

Program Analysis of Student Athlete Workshop *Beyond VT*

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Abstract

This research study evaluated the effectiveness of the Virginia Tech Office of Student Athlete Development's Beyond VT event. Study participants attended the Beyond VT event, a career development workshop offered to graduating senior student athletes in preparation for their transition into the working world. Interviews were conducted with nine event participants from seven different sports. Through literature review comparisons of similar student-athlete development programs/workshops, results have been examined to determine the findings through qualitative evaluation. Semi-structured interviews were conducted, analyzed, and resulting unique codes were grouped into categories revealing six emerging themes for future program improvements. The results indicated participants felt more comfortable moving into the working world after attending the Beyond VT workshop; however, student-athletes still felt uneasy about the transition due to missing information dealing with additional financial advice, effective time management adjustments, finding new self-identity, and the uncertainty of a plan B. This research can be used to further develop programming efforts in the Office of Student Athlete Development at Virginia Tech, as well as other student-athlete development offices around the country, in terms of preparing student-athletes for life after graduation.

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Introduction

For minority students, the chance to attend college and participate in college athletics can open a world of opportunities for the rest of their lives upon successful graduation (Gallup, 2020). Additionally, “college athletes are widely regarded as exemplars of a successful college experience” (Gallup, 2020.p. 2). For colleges and universities across the country strategies in how to best develop the student athlete during their college experience comes to question. To gain clarity with this, many schools have Career Centers, Advising Centers, and some athletic departments have offices dedicated specifically for the development of their student athlete population.

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the current effectiveness of the Beyond VT workshop offered by the Office of Student-Athlete Development at Virginia Tech. This study was to examine the current structure of the Beyond VT Career Game Plan program, and its overall effectiveness for student-athlete development. Beyond VT Career Game Plan is the final in a series of workshop offered to graduating senior student-athletes mapping out key areas for career success and transitioning away from student athlete life. Recommendations will be made based on this assessment and will be used to help the Virginia Tech Office of Student Athlete Development, as well as other student athlete development offices throughout the country.

Over the past years, there has been a significant increase in the number of students participating in intercollegiate athletics. According to the NCAA official website, the latest NCAA published records show “a record-setting 494,992 students competed in NCAA championship sports in the 2017-18 academic year, an increase of more than 3,000 since 2016-17” (NCAA.org). In 1982, the first year this data was tracked, there was 231,000 student

athletes, so in less than 40 years of tracking data the number of student athletes has nearly doubled (Meyers, 2018).

There are a number of reasons for the increase in athletic participation at the collegiate level. One of these reasons is the increased need for education in order to succeed in life. Based on a study of NCAA student athletes, research showed that student athletes are graduated at a 39% rate while non-student athletes graduated at a 32% rate (Gallup, 2020). The differences are said to be more pronounced in black graduates, where 49% who are black student athletes graduated as compared to 39% of black students that are non-student athletes. College athletics have a great impact on the success for minority groups to earn a degree in higher education. Also, a very important distinction according to the study “being an NCAA student-athlete may be particularly beneficial to these groups that have been historically underrepresented in higher-education settings, enabling them to advance their education” (Gallup, 2020).

Another reason for the increase in athletic participation includes athletes wanting to continue playing their sport and to gain more exposure in order to one day make it to the professional level. For black student athletes the opportunity to play college sports is often more important than their academic plans, but without the opportunity to play sports, they would not be attending college (Potuto & O’Hanlon, 2007). When making the choice to play at the collegiate level, student athletes face many decision-making challenges. There are various factors that go into the decision-making process. These factors can include the academic environment of an institution, cost to attend, location, and personal factors (Ellis, 2011). With the list of factors, the increase of student athletes attending college can be seen in the school’s ability to fulfill these many needs for the athlete. As student-athletes are recruited, schools do their best to showcase everything they have to offer.

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Potuto & O'Hanlon (2007) suggest that college athletes might form egos based on their success in their field of play. Harris (1993) also stated that student-athletes often receive praise from others including the media based on their actions on the playing field. The athlete's peers only know the athletes from the known experience of the athlete's success on the field or court. This can cloud the reason for the student choosing to become a student athlete. Often the media highlights the student athletes' star performances and accomplishments as an athlete, reinforcing the image of a student athlete first. This may be a reason why non-student athletes think the main reason for student athletes being in college is to play sports and there is a stigma surrounding them. Another important factor is academic environment. This shows that academics do play a large role in the reasoning for why student athletes go to the college of their choice and do not only choose an institution solely based on athletics. As more and more athletes are looking to make their dreams come true, they look to colleges and universities in order to get the chance to showcase their skills at the highest amateur level, yet schooling remains a top priority.

The purpose of college is to help give those who attend the opportunity to be successful in life. For student athletes, scholarships are awarded to those who have shown exceptional skills and talent, only in their field of play, but also from their outstanding work in the classroom. Student athletes are given the opportunity to increase their quality of education to better equip themselves for the future, while at the same time continuing to advance their skills athletically. While in school, students gain the necessary lifelong tools that they can use when they transition to life following college.

The difference between a full-time student and a student athlete is the balance between both roles. Balancing two very important roles at once can be challenging. Often times, the pressure from both roles causes tension and becomes overwhelming for student-athletes. When

their collegiate careers come to an end, many student athletes have spent so much time working on both athletics and academics that they come out of college with a blurred understanding of what is to be done afterwards and what their next step should be in their transition to the work world.

An article titled, *Mind, Body and Sports: Student Athletes in Transition* (2017), was written by Penny Semina (2017) of the Student-athlete Development Department at the University of Pittsburgh. The main purpose of the article, which is listed on the NCAA website, is to help student athletes with finding their identity after they have finished playing sports. The answer to this identity crises is to take all of the programs and services that the university provides and narrow them down to the individual level. This is one of the tactics the NCAA has supported in order to provide help for the large populations of student athletes.

But not all colleges and universities have financial means to offer their student athlete workshops and programs to assist them in transitioning and finding their identities. For comparison purposes two institutions were selected, one, a university in the same conference as the researcher and second, the institution of the researcher earned their bachelors degree. One school, the University of Pittsburgh is a university in the Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC) and a Power 5 member.

Another university, with limited resources, for comparison would be a university that is in the SWAC conference (Southwestern Athletic Conference); Alabama State University. Alabama State is a university that is not in a Power 5 conference. Alabama State is a Historically Black College and University (HBCU), it statistically has the availability of less funding than Predominately White Institutions (Thomas, 2010). The journal article titled *Funding Historically Black Colleges and Universities: Progress Towards Equality* states that “for decades, state

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funding of public historically black colleges and universities (HBCU) has been shown to be de facto discriminatory relative to the funding of their predominately white counterparts” (Thomas, 2010, p. 295). The reason is said to stem from the U.S Supreme Court and the passing of the Plessy v. Ferguson separate but equal constitutional law. Less funding can easily be seen in the comparisons of available programs for those student athletes.

