



BINDER, ELSTER, MENDELSON & WHEELER, INC.

Old Georgetown Building, Suite 202
4948 St. Elmo Avenue
Bethesda, Maryland 20014
(301)657-1898, (301)652-4983

FINAL REPORT
UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
REGIONAL CAREER COUNSELING PROGRAM

Irene N. Mendelson
Project Director
July 7, 1983

FINAL REPORT
UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
REGIONAL CAREER COUNSELING PROGRAM

INTRODUCTION

From April, 1982 to March, 1983 the U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, for the first time, offered the individual career counseling program, which has been given at headquarters for the past six years, to all regional offices. This program offers four hours of individual career counseling to an employee and focuses on the application of goal-setting and decision-making techniques to personal career issues. It has been well received by employees, who participated enthusiastically, and by NRC regional liaison officers. The composite evaluation appended to this report testifies to the many areas of work-related problem solving which employees documented as helpful. In most regions there is a waiting list for the 83-84 counseling, which attests to the positive reputation of the program developed in the NRC offices through word-of-mouth communication.

LIAISON FUNCTION

Binder, Elster, Mendelson and Wheeler, Inc., the contracting firm providing the career counseling in NRC Headquarters, serves as liaison to the regional counselors, training them and providing the same materials as used in H.Q., so that there is a uniformity of approach and philosophy of counseling in all regions. Monthly telephone contacts with counselors insure a supportive atmosphere and allow for "trouble shooting" problems. There is additional phoning and correspondence when needed, as well as the sharing among all five regional counselors of each-others quarterly reports, so that ideas, problems and solutions can be maximized. Quarterly contact with NRC liaison officers checks the Regional perception of how the program is going. The types of problems picked up in this kind of communication were, for example:

- The scheduling difficulties for inspectors out in the field. Since these personnel are not regularly available for counseling appointments, alternate procedures have been

developed in California and Pennsylvania which entail such strategies as sending materials to them ahead of time, telephone contact, 2-hour sessions, etc. These approaches were then shared among all counselors and will allow for more effective implementation of the program for this group of clients in the future in all regions.

- The difference in atmosphere between the smaller regional offices and H.Q. requires a different understanding of and working with the management and personnel. Counselors need time to acquire information on agency policy and policy changes in order to work effectively with clients and management.

- When competency of a counselor was in question, BEMW sent out independent evaluation forms to clients to ascertain the problem.

- Consultation with regional office on the hiring of a new counselor and his/her orientation and training.

PROGRAM RESULTS

One hundred thirty three clients were counseled in the regional program, an average of 27 per region. The client population served ranged from grades 3 through 15 and varied in each region in the proportion of upper and lower grade personnel counseled, in one region enrolling mainly support staff. This was due both to the timing of notification of the staff and the more skeptical attitude of some of the professional personnel toward counseling. Attempts are being made to remedy this apparent imbalance and to achieve a better distribution for this coming year of support, technical and managerial staff. It is important to note, however, that the program is self-referred (with the approval of supervisor) and the imbalance of the applicants may reflect differing perceptions of the value of counseling. In our experience, this will change of its own accord as the program's reputation increases.

Counselor quarterly reports and evaluations both indicate that clients at all grade levels were serious about benefiting from counseling, doing assignments and participating actively through a process of self-assessment, testing and analysis, to

to determine the best directions for themselves. Of the many comments made by counselors and clients, three areas stand out as worth noting as a result of the counseling process:

1. The motivation to action of participants: Most took steps to participate in training inside and outside the agency as a means toward upward mobility and career change.

The increased number of applications for positions within the agency among counselees indicated greater confidence and knowledge in designated skill areas and relevant experience as seen in better SF-171's and interviews.

2. Greater ability to communicate with others: Many commented on their increased self-knowledge and self-confidence. They indicated greater satisfaction in current jobs, increased ability to cope with frustration, better ability to deal with peers and supervisors and to work more productively.

3. Increased ability to make appropriate career decisions: For those who may have been considering leaving NRC, the career counseling offered an opportunity to examine the possibilities both within and outside the agency, and to make an appropriate decision. The counseling thus acted as a vent for dissatisfied employees, allowing them to look at their dissatisfaction in the light of reality.

