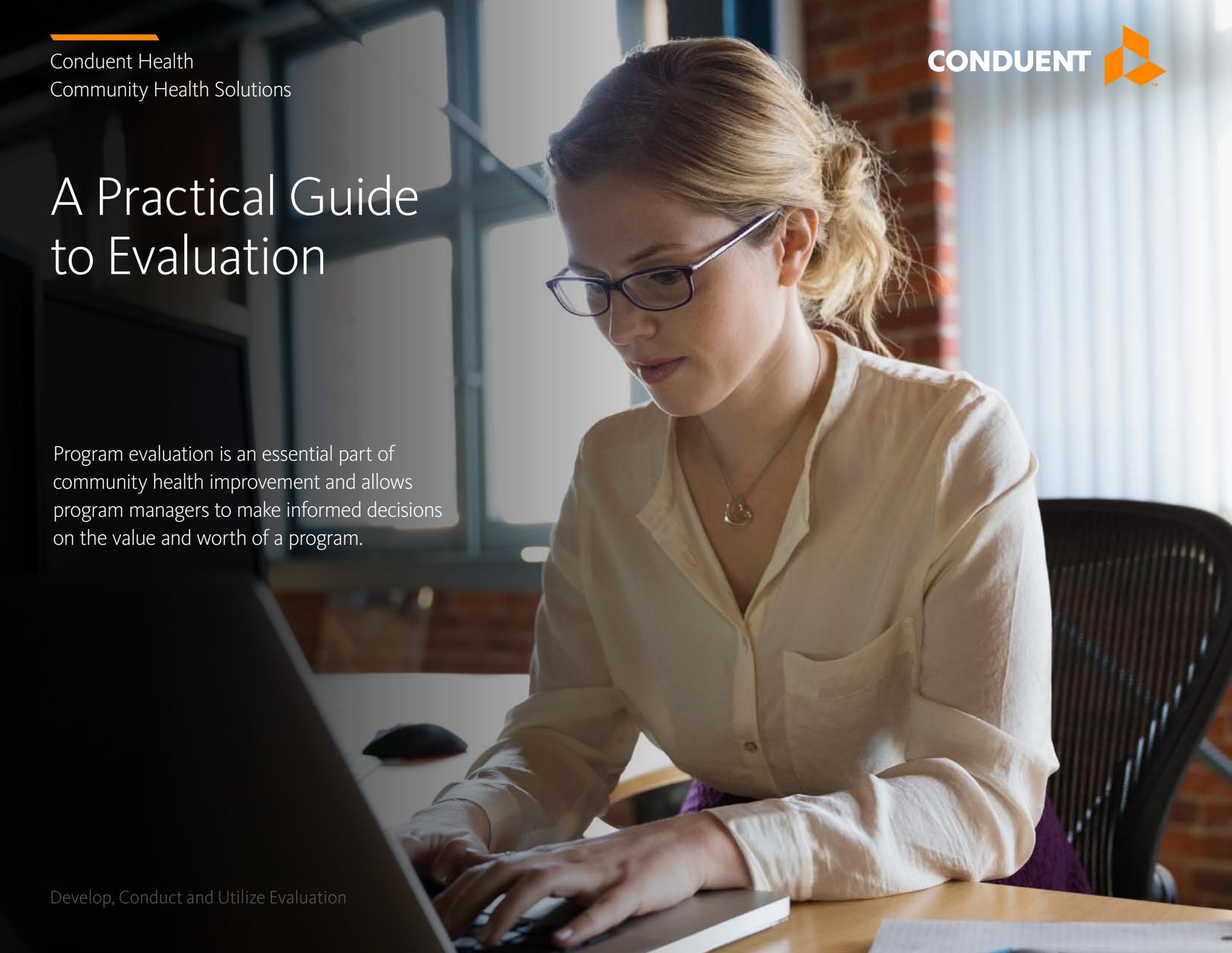


# A Practical Guide to Evaluation

Program evaluation is an essential part of community health improvement and allows program managers to make informed decisions on the value and worth of a program.



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# Why Evaluate?

- Identify opportunities for quality improvement or scaling up,
- Monitor progress toward program goals,
- Justify a need for increased funding,
- Check whether program activities are producing desired progress on outcomes,
- Meet regulatory requirements or a funder's request,
- And more!

## **Quick Tip**

Many stakeholders, including program participants, funders, policymakers, and executive leadership, are interested in the results of an evaluation. Engaging them early on in an evaluation plan increases the likelihood of the evaluation being useful.