While visiting both websites for both universities, it is easy to find many programs available for student athletes who attend Pittsburgh. These resources involve *The Occupational Outlook Handbook*, *Candid Career*, *What Can I Do with My Major*, and *Hoovers Database* (U. of Pitt, 2019). These programs and databases are all opportunities for student athletes to find careers after college, assistance with major decision making, and resources about the job market. Alabama State, with limited resources, still provides opportunities such as the *Placement Program*, *Career Fairs*, and *On-Campus Recruiting Program* (Alabama State University Office of Career Services, 2018). The efforts done by both universities are just some examples of how the NCAA and other individual universities work together to provide new ways of making improvements to the services to help better prepare student athletes for success beyond graduation. With the help of the NCAA, each university does their best to provide resources and educational programming, within their financial capabilities, to the student athlete population.

The Office of Student Athlete Development at Virginia Tech offers many opportunities for their student athletes. The office holds many workshops/events throughout the student’s time spent at Virginia Tech. Events are structured in order to give each and every individual student the opportunity to help them build the life skills necessary to be successful citizens in the real world. These opportunities focus on six main areas of development. The first area is networking opportunities. Most of these networking opportunities are built with past student athletes who

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have gone on to be very successful. Workshops are used to help student athletes build resumes, interpersonal skills and learn about professional attire. The second area of development for these workshops is finding one's identity. Student athletes have identities built on the label of being athletes. After their athletic career comes to an end, they must discover what their identity is without the label of basketball player, football player, etc.

The third area of development for the Office of Student Athlete Development is time management. One of the many ways in which student athletes are able to balance the demands of being both a student and an athlete is done through building a plan for time management. The fourth and fifth areas are based on leadership skills and communication skills. These two go hand in hand in order to learn to be an effective learner, not only by example but also for those to be able to voice their opinions. Workshops are created to assist student athletes in enhancing their leadership and communication skills. By default, student athletes are placed in leadership positions as what they do and who they inspire through their rare abilities and talents is influential to others. The sixth and final area of development is focused on life after graduation. This is the Beyond VT program, an event held for all upcoming student athlete graduates and is used to help bring comfort to those transitioning out of Virginia Tech into the real world. The Beyond VT event will be the main topic of this research. To evaluate the Beyond VT event graduating student athletes who attended Virginia Tech's Beyond VT Workshop were asked a series of questions about its program effectiveness using a questionnaire. Additionally, the students were interviewed through follow-up questions in order to recommend program improvements.

Purpose Statement

This study was developed to evaluate the current effectiveness of the Beyond VT workshop offered by the Office of Student-Athlete Development at Virginia Tech. The study examined the structure of the Beyond VT Career Game Plan program and its overall effectiveness for student-athletes. Recommendations will be made based on assessment and will be used to help the Virginia Tech Office of Student Athlete Development. With a better understanding of the effectiveness of the Beyond VT Career Game Plan program, recommendations can be made for administrators to continually improve the program with a goal of graduating students feeling more prepared for the work world and future success.

The objective of this study was to describe the most effective strategies in helping transition student-athletes into life after college.

Definition of Terms

The following key terms are defined accordingly for this project:

- **Student-athlete:** A participant in an organized competitive sport sponsored by the educational institution in which the student is enrolled.
- **Leadership:** The action of leading a group of people or an organization.
- **Program evaluation:** A systematic method for collecting, analyzing, and using information to answer questions about projects, policies and programs, particularly about the effectiveness and efficacy.
- **Transition:** The process or a period of changing from one state or condition to another, as in this study from a student athlete to a non-student athlete and citizen.

Limitations of the Project

The first limitation to the project was the ability for the student-athletes to recall the event that took place three months ago. A low response rate to the initial invitation to participate in the interview extended the time between the workshop and the interviews. Because of this, the interviewer had to prompt the interviewees in order to help the student-athletes recall certain events. Student-athletes may have provided false answers to questions relating to the past event in order to continue moving forward with the interview process.

The second limitation was the ability to provide comparisons or guidance to other similar universities. As this was a program evaluation, it is limited to one program at Virginia Tech. The small sample size of student-athletes is another limitation in itself. As only a small percentage of student athletes were actually interviewed, there might be more information left out to examine would there have been a larger sample size of student-athletes. The ability to gain access to more interview participants was limited to the number of student-athletes who were willing to participate in the interviews. Although interviews were successful in gathering useful information, the diversity was limited to a small group of sports rather than a representation of all sports offered at the university. Along with the sample size gender-based findings were also limited in the ability to have a balanced sample size of equal male student-athletes to female student-athletes.

Literature Review

The literature will review universities programming for graduating student-athletes with emphasis on transitioning. The transition process will be a large focal point within the review. With the amount of research available supporting the need for transition intervention, there is not a lot of published literature that report the career transition into their careers in regards to the outcome of the interventions (Park, 2013). The majority of athletic administrators are aware that a large portion of student athletes will not go pro (McCarthy, 2017). With this in mind there have been many programs aimed at providing this large portion of student athletes with programs to help aid transitioning. Transition programs differ from university to university. One thing that remains the same are the regulated schedules of the student athletes.

During a student athletes time at their university of choice, the NCAA has set guiding rules to regulate what is allowed as well as what is not. Among those are the rules regarding the twenty hours per week limit that athletes are allowed to participate in as far as athletic activities (National Collegiate Athletic Association, 2016). Despite these rules, athletes have reported to have been in over forty hours of activity related events (Miller & Buttell, 2018). These range from meetings, conditioning, film sessions, study halls, etc. These have been seen as great way to fulfill the college experience. However, this does little for the experience needed for the transition in to real life.

As student-athletes transition into the workforce, a number of them (15%) take more than a year to find a good job (Gallup, 2020). This number increases drastically if the student-athlete is a first-generation college student; however, first-generation athletes have an easier time than non-athletes (Gallup, 2020). For first-generation students, 36% of those who are athletes find jobs in more than a year, versus 30% of those who are non-athletes (Gallup, 2020). When

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looking for the reasons why student-athlete's percentages are above non-athletes in regards to employment, we can trace it back to a few factors. This includes the relationships with professors, physical well-being, and having a mentor to help guide. In all of the areas, student-athlete percentages are above the non-athletes. Physical well-being may be contributed to the countless resources provided to student-athletes, as well as planned nutrition and planned workout schedules. Non-athletes do not have the same resources that are provided to the student-athlete population. In addition, based on personal experiences, coaches can be great mentors to student athletes as they relate to them more closely through the sports aspect, while non-athletes do not directly have a coach whose job is to teach them in a way that a sports coach would assist an athlete.

While there are many support systems in place to help student athletes, there are also key areas that student athletes are lacking. Support from sport research recognizes that many student-athletes lag behind non-athletes with regards to career readiness and fail to recognize how sport-related skills are valued in the world of work (Gallup, 2020). The NCAA describes the relationship between transferable skills development and participation in sports. One workshop, "The Career Self-Exploration," helps to explain to student-athletes the transferable skills they have through their involvement in sports per NCAA CHAMPS Life Skills Program (1999), an on-going program now titled Life Skills by the NCAA. The workshop is a one-hour step-by-step explanation of the 11 types of transferable skills listing from communication, teamwork, coping, organization, problem solving, self-motivation, and leadership. The skills learned during the workshop are able to be transferred into a professional setting. The workshop is concluded with discussions about the key takeaways from each student-athlete. The organization of the workshop includes having the athletes discuss step by step the development processes they have

learned from the workshop. With the growing rate of student-athletes graduating in the past years (Horsick, 2014), student athletes are surprisingly not aware of the transferable skills that they have which are related to positive career outcomes in the workplace (Mayocchi & Hanrahan, 2000). The evaluation brings about the main problem “student-athletes develop key career-related skills through sport participation, but often fail to recognize the value of these transferable skills and fall behind their non-athlete peers with regard to career development” (NCAA CHAMPS Life Skills Program, 1999). Enthusiasm from the athletes to participate in the early on event was a great success in itself, seeing as this is an area where student-athletes fell short. The need for the workshop is much needed in order to inform those athletes of the transformable skills they have. The student athletes describe the workshop valuable, interesting, and enjoyable (NCAA CHAMPS Life Skills Program, 1999).

