

Interim Report 2:

ESPORT Project Evaluation

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Executive summary

This Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) project commenced in late 2004, and was to conclude, after an extension, in August 2006. The purpose of the project was to provide training and counseling to entry-level employment low-literate adults, in regions of Canada experiencing chronic unemployment, through enhancement of clients' essential skills. The original partners were the Aboriginal Human Resource Development Council Of Canada (AHRDCC), the Cape Breton Education Consortium, and the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Labor (NLFL). An amendment to the project expanded access to the John Howard Society (Ottawa), Aboriginal Futures Career and Training Centre (Calgary), and Metis Employment Services, Region 3 (Calgary). As well, data and experience from the Saskatchewan Penitentiary, Prince Albert, was incorporated, although this site was not a formal part of the project, and was not a participant in the evaluation.

An advisory group (AG) of representatives of the funding and participating agencies and stakeholder groups was established. At this writing, the AG had met twice in Ottawa to review project plans and outcomes.

The evaluation was conducted using principles of *participatory action research* (PAR), incorporating on-site and online interviews and observations, surveys of various kinds (via telephone and e-mail), direct observations (on the part of the evaluators, the project manager, trainers, and participants), and records and reports generated by the ESPORT system.

Tentative findings of the project to date include the following:

- Usage of the system, though initially disappointing, rose steadily during the report period: at this time, a total of 12 sites in four provinces, 103 clients, and 51 facilitators have been involved in the project. ESPORT usage increased over 100% in the final quarter of 2005.
- Careers investigated by clients varied; the five most commonly appearing employment areas in the clients' portfolios were: business, construction, clerk

- (various), heritage and environmental, and nursery and greenhouse. Also included were health aide and health services, and retail.
- Facilitators reported that problems arose for many users over the time required (14 to 16 hours) to complete the ESPORT program. Suggestions for addressing this problem were offered, and are under investigation in the remainder of the project.
 - Changes were made to the training process to make the training more effective in preparing facilitators to implement ESPORT with clients in their home programs. Training outcomes and experiences were evaluated regularly, and evolved continually as the project proceeded.
 - Additional initiatives of opportunity were added to the project, as amendments were approved.
 - Other modifications enhancing the project and addressing needs or opportunities included: a virtual community of practice, to link users and exploit their growing experience with ESPORT; revisions and enhancements to materials and contents of ESPORT as suggested by users, including addition of a spell-checker to the system; provision of a searchable EARAT database; development of a utility to permit downloading and transfer of client ESPORT records (providing ready mobility for users); refinements to the standalone version (for the Prince Albert Penitentiary); provision of a Helpdesk for users during business hours; and planning for a French version of the system.
 - Questions about the future availability of PLATO, the computer-assisted learning program, were raised, and are subject to ongoing assessment.

This is the second interim report of the project; the final report will be available in fall 2006.

1 **Interim Report 2:**

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3 **ESPORT Project Evaluation**

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17 **Project background and overview**

18 Reporting history

19 This is the second interim report of the ESPORT project; the *First Interim Report*
20 was produced in July 2005 (Fahy, 2005). A full description of the project's origins and
21 rationale, including an explanation for the evaluation methodology, is contained in the
22 first report (available from the project manager). The following is a brief summary of
23 pertinent background information from that report.

24 The ESPORT (*Essential Skills Portfolio*; initially, *ESCORT*) project formally
25 commenced on October 17, 2004. The purpose of the project was described as follows:

26 The ESPORT Demonstration Project will evaluate, enhance, and promote an
27 Internet-delivered, computer-mediated process designed to assist low-literate
28 adults in choosing, qualifying for, and obtaining entry-level employment
29 consistent with their interests and abilities. The project targets two of the groups
30 identified in *Knowledge Matters* as sources of workers for the knowledge
31 economy: youth and Aboriginal people, and a third group – displaced workers.
32 (“Report to Advisors,” November 7, 2004).

33 The project was to be conducted in four phases over the period October 2004 to
34 May 2006. Participating programs, through funding provided by Human Resources and
35 Skills Development Canada (HRSDC), and the Aboriginal Human Resource
36 Development Council of Canada (AHRDCC), were to be located in Cape Breton,
37 Newfoundland, and in selected aboriginal communities in the West (Calgary,
38 Vancouver). (As described later in this report, other sites commenced use of ESPORT
39 during this period. Though these sites were in some cases not formally part of the
40 project, they provided additional evaluation opportunities and experiences. Where
41 these non-project sites are referenced, they are identified, and a brief program
42 description is provided.)

43 The project was originally to consist of four phases:

- 44 1. Phase 1 (October 2004 to March 2005): Concept refinement and project
45 development
- 46 2. Phase 2 (October 2004 to April 2005): Preparation for implementation
- 47 3. Phase 3 (October 2004 to May 2006): Project implementation
- 48 4. Phase 4 (June 2005 to May 2006): Reporting and dissemination of results

49 An extension of the project was authorized in late 2005, allowing sites that had
50 only lately commenced operations to be included in the evaluation, and extending the
51 completion to summer 2006.

52 Partners

53 Planning, funding partners. The parties collaborating in the project consisted of
54 the planning and funding partners, and the employment-related programs that
55 provided facilitators (tutors, advisors) and clients ("Report to Advisors," 2004). The
56 collaborating parties comprised:

- 57 ▪ Cummins EP Consulting, Inc. (CEP), Patrick Cummins, president.
- 58 ▪ PLATO Learning (Canada), Inc., Grant Bishop, general manager.
- 59 ▪ TVLT New Media Language, Inc., Rob McBride, president.

- 60 ▪ P. Fahy Consulting (PFC), Patrick J. Fahy, PhD, president and project lead
- 61 evaluator.
- 62 ▪ Wallace Educational Research and Consulting, Mark Wallace, principal
- 63 consultant.
- 64 ▪ Activoweb, Peter Merritt, principal consultant.
- 65 ▪ Human Resources and Skills Development Canada. (HRSDC provided staff
- 66 to oversee the project, and to the agency on the Advisory Committee.)

67 Programming partners. The partnering programs in which ESPORT was to be
 68 implemented and evaluated were chosen for their ability to provide an environment
 69 consistent with ESPORT's objectives, staffed by skilled and experienced facilitators, and
 70 serving clients with needs and goals that might benefit from ESPORT's presence.
 71 ESPORT was intended to provide the following enhancements to the clients'
 72 experiences:

73 Evaluation, enhancement, and promotion of Internet-delivered, computer-
 74 mediated process that assists low-literate adults to qualify for and obtain entry-
 75 level employment consistent with their individual interests and abilities. (*Logical*
 76 *Framework Analysis*)

77 Each programming partner provided training opportunities for their facilitators,
 78 who then provided clients with guided access to ESPORT and to evaluation processes.
 79 The participating programs were in centres where occupational guidance or training
 80 were regularly delivered to clients (these were called *local delivery agencies* [LDAs], in
 81 project planning documents). The original project identified three programming
 82 partners (from the *Proposal Template for Proponents [HRP 1.1.1]*):

- 83 1. **The Aboriginal Human Resource Development Council Of Canada**
- 84 **(AHRDCC).** Working through strategic public and private sector
- 85 partnerships, AHRDCC develops innovative employment solutions for
- 86 Aboriginal people, with a mission to promote full participation of Aboriginal
- 87 people in Canadian labour markets. Through partnerships with corporate,

88 educational, government, and aboriginal leaders, the Council pioneers ways
89 to increase skills and training opportunities for Aboriginal people in Canada.

- 90 2. **The Cape Breton Education Consortium.** This is an umbrella group that
91 represents employment service providers in the former industrial Cape
92 Breton region. It is composed of the North Side Economic Development
93 Assistance Corporation, the Glace Bay and Sidney YMCA, and the Horizon
94 Achievement Centre. These organizations are funded through joint contracts
95 with HRDC and the Nova Scotia Department of Community Services to
96 provide employment counseling services and/or employment readiness
97 services to individuals facing multiple barriers to employment.
- 98 3. **The Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Labor (NLFL).** This is the
99 main umbrella organization for the labor movement in Newfoundland and
100 Labrador, with a mandate to promote the interests of its affiliates, to
101 generally advance the economic and social welfare of both unionized and
102 non-unionized workers, and to advocate on behalf of workers and the
103 general public areas such as economic development, social programs,
104 equality, and human rights. The NLFL represents approximately 50,000
105 workers in 25 affiliated unions across the province, in a both the public and
106 private sectors.

107 An amendment to the project, with costs jointly shared by CEP
108 Consulting and the funding agency, was approved in late 2005, allowing
109 recruitment of a coordinator for distance delivery in Newfoundland and
110 Labrador. Implementation in these sites was to commence early in 2006,
111 extending for six months (unless extended).

- 112 4. **ACCESS group, Surrey, BC.** Consists of facilitators and staff from the
113 Aboriginal Connections to Employment (ACE); the ACCESS Centre; Kla-
114 how-eya Employment Services (KES); and the Native Education Centre
115 (NEC). Programming commenced in the ACCESS group when training was
116 conducted, July 26 – 28, 2005, at the Kla-how-eya Centre, as described below.

117 All sites were re-trained onsite December 2, 5, and 6, 2005, due to turnover
118 among staff.

119 5. **Ottawa John Howard Society.** This site commenced with training on
120 November 9, 2005. Initial training was on ESPORT only. Another innovation
121 in the training was to have students accompany facilitators, so that the
122 training could be specific to the needs and preferences of individuals, and to
123 assure that at least one student was active in the program when the facilitator
124 returned to his or her home program.

125 6. **Aboriginal Futures Career and Training Centre, Calgary.** Training was
126 conducted afternoons during the period January 16 and 17, 2006, for four
127 staff facilitators. Trainee facilitators were invited to include clients in the
128 training, but declined for various reasons (see below).

129 7. **Metis Employment Services, Region 3, Calgary.** This site was trained
130 mornings during January 16 and 17, 2006. Like Aboriginal Futures, above,
131 these facilitators, though offered the opportunity, declined to include their
132 clients in the training process.

133 The Advisory Group. The ESPORT Advisory Group (AG) comprised
134 representatives of the programming, planning, and funding agencies, sufficiently
135 knowledgeable about and interested in the project to provide review of and guidance on
136 project decisions and outcomes. These individuals advised and supported ESPORT
137 during its development, and received the reports and briefings for reflection and
138 comment. The core members of this group were ("Report to Advisors," 2004):

- 139 1. Brigid Hayes – Director, Labour, Canadian Labour and Business Centre,
140 Ottawa.
- 141 2. Bonnie Kennedy – Executive Director, Canadian Association for Prior
142 Learning Assessment, Ottawa.
- 143 3. Craig Hall – Director of Corporate Strategy, Aboriginal Human Resource
144 Development Council of Canada (AHRDCC).

145 4. Annette Huton - Program Analyst, Skills Information, Human Resources
146 Partnerships, Human Investment Programs, Human Resources Development
147 Skills Development Canada, Ottawa. (Ms. Huton left HRSDC, and the
148 Advisory Group, in fall 2005.)

149 Other advisors who served on the Advisory Group included:

- 150 5. Patrick Cummins, project manager.
151 6. Trina Maher, Manager, Aboriginal Skills and Learning, AHRDCC, Ottawa
152 representing Craig Hall.
153 7. Colleen Meloche, HRSDC, Ottawa.
154 8. Suha Taissi, Policy Advisor, HRSDC, Ottawa.
155 9. Patrick J. Fahy, lead evaluator, and author of this report.

156 Originally, four meetings of the Advisory Group were planned: the first, in
157 Ottawa, November 9, 2004, was held prior to project implementation, and looked
158 particularly at the evaluation and communication plans. The second, during
159 implementation, considered emerging formative recommendations of the evaluation
160 (this meeting occurred December 12, 2005, in Ottawa). Others meetings were to be held
161 as required in relation to significant findings, emerging questions or opportunities, or at
162 the request of the Advisory Group itself.

163 The role of the Advisory Group was described as follows in the project's
164 Evaluation Plan:

165 The AG will be the initial source of guidance on the evaluation plan for this
166 project. As part of the face-to-face meeting with the Advisory Group, work will
167 begin on core elements of the *Evaluation Framework*, including development or
168 review of such evaluation components as the following:

- 169 1. Persons to be involved.
170 2. Schedule of key events.
171 3. Philosophy guiding the project and the evaluation (proposed is PAR).
172 4. Specific objectives of the project and the evaluation.
173 5. Observation and data-gathering processes, and data to be gathered.

- 174 6. Communication plan, methods, and schedule.
 175 7. Reflection and (re)planning processes.
 176 8. Reports to be produced; vetting and dissemination process.

177 At the meeting of the Advisory Group in November 2004, the above was
 178 endorsed by the AG.

179 **Evaluation process**

180 *Background to the model – participatory action research (PAR)*

181 The evaluation of the project was based upon principles of *participatory action*
 182 *research* (PAR), described as follows (“Evaluation proposal: ESPORT Demonstration
 183 Project, Draft 5,” 2004):

184 PAR is a method of research where creating a positive social change is the
 185 predominant driving force. PAR grew out of social and educational research and
 186 exists today as one of the few research methods which embraces principles of
 187 participation and reflection, and empowerment and emancipation of groups
 188 seeking to improve their social situation (Seymour-Rolls & Hughes, 1998).

189 In PAR evaluations, the focus is on production of results useful to the
 190 participants in making better decisions about possible action. *Meaningfulness* and
 191 *usefulness* are the crucial criteria for judging PAR results; participants must be able to
 192 understand and use evaluation findings. Through reflection and dialogue – the
 193 opportunity to think and talk about the results – everyone concerned should have the
 194 opportunity to understand what is being discovered, and to express their views about its
 195 implications. The purpose of the evaluation was to assure that the project’s lessons were
 196 understood in a collaborative fashion, and that the project benefited from its discoveries.
 197 An iterative process of *observation, reflection, planning, and action* was used to give all
 198 participants input into project development and implementation.

