

Developing an Effective Evaluation Report

Setting the course for effective program evaluation



Acknowledgements

This workbook was developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Office on Smoking and Health (OSH) and Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity (DNPAO) as part of a series of technical assistance workbooks for use by program managers, and evaluators. The workbooks are intended to offer guidance and facilitate capacity building on a wide range of evaluation topics. We encourage users to adapt the tools and resources in this workbook to meet their program's evaluation needs.

This workbook applies the CDC Framework for Program Evaluation in Public Health (www.cdc.gov/eval). The Framework lays out a six-step process for the decisions and activities involved in conducting an evaluation. While the Framework provides steps for program evaluation, the steps are not always linear and represent a more back-and-forth effort; some can be completed concurrently. In some cases, it makes more sense to skip a step and come back to it. The important thing is that the steps are considered within the specific context of your program.

A final evaluation report presents the findings, conclusions, and recommendations. It has been said that a report is never truly final, unless the program is ending, because evaluation is an ongoing process. In this workbook, "final" refers to the term that funders often use to denote the last report of a funding period or the final report of a specific evaluation activity.

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Acronyms

CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CMI	Component Model of Infrastructure
DNPAO	Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity
ESW	Evaluation Stakeholder Workgroup
NIDRR	National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research
OSH	Office on Smoking and Health
QA	Quality Assurance



Part I: Writing the Final Evaluation Report

WHO IS THE AUDIENCE FOR THIS WORKBOOK?

The purpose of this workbook is to help public health program managers, administrators, and evaluators develop a joint understanding of what constitutes a final evaluation report; why a final report is important; and how they can develop an effective report. This workbook is to be used along with other evaluation resources, such as those listed in the Resources section. Part I defines and describes how to write an effective final evaluation report. Part II includes exercises, worksheets, tools, and resources. The contents of Part II will facilitate the process for program staff members and evaluation stakeholder workgroup (ESW) members to think through the concepts presented in Part I. The workbook was written by staff members of the Office on Smoking and Health (OSH), the Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity (DNPAO) at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and ICF International. The content and steps for writing a final evaluation report can be applied to any public health program or initiative.

WHAT IS A FINAL EVALUATION REPORT?

A final evaluation report is a written document that describes how you monitored and evaluated your program. It presents the findings, conclusions, and recommendations from a particular evaluation, including recommendations for how evaluation results can be used to guide program improvement and decision making. While evaluation is an ongoing process, the term “final,” as used in this workbook, refers to the last report of a funding period or the final report of a specific evaluation activity.

The final report should describe the “*What*,” the “*How*,” and the “*Why It Matters*” questions about your program.

- The “*What*” describes your program and how its purpose and activities are linked with the intended outcomes.
- The “*How*” addresses the process for implementing your program and provides information about whether it is operating with fidelity to its design. The “*How*” (or

A final evaluation report is a written document that describes how you monitored and evaluated your program. It allows you to describe the “*What*,” the “*How*,” and the “*Why it Matters*” for your program and use evaluation results for program improvement and decision making.



process evaluation), along with output and/or short-term outcome information, helps to clarify whether and why changes were made during implementation.

- The “*Why It Matters*” (sometimes referred to as the “So What” question) provides the rationale for your program and its impact on public health. The ability to demonstrate that your program has made a difference is crucial to program sustainability.

The final evaluation report is one of many ways to present the results from an evaluation. It may be constructed differently from the approach presented here (additional options will be shared later in this workbook). However, engaging in the process of creating an evaluation report presented in this workbook will be helpful no matter how the information is presented.

WHY DO YOU WANT A FINAL EVALUATION REPORT?

A final evaluation report is needed to relay information from the evaluation to program staff, stakeholders, and funders to support program improvement and decision making. The final evaluation report is only one communication method for conveying evaluation results. It is useful, however, to have one transparent document with information about stakeholders, the program, the evaluation design, activities, results, and recommendations. Such information can be used to facilitate support for continued or enhanced program funding, create awareness of and demonstrate success (or lessons learned from program failures), and promote sustainability. Torres, Preskill, and Piontek, (2005, p. 13) contend that there are three reasons for communicating and reporting evaluation results:

1. Build awareness and/or support and provide the basis for asking questions
2. Facilitate growth and improvement
3. Demonstrate results and be accountable

The evaluation stakeholder workgroup (ESW) comprises members who have a stake, or vested interest, in the evaluation findings and can benefit most directly from the evaluation. These members represent the primary users of the evaluation results and generally act as a consultative group throughout the entire planning process, as well as throughout the implementation of the evaluation. Members often are instrumental in the dissemination of results.



The process of developing a final evaluation report in cooperation with an ESW fosters collaboration and a sense of shared purpose. A written report fosters transparency and promotes use of the results. Use of evaluation results must be planned, directed, and intentional (Patton, 2008). Starting with the written evaluation plan and culminating with the final evaluation report and dissemination and use of the evaluation information. This cycle is a characteristic of Engaged Data, a core component of functioning program infrastructure, as portrayed in the Component Model of Infrastructure (CMI) (Lavinghouze & Snyder, in press). (For information on developing an evaluation plan, see Developing an Effective Evaluation Plan at http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/publications/printed_material/index.htm.)

Several elements are needed to assure that your evaluation report fulfills the goals. These elements are to (1) collaboratively develop the report with a stakeholder workgroup; (2) write the report clearly and succinctly with its intended audience in mind; (3) interpret the data in a meaningful way; and (4) include recommendations for program improvement.

HOW DO YOU WRITE AN EVALUATION REPORT?

This workbook is organized by the elements of the evaluation report within the context of CDC's Framework for Program Evaluation in Public Health (CDC, 1999; <http://www.cdc.gov/eval/framework/index.htm>). The following elements of an evaluation report will be discussed:

- **Intended use and users:** A discussion about the intended use and users fosters transparency about the purpose(s) of the evaluation and identifies who will have access to evaluation results. It is important to build a market for evaluation results from the beginning with a solid evaluation plan and collaboration with the ESW (CDC, 2011). In the evaluation report, it is important to remind your audience what the stated intended use is and who the intended users are.
- **Program description:** A program description presents the theory of change driving the program. This section often includes a logic model and a description of the program's stage of development, in addition to a narrative description.
- **Evaluation focus:** This element documents how the evaluation focus was narrowed and presents the rationale and the criteria for how the evaluation questions were prioritized.
- **Data sources and methods:** Evaluation indicators, performance measures, data sources, and methods used in the evaluation are described in this section. A clear





description of how the evaluation was implemented will assure transparency and credibility of evaluation information.

- **Results, conclusions, and interpretation:** This section provides clarity about how information was analyzed and describes the collaborative process used to interpret results. This section also provides meaningful interpretation of the data, which goes beyond mere presentation. Often, the interpretation section is missing in an evaluation report, thus breaking a valuable bridge between results and use.
- **Use, dissemination, and sharing:** This section describes plans for use of evaluation results and dissemination of evaluation findings. Clear, specific plans for use of the evaluation should be discussed from the beginning, as this facilitates the direction of the evaluation and sharing of interim results (CDC, 2011). This section should include an overview of how findings are to be used, as well as more detailed information about the intended modes and methods for sharing results with stakeholders. In addition, this section should include plans to monitor dissemination efforts with a feedback loop for corrective action if needed. The dissemination plan is an important but often neglected section of the evaluation plan and evaluation report.

“Effective communicating and reporting facilitates learning among stakeholders and other audiences”
(Torres et al., 2005 p. 2)

Every evaluation is implemented within a complex, dynamic environment of politics, budgets, timelines, competing priorities, and agendas. The communication and reporting of evaluation results are channeled through these same complexities. Collaboration with the ESW to develop a dissemination plan from the outset of the evaluation facilitates a more conducive environment for transmitting the evaluation results in a manner that promotes program improvement and decision making.

EVALUATION REPORT OVERVIEW

This section provides a brief overview of the information that you should consider when developing a final evaluation report within the context of the CDC Framework for Program Evaluation in Public Health. Each section will be described in greater detail as you move through the steps in the framework.

A final evaluation report is one tool in your evaluation tool box for communicating and reporting evaluation results. As previously discussed, an evaluation report is a written document that describes how you monitored and evaluated your program and answers the



“*What,*” the “*How,*” and the “*Why It Matters*” questions. The ability to demonstrate that the program has made a difference can be crucial to its sustainability.

The basic elements of a final evaluation report might include the following:

- Title page
- Executive summary
- Intended use and users
- Program description
- Evaluation focus
- Data sources and methods
- Results, conclusions, and interpretation
- Use, dissemination, and sharing plan
- Tools for clarity

However, you should adapt your report to your specific evaluation needs and context.

Title page: The title page presents the program name, dates covered, and possibly the basic focus of the evaluation in an easily identifiable format.


Executive summary: This brief summary of the evaluation includes a program description, evaluation questions, design description, and key findings and action steps.

Intended use and users: In this section, the primary intended users and the ESW are identified and the purposes and intended uses of the evaluation are described. This section fosters transparency about the purposes of the evaluation and who will have access to evaluation results and when. It is important to build a market for evaluation results from the beginning.

Program description: This section will usually include a logic model, a description of the program’s stage of development, and a narrative description. This section leads to a shared understanding of the program, as well as the basis for the evaluation questions and how they are prioritized.

Evaluation focus: This section focuses the evaluation by identifying and prioritizing evaluation questions on the basis of the logic model and program description, the program’s stage of development, program and stakeholder priorities, intended uses of the evaluation, and feasibility.





Data sources and methods: This section addresses indicators and performance measures, data sources and rationale for selection of methods, and credibility of data sources. Data need to be presented in a clear, concise manner to enhance readability and understanding.

Results, conclusions, and interpretation: This section describes the analysis processes and conclusions and presents meaningful interpretation of results. This is a step that deserves due diligence in the writing process. The propriety standard plays a role in guiding the evaluator's decisions in how to analyze and interpret data to assure that all stakeholder values are respected in the process of drawing conclusions. The interpretation should include action steps or recommendations for next steps in either (or both) the program development and evaluation process.

Use, dissemination, and sharing plan: This is an important but often neglected section of the evaluation plan and the evaluation report. Plans for use of evaluation results, communication, and dissemination methods should be discussed from the beginning. The most effective plans include layering of communication and reporting efforts so that tailored and timely communication takes place throughout the evaluation.

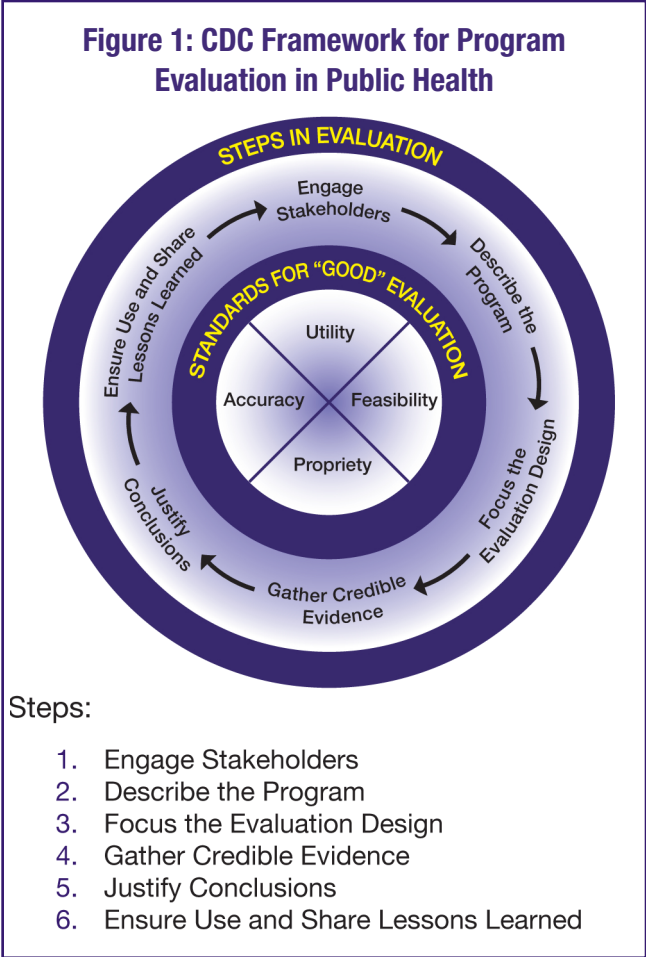
The key steps in developing a final evaluation report are to describe the activities and results that constituted each step of evaluation. You should also discuss how the concepts of utility, accuracy, feasibility, and propriety were incorporated into each step.


Tools for clarity: Other tools that can facilitate clarity in your report include a table of contents; lists of tables, charts, and figures; references and possibly resources; and an acronym list. Appendices are useful for full-size program logic models, models developed through the evaluation, historical background and context information, and success stories.

The exercises, worksheets, and tools found in Part II of this workbook are designed to help you think through the concepts discussed in Part I. These are only examples; remember, your evaluation report will vary on the basis of your program, stakeholder priorities, and context.

WHAT ARE THE KEY STEPS IN DEVELOPING AND DISSEMINATING A FINAL EVALUATION REPORT USING CDC'S FRAMEWORK?