Student-athletes also often have difficulties budgeting finances, networking, communicating, and managing nutrition (Newell, 2015). The Morgan Academic Center at The Pennsylvania State University offers a life skills menu that addresses social network training where the pros and cons of social networking and how to be safe about posting are discussed. Budget sense is another area of development where finances are discussed and ways to avoid debt are taught. Other areas involve leadership, communication skills, diversity/sensitivity training, and well as peak performance, which discusses nutritional planning (Life Skills Menu, 2019). Many of the listed topics are programs centered towards the development of student-athletes and held at the Morgan Academic Center (Official Athletics Website, 2020).

Student-athletes may go through very challenging times while attending college. The root of a student-athletes position is labeled in the word itself: “Student-Athlete.” Student-athletes have to maintain the balance between the two demanding roles. Division I student-athletes often

struggle to balance dual roles by associating more with their athletic than academic role, negatively influencing campus integration and student engagement (Gayles & Hu, 2009). Student athletes have less engagement and effective communication can be lost due to the inability to balance the dual schedules. Students who also focus primarily on athletics over academics struggle to engage in the major exploration of the process that includes long-term career planning (Navarro, 2015). A main concern is the student-athletes undergraduate major decision aligning with connections to career fields aspirations in life after sports. The incentive is “often motivated by the institution’s goals to maintain eligibility rather than to consider the extent to which undergraduate degree path prepares the student-athlete for a career for life after sports” (Navarro, 2015, p. 365). The way to advise student-athletes of undergraduate major decisions is often done through academic clustering. Academic clustering is the common way of placing student-athletes into common majors in order to maintain the standard GPA to remain eligible.

Based on the literature, the common methods for placement guides into undergraduate majors were derived by the standards for student-athletes to be guided into common major choices in order for them to be able to meet the NCAA eligibility standards. This section in the student-athletes academic career is a critical stage in the process of delivering quality advisement. Without the proper guidance, the athletes will be taken down the wrong path which will lead to loss in adequate exploration of opportunities as well as the ability for student-athletes to struggle with long term career planning. Also, per Navarro (2015) the findings show “3 major life experiences that influenced student-athletes’ undergraduate major selection processes” (p. 370). The author states these experiences were: interactions with academic/student affairs professionals across campus, the struggle to balance the athletic and academic roles, and the

interactions with academic/student affairs professionals internal to athletics. And, the influences were life experiences as well as gender and sport. Controllable variables can't be labeled to gender and life experiences as these are non-controllable facts. Experiences are what help to build personality traits through variables of time. Although traits can't be changed other facts can be learned such as skills that can be motivated through determination (Northouse, 2016). In the example the learned change must come from the variables that can be changed, which are the influences of the academic student affairs on campus and in athletics, and the struggle between the balances between athletics and academics.

Students who come from low income families tend to be minority individuals. "America's racial and ethnic minorities are the fastest-growing sectors in the country and they make up a disproportionately large segment of the economically poor population, tending to their educational needs is in everyone's interest" (US Department of Education, 2000). In this fact alone, the focus from education is needed for the minority groups. A group of 207 freshman and sophomore college student-athletes and non-athletes were examined on the relationship of race, ethnicity, gender, athletic participation, and college adjustment (Melendez, 2006). Additionally, in the examination, the findings determined that gender and athletic status were related to college adjustment (Melendez, 2006). College adjustment is the ability for student to adjust to college. This adjustment is key for the students to improve, this is the process of finding and adopting modes of behavior suitable to the environment (Paras, 2017). Through past experiences individuals may make the adjustment differently. Minority students have had less experiences in regards to schooling due to their family's low-income having access to low quality education in low income school systems. Minorities make up 22 percent of the general population, 19 percent of undergraduate enrollment, and 14 percent of undergraduate degrees (US Department of

Education, 2000). This is an indicator that minorities make up a small percentage of those who receive undergraduate degrees, with an even smaller percentage of those receiving graduate degrees. The difference in the rate of those who are student-athletes compared to non-athletes who successfully receive their degrees moves from 39% non-athletes to 49% who are student-athletes (Gallup, 2020, p. 11). NCAA student-athletes are slightly more likely (33%) than their non-athlete peers (30%) to have had a good job waiting for them upon their college graduation (Gallup, 2020, p. 12). Programs given to student-athletes may be the effective result for minorities having a greater percentage in regards to their graduation rates, and rates of employment upon graduating. The need for program evaluations show that program evaluations “are a valuable tool for program managers who are seeking to strengthen the quality of their programs and improve outcomes” (Metz, 2007, p. 1). With all the demands of student athletes, it is imperative to have strong life skills programs available to them if they are to be successful in college and beyond.

Theoretical Framework

The following theories helped shape this study: Big Five Personality Theory and The Big Five Career Theories. The Big Five Personality Theory goes back to the 1930's and was developed with contributions from multiple scholars. Originally designed to “begin determining the basic dimensions of personality” which are influenced by the environment (Lim, 2020, p. 1). The Big Five Personality Theory consists of five personality traits: Openness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism. Figure 1-1 details the spectrum of traits from high to low.

