

Overview of Evaluation

By

Arturo Vega, Ph.D.

Associate Professor

University of Texas San Antonio

Department of Public Administration

Opening

◆ Everyday We're Involved in Evaluation

- Shopping;
- Picking a Place to Eat;
- Deciding what to wear;
- Purchasing a book at the bookstore;
- Selecting a Gift

What Is Evaluation?

- ◆ Judging the worth or merit of something (something we do every day).
- ◆ The identification, clarification, and application of defensible criteria to determine an evaluation object's value (worth or merit), quality, utility, effectiveness, or significance in relation to those criteria.

How Can You Use Evaluations:

- ◆ Improve your program
- ◆ Evaluate the effectiveness of your program activities
- ◆ Generate new knowledge

What Is Evaluation?

It is the systematic application of procedures that:

- ◆ determine standards for judging quality;
- ◆ collect relevant information, and
- ◆ apply standards to judge the value, quality, effectiveness, or significance of a program or program activity.

Evaluation

- ◆ leads to recommendations that can help optimize program activities in relation to its intended purpose(s).

Evaluation is ...

- ◆ **not an “event” that occurs at the end of a project, but it is an on-going process**
- ◆ **About understanding how a project is impacting participants, works with agencies and the community;**
- ◆ **influenced/impacted by both internal and external factors.**

Evaluation is

- ◆ Not just or only an accountability measuring stick imposed on projects, but rather as a management and learning tool for projects, for funders and for practitioners in the field who can benefit from the experiences of other projects.

Planning Your Evaluation

From Basic Guide to Program Evaluation

by [Carter McNamara, MBA, PhD](#)

- ◆ Program evaluation plans depend on what information you need to collect in order to make major decisions.
- ◆ Usually, management is faced with having to make major decisions due to decreased funding, ongoing complaints, unmet needs among customers and clients, the need to polish service delivery, etc.

Planning Your Evaluation

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- ◆ For example, do you want to know more about what is actually going on in your programs, whether your programs are meeting their goals, the impact of your programs on customers, etc?
- ◆ How do you know if your programs/activities are working?
- ◆ How do you know if your programs are not working?

Three Kinds of Program Evaluations

- ◆ **CONTEXT EVALUATIONS**--how does the project function within the economic, social and political environment of its community.
- ◆ **IMPLEMENTATION or PROCESS EVALUATIONS (aka Formative Evaluations)**--help with planning, setting up and carrying out the project as well as document the evolution of the project.
- ◆ **OUTCOME EVALUATIONS (aka Summative Evaluations)**--assess the short- and long-term results of the project.

Context Evaluations

- ◆ Assess the needs, assets, and resources of a target community in order to plan relevant and effective interventions
- ◆ Identify the political atmosphere and human services context to increase the likelihood of support by community leaders and local organizations

Implementation or Process Evaluations

- ◆ Understanding How the Project Was Implemented
- ◆ Providing indications of what happened and why
- ◆ Examines what core activities undertaken achieve project goals and intended consequences

Outcome Evaluations

- ◆ Determining Project Outcomes
- ◆ What are the critical outcomes you are trying to achieve?
- ◆ What impact is the project having on its clients, its staff, its umbrella organization and its community?
- ◆ What unexpected impact has the project had?

Outcome and Impact Evaluations are important BUT

- ◆ START with REFLECTING ON
- ◆ How and Why program and services work
- ◆ For whom they work
- ◆ And in what circumstances

Getting Started

- ◆ Specify GOALS and OBJECTIVES
- ◆ Get those involved in the program to identify goals that are CLEAR/CONCISE (to know what to look for), SPECIFIC (to translate and operationalize them and be able to know when we are seeing something different) and MEASUREABLE (so that one can analyze them).

STEP 1: Start With Your Agency's Mission Statement?

- ◆ Are the community problems that the agency seeks to address clearly identified?
- ◆ Is the target population to be served identified?
- ◆ Are the desired results from providing services specified?
- ◆ Are the service approaches (e.g., counseling, education) described?

But First

- ◆ Whose Goals and Objectives for the Program Will Be Evaluated
- ◆ What's Useable
- ◆ What's Feasible

Step 2: What are the Program goals?

(Purposes, aims, problems to be addressed)

- ◆ Do program goal statements *describe* the *activities* designed to meet the goals, the clients to be served, program staffing patterns, and program budget?
- ◆ Do program goal statements *describe* the desired impact in terms of client population, the problems to be addressed, and the service delivery approaches?

Step 3: What are the Program Objectives?

- ◆ Is each program goal related to a set of measurable *objectives* for the activities necessary to achieve the goal?
- ◆ Are *process objectives* addressed in terms of how services are delivered?
- ◆ Are *impact objectives* specified in terms of assessing the impact of services on clients?

Step 4: How do we Determine Whether *Program Objectives* Have been met?

- ◆ What measures can be used to determine the extent to which program objectives have been met?
- ◆ Have we utilized both process and impact measures?

Step 5: How do we determine whether *client service objectives* have been met?

- ◆ Have specific service objectives been developed with the client?
- ◆ Are periodic assessments made of clients' progress toward meeting the objectives?
- ◆ Do workers and supervisors make periodic assessments of their own effectiveness by reviewing the progress of their caseloads?

