well, I've gained a lot of more confidence and I feel I'm able to speak about my
> thoughts properly.

Later, when asked about her teamwork skills and how they are different from the

start of the semester, she stated,

> I would say I work pretty good with teamwork. I feel like in the beginning of the
> semester I was very shy still. So, I guess I've gotten closer with everyone where
> I'm able to work better with them.

Professional Opportunities and Preparation for the Future. *Assertion 2 -*

Working closely with a PSM assisted students as they prepared for post-graduation

success. This assertion was supported by the theme-related concepts such as experiencing

professional opportunities and exploring future use of skills.

Experiencing Professional Opportunities. The intervention and intentional work

with a PSM supervisor provided SSM participants opportunities for experiencing

professional opportunities. Participants were asked to reflect on these experiences.

Caitlyn, stated, "working with the pro[fessional] staff member, I was able to gain

confidence and reassurance that I'm able to handle things on my own and communicate

better in becoming a leader." Candice indicated how the specific job and her supervisor

had presented a number of professional opportunities for her to grow. Overall, she expressed a gratefulness for the professional opportunities when she said,

> I feel like I was giving a lot of opportunity, and I'm always very grateful for that because I feel like I've been trusted a lot. Like I said, they let me build the department, however I wanted it to be. Whenever I bring something to them or whenever I make a decision, they're always very supportive. They always listen to me. And I feel like that's very important and I feel like that's what has helped me the most to develop those leadership and communication skills. So yeah, I feel like for me, being here has always been a great opportunity and I'm really grateful for that.

These examples highlighted how working closely with a PSM can benefit the SSM as an individual and in the workplace.

Understanding Use of Skills in the Future. Participants were asked how they felt these skills were preparing them for professional employment following graduation. There was an overall agreement that these transferable skills were universal and would prove beneficial in their careers. Two participants expressed their understanding of how important they feel these skills were for their future. Heather stated,

> I would say that they are helping a lot because I feel like when you go out and to when I graduate and I go into my career, these are definitely skills that I would need to be ... I would need to have and be very strong with having them

Candice also indicated her perceptions of these skills being beneficial when she claimed, "communication and leadership, it's everywhere. I feel like it's very important wherever you go."

Suzie described her professional goal of becoming a Tour Manager and how important these transferable skills would be for that career when she declared,

> [I] want to be a tour manager, it requires a lot of leadership to lead a team. So that's already a team alone. So, people that ... regardless if it's booking the venues or booking the dates and finding artists and stuff like that, it's a lot of teamwork because just one person, that's a lot. So, being able to delegate, being able to communicate with your whole team, being like, "Okay, so how is this going? What do you need help with?" And just stuff like that. So, the job I want after graduation just deals with a lot of teamwork and having those communication skills and being able to take lead on stuff like that. So, I think just my job now is really helping me. It's setting me up for what I want to do in the future.

Benefits and Reflection. *Assertion 3 - Working alongside a PSM and intentional professional development opportunities were beneficial for SSM.* This assertion was developed based on two theme-related concepts including receiving benefits of PSM support and considering personal reflection.

Receiving Benefits of PSM Support. Three participants expressed their thoughts about the benefits PSM can have in the workplace for SSM. Hannah discussed what she has learned from her supervisor over the last several years, when she said,

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These past years, I have learned a lot from my supervisors. I see what they do and

how I can do differently with my own role with working here or being a part of

PAB. And it kind of helped me to extend more skills that I can do in the next few

years. And really, I think it can help for the campus

Similarly, Suzie reflected on how she has learned from her supervisor by

watching how they handled certain situations. In her example, she noted PSM presence

proved to be beneficial even when they were not working one-on-one with SSM. Suzie

maintained,

Just having a good supervisor to look up to, it really helps a lot. Just seeing how

my supervisor handles certain situations and how he takes leadership roles and

stuff like that. It's just really admirable and I feel like I've learned a lot, just

maybe not directly working with my supervisor, but just seeing how they take

(deal with) stuff.

Heather explained her thoughts on the intervention experience and how working

with her PSM supervisor was a good experience when she said,

Working with my supervisor was very good. I feel like she has helped me, like

with talking to her she helped bring some things like to light about how to better

communicate and how to better work as a team and in leadership as well.

Considering Personal Reflections. Participants provided final reflections on the

intervention experience and working with their respective PSMs. Several of the

participants shared that overall it was an enjoyable experience. Although not every

participant communicated the effectiveness of the intervention, the following individuals

shared their appreciation for their PSM, the professional development opportunity, and their growth and development. Caitlyn hesitantly shared,

> I guess I had a lot of fun. I was expecting it to be a bit more ... I didn't expect it to be as comfortable. That setting was very comfortable and easy to work in just because I did know the pro staff member.