Figure 1-1: The BIG 5 Personality Factors

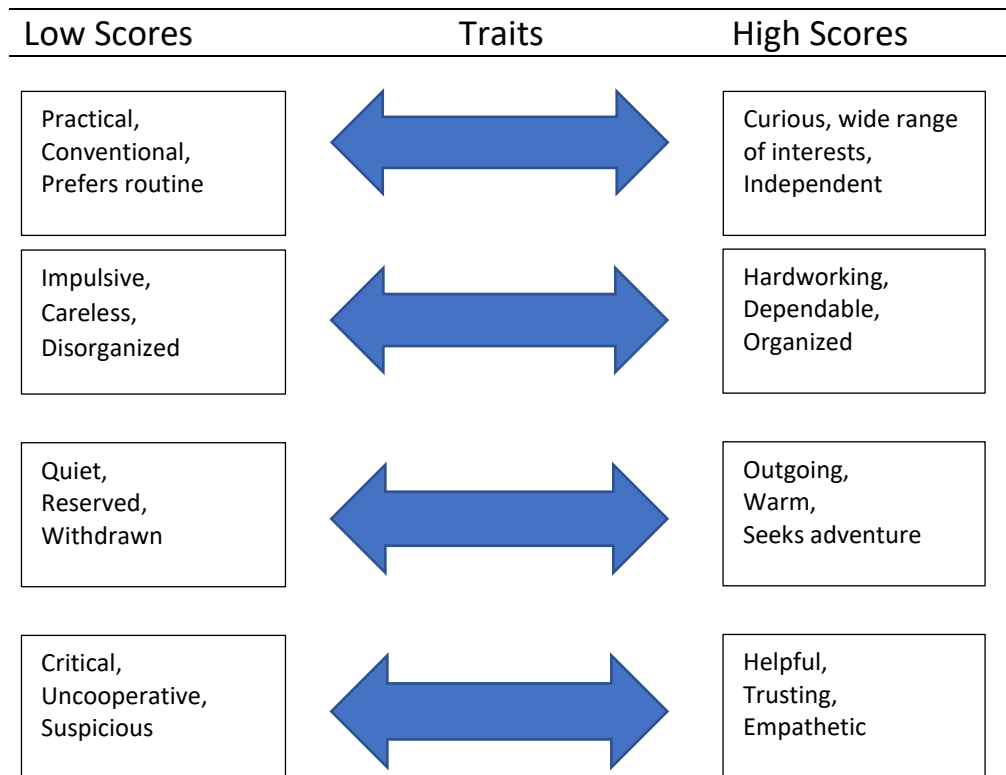




Figure 1-1: Big 5 Personality Traits, The Evolution of Personality Variation in Humans. Note. From Gone Wild (2018). Retrieved from: <https://aspergerhuman.wordpress.com/2018/06/08/big-5-personality-traits-cont-the-evolution-of-personality-variation-in-humans/>

The traits of the Big 5 are impact career success as there are relationships between the traits and career success in people-oriented occupations. (Seibert & Krimer, 2001). All of these traits help to understand an individual better in order to place them in categories that may help predict where their traits may be most effective. These traits can be used for placement within a company, group, field of work, team positions, and leadership roles. Career assessments tend to use these as measures to place individuals in the working field the most (Liang & Kelsen (2019).

An individual that is high in Openness is usually open to learning new things and willing to be coached or taught. This is a valued trait when it comes to any profession. Those high in Conscientiousness tend to be reliable and organized. Both of these are traits that employers in the workforce look for in employees. Someone who is high in Extraversion has high energy and is a very friendly and social person. This attribute is valued, knowing that an individual is social and likes to work with others. Agreeableness is about trust and helpfulness, both traits employers' value. Those high in this trait are sympathetic, affectionate and kind. The final trait within the personality test is Neuroticism. This is more so the emotional state of an individual. Those high in this trait tend to be reserved and thoughtful, but also at the opposite end of the spectrum could be very emotionally unstable, moody or tense. Low neuroticism many come off as rude or unfriendly. Most people in charge of their divisions such as team leaders, CEO, managers, and bosses or usually low in this trait. This helps with making better decisions, as their emotions are

not involved with the situation but rather they make decisions based on research and data evidence. (Di Fabio, 2016). The theory relates to the research to show how the personality traits of graduating student athletes is used in helping to find suitable careers for their lives after Virginia Tech.

The Theory of Work Adjustment is a theory within the Big Five Career Theories that is a good fit for use within the framework. The Theory of Work Adjustment “describes a dynamic component of how individuals maintain and adjust fit with their work environment” (Bayl-Smith & Griffin, 2015). It was shown that work style was positively related to conscientiousness, as well as engagement. Both attributes are similar to the two of the Big Five Personality traits of conscientiousness and extraversion. The way the Work Adjustment Theory works is through People (P) and Environment (E). The interaction between P and E is through the fulfillment of each other’s requirements. The relationship is maintained by the satisfaction of each side. To tie the theory and the concepts of P and E with this research, graduating student athletes are looking to transition into the real world and begin working. Companies are looking for those who are able to fill the need of their workplace. Former student athletes with strong skills developed through successful university / athletic department programs, part of their P, can take on these career positions. The graduating seniors have the ability to fulfill these requirements which will satisfy the companies work needs. From the conscientiousness trait, companies can predict if the student athletes will be a productive and capable worker.

This theory will be tied into the research to help predict future work. There are still gaps within the theory as it relates to the research at hand. This research looks to understand how the transition from Virginia Tech to the real world works and how the student athletes can use traits and the programs from the university to help propel them into a successful future. The work

adjustment will be the bridge between the transition from being a student athlete to the workforce.

Logic Model

To help better understand the outcomes of the Beyond VT workshop and its relationship to the different components of the program, a logic model was created (Appendix A) using the on-line, digital Netway Tool (<https://core.human.cornell.edu/research/systems/netway.cfm>) at Cornell University. Logic models, or roadmaps have become a critical feature of program planning and evaluation. Using a logic model framework, as a theory of change, and provides a visual summary that shows the relationship between the program's resources, activities, outputs, and outcomes (Grinnell, Unrau, & Gabor, 2013). The Appendix A logic model helped frame the interview questions used in this study. With regards to the Beyond VT event, the long-term goals for the program are for each of the student athletes to be productive citizens with successful lives, as well as have a full and working understanding of how to manage financial situations, personal health, critical networking, and communication skills.

The mid-term goals are for student athletes to increase comfort, growth and experiences of change. With this change, the student athletes will begin to implement financial planning exercises, practice personal health, and use the nutritional guidelines within their daily lives. Short-term goals were setting goals for one's self, understanding personal values, and to gain knowledge about professionalism.

From the Beyond VT workshop, student athletes are intended to have logical understanding of personal finance with new found knowledge of financial planning and budgeting methods. From the nutritional panel, student athletes should be able to logically begin balancing nutrition plans, self-budget around their income, learn better dietary habits, plan

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schedules for exercising around new time schedules, increased knowledge about one's body type, and understand proportionate serving sizes to help alongside with financial budgeting.

The intended outcome of the networking panel, is for student athletes to have a better understanding of the importance of communication as well as new found ways to benefit from working with others. Student athletes learned from experiences of former student athletes in order to have a jumpstart on what to look forward to so they might prepare properly, as well as being able to take advice from former student athletes to plan better for themselves.

Methods

Designing and planning interviews

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the current effectiveness of the Beyond VT workshop offered by the Office of Student-Athlete Development at Virginia Tech. The Beyond VT event was held Monday April 6th, 2020 and was conducted via Zoom technology. Perspective program participants were sent an invitation by the Office of Student-Athlete Development to attend the Beyond VT workshop, with date and time. A post-event questionnaire sent via email solicited volunteers to participate in interviews for this study following the Beyond VT event. The questionnaire was designed by the Associate Director for Student Athlete Career Development. Before contacting any potential participants, this study was submitted to the office of Virginia Tech IRB in the form of a Determination, and was determined that the proposed activity is not research involving human subjects as defined by HHS and FDA regulations.

The Beyond VT event was originally designed to be held face-to-face before the outbreak of COVID-19. However, with the safety requirements of social distancing, the event was held virtually in replacement of the original location of Lane Stadium 4th Floor President's Suite from 6:30pm -7:45pm. The final Zoom workshop was essentially the same as the planned in-person workshop.

During the Beyond VT event, discussions were held on the topic of life skills including: personal finance, personal healthy nutrition, professional networking, mental health and tips for success from Virginia Tech student athlete alumni. 174 student athletes were invited to the event with a total of 21 actually participating in the workshop. The post-questionnaire asked if the participants would be willing to participate in a post-workshop interview. Interviews were the

preferred method to collect data where the “researcher is interested in collecting “facts, or gaining insights into or understanding of opinions, attitudes, experiences, processes, behaviours, or predictions” (Rowley, 2012, p. 261). Due to lack of respondents, a second, more urgent, email invitation (Appendix B) was sent to 21 workshop participants. Post-interview questions were designed by the researcher in conjunction with university experts as the based on their experiences with designing interview questions (Appendix D) and on review of the logic model (Appendix A) to measure program success in achieving intended outcomes. Consent was given via email (see Appendix C) allowing for recording of the interview. Interviews were conducted via phone calls, and were audio recorded via iPhone technology.

