Implementing Computer Applications in Counseling

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The Problem

- Changes in clients
- Changes in staff
- Changes in organizations
- Changes in technology
Possible Solution

Use models to reduce complexity and guide our work
Potential Benefits

• Anticipate important issues, e.g., staff anxiety
• Proactive instead of reactive
• Motivate staff to invest time
• Create realistic expectations
• More cost-effective services
Effective Use of the Model

• Use as potential rather than required implementation activities
• Use to stimulate thinking among staff
When to Use the Model

• New computer resources are added
• Existing computer resources change
• Changes occur in clients served
• Organization changes occur, e.g., increased accountability
Implementation Problems

- Inadequate planning
- Poor integration of computer applications
- Inadequate training
- Staff anxiety and resistance
Possible Solution

Seven-step implementation model for computer applications

Adaptation possible for Internet applications
7 Step Model

1) Program **Evaluation**
2) Software **Selection**
3) Software **Integration**
4) Staff **Training**
5) **Trial** Use
6) **Operation**
7) **Evaluation**
Program Evaluation
Program Evaluation

• Effectiveness of current resources and services?
• If gaps exist, will computer resources help?
• Implementation committee
• Implementation plan prepared
• Stakeholder support sought
Software Selection

- Identify systems with features matching client needs
- Consider features, quality, and cost
- Select the best software
Software Integration

Program Evaluation

Software Selection

Software Integration
Software Integration

- Check “fit” with existing services
- Connect system with services
- Determine staff roles
- Finalize operational procedures
- Prepare evaluation plan
- Continue public relations
Staff Training

- Program Evaluation
- Software Selection
- Software Integration
- Staff Training
Staff Training

- Develop staff training plan
- Deliver training for practitioners and support staff
- Familiarize administrators and stakeholders
- Evaluate training effectiveness
Trial Use

Program Evaluation

Software Selection

Software Integration

Staff Training

Trial Use
Trial Use

- Identify trial users
- Trial use of the system
- Revise system as needed
Operation

Program **Evaluation**

Software **Selection**

Software **Integration**

Staff **Training**

**Trial Use**

**Operation**
Operation

• Operate the system
• Collect evaluation data
• Continue public relations
Evaluation

- Program Evaluation
- Software Selection
- Software Integration
- Staff Training
- Trial Use
- Operation
- Evaluation
Evaluation

• Revise system integration as needed
• Cycle back to an appropriate implementation step
7 Step Model

- Program Evaluation
- Software Selection
- Software Integration
- Staff Training
- Trial Use
- Operation
- Evaluation
Feedback Loops

- Program Evaluation
- Software Selection
- Software Integration
- Staff Training
- Trial Use
- Operation
- Evaluation
Feedback Loops

Program Evaluation

Software Selection

Software Integration

Staff Training

Trial Use

Operation

Evaluation
Complete 7 Step Model

Program Evaluation

Software Selection

Software Integration

Staff Training

Trial Use

Operation

Evaluation
Success Factors

• Staff participation in decisions
  – “People support what they help create”
• Flexibility in staff use of computer resources
• Good staff training
• Clarity of staff roles
• Good communication
Success Factors

• Administrative support
• Anticipating impact of IT
• Good integration
• Positive, yet cautious, attitude
• Team approach with designated coordinator
Success Factors

- Concrete plan, however brief
- On-going nature of the process
- Avoiding a short-term focus
- Realistic timetable
- Good documentation
- Good evaluation
Nature of Implementation

- On-going
- More interpersonal than technical
- Human service staff have the skills required
Nature of Implementation
Nature of Implementation

Technical Issues

Interpersonal Issues
Conclusion

• Good planning improves cost-effectiveness
• Some planning is better than no planning
• Implementation can improve over time
For Additional Information

www.career.fsu.edu/techcenter/

Thank You