



Evaluating Program Effectiveness: Planning Guide

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Introduction

Purpose of This Guide

This planning guide is a tool for participants of the 2018 National Reporting System (NRS) Regional Training. As a participant, you will use this guide to deepen your understanding of training content and apply information learned at the workshop to develop and implement a state evaluation system. The guide describes each step in the process of developing or revising an evaluation system, offers examples, and provides a template for your state team to draft your own evaluation plan. The completed planning guide will serve as the main reference document for your team in planning or revising your state evaluation system after the training ends.

Purpose of the 2018 NRS Regional Training

At the training, your state team will develop or improve a system for evaluating local program performance to identify areas in need of improvement and improve overall state performance. To develop an evaluation system, your state team will:

- Explore the purposes and approaches to evaluation.
- Identify state priorities that define effective performance.
- Select data elements and approaches to collecting data for the evaluation.
- Determine how to use evaluation data to improve state performance.
- Develop a plan for a statewide performance evaluation system.

Why We Evaluate Program Effectiveness

There are several reasons to use a state evaluation system for evaluating program effectiveness. The evaluation may help a state identify and focus on (1) areas of concern at the local level, (2) performance and policy implementation issues, or (3) areas for continuous program improvement. Along with the face-to-face training, this guide will help your state think through the process of establishing or revising an evaluation system. An evaluation system should be an ongoing process to evaluate a specific programmatic change.

You probably do some kind of program evaluation already. If so, you can use the approach we offer to identify areas you might strengthen or redesign. If you do not currently conduct evaluation activities or want to improve your current process, our approach provides guidance on the areas to examine and steps to take. Although there are several other ways to plan and conduct an evaluation, below are five main elements to include as you develop or revise your system. This guide will address each element.

1. Define the purpose and scope of the evaluation.
2. Design the evaluation.
3. Develop a data collection and analysis plan.
4. Collect and analyze the data.
5. Use the results and close the loop.



Part I: Getting Started: Define the Purpose and Scope of the Evaluation

Before you begin creating or revising your evaluation system, you need to determine what you want to know and why you want to know it. What do you hope to learn from your program evaluation?

Begin with establishing the purpose of your evaluation. An evaluation system will have several topics and goals and may include examining:

- The types and numbers of **participants**;
- The **services** offered by the program, including instruction and supportive services; and
- The **outcomes** that participants achieve.

Keep in mind that you will want your evaluation to be responsive to performance and policy issues. As such, your evaluation may focus on multiple topics and change over time to reflect the implementation of your improvement strategies. The following table provides examples of possible topics that address your participants, services, and outcomes.

| Participants | Services | Outcomes |
|--|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate target population • Participant coverage from all areas of the state or program regions • Sufficient demographic and literacy-level diversity • Identify gaps—Who is missing? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Meet recruitment goals | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services match participant needs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Right services to right participants • Sufficient intensity and duration • Gaps in services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Types of classes – Job training—Integrated Education and Training – Support service needs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting targets on indicators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Measurable skill gains (MSG), employment, and credentials • Types of MSGs achieved <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Educational Functioning Levels (EFLs) and secondary credential targets • Pre-/post-test gains <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – EFL gains – Sufficient posttesting |

In selecting your topic or topics that you will focus your evaluation on, consider what you want to know about each. The following questions may spark some ideas:

- Are we including the appropriate population of learners?
- Are we addressing the needs of learners across the entire state and regions?
- Is there sufficient demographic and literacy-level diversity among our participants?
- What are the gaps in participation (i.e., Who are we missing? And are we meeting our recruitment goals?)?
- Do our programs offer adequate diversity of programming to meet the needs of our learners, in terms of content, logistics, and other factors?
- Are classes offered of sufficient intensity and duration to support our students to reach their goals?
- Are we meeting our targets for measurable skill gains (MSG), employment, and credentials? Where are we failing to meet our targets?
- Are programs providing the right assessments at the right time for all students?

Activity: Determining Your State’s Topic, Goal, and Scope

Your first step is to identify the topic or topics your evaluation will address as well as the intended goal and scope for your evaluation.