During the beginning of the interview, conversation began with an icebreaker as indicated in the interview protocol (Appendix D). The icebreaker provided an opportunity for the interviewer and interviewees to gain a level of comfort with each other and share basic information. Conversation focused on geographical background, name, sport teams, and other similar common interests.

Interviews were the best way to collect data. Interviews allowed the interviewer to conduct qualitative research. In an interview, the participants are able to give more feedback as compared to a questionnaire or survey. Having the ability to go in-depth during an interview allows the researcher to collect quality data to use towards findings of the research questions (Fox, 1998). Questions were chosen to directly correlate with the Beyond VT event. A full list of interview questions and prompts can be found in Appendix D. Interviewees all had the experiences and knowledge from throughout their college experience to respond to the questions. Questions were specific to past events that each participant had been exposed to. Interviews were

for 10-15 minutes in length. The time frame was in place to refrain from losing the interviewee interest and attention.

Conducting Interviews

The process of conducting each interview was done to discover qualitative data. Semi structured interviews were used in the interviewing process. Semi structured interviews allow the interviewer to be flexible when asking questions. Questions were delivered in a set order and with prompts for each question (Rowley, 2012, p. 262). Original interview questions might lead to the findings of another; whereas, in structured interviews the interviewer must strictly stay with the original set of questions (Fox, 2006). Interviews lasted from 10 to 15 minutes in order to refrain from the interviewees losing interest.

The process for selecting the interview participants was done via the Beyond VT workshop. At the end of the Beyond VT workshop, student athletes were prompted to complete the post-workshop questionnaire. At the conclusion of the questionnaire there was one final question asking if the student athletes would be willing to participate in a short interview being held by the researcher. From the students who accepted the interview request, each of the student athletes were sent an email explaining the purpose of the interview and why they were selected. Due to the low turnout in responses from the original email, a second email was needed in order to increase the number of interviews (see Appendix B). With help of the Associate Director for Student Athlete Career Development, the researcher was granted names and contact of workshop participants to again solicit their participation in the interviews. With the increase in access to outreach to more of the Beyond VT student athlete participants, the researcher was able to successfully conduct nine interviews.

Following the conclusion of the interviews, recordings of the interview were immediately replayed and rich notes were taken, along with transcription, in order to carefully describe the environment and overall mood of both the interviewee and interviewer. Interviewees were later notified via email in order to bring about clarity of what was said during the interviews. After the interview each interviewee had the opportunity to request and review their transcript but each declined to request the transcript. The opportunities to remove statements from the data if they didn't feel comfortable with the answer were allowed. If any new updates were able to be included during the cleanup of the interviews, the interviewee also had the chance to add additional statements to their previous statements.

Analysis of Data

The best way in which to analyze the interviews was to first transcribe the audio recordings from each of the participating interviewees. After transcribing was complete, the transcriptions were carefully examined multiple times in order to begin coding. Codes were placed into certain categories that were reoccurring from each participant. After finding a similar pattern within the categories the researcher was able to combine categories into themes. Questionnaire responses were also summarized for key findings regarding the quality of professionals in attendance, how prepared the student athletes felt for life after Virginia Tech once they had attended the Beyond VT event, and if the event provided useful information about student wellness.

Findings

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the current effectiveness of the Beyond VT workshop offered by the Office of Student-Athlete Development at Virginia Tech. All results were in connection to the Virginia Tech student-athlete participant interviews that were invited to the Beyond VT event during the spring semester of 2020. 174 student athletes were invited to the event with a total of 21 actually participating in the workshop. The post-questionnaire asked if the participants would be willing to participate in a post-workshop interview. No students accepted the initial invitation to participate in an interview. Therefore, a second email invitation was sent to 21 workshop participants. Ten of these students agreed to participate in an interview and nine were actually interviewed. Only nine were actually interviewed because the final participant was unable to be contacted by phone or email. Of the nine student athlete participants, there were five female and four male interviewees. Table 1-1 describes male vs female participants as well as the sport the interviewees participated:

Table 1-1: Participants Sports by Sex:

Sex	Women's Volleyball	Men's Swimming	Women's Swimming	Women's Basketball	Women's Lacrosse	Baseball	Football
Female	1		2	1	2		
Male		1				1	1

Using semi-structured interview methods to answer the research question six themes emerged.

- Describe the most effective strategies in helping transition student-athletes into life after college.

Interviewee engagement was held with interesting conversations on the questions being asked. Conversation was filled with laughter and very in-depth responses. This was another way to keep the attention of the interviewees. If engagement was ever lost, the conversation would switch towards topics that the interviewee found interesting while also relating the topic to the interview questions. Another way to get the interviewee to be fully engaged was to remind them of the importance of the work that was being done and how it would benefit those following in the coming years. Interview questions were followed by prompts. Each prompt (Appendix D) was used to help those participants recall information for the event and to enlighten those on what had taken place. Prompts were rarely needed due to the quick and fluent response of the student-athletes.

Theme 1 / Networking with Comfortable and Trusted Individuals

There were six themes that emerged from the interviews: networking, early financial planning, developing an early plan B, self-identity, more participation, and goal setting and time management. Theme one conveys the importance of networking with trusted individuals.

Below is a participant shared quote from student athlete Aliyah, who described how her coach is someone who helped prepare her for life after college:

My coach was the one that recruited me, so she was one of the coaches I was super close with. She went to school here, she coached here, so she's obviously been through everything you can possibly think of. So, someone like her I definitely look up to and would want her to help me, show me the ropes when I get out into the real world, when they don't give student athletes anything anymore just because you're a student athlete. So, I lean on her a lot as she's definitely been a mentor to me.

Another student-athlete, Tammy, stated about engagements with employers:

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I went to a leadership program, which was more geared towards me and other athletes and helping them become better leaders on their team and in the workforce, but one I was actually able to meet a ton of different student athletes and we were able to hang out together which was really cool as well.

Another student-athlete, Sally, stated that the student athlete development programs helping with communication with employers:

I really liked the Career game plan event a lot, it helped me understand how to talk to professionals and they want you to feel comfortable and all that stuff.”

“One of my professors was really open-door policy in terms of being prepared for a job rather than being strict on A’s and B’s.

Another student-athlete, Richard’s, statement on the professionals brought in by the Student-athlete development:

The professionals they bring in are really nice and they work with you really well. They give great suggestions and were really personable and were willing to work through your resume like if we’ve known each other longer than just meeting.

Another student-athlete, Andy’s, statement on the Beyond VT event:

The pure focus was just college graduates and advice after graduating from your sport and from college. So, you know that event getting to talk to people who were going through the same thoughts that we’re going through was really cool to see and it helped out.

Another student-athlete, Brenda, stated that having more opportunities to network with recent student athlete graduates with “I feel like there should be more opportunities for student athletes to

talk to other student athletes who recently graduated, so events where there are just solely graduates like student to student instead of hearing from an older person.”

