CATL – Improved Student Learning Grant
Final Report compiled in 2007

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The Tool Box - a Description of the Project

Poorly executed projects are time consuming, financially draining and reduce student morale. The Health Science Professional Practice ‘Tool Box’ aims to provide students with a comprehensive resource for project planning, estimating, budgeting, resource allocation, collaboration, and time capture to help Health Science Students and potentially students from other UWA Faculties deliver project portfolios efficiently and flawlessly.

The project involved consultation with key stakeholders in Health Science curriculum delivery; consultation with past students who have completed the Health Science Professional Practice unit, consultation with experts in the field of Project Management. Formative research, design, pilot testing and preparation of the ‘Tool Box’ including both written resources and e-based resources was completed for implementation in second semester.

Finally evaluation of the Tool Box was based on student feed-back both qualitative and quantitative and tool place at the end of semester 2, 2006.

The most intensive component of the project was the design, feedback, preparation and assembly of the Tool Box in time for implementation in semester 2, 2006.

The Rationale

Health Science students are often required to be involved in group projects which can be lengthy, resource intensive and often may reduce student drive. The Health Science Professional Practice ‘Tool Box’ aims to provide students with a comprehensive resource for project planning and management to help Health Science Students deliver projects efficiently and competently.

Whilst some of the resources exist and are readily available this ‘Tool Box’ creates a coherent, orderly approach to the unit materials as the resources are located in the one place for consistency. The ‘Tool Box’, is pivotal to this unit and can also be used as an integral part of your Health Science Practicum placement in fourth year and ultimately in the workplace once they graduate.
This unit has previously relied on using generic text books, web based tools and invited guest lecturers. The Group Project takes a vocational approach to learning and has not been supported by the appropriate materials e.g. templates for timelines or memorandums. This Tool Box’ delivers the student hard and e-copies of templates and checklists that will make the project management component of this course enjoyable and aid the smooth transition into their Health Industry practicum and eventually the workforce.

In the short term students will benefit by having access to planning tools that are specific to your Health Science major, and will expedite your project management skills in the field of Health Science. Previously students have grappled with a plethora of communication, time management, professional behaviour and project management resources available both in hard and web based format.

In the longer term, students need preparation in work-based skills and awareness, specific workplace skills, your legal responsibilities, personal wellbeing and safety, safe workplace practices and work literacy. You also need orientation to the profession or industry in profession and industry structure, professional liability, ethics, supervision and marketing.

We know that lack of focused preparation and resources can cause an increase in students’ stress levels and affect their performance during group projects and placement. This lack of preparation for successful group work and practicum learning could stem from an assumption that effective learning merely requires an extension of traditional classroom strategies, which is not the case. With this in mind the ‘Tool Box’ has been developed and will be piloted in 2006.

Project Implementation

Funding was successfully achieved through CATL at the University of Western Australian in May 2006, to create 40 Tool Boxes. The Tool Box was then researched using a combination of web-based and hard copy search including the following:

- Project management websites;
- Microsoft Office Project Management template site;
- Australian University website search that teach either Project Management &/or Health Science and include a practicum option;
- Hard copy Project Management literature search;
- Discussion with peers and industry placement Supervisors;
- Focus groups with past and present UWA students.

An electronic list of tools was then compiled. These were collated so that could fit broadly with contemporary project management phases or the lifecycle of a project, known as:

1. The Project Initiation phase
2. The Project Planning and Development Phase
3. The Implementation and Execution Phase
4. The Close out Phase.

In addition a section on ‘A New Job’ was added and some handy PDF formatted guides on Project Management also included.

Thirty seven (37) Tool Boxes were distributed to third year Health Science Students. Furthermore, the Sub Dean of Health Sciences requested an additional fifty (50) Tool Boxes and twenty nine (29) were distributed to our fourth year Health Science students who were on practicum placement. The remainder were distributed to our Honors students, later this semester.

Finally a number of professional peers asked for copies and approximately 6 additional copies were distributed including Student Services Suzy Vaughan and Dr Alison from CUCRH, Geraldton and Noni Walker at Healthway.

Feedback and Evaluation

Focus group feed back June 2006
- Focus Group thematic Feed-back June 2006 (n=8)
  - Lack of group ground rules.
  - Poor team communication.
  - Uncertain where to locate PM tools.
  - Uncertain how to use PM tools.
– Computer literacy variation between students.
– ‘We need the kind of samples we had in our Health Promotion file to help get kick started’.
– Lecture notes and text book were not helpful.