CDC's Framework for Program Evaluation in Public Health (see Figure 1) is a guide that describes how to evaluate public health programs effectively and use the findings for program improvement and decision making. Just as the framework is a useful process for developing the evaluation plan, it can be a useful outline for the final evaluation report. Each step of the framework has important components that are useful in the creation of an overall evaluation plan, as described in Developing an Effective Evaluation Plan (CDC, 2011). In addition, while the framework is described in terms of steps, the actions are not always linear and are often completed in a cyclical, back-and-forth manner. As you develop and implement your evaluation plan, you may need to revisit a step during the process and complete other discrete steps concurrently. The activities you undertake to implement each step of the evaluation, as well as their underlying rationale, should be described in the evaluation plan and the final evaluation report. This will promote transparency and build connections among the evaluation plan, implementation of the evaluation, and the final evaluation report. As with planning and implementing the evaluation, the process you follow when writing the evaluation report may require nonlinear movement between the steps in the framework.





In addition to the framework, the evaluation standards will enhance the quality of your evaluation by guarding against potential mistakes or errors in practice. The evaluation standards are grouped around four important attributes: (1) utility, (2) feasibility, (3) propriety, and (4) accuracy. Following are the definitions of these attributes (indicated by the inner circle in Figure 1):

- **Utility:** Serve the information needs of intended users.
- **Feasibility:** Be realistic, prudent, diplomatic, and frugal.
- **Propriety:** Behave legally, ethically, and with due regard for the welfare of those involved and those affected.
- **Accuracy:** The evaluation is comprehensive and grounded in the data.

(Sandars & The Joint Commission on Standards for Educational Evaluation, 1994)

Your final evaluation report should address the application and practice of these standards throughout the evaluation. This will increase the transparency of evaluation efforts and promote the quality and credibility of implementation of the evaluation. It is important to remember that these standards apply to all steps and phases of the evaluation.

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THE PROCESS OF PARTICIPATORY EVALUATION REPORTING

Step 1: Engage Stakeholders

Define the Purpose of the Evaluation in the Report

The stated purposes of the evaluation serve as the foundation for evaluation planning, focus, design, and interpretation of results. The purposes should be clearly delineated in the evaluation report to remind the audience of the foundation and boundaries for the evaluation focus and design and help to establish their connection to intended use of evaluation information. While there are many reasons for conducting an evaluation, they generally fall into three primary categories:

1. Rendering judgments (accountability)
2. Facilitating improvements (program development)
3. Knowledge generation (transferring research into practice or across programs)

(Patton, 2008)

Stakeholders are first engaged around the stated purpose of the evaluation, and they continue to be engaged throughout the evaluation and into the reporting stage.

Engage the Evaluation Stakeholder Workgroup (ESW)

Why should I engage stakeholders in writing the evaluation report?

A primary feature of the evaluation plan is to identify an ESW that includes members who have a stake, or vested interest, in the evaluation findings. More specifically, the ESW includes those who are the intended users of the evaluation results and those who can benefit most directly from the evaluation (Patton, 2008; Knowlton & Philips, 2009), as well as others who have a direct or indirect interest in program implementation (CDC, 2011). The ESW plays a prominent role in the effective dissemination and use of the evaluation results. Continued

For the ESW to be truly integrated into the evaluation processes, ideally it will be identified in the evaluation report. The form this takes may vary on the basis of program needs. If it is important politically, you might want to specifically name each member of the workgroup, their affiliation, and specific role(s) on the workgroup. If a workgroup is designed with rotating membership by group, then you might just list the groups represented. Transparency about the role and purpose of the ESW can facilitate buy-in for evaluation results from those who did not participate in the evaluation—especially in situations where the evaluation is implemented by internal staff members.

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engagement of the ESW during the report writing and dissemination phase can facilitate understanding and acceptance of the evaluation information. Stakeholders are much more likely to buy into and support the evaluation if they are involved in the evaluation process from the beginning. At the very least, they should be connected to stakeholders who were involved throughout the evaluation implementation and reporting process. The ESW can be a part of the evaluation by participating in an interpretation meeting, facilitating dissemination of success stories or interim reports, or participating in the distribution of surveys.

How are stakeholders' roles described in the report?

Naming the ESW members in the evaluation report is one way to enhance transparency of stakeholders' roles in the evaluation process. Identifying the ESW members in the evaluation report can facilitate—

- ownership of the evaluation results,
- buy-in for the evaluation information from audiences who did not have direct contact with the implementation of the evaluation,
- credibility and transparency of the evaluation, and
- greater dissemination and use of the evaluation results.

How stakeholders are identified may vary on the basis of program needs. If it is important politically, you might want to include each workgroup member's name, affiliation, and specific role(s) on the workgroup. If a workgroup is designed with rotating membership, then you might just list the groups represented. For example, a workgroup may comprise members who represent funded programs (three members), nonfunded programs (one member), and partners (four members). Or, a workgroup may comprise members who represent state programs (two members), community programs (five members), and external evaluation experts (two members). Transparency about the role and purpose of the ESW can facilitate buy-in for evaluation results from those who did not participate in the evaluation, especially in situations where the evaluation was implemented by internal staff members.



AT THIS POINT IN YOUR REPORT, YOU HAVE—

- *defined the purposes of the evaluation, and*
- *described the evaluation stakeholder workgroup.*



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Step 2: Describe the Program

Create a Shared Understanding of the Program

The next step in the Framework and the evaluation report is to describe the program. A program description clarifies the program's purpose, stage of development, activities, capacity to improve health, and implementation context. A shared understanding of the program and what the evaluation can and cannot deliver is essential to successful dissemination and use of evaluation results.

A program description clarifies the program's purpose, stage of development, activities, capacity to improve health, and implementation context.

Provide a Narrative Description

Include a narrative description in the evaluation report to help assure that the audience will understand the program. You may also use a logic model to succinctly synthesize the main elements of a program. While a logic model is not always necessary, a program description is essential for understanding the focus of the evaluation and selection of methods. If results are presented without your audience having a grasp of what the program is designed to achieve or the goals of the evaluation, expectations may not be met and misunderstandings may delay or prevent the effective dissemination and use of evaluation results. The program description for the report may already be included in the written evaluation plan. If there is no evaluation plan, you will need to write a narrative description based on the program's objectives and context. The following should be included, at a minimum:

- **A statement of need** to identify the health issue addressed
- **Inputs or program resources** available to implement activities (may include a program budget with corresponding narrative)
- **Program activities** linked to outcomes through theory or best practice program logic
- **Stage of development** to reflect program maturity
- **Environmental context** within which a program is implemented

A description of the program in its context increases the accuracy of the results that you will present later in the report.



Include a Logic Model

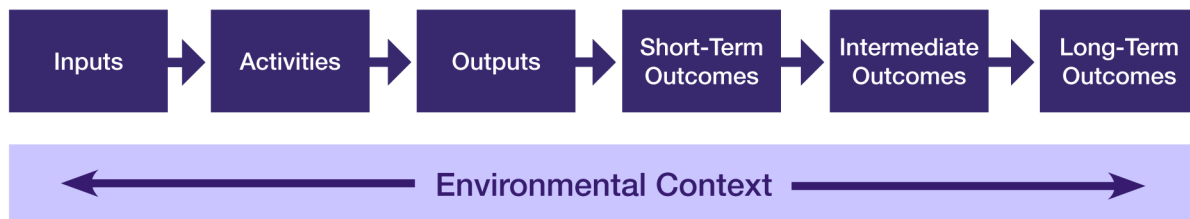
The description section often includes a logic model to visually show the links between activities and intended outcomes. The logic model should identify available resources (inputs), what the program does (activities), and what you hope to achieve (outcomes). You might also want to articulate any challenges you face (the program’s context or environment). Figure 2 illustrates the basic components of a program logic model. As you move further to the right of the logic model, away from the activities, more time is needed to observe outcomes.

It is beyond the scope of this workbook to describe how to fully develop a logic model. Resources related to developing a logic model are located in the Resources section in Part II. Example logic models developed by OSH and DNPAO are also found in Part II.

Logic models include the following elements:

- **Inputs:** These are the resources that are necessary for program implementation.
- **Activities:** These are the interventions or strategies that the program implements to achieve health outcomes.
- **Outputs:** These are direct products obtained as a result of program activities.
- **Outcomes:** Outcomes can be short term, intermediate, or long term. They are the changes, effects, or results of program implementation (activities and outputs).

Figure 2: Logic Model Example





Describe the Stage of Development

A description of the program’s stage of development also contributes to the full description and understanding of the program in an evaluation report. Programs move through planning, implementation, and maintenance developmental stages. For a policy, system, or environmental change initiative, the stages might look somewhat like the following example stages:

Planning:

1. The environment and assets have been assessed.
2. The policy, system, or environmental change is in development.
3. The policy, system, or environmental change has not yet been approved.

Implementation:

4. The policy, system, or environmental change has been approved but not implemented.
5. The policy, system, or environmental change has been in effect for less than 1 year.

Maintenance:

6. The policy, system, or environmental change has been in effect for 1 year or longer.

It is important to consider an evolving evaluation model, because programs are dynamic and change over time. Progress is affected by many aspects of the political and economic contexts. When it comes to evaluation, the stages are not always a once-and-done sequence of events.

The stage of development conceptual model complements the logic model. Figures 3A and 3B show how general program evaluation questions are distinguished both by logic model categories and developmental stages. This places the evaluation within the appropriate stage of development (i.e., planning, implementation, and maintenance). The model offers suggested starting points for asking evaluation questions within the logic model while respecting the developmental stage of the program. This prepares the evaluation report readers to understand the focus and priorities of the evaluation. The ability to answer key evaluation questions will differ by stage of development; the report audience needs to be aware of what the evaluation can and cannot answer. The following are applicable to the policy change initiative example mentioned previously.



Planning stage questions might include:

- What is the public support for the policy?
- What are the potential barriers to the policy?
- What resources will be needed for implementation of the policy?
- What are the estimated health impacts based on modeling and/or other benchmark community or state evaluations?

Implementation stage questions might include:

- Are there major exemptions to the policy?
- Is there continued or increased public support for the policy?
- Is there adequate enforcement of the policy?
- Is there compliance with the policy?

Maintenance stage questions might include:

- Is there adequate enforcement of the policy?
- Is there continued compliance with the policy?
- What is the economic impact of the policy?
- What is the health impact of the policy?

For more on stage of development related to a specific example of smoke-free policy, please see the *Evaluation Toolkit for Smoke-Free Policies* at http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/secondhand_smoke/evaluation_toolkit/index.htm

Figure 3A: Logic Model Category by Stage of Development Example

	Program Developmental Stage		
	Program Planning	Program Implementation	Program Maintenance
Logic Model Category	Inputs and Early Activities	Activities, Outputs, and Short-Term Outcomes	Intermediate and Long-Term Outcomes



Figure 3B: Logic Model Category by Stage of Development With Corresponding Evaluation Questions

	Program Developmental Stage		
	Program Planning	Program Implementation	Program Maintenance
Example: Developmental Stage Related to Policy, System, and Environmental Change Strategies	Environment and asset assessment. Policy development. Policy has not yet been approved.	Policy has been approved but not implemented. Policy has been in effect for less than 1 year.	Policy has been in effect for 1 year or longer.
Example: Questions Based on Developmental Stage Related to Policy, System, and Environmental Change Strategies	Is there public support for the policy? What resources will be needed for implementation of the policy?	Is there adequate enforcement of the policy? Is there compliance with the policy? Is there continued or increased public support for the policy? Are there major exemptions to the policy?	What is the health impact of the policy? If there are major exemptions or loopholes to the policy, are there any disparities created by these exemptions or loopholes?

AT THIS POINT IN YOUR REPORT, YOU HAVE—

- *defined the purposes of the evaluation,*
- *described the evaluation stakeholder workgroup,*
- *described the program including context,*
- *created a shared understanding of the program, and*
- *described the stage of development of the program.*



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Step 3: Focus the Evaluation Design

The amount of information you can gather concerning your program is potentially limitless. Evaluations, however, are always limited by the number of questions that can be asked and answered realistically, the methods that can be employed, the feasibility of data collection, and the resources available. These issues are at the heart of Step 3 in the CDC Framework: Focus the Evaluation Design. The scope and depth of any program evaluation is dependent on program and stakeholder priorities, available resources including financial resources, staff and contractor skills and availability, and amount of time committed to the evaluation.

Ideally, the program staff members and the ESW work together to determine the focus of the evaluation based on the considerations of stated purposes, priorities, stage of development, and feasibility. Therefore, the questions that guide the evaluation are those that are considered most important to program staff and stakeholders for program improvement and decision making. Even those questions that are considered most important, however, have to pass the feasibility test.