Step 1: Identify your topic(s)

Think about your local programs in terms of participants, services, and outcomes. Note the highest priority concerns you have, starting with the two to three topics that your evaluation system may examine.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Step 2: Identify issues and goals

For each topic identified in Step 1, describe the issue or problem and the goal of the evaluation activity in the appropriate column in the following table.

| Topic | Issue/Problem | Goal | Scope |
|-------|---------------|------|-------|
| 1. | | | |
| 2. | | | |
| 3. | | | |

Step 3: Establish the scope for each topic

Based on Step 2, identify whether your evaluation will cover all or a subset of participants, services, or outcomes for each topic. Add this information in the table above in the column labeled “Scope.”

Part II: Design Your Evaluation: Using a Logic Model and Identifying Data

Evaluation logic models are used to plan evaluation and the flow of activities in your evaluation system. Logic models are powerful tools for understanding the relationship between activities, resources, and outcomes. Logic models have many uses—program design, management, and evaluation are most common. There are many ways to organize a logic model and they can be very complex. Different models emphasize different components depending on their purpose. However, all approaches have the same underlying concepts.

Using a Logic Model

A completed logic model is a visual representation showing how activities affect outcomes in a logical sequence. Logic models consist of the following sections:

- **Topic and goals:** What you are evaluating and what you want to accomplish
- **Inputs** (program resources): What the program has. Examples include:
 - Teachers, staff, and funding to address the topic
- **Outputs** (activities and audience): What the program does with its inputs and who participates in activities. Examples include:
 - Training, webinars, and written resources for administrators, teachers, and students
- **Outcomes** (short term, intermediate, and long term): Results of activities, changes, and impact, immediately and in the future. Examples include:
 - Short term—skills development and learning gains
 - Intermediate—obtain secondary diploma, enter postsecondary education, or get a job
 - Long term—gain credentials, complete college, or enter a career path with competitive wages
- **Assumptions and external factors:**
 - Assumptions are ideas and beliefs you think are true that affect the outcomes.
 - External events or conditions are activities or situations that you cannot control and may support or impede the outcomes.

Following is a logic model in table form with the elements in sequential order. We will use this simple logic model design for the NRS 2018 Regional Training. (See p. 15 for a blank copy of the logic model template.)

| INPUTS | OUTPUTS | | OUTCOMES | | |
|---|--|---|--|---|-----------|
| | Activities | Participants | Short-Term | Intermediate | Long-Term |
| Inputs are resources used by the program. | Activities are what the program does with its inputs to fulfill its mission. | Participants refer to clients/ customers reached by program. | Outcomes are the results of your program. They are the changes that take place during or after the program for individuals, groups, communities, or organizations. These changes can take place over the short-term, intermediate, or long-term. Long-term outcomes are sometimes referred to as Impacts . | | |
| | | | | | |
| Examples: program staff, funding, time, external partners, materials | Examples: events, informational materials, products, workshops, trainings, conferences, exhibits, curricula | | Examples of short/intermediate-term outcomes: knowledge, attitudes, awareness, opinions, skills, behavior | Examples of long-term outcomes: educational, environmental quality, or human health improvements | |
| | | | | | |

| ASSUMPTIONS | EXTERNAL FACTORS |
|---|--|
| <p>Assumptions are the principles, ideas, or beliefs you hold and what you understand to be true and effective about your services.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. | <p>External factors are things or situations that may support or impede success.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. 4. |

Sample Logic Models

Below are two examples of completed logic models based on adult education evaluation goals.

Logic Model for Improving Integrated Education and Training (IET) Participation and Outcomes

Topic or Problem:

Enrollment, contact hours, and employment outcomes for IET participants are below our state’s targets.