The informal feedback (by email) past Health Science students:

Dear Justine,

I just picked up the gift from you - the very cool tool box! First glance, already looks awesome. Been using project charter at the health department, but the one in the tool box is so much more detailed! I wished we had this last year for our Health Science Professional Practice unit. BHsc graduate 2005

Hi Justine

Just wanted to say thank you so much for the tool box CD and notes, Ania gave them out on Friday. I’ve been checking it out today and it looks really helpful! I’ve already used the phone skills notes and the meeting check list and they’ve been great. BHSc Practicum student, 2006

Thank you for your Professional Practice pack - I’ve briefly skimmed through it and it looks incredibly useful. :) BHSc graduate, 2003

Selected Feedback from student group at completion of 2006 online class survey

‘I found it to be a useful tool for the assignment in that it showed us how a lot of things should be set out. I found that I didn’t really use the printed stuff very much, however that was just me personally an I’m sure other people would have used it. Maybe an idea would be just to give a summary of the contents of the CD on paper, and just give a CD with more templates and materials’. HSMD 2216 2006 student - male

‘I think it helped us a lot with the unit (especially the project) and it is a great guide for future jobs as i had no idea how minutes were set out! And i think this would be a great help for those students undertaking this unit next year. And also the hard copy/electronic copy is very useful as it is good to see the actual layout of the worksheets and its easier to navigate this way rather then using a computer!’ HSMD 2216 2006 student – female.

SPOT evaluation

A question was also included in the HSMD 2216 SPOT evaluation that stated
I anticipate that I will use the Tool Box in other units? The responses are shown below.
Dissemination of project outcomes

I used the implementation of Tool Box as part of my Healthway Leadership Development program and prepared and submitted a Report to Healthway on the success of the toolbox as demonstrating my leadership skills in the teaching and learning field of Health Science, November 2006. A sample Tool Box was provided to Healthway.

I presented a paper to the annual Teaching and Learning Forum (TLF) 2007 hosted by UWA and held on January 30 and 31, 2007. The theme was Student Engagement and my project fitted well with the theme, the presentation was on Wednesday Jan 31st at 5pm.

I have also been asked and agreed to present as part of Teaching Week 2007 a seminar organised by CATL to give prospective applicants an insight into what was involved and the success of our ISL grants. This was to be held on May, 2007 and facilitated by Dr Lee Partridge.

I also have been asked to write an article to published in the first edition of CATLyst Issue 1 May, 2007.

Conclusions

The Tool Box reached the intended student audience and was deemed successful. A modified version is under preparation for 2007 roll-out.
Furthermore, I have anecdotally received feedback from Supervisors of Health Science students as to design improvements, to further facilitate the student’s learning experience.

Finally, I have considered potential changes, modifications and improvements that the Tool Box requires. The opportunity to link this with WebCT6 and online modules is definitely a future option to pursue and of great interest to me.
## Budget breakdown

**Summary Activity Budget for the Health Science Professional Practice ‘Tool Box’ as of 04/02/70**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Anticipated Cost</th>
<th>Final Costing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 x FTE Level 4.1 Research Assistant @ 14.5 hours (including on-costs of 23%) $31.33 per hour</td>
<td>$1174.87</td>
<td>$790.80 $ 92.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Appointed: Darcy Bosch</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75 x PVC ‘Tool Box’ with Art Work supplied</td>
<td>$ 4.95 per PVC tool box $ 780.00 photocopying &amp; artwork @ 66 pages x 90 sets</td>
<td>$594.00 Stationery PVC $1039.20 Printing/copying/binding $240.00 CD graphics re-format/cardex covers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Includes formatted CD-rom Amended: 120 Tool Boxes produced.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Original SPH Artwork and branding of Tool Box @ $75 per hour for 6 hours</td>
<td>Provided by SPH</td>
<td>In kind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 hours @ $100 per hour including transcribing</td>
<td>$200.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 x Focus Groups &amp; online survey design &amp; evaluation 24/10/2006. Amended: 2 hour facilitation &amp; 2 hour evaluating themes.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spent so far</td>
<td>$2956.97</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>CATL amount paid</td>
<td>$2834.87</td>
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<tr>
<td>Over budget</td>
<td>$122.10</td>
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</table>

The small over spend was covered by the Sub Dean Bachelor of Health Sciences