# The Six Steps to Program Evaluation



## Engage

- Pick a Team
- Identify and Engage Stakeholders
- Scope the Evaluation



## Describe

- Develop Program Description
- Flesh Out the Framework



## Design

- Select Evaluation Type
- Determine Questions
- Pick Evaluation Design



## Gather

- Develop Measures, Indicators or Metrics
- Identify Data Collection Methods and Sources
- Create Logistics and Protocols to Collect Data
- Collect and Manage Data



## Justify

- Analyze and Synthesize the Data
- Interpret Findings & Draw Conclusions



## Share

- Develop a Communications Plan
- Create Media and Share Your Results
- Use Your Evaluation Findings

# Step 1: Engage

## Create a Team and Engage Stakeholders

Who will conduct the evaluation?

Evaluations can be carried out by a range of individuals or groups with different skills and expertise.

An effective way to coordinate evaluation activities is to have an evaluation team and to appoint a team lead. The team lead need not be an evaluation expert to plan and conduct the evaluation, as long as they are competent at coordination and can seek out help with specific tasks.



# Step 1: Engage

## Create a Team and Engage Stakeholders



### A. Pick a Team

Make sure to consider the following in selecting a team, and look to external evaluation support as needed to fill any gaps:

- Skills and knowledge in evaluation, program/ topic area, data collection/management, and local context
- Credibility among stakeholders
- Staff workload
- The type of data you might need to collect
- Funding
- Timelines, resources, and purpose of the evaluation



### B. Engage Stakeholders

**Identify** – Anyone who may be interested in the evaluation's findings can be considered a stakeholder

**Engage** – Reach out to individual stakeholders or representatives through formal or informal meetings

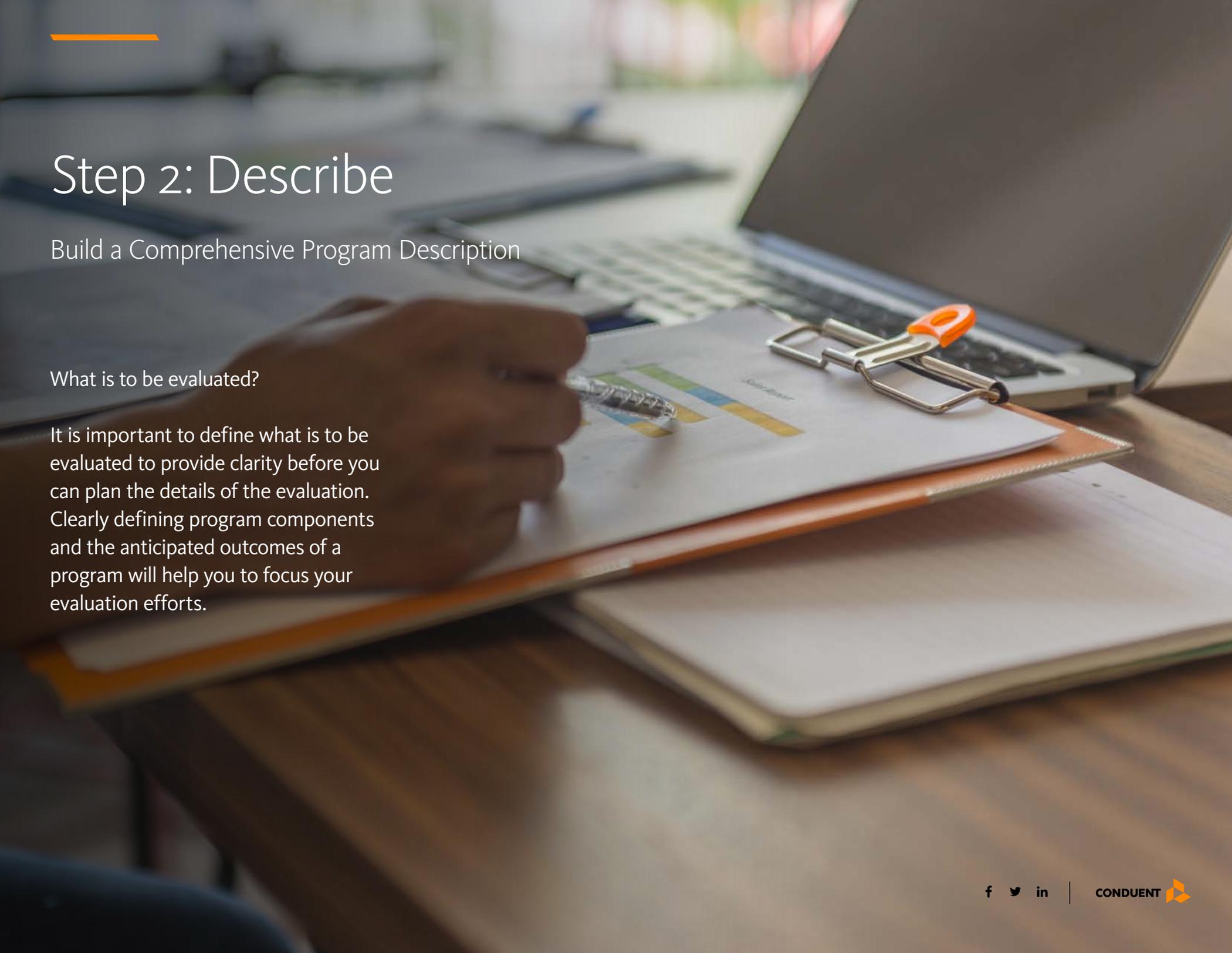
**Plan** – Develop a plan for stakeholder involvement and target stakeholders for participation at key steps