199 *Data collection – principles and strategies.* Various methods of collecting evaluation
 200 data were employed in the project, based on core PAR principles:

- 201 1. Anyone asked to participate in any evaluation activity could decline to
202 participate, or could withdraw from any activity, at any time, without
203 explanation, and without prejudice to their ongoing involvement.
- 204 2. Those wishing to remove themselves and/or their input from the study could
205 do so at any time.
- 206 3. Any information collected during the evaluation process was kept
207 completely confidential and secure at all times. No one who participated in
208 the project was identified in any report or publication, unless they expressly
209 agree or requested to be identified. Written permission was obtained from
210 anyone for use of information which might identify them.
- 211 4. All information generated or data used during the evaluation was to be kept
212 secure during the project, and destroyed at an agreed upon date after project
213 end.

214 The principal data-gathering methods and strategies used in the evaluation
215 included:

- 216 - **On-site or online interviews.** When feasible, the evaluators visited sites
217 personally, to observe training events and to meet with and interview
218 directly as many participants as possible. The evaluators also conducted
219 interviews using various technologies (telephone, computer conferencing), or
220 posted messages, surveys, or questions to participants electronically. The
221 evaluators explained their intentions regarding any information generated by
222 any of these methods.
- 223 - **Questionnaires, opinionnaires.** These surveys were administered in various
224 forms, including face-to-face, oral or written, or electronic. Participants were
225 asked to express their opinions, or describe their views or experiences, on
226 these. Surveys were completed by an interviewer taking down the subject's
227 comments, or by the subject directly. At least one open-ended question
228 permitted respondents to comment on any aspect of the project.

- 229 - **Direct observations.** Anyone involved in the project used visits as
230 opportunities to observe activities at learning centres. Observations of
231 interest were forwarded to the evaluators.
- 232 - **Records (system-generated and paper-based).** Program records of client
233 activity, and personal, work-related, and academic histories, were accessed as
234 available. Confidentiality was maintained in any such secondary use of these
235 data (Medical Research Council of Canada, 2003). Any reports that resulted
236 preserved the confidentiality of participants; no one other than the evaluators
237 saw information containing personal information.
- 238 - **Document analysis.** The evaluators used reports and other documents that
239 added useful information to the evaluation. Before any documents were
240 used, names and other identifying information were removed, and any
241 identifying information retained in the reports was kept strictly confidential.

242 *Role of the evaluation consultants*

243 The evaluation consultants were involved in various of tasks during the project,
244 including:

- 245 1. Helping to identify and contact those who should be included in the
246 evaluation.
- 247 2. Explaining the evaluation to those involved or interested in the project.
- 248 3. Assisting participants to express their views and articulate their suggestions
249 about various questions the project was attempting to address.
- 250 4. Helping participants to communicate with each other, and monitoring the
251 overall interaction process.
- 252 5. Summarizing the results of discussions for participants, and asking them to
253 clarify or comment on any questions arising from the ongoing discussions
254 and planning.
- 255 6. Monitoring progress toward answering important project questions; writing
256 reports to summarize results regarding the project's important questions.

- 257 7. Reporting the findings and conclusions reached by the project, and helping to
258 make various identified stakeholders aware of the project's results.
- 259 8. Consulting with project administrators regarding evaluation results and their
260 implications for project planning and direction.

261 The overall goal of the evaluation was to help the participants to achieve their
262 various goals for the project. The PAR model regards all participants as "researchers,"
263 each playing a key role in the evaluation process, "including, but not limited to,
264 [producing] information relevant to making decisions, judgments, comparisons, or goal
265 attainment assessments" (Patton, 1975). All participants were asked to help make the
266 evaluation successful (Masters, 1995). The evaluation consultants' role was described as
267 supporting the participants, especially in communications, data gathering and analysis,
268 recordkeeping and monitoring, and reporting (including dissemination of results).

269 Scope of the evaluation

270 The questions initially identified for the evaluation appear in the *First Interim*
271 *Report* (pp. 15 – 17). These questions defined the scope of the evaluation, as follows:

- 272 1. Participants: backgrounds, characteristics, histories, goals and objectives,
273 barriers, views of the program.
- 274 2. Programs: enrolment, programming, counseling, and employment histories;
275 relation of history to the ESPORT project.
- 276 3. Technology: used, success/adaptations, impact on the program.
- 277 4. Outcomes: sustainability, adaptation to ESPORT, community and learning
278 impacts.

279 Occasional Reports

280 In order to help the project management monitor adoption and progress of the
281 project, *occasional reports* were provided from time to time based on emerging data or
282 conditions observed as part of the evaluation process. As noted in the *First Interim*
283 *Report*, six Occasional Reports were produced from February to June 2005. In the period

284 July 1, 2005, to November 1, 2005, five more Occasional Reports were provided to the
285 project management.

286 Occasional reports were to brief project managers on situations or events
287 considered significant for planning or the evaluation, clearly requiring intervention or
288 attention, or meriting further exploration. The reports were quasi-confidential
289 documents, intended for the use of management, rather than as project evaluation
290 reports per se. Some of the observations or findings that were the subject of these
291 reports might later have been included in other evaluation documents; if so,
292 confidentiality was maintained regarding sources of the information reported.

293 Overall chronology of the project

294 Table 1 shows the major events of the evaluation process, during the period
295 covered in this report (July 2005 – January 2006), in chronological order.

296

297 **Table 1: Chronology of major project events**

Date, location	Event
July 5, 2005	First ESPORT newsletter
July 7	Dates for ACCESS training set (July 27 – 29)
July 8	Occasional Report #7
July 27 – 29	Training, ACCESS program, Vancouver
August 12	<i>Occasional Report #8</i>
August 31	<i>Occasional Report #9</i>
September 19	<i>Occasional Report #10</i>
October 4	<i>Occasional Report #11</i>
October 7	Amendment to demonstration project agreement signed by Minister.
October 20	<i>Occasional Report #12</i>
October 24	Spell-checker added to portfolio builder
October 26	Note from PC to Clahane, Bishop, re problems in Sydney accessing PLATO materials; request for meeting
October 31	Planning for John Howard Society, Ottawa, training and evaluation.
November 9	Training, John Howard Society, Hire Power group, Ottawa
November 15	Question from Cape Breton (C. MacLellan) re suspension of Canadian PLATO operations; referred to P. Cummins.
November 16	<i>Readiness questionnaire</i> sent to Hire Power group, John Howard Society, Ottawa
November 16	Training, John Howard Society, literacy group, Ottawa.
November 17	ESPORT announces (Newsletter) that PLATO (Canada) has closed its offices
November 22	<i>Readiness questionnaire</i> sent to literacy group, John Howard Society, Ottawa
November 27	Occasional Report #13; <i>Facilitator and Client Surveys</i> sent by e-mail (Attachments 5 – 7)
November 28	TEC authorized to upgrade RAM at CEP expense
December 2, 5, 6	Retraining of ACCESS facilitators, Vancouver, due to staff turnover
December 6	Meeting, London, WIL program
December 7	Cut-off for <i>Facilitator and Client Surveys</i> Meeting, Vancouver, with SUCCESS programs
December 12	Advisory committee meeting, Ottawa
January 16-17, 2006	Training, evaluator site visit, Calgary: Metis Employment Services, Region 3, and Aboriginal Futures Career and Training Centre sites
January 18 – 27	Survey, student completion problem
January 30	<i>Occasional Report #14</i> – follow-up on new Calgary sites
February 2	<i>Draft Interim Report #2</i> submitted
February 27	<i>Interim Report #2</i> released

299 **Project evolution**

300 *Saskatchewan Penitentiary, Prince Albert*

301 This initiative, which was not part of the core project, commenced in early 2005.
302 The major findings of the implementation were reported by the project coordinator and
303 on-site instructor-facilitator. Salient findings from this implementation are presented
304 below.

305 *John Howard Society, Ottawa*

306 In summer 2005, the opportunity to offer ESPORT to clients of this agency arose.
307 Two programs, one for literacy clients and another career preparation (“Hire Power”)
308 were involved. As with the Saskatchewan Penitentiary site, these clients and programs
309 were deemed comparable to those in the project, so relevant findings will be included
310 here and in future reports.

311 *Virtual community initiative*

312 After the April 27, 2005, meeting, in Ottawa, at which the virtual community
313 (VC) initiative commenced, Mark Wallace continued to coordinate the program.

314 Five objectives were set for participants who join the VC:

- 315 1. Greater understanding of the whole project, not just one’s own role.
- 316 2. Less need to use [the project manager] as chief conduit for information, when
317 it may be more efficient to communicate directly with team members.
- 318 3. More opportunities for synergy through increased project awareness and
319 increased interpersonal contact.
- 320 4. Chance to work towards the development of a corporate identity/vision.
- 321 5. By encouraging the options and feedback of all ESPORT members, a greater
322 sense of ownership and pride in the project and its products.

323

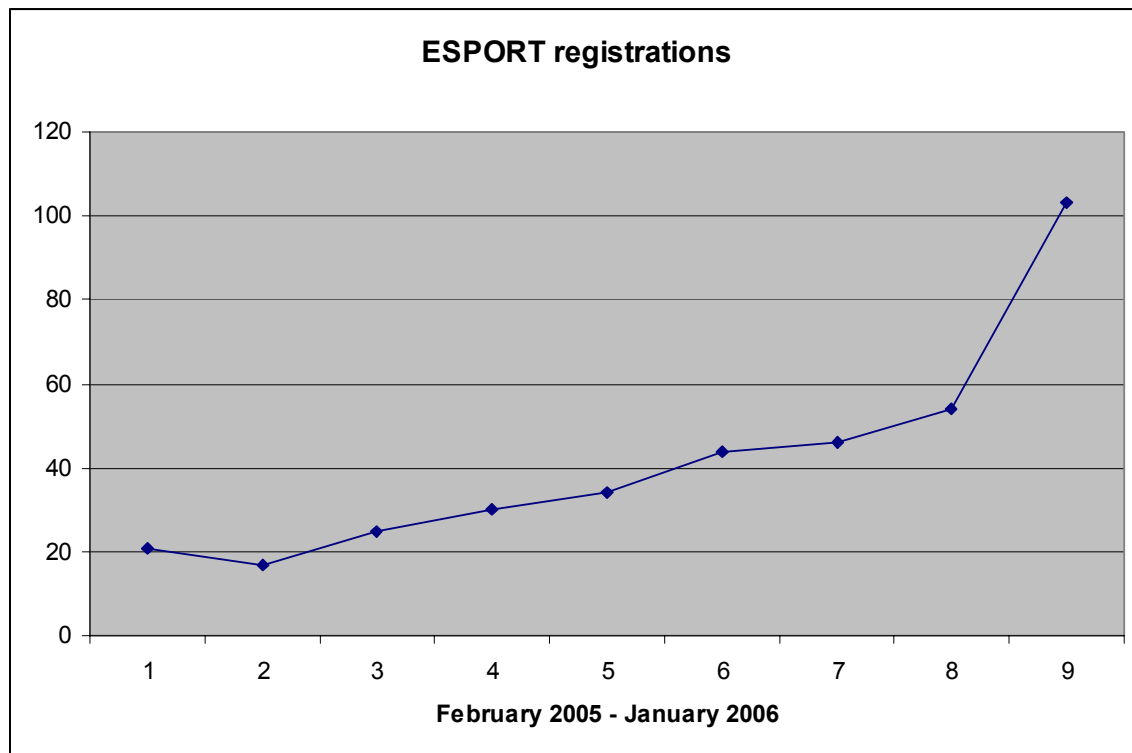
324 **Project outcomes – July 2005 to January 2006**

325 As noted, the *First Interim Report* contains information about results of the project
 326 to June 30, 2005. The following describes outcomes in the period July 2005 to January
 327 2006.

328 *Client commencements and activity*

329 Client commencement in the ESPORT program, and completion of ESPORT
 330 elements, grew steadily as the project matured. Figure 1 shows the growth in the
 331 number of clients participating the demonstration project who commenced ESPORT
 332 from February 2005 to January 2006:

333



334

335 **Figure 1: Growth in “total learners” (clients) over twelve months (February 2005 to January**
 336 **2006).**

337

338 Table 2 shows the geographic distribution of demonstration project clients across
 339 Canada, as of January 20, 2006.

340

341 **Table 2: Total clients by province, to January 20, 2006**

Province	Clients	%
Alberta	8	8%
British Columbia	29	28
Nova Scotia	38	37
Ontario	28	27
Total	103	100%

342

343 The number of demonstration project sites, by province, is shown in Table 3.

344

345 **Table 3: Total project sites, by province (January 20, 2006)**

Province	Sites	%
Alberta	2	17%
British Columbia	3	25
Nova Scotia	6	50
Ontario	1	8
Total	12	100%

346

347 Overall growth was accompanied by activity in all elements of the ESPORT
 348 program. Table 4 shows changes in the ESPORT activities in which clients were
 349 engaged, over the twelve-month period from project commencement (February 2005) to
 350 January 20, 2006.

351

352 **Table 4: Client completion of ESPORT elements, February 28, 2005, to January 20, 2006**

Activity	2/28/05	3/10	3/22	5/17	6/21	8/30	9/19	11/25	1/20/06
InterOptions	3	3	3	17	19	31	34	55	78
Self-Assessment	2	2	2	8	12	16	19	31	40
Portfolio	2	2	2	6	6	6	12	26	54
Learning Plan(s)	1	1	1	1	2	6	6	8	9
Total learners	21	17	25	30	34	44	46	74	103

353

354 Facilitators were trained (and re-trained) regularly as part of the demonstration
 355 project. Table 5 shows the number of trained ESPORT facilitators in place in
 356 participating provinces as of January 20, 2006.

357

358 **Table 5: Total project facilitators trained, by geographic location, to January 20, 2006**

Province	Facilitators	%
Alberta	5	10%
British Columbia	18	35
Nova Scotia	15	29
Ontario	13	26
Total	51	100%

359

360 Finally, Table 6 shows ESPORT activity levels for all sites and all presently
 361 trained facilitators, as of January 27, 2006. (Note that all facilitators are not presently
 362 active; the re-training reflected in the totals shown in Table 5 was often required by
 363 facilitator turn-over at these sites.)

