
EVALUATION FOR LEARNING

News for an Evaluating Community

Spring 2001

INTRODUCTION TO PROGRAM OUTCOMES

Would you like board members to understand the basics of outcome-based evaluation? Have new staff joined your organization since you began tracking and measuring outcomes? If so, offer to sign them up for Measuring Program Outcomes, a thorough, hands-on workshop that covers terminology, measurement, analysis and reporting. The next sequence of sessions will meet May 16, 23, and 30, 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. in the Greater Kalamazoo United Way Board Room (709 S. Westnedge Avenue). Cost is \$15/person; any community member is welcome. Register by May 10, 2001. For a registration form, call Elaine Griffin at 616/343-2524.

EVALUATION STANDARDS

How do we know if evaluation is done well? Who determines whether evaluation is acceptable? This dilemma faced workers thirty years ago when evaluation was in its infant stages. To address this issue, sixteen professional associations collaborated with evaluators and users of evaluation to develop standards for program evaluation. The second edition of these standards appeared in 1994.

There is general agreement that the characteristics of good evaluation practice are that evaluation is (1) useful, (2) feasible, (3) proper/ethical, and (4) accurate. The published standards elaborate on each of these four characteristics.

The following questionnaire was developed in an evaluation class at Western Michigan University to guide a discussion of evaluation procedures based on the *Standards*. Once strengths and weaknesses of evaluation are identified using the questionnaire, changes directed toward improving evaluation can be discussed.

We hope you find this useful for improving your evaluation practices.

EVALUATION ACCEPTABILITY QUESTIONNAIRE

Directions: Circle the response for each statement about the evaluation that best reflects your feelings about the evaluation.

SA=Strongly agree A=Agree N=No feelings D=Disagree SD=Strongly disagree

- | | | | | | |
|---|----|---|---|---|----|
| 1. You were involved. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 2. The evaluator was qualified. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 3. The evaluation was too narrow. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 4. The basis for making judgements was clear. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 5. The report(s) were clear. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 6. Reports were received on time. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 7. The evaluation had an impact. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 8. The procedures were workable. | SA | A | N | D | SD |

ASKING GOOD
QUESTIONS

COLLECTING AND
SHARING USEFUL
INFORMATION

USING THE
INFORMATION FOR:
➤ IMPROVEMENT
➤ ACCOUNTABILITY

CONTINUING
TO REPEAT
THE CYCLE

EVALUATION FOR LEARNING
NEWSLETTER IS A PRODUCT OF THE
GREATER KALAMAZOO EVALUATION
PROJECT WITH SUPPORT FROM THE
GREATER KALAMAZOO UNITED WAY,
THE IRVING S. GILMORE FOUNDATION,
AND THE KALAMAZOO FOUNDATION

9. Cooperation was maintained.
SA A

THE GREATER KALAMAZOO EVALUATION PROJECT PUBLISHES THIS NEWSLETTER TO FOSTER EVALUATION THROUGHOUT THE KALAMAZOO AREA. Send your ideas and examples to: Denise Hartsough
Greater Kalamazoo United Way PH: (616)343-2524
709 S. Westnedge Avenue FAX: (616)344-7250
Kalamazoo, MI 49007-5099

10. It was worth it.	SA	A	N	D	SD
11. Participants were served by this evaluation.	SA	A	N	D	SD
12. Obligations of all parties were clear.	SA	A	N	D	SD
13. Participants' rights were protected.	SA	A	N	D	SD
14. People were treated well.	SA	A	N	D	SD
15. Program strengths and weaknesses were described.	SA	A	N	D	SD
16. Findings were accessible to you.	SA	A	N	D	SD
17. There was no conflict of interest.	SA	A	N	D	SD
18. Evaluation funds were spent wisely.	SA	A	N	D	SD
19. The program was accurately described.	SA	A	N	D	SD
20. The context of the program was taken into account.	SA	A	N	D	SD
21. The evaluation procedures were clear.	SA	A	N	D	SD
22. It was clear where the information came from.	SA	A	N	D	SD
23. The evaluation was valid.	SA	A	N	D	SD
24. The evaluation was accurate.	SA	A	N	D	SD
25. Evaluation data were handled properly.	SA	A	N	D	SD
26. Evaluation data were analyzed properly.	SA	A	N	D	SD
27. The conclusions were justified.	SA	A	N	D	SD
28. The evaluation was biased.	SA	A	N	D	SD

COMMENTS: Please add any comments that you may have about the evaluation.

REFERENCE

Joint Committee on Standards for Evaluation (1994).
The Program Evaluation Standards. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

TIPS AND TOOLS

The Michigan Association for Evaluation MAE strives to improve and increase the capacity for evaluation in Michigan. MAE features an annual conference with a nationally known evaluator, and regional events for evaluators, funders, and users of evaluation. The May 23-24, 2001 conference features Dr. Heather Weiss of the Harvard Family Research Projects. For information see "What's New" at www.MAEEVAL.org.

EVALUATION FOR LEARNING IS:

- EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY
- CONTINUALLY ASKING GOOD QUESTIONS, GETTING ANSWERS, AND TAKING ACTION BASED ON THOSE ANSWERS
- INTEGRATED INTO THE DAY-TO-DAY OPERATIONS OF THE ORGANIZATION
- A DEVELOPMENTAL PROCESS
- COLLABORATIVE AND DEPENDENT ON INFORMATION SHARING
- TIME WELL SPENT
- GOING TO ENSURE THE ORGANIZATION'S HEALTH AND VIABILITY IN THE LONG RUN IN A CHANGING ENVIRONMENT

GREATER KALAMAZOO EVALUATION PROJECT
c/o Greater Kalamazoo United Way
709 S. Westnedge Avenue
Kalamazoo, MI 49007-5099

Non-profit Organization
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Kalamazoo, MI
Permit No. 720