Describe the Evaluation Questions

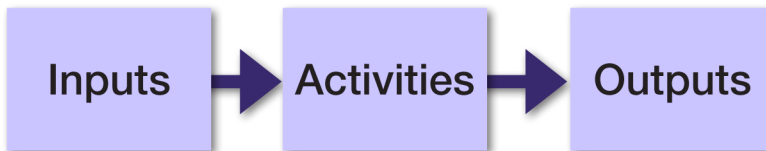
A final evaluation report should include the questions that guided the evaluation, as well as the process through which certain questions were selected and others were not. Transparency is particularly important in this step. To enhance the evaluation's utility and propriety, stakeholders and users of the evaluation need to understand the roles of the logic model and the stage of development in informing evaluation questions. The stage of development discussed in the previous chapter illuminates why questions were or were not chosen. If the program is in the planning stage, for example, it is unlikely that outcome questions will be asked or can be answered as part of the evaluation. However, most stakeholders and decision makers are keenly interested in outcome questions and will be looking for those answers in the evaluation report. To keep stakeholders engaged, it may be helpful to describe when questions related to downstream effects might be answered. This is possible if a multiyear evaluation plan was established (CDC, 2011).

The report should include discussion of both process and outcome results. Excluding process evaluation findings in favor of outcome evaluation findings often eliminates the understanding of the foundation that supports outcomes. Additional resources on process and outcome evaluation are identified in the Resources section of this workbook.



Process Evaluation Focus

Process evaluation focuses on the first three boxes of the logic model.

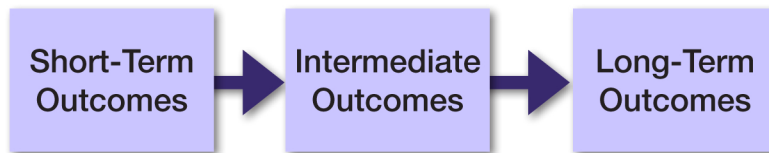


Process evaluation enables you to describe and assess your program’s activities and link progress to outcomes. This is important because the link between outputs and outcomes (last three boxes) for your particular program remains an empirical question.

(CDC, 2008, p. 3)

Outcome Evaluation Focus

Outcome evaluation, as the term implies, focuses on the last three outcome boxes of the logic model: Short-term, intermediate, and long-term outcomes.



Outcome evaluation allows researchers to document health and behavioral outcomes and identify linkages between an intervention and quantifiable effects.

(CDC, 2008, p. 3)

Process and Outcome Evaluation in Harmony in the Evaluation Report:

A discussion of both process and outcome results should be included in the report. Excluding process evaluation findings in favor of outcome evaluation findings often eliminates the understanding of the foundation that supports outcomes. Additional resources on process and outcome evaluation are identified in the Resources section of this workbook.

Transparency about the selection of evaluation questions is crucial to stakeholder acceptance of evaluation results, and possibly for continued support of the program. If it is thought that some questions were not asked and answered to hide information, then it is possible that unwarranted negative consequences could result.



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Discuss Feasibility Issues

The feasibility standard addresses issues of how much money, time, and effort can be expended on the evaluation. Sometimes, even the highest-priority questions cannot be addressed because they are not feasible due to data collection constraints, lack of staff expertise, or economic conditions. Therefore, it is essential to have a discussion with the ESW early in the process about the feasibility of addressing evaluation questions. It is important to be transparent both in the evaluation plan and report about feasibility issues related to how and why evaluation questions were chosen.

Discussions of budget and resources (both financial and human) that can be allocated to the evaluation are likely to be included in the evaluation plan. *Best Practices for Comprehensive Tobacco Control Programs—2007*¹ (CDC, 2007) recommends that at least 10% of your total program resources be allocated to surveillance and evaluation. In the final evaluation report, you may want to include the evaluation budget and an accompanying narrative that explains how costs were allocated. Including evaluation budget information and the roles and responsibilities of staff and stakeholders in the final report reflects the decisions regarding feasibility. The process through which you created the budget narrative may also enhance utility by assuring that the evaluation priorities, as well as future evaluation questions and resource requirements, are clearly outlined.

¹ *This is an evidence-based guide to help states plan and establish effective tobacco control programs to prevent and reduce tobacco use.*

AT THIS POINT IN YOUR REPORT, YOU HAVE—

- ***defined the purposes of the evaluation,***
- ***described the evaluation stakeholder workgroup,***
- ***described the program including context,***
- ***created a shared understanding of the program,***
- ***described the stage of development of the program, and***
- ***discussed the focus of the evaluation through the lens of the logic model or program description and stage of development.***

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Step 4: Gather Credible Evidence

Now that you have described the focus of the evaluation and identified the evaluation questions, it is necessary to describe the methods used in the evaluation and present the results. For evaluation results to be perceived as credible and reliable, content must be clear and transparent in the section of your report that describes methods used. It is important to note that the buy-in for methods begins in the planning stage with the formation of the ESW, follows throughout the implementation and interpretation phases, and continues throughout the report writing and communication phases—all with the aid of the ESW.

CREDIBILITY OF THE EVALUATOR

The credibility of the evaluator(s) can have an impact on how results and conclusions are received by stakeholders and decision makers and, ultimately, on how the evaluation information is used. Patton (2002) included credibility of the evaluator as one of three elements that determine the credibility of data. This is especially true if the evaluation is completed in house. Consider taking the following actions to facilitate the acceptance of the evaluator(s) and thus the evaluation:

- Address credibility of the evaluator(s) with the ESW early in the evaluation process.
- Be clear and transparent in both the evaluation plan and the final evaluation report.
- Present periodic interim evaluation findings throughout the evaluation to facilitate ownership and buy-in of the evaluation and promote collaborative interpretation of final evaluation results.
- Provide information about the training, expertise, and potential sources of biases of the evaluator(s) in the data section or appendices of the final evaluation report.

Present Credible Evidence

The primary users of the evaluation should view the evidence you gathered to support the answers to your evaluation questions as credible. The determination of what is credible is often context dependent, and it can also vary across programs and stakeholders. The determination of credible evidence is tied to the evaluation design, implementation, and standards adhered to for data collection, analysis, and interpretation. When designing the evaluation, the philosophy should be that the methods that fit the evaluation questions are the most credible. Best practices for your program area and the evaluation standards of utility, feasibility, propriety, and accuracy included in the framework will facilitate the process of addressing credibility (CDC, 1999). It is important to fully describe the



rationale for the data collection method(s) chosen in your evaluation report to increase the likelihood that results will be acceptable to stakeholders. It also strengthens the value of the evaluation and the likelihood that the information will be used for program improvement and decision making.

Describe Methods and Data Sources

Methods and data sources used in the evaluation should be fully described in the evaluation report. Any approach has strengths and limitations; these should be described clearly in the report along with quality assurance (QA) methods used in the implementation of the evaluation. QA methods are procedures used to ensure that all evaluation activities are of the highest achievable quality (International Epidemiological Association, 2008). Explaining QA methods facilitates acceptance of evaluation results and demonstrates that you considered the reliability and validity of methods and instruments. Reliable evaluation instruments produce evaluation results that can be replicated; valid evaluation instruments measure what they are supposed to measure (International Epidemiological Association, 2008). Your evaluation report should include a detailed explanation of anything done to improve the reliability and/or validity of your evaluation to increase transparency of evaluation results.

RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

Indoor air quality monitoring has become a valuable tool for assessing levels of particulate matter before and after smoke-free policies are implemented. This documentation of air quality provides an objective measurement of secondhand smoke levels. Air quality monitoring devices must be calibrated before use to ensure that they are accurately measuring respirable suspended particles (RSPs), known as particulate matter. That is to say, the machine recordings must be reliable. Measurements should also be taken during peak business hours to reflect real-world conditions. That is to say, are the measurements valid?

Quantitative and Qualitative Methods

Quantitative and qualitative methods are both credible ways to answer evaluation questions. It is not that one method is right or wrong; rather, it is a question of which method or combination of methods will obtain valid answers to the evaluation questions and will best present data to promote clarity and use of information.



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Triangulation is the combining of methods and/or data to answer the same evaluation question (Patton, 2002). Triangulation is used to overcome the limitations of using just one method to answer an evaluation question. It can strengthen your evaluation because it provides multiple methods and sources from which results and conclusions may be drawn. Triangulation thus facilitates validation of interpretation through cross-verification from more than two data sources, often using both quantitative and qualitative methods and/or data. Triangulation may increase the amount of data you collect and the methods being used (Patton, 2002). If you used triangulation to answer evaluation questions, then this should be reflected in your final evaluation report. In addition, the possible challenges faced when using triangulation (such as multiple interpretations) should be addressed in the report, as well as the steps used to address those challenges.

Quantitative data are data that are numerical and express quantities; for example, the number of meeting attendees. Qualitative data are nonnumeric data; for example, a description of a process that led to policy implementation.

(International Epidemiological Association, 2008)

Use the Evaluation Plan Methods Grid

It is important to connect the data collected to the evaluation question, the methods, and the anticipated uses. One particularly useful tool that can enhance the clarity of your evaluation report is an evaluation plan methods grid. This tool is helpful in aligning evaluation questions with methods, indicators, performance measures, and data sources and can facilitate a shared understanding of the overall evaluation among stakeholders. This tool can take many forms and should be adapted to fit your specific evaluation and context. Two different examples of this tool are presented in Figures 4A and 4B.

It is beyond the scope of this workbook to describe how to choose indicators and data sources. Resources related to these are located in the Resources section in Part II.

Those specific to tobacco indicators include:

- *Key Outcome Indicators for Evaluating Comprehensive Tobacco Control Programs*
 - *Surveillance and Evaluation Data Resources for Comprehensive Tobacco Control Programs*
-



Figure 4A: Evaluation Plan Methods Grid Example 1

Evaluation Question	Indicator or Performance Measure	Methods	Data Source	Frequency	Responsibility
What process leads to implementation of policy or system change?	Description of process steps, actions, and strategies	Case study, interviews, and document reviews	Site visits, reports, and interviews	Pre- and post-funding period	Contractor TBD
How many policies were approved or system changes achieved?	Number of policies approved or system changes achieved by the end of the project period	Analysis of policy or system change data collected	Policy or system change tracking database	Pre- and post-funding period	Health department staff member

Figure 4B: Evaluation Plan Methods Grid Example 2

Evaluation Question	Indicator or Performance Measure	Potential Data Source (Existing or New)	Comments
What media promotion activities are being implemented?	Description of promotional activities and their reach to targeted populations; dose and intensity	Focus group feedback; total rating points (TRP) and gross rating points (GRP); enrollment data	
Is the public service announcement being used by newspapers?	Number of newspapers that print public service announcement	Media tracking database	



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Report Data With Clarity

According to Heath and Heath (2007), ideas that stick are understandable, memorable, and effective in changing thought or behavior. For evaluation results to stick with and be used by stakeholders and decision makers, the data must be presented in simple, clear terms. The core message must not be muddled by distractions in the report, and the results must be concrete. The evaluation results must be humanized and delivered in terms that are credible and actionable. The actionable aspect will be discussed in the section on interpretation.

Report Clarity of Quantitative Data

Tables and graphs are a great way to condense quantitative information and make a report more readable (Torres et al., 2005); however, they should be used correctly to convey the meaning of the evaluation results. According to Stephen Few (2004, p. 46) in *Show Me the Numbers: Designing Tables and Graphs to Enlighten*, it is best to use tables when—

- you will be looking at individual values,
- you will be comparing individual values,
- precise values are required, and
- the quantitative information to be communicated involves many units of measurement.

It is best to use graphs when—

- the message is contained in the shape of the values, and
- you will reveal relationships among multiple values.

In addition, Torres et al. (2005, p. 59) identified several features of effective tables:

- Assign each table an Arabic number if you are using several tables.
- Present tables sequentially within the text.
- Always place the title immediately above the table.
- Make each quantitative table self-explanatory by providing titles, keys, labels, and footnotes so that readers can accurately understand and interpret them without reference to the text.
- When a table must be divided so it can be continued on another page, repeat the row and column headings and give the table number at the top and bottom of each new page.



Distractions in the data presentation should be eliminated. These distractions come in many forms, but some that often are missed are included right in the tables, charts, and graphs—the use of too many words when icon headings will do, or excessive graph lines or line colors that do not print distinctly in black and white (Few, 2004).

Report Clarity of Qualitative Data

The power of the vivid story is often forgotten in the presentation of quantitative data. These data need to be contextualized so that stakeholders and decision makers can relate, hold onto the ideas presented, and thus act upon the information (Heath & Heath, 2007). A story or narrative can often give life and meaning to the numbers presented in the tables and graphs (Lavinghouze, Price & Smith, 2007).

Patton (2002) described three inquiry elements that facilitate the credibility of qualitative inquiry: (1) rigorous methods, (2) credibility of the researcher, and (3) philosophical belief in the value of qualitative inquiry. Qualitative data quickly become unclear through an overabundance of words. For example, distractions in qualitative data occur when quotes are used that do not show the link between data and conclusions or are not related to the main message. Writers often get carried away when presenting qualitative data and stray from the core message. In the evaluation report, authors must tell the audience exactly what the interpretation is and what actions should follow so that readers do not get lost or make erroneous interpretations. The data must tell a vivid story from authoritative and credible sources in an organized manner so that the audience can draw, in parallel with the evaluator, conclusions that are grounded in the data (Miles & Huberman, 1998).

Evaluators who use mostly or only qualitative data may find that reporting in the outline presented in this workbook is cumbersome or does not fit the flow of the data. An alternative outline for a qualitative report is presented in Part II, Section 5.2, Example 4.