364

365 **Table 6: Client numbers, other sites, by facilitator, as of January 27, 2005**

Site / Facilitator	Completed InterOptions	Self-Assessment	Learning plan	Portfolio	Totals
ACCESS	23	10	4	17	30
- Anne	1	0	0	1	1
- Blair	1	1	1	1	1
- Brandon	4	0	0	1	4
- Candy	2	0	0	2	3
- Cori	1	0	0	0	2
- Donna	1	0	0	1	1
- Fred	1	0	0	1	1
- Jackie	0	0	0	0	1
- Jolene	1	1	0	2	2
- Lorna	1	0	1	1	3
- Pam	1	0	0	0	1
- Shannon McC	2	2	1	1	2
- Shannon McM	1	1	0	1	2
- Tonya	6	5	1	5	6
Cape – TEC	25	14	2	19	28
- Charlie	4	0	0	4	6
- Gina	0	0	0	0	1
- Derek	2	0	0	0	2
- Jenny	12	9	1	9	12
- Lee	1	0	0	1	1
- Marie	5	5	1	5	5
- Michelle	1	0	0	0	1
Cape – GB-YMCA	2	2	2	2	2
- Sadie	2	2	2	2	2
JHS – Hire Power	22	11	1	11	31
- Deborah	2	1	0	1	2
- Abdul	3	0	0	2	4
- Jamie	2	0	0	0	2
- Justin	2	1	0	1	2
- Ken	4	3	0	1	13
- Lydia	2	0	0	2	2
- Melanie	1	1	0	1	1
- Neally	2	2	0	1	2
- Rhea	2	2	1	1	3
Metis Employment	4	1	0	3	4
- Tessie	1	0	0	1	1
- Caroline	2	1	0	2	3
Aboriginal Futures	3	3	2	4	5
- Jami	1	1	0	2	2
- Shay	1	1	2	1	2
- Jack	1	1	0	1	1
Project totals	83	41	11	61	113

366

367 Use of ESPORT elements: Indicators of career interests

368 As clients worked with ESPORT, their portfolios, and the investigations they
 369 undertook in producing the portfolios, showed the careers of most interest to them.
 370 Table 7 shows the titles of the careers which were most often accessed by clients. (Note
 371 that these data reflect *all* users of ESPORT during this time period, not only those in the
 372 demonstration project.)

373

374 **Table 7: Frequency of careers included in all clients' portfolios (as of January 20, 2006)**

Career	#	%
Small Business Owner-Operators	9	7%
Construction Trades Helpers and Labourers	7	5
Administrative Clerks	6	4
Heritage Interpreters	6	4
Computer Operators	4	3
Nurse Aides, Orderlies, and Patient Service Associates	4	3
Other Protective Service Occupations	4	3
Accounting and Related Clerks	3	2
Apparel Production Supervisors	3	2
Boat Operators	3	2
By-law Enforcement and Other Regulatory Officers	3	2
Court Clerks	3	2
Heavy Equipment Operators (Except Crane)	3	2
Image, Social and Other Personal Consultants	3	2
Oil and Gas Well Drilling Workers and Services Operators	3	2
Quality Control Technicians	3	2
Sales Representatives, Wholesale Trade (Non-Technical)	3	2
Sign Pre-production Technicians	3	2
Special Events Co-ordinators and Special Events Managers	3	2

375

376 Another measure of career interest was the learning plans produced by clients.

377 Table 8 shows the careers most often found in clients' the learning plans.

378

379 **Table 8: Careers most often included in clients' learning plans (as of January 20, 2006)**

Career	#	%	Views
Library Clerks	9	24%	9
Construction Trades Helpers and Labourers	6	16	10
Small Business Owner-Operators	5	13	15
Nursery and Greenhouse Workers	4	11	8
Special Events Co-ordinators and Special Events Managers	4	11	6
Nurse Aides, Orderlies, and Patient Service Associates	3	8	26
By-law Enforcement and Other Regulatory Officers	2	5	11
Computer Operators	2	5	9

380

381 Judging the basis for (and thus the potential soundness or plausibility of) clients'
 382 career interests and choices requires information on the processes involved in making
 383 these choices, especially how often clients examined the career information available in
 384 ESPORT. In Table 8, above, the column marked "views" indicates the number of page
 385 views of specific careers examined by clients, since these data began being tracked
 386 (December 2005).

387 Interpreting the above data is easier with the following, showing those careers in
 388 ESPORT that, overall, were viewed most often over this same period. The total number
 389 of views in the period of interest here (December 27, 2005, to January 20, 2006) was 1968.
 390 The two careers from Table 8 that were among the most commonly accessed overall are
 391 shown in bold in Table 9.

392

393 **Table 9: Most commonly viewed careers (as of January 20, 2006)**

Career	#	%
Accounting and Related Clerks	277	14.1%
Heritage Interpreters	30	1.5
Human Resources Managers	27	1.4
Nurse Aides, Orderlies, and Patient Service Associates	26	1.3
Small Business Counselors	20	1.0
Elementary and Secondary School Teacher Assistants	19	1.0
Small Business Owner-Operators	15	0.8
Early Childhood Educator Assistants	15	0.8

394

395 Finally, the terms used by clients in their free searches of the career database also
 396 provide insight into the employment areas attractive to clients. Table 10 shows the
 397 terms most often typed into the search utility by clients to find career information,
 398 during the period December 27, 2005, to January 20, 2006.

399

400 **Table 10: Most commonly used client-generated search terms, December 2005 to January 2006**

Client-generated career search term	#
Construction	40
Retail	24
Health, Health service	20
Fish	16
Food	14
Sales	9
Travel	7
Call	7
Design	7

401

402 The above data suggests some observations about how clients used ESPORT to
 403 generated information about possible careers, and the careers they were interested in
 404 pursuing:

- 405 • ESPORT activity levels increased steadily over the 12-month term observed,
 406 especially since November 2005. In the period September 2005 to January 2006,
 407 activity levels increased 224% (Figure 1; Tables 4 and 6).
- 408 • Clients in the demonstration project were generally evenly distributed
 409 geographically (Table 2).
- 410 • Over fifty facilitators were trained during this period (Table 5). While not all of
 411 them continue to be active in the project (indeed, part of the reason for re-
 412 training, and for this high number of trainees, was turn-over among facilitators),
 413 nevertheless, this number suggests that the objective of cultivating a *community of*
 414 *practice* is realistic.

- 415 • Clients showed interest in a wide range of careers (Tables 7 to 10). The viability
 416 and feasibility of these, in terms of their personal qualifications and actual
 417 employment opportunities, remain to be investigated.
- 418 • Careers that showed special appeal for ESPORT clients overall included
 419 construction, retail, health, fishing, and food services.

420 Client and Facilitator surveys

421 In order to assess attitudes toward ESPORT, and experiences of clients and
 422 facilitators, a survey was sent out by e-mail on November 27, 2005 (Attachment 5). The
 423 surveys were intended to answer the following questions:

424 Client survey:

- 425 1. What is the client's overall impression of ESPORT?
 426 2. Specifically, what ESPORT elements are viewed as helpful?
 427 3. What are the clients' goals related to ESPORT and other services and
 428 resources?
 429 4. Other comments.

430 Facilitator survey:

- 431 1. What problems or successes have emerged with ESPORT for clients, from
 432 view of facilitators?
 433 2. What requests do facilitators have for further information, assistance, or
 434 resources for themselves?

435 The surveys were sent with a cover letter that asked for assistance from the local
 436 facilitator in completing the survey, and asking clients to complete theirs. A total of 13
 437 surveys were returned from the three sites, as shown in Table 11:

438

439 **Table 11: Survey returns**

Site	Clients	Facilitators	Total
ACCESS – Vancouver	2	2	4
JHS – Ottawa	1	2	3
Cape Breton	0	6	6
Total	3	10	13

440

441 Results of the survey were as follows (see Attachments 8 and 9, and bear in mind
442 the small number of participants overall, especially the clients):

- 443 • Both clients and facilitators rated their experiences positively (the mean
444 rating for clients was 3.32, for facilitators 3.12, where 4 = *strongly agree*, 1 =
445 *strongly disagree*).
- 446 • The two groups generally agreed with each other in their ratings: the
447 Spearman ρ (*rho*) correlation was .35, an indication of a “moderate” level of
448 correlation.
- 449 • On five items, clients and facilitators differed by 5 rankings or more (see
450 Attachment 8), even though *both groups were positive* (i.e., mean values greater
451 than 2.5, indicating results skewed to the *agree-strongly agree* end of the Likert
452 scale). Though both were positive, facilitators were more likely than clients
453 to believe that:
 - 454 ○ Clients would use their ESPORT *portfolio* when looking for a job (item
455 15).
 - 456 ○ Clients knew their potential occupational skills better after using
457 ESPORT (item 14).
 - 458 ○ Clients found the *portfolio builder* useful.
- 459 • Clients were more likely than facilitators to believe that:
 - 460 ○ They would like to use ESPORT more (item 5).
 - 461 ○ They found the *self-assessment tool* useful (item 9).

462 While there was a difference in ranking, it is important to emphasize that *both*
463 *groups were positive* about the above elements, as shown in Attachment 9: clients agreed
464 that the *self-assessment tool* was useful (Likert value = 3.0, where 3 meant *agree*);
465 facilitators rated this item (item 9) 3.14. The ratings for more use of ESPORT (item 5)
466 were 3.0 and 3.3, respectively, for clients and facilitators.

467 The overall conclusion from this brief survey was that both clients and
468 facilitators saw the value in ESPORT in relation to their career development, and tended
469 to see most aspects of ESPORT use in the same light.

470 Though not a formal part of the project, the Sask Pen experience illustrates
471 results achievable when facilitators are committed and clients spend the time required to
472 complete the program. According to a letter received from the Sask Pen facilitator, of 42
473 referrals received since September 2005, 26 had been processed, 4 had been unable or
474 unwilling to participate, six had completed, and six more were still working on the
475 program. The facilitator reported that she had provided information sessions to the
476 inmate, and that self-referrals had resulted (Attachment 3).

477 ESPORT completion rates

478 Early in the project, it was apparent that many clients were commencing but not
479 completing ESPORT. The reasons for this became a focus of this phase of the evaluation,
480 and investigations of this phenomenon will continue in the final phase of the project.

481 To examine the phenomenon of non-completion, a question was put to local
482 coordinators in the sites with sufficient ESPORT history to have an opinion (Attachment
483 4). The question that was put to each participant was:

484 *We're seeing, at pretty well all of our sites, that a certain number of clients are getting*
485 *started - creating an account and getting through the early stages like the interest*
486 *inventory - but they aren't "finishing" the process and walking out with a training plan.*
487 *So what I'd like to hear from you is why you think this might be happening....*

488 Two individuals with positions of authority and perspective in multi-site
489 programs responded. The reasons given by them for non-completion included:

- 490 • Program is still attempting to identify appropriate clients for ESPORT.
- 491 Present clients, of various ages and backgrounds, find ESPORT interesting,
- 492 but are not motivated to address skills deficits systematically with a Learning
- 493 Plan.

- 494 • Many of current users are not at entry levels; therefore, do not see ESPORT as
495 offering relevant employment assistance.
- 496 • Technical problems in some sites have discouraged use.
- 497 • Turn-over has required re-training of facilitators; re-training was also useful
498 to address “rusty” ESPORT skills among previously trained facilitators.
- 499 • Re-training that was completed [in fall 2005] was helpful, and resulted in
500 more use of ESPORT.
- 501 • When they become busy, facilitators tend to resort to traditional methods of
502 handling clients (use of ESPORT declines).
- 503 • Attempts to use PLATO with ESPORT have regularly encountered technical
504 problems that constituted “a nuisance.”

505 A facilitator, experienced with ESPORT but without administrative
506 responsibilities added the following comments:

- 507 • Facilitators need to learn enough about ESPORT to be able to describe its
508 components and its potential usefulness accurately to clients. Immediately
509 after initial training, facilitators may not have a good enough grasp of
510 ESPORT to do this well. Follow-up training, and the use of the virtual
511 community, could provide information and additional confidence to
512 facilitators for this task.
- 513 • Clients who are involved in extended upgrading or skill-training programs
514 might find it easier to access ESPORT in stages. Some ESPORT activities are
515 useful early in a counseling and upgrading program, while others are more
516 relevant after some other experiences have been successfully completed. At
517 all stages, concrete results of activities (printed copies, an evolving file of
518 findings or discoveries) should be compiled and made freely available to the
519 client.
- 520 • While the decision about what to present, and when, should be made on the
521 basis of individual client needs, characteristics, and preferences, but
522 facilitators should entertain the possibility of pacing clients through ESPORT

523 along with, and in relation to, any other activities in which they might be
524 engaged.

525 Evidence from Sask Pen indicated that average time for completion of the
526 ESPORT among the inmates involved was 3 to 4.5 hours, and that the record time for
527 completion was 1.5 hours. Another observation of interest from this site was that
528 preparation and previous education was a factor; the facilitator wrote, "I have found
529 that the more computer literate and high functioning the offender is, the shorter the time
530 it takes to complete ESPORT."

531 While completion rates will be a priority of the evaluation during the rest of the
532 project, and completion levels will be monitored and updated in the final report, it
533 should be recognized that non-completion may be viewed as complex, representing
534 various realities, and not simply a sign of a failure of the program. It is well known that
535 most adult learners, even if low-functioning, prefer learning situations that allow them
536 to exercise some choice and self-direction, and are motivated by their (real-world)
537 priorities and goals (Kidd, 1973; Knowles, 1978, 1981), and tend to look for immediate
538 applications of new learning. It may be that some non-completers have gained enough
539 from the program without finishing it, that other priorities have emerged or become
540 pressing, or that new opportunities have presented themselves. (Non-completion is not
541 *de facto* evidence of failure of either the program or the client.)