Candice provided a more detailed and direct reflection, when she shared the following closing thoughts about her experience,

> I feel like for me it was a really nice program, activity or thing to do. I feel, especially now that [my supervisor] is back here, I feel like it definitely helped us connect a lot. And I feel like it's very important to talk about these topics because I feel like once you recognize the things that you are missing or areas or skills that you can still grow and work upon, it just helps you actually become better at them … So, …, I feel like everyone should have these kinds of conversations with their managers or their supervisors because I feel like they have helped me personally grow a lot in my role and just having a better relationship with my supervisor, which I feel like is very important for teamwork and making decisions and all of those things that are important at work. So, …, I really enjoyed it and I feel like it would be very beneficial for everyone to have these types of conversations with their supervisors and being able to get advice and recommendations and expertise from them. It's really nice and I enjoyed it a lot. Really good learning experience.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

Change is the end result of all true learning.

—Leo Buscaglia

I conduct this action research project to equip better professional staff members (PSM) to prepare and support student staff members (SSM) with career readiness skills, transferable skills, to foster career success graduation following graduation. The problem of practice was multifaceted; however, ultimately, there is a lack of knowledge and skills related to specific transferable skills for which professional organizations and companies are looking in recent college graduates. The previous chapters focus on the local and larger context, problem of practice, and need for professional development and resources for professional staff members (PSM) to implement transferable skills with SSM. The research is focused on the effectiveness of the intervention for PSM in their work with SSM. PSMs' perceptions of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and self-efficacy of transferable skills along with SSMs' perceptions of transferable skills and connection to work are measured through surveys, reflections, and interviews. In this chapter, I discuss the quantitative and qualitative findings, the study's limitations, implications for practice and future research, along with personal lessons learned, and final closing thoughts.

Complementarity of Quantitative and Qualitative Data

After the conclusion of the quantitative and qualitative data analysis process, I merge the data to triangulate it to examine the complementarity of the findings. This process of triangulations allowed me to generate more credible and reliable results

(Ivankova, 2015). With combined PSM quantitative and qualitative results, we can determine that participants who actively engage in the intervention increase knowledge and skills related to transferable skills according to Assertion 1. This assertion was supported by the quantitative results, which illustrate an increase of 0.83 of a point in knowledge and a more modest increase 0.50 of a point in skills among the PSM participants. These outcomes are confirmed by the qualitative data in which PSM demonstrate understanding of the importance of transferable skills, increases in skills for teaching transferable skills, use of these strategies during implementation with SSM. Additionally, for Assertion 2, perceived attitudes and self-efficacy for teaching transferable skills is supported by the quantitative data results, which show a modest increase of 0.50 of a point for attitudes and 0.80 of a point increase in self-efficacy. Moreover, these outcomes are consistent with qualitative results that show an overall positive attitude, increased self-efficacy of confidence, and personal reflections on the importance of transferable skills.

      Cumulative SSM quantitative and qualitative results are ultimately inconclusive. Quantitative data showed very minimal increases in variables for the three transferable skills and connection to work. Nevertheless, from the qualitative data, I observe SSM are experiencing growth and development within transferable skills and their connection to work. The minimal increases in quantitative results make it difficult to determine whether the two kinds of data are complementary for students.

Discussion of Findings

In the following sections, I present a discussion of how the findings are related to theoretical frameworks and how they can be understood with respect to the intervention.

Increases in PSM Knowledge and Skills

Data show slight to modest increases of knowledge *and* skills for the six PSM participants. NACE (2021) definitions, related skills, and behaviors served as the foundational knowledge for the workshop content and assessment. In addition to the NACE definitions for the transferable skills, activities were chosen that specifically related to the corresponding skill. Additionally, the three resources shared for each transferable skill through the OCoP were directly related to each skill. In the training about knowledge and skills, I use a constructivist viewpoint that is modeled after Coghlan & Brydon-Miller (2014), Given (2014), and Mertens (2015) understanding that individuals build knowledge based on their experiences. Moreover, Vygotsky (1978) discusses building knowledge based on experiences and the importance of shared cooperative and collaborative dialogue. The workshops are treated as an open environment for participants to collaborate with other participants while building transferable skill knowledge. In Assertion 1, I claim participants who actively engage in the process gain knowledge and skills which they implement with SSM throughout the intervention. The quantitative and qualitative data are both consistent with this interpretation. Specifically, the theme-related components of PSM participants show they understand the importance of transferable skills, discuss their new knowledge, and adapt

this knowledge to employ strategies during implementation while working with their SSM.

Increases in PSM Attitudes and Self-Efficacy

For Assertion 2 from the PSM qualitative data, I find there are increases in PSMs' attitudes and confidence (self-efficacy) as they approach teaching SSM transferable skills. This is evident in theme-related components highlighting participants' good attitudes and mental outlooks, increasing confidence, and use of self-reflection, and understanding the importance of student development and in slight and modest changes in the quantitative data. So, what might account for these changes? Throughout the intervention, I use Whitmore's (2017) GROW coaching model to keep constant focus on the goal of serving and supporting students as they learned the NACE career readiness skills. Further, I provide model how they might work with students. And, importantly, I provide opportunities for participants to practice delivery of the skills before they implement their efforts with the students. . Notably, these latter two approaches are consistent with Bandura's (1997) work on self-efficacy in which he claims mastery experiences and modeling are important sources of self-efficacy information that can increase self-efficacy. Increased confidence or self-efficacy is the most consistent outcome among the PSM participants across the various kinds of data.