Program and Research Designs

- ◆ Keep your design simple, flexible and responsive to the needs of the program activities
- ◆ Nonexperimental
- ◆ Quasi-Experimental
- ◆ Experimental

Internal Validity

- ◆ History
- ◆ Maturation
- ◆ Testing
- ◆ Instrumentation
- ◆ Regression
- ◆ Selection
- ◆ Mortality
- ◆ Selection-Maturation Interaction

External Validity

- ◆ Interaction effects of Testing
- ◆ Interaction Selection and Experimental Treatment
- ◆ Reactive effects
- ◆ Multiple Treatment
- ◆ Irrelevant Replicability

Experimental, Non and Quasi

<u>EXPERIMENTAL</u>	<u>NONEXPERIMENTAL</u>	<u>QUASI-EXPERIMENTAL</u>
Random Assignment	No random assignment of participants	
control group/ experimental group	No control group	Tries for an experimental design but has not random assignment
R O X O R O O	Case study	O X O O O
	NonProfit Management Program	25

Methods

- ◆ Surveys
- ◆ Focus groups
- ◆ Case studies
- ◆ Qualitative and Quantitative data-collection methods

Quantitative or Qualitative Data?

- ◆ Things that can be counted.
- ◆ People, materials, number of students, %dropouts
- ◆ Surveys, case files, demographic data, content analysis
- ◆ Information to describe a program functions
- ◆ Or what it may mean to the people involved
- ◆ People's feelings
- ◆ In-depth interviews
- ◆ Participant observer

In Data Collection, Remember to

- ◆ Collect only the information you are going to use, and use all the information you collect.
- ◆ Ask yourself:
 - Why are you collecting this information?
 - How is it currently used?
 - Can it help you address your evaluation questions? How?
 - What is still missing?
 - Are there other sources of information of what is missing?

A Few Simple Rules When Developing a Survey

- ◆ Make the questions short and clear.
- ◆ Avoid questions that have more than one central idea or theme.
- ◆ Keep questions relevant to the problem.
- ◆ Do not use jargon.
- ◆ Avoid words which are not exact (generally, usually, average).

A Few Simple Rules When Developing a Survey

- ◆ Avoid introducing bias...slanted questions produce slanted results.
- ◆ Use transitions to move smoothly from one question to the next (if yes...did you? Or if no...did you?).
- ◆ Decide beforehand how the answers will be recorded and analyzed.
- ◆ Test your questionnaire (use it with people).

Ask for or Make a Task Schedule

Task	April	May	June	July	August	Sept.
Project Administration	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Detailed Work Plan	-----					
Doc. Review		-----	-----			
Stakehold Interviews			-----			
Survey				-----	-----	
Data Analysis					-----	
Status reports	-----		-----		-----	
Final Report Preparation						-----

AND a Data Collection Matrix

Eval. Objectives	Eval. Questions	Method of Collection	Timeline
Review origin of program	What models of service delivery are employed	Literature Review/ Document Review	April 1-15
Describe implementation	How was the projected implemented?	Stakeholder Interviews	April 15-22
	What service are offered?	File Review	April 15-22
Outcomes	Which goals are met?	Provider Interviews	May 1-15
	What are strengths?	Survey	May 16-30

Remember....

- ◆ Determine data-collection methods based on how appropriate they are for answering your evaluation questions.
- ◆ Tie method to available resources.
- ◆ Choose methods appropriate for your population and project participants.
- ◆ Mix your evaluation methods where appropriate.

Ask for or Create Reports

- ◆ Status reports—progress reports; Provide milestones and are linked to workplan with updates on task completion
- ◆ Interim evaluation Repts—compile results from evaluation activities to date; Plus draft report for review
- ◆ Final report—results of all evaluation activities; Can include recommendations

Step 6: How Can the Evaluation Results Be Used?

- ◆ Have the findings been carefully organized to interpret the degree to which the program goals and objectives have been achieved?
- ◆ Have we allowed enough time for the interpretation process to unfold?

Step 6 con'ted: How Can the Evaluation Results Be Used?

- ◆ What factors (both internal and external) seem to account for the evaluation findings?
- ◆ What program changes should be considered in light of the success and areas in need of improvement?
- ◆ How will the findings, interpretations, and recommendations be shared?

Some Resources

- ◆ American Evaluation Association:
www.eval.org
- ◆ Resources for Methods in Evaluation and Social Research
<http://gsociology.icaap.org/methods/>
- ◆ <http://national.unitedway.org/outcomes/>)
- ◆ W.K. Kellogg foundation evaluation handbook
- ◆ Quantitative & Qualitative Research <http://writing.colostate.edu/references/research.cfm>

Some Resources

- ◆ The evaluation exchange –Harvard family research project
<http://www.gse.harvard.edu/~hfrp/eval.html>
- ◆ **Basic guide to program evaluation**
by carter McNamara, MBA, PhD
http://www.mapnp.org/library/evaluation/fnl_eval.htm

Some Resources

- ◆ **A report from the American evaluation association**
- ◆ **A checklist for evaluating research**

Review Handouts

- ◆ **Threats to internal validity**
- ◆ **Threats to external validity**
- ◆ **Research designs**
- ◆ **Guiding principles for evaluators**
- ◆ **Guidelines for the evaluation of research reports**
- ◆ **A check list for evaluating research**

Close

- ◆ Evaluate to improve your program, value the effectiveness of your program and generate new knowledge
- ◆ Do first things first—no short cuts. Be reflective of goals/objectives
- ◆ Get commitment and buy-in from stakeholders
- ◆ Ask questions
- ◆ Thank you for this opportunity!