542 The experiences of clients, completers and, as possible, non-completers, will be
543 examined to attempt to address this question.

544 **Status – project and non-project elements**

545 Cape Breton status report

546 Since the initial training workshop (January 18 – 21, 2005), activity in Cape
547 Breton has been low, except for the Entrepreneurial Centre (TEC; see Table 6). Several
548 Occasional Reports have chronicled activity levels, but it was report #12 (October 20,
549 2005) that resulted in the identification of several factors that have suppressed usage of

550 ESPORT in these sites. Specifically, the following were cited as problems in the Cape
551 Breton:

- 552 ▪ The interface between ESPORT and PLATO was deemed not friendly
553 enough, especially for facilitators who had not used the system immediately
554 after training. (Some of the reported “technical problems” were, it was
555 suspected, actually instances of staff being unable to remember how to use
556 the system, due to a lack of practice after training.)
- 557 ▪ CHOICES, a career counseling tool familiar to facilitators in these sites, was
558 deemed more attractive by some, because it was seen as simpler, was already
559 in place, and was familiar to facilitators and administrators.
- 560 ▪ ESPORT and PLATO use were initially tied to one another; use of one
561 entailed use of the other, with ESPORT preceding PLATO. (PLATO was
562 used in the *training plan* phase of the portfolio development process, to
563 address academic skills deficiencies detected in the *self-assessment*.) The Cape
564 Breton informant (from TEC; i.e., the largest ESPORT user site in the Cape)
565 suggested that clients be permitted to use PLATO first, if they or their
566 counselor chose, in order to gain trust and understanding of and enthusiasm
567 for the system. At that point, ESPORT could be introduced.
- 568 ▪ A time-lag between enrolment and appearance of accessible lessons was
569 reported. This lag prevented clients from entering and using the ESPORT
570 system immediately after registration. Facilitators were not advised of the
571 reason for the lag, and were not able to advise clients of how long they would
572 have to wait before accessing the system, with consequent negative impact
573 on motivation.
- 574 ▪ Some technical issues continue to exist for some sites in this region. While
575 many of the issues have been addressed, some facilitators have formed a
576 negative impression of ESPORT from earlier experiences, which the regional
577 spokesman believes are hampering further use. Project management is

578 aware of this, and is considering whether the situation is remediable in the
579 time remaining for the project.

580 ▪ Immediately after training, HRSDC in the Cape notified programs under its
581 jurisdiction that they were not authorized to be involved in the project. This
582 instance of poor articulation between the local and national offices had
583 profound implications for the initial implementation of ESPORT in this area.

584 Despite these difficulties, one Cape Breton site (TEC) continued to make regular
585 use of the system, both ESPORT and PLATO, and continued to supply feedback and
586 suggestions for improvement to procedures and technologies. This site was also
587 creative in applying the system to other client groups (such as students of the local high
588 school, enrolled in the Physical Active Living (PAL) program).

589 ACCESS sites, Vancouver

590 Three sites were trained July 27 – 29, 2005, as part of the ACCESS initiative. The
591 three sites were Aboriginal Connections to Employment (ACE); Kla-how-eya
592 Employment Services (KES); and the Native Education Centre (NEC). A total of eleven
593 facilitators and administrators were eligible for training; six actually took the full three
594 days of training, and all participated in the follow-up readiness survey.

595 The readiness survey was conducted within a week of completion of the training
596 (*Occasional Report #9*; see Table 13, Attachment 5). In their remarks, three of the six
597 facilitators who responded mentioned that time pressure had reduced their immediate
598 use of ESPORT. Two other respondents made recommendations about the system: one
599 mentioned that the language/reading levels of some parts of the program could prove
600 challenging to some clients; another suggested that program administrators should
601 “provide a push so that we can get started soon after training, so we don't lose our
602 knowledge’; and the third wondered whether clients would be able to separate specific
603 occupations used as examples in ESPORT, from their own actual career interests and
604 expectations. (This last point refers to the fact that ESPORT uses examples, such as
605 babysitting, which many clients have experience with, to illustrate potential job skills

606 arising from previous work experience. ESPORT explains that “A babysitter interacts
607 with several people at once and takes into account their individual needs...,” to cue the
608 client to the skill contained in this experience. One facilitator voiced her concern: “In
609 their mind, they may think, ‘I don’t want to be a babysitter.’ Although it may sound
610 silly, this is really how some of our clients may take it.”)

611 As of this report, usage of ESPORT at these sites is as shown in Table 6.

612 *Saskatchewan Penitentiary, Prince Albert*

613 The Saskatchewan Penitentiary (Sask Pen) was not an official part of the ESPORT
614 demonstration project, but was undertaken when interest was shown by Corrections
615 Canada, and qualified clients and facilitators were identified at the penitentiary site.
616 Costs of this implementation are shared between Corrections Canada and CEP
617 Consulting, Inc. (Sask Pen uses only ESPORT, not PLATO, due to the priority of making
618 the implementation easier to establish and support, and in the interest of simplifying
619 training.)

620 Initially, this implementation experienced several problems:

- 621 • None of those initially training ultimately took part in the implementation.
- 622 • Technical problems arose in the initial local area network (LAN)
623 implementation.
- 624 • Hardware problems required the building and installation of a second server.
- 625 • Regional Corrections Canada technical staff had to be oriented to support
626 requirements of ESPORT.
- 627 • There was some initial adjustments to ESPORT, as an innovation, on the part
628 of facilitators and Sask Pen senior officials.

629 Once problems were resolved, the experience at the Saskatchewan Penitentiary
630 became very positive, and the site continues to provide useful feedback on ESPORT as a
631 tool for helping clients reflect on and understand the character of their work
632 experiences. Attachments 1 and 3 contain descriptions from earlier in the

633 implementation of client outcomes using ESPORT. The major points reported by users
634 in the corrections setting include:

- 635 • Clients require guidance, some throughout the process, with ESPORT.
- 636 • Clients frequently discount or fail to appreciate the occupational significance
637 of their previous employment and life experiences.
- 638 • The counselor working with a client using ESPORT requires patience; a non-
639 threatening environment of trust enhances ESPORT's positive effects.
- 640 • The ESPORT resume is quite acceptable to industry; however, a client lacking
641 expected credentials, especially a high school diploma, would be less likely to
642 get an interview, even with a positive resume.
- 643 • Client experience and familiarity with the computer is important.
- 644 • Information generated by ESPORT aids the counseling process. The resume
645 is very helpful in clarifying assumptions and detailing the client's
646 employment and skill-training history.
- 647 • With ESPORT, goal setting is more realistic, and skills (and skills deficits) are
648 clearer and better linked related to occupational goals.

649 In early 2006, a updated report of usage at Sask Pen was received from the on-
650 site facilitator. According to this report, 42 referrals had been received for ESPORT since
651 September 2005, of which 30 had been processed. Results were noted in the "Project
652 Outcomes" section, above. Overall, Sask Pen rates their experience with ESPORT as
653 "very positive." ESPORT continues to be tested at Sask Pen, and as results are pertinent
654 to this evaluation, they will continue to be reported.

655 *John Howard Society, Ottawa*

656 This site, like the Saskatchewan Penitentiary, Prince Albert, is not an official part
657 of the ESPORT demonstration project. (Costs, which have been minimal, are borne by
658 CEP Consulting.) The project commenced with two training groups, the employment-
659 focused group (Hire Power; trained November 9) and the literacy group (training
660 November 16). The Hire Power group consisted of nine persons, including 2 clients, and

661 a student intern; the literacy group also consisted of nine, including 4 facilitators and 5
662 clients.

663 As noted earlier, an innovation in training for this group was the presence of
664 clients (students) in the training sessions, accompanying their facilitators (instructors).
665 The clients and facilitators proceed through the training together, and problem solve as
666 necessary together as part of the process. PLATO was not introduced with ESPORT at
667 this site, to permit greater focus in the training; PLATO will be introduced later, if
668 appropriate and feasible.

669 As part of the training, this group was asked to describe their goals for the
670 training session, and for ESPORT. Responses included the following:

671 Facilitator: I would like to become more familiar with the program itself and
672 the administration of it so I can use the results to help my clients
673 progress to meet both short-term and long-term goals.

674

675 Administrator: to familiarize myself with ESPORT and how best to administer
676 and facilitate the program.

677

678 Facilitator/site administrator: gain more knowledge about ESPORT. Be familiar
679 enough with the program to answer clients' questions and
680 provide guidance and support on ESPORT.

681

682 Facilitator: to learn about a new assessment tool for clients that provides easy
683 to understand, useful information to help clients to make
684 education/training/career decisions.

685

686 Facilitator, administrator: 1) like to see how this tool can be used in group
687 settings; 2) is it workshop friendly?; 3) how can we expand its use
688 -- can we use it for computer training, self-esteem building?

689

690 Client: I hope to learn today about new job-search strategies and possible
691 career change advice.

692

693 Facilitator: As a social service worker ... I wanted to gain as much knowledge
694 as possible on this field placement. I think attending this program
695 will allow me to be as updated as possible as I enter into the work
696 world in this career.

697

698 Client: I would like to find out what different skills I actually have and
699 different job search engines.
700

701 This question had not been asked of previous trainees, so comparisons are not
702 possible, but the tenor of the comments indicated a positive view of ESPORT, and a clear
703 conception of its purposes.

704 Other comments of this group included the following (received at various points
705 in the training, in response to invitations to comment on the training, or to make
706 suggestions about ESPORT):

707 Facilitator: I had already bought in because I had worked with it before
708 today. Now I want to get one or two counselors on board (at
709 another John Howard Society). They will like the Authentic
710 Materials. People have their favourites, but one-stop shopping
711 means this is the best. Other systems are all based on interest. This
712 has everything in place. You don't have to go to other sites. Great
713 time saver. Information is at your fingertips.
714

715 Site administrator: Getting people started is challenging. Introducing people to
716 the first steps. Doing the training in a group is distracting.
717

718 Client: Great. One-stop shopping. Gender friendly, age friendly. Gives
719 great suggestions that you wouldn't think of. Resume gives ideas.
720

721 Facilitator: Liked the way everything was connected. Break into occupation,
722 then showed tasks. Didn't have to go to NOC. You have a "cheat
723 sheet" for when you go to the interview. Liked the way each job
724 gets its own portfolio.
725

726 Facilitator, program manager: Love the learning – adult learning. Learning by
727 doing. Fun to see others see the possibilities. Young people will
728 come.
729

730 Facilitator: [Client's] reaction was positive. Interest Inventory made sense.
731 The innovative part is like... gave examples, make connections.
732

733 Client: A lot easier for me to compare life experience. It's right there in
734 front of me. A lot easier because of this.
735

736 The literacy group, as would be expected, had specific comments about the
 737 reading and literacy demands of the system. The goals and objectives included the
 738 following (the comment indicated was from a client):

- 739 ▪ To learn how to use ESPORT in order to help clients achieve the best benefits
 740 for finding a job, etc.
- 741 ▪ To understand how ESPORT will enhance the organizational and work-
 742 related skills of clients. How can clients use ESPORT to their advantage?
 743 ○ Client: To learn how the program will teach me how to work the skills to
 744 find a job.
- 745 ▪ To see how ESPORT works and how it is better than other ways of finding a
 746 career.
- 747 ▪ To learn how to use ESPORT will be able to benefit clients and aid them in
 748 searching for a career with the skills they may already have or be currently
 749 learning.

750 Their comments, taken after their training, included the following suggestions
 751 about the training and about ESPORT.

752 **Suggestions for improvement of ESPORT:**

- 753 • Too wordy – watch level of comprehension.
- 754 • Bullet points. Fewer words.
- 755 • Need a file for everybody.
- 756 • Make the button for Print Format more obvious.
- 757 • Too much reading.
- 758 • Tasks (in assessment) are okay, but they should be mixed up as to
 759 difficulty.
- 760 • Reading about tasks – How can I know if I can do that job if I've never
 761 tried to do it? (Need to interpret the skills for the job. Generalize.)
- 762 • I tried to project myself into that job.
- 763 • Break in the middle.
- 764 • Maybe a two-hour initial training session is too long for some clients.

- 765 • Make sure clients each has an email address before the session.
- 766 • The information needs to be condensed. You must say the most with the
- 767 fewest number of words, or else the clients will not bother to complete
- 768 the questionnaires.

769 **Comments on logistics of training:**

- 770 • How to deal with two people sitting around one computer.
- 771 • Make sure printer is connected and running.
- 772 • Want paper copies. (Clients can highlight useful things.)
- 773 • Don't want this to be lost.

774 **General Comments:**

- 775 • More jobs that I didn't know I was interested in, that I am interested in
- 776 now.
- 777 • Choose opportunities. Hopefully, I will look more.
- 778 • First part gives us a direction to work on.
- 779 • [Client] Takes too long.

780 The trainer noted that the Literacy Coordinator made up files of each client's
 781 work, which could be useful in other parts of their programs (i.e., for portfolio
 782 assessment by counselors). Also, by the end of the training consensus developed that
 783 three 1.5 hour sessions may be better than two 2-hour sessions, as clients began to get
 784 restless towards the end. Finally, it was concluded that having clients attend the
 785 training with their counselor/facilitators was a help to both, and made the training more
 786 effective.

787 Within a week of completion of the training, a readiness survey was conducted
 788 with the John Howard participants. The results are shown in Table 11, Attachment 5.

789 The table and the attachment show that the Ottawa John Howard trainees
 790 differed from the other two previous training sites in various ways.

791 The Ottawa John Howard trainees were more confident about:

- 792 • Explaining ESPORT to clients (1).
- 793 • Showing ESPORT to clients (2).

794 The Ottawa John Howard trainees were less confident about:
 795 • Recognizing outcomes or findings important to the evaluation (8).
 796 • Contacting the project's evaluators (11).

797 The Cape Breton trainees were more confident about:
 798 • Explaining the evaluation model (PAR) to clients (5).

799 The ACCESS (Vancouver) trainees were more confident about:
 800 • Contacting the project administrator when necessary (9).