IMPLICATIONS FOR NRC

The advantages to NRC of the career counseling program have been many and can increase if the perceptions and talents of the counselors are used well. Counselors have noted problems and possible solutions in reports that go directly to regional administrators. This gives administration a direct line to employee concerns and needs. Some of these concerns were:

- Increased opportunity for advancement within the regionalization formula for those currently in the region, as well as those coming in from headquarters.
- More direct and honest communication of policy changes and recognition of their effect on employees.

- Rigorous recruitment of females and minorities into professional positions.
- Opportunity for challenging work, which is appreciated at all levels and is experienced by employees as a chance for individual growth. This increases employee loyalty to the agency.
- Additional training courses such as stress management (see Regional Quarterly Reports).

Data from the written evaluations indicate that the most important results from career counseling include increased self-direction, motivation to get ahead through education and training, better interpersonal skills throughout the agency and a vent for dissatisfaction. All are crucial and positive outcomes which have been experienced in NRC headquarters, and from the appended evaluations, are beginning to be felt in the NRC regions as well.

UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
CAREER COUNSELING PROGRAM
Summary of Region I

EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

n = 21

Please rate your growth in the following areas:	<u>Very High</u>	<u>High</u>	<u>Average</u>	<u>Low</u>	<u>Very Low</u>
Increased awareness of your own abilities and limitations as they apply to your career goals	10	8	3		
Clarification of your career goals	7	11	3		
Knowledge of options available to you	9	8	4		
Ability to make career-related decisions	8	8	3	1	
Job finding skills	5	9	4	1	
Confidence in making career-related decisions	9	8	3	1	

What other areas do you feel have been enhanced as a result of the career counseling?

11 Communications with supervisors and/or co-workers

19 Clarification of values and priorities

11 Knowledge of job and/or occupational requirements

10 Other (Specify) match skills and job, verbalize to good sounding board, assess options, control temper

During or since counseling, have you taken specific steps in your own behalf toward realizing greater potential?

20 Yes 1 No

Region I

If you have not, do you plan to?

3 Yes No

What do you plan to do?

If yes, check those appropriate:

- 11 Courses through NRC
11 Courses through an outside educational institution
7 Work toward a degree
7 Specific career investigation
15 Application for other jobs within NRC
18 Initiating communications with supervisors about career-related questions
2 Initiating work with PMA about opportunities within NRC
19 Exploring options outside NRC
1 Other (Specify)

At the beginning of this program you stated the goals you wanted to accomplish. List these goals and rate the attainment of each according to the following scale:

<u>Much less</u> <u>than expected</u>	<u>Somewhat less</u> <u>than expected</u>	<u>Expected</u>	<u>Somewhat more</u> <u>than expected</u>	<u>Much more</u> <u>than expected</u>
1	2	3	4	5
	(2)	(8)	(24)	(8)

GOALS

1. 1 2 3 4 5
2. 1 2 3 4 5
3. 1 2 3 4 5

Have you achieved any goals previously unarticulated? Yes - 5

UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

CAREER COUNSELING PROGRAM

Summary of Region II

EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

n = 24

Please rate your growth in the following areas:	<u>Very High</u>	<u>High</u>	<u>Average</u>	<u>Low</u>	<u>Very Low</u>
Increased awareness of your own abilities and limitations as they apply to your career goals	14	6	4		
Clarification of your career goals	10	8	6		
Knowledge of options available to you	11	9	4		
Ability to make career-related decisions	11	8	5		
Job finding skills	12	5	6	1	
Confidence in making career-related decisions	9	11	4		

What other areas do you feel have been enhanced as a result of the career counseling?

- 7 Communications with supervisors and/or co-workers
- 18 Clarification of values and priorities
- 15 Knowledge of job and/or occupational requirements
- 1 Other (Specify)

During or since counseling, have you taken specific steps in your own behalf toward realizing greater potential?

19 Yes 5 No

Region II

If you have not, do you plan to?

6 Yes No

What do you plan to do?