### C. Scope the Evaluation

Once you have selected the team and lead evaluator, the group should reach consensus around:

- Purpose of the evaluation (i.e., effectiveness, efficiency, etc.)
- Approach to evaluation (i.e., return on investment, participatory, developmental, case study, etc.)
- Division of responsibilities (i.e., define roles and management processes in a TOR, MOU, SOW, etc.)
- Resources available and budget commitment
- Timeline (i.e., clear timeframes, deliverables, and milestones)



## Step 2: Describe

### Build a Comprehensive Program Description

What is to be evaluated?

It is important to define what is to be evaluated to provide clarity before you can plan the details of the evaluation. Clearly defining program components and the anticipated outcomes of a program will help you to focus your evaluation efforts.

# Step 2: Describe

## Build a Comprehensive Program Description



### A. Develop Program Description

An initial program description can be shown to various stakeholders to identify disagreements or gaps in information. An overview should include:

**Need:** What issues does the program address and for whom?

**Context:** What stage of development is the program in?

**Resources / Inputs:** What funding and staffing requirements will the program need to be successful?

**Outcomes:** What does the program aim to change?

**Activities:** What needs to be done to create the change?

**Outputs:** What will be the direct results of the program activities?



### B. Flesh Out the Framework

An evaluation framework provides structure in establishing causal pathways. The typical framework used is a logic model. You can convert your program description into a logic model and elaborate as needed, following the example below:

Inputs →	Outputs →		Outcomes		
	Activities	Participation	Short	Medium	Long
Resources and other investments Staff, Materials, Funding, Time, Etc.	What We Do	Who Participates	Short-Term Results	Medium-Term Results	Long-Term Results (Impact)
			Changes in knowledge, attitudes, and behavior, or even system and environment changes and health outcomes		

A framework should help you depict the relationship between a program’s activities and its intended outcomes – or why you think this program should work!

Source: [www.fyi.uwex.edu/programdevelopment/logic-models/](http://www.fyi.uwex.edu/programdevelopment/logic-models/)



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## Step 3: Design

Hone Evaluation Focus and Select the Appropriate Evaluation Design

What is evaluation design?

Depending on the purpose and objectives that the evaluation team and stakeholders have worked together to define, select an evaluation type and determine appropriate evaluation questions that you'd like to answer. The evaluation type and questions will help you pick an evaluation design to meet your purpose and objectives.

# Step 3: Design

## Hone Evaluation Focus and Select the Appropriate Evaluation Design



### A. Select Evaluation Type

**Impact:** Identify a program's effectiveness in reaching overall goals

**Effectiveness/Outcome:** Assess progress on the outcomes of a program

**Implementation/Process:** Determine whether a program has been implemented as intended

**Formative:** Seek to establish whether a program will be feasible, appropriate, and acceptable before it is implemented



### B. Determine Questions

Based on your agreed upon objectives, evaluation questions can be selected. Determine your evaluation questions as early as possible in order to plan the most effective timing of data collection.

#### Possible Evaluation Questions:

- What did the program carry out?
- Was the program implemented as intended?
- Did the program have the intended results?
- Were social and physical conditions improved?
- Was the program efficient?
- Does the benefit of the program's outcomes exceed the cost?

# Step 3: Design

## Hone Evaluation Focus and Select the Appropriate Evaluation Design



### C. Pick Your Design

Traditional program evaluation design typically uses observational or quasi-experimental designs. Some considerations for determining the best design for your evaluation include usability/feasibility, reliability/validity, ethics, and cost.