PSM and SSM Participation and Experience

Both PSM and SSM participants data indicate value from the intervention experience. PSM participant data show the intervention content along with the coaching experience for developing SSM transferable skills is a valuable experience for the

participants. Focusing on relationship building and placing students first validates the experience and potential future use. Additionally, SSM participants feel working alongside a PSM coupled with professional development opportunities proves to be beneficial. The benefits of these relationships are evident in their supportive nature and further, the overall experience provides opportunities for reflection by the SSM.

Limitations and Approaches to Building Validity and Trustworthiness

Within the study, the research and results are only as strong as the validity and trustworthiness of the research project. There are several limitations that can affect the study. By addressing these limiting factors, I hope to build confidence in the intervention and the attendant results.

The first two limitations are directly related to the study and intervention design. The first limitation, my specific role as the researcher can be a seen as a limitation in this study in two unique ways. First, with the PSM participants, I have strong professional relationships with the individuals who agreed to take part in my research study over the course of the semester. I recognize these relationships could potential lead to some bias and some participants may agree to engage in the first place as a favor to me. In the study, as much as possible, I mitigate this limitation by having open and honest conversations with the individuals about the research and indicate they are free to participate or not to do so. Additionally, by keeping participants' survey responses anonymous, I create a setting in which participants can share their open and honest perspectives. The second limitation with respect to my role as the research comes during the SSM participant interviews. I discover that my lack of relationship with these

individuals along with my role and title may cause some students to be nervous or unwilling to share in as much detail as I would have liked.

The second limitation is the small sample size $n = 6$ for PSM and $n = 6$ for SSM. This sample sizes prevent me from analyzing data for statistical significance due to the small sample sizes. Additionally, within the qualitative data only four SSM participants complete the retrospective, pre-intervention survey, which means I am unable to fully analyze these data.

The next limitation is time. There are two points worthy of discussion, here. I believe both the length of the intervention along with the time demand of the intervention serve as limitations. The intervention only occurs over the course of one semester, which too brief a time period to anticipate substantial change, particularly among the students. Several PSM participants note that finding time to work with their respective SSM is a challenge for them. In addition, building SSM transferable skills to a point where they are comfortable and competent over a course of a semester proved to be challenging. Second, the time demands of my intervention are substantial. Although the workshops, interviews, and surveys were all kept intentionally short, I accept that the multilayer intervention causes participants to dedicate a lot of time towards this research project. I think this is evident in the limited use of the OCoP, which seems to almost be an afterthought for PSM throughout the entire intervention.

Finally, history may be a limitation. Ultimately, I understand it is completely outside of my control what professional development the PSM and SSM participants are doing on their own over the course of the semester. Because participants come from

several on-campus departments, they pursue developing these skills from their own respective teams. Additionally, SSM might participate in opportunities to develop these skills through various channels, whether it was with their respective on campus job, through academics, friends, family, or an outside entity. I understand this research project is not the only potential opportunity for SSM professional development.

Implications for Practice

I anticipate there are several aspects of this action research project that can be implemented into my local context and daily practice. The addition of specific transferable skills that professionals are looking for in recent college graduates is something that can be easily infused into our best practices and resources that PSM have at their disposal. Moving forward, utilizing the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) definitions for career readiness and competencies will ensure we are focusing our professional development efforts with SSM in an effective way to prepare them for professional employment following graduation.

Moreover, follow-up with the PSM is warranted to assist them in sharing their knowledge of communication, team-based efforts, and leadership as well as other NACE career readiness skills with SSM. Because the SSMs' data, particularly the quantitative data, indicate little influence on these skills, additional work is warranted. In regard to this, affording a longer time frame for PSM to work with SSM may lead to better outcomes, as well. Additionally, it appears that providing more, consistent professional development for PSM is warranted. Historically, conversations have a focus on professional development for SSM, and I anticipate we can be doing more to better equip

and prepare our PSM for success in their roles, particularly their roles in supporting and mentoring SSM. Incorporating some level of professional or skill development into every PSM staff meeting will provide consistent opportunities for growth and development. In practice, by placing these conversations into our daily conversations on a regular basis, our team can develop a culture that focuses on SSM development on a larger scale. This leads to my next implication, placing SSM professional development for post-graduation success as one of our top priorities. Although this is generally known and agreed upon, continued focus and conversations surrounding this topic should be a priority moving forward. With the support of departmental leadership, I believe we can make this a pillar of our department.