Evaluators who use mostly or only qualitative data may find that reporting in the outline presented in this workbook is cumbersome or does not fit the flow of the data. An alternative outline for a qualitative report is presented in Part II, Section 5.2, Example 4.

Long stretches of text—typical with qualitative data—can be made more readable by including quotes in text boxes or creating lists from data points. Graphics and formatting



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techniques often can enhance the readability and thus the understanding of qualitative data. Such techniques include heading and subheading structure to guide the reader through sections of the data; thematic chapters for particularly long reports (for examples, see Part II, Section 5.2, Example 4); illustrations and photographs to break up long sections of text; and repetition of diagrams or models when discussed for more than two pages. Regarding diagrams or models, one large icon can be used to introduce the diagram or model with smaller ones repeated on subsequent pages to guide the readers and remind them of what section of the model or diagram is currently being discussed.

For the report to be useful and used, it has to resonate with the audience. This may entail various communication and reporting methods, which will be discussed in more detail in Step 6.

Clarity of methods and data in a report is key to enabling the audience to understand the information presented and thus act upon the evaluation results. Time should be allowed for careful crafting of presentation techniques, as well as for review and feedback from the ESW on clarity and usefulness. It is beyond the scope of this workbook to fully discuss all the aspects of making data clear to the intended audience. If you are interested in learning about how to make data clear, additional resources are included in Part II of this workbook.

AT THIS POINT IN YOUR REPORT, YOU HAVE—

- *defined the purposes of the evaluation,*
- *described the evaluation stakeholder workgroup,*
- *described the program including context,*
- *created a shared understanding of the program,*
- *described the stage of development of the program,*
- *discussed the focus of the evaluation through the lens of the logic model or program description and stage of development,*
- *discussed issues related to credibility of data sources,*
- *discussed indicators and/or performance measures linked to evaluation questions,*
- *developed an evaluation methods grid, and*
- *worked through clarity of presentation issues.*



Step 5: Justify Conclusions

Justification of conclusions includes analyzing the data collected, as well as interpreting and drawing conclusions from the data. This step is needed to turn the data collected into meaningful, useful, and accessible information. Engage the ESW in this step to assure the meaningfulness, credibility, and acceptance of evaluation conclusions and recommendations. Meet with stakeholders and discuss preliminary findings to help guide the interpretation phase. Stakeholders often have novel insights or perspectives to guide interpretation that the evaluation staff may not have, leading to more thoughtful and meaningful conclusions.

Planning for analysis is directly tied to the timetable developed in the evaluation plan (CDC, 2011). Errors or omissions during planning can cause serious delays in the final evaluation report and may result in missed opportunities if the report has been timed to correspond with significant events. Some program efforts are focused on collecting data without full appreciation of the time, resources, and expertise it takes to prepare the data for analysis; such programs are suffering from D.R.I.P.—Data Rich but Information Poor. Survey data may remain in boxes, or interviews may not be fully explored for theme identification. If insufficient time is allowed to properly understand and interpret the data, the credibility of the evaluation and information obtained will suffer. Therefore, the use of the results will be limited at best.

After the data analysis is completed, the next step is to interpret data and examine results to determine what the data actually say about your program. These results should be interpreted with the goals of your program, the social and political context of the program, and the needs of the stakeholders in mind. Data by themselves often are of little use to stakeholders and decision makers. To ensure that the evaluation can and will be used for program improvement and decision making, interpretation of the data needs to be included in the report, along with recommendations for next steps for the program and/or evaluation. The meaning of and uses for the data need to be clearly and explicitly stated in the report. Use comes from the interpretation or act of explaining the data; it applies understanding to the evaluation results. Otherwise, the evaluation information remains purely in the academic and theoretical realm. The final evaluation report is one tool for bridging the gap between data and real-world application or translation into practice.

The emphasis is to justify conclusions and provide meaning, not just analyze the data; therefore, this step deserves due diligence. A note of caution: In a stakeholder-driven process, there is often pressure to reach beyond the evidence when drawing conclusions. The evaluator and the ESW are responsible for making sure that conclusions are grounded

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in the data. This topic should be discussed with the ESW in the planning stages, along with reliability and validity issues and possible sources of biases. If possible and appropriate, consider triangulation of data and remedies to address potential threats to the credibility of the data as early as possible. The final report should include a discussion of the limitations of the evaluation.

FINDING YOUR ARGUMENT

Your target audience will be persuaded to accept conclusions and recommendations if the arguments presented are grounded in the data. This should be the crux of the final evaluation report, and is what separates this report from progress reports. This is where evaluators answer the “so what” question, or why the audience should care about the program or information presented in the report. Meaningful, grounded arguments, supported by vivid detail, will facilitate answering the “so what” question and creating a desire to care in the audience. Charmaz (2006) presents questions to facilitate finding the strongest argument to persuade the audience to care and respond to the evaluation:

- What sense of the process or analysis do you want your audience to make?
- Why is it significant? Make it clear and explicit. Don’t assume the audience knows. Combine showing and telling to direct the audience to discovery of the argument.
- What did you tell your audience that you intended to do? What were your evaluation questions and why?
- In which sentences or paragraphs do your major points coalesce? This is where you will find your argument.

(Charmaz, 2006, p. 157)

*A **Stakeholder Interpretation Meeting** exercise is found in Part II, Section 3.1.*

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Use Tools for Reporting With Clarity

When describing the conclusions, you should include the processes used during analysis and interpretation meetings to promote transparency and credibility of findings. The interpretation should be clear, concise, and actionable for the information to be used. Make liberal use of bullet points, text boxes, and lists of key ideas to facilitate readability and understanding. In addition, it is often useful to include a pull-out, one-page document that highlights key findings and action items and can be used for quick review and reflection. For those in your audience who love acronyms, a list of acronym definitions at the beginning of the report will be appreciated.

AT THIS POINT IN YOUR REPORT, YOU HAVE—

- *defined the purposes of the evaluation,*
- *described the evaluation stakeholder workgroup,*
- *described the program including context,*
- *created a shared understanding of the program,*
- *described the stage of development of the program,*
- *discussed the focus of the evaluation through the lens of the logic model or program description and stage of development,*
- *discussed issues related to credibility of data sources,*
- *discussed indicators and/or performance measures linked to evaluation questions,*
- *developed an evaluation methods grid,*
- *worked through clarity of presentation issues,*
- *described analysis and interpretation processes,*
- *included interpretation discussion and action steps, and*
- *developed clarity tools such as one-pagers and acronym lists.*

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Step 6: Ensure Use and Share Lessons Learned

Ensuring use of evaluation results, sharing of lessons learned, communicating, and disseminating results begins with the planning phase and the development of the evaluation plan (CDC, 2011). It is often thought that this step will just take care of itself once the report is published; however, evaluation use is likely when it is planned for and built into the six steps in the evaluation plan. Planning for use is directly tied to the identified purposes of the evaluation and program and stakeholder priorities. The decision to include the ESW throughout the plan development begins the process of building a market for the evaluation results and increases the likelihood that results will be used for program improvement and decision making. Use of evaluation is most likely to occur when evaluation is collaborative and participatory. This step is directly tied to the utility standard in evaluation. Is it ethical to consume program and stakeholder resources on evaluations if the results are never used? The resources expended and the information gained from an evaluation are too important to just hope that evaluation results will be used. Use must be planned for, cultivated, and included in the evaluation plan from the very beginning.

Use must be planned for, cultivated, and included in the evaluation plan from the very beginning.

The uses for the evaluation will be determined by who needs to learn about the findings, along with how and when they should learn the information. Typically, this occurs when the final report is published. Most evaluators assume they are done at this point; however, taking personal ownership of evaluation results here, such as through collaboration with an ESW, will increase the impact and value of the evaluation results (Patton, 2008). The program staff and the ESW are responsible for getting the results to the right people, at the right time, and in a usable and targeted format. It is important to consider your audience in terms of timing, style, tone, message source, method, and format. Remember that stakeholders will not suddenly become interested in your product just because you produced a report; you must sufficiently prepare the market for the product and for use of the evaluation results (Patton, 2008). A clearly written and comprehensive evaluation report can help ensure use. An executive summary can also be a useful tool in summarizing the evaluation and results for audiences that need a quick overview.

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Plan for Communication and Dissemination

The evaluation results may not reach the intended audience with the intended impact just because they are published. An intentional communication and dissemination approach should be included in the evaluation plan and report. As previously stated, the planning stage is when the program staff and the ESW should begin to think about the best way to share the lessons learned from the evaluation. The communication and dissemination phase of the evaluation is a two-way process designed to support use of the evaluation results for program improvement and decision making. To achieve this outcome, evaluation results must be translated into practical applications and the information must be systematically distributed through a variety of audience-specific strategies. Effective dissemination systems need to do the following:

- Orient information toward the needs of the users, incorporating the types and levels of information needed into the forms and language they prefer.
- Incorporate varied dissemination methods, including written information, electronic media, and person-to-person contact.
- Include both proactive and reactive dissemination channels—that is, include information that users have identified as important as well as information that users may not know to request but are likely to need.
- Establish clear channels for users to make their needs and priorities known to the disseminating agency.
- Recognize and provide for the natural flow of the four levels of dissemination that lead to use: Spread, exchange, choice, and implementation.
- Draw upon existing resources, relationships, and networks to the maximum extent possible while building new resources as needed by users.
- Include effective quality control mechanisms to assure that information is accurate, relevant, and representative.

Include both *proactive* and *reactive* information—that is, include information that users have identified as important, and include information that users may not know to request but are likely to need.

(NIDRR, 2001, p. 3)

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- Include sufficient information so that users can determine the basic principles underlying specific practices and the settings in which these practices may be used most productively.
- Establish linkages to resources that may be needed to implement the information (usually referred to as technical assistance).

(NIDRR, 2001, p. 3)

The first step in writing an effective communication plan is to define your communication goals and objectives. Given that the communication objectives will be tailored to each target audience, you and your ESW need to consider who the primary audience(s) are (e.g., the ESW, the funding agency, the general public, or some other group). Some questions to ask about the potential audience(s) are:

- Who is a priority and why are they a priority?
- What do they already know about the topic?
- What is crucial for them to know?
- Where do they prefer to receive their information?
- What is their preferred format?
- What language level is appropriate?
- Within what time frame are evaluation updates and reports necessary?

Once you establish the goals, objectives, and target audiences in the communication plan, you should consider the best way to reach the intended audience; that is, which communication or dissemination tools will best serve your goals and objectives. Will the program use newsletters and fact sheets, oral presentations, visual displays, videos, storytelling, and/or press releases? Carefully consider the best tools to use by getting feedback from your ESW, by learning from others' experiences, and by reaching out to target audiences to gather their preferences. *Evaluation Strategies for Communicating and Reporting* (Torres et al., 2004) is an excellent resource on creative techniques for reporting evaluation.

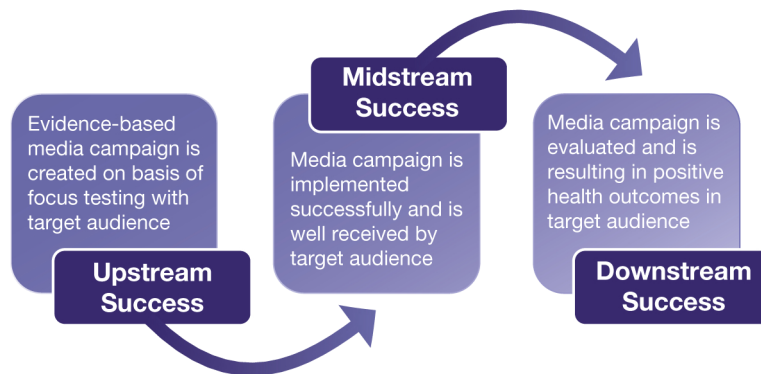
Complete the communication planning step by establishing a timetable for sharing evaluation findings and lessons learned. It is not enough to write and publish an evaluation report; you need to communicate the information so that stakeholders can use the information. The following table (Figure 5) can be helpful when charting your written communications plan.

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Target Audience	Goals	Tools	Timetable
Program implementation team	Inform them in real-time about what is working well and what needs to be adjusted quickly during implementation	Monthly meetings and briefing documents	Monthly
Program stakeholders	Promote program progress	Success stories	Annually
Funding decision makers	Continue and/or enhance program funding	Executive summary; targeted program briefs	Within 90 days of conclusion of funding
Funders and decision makers; agency leads	Continue and/or enhance program funding	Final evaluation report	Within 180 days of conclusion of funding

You do not have to wait until the final evaluation report is written to share your evaluation results. Your evaluation plan should include a system for sharing interim results to facilitate program course corrections and decision making. For example, a success story can show movement in your program’s progress over time and demonstrate its value and impact. Success stories that focus on upstream, midstream, and downstream successes can facilitate program growth and visibility. (See Figure 6 for specific examples related to evaluating a media campaign.) Success stories also can serve as vehicles for engaging potential participants, partners, and funders, especially as a program takes time to mature and achieve long-term outcomes (Lavinghouze et al., 2007).

