



Project STAR



II. Steps in Designing an Evaluation

- Five Steps in Designing an Evaluation
- Evaluation Implementation Timeline
- Preparing for an Evaluation
- Evaluation Schedule

Project STAR

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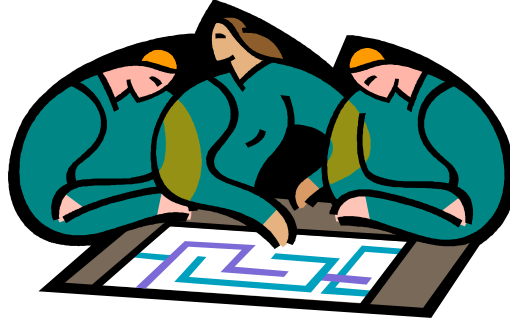
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5 Steps in Designing an Evaluation



What is "Evaluation"?

An in-depth, rigorous effort to measure impact and identify causality using scientifically-based research methods. For example, an evaluation could compare the outcomes of individuals receiving a service with similar individuals not receiving the service or participating in the program.

Step 1: Pre-Planning: Preparing for the Evaluation

(Sample Evaluation Plan Reference: 3, 4, 5, 6 and 9)

1. Identify Key Stakeholders and Form an Evaluation Steering Committee
2. Define the Evaluation Questions
3. Determine Budget for the Evaluation
4. Select an Evaluator
5. Draft the Evaluation Plan (Who, What, How, When, etc.)

Step 2: Planning and Refinement: Operationalizing the Evaluation Plan

(Sample Evaluation Plan Reference: 7)

1. Work with evaluator to identify data collection methods
2. Develop, refine and/or test data collection tools, as needed
3. Revise evaluation plan, if necessary

Step 3: Implementation: Collecting the Data

(Sample Evaluation Plan Reference: 7)

At every stage, you need to interact closely with the evaluator!!

1. Collect Data

Step 4: Data Analysis and Reporting

(Sample Evaluation Plan Reference: 8)

1. Analyze and Interpret Data
2. Prepare Final Report to Communicate Findings and Insights

Step 5: Sharing and Using Findings: Preparing for Reapplication

1. Release results in appropriate ways to community and stakeholders
2. Use the findings of your evaluation for other purposes (continuous improvement, grant proposals, creating partnerships, etc.)

AmeriCorps: Evaluation Implementation Timeline for the Program Evaluation Over the Life of the Three-Year AmeriCorps Grant Cycle

Application	Year 1				Year 2				Year 3				
Jan-March	1 st Qtr	2 nd Qtr	3 rd Qtr	4 th Qtr	1 st Qtr	2 nd Qtr	3 rd Qtr	4 th Qtr	1 st Qtr	2 nd Qtr	3 rd Qtr	4 th Qtr	
<i>Stages of Program Evaluation</i>													
Pre-Planning	Planning and Preparation		Implementation and Data Collection						Data Analysis and Reporting		Using evaluation results		
<i>Planning, Preparation, and Impementation</i>													
Evaluation Plan developed for the first Re-Application	Hire/identify Evaluator; refine evaluation plan; finalize instruments; Human Subject Review (if needed).	Time for continued Planning and Preparation; or begin implementation.	Implement evaluation tasks and collect/enter data for analysis.						Analyze data; Assess Results; Complete Report; Report findings in the second Re-Application.	Share finding with stakeholders; Review for program improvement; Use findings for other benefits (e.g., grant writing; public relations; Member recruitment).			

Need to begin implementation no later than the 1st quarter of the second year of the three-year cycle (need a minimum of one year for evaluation).

Need to complete data collection by first month of third year (October); need time to aggregate and analyze data, and develop the evaluation report for submittal for next re-application (in December – February).

**Preparing for an Evaluation:
What do you want to know? Developing Evaluation Questions**

Respond to the following questions and be ready to discuss your responses with a partner or your small group.

Developing Evaluation Questions

- 1. What outcomes do you already measure for your program? Do you already have comparison data to show the impact on the people served by your program? If not, is this the approach you plan to use?**

- 2. What else do you (or others) want to know?**
 - a. about the impact of your activities on the people served?**
 - b. about how the program is implemented)?**
 - c. What broad questions do you have about what your project is trying to accomplish? (list a few items)**

Example: What has this project done for youth?