As we look at the future of communication and opportunities to network and build community among our team, I would like to pursue better practices for establishing a community of practice. Admittedly, I did not receive much, if any response, within my online community of practice (OCoP) on SLACK. Throughout the study, I received extremely limited responses and feedback when I sent resources or when I tried to engage with the group. Determining the best avenue for this type of connection, whether it be online or in-person, could provide that much needed space for individuals to connect. Finally, determining best practices for SSM evaluations to ensure they are driven by research and the data will be valuable to our team as we move forward. By implementing a consistent pre- and post-semester evaluation of all SSM and their development of career readiness skills, our team will have a better understanding of our overall success with our SSM.

Implications for Future Research

As I look to the future for the potential continuation of this research project or future studies, I see several ways the results inform future research. First, this study focuses on three of the eight NACE career competencies. Future studies have the potential to cover additional or all eight competencies to determine overall career readiness for SSM. Surveys and interviews can be set up to determine which transferable skills students feel are the most applicable to their work and where they feel they are developing their skills more and less effectively. In addition to studies focusing on all eight transferable skills, I believe a long-term case study following SSM professional development over the course of their academic career would be beneficial in determining how on-campus employment and PSM support and mentoring affect overall growth and success of SSM and their development of career readiness skills, transferable skills. Although over the course of the semester SSM participants only showed a slight increase in transferable skills, extending the length of research time over the course of a student's full academic career would provide insight into long term development. Examples of research questions are "Over the course of an academic career, how and to what extent are SSM developing transferable skills" and "According to the NACE definition for career readiness, how and to what extent do students perceive themselves as career ready?"

Other potential areas of research that build upon this research topic would be conducting research with recent graduates who are now working professionals. This would provide further insights about understanding whether these individuals feel their

on-campus employment opportunity and professional development they received as an SSM prepares them for their job following graduation. This study could potentially involve the surveying of a large group of alumni who held on-campus jobs to determine whether they felt their on-campus employment and the professional development prepared them for their full-time career after graduation. Additionally, further avenues for researchers to explore would be how PSM and SSM professional relationships translate beyond professional development. Research questions such as "How and to what extent do SSM relationships with a PSM support academic development?" or "How and to what extent do SSM relationships with PSM support personal development?" This would highlight the entire purpose of student services professionals and their goal of supporting students both inside and outside the classroom.

Personal Lessons Learned

Looking back to where I was at the beginning of this program, it is clear that I have changed dramatically and learned many lessons along the way. When I began investigating this specific problem of practice nearly two years ago, I had no formal experience with research of the knowledge to construct and complete a study. Over the last two years, I learned about the great potential of action research, particularly in education. As action research practitioners, we truly can induce change. So many times, I observe individuals, departments, and organizations implement change for little or no reason, and even worse, without the ability or desire to determine the effectiveness of that change. In addition to my increased knowledge and understanding of the dynamic action research process, I have outlined below four personal lessons I learned.

First, no matter the context, change is difficult. Change is hard to implement and extremely challenging to sustain. In order to validate change as action research practitioners, we must be able to present results showing change and notably display the benefits. Regardless of the benefits, the second lesson I learned is that no one can accomplish success on their own. The support of a strong team and the individuals in your local context are integral to success as a practitioner. Education is about people. We must continue to put people first.

The third lesson I learned is gaining a better understanding of my own strengths and weaknesses as a leader. I will always be the first to admit I have a lot on which to improve; however, as a leader I need to find ways to highlight my own strengths so I can capitalize on those. The final lesson I learned is that I have a professional obligation to utilize my career and leverage my position for the collective betterment of the individuals in my sphere of influence. According to Mertler (2020), action research is a systematic inquiry conducted in the educational setting by educational professionals to benefit their local community. Reflecting on Mertler's definition, I understand I have an obligation to continue to look for innovative ways to benefit my own local workplace community.

Conclusions

This all began with the desire to serve best SSM and prepare them for professional success following graduation. The combination of workshops, coaching, and an OCoP provides knowledge and skills to PSM in their work with SSM. The anticipation is that this intentional work with PSM would translate to SSM developing the transferable skills for their future workplaces.

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This research highlights the value of connection and community along with displaying how important it is to have ongoing conversations about how we best serve our SSM. The world of higher education and student services is challenging and extremely busy; however, within student services, we must continue to always place the student first. Notably, I anticipate this research can serve as a stepping stone as our team continues to focus efforts on our students. As a leader in student services, this research serves as a catalyst for my own desire to find innovative and creative ways to ensure that our PSM have the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and self-efficacy to best support and influence students in the present as university students and into the future after they graduate. As Jackie Robinson notes, "A life is not important except in the impact in has on other lives."

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APPENDIX A

PROFESSIONAL STAFF MEMBER PARTICIPANT RECRUITMENT LETTER

Participant Recruitment Letter: Professional Staff Member

Dear Colleague:

My name is Mitch Tybroski and I am a doctoral student in the Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College (MLFTC) at Arizona State University (ASU). I am working under the direction of Dr. Ray Buss a faculty member in MLFTC. We are conducting a research study to explore intentional professional development among Educational Outreach and Student Services (EOSS) professional staff members to better equip and prepare individuals to develop transferable skills among student staff members. The purpose of this study is to understand better whether a series of transferable skills workshops, coaching, and online communities of practice lead to increases your abilities to support students with transferable skills.

