Wayne State University  
College of Education  
IT 8320 Performance Consulting & Analysis  
Winter 2014

Instructor  
Ingrid Guerra-López, PhD  
Associate Professor and Director,  
Institute for Learning & Performance Improvement  
College of Education, WSU  
Office: 399 College of Education  
Email: Ingrid.guerra-lopez@wayne.edu (preferred contact method)

Course Approach

The field of performance improvement is in continuous transition and development. It has evolved from the experience, reflection and conceptualization of professional practitioners looking to improve not only ‘learning through instructional solutions’ but also human performance in the workplace. Since the late 1980s, much attention has been devoted to expanding the boundaries of performance improvement professionals by shifting exclusively from a training and learning focus to a performance system focus that looks at a wide range of relevant human and organizational variables. Therefore, performance consultants are those who adopt a systems view of performance gaps, systematically analyze both gaps and systems, and design cost-effective and cost-efficient interventions that are based on analysis of data, scientific knowledge, and documented precedents, in order to close these gaps in the most desirable manner. Serious performance consultants do not impose instructional solutions without data about performance gaps and causes.

This course is designed to support the development of your conceptual understanding, as well as your practical experience as performance consultant, as described by the objectives in the following section.

Competencies and Objectives

1. Discuss key concepts in performance consulting (Discussion Board Reflections)  
2. Discuss experiences in performance consulting (Invited guest interviews)  
3. Apply key concepts in performance consulting scenarios (Performance Consulting Project)
Required Text


    Note: 2004 Version would also work.

Additional Readings

Relevant articles may also be provided to you throughout the semester, as appropriate.

Deliverable Values

1. Unit Reflections (7 units x 5 points) ......................................................... 35 pts
2. Coaching & Feedback Sessions (3 x 5 points) ................................. 15 pts
3. Performance Consulting Project .............................................................. 50 pts
   a. Client Overview and Request Summary ........................................ 10 pts
   b. Project Definition & Plan .............................................................. 10 pts
   c. Findings & Recommendations .................................................... 20 pts
   d. Evaluation Plan ........................................................................... 10 pts

General Description Deliverables

1. Unit Reflections (Individual Activity: 7 x 5 points)

Reflections (Individual Assignment)
For each unit, you will be expected to respond to a trigger question provided in the Discussion Board. To receive full credit for the task you must demonstrate reflective consideration of the question and an understanding of its implications for practice. Additionally, you are expected to respond at least once to a classmate’s response. Your reflection and comments should be substantive, but not needlessly long.

Your initial reflection could range from 3-5 paragraphs in length and your other comments could vary from 1-3 paragraphs. Again, the key is not length but substance. Substance is reflected by clearly responding to the issue at hand, bringing in another dimension to the discussion, providing an example, synthesizing various remarks, bringing in external references that illustrate a different perspective, etc. Please refrain from one-liners, if they are not followed up by further articulation.

You will find the trigger questions for each unit’s discussions within the Discussion Board. Simply respond directly, there is no need to attach the response as a Word document.
Performance Consulting Project (Team Activity: 50 points)

Your performance consulting proposal is designed to allow you to immediately put into practice the concepts and process discussed in class. This authentic learning approach is instrumental in facilitating your internalization of the performance improvement process and logic, and the kinds of things that will naturally arise when you are simultaneously working with so many issues.

You will work in teams of 3 to produce 4 key deliverables throughout the semester:

1. Client Overview and Request Summary
2. Project Definition & Plan
3. Findings & Recommendations
4. Evaluation Plan

See Course Agenda below for specific due dates. The detailed assignment descriptions can be found under the Assignment folder on our course website.

Team Sessions: Coaching and Feedback (Teach Activity: 3 x 5 points = 15 points)

Each team will have the opportunity to have three individual coaching and feedback sessions with me to go over the progress of the consulting project. These coaching and feedback sessions can be done in person during my office hours (Wednesdays) or virtually at a mutually agreed time.

This will be your opportunity to bring up any issues or questions, and have them resolved on a timely fashion. The types of issues typically discussed relate to client interactions, internal team dynamics, or clarification on concepts and their proper application.

Assignments Formatting and Procedures

Please submit all of your assignments using the latest APA guidelines.

Submission and Resubmissions: All work should be submitted via email to: ingrid.guerra-lopez@wayne.edu. The exception is the weekly discussion board reflection, which is to be directly submitted to the respective forum (e.g. Unit 1 Reflection; Unit 2 Reflection, etc...)