Theme 2 / Early Financial Planning

Theme two conveys the importance of early financial planning. Below is a shared quote from student-athlete, Brenda on more up to date financial advice:

I think a lot of the advice was really good, but a lot of it was in the next few years students should do this, where I think it would be nice to get advice on what you can do today or tomorrow and all those topics.

Another student-athlete, Tammy, stated she paid most attention to the financial panel:

I paid most attention to the finance stuff just because I didn't really do a lot of finance stuff in under grad. So, I really didn't know what to do and I kind of relied heavily on my parents for information on that. But definitely, I'd say that is probably most important and helping you find a job and what makes you stand out to employers.

Another student-athlete, Sally, commented on the reliance upon parents for financial needs with “Finance was helpful, it made you realize you're going to have to take more responsibility, especially for student-athletes. Majority of my team are still relying on their parents.”

Another student-athlete, Richard, shared his observations about a problem another student had related to budgeting as “A budgeting plan would be great; my girlfriend was a swimmer and budgeting and saving her money was one of the problems she had.”

Another student-athlete, Andy, stated about the need for more financial independence events with “More events around financial independence maybe or really what to do living by yourself like as an ex student-athlete. So, more in-depth on that.”

Theme 3 / Developing Early Plan B

Theme three shows the importance of developing early Plan B. Below is a shared quote from student athlete, Colt stated about his situation dealing with next steps:

Before I was stuck at home I was really debating on whether I wanted to do my fifth year, or if I just wanted to graduate and go out into the real world, but after being home for all that time I realized I kind of missed school. So, that's when I really decided that I'm going to stay for my fifth year.

Another student-athlete, Tammy, statement on work experience opportunities:

I didn't really spend my 4 years as much as I wanted to investing into my future more then I was investing into my present. So, I think my biggest fear now is like if my work experiences are where they need to be. Whereas someone who is a regular student at Tech had more opportunities to be involved in things that would better help them in the future.

And "I'm really using the fifth year to figure out what I want to do."

In regards to a program being done earlier on in student athletes collegiate careers, Sally stated "Yes and no because only a select few would listen to it honestly, because athletes only worry about the next week to see who we are playing and you don't really think that far ahead."

Another student-athlete, Richard, stated concerns about future plans for after gradation:

My biggest concern is getting into grad-school to finish my fifth year and if not, I'll be looking to go professional and if that doesn't work out, it's going to be finding a job in the next couple of months to help just live my life. Everything been so difficult with corona virus rearranged so many different plans.

Theme 4 / Self-Identity

Theme four conveys the need to find Self-Identity. Below is a shared quote from student-athlete, Colt states his struggle with finding his self-identity with “Trying to find my identity, I think that’s going to be biggest thing I struggle with once I’m done playing football and all that.” Another student-athlete, Tammy, stated that personality is based on sports involvement as “You form your whole personality based off of what sport you play because that’s all you get to do and that’s all who you hung out with is usually though athletes.”

Another student-athlete, Sally, explaining how she transitioned into a new identity earlier due to injuries:

I transitioned out of the sport a lot faster than other people did because of my injuries. So, I remembered going to see my doctor really early on and he helped me to realize I’m not an athlete anymore. But I could imagine coming out of it like everyone else I would have problems too. Luckily- well not luckily- but I got to remove the label a year earlier and I guess it helped to transition.

Theme 5 / More Participation in Student Athlete Development Events/Resources

Theme five conveys the importance of More Participation in Student Athlete Development events. Below is a shared quote from student athlete, Colt, on attending events:

I wish I would have. That’s what I look back on and regret not going to any of those. Because I think my freshman year I was like well I’m not going to that, but looking back I wish I would’ve done that, but like I said this is the first year I attended some of the stuff.

Colt also added:

For my sport I know we need to get more guys going to some of those things because I feel that they help so much with networking. So, to just use them as a tool and making sure

student-athletes know like that's what they're there for because I feel like a lot of the guys don't really take advantage of some of the stuff like that. Maybe not make it mandatory but at least make it so you have to go to 1 or 2 per year.

Another student-athlete, Aliyah, stated future implementations that would be helpful to gain work experience:

I think Virginia Tech should implement making it mandatory from your freshman to senior year to either start doing internships, volunteering just to get out to the workforce because a lot of times it takes graduates at least 2 to 5 years to find a job.

Another student-athlete, Richard, statement in regards to the staff members in the office of student athlete development "The ladies up on the sixth-floor do a great job networking the athletes and helping us with our careers and resumes."

Theme 6 / Goal Setting, Time Management

The final theme will convey the need for Time Management. Below is a shared quote from student athlete, Erica addressing concerns in dealing with time management:

Working out too, that's something that I like, I want to be active and stay active like through COVID. I kind of had ample amount of time to work out and I still kind of struggle with finding time in the day to be active or find motivation honestly. So, working some sort of physical activity within my day working a 9 to 5 job.

Another student-athlete, Andy, expressed concerns about time management and motivation including "My biggest concern is probably how I spent my time like outside of work like time management and already not working out every day like I have no motivation to workout anymore."

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Andy also added “It’s hard for me to do stuff by myself but it’s easy when you have a coach putting presser on you.”

Another student-athlete, Brenda’s, statement in regards to the biggest concern for life after VT.

I feel like the structure of it. Like you mentioned before where you have like a set schedule already made for you like when you wake up, when you go to classes, when you eat, and when you’re going to practice. So, the biggest differences are like not having someone to tell when to do everything like have too much freedom almost in a way.

Brenda also stated:

The main problem is like you’re not accomplishing something, because like you go to practice and you’re like ok I accomplished practice but at home you can sit on the couch all day and just go to bed. I feel like its hard to make a schedule to accomplish things like I use to kind of thing.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the current effectiveness of the Beyond VT workshop offered by the Office of Student-Athlete Development at Virginia Tech and to improve the programming offered. This was done completed through and interviews with program participants. The logic model helped to define the connections between each of the following themes from activities provided at the workshop and their intended outcomes. Six themes emerged that connect the findings to the research objective to describe the most effective way in helping transition student-athletes into life after college.

Within theme one, the message was to help better understand the importance of networking with comfortable and trusted individuals. Student-athletes expressed having the comfort in talking to individuals who were in the same positions in relationship to sports, career goals, and daily interactions, and they felt there are those who they can relate to the most. Student athletes having trust in those professionals may also bring comfort and allow the student athlete to open up in order to being networking with other individuals outside of their comfort zone. Doors may open for student-athletes from having the very close connections to those trusted individuals. Communication is key for student-athletes to be effective in the working world after transitioning out of college athletics. The networking skills will better help student-athletes with communication skills due to the networking that has taken place with those trusted individuals.

Theme two was focused directly on early financial planning. In this section, the quotes from the student athletes all expressed the need for further financial preparation in order to gain stability outside of parental figures as well as ways in which to understand what step they could do as of now instead of later in order to understand the necessary step dealing with current

situations rather than future endeavors. The Beyond VT event gave advice regarding budgeting, future financial advice, as well as ways to think about savings. Through the findings from the interview coding process, the reoccurring messages found that the student-athletes paid most attention to the financial panel. Yet, rather than be given advice about future plans for financial literacy, student athletes showed more interest in advice that would relate more to things they can do now, and focus on the present rather than the future.