Goal:

Improve participation in IET and increase employment of IET participants to meet the state target.

| INPUTS | OUTPUTS | | OUTCOMES | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|--------------|----------------------|---|--------------------------|
| | Activities | Participants | Short-Term | Intermediate | Long-Term |
| Funding for IET programs | Number of classes taken | Students | Higher skill gains | More participants advance in jobs | Reduced unemployment |
| Teachers trained in IET instruction | Contact hours received | | Higher job placement | Higher wages | Higher skilled workforce |
| Providers of IET instruction | Other training services received | | | Greater employer satisfaction (e.g., repeat business) | |
| Relationships with employers | Professional development on IET instruction, using materials, program design | Teachers | | | |

| ASSUMPTIONS | EXTERNAL FACTORS |
|---|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Instructional approach is effective 2. Jobs are available in targeted occupation 3. Participants have skills to benefit from instruction | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Unemployment rate in community 2. Employers are available and willing to participate |

Logic Model for Increasing Enrollment of Higher Level Participants

Topic or Problem:

Enrollment of higher level ABE and ESL participants is below the state's targets.

Goal:

Increase enrollment in levels 4-6 of ABE and ESL participation.

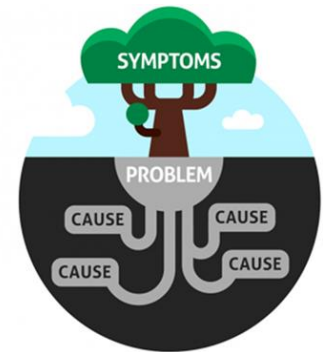
| INPUTS | OUTPUTS | | OUTCOMES | | |
|---|--|---------------|---|--------------------------------------|---|
| | Activities | Participants | Short-Term | Intermediate | Long-Term |
| Funding for recruitment efforts | Increase advertisement of program | Students | Higher enrollment of levels 4-6 | More participants enter job training | Higher educated population in the community |
| Recruitment outreach staff | Provide recruitment materials to other service providers | | More participants obtain secondary credentials | | Reduced unemployment |
| Relationships with partners for referrals | Provide information on adult education services to provider partners | Partner staff | More participants enter postsecondary education | | |

| ASSUMPTIONS | EXTERNAL FACTORS |
|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Potential participants will pay attention to messages 2. Partners will cooperate with recruitment efforts and identify appropriate participants 3. Participants have the motivation to benefit from instruction | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There are enough higher-level students in the community needing adult education |

Root Cause Analysis

In planning the evaluation, you should spend time determining the root causes of the outcomes that you see. A root cause analysis is a deconstruction process to identify all the resources, activities, and audiences that may affect outcomes. It helps pinpoint causes and solutions, and suggests changes needed to improve outcomes.

What is meant by “root cause”? The root cause is the fundamental reason for the occurrence of a problem. If you can determine the root cause of your issues, it will help you select the appropriate measures and responses. Deconstruction is a process of uncovering the underlying issues through a process of asking questions. This exercise will help you identify the outputs in your logic model and suggest where to make changes once the evaluation is complete.



Below is an example of a root cause analysis in an adult education program.

Root Cause Analysis Example

Problem #1:

We are not serving the target population.

Questions to Deconstruct the Problem:

- Were staff informed about the target audience for services? What methods were used to inform them/disseminate the information?
- Was the message clear to the different stakeholders (e.g., was appropriate language used for staff, students, and the community)?
- How frequently was the information about services shared with potential students?
- Are we doing enough to prepare staff to meet the need? What evidence do you have that we are or are not?
- Does our schedule allow for maximum participation by the target audience?

Activity: Problem—Root Cause Analysis

Based on the previous topic(s) you identified, describe the program problem that you want to analyze or address. Using the space below, list the key questions you should ask to deconstruct this program problem and get at its root cause. Next to each question in the table, identify:

- How and where you would find the answers to these questions, and
- The potential or anticipated outputs.

Repeat the process for a program problem related to your previously identified topic(s).

1. **Topic area:** _____

Program problem: _____

| Questions | How/Where to Find Answers | Outputs |
|-----------|---------------------------|---------|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

2. **Topic area:** _____

Program problem: _____

| Questions | How/Where to Find Answers | Outputs |
|-----------|---------------------------|---------|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

Developing Your Logic Model

You have already begun to develop your logic model! You have identified your topics and goals, and, based on those topics, you have identified specific program or process problems that you want to address. Keep in mind that you do not have to start with inputs and end with outputs as you develop your logic model. Some people find it helpful to begin with outcomes and work backward to inputs. However, it is very important to develop a complete logic model that is specific to your topic and goal. The more complete and accurate the model, the better your planning and evaluation will be.

