

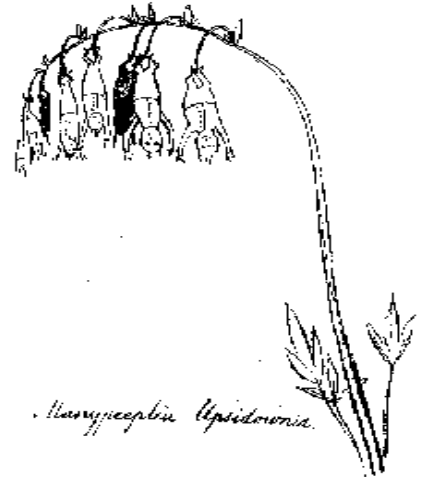


Reduce Evaluation Measurement

A county agent asked: How can I avoid evaluating my clients to death?

One strategy is to reduce the need for frequent data collection.

Defining 'a program' as the implementation of a group of events or activities that cover topics in an in-depth way over a period of time like a year or more, consider the following evaluation strategy. Before the program is implemented, sample a representative group of the target audience with a baseline survey on topics in your program objectives that cover that period of time. Deliver the program. Then, instead of evaluating every event, activity, newsletter or video, wait until the end of the program and go back to the original sample of the target audience (or take another random sample) and determine which changes relate to your program objectives.



One obvious benefit of this strategy is that you and the participants are relieved of ongoing evaluation procedures, creating more time for the program itself. Another benefit, knowing at an early stage in the program cycle the topics on which the target audience needs more work, will allow you to concentrate on them in more depth. Such an evaluation strategy is very timely at the beginning of a new Plan of Work.

Discuss this strategy with specialists and discuss it with other agents conducting similar programs. If the programs have similar educational objectives, your colleagues may be excited by your interest, perceive similar benefits and collaborate with you.

Keep in mind that this strategy will require specific program objectives to guide the selection of topics for the baseline survey and the identification of names (and addresses or telephone numbers) of a representative sample of the target audience, but the benefits in the quality of the focus in your program should outweigh this need for early planning.

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