

Presenting Data

Secondary Data Overview

Reporting evaluation results may:

- Increase understanding of a program's achievements and areas for improvement
- Help with future decision-making
- Offer examples and practices that can be studied and adopted by other organizations
- Meet the reporting requirements for funders
- Strengthen fundraising activities
- Influence individual's knowledge and attitudes about a topic
- Provide information that is useful to policy-makers
- Identify future questions and areas of exploration
- Bolster marketing and promotion

The only way to achieve those goals is to report your findings in way that is accessible and understandable to your intended audience.

In some cases, evaluation results are not fully understood or applied because they were not reported satisfactorily. For example, the detailed written report you created for your current funders is likely not an adequate format to entice future sponsors. Similarly, the poster you developed for middle-school students is probably not appropriate for a state oversight committee.

Evaluation Results Reporting Tools

Communication works best if you customize the scope and format of your reporting tool(s) to your intended audience.

- Full written report: A comprehensive written report may include graphs and tables and is usually intended for program stakeholders who have devoted resources to the program or evaluation. It will likely include the following:
 - o Executive summary
 - o Program background
 - o Goals of the evaluation
 - o Evaluation design and methodology of data collection
 - o Results
 - o Interpretation of the data and discussion of outcomes
 - o Limitations of the study
 - o Conclusions and recommendations
- Oral presentation: An oral report's structure and content will be different for different audiences. It is of utmost importance to engage the listener. Using Microsoft® PowerPoint® or an audience polling system are strategies that could make the presentation more engaging. Topics can include the following:
 - o Reasons for the evaluation
 - o Importance to the audience
 - o Background of the program
 - o Key findings
 - o Conclusions and recommendations

- Open discussion
- Written Summary: This concise report is written for a specific target audience. Written summaries tend to include a concise written list of key methods and findings. Examples of summarized reports include the following:
 - One-page handout for a potential funder or an advocacy organization
 - Executive summary for a state agency
 - Short summary of key statistics to be placed on a website
- Poster or visual brochure: The scope of this reporting tool varies greatly depending on the intended audience and where it will be available. Posters and visual brochures are designed to be eye-catching and may have less written content and more graphics. Some examples include the following:
 - One-page illustrated brochure for the media or a potential funder
 - Poster with achievement highlights for participants
 - Brochure with key findings, conclusion and recommendations for community members
 - Poster to present at a conference
- A press release can vary from one paragraph to a few pages. It should be a concise summary that is ready to easily put into a newspaper story or news broadcast. A press release may include:
 - Only a couple of key points
 - Highlights from the results
 - Prepared talking points
 - Links to a full report so reporters can gather more information if needed

A presentation may include a variety of elements. For instance, a package you send to the media may contain a press release and illustrated brochures.