We are asking for your help, which will involve your participation in a brief intervention, which will include five, 30-minute workshops over the course of the semester (about 2.5 hours), a bi-weekly reflection journal (5 minutes x 8 = 40 minutes), completion of an online survey on two occasions (5 minutes, each), and an in person interview (about 15 to 20 minutes) concerning your knowledge, experiences, attitudes, and beliefs about the benefits of the transferable skills workshops. In total we are asking for roughly 3.5 hours of participation in the intervention and data gathering over the course of the semester. Along with the details outlined above, we will ask that you work 1-to-1 with a student staff member of your choice to coach and develop transferable skills. This can occur during normal roles and responsibilities within your position and will not require any additional time. Interview participants will be randomly selected.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time, there will be no penalty. Choosing not to participate in the study does not affect your standing at Arizona State University or within your respective department. You must be 18 years of age or older to participate in the study.

The benefit to participation is the help guide and shape the future of professional development of professional staff members and student staff members within EOSS. This research study has the potential benefit of laying the foundation for future leaders within EOSS and across the university along with reshaping how we prepare student staff members for full-time employment following graduation.

In the surveys, to protect your confidentiality, we will ask you to create a unique identifier known only to you. To create this unique code, use the first three letter of your mother's first name and the last four digits of your phone number. Thus, for example, if your mother's name was Sarah and your phone number was (602) 543-6789, your code would be Sar 6789. The unique identifier will allow us to match your post-intervention

survey responses and your retrospective, pre-intervention survey responses when we analyze the data.

If you are selected for the interview, the interview will not be audio recorded without your permission. Please let me know if you do not want the interview to be audio recorded; you also can change your mind after the interview starts, just let me know. I will ask for your oral consent at the time of the interview for those who are selected.

Your responses will be confidential. Results from this study may be used in reports, presentations, or publications but your name will not be used. Further, de-identified data will not be shared.

If you have any questions concerning the research study, please contact the research team – Mitch Tybroski at mitch.tybroski@asu.edu or 760-814-0338 or Dr. Ray Buss at ray.buss@asu.edu or 602-543-6343.

Thank you,

Mitch Tybroski, Doctoral Student
Ray Buss, Professor

If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this research, or if you feel you have been placed at risk, you can contact Dr. Ray Buss at 602-543-6343 or the Chair of Human Subjects Institutional Review Board through the ASU Office of Research Integrity and Assurance at (480) 965-6788.

APPENDIX B

PROFESSIONAL STAFF MEMBERS INTERVIEW QUESTIONS/PROTOCOL

<p style="text-align: center;">**Professional Staff Member Interview Questions/Protocol**</p>

Briefing Statement

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. The purpose of this interview is to better understand the current situation with respect to teaching transferable skills to student employees and mentoring of these students. To help me understand the situation I have several questions to help guide our conversation. Please respond with your own thinking about the questions. In your responses do not mention your name or the names of other individuals. May I record the interview?

Interview Questions

1. Tell me about your understanding of the transferable skills we worked on this semester.

2. Tell me about how you implemented the transferable skills with student staff members.

3. Tell me about your attitudes toward teaching transferable skills to student staff members.

4. What skills/abilities do you feel you have to teach transferable skills to student staff members?

5. Tell me about your confidence with regard to teaching transferable skills

6. Tell me about your experience mentoring student staff members.

7. What else would you like to share with me about transferable skills or your experience mentoring student staff members this semester?

Debriefing Statement

Thank you for your responses and your time today. I appreciate it very much. I will be using your responses to inform my dissertation work.

APPENDIX C

BI-WEEKLY INTERVENTION E-JOURNAL

Bi-Weekly Intervention E-Journal – Professional Staff Members

1. Over the last two weeks, using the scale from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree" rate the following item. "The workshops, Online Community of Practice, and coaching were beneficial to my work supervising student staff members in my department?"
    1. Strongly Disagree
    2. Disagree
    3. Slightly Disagree
    4. Slightly Agree
    5. Agree
    6. Strongly Agree

2. Over the last two weeks, how did the workshops, Online Community of Practice, and coaching benefit you, as you supervised student staff members in your department or in other work? (open ended)

3. How did you incorporate the content from the workshops, Online Community of Practice, or coaching into your work supervising student staff members or in other ways? (open ended)

4. What other comments do you have? (optional)

APPENDIX D

PROFESSIONAL STAFF MEMBER POST-INTERVENTION SURVEY

Professional Staff Members Post-Intervention Survey

Unique Identifier:

Please develop a unique identifier: This identifier should be known only to you, use the first three letters of your mother's first name and the last four digits of your phone number. For example, Sar4567 would be the identifier if your mom's first name was Sarah and your phone number is (623) 555-4567. This will allow us to connect responses from the two surveys while keeping data anonymous.

