

Evaluating Your *VOLUNTEER PROGRAM*

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Objectives:

- 1. Increase knowledge of the steps to evaluating a volunteer program.**
- 2. Increase ability to plan how to evaluate a volunteer program.**
- 3. Develop next steps for improving current evaluation of volunteer program.**

Evaluation

- ✿ What's the point?
 - ▣ Lends credibility to your agency
 - ▣ Helps fundraise from individuals
 - ▣ Use for grant-writing purposes
 - ▣ Helps retain volunteers
 - ▣ Better serve your mission

Steps to Evaluating a Volunteer Program

STEP 1: Decide What to Track

STEP 2: Collect Data

STEP 3: Turn Data into Findings

STEP 4: Use Findings

The Importance of Evaluation

Imagine you are managing a Neighborhood Watch volunteer program in which residents volunteer to patrol the neighborhood.

Now fast forward 5 years from now. You are at the podium in front of 1,500 people, including your boss, your boss's boss, and some of the most influential people in the country.

You are reporting on your Neighborhood Watch volunteer program. **Looking back over the past five years, what do you want to be able to say?**

The Evaluation Grid

INPUTS

The *resources* used to meet your volunteer program goals, such as time, money, materials, etc.

Inputs also include service providers, the program setting, community factors, collaborations, service technology, funding sources, and participants.

The Evaluation Grid

OBJECTIVES

Can be set for three areas: **community/beneficiaries, organization, and volunteers.**

Objectives define what you are trying to achieve.

The Evaluation Grid

ACTIVITIES

Process information that are descriptions about what happens day-to-day to carry out the program.

These are the **methods used to accomplish program goals** (i.e, classes, workshops, counseling sessions, group outings, assessments).

The Evaluation Grid

OUTPUTS

The **results** of your efforts. The units produced by a program.

Units include **dose** (i.e., # of classes), **duration**, and **number of participants**.

The Evaluation Grid

OUTCOMES

Short-term meaningful changes that may or may not hold up over time.

Immediate steps of progress toward a goal.

The Evaluation Grid

IMPACTS

Show what has changed for the better because of your program.

Meaningful long-term changes.

STEP 1: Decide What to Track

Track

- What your program aims to achieve for the **community**.
- What your program aims to achieve for your **organization**.
- What your program aims to achieve for your **volunteers**.

Activity

- ✦ Using the Volunteer Program Evaluation Plan worksheet, complete Step 1 for your program.
- ✦ Select an **output, outcome, or impact** that you would like to measure but currently don't.
- ✦ You'll have 5 minutes for this.

STEP 2: Collect Data

2.1 Select Indicators

2.2 Select Methods

2.3 Obtain Data

STEP 2.1: Select Indicator

An indicator is a specific item that will represent the level or degree to which a process measure, output, outcome, or impact occurred.

STEP 2.2: Select Methods

- ❑ **Existing Records**
- ❑ **Focus Groups**
- ❑ **Interviews**
- ❑ **Observations**
- ❑ **Portfolio/Journal Assessment**
- ❑ **Tests**
- ❑ **Written Surveys**

Existing Records

- ❏ **Existing information collected by other agencies and institutions**
- ❏ **Provide both descriptive and evaluative information**
- ❏ **Used to track changes in quantifiable behaviors**

Interviews

A series of questions, semi-structured or unstructured, conducted in person or over the phone.

Use when you want in-depth information or when investigating a sensitive topic.

Observations

First-hand observation of interactions and events

Use pre-determined protocol or observations guides to focus the information you gather

When to use

- When self-report or existing data is not accurate
- When professional judgment is helpful

Surveys

Instruments that contain questions about the issues to be evaluated.

Types of Questions

- Single, direct questions (closed ended)
- Series of questions about the same topic (scale)
- Open ended questions

Surveys

How to conduct the survey

- By mail
- In person
- Over the phone or internet
- In a centralized activity as part of an event

Types of Surveys

- Standardized
- Self developed

Sampling Strategy and Sample Size

- ❑ **If under 100, survey the total population**
- ❑ **If over 100, survey a sample population**
 - Large & representative enough so results reflect the entire population
 - Probability Sampling: Assign a number to each client and draw numbers at random or select people at equal intervals (every third person)

STEP 2.2: Select Methods

Advantages	<i>Existing Records</i>	Focus Groups	Interviews	Observation	Portfolio/ Journal	Tests	Written surveys
Anonymous	✓					✓	✓
Cost-effective	✓					✓	✓
Easily administered	✓					✓	✓
Generalizable			✓	✓		✓	✓
Quantitative			✓	✓		✓	✓
Probing (allows)		✓	✓				
Rich data (collects)		✓	✓		✓		

2.3 Obtain Data

- **With the methods you have chosen, conduct data collection.**

STEP 3: Turn Data into Findings

- **Aggregate Data**
- **Analyze Data**
 - Quantitative
 - Qualitative

Activity

- ✦ Using the Volunteer Program Evaluation Plan worksheet, complete Steps 2 and 3 for your program.
- ✦ Write down your data collection method or methods and who will aggregate and analyze your data.
- ✦ You'll have 5 minutes for this.

STEP 4: Use Findings

Report Findings

- Select the best format for audience & message
- Provide basic information on how data were collected
- Express only one idea per graph (if used)
- Use both qualitative and quantitative data
- Do not over-interpret results

Apply Findings

Thank You for Coming

Please complete an evaluation of all of the workshops.

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