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Name of the workshop attended: Introduction to NVivo Qualitative Data Analysis Software

Dates: 22/10/2020 – 23/10/2020

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Current employee: Mthente: Research and Consulting Services

Years of experience in evaluation: 8 months

Highlights:

- Having a first time experience with a hands-on measurement tool despite not only having limited working experience with qualitative research methodology and analysis but based on the fact that such an important beginner level workshop was conducted through online conferencing.
- I found it beneficial how relevant the overall workshop and the Nvivo measurement tool was for individuals from different backgrounds, such as social work, relative to monitoring and evaluation/programme evaluation.
- I was really impressed with how the workshop balanced presentation, practical examples and exercises, team discussions and reflection that was facilitated and supported.

Lessons learnt:

- Nvivo, as a measurement tool, proves to be extremely helpful and intuitive when it comes to qualitative research. I would highly encouraged engaging tertiary education students and entry-level professionals with this platform.
- The means of coding from existing documents and transcripts is made simpler through this platform.
- It instils more confidence into those who have concerns surrounding the organisation and analysis of qualitative data.
- The platforms offers a means of engaging with quantitative data (e.g., responses to self-report surveys), despite not being fully engaged with in the workshop.
- There are unique tips, tricks and pitfalls to take clear note of when engaging with the platform.

Challenges:

- Given the fact that I myself was unable to attend the live workshops due to health-related reasons, my engagement with the relevant attendees and presenters is limited to post-workshop inquiry. As such, during sanctioned team sessions and breakaway group discussion, I was not able to share my ideas and thoughts across to the members and ultimately learn from them.
- With specific regard to the mechanisms embedded in Nvivo, I found the issuing of coding queries, to be difficult, or more-or-less overwhelmingly, at times especially when multiple transcripts, classification, cases and attributes were being assigned.

Next steps:

- To reflect on what was learnt, engage with the helpful material provided from the course presenters and practice more with the procedures in order to enrich my understanding and confidence in utilising this effective tool in future programmes and projects where the primary means of data collection, analysis and interpretation is qualitative.
- Engage more with professional bodies who not only have experience with qualitative research methodology, but have utilised Nvivo and perhaps alternative platforms that aim to work just as effectively, particularly within the context of programme evaluation.