It is important to identify all the important relationships of activities to outcomes, assumptions, and external factors. You may find it helpful to include multiple stakeholders outside your state team, who may have a different perspective to contribute.

After determining topics and goals, two major components of your logic model are the inputs and outputs. Both components should be logically connected to each other and, in turn, connected to outcomes. Identifying the inputs and outputs will allow you to plan important changes in your program to achieve the outcomes. After you know the results of the evaluation, going back to the inputs and outputs will help you identify what worked and what did not in achieving (or failing to achieve) your goal.

Inputs

Inputs are all the resources you have that affect the program area you are evaluating. Resources might include funding for the program, teachers and staff, equipment you might need, technology, and other materials. Even the physical environment, such as classroom space, might be listed as a resource if it affects the outcomes.

If your goal is to improve EFL gains by pre- and post-testing, for example, you would consider all the resources related to testing. These might include the type and number of staff who administer tests, the professional development they and other staff receive, the types of assessments your program uses, the method of entering test scores into and retrieving them from the state database, and your state's assessment policy governing pre- and post-testing. Identifying these resources informs you of what you might change when planning to achieve the goal and what to review after outcomes are collected to assess what worked.

Outputs

Outputs is another name for the activities the program conducts that affect the outcomes and participants. A good logic model will include *all* the pertinent activities related to the outcomes. Outputs are often the most critical part of the logic model because they are directly related to the outcomes. As with inputs, identifying all the relevant outputs helps both with planning and interpreting the results of the evaluation. Outputs will guide you in making changes based on the outcomes of the evaluation.

Depending on your topic and goal, outputs could include activities such as recruitment, intake, assessment, instruction, class arrangements, and professional development. The process of determining relevant activities also includes describing the audience of people who conduct or are the target of the activities. If the activities are focused on the wrong audience, for example, the activities will be ineffective in changing the outcomes. For example, professional development on improving

instruction to realize EFL gains must reach the right teachers who can help students achieve skills. The root cause analysis discussed in this guide is an effective method for identifying outputs.

Outcomes

Outcomes are the results you expect the program to achieve. Stated another way, outcomes occur because of the inputs and outputs. Outcomes must be measurable and stated in terms of change or improvement. For example, in evaluating improvement in EFL gains, you could identify a desired outcome as a 20% increase in EFL-level gains. Programs can affect these outcomes, which are measurable. On the other hand, an outcome to build students' feelings of empowerment, although a desirable goal, is not a good outcome for a logic model. It is not directly measurable and the program may have little ability to affect this outcome directly.

Your logic model should include short-term, intermediate, and long-term outcomes. Short-term outcomes are what you expect to happen immediately or in a short amount of time as a direct result of the inputs and outputs. Intermediate outcomes are what you expect to occur later and are related to short-term outcomes. An evaluation may include these outcomes for strategic planning; for example, when it is necessary to understand outcomes related to activities over time.

Intermediate and short-term outcomes will progress or build up to long-term outcomes. However, program staff may have little direct control over the long-term outcomes and may not want to include them as part of the evaluation, unless they are evaluating the program from a longitudinal perspective. However, stating long-term outcomes may help situate activities and program outcomes in a broader context and time frame, which may be helpful when working with stakeholders who want to understand the value of investment in the program over time.

Activity: Develop Your Logic Model

Create your draft logic model using the table below. Complete each section as fully as possible.