Please type your unique identifier below.

Demographics

1. Age
2. Gender
     a. Male
     b. Female
     c. Non-Binary
     d. Other
     e. Prefer Not to Disclose
3. How long have you worked in your current role? (years and months)
4. How many years of supervisory experience do you have? (years and months)
5. How long have your worked in higher education? (years and months)

For the following questions/statements please indicate your level of agreement with each of these statements. Based on a six-point Likert Scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Slightly Disagree, 4 = Slightly Agree, 5 = Agree, and 6 = Strongly Agree.

Knowledge

1. I have a good understanding of transferable skills
2. I am knowledgeable about transferable skills
3. I have a sound awareness of transferable skills
4. I am very familiar with transferable skills
5. I readily recognize transferable skills

Skills

6. I have the ability to teach transferable skills
7. I am equipped professionally to provided transferable skill professional development
8. I have the aptitude to provide transferable skills

9. I am qualified to teach transferable skills
10. I have an expertise in teaching transferable skills

Attitudes

11. I value transferable skills as an opportunity for professional development of student staff members
12. I highly support teaching transferable skills to students
13. I understand the usefulness of teaching transferable skills
14. I like to teach transferable skills to student staff members
15. I look forward to developing student staff members' transferable skills
16. Prior to participating in this project, I liked to teach transferable skills to student staff members
17. Prior to participating in this project, I looked forward to developing student staff members' transferable skills

Self-Efficacy

18. I am confident I can teach transferable skills
19. I believe I can teach and prepare student staff members' with transferable skills
20. I am self-assured I can teach transferable skills
21. I am certain I can use my knowledge and skills to successfully teach transferable skills
22. I am certain I can support students in developing transferable skills

APPENDIX E

PROFESSIONAL STAFF MEMBER RETROSPECTIVE, PRE-INTERVENTION

SURVEY

Professional Staff Members Retrospective, Pre-Intervention Survey

Unique Identifier:

Please develop a unique identifier: This identifier should be known only to you, use the first three letters of your mother's first name and the last four digits of your phone number. For example, Sar4567 would be the identifier if your mom's first name was Sarah and your phone number is (623) 555-4567. This will allow us to connect responses from the two surveys while keeping data anonymous.

Please type your unique identifier below.

For the following questions/statements please indicate your level of agreement with each of these statements. Based on a six-point Likert Scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Slightly Disagree, 4 = Slightly Agree, 5 = Agree, and 6 = Strongly Agree.

Knowledge

1. Prior to participating in this project, I had a good understanding of transferable skills
2. Prior to participating in this project, I was knowledgeable about transferable skills
3. Prior to participating in this project, I had a sound awareness of transferable skills
4. Prior to participating in this project, I was very familiar with transferable skills
5. Prior to participating in this project, I readily recognized transferable skills

Skills

11. Prior to participating in this project, I had the ability to teach transferable skills
12. Prior to participating in this project, I was equipped professional to provide transferable skill professional development
13. Prior to participating in this project, I had the aptitude to provide transferable skills
14. Prior to participating in this project, I was qualified to teach transferable skills
15. Prior to participating in this project, I had an expertise in teaching transferable skills

Attitudes

18. Prior to participating in this project, I valued transferable skills as an opportunity for professional development of student staff members
19. Prior to participating in this project, I highly supported teaching transferable skills to students

20. Prior to participating in this project, I understood the usefulness of teaching transferable skills
21. Prior to participating in this project, I liked to teach transferable skills to student staff members
22. Prior to participating in this project, I looked forward to developing student staff members' transferable skills

Self-Efficacy

23. Prior to participating in this project, I was I could teach transferable skills
24. Prior to participating in this project, I believed I could teach and prepare student staff members with transferable skills
25. Prior to participating in this project, I was self-assured I could teach transferable skills
26. Prior to participating in this project, I was certain I could use my knowledge, skills to successfully teach transferable skills
27. Prior to participating in this project, I was certain I could support students in developing transferable skills

APPENDIX F

STUDENT STAFF MEMBER PARTICIPANT RECRUITMENT LETTER

Participant Recruitment Letter: Student Staff Member

Dear Potential Participant:

My name is Mitch Tybroski and I am a doctoral student in the Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College (MLFTC) at Arizona State University (ASU). I am working under the direction of Dr. Ray Buss a faculty member in MLFTC. We are conducting a research study to explore intentional professional development among Educational Outreach and Student Services (EOSS) professional staff members to better equip and prepare individuals to develop transferable skills among student staff members. The purpose of this study is to understand whether a series of transferable skills workshops, coaching, and online communities of practice lead to increased transferable skills.