801 Some of the above results were unsurprising: the Cape Breton group had an
 802 extensive (too extensive, it was later concluded; this aspect of the orientation was
 803 dramatically shortened in subsequent training) orientation to the purpose and processes
 804 of the evaluation); JHS trainees had only a minimal introduction to the evaluation, and
 805 had not met the evaluators in person, at the time of the survey. The finding that JHS
 806 trainees also felt more confident explaining and showing ESPORT to clients was
 807 gratifying, as this was exactly the purpose in removing some other content from the
 808 initial training, as described above. These results suggest that the objective of refining
 809 the focus of the initial orientation was achieved in the Ottawa training.

810 *Aboriginal Futures and Metis Employment Societies, Alberta*

811 In January 2006, these two Calgary-based organizations were trained and
 812 commenced ESPORT operations, *Aboriginal Futures Career and Training Centre*, and *Metis*
 813 *Employment Services*. As of this writing, the programs have only begun use of ESPORT.
 814 Information about their results will be provided in the final report.

815 The following points, raised with the evaluator and the project manager (who
 816 were present) immediately after training had been completed, were recorded:

817 Cautions and questioning comments

- 818 1. The time commitment appears significant.
- 819 2. Some materials would be more useful if they could be printed out; some of
 820 these, it was noted, can be printed, and further instruction was promised to
 821 train users how to do this.

- 822 3. The training had presented a large amount of information, which would need
823 to be absorbed and digested by staff before they would feel truly comfortable
824 with the ESPORT system.
- 825 4. Clients would need quiet and privacy to work through all the elements of the
826 program conscientiously; this might be challenging, especially at busy times
827 of the day.
- 828 5. There were some typos in the materials.
- 829 6. The ESPORT print diagram in the training materials no longer matches the
830 diagram of activity on the ESPORT screen.
- 831 7. Clients will still need the assistance of the facilitator to polish their resumes,
832 prepare for interviews.
- 833 8. Lack of suitable hardware may limit use; hardware has been ordered but has
834 not yet arrived; existing hardware is heavily used, and is not available for the
835 sole use of clients in this project.
- 836 9. Facilitators must help clients when none of the jobs generated by ESPORT
837 match clients' expectations or interests.

838 Positive comments

- 839 1. The format of the resumes made them stand out well, would probably
840 positively distinguish ESPORT users from other applicants.
- 841 2. Experience of completing the self-assessment demonstrates to clients that
842 they have skills and relevant experience for future employment; often, this is
843 a surprise to them, and is encouraging.
- 844 3. The process is a systematic career planning tool, with good potential to help
845 clients identify their skills, and to help facilitators provide effective advice.
- 846 4. The ESPORT materials appear to parallel the Alberta ALIS (Alberta Learning
847 Information Service; <http://www.alis.gov.ab.ca/main.asp>) materials already
848 in use in the centres.

- 849 5. Process seems positive: clients do not need another negative experience, or
850 more proof of their deficiencies; ESPORT appears to emphasize and
851 demonstrate the positive.
- 852 6. While other tools and packages exist that do many of the things that ESPORT
853 does, ESPORT is a package, is accessible over the Web, and is integrated, to
854 help clients work on their own, and over time, when facilitators are not
855 present.
- 856 7. Working with ESPORT output, facilitators can help clients see the application
857 of their previous work histories to their future possibilities; should also make
858 counseling further education or training easier.
- 859 8. ESPORT appears more friendly and useful for low-level clients than
860 CHOICES, or some of the other materials currently in use. (ESPORT should
861 allow counselors to advise clients they formerly referred elsewhere, due to
862 lack of suitable materials.)
- 863 9. As familiarity increases, potential usefulness also increases; further
864 experience with ESPORT will be needed to truly test it.

865 The progress of these two sites will be reported in the final report. They will be
866 asked to complete the Readiness Survey, as the other sites have done.

867 **Project initiatives**

868 Virtual community

869 Background. In April 2005, WERC (Mark Wallace) conducted preliminary
870 research on Communities of Practice. Mark organized a meeting of ESPORT team
871 members in Ottawa, some of whom had been working together for years, but had never
872 met in person.

873 The primary initial objective of the meeting was to develop a Community of
874 Practice for ESPORT team members, to improve communication about the project, and
875 to bypass the need for using Patrick Cummins as the conduit of all work-related
876 communication. With the lessons learned from the ESPORT team, it was planned that a

877 Community of Practice would be introduced to the facilitators, and eventually to the
878 learners as well.

879 A community system was implemented, using the Yahoo Groups website. This
880 allowed the entire ESPORT team to be contacted via one e-mail, and provided an
881 accessible archive of all messages. The project manager began using the Yahoo function
882 to send out weekly digests about the ESPORT project, which greatly aided the sense of
883 community.

884 There were several successes with using the Yahoo Groups, and also some less
885 successful areas. The successes included an increase in information about the ESPORT
886 project being circulated to all team members. When working from virtual offices as part
887 of a large project, it can be difficult to get an overall picture of the work, as one tends to
888 get focused on one's own contributions and little else. With greater awareness of issues
889 facing the project, and of individuals' roles within the project, team members began to
890 offer assistance to other members where possible.

891 Other strengths of the Yahoo group are the aforementioned *Update Digests*, sent
892 out by the project manager. The use of one email to reach everyone has also been used
893 when urgent questions needed to be answered. Mark Wallace works to follow up on any
894 such questions that come in, ensuring that appropriate team members are providing
895 answers.

896 One of the initial difficulties with the Yahoo group was that there was minimal
897 buy-in to signing up and using the system by some ESPORT team members. The core
898 members were all on-board, but there was a slow or non-existent response from some of
899 the PLATO members. This was likely due to their need to respond to the demands of
900 their full-time work with PLATO, but despite repeated attempts to establish these
901 members as part of the community, success was limited.

902 As of February 2006, PLATO's employees are no longer part of the ESPORT
903 group; however, their Canadian representatives are part of the community. Given
904 ESPORT's new "arms-length" relationship with PLATO, there is greater autonomy,
905 enabling the Yahoo Group to work with greater involvement than it ever has. Team

906 communication is at an all-time-high. The ESPORT team now works together freely
907 without the need to use the project manager constantly as the chief conduit. With
908 Patrick's continued *Update Digests*, the team is kept informed of big-picture issues
909 regarding the ongoing developments of ESPORT.

910 The decision was made fairly early in the process not to attempt to implement
911 the Community of Practice with facilitators until later. Their requirements to use and
912 understand ESPORT, and then to understand PLATO, were considered priorities,
913 without burdening them with another website to visit and use. One key discovery
914 through the project member's Community of Practice is that there needs to be enough
915 people using the site regularly in order for the community to develop. At the same time,
916 there needs to be a compelling reason to use the site regularly. These findings will be
917 invaluable when we proceed with designing and introducing a Community of Practice
918 for facilitators.

919 Helpdesk. WERC receives any queries that are made by facilitators or interested
920 visitors, and either responds to them or forwards them to the appropriate party who can
921 answer the question. This process has been ongoing since April 2005, and has resulted
922 in development and refining of a standard downloadable Help document that is now
923 published on the ESPORT site.

924 Updating the database. The original ESPORT database only contained the
925 Essential Skills that were measured by a specific complexity level. As ESPORT has
926 expanded, the decision was made to update the database to include all possible Essential
927 Skills, so that clients have an accurate picture of the requirements of their chosen
928 occupation. The following Skills were added: Working With Others, Significant Use of
929 Memory, Additional Information, Continuous Learning.

930 In the process of conducting this update, it was discovered that many of the
931 HRSD Profiles had changed since the ESPORT database was first built. Some Profiles
932 were no longer listed, and many had been renamed. WERC proceeded to make changes
933 to the database and corresponding materials to reflect the changes on the HRSD website.

934 In addition, 26 new Profiles were added to the ESPORT databases, and several
935 of the older Profiles were updated to reflect the way they have been aligned with
936 PLATO courseware. An additional 20 Profiles are forthcoming from HRSD. The first 26
937 have been prepared and coded for alignment into PLATO. Upon receiving finalized
938 versions of the new Profiles, they will be added into ESPORT as well.

939 All new and revised Profiles have been matched with InterOptions occupations,
940 and the new Essential Skill of Critical Thinking has also been added to the new Profiles
941 on the database. Critical Thinking has been aligned with PLATO courseware, wherever
942 such articulation is possible. The result of this work is that ESPORT's databases are
943 accurately reflecting the detail of the HRSD Profiles.

944 Learning materials

945 The following is a summary of activities related to the ESPORT system itself,
946 including software changes and linkages to other resources.

947 HRSDC Authentic Materials. The learning materials comprising the HRSDC
948 *Authentic Materials* have been recreated on the host server allowing the content to be
949 made available from ESPORT. This removes the risk of "file not found" errors that tend
950 to occur when relying on content that is managed by an external site. There have been
951 instances where the external site has undergone revisions that impacted the file
952 directory structure causing the database pointers to become outdated and that content
953 data to be suddenly unavailable. The information is now stored entirely on the ESPORT
954 site.

955 Example:

956 [http://www.esportfolio.com/esport/english/AuthenticMaterials/Specific_Authentic_Mate](http://www.esportfolio.com/esport/english/AuthenticMaterials/Specific_Authentic_Materials.cfm?TradePK=99)
957 [rials.cfm?TradePK=99](http://www.esportfolio.com/esport/english/AuthenticMaterials/Specific_Authentic_Materials.cfm?TradePK=99)

958 Clients are also able to search for *Authentic Materials* by skill type category, and
959 may also use an optional complexity level filter to narrow the results even further. This
960 enables a user to access materials that focus on a particular skill type and skill level,
961 regardless of a restriction of trade.

962 Job Futures. *Job Futures* is a career tool to help clients plan for their future. It
 963 provides the following useful information about the various occupational groups.

- 964 • AT WORK (General Information)
 - 965 ○ What They Do
 - 966 ○ Where They Find Work — Top Occupational Areas
 - 967 ○ Some Related Occupation(s)
- 968 • EDUCATION, TRAINING, & EXPERIENCE
 - 969 ○ What You Need
 - 970 ○ Required/Related - Educational Programs*
- 971 • WORK PROSPECTS
 - 972 ○ Current Conditions (example Poor-Very good, etc.)
- 973 • IMPORTANT FACTS
 - 974 ○ Wages
 - 975 ○ Part-Time/Full-Time (employment percentages)
 - 976 ○ Demographic Statistical Information (men/women)

977 The information within the *Job Futures* module has also been recreated on the
 978 host server, allowing the content to be made available directly from ESPORT. This again
 979 eliminates the errors due to missing files that tend to occur when simply using links to
 980 an external website. Clients have access to print versions for an easy-to-print
 981 information sheet. A quick link to the skill requirements is also available on each display
 982 of *Job Futures* for a trade.

983 Choose occupation (additional profiles). ESPORT has included an additional 70
 984 occupation titles with descriptions and skill requirements for each. Skill and job task
 985 requirements for a small set of occupations remain missing, and will be included when
 986 the information becomes available.

987 The inclusion of the trade profiles has enabled ESPORT to broaden the data
 988 available in the set of occupation titles that exists within the Interest Inventory section.
 989 There are over 800 trade titles in the Interest inventory section compared to 237 that exist
 990 in the Choose Occupation section. This has been a challenge to integrate, as the trades in

991 the Interest Inventory are very specific in nature, whereas the trade titles in Choose
 992 Occupation tend to represent a general grouping. Please see the following example for
 993 an illustration:

994 Table: Choose Occupation

995 Plastic Products Assemblers, Finishers and Inspectors

996 Table: Interest inventory

Pattern of interest code

997 Plastic Products Assembler or Finisher (Moi)

998 Plastic Products Inspector (OMi)

999 Trades within the Interest Inventory are assigned to the closest match to the
 1000 entry in the Choose Occupation set. In the above example you will notice that the more
 1001 specific trades differ in pattern of interest code.

1002 Many trades in the Interest Inventory have no matches. This is mostly due to a
 1003 much higher skill level existing beyond the scope of ESPORT. This unfortunately results
 1004 in the occasional instance where a client completing the Interest Inventory questionnaire
 1005 achieves a pattern of interest code that contains very few matches of trades according to
 1006 the individual's interests. If all occupations are included, it causes a type of disconnect
 1007 between the details available for a user in terms of skills and interests. The following
 1008 information would not be available: Skill requirements, job task requirements, Job
 1009 Futures, etc.

1010 There has been a tuning of the content display to ensure information for a
 1011 particular trade is accessible with ease. The following links to supplemental information
 1012 are available on each occupation detail page:

1013

JOB FUTURES

PRINT VERSION

AUTHENTIC MATERIALS

SKILLS SUMMARY ANALYSIS

EARAT

1014

1015 The screenshot below (Figure 2) illustrates a typical Skills Summary Analysis.
 1016 This allows a client to quickly identify the skills that they need to improve to reach the

1017 level that is deemed to be required for the occupation. (If lacking in a certain skill, the
1018 client is advised to use the learning materials and also to create a learning plan)

1019

1020 **Figure 2: Skills summary analysis - example**

Skill Assessment

The following is a Summary Analysis of how well you measure up to the skill requirements of Assemblers and Inspectors, Electrical Appliance, Apparatus and Equipment Manufacturing.