If yes, check those appropriate:

11 Courses through NRC

17 Courses through an outside educational institution

9 Work toward a degree

6 Specific career investigation

10 Application for other jobs within NRC

8 Initiating communications with supervisors about career-related questions

5 Initiating work with PMA about opportunities within NRC

17 Exploring options outside NRC

2 Other (Specify)

At the beginning of this program you stated the goals you wanted to accomplish. List these goals and rate the attainment of each according to the following scale:

<u>Much less</u> <u>than expected</u>	<u>Somewhat less</u> <u>than expected</u>	<u>Expected</u>	<u>Somewhat more</u> <u>than expected</u>	<u>Much more</u> <u>than expected</u>
--	--	-----------------	--	--

1

2

3

4

5

(1)

(17)

(18)

(16)

GOALS

1. 1 2 3 4 5

2. 1 2 3 4 5

3. 1 2 3 4 5

Have you achieved any goals previously unarticulated? 3

UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
CAREER COUNSELING PROGRAM
Summary of Region III

EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE
INDIVIDUAL CAREER COUNSELING

n = 14
Counselor's Name

Please rate your growth in the following areas:	<u>Very High</u>	<u>High</u>	<u>Average</u>	<u>Low</u>	<u>Very Low</u>
Increased awareness of your own abilities and limitations as they apply to your career goals	7	5	1	1	
Clarification of your career goals	2	8	4		
Knowledge of options available to you	3	7	4		
Ability to make career-related decisions	4	8	2		
Job finding skills	1	8	4		
Confidence in making career-related decisions	4	5	5		

What other areas do you feel have been enhanced as a result of the career counseling?

6 Communications with supervisors and/or co-workers
14 Clarification of values and priorities
6 Knowledge of job and/or occupational requirements
1 Other (Specify)

During or since counseling, have you taken specific steps in your own behalf toward realizing greater potential?

11 Yes 3 No

Region III

If you have not, do you plan to?

3 Yes No

What do you plan to do?

If yes, check those appropriate:

- 5 Courses through NRC
- 7 Courses through an outside educational institution
- 4 Work toward a degree
- 8 Specific career investigation
- 3 Application for other jobs within NRC
- 3 Initiating communications with supervisors about career-related questions
- 1 Initiating work with PMA about opportunities within NRC
- 8 Exploring options outside NRC
- Other (Specify)

At the beginning of this program you stated the goals you wanted to accomplish. List these goals and rate the attainment of each according to the following scale:

<u>Much less</u> <u>than expected</u>	<u>Somewhat less</u> <u>than expected</u>	<u>Expected</u>	<u>Somewhat more</u> <u>than expected</u>	<u>Much more</u> <u>than expected</u>
1	2	3	4	5
	(4)	(7)	(10)	(5)

GOALS

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. outside business
communicating with supervisor
retirement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. set goals to work toward them" | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Have you achieved any goals previously unarticulated? 3

UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
CAREER COUNSELING PROGRAM
Summary of Region IV

EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

n = 22

Please rate your growth in the following areas:	<u>Very High</u>	<u>High</u>	<u>Average</u>	<u>Low</u>	<u>Very Low</u>
Increased awareness of your own abilities and limitations as they apply to your career goals	7	12	3		
Clarification of your career goals	4	14	4		
Knowledge of options available to you	8	9	5		
Ability to make career-related decisions	8	8	6		
Job finding skills	3	12	7		
Confidence in making career-related decisions	10	10	2		

What other areas do you feel have been enhanced as a result of the career counseling?

- 12 Communications with supervisors and/or co-workers
- 19 Clarification of values and priorities
- 14 Knowledge of job and/or occupational requirements
- 4 Other (Specify)

During or since counseling, have you taken specific steps in your own behalf toward realizing greater potential?

17 Yes 4 No

Region IV

If you have not, do you plan to?

9 Yes No

What do you plan to do?

