

## ***X. Survey Assistant***

### **The Setting**

The Savanna-Chatham Private Industry Council (PIC) administers a Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) in Savannah, Georgia. They arrange job placements for hundreds of disadvantaged youths each summer. They are eager to get feedback on how their program is perceived by their clients (both the youth workers and employers). In the summer of 1993, they used a team of five youth workers and one adult supervisor to design and administer a survey of 200 youth participants in the SYEP and their supervisors. They reported their findings and made recommendations to the PIC about how to improve the SYEP for the future.

### **Comparable Settings**

A similar survey of 42 youth workers and their supervisors in a SYEP in Baltimore was conducted by two youth workers with two supervisors. Similar projects could take place in any office that serves external clients, including government or charitable organizations, businesses, and schools, to name a few. The size of the team will depend on the desired format and audience of the survey.

### **The Work**

Team members scheduled time and organized the resources and information necessary to survey the clients of the Savannah-Chatham PIC. They developed and implemented a work plan from start to finish. First, the team identified the purpose of the survey. They then decided who would be surveyed (for example, 200 of the eligible applicants to the program, including those who were placed in jobs and those who were not) and how to conduct the survey (for example, in person, via telephone, or mail). After addressing these issues, the team wrote specific questions and developed the questionnaire. They then conducted the survey. They decided what technology to use, who would set it up, and what statistical procedures to use. Finally, they presented the results to the PIC. They decided how to organize the report, what medium to use, and how much detail to report.

### **The Learning**

Team members learned about a complex system as represented by the organization of the PIC, its business and its clients. They learned about resources by developing and acting on a work plan that considers the people, time, material and facilities available. They learned about information by acquiring, organizing, interpreting, and communicating survey information. They developed interpersonal skills by dealing with the clients they surveyed, as well as by working as a team in all aspects of this project. They learned about systems by following the project from beginning to end. They started by determining the purpose of the survey, and ended by reporting the findings. Finally, they learned about technology by selecting what tools they would use to write, conduct, summarize and report the survey and by applying the technology to the task.

*Source: The Institute for Policy Studies  
The Johns Hopkins University  
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