Topic or Problem:

Goal:

| INPUTS | OUTPUTS | | OUTCOMES | | |
|--------|------------|--------------|------------|--------------|-----------|
| | Activities | Participants | Short-Term | Intermediate | Long-Term |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |

| ASSUMPTIONS | EXTERNAL FACTORS |
|-------------|------------------|
| 1. | 1. |
| 2. | 2. |
| 3. | 3. |

Evaluation Data Sources

Now you have a logic model that includes your topic and goal, inputs (resources), outputs (activities), and outcomes. The next step in the evaluation planning process is to match each of these components to a source of data. You need data for outcomes to evaluate whether the goal has been achieved, and for outputs to ensure that the activities have been performed and to determine how they have been implemented. You likely already collect much of these data, especially for outcomes. Data on activities may be more difficult to obtain and you may find you do not currently collect them at all, in which case you may consider new ways to collect these data.

Identifying Data Quality, Sources, and Needs

There are several sources of data that programs already have that can be used in an evaluation system. These include data from local program monitoring, such as desk monitoring and on-site visits. Most program data systems include a wealth of data that can be mined for evaluation. You can find data in your existing management information system (MIS) data reports and data dashboards. Data should be measurable. Examples of measurable outcome data are test scores, attendance hours, number of participants served, and number of outcomes achieved. Most programs already collect many measures likely to be used in the evaluation, such as the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) indicators.

Output data may be more difficult to measure, and often programs do not collect this information systematically. Output data measure activities, such as type of instruction and curriculum offered, class schedules, teacher qualifications, professional development offered, and student motivation and attitudes. Often these data are not quantitative, which can add to the challenge of collecting and analyzing them.

Data Quality

As you identify which data you will need to collect as reflected in the logic model, you may discover that you have a data quality problem that makes the data unusable. Poor data quality prohibits accurate understanding and often leads to false conclusions. Causes of poor data quality include large amounts of missing data (such as incomplete attendance data), inconsistency in data collection, and different measures being used by different programs in the state; for example, when programs use different tests or collect attendance in different ways. Other causes of poor data quality might be technical problems with the state database, such as errors in data entry and lack of sufficient error checking in the state system, as well as misunderstanding of data definitions. When examining your data needs, assess the quality of your data.

Activity: Identifying Your Data Quality, Sources, and Needs

Available Data Sources

In the table below, identify the data you have available, whether you think there are problems with data quality, and how you may use these data for program evaluation.

| Available data | Problems with data quality? | How have you used these data for program evaluation? |
|----------------|-----------------------------|--|
| 1. | | |
| 2. | | |
| 3. | | |
| 4. | | |
| 5. | | |
| 6. | | |
| 7. | | |

Data Coverage

If you do not have the data you need for your evaluation because their quality is poor, they cannot be used in the form in which they were collected, or you do not currently collect the data for an activity or outcome, you have a data coverage problem. To resolve this problem, consider additional ways to collect what you need. The additional data will provide the data you need to understand how activities (outputs) affect the outcomes.

There are several sources and methods for collecting additional data. Which data sources you choose will depend on the cost of collecting data, the complexity of the measurement, and timeliness—when and how often you need the data. The solution may be to add new elements to your data system, such as different categories of participant or provider characteristics. Often, in evaluations you may need to create new data collection tools, such as a survey or observation guide, or revise tools you already use. For example, you may need to collect additional information through the state’s on-site monitoring tools or other document review guides. You may need to collect new information from students through interviews and focus groups. If you need data about your community or state, there are many existing data sources that are useful. The census or American Community Survey data can give you information about the characteristics of people in your community. Labor market data for employment-related evaluations or data about the skills and training needs of the community can help with recruitment and planning. Data from surveys or research in adult education and participants can serve as another data source.

Using your logic model, determine the following information as it relates to your current data sources and needs. Complete the following table.

| Available data for outputs and outcomes | Source(s) of data | How will you collect these data? | Are the data of sufficient quality? | Do you need to supplement with additional data? | If data are not available, how will you collect them? |
|---|-------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| 1. | | | | | |
| 2. | | | | | |
| 3. | | | | | |
| 4. | | | | | |
| 5. | | | | | |
| 6. | | | | | |
| 7. | | | | | |
| 8. | | | | | |

Part III: Procedural Plan: Collection and Analysis

You will need to develop a formal evaluation plan to include in your data collection and analysis process. The following are key steps to take in developing this plan:

1. Match data needs to your logic model.
 - a. Address the topic.
 - b. Identify data sources for activities and outcomes (*refer to the activity on pp. 15–16*).
2. Identify the programs or services to cover in the plan (*refer to the activity on p. 3*).
 - a. All programs
 - b. Subsets of programs or participants
3. Determine a timeline for collecting data.
4. Assign staff responsibilities.
5. Specify analysis and use of findings.