Theme three showed the need and importance of developing an early Plan B. Throughout this theme there were many student-athletes who were uncertain of their future plans. The majority stated having problems due to the COVID-19 virus pandemic in implementing their Plan B. Many resorted to continuing schooling into their fifth year of college as a path to use the extra time in order to plan for their next step, while others have no choice due to the circumstances of not having the time to prepare a plan B because of the amount of time spent focusing on their current situation in collegiate athletics. Similar to financial planning, focusing on the present situation for secondary plans would be most effective in aiding student athletes. This may also increase the comfortability student-athletes feel upon their transition process.

Theme four was focused on finding one's self-identity. In this theme, the main concern was self-identity outside of athletics. Most of the student athletes stated that their personalities were so intertwined with their sports, that their sport was the only way they could see themselves. A factor related to this concern was that student athletes expressed that they spend the majority of their time around other student athletes within their corresponding sports. Diverse integration of student athletes has more opportunities to intermingle those peers outside of their respective sports and may allow student-athletes to engage in conversation with others outside of their small groups to learn more about what goes on with other student-athletes to compare their

similar and non-similar situations to learn from one another on how they thought about coping with their new identities. The effective outcomes may result in a decrease in worry for student-athletes regarding their self-identity after the transition.

Theme five is primarily focused on more participation in Student Athlete Development events and resources. In this section, student athletes expressed regretting not taking advantage of the Student Athlete Development resources and events as well as hoping more student-athletes would take advantage of this resource. Multiple students expressed what a great resource the Student Athlete Development office actually is, while others agree and would go as far as making it mandatory for student-athletes to attend their events so they may take advantage of every opportunity before it's too late. The events held by the Office of Student Athlete Development received positive feedback from the majority of interview participants. With such high praise from athletes, and even wishing events were mandatory, this shows how this population understood the importance of this office and the resources available to them. An increase in student-athletes event attendance might result in the greater understanding of the events held for the student-athletes. The increase of event attendance may also enable student-athletes to engage in constructive conversation with other peers outside of their own respective sports.

The final theme was built around goal setting and time management. In this section, a majority of the student-athletes were concerned with time management in regards to building schedules around their new lives. Student-athletes stated concerns with getting motivated and adjusting to their new schedules, filled with tons of free time as compared to their lives as a student-athlete. The worry around time management for new perspective careers or daily living was mentioned numerous times by participants interview as noted in the transcriptions. Student-

athletes described past time management and scheduling to be planned out ahead of time. This includes class schedule times, practice times, meal times, and game times. Student-athletes have the majority of their days already planned for months in advance, thanks to academic staff and coaching staff. Student-athletes noted the need to be on time to certain events due to repercussions to those who arrive later than the set time. Student-athletes almost never have to worry about scheduling any daily activity since their schedules are already planned and filled with numerous amounts of requirements such as class, practice, and games. Management of time was only completed by the student-athlete if they have any free periods, meaning student-athletes have very limited experiences creating and planning their own schedules. Although daily planning and time management are similar, time management was reliant on the student-athletes to follow through. With the limited amount of free-time the student-athletes have, they may choose to spend time either relaxing, studying, or partying, etc. This may be where student-athletes acquire their learned understanding of how to manage time. With that time being only a fraction of their daily workloads, student-athletes only have experience managing short time frames. This may contribute to the inability for student-athletes to understand how to manage so much time when they are only used to managing smaller amounts compared to having entire days in a row to have to manage with nothing filled by class, games, and practice any longer.

As a researcher and participant in the Beyond VT event described in this study I feel comfortable in these findings. Through my experiences with this program, I was able to relate to the majority of the student athletes through my background as a student athlete. From this, I was able to answer questions I needed to answer myself, as well as connect with peers to help them with their concerns. Being able to perform this research was a great experience to understand which areas need improvement in order to better serve the student athlete population.

Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the current effectiveness of the Beyond VT workshop offered by the Office of Student-Athlete Development at Virginia Tech. Nine interviews of student-athletes were conducted resulting in six occurring themes. From student-athletes statements, findings resulted in the need for further information about financial planning by applying particular advice pertaining to the more present day information rather than future plans. In addition, student-athletes expressed a need for early planning. Multiple participants conveyed the message of having little idea as to what they would do if their primary plan after transitioning were to fall through. Due to the unfortunate event of the COVID-19 outbreak pandemic, many athletes have been forced to reconsider their options.

For both the Big Five Personality Theory and the Theory of Work Adjustment, connections can be seen throughout the entirety of both. The Big Five Personality, connections from student athletes personality traits have been seen to be a great way to determine their future success in job placement and the workforce. The theory holds that people are influenced by their environment (E). And workshops such as the Beyond VT event and others offered by Virginia Tech to its student athletes are an influence to their environment, with the goal of positive growth. Positively influence the E and students will grow with new skills and knowledge. For this reason Virginia Tech offers it student athletes many different workshops. And for those students that score higher in the Big Five Personality traits tend to have better chances of catching the eye of employers, as the majority of the Big Five traits, such as organization, outgoingness, caring for others, and being open to new experiences are great qualities to have, while those who have scored on the low end of neuroticism tend to fare well over those who

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score higher due to the fact that they are able to control their mental state. From the Theory of Work Adjustment, we can see that the environment has a great impact on personality traits of individuals. Seeing as the environment has a great deal of impact, the Beyond VT event should take this into consideration by planning to incorporate transferrable skills into the program to further improve student athletes chances of peaking the interest of employers.

Recommendations

Based on the research this study found, there are seven recommendations that should be considered by the Office of Student Athlete Development for their Beyond VT event. In future programming for this event, student athletes would like to see an increase in employer exposure, early financial planning, an increased awareness or exposure of the benefits of the program itself, opportunities for peer engagement, assistance with time management after college, transferable skill awareness, and an overall increased participation in the event. Student athletes expressed a desire to be more informed of these events and their importance. These recommendations can be seen as improvements for the program in the future and will benefit the student athlete population.

Those who wish to replicate this study should consider the need for a larger interview pool with students willing to participate in the study. The greater the number of those participating in the interviews, the more in depth and concrete findings will be discovered. The sample size for this study requires a broader outlook across multiple sports. Having a balanced sample of female and male participants may also open a new door of evolution regarding the differences in male to female outlooks. When designing questions, ensure using the best possible questions that will help to answer the research question, rather than having 15 broad questions, it is better to have 5-6 high quality questions. Make sure the questions are simple and easy to follow. This will promote high levels of response from the interviewees. This will in turn build their confidence in answering questions and is also a great way to break the ice to invoke more conversation. Be sure to keep the interviewee on track as simple questions might promote high responses, they can also be a roadway for the participants to lead into other directions off topic. In my interviews, I found humor and laughter helped to relax the interviewee to make it feel less

like an interview and more of a conversation. When recruiting participants, make sure to reach out to as many potential participants as possible. If not, you run a risk of falling short on the minimum number of participants needed for the study to be valid. If a second email is required in order to increase interview participation, make sure to make the email very urgent in order to convey the importance of their participation. After interviewee participants agree to be interviewed make sure to keep the interview process as short and simple and up beat as possible. This will diminish the likelihood of interviewees losing interest and decrease the quality of responses needed from them. When going through the process of coding, categorizing, and creating themes make sure to label as many codes as you can. As you move from categorizing and themes the large amount of coding will allow for the discovery of high-quality outcomes to better backup your findings. Remember the interviewer confidence is needed to finish the interview as strong as possible so the findings will be to high standards. In the finishing remarks be sure to thank the interviewees for participating in the interview.