- You meet or exceed the "maximum" requirements of this occupation for the following skills:
 - Reading Text
 - Document Use
 - Writing
 - Problem Solving
 - Job Task Planning
 - Finding Information
 - Computer Use

- You exceed the "minimum" requirements for this occupation for the following skills. However, since your skill level does not yet meet the "maximum" requirements it is recommended that you update these skills if you are interested in this occupation.
 - Numeracy
 - Oral Communication
 - Decision Making

These results are based upon your scores from the Self Assessment as compared to the skill requirements of the occupation

1021

1022 Spell check. A spell check feature has been implemented in various areas of the
1023 ESPORT website that allows clients to verify the spelling of the information that they
1024 provide in the development of their portfolio resumes. The areas where this feature has
1025 been implemented include the following:

- 1026 1. Education & Certificates
- 1027 2. Job History
- 1028 3. Life & Work Experiences
- 1029 4. Learning Plan (available for each skill category)
- 1030 5. Sending Resumes

1031 EARAT Skill Sheets (searchable). EARAT (*Evaluation for Academic Readiness for*
1032 *Apprenticeship Training*) provides academic skill sheets in reading, writing, and math.
1033 The client prints up these skill sheets, then works on their assignments with the help of a
1034 tutor. EARAT skill sheets are appropriate for people who are preparing to take college
1035 courses as part of trade preparation. The section pertaining to the EARAT Skill Sheets
1036 has been improved through the inclusion of a search interface allowing a client to search
1037 for skill sheets for a particular skill for a particular trade without going through the
1038 choose occupation route.

1039 French versioning preparation. There has been an extensive re-design of the
1040 database to allow ESPORT to display content in both English and French. All columns
1041 have been added to store the corresponding data in French. The original database was
1042 developed with separate tables for English and French content that had become
1043 inefficient in terms of restricting rapid development and made management of the
1044 database more difficult. Segmentation of the site has been accomplished to manage the
1045 display and query contents, and to improve the ease of integration with a multilingual
1046 format.

1047 XML (generation of profile data into format for LAN – WEB integration). This is
1048 a feature enabling a facilitator to press a button to launch a file-save mechanism to
1049 conveniently store a client's portfolio and personal information. This file stores the data
1050 in XML format which will in the near future allow a user using a LAN based system to

1051 save their data on a disk and use a file upload mechanism on the web-based system to
1052 automatically create their account and seed their profile with the existing information.
1053 This will allow a client to continue working with ESPORT on the web without any
1054 interruption and without any loss of their information and assessment scores, etc.

1055 Database migration scripts. Within a LAN based system that has a tight security
1056 restriction to the viewing of client supplied data, a system was needed to enable the
1057 remote updating of the database when changes were completed on the web system. A
1058 comprehensive script has been developed that will enable an administrator at a remote
1059 institution to run a set of procedures to perform a migration of client data into a revised
1060 database.

1061 Statistics and reports. Evaluators and ESPORT administrators can go onto the
1062 ESPORT website to view current, dynamically created statistics in a variety of formats,
1063 and can also download reports as .csv files viewable or analyzable using MS-Excel or
1064 SPSS. The reports contain information on users, skill assessments scores, trades
1065 included in portfolios (by NOC codes), trades browsed or searched (again using NOC
1066 codes), and search terms used by clients in their career explorations.

1067 Database changes allow an enhanced query enabling the ESPORT system to
1068 highlight the most important essential skills for each of the trades. This informs users of
1069 the skills most critical for a particular trade, and shows them how well they measure up
1070 (assuming they have completed the self-assessment section). The resulting comparison
1071 is used to recommend the key elements of a learning plan for skill development and
1072 improvement.

1073 Monitoring requests for information on ESPORT from the public. For
1074 monitoring and promotion of the pilot project, and of users given temporary trial
1075 ESPORT accounts, information is now routinely gathered on *Request For Information*
1076 contacts. This utility enables reviewing the details in any message requesting
1077 information, including "Site," "Facilitator," "Organization," "Account Creation Date,"
1078 and "Status." The information can be browsed from all manager and facilitator accounts
1079 within ESPORT, with a filter available for such criteria as "Site" and "Role." The

1080 module contains an e-mail-friendly text feature, allowing high level administrators to
1081 copy email addresses to send a reply quickly and efficiently.

1082 Newsletter. An ESPORT newsletter has been developed and published from
1083 time to time to provide information to users, and to publish results of the demonstration
1084 project. The second issue, which appeared in fall 2005, is available at
1085 http://www.esportfolio.com/Project_Site/index.cfm?display=newsletter&Edition=edition
1086 [2](#).

1087 Server changes

1088 Since the stand-alone server was deployed to Prince Albert (PA), Chris Rogers
1089 worked on testing the installation, and on upgrading the server for PA and for future
1090 deployments. These changes will facilitate a more streamlined approach to stand-alone
1091 servers, making them less likely to become infected with a virus or other potentially
1092 destructive spyware or trojan, however small the risk.

1093 The first thing implemented was a backup scheme for the learner database, to a
1094 USB memory stick. This provided a tertiary method of backing up learner data on the
1095 stand-alone server, in the event of a complete server failure. Additionally, this method
1096 of backing up, deployed in January 2006, will assist in rolling out updates to all
1097 standalone servers in future.

1098 Secondly, and most importantly, was the setup of the Windows Server Update
1099 Services (WSUS). This service allows deployment of updates from Microsoft Windows
1100 to the standalone servers in the field, and other machines running Microsoft Windows
1101 operating systems. The WSUS was sent out in January and installed on the PA server in
1102 February. Future server deployments will already have the WSUS installed and updates
1103 can be sent to the institutions on a quarterly basis. Another ESPORT consultant is
1104 currently working on a method of installing the WSUS updates to the stand alone
1105 servers that will be easier than the current method of restoring from multiple DVD's
1106 using two software packages. Ideally a single script should be able to do most of the
1107 update with minimal interaction from institution staff.

1108 Another web server was setup in mid-February 2006 for ESPORT technical
1109 personnel to use as a standalone test web server, completely isolated from the internet.
1110 This will aid in testing of the ESPORT website for standalone servers.

1111 Other

1112 Based on experiences, observations, and evaluation findings to date, the
1113 following are activities, issues, and opportunities to be explored, as the project
1114 continues.

1115 1. General

- 1116 a. Occasional reports will continue to be provided, to assure that
1117 significant developments are noted and monitored in a timely way.
1118 b. Training approaches and contents will continue to be assessed in
1119 relation to trainee feedback and subsequent facilitator behaviour.
1120 Changes to make the training more efficient will be implemented and
1121 assessed as required.

1122 2. Cape Breton

- 1123 a. This has been a disappointing adoption, due to low usage levels,
1124 delayed adoption at some sites, and technical issues.
1125 b. Usage levels will continue to be monitored; where usage is low,
1126 attempts will be made to determine whether specific issues exist that
1127 might be addressed. Centres where usage is higher, and where client
1128 recruitment is creative (e.g., TEC), will continue to be the priority for
1129 evaluation.
1130 c. Technical issues, such as the newly encountered "enrolment lag"
1131 problem, will be addressed.
1132 d. The complementarity or compatibility of ESPORT with other tools
1133 (such as CHOICES) will be explicitly demonstrated, where
1134 appropriate based on client needs.
1135 e. Usage and usefulness of PLATO will be assessed.

- 1136 3. ACCESS, Vancouver
- 1137 a. The potential problem of facilitators perceiving a lack of time for
- 1138 ESPORT, which appeared in the readiness assessment, will be
- 1139 monitored, as will client usage.
- 1140 b. The need for further training, as was supplied in Cape Breton, will be
- 1141 monitored.
- 1142 4. John Howard Society, Ottawa
- 1143 a. The impact of the training differences that were implemented in these
- 1144 centres will be monitored.
- 1145 b. The suggestions and questions generated by the facilitators at the end
- 1146 of their training session will be analyzed and addressed.
- 1147 c. These trainees had considerably less exposure to PLATO, and to the
- 1148 processes and purposes of the project's evaluation. Their needs for
- 1149 more information in these areas will be monitored, and response
- 1150 made as appropriate.
- 1151 5. Saskatchewan Penitentiary
- 1152 a. The experience and feedback from this site has been positive, detailed,
- 1153 and useful to the project. Sask Pen will continue to receive attention
- 1154 as part of the evaluation, as the results continue to appear applicable.
- 1155 b. Making ESPORT available in the LAN version has made the system
- 1156 more robust and positively redundant.
- 1157 6. SUCCESS, ISS, and MOSAIC
- 1158 a. Negotiations involve the three implementing agencies, and Service
- 1159 Canada (EBSM), national HRSDC, and HRSDC's regional Human
- 1160 Rights Program (HRP). The target for implementation is February
- 1161 2006, pending agreements with the funding agencies. Facilitator
- 1162 training will take place separately at each of the three sites.
- 1163 7. Metis Employment Services, Aboriginal Futures

- 1164 a. These sites commenced ESPORT demonstration project operations in
1165 January 2006.
- 1166 8. The virtual community initiative
- 1167 a. This concept is still evolving and changing as the project also evolves.
- 1168 b. The intention to create and sustain a virtual community of practice,
1169 using technologies and based on experience with ESPORT, appears to
1170 be increasingly valid, as the number of project participants increases,
1171 and more is learned about what constitutes good practice with
1172 ESPORT.
- 1173 c. Users constitute a potentially large and useful source of evaluation
1174 feedback for the project, especially as more conclusions are reached
1175 based on direct experience. The VC will be consulted, as appropriate,
1176 to vet evaluation findings and conclusions.
- 1177 9. Evolution of training
- 1178 a. Training has undergone radical evolution. As the project
1179 commenced, training had been mainly PLATO's responsibility.
1180 Beginning with the John Howard implementation, in mid-2005,
1181 training was taken over by CEP.
- 1182 b. The word "training" is less accurate, as the sessions are more on the
1183 model of "facilitated learning." Facilitators and learners often attend
1184 the same sessions (if the trainee-facilitators agree). They go through
1185 the normal process with a support person in the background, and a
1186 *Facilitator's Guide* for reference.
- 1187 c. With experience, a shift in emphasis in the implementation also
1188 occurred. Facilitators were encouraged to view the Portfolio Builder
1189 section as the foundation; Interest Inventory, Self-Assessment, and
1190 Learning Materials were seen as supports.

- 1191 d. The issue of student completion of essential aspects of ESPORT was
1192 identified in late 2005. A report on this issue will be included in the
1193 final report.
- 1194 e. PLATO training will take place once facilitators are comfortable with
1195 ESPORT. This should address the problem of loss of learning through
1196 overload.

1197 10. Future of PLATO

- 1198 a. In November 2005, PLATO learning Inc. closed its Canadian division.
1199 This looked ominous at first, but PLATO's president has now assured
1200 CEP that "we fully intend to honor our commitments and to expand
1201 our relationships in Canada in a responsible and organized way."
- 1202 b. The closure is disappointing for PLATO's Canadian representatives,
1203 who have invested considerable faith and personal effort in helping
1204 ESPORT grow its wings.
- 1205 c. The closure has also put CEP in the interesting position of having to
1206 answer queries about marketing, schedule and provide training, and
1207 provide technical support (at least temporarily) for the PLATO
1208 system.
- 1209 d. Although there are legally binding agreements with PLATO, these
1210 developments may provide an opportunity to review the relative
1211 value of PLATO in the overall picture and the way it is offered within
1212 the package, to structure a more independent marketing strategy, and
1213 build a Canadian training team.

1214 11. Completion

- 1215 a. The finding that clients often do not complete all of ESPORT has been
1216 noted at all sites. The meaning of this phenomenon remains to be
1217 analyzed, and will continue to be investigated. It is a matter of
1218 concern that clients do not complete the Portfolio, as this is the part of
1219 ESPORT that uniquely involves clients in assessment of their own

1220 skills and interests. On the other hand, there is reason to believe that
1221 at least some users terminate ESPORT after having achieved
1222 something useful; their non-completion may be seen as a sign of
1223 accomplishment of their immediate objectives.

1224 b. The notion that clients working in cohorts may accomplish more than
1225 those working in one-to-one relationships with facilitators or
1226 counselors has been made (Saltiel and Russo, 2001). This concept will
1227 be explored further in the final phase of the project.

1228

1229 **Emerging project findings (tentative)**

1230 While the project continues, and the original plans and intentions are still in
1231 place, some tentative findings are already being identified. In some cases, these findings
1232 are of sufficient significance, and are sufficiently well supported by the evidence, that
1233 they have already been acted upon. All are tentative, and may be further impacted by
1234 events still transpiring in the project. They are offered here as preliminary findings, and
1235 as indications of possible eventual outcomes of the project.

1236 Training

1237 Experience with the process of training new facilitators has led to several
1238 tentative conclusions. First, it was clear that facilitators required different amounts of
1239 ESPORT training, and different types of training experiences, based upon their previous
1240 experience with computers, online training systems, computer-assisted learning, adult
1241 education, and use of online counseling tools. Early in the project it was decided that
1242 the standard training approach would be modified as needed: where the outcomes of
1243 training required it, retraining or additional training has been offered.

1244 It was also clear early in program that facilitator turnover at the sites would
1245 necessitate regular – even frequent – retraining. Throughout the project, maintaining the
1246 presence of adequately training facilitators at each site has been a challenge. There is, of

1247 course, nothing that can be done about the fact that trained people leave their jobs, but it
1248 was somewhat surprising how often facilitators moved out of positions, changed
1249 employers, or, for various reasons, stopped dealing directly with clients who were
1250 ESPORT candidates. In the mature adaptation of ESPORT, on-site expertise could be
1251 used to assure the training of newcomers, but in the project this solution could not be
1252 counted upon.

1253 Over time, it was decided that including clients in the training experience could
1254 have benefits for all parties. The option of including clients was offered to trainees after
1255 the Cape Breton training; facilitators were urged to bring a client of their choice with
1256 them to the training, after explaining that the client would be a co-trainee of this
1257 experience. The offer was not a requirement, however, and some programs have chosen
1258 not to do so, for various reasons (often related to the level of confidence or experience of
1259 the facilitators, or the related desire not to appear unprepared to their clients). Where
1260 clients have attended, trainers believe that the results are better: facilitators are more
1261 focused on the training content, collaboration between the facilitator and the client offers
1262 genuine training benefits, and continued use of ESPORT in the program after training is
1263 more common.

1264 Facilitators often observed that their understanding of ESPORT increased with
1265 use, and the more immediately they used ESPORT after the training the more competent
1266 and confident they felt with the system. Additional training could also add to
1267 understanding and expertise with ESPORT, but the most important factor in facilitator
1268 understanding and effective use of ESPORT appears to be direct experience with real
1269 clients back in the home program. This reinforces the importance of early use and
1270 application of new ESPORT skills immediately after training.