We are asking for your help, which will involve your participation in a brief intervention, which will allow you the opportunity to work 1-to-1 with your professional staff member supervisor on building transferable skills over the course of the fall semester. Along with this professional development we are asking for the completion of an online survey on two occasions (5 minutes, each), and an in-person interview (about 15 to 20 minutes) concerning your knowledge, experiences, attitudes, and beliefs about your experiences with respect to the intervention over the course of the semester. In total we are asking for roughly 30 minutes of participation over the course of the semester. Interview participants will be randomly selected.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time, there will be no penalty. Choosing not to participate in the study does not affect your standing at Arizona State University or within your respective department. You must be 18 years of age or older to participate in the study.

The benefit to participation is the help guide and shape the future of professional development of professional staff members and student staff members within EOSS. This research study has the potential benefit of laying the foundation for future leaders within EOSS and across the university along with reshaping how we prepare student staff members for full-time employment following graduation.

In the surveys, to protect your confidentiality, we will ask you to create a unique identifier known only to you. To create this unique code, use the first three letter of your mother's first name and the last four digits of your phone number. Thus, for example, if your mother's name was Sarah and your phone number was (602) 543-6789, your code would be Sar 6789. The unique identifier will allow us to match your post-intervention survey responses and your retrospective, pre-intervention responses when we analyze the data.

If you are selected to participate in the interview, the interviews will not be audio recorded without your permission. Please let me know if you do not want the interview to be audio recorded; you also can change your mind after the interview starts, just let me know. I will ask for your oral consent at the time of the interview for those who are selected.

Your responses will be confidential. Results from this study may be used in reports, presentations, or publications but your name will not be used. Further, de-identified data will not be shared.

If you have any questions concerning the research study, please contact the research team – Mitch Tybroski at mitch.tybroski@asu.edu or 760-814-0338 or Dr. Ray Buss at ray.buss@asu.edu or 602-543-6343.

Thank you,

Mitch Tybroski, Doctoral Student
Ray Buss, Professor

If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this research, or if you feel you have been placed at risk, you can contact Dr. Ray Buss at 602-543-6343 or the Chair of Human Subjects Institutional Review Board through the ASU Office of Research Integrity and Assurance at (480) 965-6788.

APPENDIX G

STUDENT STAFF MEMBER INTERVIEW QUESTIONS/ PROTOCOL

Student Staff Member Interview Questions/Protocol

Briefing Statement

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. The purpose of this interview is to better understand the current situation with respect to your learning about communication, teamwork, and leadership skills. To help me understand the situation I have several questions to help guide our conversation. Please respond with your own thinking about the questions. In your responses do not mention your name or the names of other individuals. May I record the interview?

Interview Questions

1. Tell me your communication skills.
    1. If they have changed since the beginning of the semester, how are those skills different now?

2. Tell me your teamwork skills.
    a. If they have changed since the beginning of the semester, how are those skills different now?

3. Tell me your leadership skills.
    a. If they have changed since the beginning of the semester, how are those skills different now?

4. To what extent were you provided with opportunities to develop these skills?

5. To what extent were these skills preparing you for professional employment following graduation?

6. What else would you like to share with me about learning transferable skills or your experience working with your supervisor?

Debriefing Statement

Thank you for your responses and your time today. I appreciate it very much. I will be using your responses to inform my dissertation work.

APPENDIX H

STUDENT STAFF MEMBER POST-INTERVENTION SURVEY

Student Staff Members Post Intervention Survey

Unique Identifier:

Please develop a unique identifier: This identifier should be known only to you, use the first three letters of your mother's first name and the last four digits of your phone number. For example, Sar4567 would be the identifier if your mom's first name was Sarah and your phone number is (623) 555-4567. This will allow us to connect responses from the two surveys while keeping data anonymous.

Please type your unique identifier below.

Demographics

1. Age
2. Gender
    a. Male
    b. Female
    c. Non-Binary
    d. Other
    e. Prefer Not to Disclose
3. Academic Standing
    a. First Year Student
    b. Sophomore
    c. Junior
    d. Senior
    e. Graduate Student
4. Years worked in your current role? (years and months)
5. How many years of total work experience do you have? (years and months)

For the following questions/statements please indicate your level of agreement with each of these statements. Based on a six-point Likert Scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Slightly Disagree, 4 = Slightly Agree, 5 = Agree, and 6 = Strongly Agree.

Communication

1. I am an effective communicator
2. I utilize active listening with others
3. I communicate clearly so others can understand
4. As I communicate, I adjust my communication style to accommodate others' needs
5. I share all important information with others

Teamwork

6. I employ personal strengths, knowledge, and talents to complement those of others
7. I collaborate well with others on my team
8. I build strong, positive working relationships with my team
9. I am a team player, so I try to work effectively with others
10. In a team setting, I work unified with others toward a common goal

Leadership

11. I am a leader
12. In my workplace, I take the lead when the opportunity presents itself
13. As opportunities present themselves, I take a leadership role
14. I serve as a role model in various situations
15. I lead my projects by focusing on my top priorities

Connection to Work

16. I feel I am connected to others at my workplace
17. I have developed good relationships with others at work allowing me to connect with them
18. In my work setting, I feel I am part of the group
19. At work, it feels like I am part of a 'small community'
20. I am part of my workplace environment

APPENDIX I

STUDENT STAFF MEMBER RETROSPECTIVE, PRE-INTERVENTION SURVEY

Student Staff Members Retrospective, Pre-Intervention Survey

Unique Identifier:

Please develop a unique identifier: This identifier should be known only to you, use the first three letters of your mother's first name and the last four digits of your phone number. For example, Sar4567 would be the identifier if your mom's first name was Sarah and your phone number is (623) 555-4567. This will allow us to connect responses from the two surveys while keeping data anonymous.

