



Understanding Program Evaluation and Making it Work for You

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Goals for the Webinar

- Introduce basics of evaluation including:
 - types of evaluation,
 - functions of evaluation,
 - data types,
 - capacity issues,
 - Considerations for evaluation implementation, and
 - relationship of evaluation to DD Council planning.

Types of Evaluation

- Quantitative: an assessment process that answers the question, "How *much* did we do?"
 - Numbers of consumers, activities, and materials produced or provided
 - Changes in consumer performance relative to knowledge, skills, behaviors
 - Costs
 - Number of consumers served

Types of Evaluation

- Qualitative evaluation: an assessment process that answers the question, "How well did we do?"
 - Content, quality, and relevance of a program
 - What was learned or changed from the user's perspective?
 - Are the consumers using their new knowledge or skills? If so, how?
 - Attitudes and achievements of the consumers
 - What do the consumers think about the program and materials?
 - Do they think the program made a difference in their lives? If yes, what kind of difference?
 - Quality of resources (including literacy materials)
 - Do people in the community like the program?
 - Do they think the program is relevant to the local culture?
 - Do they think the program is appropriate for the target population?
 - Do the program materials communicate the right information?
 - Efficiency of strategies and activities
 - Do people in the community think the program is successful?
 - Do they think the program staff are trained properly?
 - Which activities do they think are good? Which activities do they think are not good?

Functions of Evaluation

- Document processes:
 - formative evaluation,
 - measures what happens, when, by whom, where, etc.
- Document value:
 - this could be return on investment, cost-benefit, cost-effectiveness
- Document impact:
 - outcomes and impact studies

Types of Information Collected

- Target Population (characteristics of those we serve)
- Inputs (costs, resources, technology, people, facilities)
- Activities (the things we do as part of our work)
- Outputs (the things we make or produce)
- Outcomes (the impact of our work)

Questions Answered

- Target Population: Who do we serve?
- Costs? What does it cost to do this?
- Activities: What do we do as part of our daily work?
- Outputs? What do we make or create? What are the tangible products of our work?
- Outcomes: What are the results or achievements of our work?



Related Activities You May Have Encountered

- Logic Models
- Needs Assessments
- Strategic Plans
- Collaborative Evaluations (with partners)

Relationship of DD Council Planning Documents to Evaluation

- Target Population (Section III)
- Costs (Section VI, Budget)
- Activities (Section IV)
- Outputs (Section IV)
- Outcomes (Section IV)

Capacity Issues

- People
- Knowledge
- Technology
- Funding
- Partners
- A plan for integrating all of the above

Capacity Solutions

- Have a plan
- Build internal capacity (people, knowledge, technology, funding)
- Build external capacity
 - Partner with UCEDDs
 - Partner with Higher Education
 - Partner with consultants
 - Partner with other non-profits
- Structure time for reflection (interpretation of data, planning, etc.)

Evaluating Your DD Council Achievements

- Starts with your plan.
 - Outcomes: The end state, global.
 - Goals: Things you hope to do to achieve outcomes.
 - Objectives: Measurable strategies that relate to accomplishing your goals.
 - Indicators: How will you know you have achieved your objectives?

Example

- Outcome: All persons with developmental disabilities have affordable, accessible housing.
 - Goal: To increase by 20% the available number of accessible home or rental units for persons with developmental disabilities.
 - **Objective1**: To partner with funders to increase by 20% the tax abatements for new housing development.
 - **Indicator**: The increase in the number of dollars available for tax abatements for housing.
 - **Objective2**: To partner with developers to increase by 50% the use of tax abatements in new home and apartment construction.
 - **Indicator**: The increase in the percent of available tax abatements that are used by developers.
 - **Objective 3**: To partner with funders and developers to disseminate information regarding new accessible housing.
 - **Indicator**: Number of informational documents and processes disseminated to consumers with developmental disabilities regarding newly available housing.

Looking Closely at Success

	Starting	Not Successful	Successful
<i>Objective 1:</i> To partner with funders to increase by 20% the tax abatements for new housing development.	10,000,000	10,000,000	12,000,000
<i>Objective 2:</i> To partner with developers to increase by 50% the use of tax abatements in new home and apartment construction. (assume success)	50%	50%	75%
Results if Obj. 2 successful, Obj. 1 not successful		7,500,000	
Results if Obj. 2 successful, Obj. 1 successful			9,000,000

Notes:

Sometimes the success of one objective can influence the success of another. Knowing the benchmark makes a difference.

Considerations for Program Evaluation Implementation

- Reflect regularly on answers to all questions
- Get lots of interpretations from different groups to ensure you don't miss anything important
- Continuous improvement does not mean continuous change (beware of data fatigue)
- Don't expect improvement to be linear
- Create regular summaries that can be used to create ongoing reporting (such as DD Council Annual Report)

Additional Resources

- **Websites**

- <http://www.eval.org>
- <http://gsociology.icaap.org/methods/evaluationbeginnersguide.pdf>
- <http://www.tgci.com/magazine/A%20Basic%20Guide%20to%20Program%20Evaluation.pdf>
- <http://www.cdc.gov/eval/framework.htm>

Additional Resources

- Books

- Program Evaluation: An Introduction

- by David Royse, Bruce A. Thyer, and Deborah K. Padgett

- Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation

- by Joseph S. Wholey, Harry P. Hatry, and Kathryn E. Newcomer

- Organizations

- American Evaluation Association:

<http://www.eval.org>

- Evaluators Institute: <http://tei.gwu.edu/>