1271 Time commitment

1272 Where programs did not make significant use of ESPORT after training, the most
1273 common explanation was the amount of time that the program required, on the part of
1274 the facilitator with the client, and on the part of clients with the system. It appears that

1275 programs are often not accustomed to spending extended time with individual clients,
 1276 as ESPORT demands. (The developers recommend that 14 to 16 hours be allocated to
 1277 initial ESPORT activities, dependent upon client readiness and needs; see Attachment
 1278 10.) Programs, it appears, usually spend considerably shorter amounts of time with
 1279 clients, and do not develop counseling plans systematically for most cases. Clients
 1280 become used to “dropping in” to the training agency, but not necessarily to planning to
 1281 attend regularly for the time required, over multiple days/appointments, to complete the
 1282 full process. This became clear early in the project, and was a topic during training, in
 1283 order to attempt to prepare facilitators; however, the issue remained a limitation and a
 1284 factor.

1285 One of the implications of the discovery of the problem of convincing facilitators
 1286 and clients to devote time to the ESPORT process was to consider how the total time
 1287 required could be divided into smaller units. A suggestion that emerged after
 1288 considerable experience was that blocks of time, or steps, might be offered to clients for
 1289 completing the ESPORT process. Clients would be advised of the time needed to
 1290 complete a step of the program, but would not commit to the next step until the first was
 1291 successfully finished. Steps could correspond to clusters of the units suggested in
 1292 Attachment 10:

1293 Step 1 (preparation)

- 1294 • **Preparing and engaging client** – (1 hr)
- 1295 • **Registration and Introduction** of the program – (1 hr)
- 1296 • **Interest Inventory** – (1 hr)

1297

1298 Step 2 (self-assessment)

- 1299 • **Walking client through the essential skills / areas of self-assessment** – (2
 1300 hrs)
- 1301 • **Guiding client through choosing an occupation and using resources** – (2 – 3
 1302 hrs)

1303

1304 Step 3 (portfolio)

- 1305 • **Portfolio building** – Clients spent a lot of time in building the portfolio. They
 1306 had difficulty in putting ideas into words. Much more input from the
 1307 counselor is required. I have come to realize that I did not spend enough time
 1308 with my clients when they were building their portfolio in terms of guidance

1309 and assistance. – (3 – 4 hr) More time will be required if the client wants to
 1310 build more than one portfolio.

1311

1312 Step 4 (learning plan)

1313 • **Learning Plan** – (2 hrs)

1314 • **Review** /interpret **Portfolio** and follow-up plan – (2 hrs)

1315

1316 Step 5 (conclusion, job search)

1317

1318 The initial block of time would be for the preparatory stages, after which would
 1319 follow a block of time for self-assessment and career exploration. A final stage might be
 1320 actual career choice and preparation of the portfolio and résumé related to career
 1321 choices. This approach divides the amount of time required into smaller units, and
 1322 permits the student to complete part of the whole process before committing to the next
 1323 part. This approach was viewed as having merit, and was proposed for assessment in
 1324 the final stages of the project. (*Occasional Report #17* was produced to describe this idea
 1325 more fully.)

1326 *Client outcomes*

1327 Data were collected in various forms throughout the project on clients'
 1328 adaptation to ESPORT, especially through the comments of facilitators working directly
 1329 with clients. These reports provided information about client adaptation and any
 1330 problems or issues with use of the ESPORT system. Findings of the surveys are reported
 1331 elsewhere (see Attachments 8 and 9 for general results, and Attachments 1 and 3 for
 1332 results from the Saskatchewan Penitentiary; Tables 1, 4, and 6, indirectly describe,
 1333 through usage patterns, client adaptation).

1334 In relation to career thinking, Tables 7, 8, 9, and 10 contain information about the
 1335 careers that clients considered in the process of working through the ESPORT process.
 1336 In summary, it appears that clients' interests clustered in the following areas (taken from
 1337 the contents of their portfolios and learning plans, and from their browsing within
 1338 various career information databases):

1339 • small-business (ownership and counseling)

- 1340 · construction trades (helpers and laborers)
 - 1341 · clerks (administrative, library, and accounting)
 - 1342 · heritage and environmental
 - 1343 · nursery and greenhouse
 - 1344 · special events planning and management
 - 1345 · human resources
 - 1346 · nursing (aides, orderlies, and patient services)
 - 1347 · teaching assistant (elementary, early childhood, and secondary school)
 - 1348 · retail
 - 1349 · fishing and food services
- 1350 In terms of attitudes, from survey results was clear that both clients and
- 1351 facilitators viewed ESPORT highly positively; all results were skewed to the positive end
- 1352 of the Likert scales used (Attachments 6, 8, and 9) . There were some minor differences
- 1353 in emphasis: facilitators tended to feel more strongly than clients that ESPORT portfolios
- 1354 would be useful for job-search, while clients would prefer to use ESPORT more. The
- 1355 printed products of the ESPORT process, including résumés and printouts of career
- 1356 searches and self-assessments, and the ability to transfer ESPORT profiles and records to
- 1357 other ESPORT systems if the client moved, were cited as useful.
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ATTACHMENT 1

August 29, 2005, notes from Saskatchewan Penitentiary

Regarding experiences with a client, Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. (Composed by an on-site facilitator):

In the process of working with a young man a few weeks ago, I asked if he would be willing to work with me on the resume portion of ESPORE. He agreed and we went through to it. He had decided with the help of the facilitator operating the pilot project in the classroom, to apply for a job as AUTOMOTIVE ASSEMBLY CHECKER AND TESTER through the InterOptions portion of the program.

We went through the academic section and he had a full Grade 11 and was 19 years old. I asked him what jobs he had had. He replied that the only real "job" had been as Cook in a Pizza shop. I said that was fine and asked what he had had to do in that job.

He looked at me as if I were dumb and also a bit sheepishly, said, "I cooked pizzas. I told you - I was a cook there." I replied very quietly and gently that "I can't quite agree with that. I have stood and waited while my pizza was being prepared and I know it isn't only cooking."

So:

Q. Did you ever have to answer the phone?

A Yes

Q What kind of information did you have to get?

A Lots - their name, address, phone, what they wanted on the pizza, size etc.

Q Did it have to be accurate

A Of course.

Q OK, so you already know then that you did more than cook. Now let's look at what this program wants from you.

Of course, the program starts with the 10 Essential Skills and in a dialogue box, describes what the auto assembler etc. would have to do in the situation exacting the skill. The one I remember best was something like this:

"Interpersonal Interactions. At the beginning of a new shift the auto assembler (etc.) would have to advise the newly arriving staff of incidents on the previous shift and of any changes policy or procedures that had come up on the last shift."

Q Did you ever have to do that?

A No.

Q Well, let's see - what time did the shift change at your shop?

A 2pm.

Q Did you ever have to tell them that you were running out of sauce?

A No.

Q Did you ever have to tell them that at sometime, let's say 4:30, someone is coming to pick up 30 pizzas for a party or something like that?

A Well – yes, I did sometimes, but not all the time.

Q. Would you like to put something like that in the box (where he would write his experience)?

A. OK.

All the time we worked together- about an hour and a half - he answered the questions and chose what he would write down. Several times he added information.

Once the Essential Skill area had been completed, he asked the program to show him the whole resume. Once he read it he turned to me and with wide eyes said, "Oh, I guess I really DID do a lot of things in that job!"

To test out the resume, I asked his permission to use it but to take out his name, address, etc., all except the academic and age, and the experience portions. I then phoned [a local international company] here. Over lunch a few days later their Director of Human Resources read over the resume and said, "This is exactly the kind of information I need. It has the skills listed on the left and I don't have to go looking for them. The proof is listed on the right in his description of his job experience. Usually I

have to read resumes and then phone to ask a lot of questions to get the proof information. For example, everybody writes 'trustworthy' on their application, but who is going to say he is NOT trustworthy, so it sometimes takes me over an hour to get the information out of him that proves he has that quality. In this format it is all right there".

The only thing she found missing is the proof of Ability to Learn - she advised that she could see this from Certificates earned, i.e., WHMIS, etc., and Volunteer Experiences.

I then phoned an international automobile manufacturer in Ontario and asked the same questions. Her immediate reaction was to say he would be screened out because of lack of Grade 12. I asked her to put that aside - assume he HAS Grade 12 - now what? She advised that they have their own application form with the info THEY want on. When she gave this one a bit more thought, she said it would get him a phone call (if he had Gr. 12), that would put him into the first round of a multi-level screening process their company goes through.

In both interviews the interviewee had more than 15 years of human resources experience.

I left this exercise thinking these things:

1. I am convinced that this format of resume would put a person into a screening process if nothing else. Two major industrial employers are enough to satisfy me on that score.
2. It is unrealistic, given my experience with the student, to think that we will ever be able to put someone with little to no work experience in front of this program and leave him/her on their own to follow it all through effectively.
3. Mediating the experience is extremely important- asking open-ended questions in an unthreatening way and waiting till he sorts it out and says it out. This puts an onus on the training to be very applications oriented.

4. The trainer (or one of them) will have to be able to create an atmosphere of trust in which the facilitators will be willing to exercise their imaginations and practice almost counseling-type techniques to draw the information from the clients. They will need to be able to empower the client to articulate that experience to the computer program.
5. In discussions with a teacher of Learning Disabled students, we talked about those clients who may be able to articulate but have little to no computer experience. This led us to the possibility of using Dragon Naturally Speaking- an inexpensive program that allows the client to speak and it writes the data onto the screen for him/her. This would free up time that is currently used in the client coming to terms with the keyboard.

ATTACHMENT 2

Table 12: Results of Readiness Questionnaire, Ottawa John Howard Society

November 2005 (ranked from most to least agreement)

Questionnaire item ¹	Mean	S.D.
9. Contact the project administrator (Patrick) when necessary.	8.1	1.77
13. Know where to go for assistance if needed.	7.7	2.29
11. Contact the project evaluators when necessary.	7.4	2.30
14. Have the right technology for the project.	8.6	1.99
8. Recognize outcomes or findings important to the evaluation.	5.5	2.17
15. Be able to use the project's technologies.	7.9	1.86
5. Explain the evaluation model (PAR) to clients.	4.3	1.89
6. Participate in the evaluation process.	5.0	2.08
7. Communicate using various technologies.	6.7	2.29
2. Show clients how to get started with ESPORT.	8.0	1.91
1. Explain ESPORT to clients.	6.6	2.07
12. Make time for everything the project requires me to do.	4.7	0.95

¹Scale: 0 = I am not at all ready; I am very uncomfortable with this
10 = I am completely ready; I am perfectly comfortable with this

ATTACHMENT 3

November 8, 2005 – Letter from Saskatchewan Penitentiary facilitator:

The longer I work with ESPORT, the more impressed I am with it! Between the interview and ESPORT, I am able to derive enough information to write a report for the employment part of the correction plan and a more thorough in-depth report. In general, other than the resume, most offenders are able to complete the interview and ESPORT within 1.5 - 2.0 hours. The resume adds another 1 -2 hours to the process depending on the person doing it.

Initially, I was uncertain about the benefit of doing a resume in the intake process. However, I now see it as a valuable tool. It is amazing how many assumptions are dispelled because of it! The resume gives me a very clear picture of the employment history, as material is automatically arranged chronologically. As the resume asks for a job title and a job description, further valuable information is gleaned from this.

I also see the resume as a useful method of goal setting or dreaming. It allows the offender to see where they are now and gives them a sense of what they need to do to achieve their goal/dream.

Whether an offender chooses to actually use the ESPORT resume or not, he now has in his possession the information he needs to write one. He has done the thinking about his employment history, education history, and related certificates. I have been putting the resume on a disk and giving it to the offender, informing him that the resume can be updated before they leave the institution.

I do like the "In-depth Report" that is generated from the Interest Inventory. I would love to see the detailed report expanded to include the results of the 10 Essential Skills, thus putting everything into one report. I realize that the results of the 10 Essential Skills are available through the occupation choice to demonstrate how the offender stacks up against the Essential Skills requirements for that occupation. I really like the fact that ESPORT does that, but I would still like to see it appear in the detailed report.

The server is up and running and so far, I have had no difficulties with it. From my perspective, things are going well!

With warmest regards,

[Name]
Sask Pen, PA

February 3, 2006 - Letter from Saskatchewan Penitentiary facilitator:

Since I took over the ESPORT program in September 2005, I have had 42 referrals for it. Of this 42, 30 files have been completed. Of the 30 files, for security reasons, 3 were not permitted to come to the school to do ESPORT and 1 refused to do it because he did not want to disclose "personal information" by answering the questions in ESPORT and doing the resume. Of the remaining 12 (of the 42), 6 are part way through it and 6 are waiting to do it.

The response to ESPORT by the offenders has been very positive (other than the one that refused to even look at it). [The coordinator] has devised an evaluation form for the guys to fill out upon completion of ESPORT. So far, there have been no complaints. Upon completion of ESPORT, I give the offender a hard copy of everything he has done and their results along with a computer disk which contains the same information....

I have found that the more computer literate and high functioning the offender is, the shorter the time it takes to complete ESPORT. The record time to date is 1.5 hours. Of course, the reverse is also true, the less computer literate and lower functioning they are, the longer it takes - an average of 3 to 4.5 hours....

With the principal's encouragement and permission, I have been doing "information sessions" in some of the classrooms. Most of my "self-referrals" have come from this....

As I have the time, and I have not been in touch with you lately, I felt it was time to touch base.

I am very pleased with the way the server is running, and I have not run into any major glitches that hinder its use.

With warmest regards,

[name]
Sask Pen, PA

ATTACHMENT 4

Client completion of ESPORT activities:

Question:

We're seeing, at pretty well all of our sites, that a certain number of clients are getting started - creating an account and getting through the early stages like the interest inventory - but they aren't "finishing" the process and walking out with a training plan. So what I'd like to hear from you is why you think this might be happening; are they getting frustrated somewhere, or are counselors maybe using just selected portions of the ESPORT system and not worrying about doing the whole thing, or...?