Please type your unique identifier below.

For the following questions/statements please indicate your level of agreement with each of these statements. Based on a six-point Likert Scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Slightly Disagree, 4 = Slightly Agree, 5 = Agree, and 6 = Strongly Agree.

Communication

1. Prior to participating in this project, I was an effective communicator.
2. Prior to participating in this project, I utilized active listen with others.
3. Prior to participating in this project, I communicated clearly so others could understand
4. Prior to participating in this project, I adjusted my communication style to accommodate others' needs
5. Prior to participating in this project, I shared all important information with others

Teamwork

6. Prior to participating in this project, I employed personal strengths, knowledge, and talents to completement those of others
7. Prior to participating in this project, I collaborated well with others on my team
8. Prior to participating in this project, I built strong, positive, working relationships with my team
9. Prior to participating in this project, I was a team player, who worked effectively with others
10. Prior to participating in this project, in a team setting, I worked to unified with others toward a common goal

Leadership

11. Prior to participating in this project, I was a leader
12. Prior to participating in this project, in my workplace, I took the lead when the opportunity presented itself

13. Prior to participating in this project, as opportunities presented themselves, I took a leadership role,
14. Prior to participating in this project, I served as a role model in various situations
15. Prior to participating in this project, I lead my projects by focused on my top priorities

Connection to Work

16. Prior to participating in this project, I felt connected to others at my workplace
17. Prior to participating in this project, I had a good relationship with others at work allowing me to connect with them
18. Prior to participating in this project, in my work setting, I felt I was part of the group
19. Prior to participating in this project, at work, it felt like I am part of a 'small community'
20. Prior to participating in this project, I was part of my workplace environment

APPENDIX J

IRB APPROVAL

ASU Knowledge Enterprise Development

EXEMPTION GRANTED

Ray Buss
Division of Educational Leadership and Innovation - West Campus
602/543-6343
RAY.BUSS@asu.edu

Dear Ray Buss:

On 7/1/2022 the ASU IRB reviewed the following protocol:

Type of Review:	Initial Study
Title:	Developing Career Readiness Among Collegiate Student Staff Members
Investigator:	Ray Buss
IRB ID:	STUDY00016163
Funding:	None
Grant Title:	None
Grant ID:	None
Documents Reviewed:	• Intervention--Workshops for Professional Staff Members, Category: Other; • Interview Questions--Professional Staff Members, Category: Measures (Survey questions/Interview questions /interview guides/focus group questions); • Interview Questions--Student Staff Members, Category: Measures (Survey questions/Interview questions /interview guides/focus group questions); • IRB Protocol, Category: IRB Protocol; • Journal Prompts for Professional Staff Members, Category: Other; • Recruitment Consent Letter--Professional Staff Member, Category: Consent Form; • Recruitment Consent Letter--Student Staff Member, Category: Consent Form; • Survey 1--Professional Staff Members, Category: Measures (Survey questions/Interview questions /interview guides/focus group questions); • Survey 1--Student Staff Members, Category:

	Measures (Survey questions/Interview questions /interview guides/focus group questions); • Survey 2--Professional Staff Members, Category: Measures (Survey questions/Interview questions /interview guides/focus group questions); • Survey 2--Student Staff Member, Category: Measures (Survey questions/Interview questions /interview guides/focus group questions);

The IRB determined that the protocol is considered exempt pursuant to Federal Regulations 45CFR46 (2) Tests, surveys, interviews, or observation on 7/1/2022.

In conducting this protocol you are required to follow the requirements listed in the INVESTIGATOR MANUAL (HRP-103).

If any changes are made to the study, the IRB must be notified at research.integrity@asu.edu to determine if additional reviews/approvals are required. Changes may include but not limited to revisions to data collection, survey and/or interview questions, and vulnerable populations, etc.

REMINDER - Effective January 12, 2022, in-person interactions with human subjects require adherence to all current policies for ASU faculty, staff, students and visitors. Up-to-date information regarding ASU's COVID-19 Management Strategy can be found here. IRB approval is related to the research activity involving human subjects, all other protocols related to COVID-19 management including face coverings, health checks, facility access, etc. are governed by current ASU policy.

Sincerely,

IRB Administrator

cc:

    Mitchell Tybroski JR