If yes, check those appropriate:

- 11 Courses through NRC
- 14 Courses through an outside educational institution
- 5 Work toward a degree
- 12 Specific career investigation
- 7 Application for other jobs within NRC
- 7 Initiating communications with supervisors about career-related questions
- 4 Initiating work with PMA about opportunities within NRC
- 11 Exploring options outside NRC
- 2 Other (Specify)

At the beginning of this program you stated the goals you wanted to accomplish. List these goals and rate the attainment of each according to the following scale:

<u>Much less</u> <u>than expected</u>	<u>Somewhat less</u> <u>than expected</u>	<u>Expected</u>	<u>Somewhat more</u> <u>than expected</u>	<u>Much more</u> <u>than expected</u>
1	2	3	4	5
2		7	26	23

GOALS

- 1. 1 2 3 4 5
- 2. 1 2 3 4 5
- 3. 1 2 3 4 5

Have you achieved any goals previously unarticulated? 8

UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
CAREER COUNSELING PROGRAM
Summary of Region V

EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

n = 26

Please rate your growth in the following areas:	<u>Very High</u>	<u>High</u>	<u>Average</u>	<u>Low</u>	<u>Very Low</u>
Increased awareness of your own abilities and limitations as they apply to your career goals	6	14	5		
Clarification of your career goals	7	14	5		
Knowledge of options available to you	8	16	2		
Ability to make career-related decisions	8	12	6		
Job finding skills	7	8	10		
Confidence in making career-related decisions	9	11	6		

What other areas do you feel have been enhanced as a result of the career counseling?

- 14 Communications with supervisors and/or co-workers
- 18 Clarification of values and priorities
- 6 Knowledge of job and/or occupational requirements
- 8 Other (Specify)

During or since counseling, have you taken specific steps in your own behalf toward realizing greater potential?

23 Yes 3 No

Region V

If you have not, do you plan to?

2 Yes 1 No

What do you plan to do?

If yes, check those appropriate:

- 7 Courses through NRC
7 Courses through an outside educational institution
2 Work toward a degree
6 Specific career investigation
8 Application for other jobs within NRC
11 Initiating communications with supervisors about career-related questions
 Initiating work with PMA about opportunities within NRC
12 Exploring options outside NRC
 Other (Specify)

At the beginning of this program you stated the goals you wanted to accomplish. List these goals and rate the attainment of each according to the following scale:

<u>Much less</u> <u>than expected</u>	<u>Somewhat less</u> <u>than expected</u>	<u>Expected</u>	<u>Somewhat more</u> <u>than expected</u>	<u>Much more</u> <u>than expected</u>
--	--	-----------------	--	--

1

2

3

4

5

(2)

(16)

(19)

(23)

GOALS

1.

1 2 3 4 5

2.

1 2 3 4 5

3.

1 2 3 4 5

Have you achieved any goals previously unarticulated? 11

UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
CAREER COUNSELING PROGRAM
Summary of Regions I, II, III, IV, V

EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

n = 107

Please rate your growth in the following areas:	<u>Very High</u>	<u>High</u>	<u>Average</u>	<u>Low</u>	<u>Very Low</u>
Increased awareness of your own abilities and limitations as they apply to your career goals	44	45	15	1	
Clarification of your career goals	30	55	24		
Knowledge of options available to you	39	49	19		
Ability to make career-related decisions	39	44	22	1	
Job finding skills	28	42	31	2	
Confidence in making career-related decisions	41	45	20	1	

What other areas do you feel have been enhanced as a result of the career counseling?

50 Communications with supervisors and/or co-workers
88 Clarification of values and priorities
52 Knowledge of job and/or occupational requirements
24 Other (Specify)

During or since counseling, have you taken specific steps in your own behalf toward realizing greater potential?

90 Yes 11 No

Summary of Regions I, II, III, IV, V

If you have not, do you plan to?

23 Yes 1 No

What do you plan to do?

If yes, check those appropriate:

- 45 Courses through NRC
56 Courses through an outside educational institution
27 Work toward a degree
39 Specific career investigation
43 Application for other jobs within NRC
47 Initiating communications with supervisors about career-related questions
12 Initiating work with PMA about opportunities within NRC
67 Exploring options outside NRC
9 Other (Specify)

At the beginning of this program you stated the goals you wanted to accomplish. List these goals and rate the attainment of each according to the following scale:

<u>Much less</u> <u>than expected</u>	<u>Somewhat less</u> <u>than expected</u>	<u>Expected</u>	<u>Somewhat more</u> <u>than expected</u>	<u>Much more</u> <u>than expected</u>
1	2	3	4	5
(2)	(9)	(55)	(97)	(75)

GOALS

1. 1 2 3 4 5
2. 1 2 3 4 5
3. 1 2 3 4 5

Have you achieved any goals previously unarticulated?

Yes - 30