Figure 6: Examples of Upstream, Midstream, and Downstream Successes With a Media Campaign



Other Communication and Reporting Efforts

The final evaluation report is one tool in a program's evaluation tool box. While the final report is often required by funders, there are numerous methods, modes, and mechanisms for communicating and reporting evaluation results. Stakeholders and decision makers rarely read lengthy final evaluation reports. An executive summary that highlights the main points you want this key audience to know can be useful to include. It is best to layer your communication and reporting methods. For example, evaluation staff and stakeholders might make use of e-mails, newsletters, and upstream success stories to convey early and interim evaluation results. Then, evaluation staff may make use of several interpretation meetings to include stakeholders in the analysis process and also provide information on preliminary and final results. This might be followed by presentations (such as oral presentations, tailored fact sheets, final one-page success stories, and publication of an executive summary to communicate final evaluation results) tailored to the stakeholders you are trying to reach. And finally, the evaluation staff may publish a Web summary as well as post the full, final evaluation report on the program's Web site. This strategy might also include

A note on

presentation: Do not fall for the siren's song of presentation information overload. Remember the pointers on clarity of presentation of data provided in Step 5 and use these tips when creating presentation slides. A useful resource for creating clear, concise presentations is Cliff Atkinson's (2007) book *Beyond Bullet Points: Using Microsoft Office PowerPoint 2007 to Create Presentations That Inform, Motivate, and Inspire*.

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a plan for members of the ESW to further communicate evaluation results using tailored summaries and success stories. For additional reach and sharing of lessons learned, results and conclusions can be published in peer-reviewed journals.

Ensure Use of Information

The evaluation team and the program staff need to proactively take action to encourage use and wide dissemination of the information gleaned through the evaluation project. To leverage communication and dissemination plans, evaluators and staff members need to strategize with stakeholders early in the evaluation process about how to make sure that findings are used to support program improvement efforts and inform decision making. Program staff and the ESW must take personal responsibility for ensuring the dissemination and application of evaluation results.

*The **Communicating Results** exercise in Part II, Section 4.1 can assist you with tracking your audiences and ways to reach them. More information on developing a communication and dissemination plan can be found in the Resources section in Part II.*

You can include several practical actions in your communication and reporting plan to help make sure evaluation findings are used. These might include plans to—

- conduct regularly scheduled meetings with evaluation stakeholders as a forum for sharing evaluation findings in real time and developing recommendations for program improvement based on evaluation findings;
- review evaluation findings and recommendations in regularly scheduled staff meetings;
- engage stakeholders in identifying ways they can apply evaluation findings to improve the program;
- coordinate, document, and monitor efforts of program staff and partners to implement improvement recommendations; and
- develop multiple, tailored evaluation results delivery mechanisms to address specific stakeholders' information needs.

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Use Tools for Clarity in Reporting

To make the information visually appealing and easy to read, consider using graphic design best practices or the assistance of a graphic design expert when formatting your evaluation report. Following are some basic tips from Stephanie Evergreen (2011) to get you thinking about graphic design best practices that you can apply to your evaluation report.

- The type of font you use affects the readability of your evaluation report. To enhance readability in a printed report, consider using a serif font (such as Garamond, Palatino, or Cambria).
- Consider how you will share your report. If it will be opened in multiple computers in a format other than PDF, there is a chance the font you selected will be changed and result in reformatting of your entire report. To make sure this doesn't happen, consider using one of the five fonts listed that are installed on almost all computers (i.e., Verdana, Trebuchet, Arial, Georgia, and Times New Roman).
- If using a special font, make sure you embed the font in your document when you send it to another person who may or may not have that same font loaded on their computer. Turning the document into a PDF file does not always ensure your document will open with the same font and layout.
- Consider using emotional graphics to draw readers to your key points and increase the chance they will remember what they read later on.
- If there is a possibility that others will be printing your report in black and white, make sure that whatever color scheme you chose will also print well in black and white.
- If you are using a color to emphasize a point, it is often helpful to use dark gray for the rest of the text instead of black because black has the most contrast against a white background and can distract from your emphasis point when printed in black and white.

Prepare an Executive Summary

The executive summary is another tool that can be used for quick review and reflection by stakeholders and decision makers. It can be considered a mini final report, and it may be the only section of the report that some people read. Therefore, after reading this section, a person should have a clear understanding of what your program did, how it was done, and the future direction of the program without reading the entire report. Use this section to

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provide an overview of the program, the evaluation questions, the methodology used in the evaluation, and highlights of key findings and recommendations. The executive summary should be brief, no more than about 10% of the total final evaluation report. In an ideal world, the executive summary would be one to three pages long.

More information on making your evaluation report visually appealing can be found in the Resources section in Part II.

Include References and Appendices

The reference section should acknowledge the sources that were used during writing the report. Any references made in the body of the report relevant to data, research, or theories other than the evaluation being described should be cited. References can help to justify and lend further support for the conclusions, especially when similar conclusions are found in other research including peer-reviewed work. References also contextualize findings within the existing body of literature on a given topic.

An appendix is a great place to include a full-size program logic model or a model developed in the evaluation. An appendix is also a great place to include interim and final one-page success stories that can provide additional meaning and insight into the evaluation findings and promote the program. Appendices, including supporting documents such as success stories, can help to justify interpretations and judgments and can strengthen recommendations.

One Last Note

The impact of the evaluation results can reach far beyond the evaluation report. If stakeholders are involved throughout the process, communication and participation may be enhanced. If an effective feedback loop is in place, program improvement and outcomes may be enhanced. Use of evaluation results and their impact beyond the formal findings of the evaluation report start with the planning process and a transparent evaluation plan (CDC, 2011). If the commitment is strong to share lessons learned and success stories, then other programs may benefit from the information gleaned through the evaluation process. Changes in thinking, understanding, program, and organization may stem from thoughtful evaluative processes and the final evaluation report (Patton, 2008).

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AT THIS POINT IN YOUR REPORT, YOU HAVE—

- *defined the purposes of the evaluation,*
- *described the evaluation stakeholder workgroup,*
- *described the program including context,*
- *created a shared understanding of the program,*
- *described the stage of development of the program,*
- *discussed the focus of the evaluation through the lens of the logic model or program description and stage of development,*
- *discussed issues related to credibility of data sources,*
- *discussed indicators and/or performance measures linked to evaluation questions,*
- *developed an evaluation methods grid,*
- *worked through clarity of presentation issues,*
- *described analysis and interpretation processes,*
- *included interpretation discussion and action steps,*
- *developed clarity tools such as one-pagers and acronym lists,*
- *developed an intentional, strategic communications and dissemination plan, and*
- *planned for various audience-specific evaluation reports, presentations and publications.*



PULLING IT ALL TOGETHER

Thus far, we have described the components of an evaluation report and details you should consider while developing the final evaluation report within the context of the CDC Framework for Program Evaluation in Public Health. This section recaps the information.

A final evaluation report is one tool in your evaluation tool box for communicating and reporting evaluation results. As previously discussed, an evaluation report is a written document that describes how you monitored and evaluated your program and answers the “*What*,” the “*How*,” and the “*Why It Matters*” for your program. The “*What*” reflects the description of your program and the program’s accomplishments; it serves to clarify the program’s purpose and outcomes. The “*How*” answers the question, “How did you do it?” by describing how a program was implemented and assessing whether it operated with fidelity to the program protocol. The “*How*” also addresses program course corrections that should have been made during implementation. The “*Why It Matters*” represents how the program has made a difference and its impact on the public health issue being addressed. The ability to demonstrate that the program has made a difference can be crucial to program sustainability. The final evaluation report can facilitate the link between evaluation and program planning.


*An **Evaluation Report Checklist** tool can be found in Part II, Section 5.1 and can provide discussion points for the report writing process.*

The basic elements of a final evaluation report might include the following:

- Title page
- Executive summary
- Intended use and users
- Program description
- Evaluation focus
- Data sources and methods
- Results, conclusions, and interpretation
- Use, dissemination, and sharing plan
- Tools for clarity

However, your report should be adapted to your specific evaluation needs and context.





Title page: The title page presents the program name, dates covered, and possibly the basic focus of the evaluation in an easily identifiable format.

Executive summary: This brief summary of the evaluation includes a program description, evaluation questions, design description, and key findings and action steps.

Intended use and users: In this section, the primary intended users and the ESW are identified and the purposes and intended uses of the evaluation are described. This section fosters transparency about the purposes of the evaluation and who will have access to evaluation results and when. It is important to build a market for evaluation results from the beginning.

Program description: This section will usually include a logic model, a description of the program's stage of development, and a narrative description. This section leads to a shared understanding of the program, as well as the basis for the evaluation questions and how they are prioritized.

Evaluation focus: This section focuses the evaluation by identifying and prioritizing evaluation questions on the basis of the logic model and program description, the program's stage of development, program and stakeholder priorities, intended uses of the evaluation, and feasibility.

Data sources and methods: This section addresses indicators and performance measures, data sources and rationale for selection of methods, and credibility of data sources. Data need to be presented in a clear, concise manner to enhance readability and understanding.

Results, conclusions, and interpretation: This section describes the analysis processes and conclusions and presents meaningful interpretation of results. This is a step that deserves due diligence in the writing process. The propriety standard plays a role in guiding the evaluator's decisions in how to analyze and interpret data to assure that all stakeholder values are respected in the process of drawing conclusions. The interpretation should include action steps or recommendations for next steps in either (or both) the program development and evaluation process.

Use, dissemination, and sharing plan: This is an important but often neglected section of the evaluation plan and the evaluation report. Plans for use of evaluation results, communication, and dissemination methods should be discussed from the beginning. The most effective plans include layering of communication and reporting efforts so that tailored and timely communication takes place throughout the evaluation.



Tools for clarity: Other tools that can facilitate clarity in your report include a table of contents; lists of tables, charts, and figures; references and possibly resources; and an acronym list. Appendices are useful for full-size program logic models, models developed through the evaluation, historical background and context information, and success stories.

The exercises, worksheets, and tools found in Part II of this workbook are designed to help you think through the concepts discussed in Part I. These are only examples; remember, your evaluation report will vary on the basis of your program, stakeholder priorities, and context.





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STEP 1: 1.1 STAKEHOLDER INCLUSION AND COMMUNICATION PLAN EXERCISE

At the beginning of the evaluation, it is important to explore stakeholder agendas and come to a shared understanding of roles and responsibilities as well as the purposes of the evaluation. Some stakeholders will be represented in the evaluation stakeholders workgroup (ESW), and some will not. It is important to include a clear communication plan to meaningfully engage all appropriate stakeholders and increase their participation, buy-in for the evaluation, and use of the final results.

List the appropriate role for each stakeholder and how and when you might engage him or her in the evaluation. Consider a stakeholder’s expertise, level of interest, and availability when developing the communication plan. If there are specific deadlines for information, such as a referendum or funding opportunity, it is important to note those as well. Additional columns could be added for comments.

Evaluation Stakeholder	Role Related to the Evaluation	Mode of Communication	Timing of Communication
Coalition	Stakeholder (a representative might be on the ESW)	Progress update	Quarterly
Community	Stakeholder (a representative might be on the ESW)	Interim progress update through success stories	Semiannual

A NOTE ON ROLES

Stakeholders need not be a member of the ESW to have a role related to the evaluation. Given a stakeholder’s specific expertise, interest, availability, or intended use of the evaluation results, he or she may be involved in part or all of the evaluation without being a member of the ESW. Roles might include the following:

- Developing the evaluation plan
- Giving feedback on the focus of the evaluation
- Needing information about specific evaluation activities or progress of the evaluation
- Facilitating implementation of specific aspects of the evaluation
- Participating in interpretation meetings
- Disseminating and promoting use of evaluation results



STEP 1: 1.2 STAKEHOLDER INFORMATION NEEDS EXERCISE

While focusing the evaluation occurs in Step 3, the groundwork begins with the identification of stakeholders or the primary intended users of the evaluation. The ESW membership is designed to reflect the priority information needs of those who will use the evaluation information. However, it is not always possible to include representation from every group that would benefit from evaluation results. This should not prevent evaluators and the ESW from considering all points of view and information needs when considering how best to focus the evaluation. Therefore, determining stakeholder information needs is both useful for considering membership in the ESW (Step 1) and focusing the evaluation (Step 3).

From your list of primary intended users (those who have a stake in the evaluation results), identify what information each stakeholder needs.

Primary Intended User (Stakeholder)	Evaluation Information Needed
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

Exercises 1.1 and 1.2 are not intended to provide the full picture of how to include stakeholders in the implementation of your evaluation or evaluation plan. Please see the following resource for more information: [Developing an Effective Evaluation Plan \(CDC, 2011\)](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/tobacco_control_programs/surveillance_evaluation/evaluation_plan/index.htm), available at http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/tobacco_control_programs/surveillance_evaluation/evaluation_plan/index.htm

In addition, the Resources section of this workbook refers to documents that provide information on including stakeholders.



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Primary Intended User (Stakeholder)	Evaluation Information Needed
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STEP 3: 2.1 CHECKLIST FOR ASSESSING YOUR EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The success of an evaluation lies in appropriately focusing the overarching evaluation questions. Once you have drafted a set of potential evaluation questions, apply the criteria below to each question. Review the questions to help you identify the ones that are most likely to provide useful information. Although no set of criteria can be universally applicable, this checklist should be helpful regardless of the purpose of your evaluation.