Response #1:

I have mentioned before that the program is seeking an audience. Most people that started the program haven't gone on because they haven't found any real value in it. We have had a mix of youth, and older people use ESPORT, and although they found it interesting, there was no desire to do a learning plan to bring up their essential skills. One reason is that many met the highest number (5) for many of the occupations offered. Also we use the CHOICES software in our Centre and clients find it much more interesting and informative to use than ESPORT.

We have tried to utilize the PLATO software to assist people preparing to write GED, but the technical difficulties associated with that have made it frustrating to use. We have worked through all the technical problems here at the Centre, but many clients are not prepared to stick with it. Besides, we have PLATO stand alone software that is easy to use.

Other groups in our consortium have pretty well ceased trying to use ESPORT because the technical difficulties were too much to deal with and they just said the heck with it. Everyone is busy with their duties, and the time is just not there to experiment with this program. That being said, we are still trying to find clients we can run through the program and I am hoping to get some high school students interested.

Response #2:

[Summary of a telephone interview]: The training we received was during the summer; we've had some busy time when we weren't able to get into ESPORT as well as some staff turnover. So the fact that our skills are rusty has been a deterrent. Patrick came out and did some refresher training on the ESPORT side; that was helpful and we've been using it more since that time...there hasn't been any retraining on the PLATO side, though. If we could get brushed up again on that component of the program our usage there might pick up too.

When we tried to get students from the ESPORT side to the PLATO side, we discovered that their accounts didn't carry over - it was necessary to create them new usernames and passwords before they could get going in PLATO. That was a nuisance.

ATTACHMENT 5

Table 13: Results of Readiness Questionnaire, all ESPORT sites

Questionnaire item ¹	Cape Breton			ACCESS – Vancouver			JHS – Ottawa		
	Mean	S.D.	Rank	Mean	S.D.	Rank	Mean	S.D.	Rank
1. Explain ESPORT to clients.	6.2	1.94	14	4.5*	2.33	15	6.6*	2.07	8
2. Show clients how to get started with ESPORT.	6.3*	1.97	13	5.6	3.99	12	8.0*	1.91	3
3. Explain PLATO to clients.	6.5	2.26	11	5.4	3.62	13	n/a ²		
4. Show clients how to get started with PLATO.	6.5	2.07	11	5.7	4.03	11	n/a		
5. Explain the evaluation model (PAR) to clients.	6.8**	1.94	8	4.6	3.11	14	4.3**	1.89	12
6. Participate in the evaluation process.	6.7	2.07	9	6.1	4.19	10	5.0	2.08	10
7. Communicate using various technologies.	6.7	1.51	9	7.1	3.27	7	6.7	2.29	7
8. Recognize outcomes or findings important to the evaluation.	8.3**	1.75	6	8.6**	1.41	5	5.5**,**	2.17	9
9. Contact the project administrator when necessary.	9.5	0.84	1	9.6*	1.06	1	8.1*	1.77	2
10. Contact the PLATO trainer when necessary.	9.2	0.98	5	9.6	1.06	1	n/a		
11. Contact the project evaluators	9.3*	1.03	3	9.6**	1.06	1	7.4**,**	2.30	6

ATTACHMENT 6

Client Survey

November 2005

Please respond, by mail, e-mail, or fax (see below) to these statements using the following ratings:

SA - Strongly agree
 A - Agree
 NS - Not sure, no opinion
 D - Disagree
 SD - Strongly Disagree

Site (check one):
 _____ Cape Breton
 _____ ACCESS (BC)
 _____ JHS (Ottawa)

(Circle one):

- | | |
|--|--------------|
| 1. ESPORT has been helpful to me. | SD D NS A SA |
| 2. I would rather use ESPORT than other career exploration tools. | SD D NS A SA |
| 3. I understand what ESPORT is intended do for me. | SD D NS A SA |
| 4. Whenever I had any questions about ESPORT, they were answered. | SD D NS A SA |
| 5. I would like to use ESPORT more. | SD D NS A SA |
| 6. I am comfortable using computers. | SD D NS A SA |
| 7. I found the ESPORT <i>interest inventory</i> useful. | SD D NS A SA |
| 8. ESPORT is easy to use. | SD D NS A SA |
| 9. I found the ESPORT <i>self-assessment</i> useful. | SD D NS A SA |
| 10. I found the ESPORT <i>portfolio builder</i> useful. | SD D NS A SA |
| 11. I found PLATO useful. | SD D NS A SA |
| 12. I found some occupations I am interested in using ESPORT. | SD D NS A SA |
| 13. I am working on my ESPORT <i>learning plan</i> . | SD D NS A SA |
| 14. I know my potential occupational skills better after using ESPORT. | SD D NS A SA |
| 15. I intend to use my ESPORT <i>portfolio</i> when I look for a job. | SD D NS A SA |

Comments:

PS: We would like to talk to some survey respondents briefly by telephone. If you are willing to take part in a 5 – 10 minute phone interview about ESPORT, please give your phone number, and time when we can reach you, here:

Facilitator Survey

November 2005

Please respond to the following statements using the following ratings:

- SA - Strongly agree
 A - Agree
 NS - Not sure, no opinion
 D - Disagree
 SD - Strongly Disagree

(Circle one):

- | | |
|---|--------------|
| 1. ESPORT has been helpful to me. | SD D NS A SA |
| 2. I would rather use ESPORT than other career exploration tools. | SD D NS A SA |
| 3. I understand what ESPORT is intended to do for me. | SD D NS A SA |
| 4. Whenever I had any questions about ESPORT, they were answered. | SD D NS A SA |
| 5. I would like to use ESPORT more with my clients. | SD D NS A SA |
| 6. I am comfortable using computers. | SD D NS A SA |
| 7. My clients find the ESPORT <i>interest inventory</i> useful. | SD D NS A SA |
| 8. ESPORT is easy to use. | SD D NS A SA |
| 9. My clients find the ESPORT <i>self-assessment</i> useful. | SD D NS A SA |
| 10. My clients find the ESPORT <i>portfolio builder</i> useful. | SD D NS A SA |
| 11. My clients find PLATO useful. | SD D NS A SA |
| 12. My clients find some occupations they are interested in using | |
| 13. ESPORT. | SD D NS A SA |
| 14. My clients are working on their ESPORT <i>learning plans</i> . | SD D NS A SA |
| 15. My clients know their potential occupational skills better after | |
| 16. using ESPORT. | SD D NS A SA |
| 17. My clients intend to use the ESPORT <i>portfolio</i> when they look for | |
| a job. | SD D NS A SA |

Comments (please add anything you wish below):

ATTACHMENT 7*Cover-letter to facilitators regarding survey*

Dear [Facilitator]:

As part of the evaluation of ESPORT, an interim report is being prepared. The report will describe how ESPORT is being used, and hopefully will point out areas where changes are needed (as well as documenting what is working well).

As preparation for the interim report, I would like to ask two things of you:

1. To complete and return to me the attached "Facilitator Survey," giving your own views.
2. To ask any clients who are able to complete the "Client Survey."

The surveys can be mailed back to me, or, better, can be e-mailed to patf@athabascau.ca, or faxed (toll-free) to 866-514-6234. I would appreciate receiving these by Monday, December 5, if at all possible.

All replies are strictly confidential. The forms are marked to show they are from the Cape, but no other identification is required, and participants will not be identified in any way in the interim report that will include this information.

If you or your clients have any questions, please e-mail or phone me at the toll-free number above.

Thank you, as ever, for your ongoing help with this evaluation.

Sincerely,

Pat Fahy
ESPORT Project Evaluator

PS: Please complete the survey for yourself, even if you don't have clients who can participate. Thanks!

ATTACHMENT 8

Response to Facilitator Survey: Comments

1. Sorry, only one client has used it and they were getting rather irritated at the length of time it was taking to do all the different areas. I believe I will do just bits of the options with clients, then give them their passwords so that they can move through it at their own speed, and then get their own results. I have not answered the survey as I have only one client who was willing to do this. Others who are coming in have definite plans, registered for school, etc., so for some it is useful. I wonder if this program isn't more suited to high school evaluations from what we used to be called guidance counselors. And speaking of counselors, you don't have those listed in your area of careers.
2. My experience has been limited thus far. It is hard to get clients to stick with it.
3. working with clients who are lacking in a considerable amount of skills, I find ESPORT a very useful tool. They seem to be a few problems that still need attention.
4. The clients I enrolled in ESPORT had very little difficulty with the actual program; however, did express that it wasn't as user-friendly as it could be. Most clients agreed that they would not feel comfortable sending a resume that was created in ESPORT to an employer. Clients were concerned the resume would be too long and in an unacceptable format. We also experienced, from time to time, technical difficulties while waiting for account activations for new users. Otherwise, ESPORT is a useful tool for determining what areas of the essential skills need additional work. Clients were receptive of the program, however many did not follow through due to time constraints.
5. Technical issues have been a problem. Nothing that couldn't be worked out, but it took time and persistence, something that led to the discontinuation of the program by some facilitators. Again, we searched for clients that this program is right for.
6. Unfortunately, due to circumstances beyond my control, the clients here at the [name] center were not given the opportunity to participate in the project. Therefore, no information that might have been useful for this project was obtained from this initial test site.

I do wish to apologize for not being able to participate in the project. I was looking forward to this new experience, as I have an academic background in survey research and would have appreciated this new learning opportunity. However, due to circumstances beyond my control, was not given permission by the management here at my center to participate in the project. I do hope that you have been able to collect enough information from the other test sites in the region to be able to come toward some substantive conclusions as to the usefulness of ESPORT in academic and employment support service fields.

7. I have gotten my clients to do this [survey] but have not asked for feedback from them [about whether they have actually completed the form].
8. After working with the program I can say that I find it very useful tool. Unfortunately, I clients didn't have the level of commitment needed when approaching a program such as ESPORT. Without that, the program cannot be used as fully as it could be. I think the concept is a great idea and I really like the program. In career exploration we tend to use the CHOICES program but the ESPORT program is useful and it could play a big part in career development. Perhaps more marketing and endorsement through Service Canada would make the program more successful.
9. Sorry I'm not able to offer much of my thoughts or opinions about ESPORT because we have not been using it as part of our client assessment tools. I took the initial training that was offered but have not had the opportunity to actually use it. I guess it is up to our employer of their going to use ESPORT as an assessment tool.

Clients

1. I really like working with ESPORT and think that everyone would benefit from it.

ATTACHMENT 9

Response to Facilitator Survey: Frequencies

Table 14: Responses to the Facilitator Survey

#	Survey Item	Mean-total	Rank-total	Mean-clients	Rank-client	Mean-facilitators	Rank-facilitators
6	I am comfortable using computers.	3.73	1	4	1.5	3.67	1
11	I found PLATO useful. Whenever I had any questions about ESPORT, they were answered.	3.5	2	3.5	4	3.5	2
4	I know my potential occupational skills better after using ESPORT.	3.47	3	3.33	7	3.5	3
14	I understand what ESPORT is intended do for me.	3.3	4	4	1.5	3.13	7
3	I would like to use ESPORT more.	3.27	5	3.33	7	3.25	5
5	I found the ESPORT <i>interest inventory</i> useful.	3.23	6	3	12.5	3.3	4
7	I intend to use my ESPORT <i>portfolio</i> when I look for a job.	3.17	7	3.33	7	3.11	9
15	I found the ESPORT <i>self-assessment</i> useful.	3.13	8	3.67	3	2.8	14
9	I found some occupations I am interested in using ESPORT.	3.1	9	3	12.5	3.14	6
12	ESPORT has been helpful to me	3.09	10	3	12.5	3.13	8
1	I found the ESPORT <i>portfolio builder</i> useful.	3.08	11	3.33	7	3	10
10	I am working on my ESPORT <i>learning plan</i> .	3	12	3.33	7	2.86	12
13	ESPORT is easy to use.	3	12	3.33	7	2.89	11
8	I would rather use ESPORT than other career exploration tools.	2.86	14	3	12.5	2.82	13
2		2.64	15	2.67	15	2.63	15

Table 14 show levels of activity as of November 25, 2005, for Cape Breton, Vancouver (ACCESS), and Ottawa (John Howard Society). (Note that Saskatchewan Penitentiary, a non-project site, is not included in these figures.)

Table 15: Client activity levels, by site (November 25, 2005)

	Vancouver	Cape Breton					Ottawa	Tot
Activity	ACCESS	BEO	NWEO	TEC	WAC	YMCA's	JHS	
Has Learning Plan(s)	2	0	1	2	0	2	1	8
Has Complete InterOptions	12	0	2	23	0	2	16	55
Has Registered PLATO	6	0	0	2	0	2	0	10
Has Completed Self-Assessment	7	0	0	14	0	2	8	31
Total learners	19	2	5	24	1	3	20	74

ATTACHMENT 10

Estimated time commitments

[The following estimates were developed by an ESPORT user during the project. While not empirically tested, the project manager believes the totals and the rationale for the time spent are sound.]

I would definitely like to spend more time in each stage of the preparation and feedback if more time were available. Preferably, I would like to allocate for each client:

- **Preparing and engaging client** – (1 hr)
- **Registration and Introduction** of the program – (1 hr)
- **Interest Inventory** – (1 hr)
- **Walking client through the essential skills / areas of self-assessment** – (2 hrs)
- **Guiding client through choosing an occupation and using resources** – (2 – 3 hrs)
- **Portfolio building** – Clients spent a lot of time in building the portfolio. They had difficulty in putting ideas into words. Much more input from the counselor is required. I have come to realize that I did not spend enough time with my clients when they were building their portfolio in terms of guidance and assistance. – (3 – 4 hr) More time will be required if the client wants to build more than one portfolio.
- **Learning Plan** – (2 hrs)
- **Review /interpret Portfolio** and follow-up plan – (2 hrs)

Total: **14 – 16** hours (This does not include time spent on guidance throughout the implementation of the Learning Plan.)