You have already completed Steps 1 and 2 in previous sections. Steps 3–5 are described below.

Timeline

You will need to set a timeline for all activities within your evaluation plan. Your timeline should include all activities for observation and data collection, considering multiple collections as well as when you will need all information. Remember to allow sufficient time for change to be observed. Note in your timeline instances of ongoing data collection, including how frequently you will collect and review data (e.g., monthly, bimonthly, quarterly). Your timeline also should indicate when data will be reviewed, such as after an intervention is implemented or at the end of the program year.

When building your timeline, work with your staff to identify all steps of the evaluation process and ensure that they are included. It may be helpful to consult prior studies or evaluations for guidance and consider standards already in place or commonly accepted practices. Other considerations when determining your timeline should include:

- Staff and resources—Are staff at both the state and program levels available when needed?
- Anticipate problems—Building in extra time to account for unexpected issues is helpful.

Keep in mind that things rarely go exactly according to plan. It is important to anticipate challenges, but also to be flexible (and prepared) enough to change your plan according to developing needs.

Assigning Staff

As part of your evaluation plan, you will identify staff who are responsible for the various elements in your evaluation and assign person(s) to complete each item. Review your logic model activities and outcomes, and identify staff who will (1) collect data, (2) review and analyze data, (3) monitor problems, and (4) provide feedback to program staff.

Analysis and Use of Findings

The final section of your evaluation plan should detail how you will use the results of your evaluation. How will you use the data collected and what will you do with the findings? Be clear about how you will proceed after the evaluation. Using your logic model as a guide, consider your identified audiences and explain who will use the data and results of the evaluation.

After you have answered your evaluation questions to address the topic and program problem, consider how you will use those data to develop a plan for program improvement. Your program improvement plan should specifically address the issue and topic you wanted to address with your evaluation. We will discuss further how to analyze and use your findings in Part V of this guide.

Activity: Develop Your Data Collection and Analysis Plan

Review your data needs identified in the previous section and determine if you need to make any changes. Did you miss anything in the logic model? Do you need to add and collect additional measures? Revise your logic model if needed and complete the following worksheet.

Use the table below to list each data element and data collection activity within your evaluation, according to your logic model. Determine when the activity should occur (this may be general, such as monthly or annually, or more specific if you have the information now) and assign staff who will be responsible for completing the activity.

| Data Element or Activity | Timeline When Data Are Collected and Reviewed | Staff Responsible |
|--------------------------|---|-------------------|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
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| | | |
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| | | |

Next, consider how you expect to use your findings. In the table below, indicate how you plan to use the findings of your evaluation and the audience you will communicate with about those findings. Identify each data element, the audience, and planned use.

| Data Element or Activity | Planned Use of the Findings | Audience |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|----------|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
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| | | |
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Part IV: Defining Effectiveness: Setting the Standards and Incentives

When conducting an evaluation, you must address the issue of how to define effective performance. A data point by itself is objective and takes on a value only when you set a standard for quality to it. That is, you define what is “good enough” or high quality. For example, if a program has an average MSG of 40%, you cannot determine whether that reflects good or poor performance without setting a criterion or performance standard. A performance standard is a numeric target assigned to a measure that defines an acceptable level of performance. The performance standard serves as a goal, and often a reward or sanction is tied to it as a motivator for the program in achieving that goal. In evaluation, standards help you determine what programs are effective and what needs improvement. There are four main models for setting standards, each reflecting different policy goals and having a different potential impact on programs.