Does the evaluation question meet this criterion?	YES	NO	Does not meet criterion but merits inclusion because ...
Q1			
1. Stakeholder engagement			
A. Diverse stakeholders, including those who can act on evaluation findings and those who will be affected by such actions (e.g., clients, staff), were engaged in developing the question.			
B. The stakeholders are committed to answering the question through an evaluation process and using the results.			
2. Appropriate fit			
A. The question is congruent with the program's theory of change.			
B. The question can be explicitly linked to the program's goals and objectives.			
C. The program's values are reflected in the question.			
D. The question is appropriate for the program's stage of development.			
3. Relevance			
A. The question clearly reflects the stated purpose of the evaluation.			
B. Answering the question will provide information that will be useful to at least one stakeholder.			
C. Evaluation is the best way to answer this question, rather than some other (nonevaluative) process.			

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Does the evaluation question meet this criterion?	YES	NO	Does not meet criterion but merits inclusion because ...
4. Feasibility			
A. It is possible to obtain an answer to the question ethically and respectfully.			Unless an acceptable option can be found, eliminate this question.
B. Information to answer the question can be obtained with a level of accuracy acceptable to the stakeholders.			
C. Sufficient resources, including staff, money, expertise, and time, can be allocated to answer the question.			
D. The question will provide enough information to be worth the effort required to answer it.			
E. The question can be answered in a timely manner (i.e., before any decisions potentially influenced by the information will be made).			
5. In sum ...			
A. This question, in combination with the other questions proposed for this evaluation, provides a complete (enough) picture of the program.			
B. The question, in combination with the other questions proposed for this evaluation, provides enough information for stakeholders to take action.			

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STEP 5: 3.1 STAKEHOLDER INTERPRETATION MEETING EXERCISE

Justification of conclusions includes analyzing the information you collect, interpreting the meaning of the data, and drawing conclusions based on the data. This step is needed to turn the data collected into meaningful, useful, and accessible information. This often is the step in which program staff incorrectly assumes that the stakeholder workgroup is no longer needed and the work is better left to the experts. However, including your ESW in this step is directly tied to the previous discussion on credibility, acceptance of data and conclusions, and use.

Moreover, your plans must include time for interpretation and review from stakeholders (including your critics) to increase the transparency and validity of your process and conclusions. The emphasis here is on justifying conclusions—not just analyzing data. This step deserves due diligence in the planning process. The propriety standard plays a role in guiding the evaluator’s decisions about how to analyze and interpret data to assure that all stakeholder values are respected in the process of drawing conclusions (Sandars & The Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation, 1994). This may include one or more stakeholder interpretation meetings to review interim data and further refine conclusions. A note of caution: As a stakeholder-driven process, there is often pressure to reach beyond the evidence when drawing conclusions. The evaluator and the ESW are responsible for making sure that conclusions are drawn directly from the evidence.

Ideally, information on how you plan to solicit stakeholder input and facilitate interpretation of evaluation data will be included in your evaluation plan. If you have not done so in your evaluation plan, you should determine how you will do this while working on your evaluation report. An example follows.

Interpretation and Review Activities	Timeline
Check-in with ESW and/or participants for member-checking of data	As appropriate during analysis phase
Awardee interpretation meeting	Immediately following preparation of preliminary results
Stakeholder interpretation meeting	Within 3 months following the awardee interpretation meeting
Stakeholder review of draft final report	Within 3 months following the stakeholder interpretation meeting
Approval and review process of final report	Within 2 months following stakeholder review of draft final report



Complete an outline of proposed activities appropriate to your evaluation project to include opportunities for stakeholder interpretation and feedback.

Interpretation and Review Activities	Timeline

You should consider the time it takes to solicit and incorporate stakeholder feedback in your evaluation project timeline. At this time, you should revisit your budget and timeline created during your evaluation plan to ensure adequate time and funding to include stakeholders in the process.

To make sure your stakeholder interpretation meeting is a success, plan activities to help things run smoothly. Time for these activities needs to be included in your evaluation timeline.

- Send an initial invitation so that stakeholders can plan for the meeting. Remind them of the overall evaluation purpose and questions.
- Send the preliminary report or PowerPoint presentation within 2 weeks of the initial invitation to allow time to review. Remind stakeholders that results are draft and should not be shared outside of the review group.
- Send reminders about the meeting 1 or 2 weeks before the date. Identify any pre-existing documentation that may be useful for understanding context.
- Plan for appropriate technology (and backup) needed, such as recorders, laptop computer, screen, flip charts, and so forth.
- If feasible, use a professional meeting facilitator.

A checklist for facilitating the development of a formal stakeholder interpretation meeting can be found at http://www.wmich.edu/evalctr/archive_checklists/feedbackworkshop.pdf.

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STEP 6: 4.1 COMMUNICATING RESULTS EXERCISE

Just because your evaluation results are published does not mean they will reach the intended audience with the intended impact. An intentional communication and dissemination plan should be included in your evaluation plan. As stated in the Developing an Effective Evaluation Plan workbook (http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/tobacco_control_programs/surveillance_evaluation/evaluation_plan/index.htm), the planning phase is the time to begin thinking about the best way to share the lessons you will learn from the evaluation. The communication (i.e., dissemination) phase of the evaluation is a two-way process designed to support use of the evaluation results for program improvement and decision making. To achieve that outcome, evaluation results must be translated into practical applications and the information or knowledge must be distributed systematically through a variety of audience-specific strategies.

Communicating evaluation results involves sharing information in ways that make it understandable and useful to stakeholders. Successful communication is key to your evaluation results being used. You can communicate successfully by using a variety of formats and channels. A communication format is the actual layout of the communication you will use, such as reports, brochures, one-page descriptions, newsletters, executive summaries, slides, and fact sheets. A communication channel is the route of communication you will use, such as oral presentations, videos, e-mails, Webcasts, news releases, and telephone conferences. The formats and channels should take into account the needs of different audiences, the type of information you wish to provide, and the purpose of the communication. Consulting the ESW can provide some of this information.

When developing your communication or dissemination strategy, carefully consider the following questions:

- With which target audiences or groups of stakeholders will you share findings?
- What formats and channels will you use to share findings?
- When and how often do you plan to share findings (including interim and final evaluation findings)?
- Who is responsible for carrying out dissemination strategies?

You should develop a communication strategy while you are creating an effective evaluation plan. If you did not have a chance to develop a communication plan during your evaluation planning phase, this exercise is included to allow you to work on creating one for your evaluation report. You can use the following matrix to help you develop a communications plan for your evaluation findings.

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Communication Plan Table

What do you want to communicate? (Include both interim and final evaluation findings)	To whom do you want to communicate?	How do you want to communicate?	
		Format(s)	Channel(s)

This tool was adapted from the Division of Adolescent and School Health's communication matrix in Using Evaluation to Improve Programs: Strategic Planning in the strategic planning kit for school health programs, retrieved July 24, 2012, from http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/evaluation/sp_toolkit.htm

The next tool can help you track communications with your various audiences, including the communication format (the layout of the communication, such as newsletters); the communication channel (the route of communication, such as oral presentations); audience feedback on the communication message; and the next steps you need to take in response to audience feedback.



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Communication Tracking Chart No. 1

Communication	Date	Audience(s)	Communication Format(s)	Communication Channel(s)	Audience Feedback and Next Steps



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Communication	Date	Audience(s)	Communication Format(s)	Communication Channel(s)	Audience Feedback and Next Steps

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A second example illustrates what a communication tracking chart might look like.

Communication Tracking Chart No. 2

Target Audience	Objectives for the Communication	Tools	Timetable

Following is an example of a completed chart:

Figure 5. Communication Tracking Chart

Target Audience (Priority)	Goals	Tools	Timetable
Program implementation team	Inform them in real-time about what's working well and what needs to be quickly adjusted during implementation	Monthly meetings and briefing documents	Monthly
Program stakeholders	Promote program progress	Success stories	Annually
Funding decision makers	Continue and/or enhance program funding	Executive summary; Targeted program briefs	Within 90 days of conclusion of funding
Funders and decision makers; agency leads	Continue and/or enhance program funding	Final evaluation report	Within 180 days of conclusion of funding



OUTLINE: 5.1 REPORTING CHECKLIST TOOL

The following is a checklist of items related to reporting your evaluation results that may be worth discussing with your evaluation stakeholder workgroup.

Tools and Templates: Checklist for Ensuring Effective Evaluation Reports*

- Provide interim and final reports to intended users in time for use.
- Tailor the report content, format, and style for the audiences by involving audience members.
- Include an executive summary.
- Summarize the description of the stakeholders and how they were engaged.
- Describe essential features of the program (e.g., in appendices).
- Explain the focus of the evaluation and its limitations.
- Include an adequate summary of the evaluation plan and procedures.
- Provide all necessary technical information (e.g., in appendices).
- Specify the standards and criteria for evaluative judgments.
- Explain the evaluative judgments and how they are supported by the evidence.
- List strengths and weaknesses of the evaluation.
- Discuss recommendations for action with their advantages, disadvantages, and resource implications.
- Assure protections for program clients and other stakeholders.
- Anticipate how people or organizations might be affected by the findings.
- Present minority opinions or rejoinders where necessary.
- Verify that the report is accurate and unbiased.
- Organize the report logically and include appropriate details.
- Remove technical jargon.
- Use examples, illustrations, graphics, and stories.

**Adapted from Worthen, Sanders, and Fitzpatrick (1997) and presented in Comprehensive Cancer Control Branch Program Evaluation Toolkit (CDC, 2010). Also visit Western Michigan University (n.d.) for a free evaluation report checklist, available online at http://www.wmich.edu/evalctr/archive_checklists/feedbackworkshop.pdf*





OUTLINE: 5.2 EVALUATION REPORT OUTLINE EXAMPLES

Following are report outline examples to spur discussion and ideas for the development of a report that best fits your program's context and stakeholder needs.

Example 1

- I. Executive Summary
- II. Program Description
 - a. Implementation Process
 - b. Program Goals and Objectives
- III. Evaluation Design and Methodology
- IV. Results
 - a. Data
 - b. Process Report
 - c. Outcomes Report
- V. Interpretation of Process and Outcomes Reports
- VI. Conclusions
- VII. Recommendations
- VIII. Appendices

Example 2

- I. Executive Summary
- II. Problem Statement
- III. Evaluation Design
- IV. Evaluation Methodology
- V. Results
 - a. Quantitative
 - b. Qualitative
- VI. Conclusions
- VII. Recommendations
- VIII. Appendices



Example 3

- I. Executive Summary
- II. Program Description
- III. Project Objectives and Activity Plans
- IV. Evaluation Plan and Methodology
- V. Results
 - a. Process and Outcome
 - b. Successes and Barriers
- VI. Conclusions
- VII. Recommendations
- VIII. Appendices

Example 4*

Executive Summary

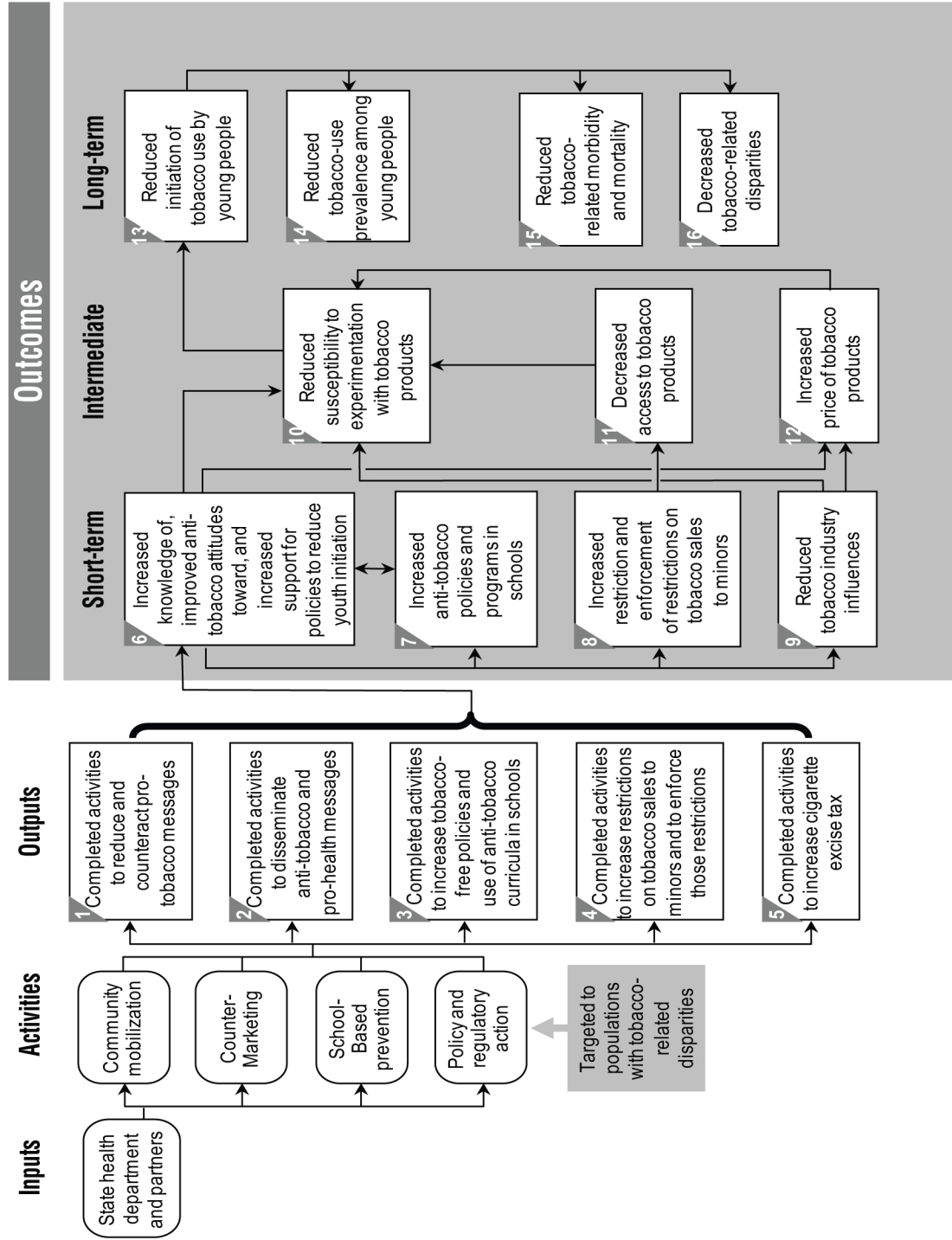
- I. Introduction
 - a. Program Overview
 - b. Evaluation Plan
 - c. Methods
- II. Documentation Summary of Services Delivered
- III. Survey Findings
- IV. Case Study
 - a. City Intermediate School
 - i. Introduction
 - ii. The School Context
 - iii. Goals
 - iv. Services Delivered
 - v. Staff Developer Support at the School
 - vi. Implementation
 - vii. Accomplishments
 - viii. Problems Encountered by the Team, and Strategies Used to Cope With Them
 - ix. The Basic Skills Improvement Plan: Quality and Level of Implementation



