



Evaluating Our Work: Do I Have the Right Data?

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 **ThinkCollege**
NATIONAL COORDINATING CENTER

What We Hope to Accomplish



- Understand the key questions to collect data for evaluation
- Understand the key factors that need to be considered for a program review or data collection
- Use the right data to answer your key questions



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What happens when you don't collect data?



- Ineffective programs/practices are continued
- Effective programs/practices are discontinued



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WHAT IF

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V017LCZxFbs>



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What is the Intention of Evaluation or Program Review?



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Key Considerations for Designing a Program Review or Evaluation

1. What's the purpose: **What questions are you trying to answer?**
2. Who is/are the audiences – e.g., funders, customers, management, boards, etc.
3. What **kind of information is needed** to make the decisions or answer your questions?
4. What are the **sources of your information?** EX: program documentation, funder feedback, outcomes, groups of people such as families, students, etc.
5. How will you **collect the data** or information? e.g., surveys, interviews, focus groups, observations, examining documents, etc.
6. Do you have a **timeline** for collecting the information?
7. What **resources** are available to collect the information?



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TRUE or FALSE

Evaluation is about proving the success or failure of a program

FALSE - It's about continuous feedback, improvement and adjusting as needed



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Key Program Review or Evaluation Questions

1. What is the **need** for the program? EX: Needs assessments, identifying gaps
2. Is the program **relevant**? Based on priorities of the organization, Government, Board of Directors or other stakeholders
3. Is the structure of the program **appropriate**? Is it addressing a gap, problem or issue from a needs assessment or other means.

McDavid, Huse, and Hawthorn, 2013



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TRUE or FALSE

Collecting data to evaluate or review programs can verify if the program is operating as planned

TRUE: Are you doing what you think you are doing? Plans change as you put them into place. Data can verify how the program is operating.



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Key Program Review or Evaluation Questions

4. Is the program **implemented** as intended?
5. Is the program **technically efficient**?



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Assessing Implementation and Technically Efficient

- Reviewing program components EX; Inclusive postsecondary education programs
- The activities and outputs from those activities
- Reviewing or comparing inputs with outputs to determine productivity of the program or costs (how can it be sustained)



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TRUE or FALSE: Collecting and using data is a highly complex process

FALSE: We need to consider what information is needed to make decisions about the program issues or needs



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Key Program Review or Evaluation Questions

6. Is the program responsible for the outcomes that actually occurred (**effectiveness**)?
7. Did the program achieve its intended outcomes/objectives (**effectiveness**)?
8. Is the program **cost-effective**?
9. Is the program **cost beneficial**?
10. Is the program **adequate**?



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Let's Take a Look at An Example



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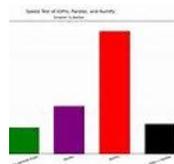
So . . . What Data Do You Collect?

- It depends . . . on what information you need to make your decisions, to answer your questions, and on your available resources



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Analyzing and Using the Data

- Summarize the data
- Show it in usable visualizations – tables, charts
- Look at patterns
- Consider the strengths and limitations



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THANK YOU!

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