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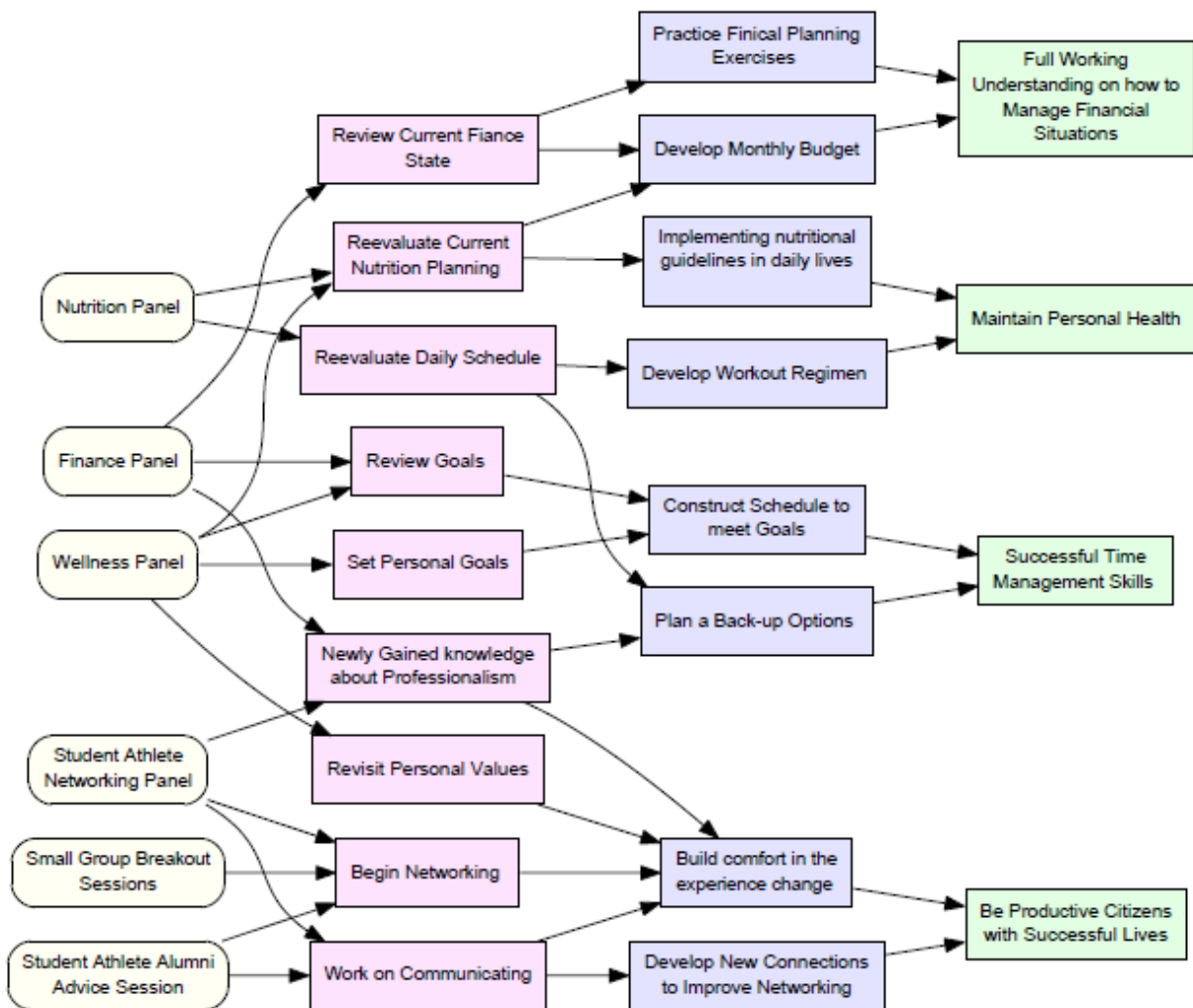
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Appendix A – Pathways Logic Model Theory of Change Diagram



Appendix B – Secondary Recruitment Script

Secondary Recruitment Script

Hi (Insert name), my name is Branden Johnson and I am a part of the men's basketball team here at Virginia Tech and I need your assistance. I am completing my fifth year of school and I am looking to finish my VT master's degree this summer. I have a short interview I would like for you to participate in so I will be able to graduate on time. The interview will consist of six short questions relating to the Beyond VT workshop that was held this spring semester. The interview will be no longer than 10-15min. The information given by you will help in the progression of my master's degree completion.

This project is in conjunction with the Virginia Tech Office of Student Athlete Development.

As another Virginia Tech student athlete, I hope you'll participate in this very quick and important interview. If you're willing to participate please respond to my email as soon as possible and I will schedule the meeting via Zoom or phone call whichever is preferred.

GoHokies!!

Appendix C – Email Script for Recruitment

Email Script for Recruitment

Hello! My name is Branden Johnson. As part of my Virginia Tech Master's Degree completion I will be asking a series of questions about *Beyond VT Career Game Planning* workshop effectiveness using a questionnaire. Additionally, I will be asking you questions about the workshop for program improvement. Your honest feedback will not only help guide my project, but it will also allow for the Virginia Tech Athletic Departments to enhance leadership tools and career development programs offered to student athletes.

I am requesting you participate in my project. Part I of this includes completing a written questionnaire at the end of the workshop which should not take more than 10 minutes. Part II is participating with me in a casual interview after the workshop where I will ask you a few questions that will be used for program improvement and again should not take more than 10 minutes.

All answers will be kept confidential. You will not be identified by name.

Participation in the interview is completely voluntary. You will not receive compensation for participation.

Are you willing to assist me in this program evaluation?

Appendix D – Icebreaker, Interview Questions & Prompts

Icebreaker – tell them my name, ask their name and sport played, ask about where they are from, etc. tell them it is nice meeting you. Explain the purpose of the study and my role as a graduate student. Thank them for their time. Have some fun meeting them!

Interview Questions & Prompts

1.What resources do you think should be added to increase Career readiness?

Prompts

- 1.Financial Advice
- 2.Networking Advice
- 3.Nutritional Advice
- 4.Mental wellbeing Advice

2.What opportunities for student athletes do you feel were most effective in preparing you for life after VT?

Prompts

1. Any events outside of the Office of student development that you attended while at VT.

3.Who do you think plays the biggest role in aiding you through the transition process?

Prompts

1. Did any of your coaching staff play any big roles in your process?
2. Did any of your close friends play a big role in your process?
3. Did family play any big roles in your process?

4.What is your biggest concern about life after VT?

Prompts

1. Is there nothing planned next
2. Are future sports opportunities a concern?
3. Are there concerns about living situations?
4. Is traveling a concern?

5.What are your current plans for life after VT?

Prompts

1. Will you be continuing your path in sports?
2. Are you returning to school for additional years?
3. Will you continue working in the sports field?
4. Is coaching an interest?

6.While you were student athletes what student development events did you participate in.

Prompts

- 1.What other events did you attend
- 2.mental health for Male Athletes
3. Mental health for Female Athletes