- x. Classroom Implementation
- xi. Impact and Capacity Building
- xii. Integrative Summary
- b. Roundtree Junior High School (parallel structure)
- c. Union Prep High School (parallel structure)
- d. Cross-Site Summary
- V. Recommendations

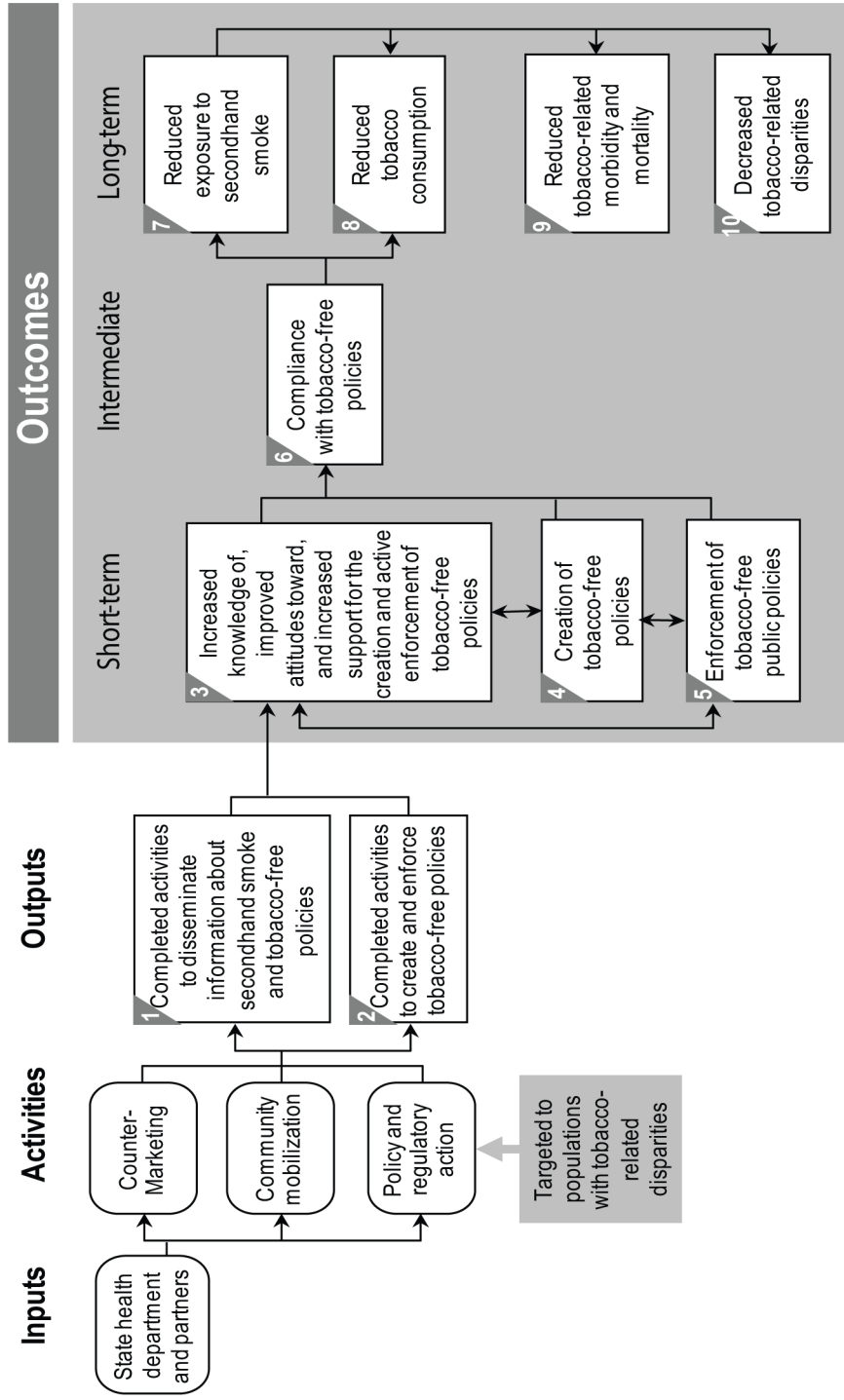
**This report outline example was taken from Miles and Huberman (1994, p. 304) for an action-oriented evaluation study. The audiences were managers, funders, and operators of a program to help schools adopt better methods of reading and writing instruction. Stakeholders needed information that would help them decide about the program's future.*

Preventing Initiation of Tobacco Use Among Young People

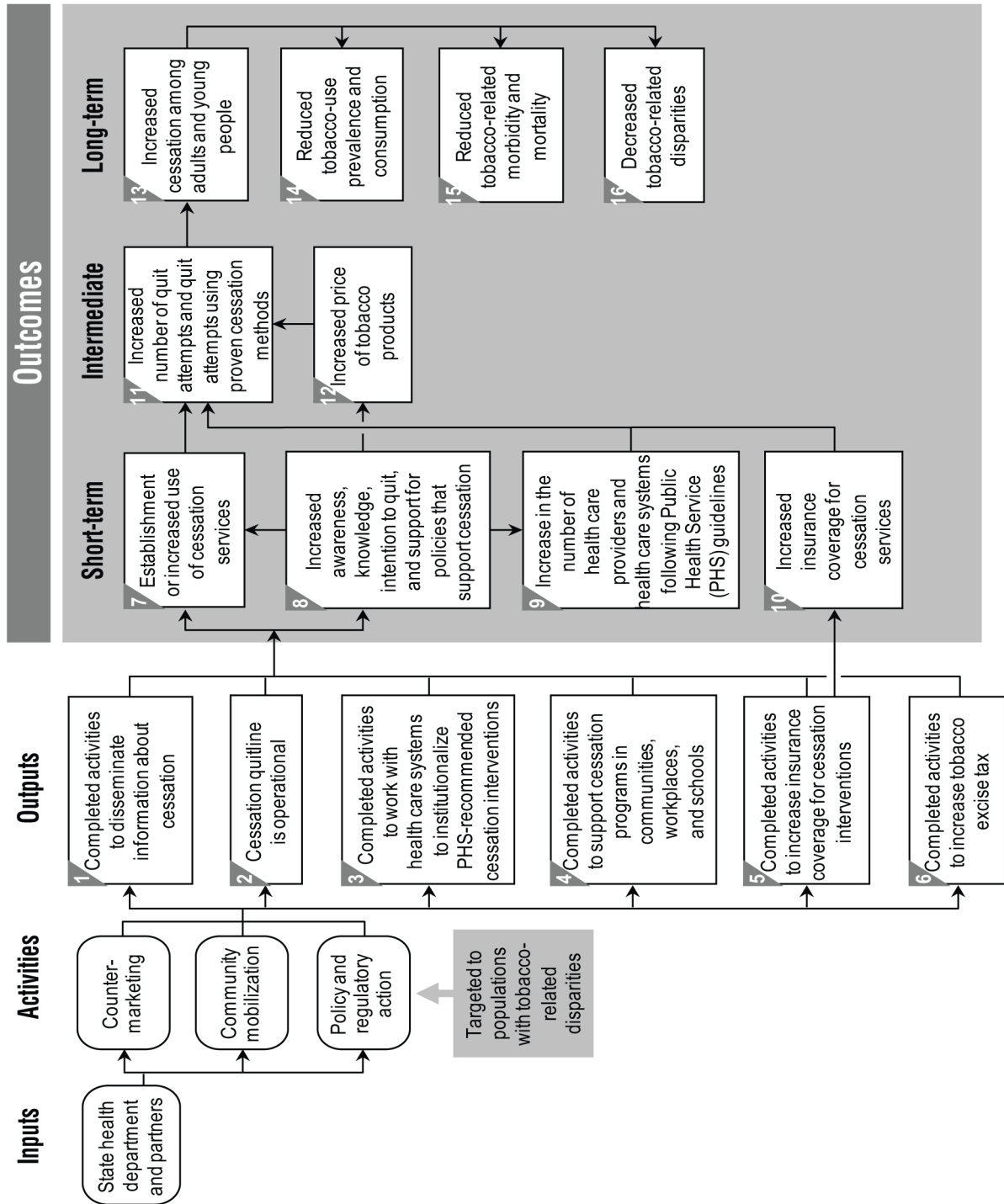


LOGIC MODELS: OSH AND DNPAO LOGIC MODEL EXAMPLES

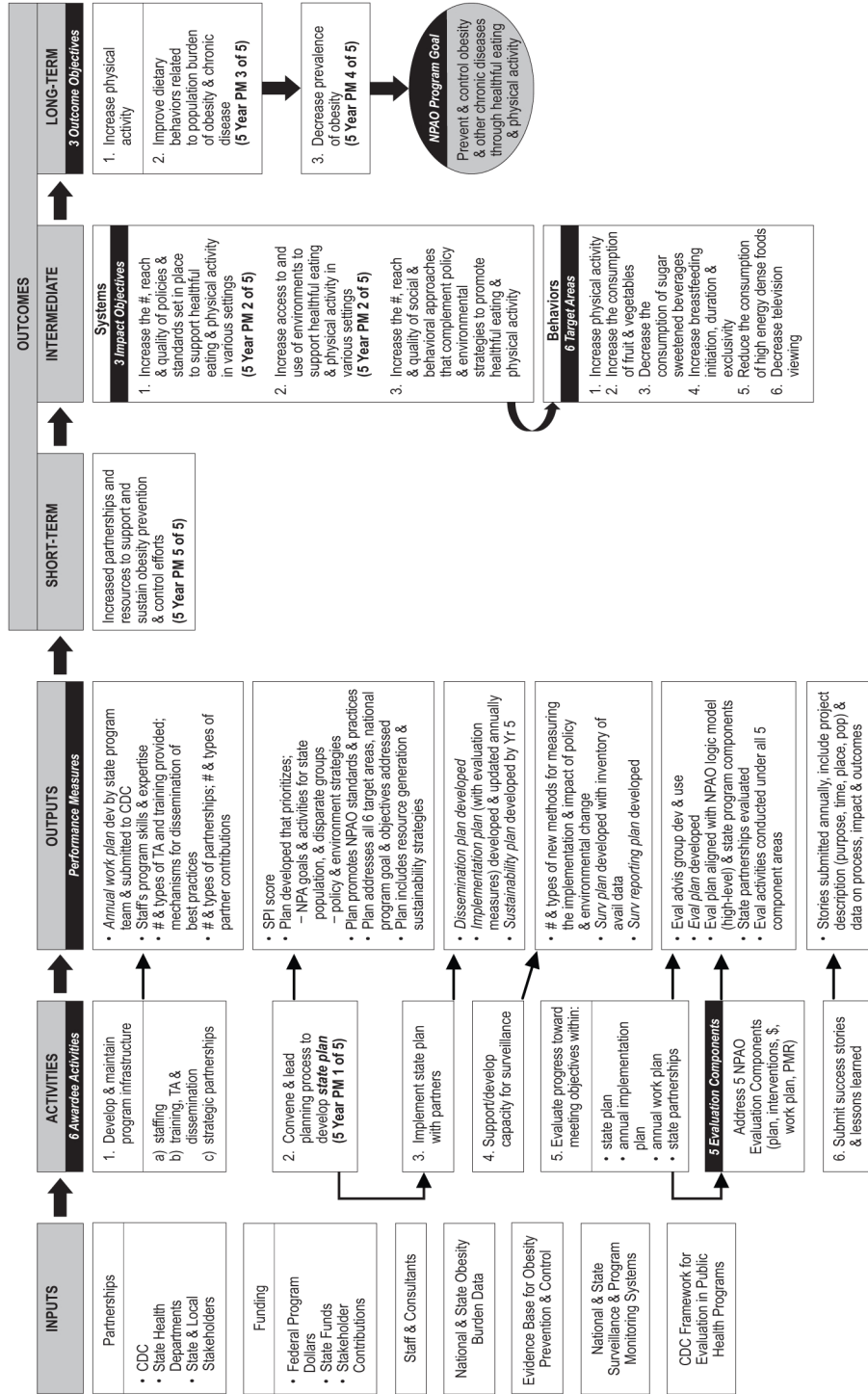
Eliminating Nonsmokers' Exposure to Secondhand Smoke



Promoting Quitting Among Adults and Young People



State NPAO Program – Detailed Logic Model (FOA 805 & TA Manual)



CONTEXT: Apply a social ecological approach; Emphasize policy & environmental change; Identify and address health disparities



Resources*

WEB RESOURCES

American Evaluation Association (AEA)

- <http://www.eval.org>
- The American Evaluation Association is an international professional association of evaluators devoted to the application and exploration of program evaluation, personnel evaluation, technology, and many other forms of evaluation. Evaluation involves assessing the strengths and weaknesses of programs, policies, personnel, products, and organizations to improve their effectiveness. The association has approximately 5,500 members representing all 50 states and more than 60 foreign countries. (Retrieved July 19, 2011 from AEA's Web site, <http://www.eval.org>.)