- 3. For one or two of the broad questions, identify several specific questions.**

Example: Has the project decreased the number of teenage pregnancies in our clientele in comparison to other teenagers in the area?

- 4. Who else might help you identify evaluation questions?**

Developing Evaluation Questions



Evaluation questions are “a set of questions developed by the evaluator, evaluation sponsor, and other stakeholders; the questions define the issues the evaluation will investigate and are stated in terms such that they can be answered using methods available to the evaluator in a way useful to stakeholders” (Rossi, p. 443).

The way your evaluation questions are worded is extremely important. Evaluation questions “serve to focus the entire evaluation process and determine the type of information to collect, the strategy for gathering the information, and the appropriate analysis options” (Program and Project Evaluation, CSTL).

To develop evaluation questions: (1) Determine the purpose of the evaluation; (2) Draft general questions; (3) Develop specific questions that are measurable. Work with your evaluator and other stakeholders (as appropriate) throughout this process.

1. Determine the purpose of the evaluation.

- Are you contributing new knowledge to the field? Examining innovative new services and approaches you have implemented? Providing data that helps shape policy and improve services? Fulfilling funder requirements (if you have multiple funders, are there ways the evaluation can respond to most/all interests)?
- What do your stakeholders want to know? Stakeholders might be: funders, staff, volunteers, managers, clients, board of directors, collaboration organizations, community members and leaders. Try to get a good idea of everyone’s concerns and expectations before you decide on questions; it is to your advantage to get stakeholder input early on.

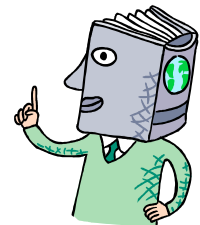
2. Draft general evaluation questions. Consider...where are “knowledge gaps”? What more do you need to know about to improve services and respond to stakeholder interests? A good place to start is your program logic model(s), which link program goals to specific objectives, and will help prioritize evaluation questions. You may want to think of questions in terms of process (service delivery) and outcome (service benefits).

Examples of general process evaluation questions:

Does the program provide adequate opportunity for the desired outcomes to occur? Is the appropriate structure in place (e.g. staffing, physical setting, written policy and procedures, availability of services)? Are the intended recipients getting the service? Are participants getting the dosage of service they should?

Examples of general outcome evaluation questions:

What kinds of outcomes have been observed in participants after receiving services for one year? Are these temporary or lasting outcomes? How much of the outcomes can be attributed to the services received? Are participants more likely than similar non-participants to demonstrate outcomes?



3. Develop specific questions that are measurable. As you focus your questions with help from your evaluator, consider...

- Can the data you need be collected within your timeframe and budget?
- What are the ethical or political constraints to the type of data you want to collect?
- Will the evaluation be institutionalized (i.e. implemented on some level beyond the initial required evaluation)? If yes, can you prioritize questions that will give you useful information to make management decisions on an ongoing basis?

Sources:

- ARCH (Respite), Chapel Hill Training-Outreach Project, Inc.: <http://www.archrespite.org>.
- Program and Project Evaluation (2005), Center for Support of Teaching and Learning at Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY. <http://cstl.syr.edu>.
- Rossi, Peter H., Howard E. Freeman, & Mark W. Lipsey (1999). Evaluation: A Systematic Approach, 6th Ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Evaluation Toolkit, W.K. Kellogg Foundation, www.wkkf.org.

Project STAR

EVALUATION SCHEDULE

Program Name: _____ *Program Director:* _____

Evaluator: _____ *Evaluation Program Year Start Date:* _____ *End Date:* _____

Data to be collected	Data Collection Schedule		Data Analysis Schedule	Evaluation Report Due Dates	Reflection (discussion of findings) List meeting dates and attendees.
	Dates of Collection	Check when completed			
Instrument: _____ Method: _____ Data Source: _____ Persons responsible for data collection: _____	Date (1): _____ Date (2): _____ Date (3): _____ Date (4): _____	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Date: _____ Check when completed <input type="checkbox"/>		
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