Four Models for Setting Standards



1. *Continuous Improvement*—Designed to make all programs improve compared with themselves. Used when you want program quality to improve for all programs.
2. *Relative Ranking*—Used for relatively stable measures, where median performance is acceptable. Used when state policy is set for a more uniform level of quality across programs.
3. *External Criteria*—Promotes adoption of a policy goal to achieve a uniform higher standard of performance. Used when moving programs toward a broad, overarching goal.
4. *Return on Investment*—Provides information on whether services are worth the monetary or resource investment. Used when the state wants a cost-benefit approach.

| Continuous Improvement | Relative Ranking | External Criteria | Return on Investment |
|--|---|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Want the program performance to improve for every program. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Want a more uniform level of performance across programs. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Want to move programs toward a broad overarching goal. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Want to consider the cost benefit of what programs are doing. |

Activity: Reflect on Your Model With Your State Team

Think about your evaluation plan and consider the following questions with your state team. Use the space below to record your discussion.

Which of the above models or combination of models have you used within your state to set standards for your programs? Why?

Do you use different models for different programs? Different models for different measures or goals?

Which model(s) would be most effective for your topic? Why?

Spend some time developing your standards for that topic and list them below.

Activity: Reflect on Incentives With Your State Team

With your state team, use the following questions to think about the role that incentives will play in your evaluation plan. Use the spaces below to record your discussion.

What rewards or incentives do you use in your state? Are they effective? How do you know?

Look again at your logic model. Where could rewards or incentives come into play in your evaluation plan? Which ones will you include?

How do you communicate the rewards or incentives that are available to your programs?

Activity: Learning From Other States

What rewards or incentives might you try as part of your evaluation plan?

Part V: Using the Results: Close the Loop

An often-overlooked step in designing an evaluation is determining what you will do with the findings, including identifying the stakeholders and staff with whom you will share the data and information you learn from the evaluation. Communicating with your stakeholders is an end step, but you may want to address it at the start of your evaluation planning. For example, you might need to show your state agency director or the public how your programs are performing, either to gain their support and funding or to help you identify program improvement needs.

Determine what you want to communicate in advance to promote understanding about what will help program staff and other stakeholders learn what is going well (or not) for whom and under what conditions. Devise ways to convey the results so that you can use the data for continuous improvement.

The following are guiding steps for what happens next with the information you have gathered and how you can close the loop on establishing your program evaluation system.

- **Review your logic model.**
 - Assess success toward your goal.
 - Review inputs and outputs.
 - Review assumptions and external impacts.
- **Review your process.**
- **Identify how it will inform your program in the future.**
- **Communicate with your stakeholders.**

Activity: Close the Loop

In state teams, looking at your logic model and evaluation plan, consider the following:

- Identify what you want to communicate about your evaluation and why.
 - Identify what your stakeholders would be interested in knowing about the evaluation.
 - Describe how you will collect feedback from stakeholders and what role will it have in your next steps.
1. Select at least one input, output, and outcome, and develop a potential question for each that your evaluation may be able to answer. You can use the extra lines for additional responses.

Example

| Logic Model Element | Questions |
|---|---|
| Input: Employer relationships Number of providers | Were more employers involved in Integrated Education and Training (IET) in our state? Did we get more IET providers? |
| Output: Professional development for teachers Student participation | Were more teachers trained on our IET instructional model? Did participants attend more hours of IET instruction? |
| Outcome: Increase in employment | What factors worked (or did not) in achieving greater employment? |

| Logic Model Element | Questions |
|---------------------|-----------|
| Input: | |
| Output: | |
| Outcome: | |
| | |
| | |
| | |

2. Pick one stakeholder group to communicate the results of your evaluation. Identify items to share about the evaluation with this stakeholder and why it is important to share with this group.

Example

| |
|---|
| Stakeholder Group: <u>Employers</u> |
| Information to share: Our Integrated Education and Training instruction is effective and helps produce a stronger workforce and better trained employees for you. |
| Reasoning: By improving our teaching and recruiting more programs and students to participate, we achieved a higher level of employment—xx% of students get a credential and xx% become employed. |

| |
|--|
| Stakeholder Group: _____ |
| Information to share: |
| Reasoning: |