CDC Division of Adolescent and School Health's (DASH's) program evaluation resources and tools

- <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/evaluation/resources.htm>

CDC Division of STD Prevention's Practical Use of Program Evaluation among Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD) Programs

- <http://www.cdc.gov/std/program/pupestd/Introduction-SPREADS.pdf>

CDC Framework for Program Evaluation in Public Health

- <http://www.cdc.gov/eval/framework.htm>
- Effective program evaluation is a systematic way to improve and account for public health actions that involves procedures that are useful, feasible, ethical, and accurate. The framework guides public health professionals in their use of program evaluation. It is a practical, nonprescriptive tool, designed to summarize and organize essential elements of program evaluation. The framework comprises steps in program evaluation practice and standards for effective evaluation. Adhering to the steps and standards of this framework will shape an understanding of each program's context and will improve how program evaluations are conceived and conducted.

**Resources are listed for the convenience of the user and do not constitute endorsement by the U.S. Government.*





CDC Introduction to Program Evaluation for Public Health Programs: A Self-Study Guide

- <http://www.cdc.gov/eval/evalguide.pdf>

Developing an Effective Evaluation Plan

- http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/tobacco_control_programs/surveillance_evaluation/evaluation_plan/index.htm

Disseminating Program Achievements and Evaluation Findings to Garner Support

- <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/evaluation/pdf/brief9.pdf>

Impact and Value: Telling Your Program's Story

- http://www.cdc.gov/oralhealth/publications/library/success_stories_wkbk.htm

National Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention Program's evaluation guides: Writing SMART Objectives and Developing and Using Logic Models

- http://www.cdc.gov/dhdsp/programs/nhdsp_program/evaluation_guides/smart_objectives.htm
- http://www.cdc.gov/dhdsp/programs/nhdsp_program/evaluation_guides/logic_model.htm

Pennsylvania State University Extension Program evaluation resources

- <http://extension.psu.edu/evaluation/>

The Evaluation Center

- http://www.wmich.edu/evalctr/archive_checklists/feedbackworkshop.pdf
- This site provides refereed checklists for designing, budgeting, contracting, staffing, managing, and assessing evaluations of programs, personnel, students, and other evaluands; collecting, analyzing, and reporting evaluation information; and determining merit, worth, and significance. Each checklist is a distillation of valuable lessons learned from practice.



University of Wisconsin Extension Program development and evaluation publications

- <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/pdande/evaluation/evaldocs.html>
- This site provides a range of publications for planning and implementing an evaluation and offers online evaluation curriculums and courses.

W.K. Kellogg Foundation logic model and evaluation guides

- <http://www.wkkf.org/knowledge-center/resources/2006/02/WK-Kellogg-Foundation-Logic-Model-Development-Guide.aspx> (Retrieved July 19, 2011.)
- The foundation provides a guide to logic modeling to facilitate program planning and implementation activities.

MAKING YOUR IDEAS STICK: REPORTING AND PROGRAM PLANNING

- Atkinson, Cliff. (2007). *Beyond bullet points: Using Microsoft Office PowerPoint 2007 to create presentations that inform, motivate, and inspire*. Redmond, WA: Microsoft Press.
- Becker, H. S. (2007). *Writing for social scientists: How to start and finish your thesis, book, or article* (2nd ed.). Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Heath, C., & Heath, D. (2007). *Made to stick: Why some ideas survive and others die*. New York, NY: Random House.
- Heath, C., & Heath, D. (2010). *Switch: How to change things when change is hard*. New York, NY: Random House.

Impact and Value: Telling Your Program's Story

- www.cdc.gov/oralhealth/publications/library/success_stories_wkbk.htm
- Lavinghouze, R., Price, A. W., & Smith, K-A. (2007). The program success story: A valuable tool for program evaluation. *Health Promotion Practice*, 8(4), 323–331.
- Torres, R., Preskill, H., & Piontek, M. E. (2004). *Evaluation strategies for communicating and reporting* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.





QUALITATIVE METHODS

- Miles, M. B., & Huberman, M. A. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Yin, R. K. (2008). *Case study research: Design and methods* (applied social research methods) (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Yin, R. K. (2010). *Qualitative research from start to finish*. New York, NY: The Guilford Press.

QUANTITATIVE METHODS

- Kleinbaum, D. G., & Klein, M. (2010). *Logistic regression: A self-learning text* (statistics for biology and health) (3rd ed.). New York, NY: Springer.
- Rothman, K. J., Greenland, S., & Lash, T. L. (2008). *Modern epidemiology* (3rd ed.). Philadelphia, PA: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins.
- Tufte, E. R. (1990). *Envisioning information*. Cheshire, CT: Graphics Press.
- Tufte, E. R. (2001). *The visual display of quantitative information*. Cheshire, CT: Graphics Press.

PULLING IT ALL TOGETHER

Evaluation Report Layout Checklist that provides best practices for designing your evaluation report

- <http://stephanieevergreen.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/ERLC.pdf>

Color diagnostics Web site that gives ideas on combining colors in a visually appealing way for documents

- <http://kuler.adobe.com/#themes/rating?time=30>

Color-blindness software with information on what different color combinations look like to someone with color blindness

- <http://colororacle.cartography.ch/>



EVALUATION USE

- Butterfoss, F. D. (2007). *Coalitions and partnerships in community health*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Mattessich, P. W. (2003). *The manager's guide to program evaluation: Planning, contracting, and managing for useful results*. St. Paul, MN: Amherst H. Wilder Foundation.
- Patton, M. Q. (2010). *Developmental evaluation: Applying complexity concepts to enhance innovation and use*. New York, NY: The Guilford Press.
- Patton, M. Q. (2008). *Utilization-focused evaluation* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

OSH EVALUATION RESOURCES

Best Practices for Comprehensive Tobacco Control Programs—2007

- http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/stateandcommunity/best_practices/index.htm
- This document is an evidence-based guide to help states plan and establish effective tobacco control programs to prevent and reduce tobacco use.

Developing an Effective Evaluation Plan

- http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/tobacco_control_programs/surveillance_evaluation/evaluation_plan/index.htm
- This workbook was designed to help public health program managers, administrators, and evaluators develop an effective evaluation plan in the context of the planning process.

Evaluation Toolkit for Smoke-Free Policies

- http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/secondhand_smoke/evaluation_toolkit/index.htm
- The evaluation approaches described in this toolkit and the findings of studies conducted using these approaches may also be useful to stakeholders who are interested in the effects of smoke-free laws, including business organizations (e.g., chambers of commerce, restaurant associations) and labor unions.





Introduction to Process Evaluation in Tobacco Use Prevention and Control

- www.cdc.gov/tobacco/tobacco_control_programs/surveillance_evaluation/process_evaluation/index.htm
- This guide, published in 2008, will help state and federal program managers and evaluation staff design and implement valid, reliable process evaluations for tobacco use prevention and control programs.

Introduction to Program Evaluation for Comprehensive Tobacco Control Programs

- http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/tobacco_control_programs/surveillance_evaluation/evaluation_manual/index.htm
- This how-to guide, published in 2001, for planning and implementing evaluation activities will help state tobacco control program managers and staff members plan, design, implement, and use practical and comprehensive evaluations of tobacco control efforts.

Key Outcome Indicators for Evaluating Comprehensive Tobacco Control Programs

- http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/tobacco_control_programs/surveillance_evaluation/key_outcome/index.htm
- This guide, published in 2005, provides information on 120 key outcome indicators for evaluation of statewide comprehensive tobacco prevention and control programs.

Question Inventory on Tobacco (QIT)

- <http://apps.nccd.cdc.gov/qit/quickSearch.aspx>
- This Web-based tool developed by OSH categorizes more than 6,000 tobacco-related questions. This site can be used to collect information on survey questions used in the past, locate available data for secondary analyses, and gather ideas for future instrument development.

Quitlines: A Resource for Development, Implementation, and Evaluation

- http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/quit_smoking/cessation/quitlines/index.htm
- This 2005 document is intended to help state health departments, health care organizations, and employers to contract for and monitor telephone-based tobacco cessation services. It is also intended to help states, health care organizations,



and quitline operators enhance existing quitline services, and to inform those who are interested in learning more about population-based approaches to tobacco cessation.

Smoking-Attributable Mortality, Morbidity, and Economic Costs (SAMMEC)

- <http://apps.nccd.cdc.gov/sammeec/>
- This online application allows you to estimate the health and health-related economic consequences of smoking to adults and infants.

State Tobacco Activities Tracking and Evaluation (STATE) system

- <http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/statesystem>
- The STATE system is an electronic data warehouse containing up-to-date and historical state-level data on tobacco use prevention and control.

Surveillance and Evaluation Data Resources for Comprehensive Tobacco Control Programs

- http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/tobacco_control_programs/surveillance_evaluation/surveillance_manual/index.htm
- This compilation of data sources for tobacco control programs, published in 2001, is useful for tobacco control programs that are conducting surveillance or evaluation.

Surveillance and Evaluation Net-Conferences

- Archived presentations are available at http://www.ttac.org/resources/cdc_netconferences.html
- The Surveillance and Evaluation Net-Conference series provides information on best and promising evaluation practices and describes the role of evaluation in tobacco control work. The Net-Conference series was originally designed for state surveillance and evaluation staff, but the material covers a variety of interesting and emerging topics in surveillance and evaluation that are valuable to other public health professionals. Each conference consists of a lecture followed by a question-and-answer session.





Surveillance and Evaluation Web page on OSH's Smoking and Tobacco Use Web site

- http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/tobacco_control_programs/surveillance_evaluation/index.htm

Tobacco Control State Highlights 2012

- http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/state_data/state_highlights/2012/index.htm

Tobacco Control State Highlights 2012 guides states in developing and implementing high-impact strategies and assessing their performance. This report also provides state-specific data intended to—

- highlight how some states are making great strides in reducing smoking rates using evidence-based strategies while also showing that more work needs to be done in other states, and
- enable readers to see how their own states perform.

DNPAO EVALUATION RESOURCES

Developing an Effective Evaluation Plan

- http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/tobacco_control_programs/surveillance_evaluation/evaluation_plan/index.htm
- This workbook was designed to help public health program managers, administrators, and evaluators develop an effective evaluation plan in the context of the planning process.

Developing and Using an Evaluation Consultation Group

- <http://www.cdc.gov/obesity/downloads/EvaluationConsultationGroup.pdf>
- This document will help users clarify approaches to and methods of evaluation. It provides examples and tools specific to the scope and purpose of state nutrition, physical activity, and obesity programs and recommend resources for additional reading.
- The guidance describes an evaluation consultation group, how it can be structured and implemented, and how it contributes to better and more useful evaluation.



Evaluation of State Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity Plans

- <http://www.cdc.gov/obesity/downloads/EvaluationofStateNPAOPlans.pdf>
- This document will help users clarify approaches to and methods of evaluation. It provides examples and tools specific to the scope and purpose of state nutrition, physical activity, and obesity programs and recommend resources for additional reading.

Evaluation Quick Start Resources

- http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/physical/pdf/PA_evaluation_quick_start.pdf
- These resources will help users clarify approaches to and methods of evaluation. They provide examples and tools specific to the scope and purpose of state nutrition, physical activity, and obesity programs and recommend resources for additional reading.

Recommended Community Strategies and Measurements to Prevent Obesity in the United States

- <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr5807a1.htm>
- The Common Community Measures for Obesity Prevention Project (the Measures Project) established a core set of data elements that can be used by communities for self-evaluation and potentially by program evaluators and researchers who study the food and physical activity environments. For each measure, a data collection protocol and potential data sources are identified.