#### Experimental Designs:

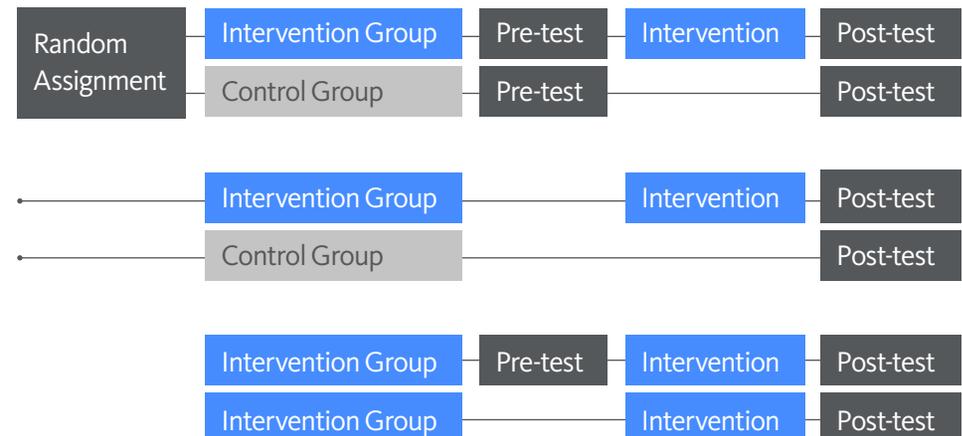
One or more groups are randomly assigned to an intervention and an equivalent group that does not receive the intervention for comparison in outcomes.

#### Quasi-Experimental Designs:

Similar to experimental design but lacking random assignment into control or intervention and may lack pre-test.

#### Observational Designs:

Lack a control group and include both time-series analysis and case studies.



Source: [www.toolkit.pellinstitute.org/evaluation-guide/plan-budget/choose-an-evaluation-design/](http://www.toolkit.pellinstitute.org/evaluation-guide/plan-budget/choose-an-evaluation-design/)



# Step 4: Gather

Gather Evidence to Answer  
Your Evaluation Questions

What is an indicator?

Indicators are specific, observable, measurable metrics that should answer your evaluation questions. Other characteristics of good indicators include validity, reliability, and timeliness. Where possible, use standardized indicators if they are available.

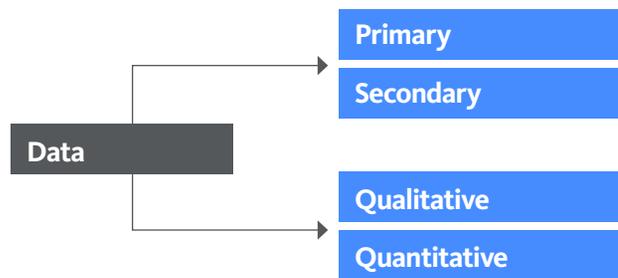
# Step 4: Gather

## Gather Evidence to Answer Your Evaluation Questions



### A. Develop Indicators

Indicators may already be defined or they may need to be developed. Common examples for evaluation indicators include participation rates, attitudes, behaviors, and incidence or prevalence.



#### Tip

Look for indicators that are:

- Available
- Accurate
- Relevant
- Easily Obtained
- Regularly Updated

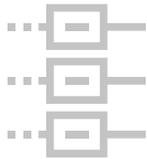


### B. Identify Sources

Different indicators come from different data sources, such as registration forms, training logs, new or existing survey data, interview transcripts, medical records, or administrative and program records.

# Step 4: Gather

## Gather Evidence to Answer Your Evaluation Questions



### C. Create Logistics & Protocols

Clear procedures will help with gathering data and better prepare you for analysis.

- How and when will you collect or retrieve data from the different data sources?
- If new data collection instruments are to be designed, who will create them, establish data collection procedures, and train data collectors?
- Who is responsible for organizing, storing, and managing the quality of the data?
- How will data be securely stored?

#### Example Evaluation

Methods & Collection Matrix:

Evaluation Question	Indicators	Data Sources	Methods	Timing, Duration, & Frequency of Data Collection	Analyses	Person Responsible



### D. Collect & Manage Data

After developing a system for data collection, it's time to execute your evaluation plan.

Track and organize your data as you go, being sure to protect confidentiality of the data as you handle and store it. Check in periodically to reflect on what's working and what could be improved, and review the quality of the data you're gathering.

Think back to your evaluation purpose and design – is this data still the most appropriate to use?

# Step 5: Justify

## Analyze the Data and Justify Your Conclusions

### What is data analysis?

Data analysis is the process of examining, organizing, and classifying data so as to tabulate, summarize, and compare the results with other appropriate information. The goal is to present and display these findings to stakeholders in a visually appealing and easy to understand manner.



# Step 5: Justify

## Analyze the Data and Justify Your Conclusions



### **B. Interpret Findings and Draw Conclusions**

Benchmarks and other standards are useful for determining how your program is performing. When interpreting the results, consider larger contextual or cultural issues. Try to identify both strengths and challenges, as well as any limitations of the evaluation.

Think of the practical significance and utility or application of findings that can help modify or strengthen program activities.



# Step 6: Share

Communicate the Results of Your Evaluation and Use Them to Improve Upon Your Efforts

Why share your evaluation results?

By communicating the results of your evaluation, you share your progress, including successes and learned lessons, to stakeholders, community members, and other relevant audiences.

Sharing with your stakeholders and community members keeps them engaged and increases the likelihood of more success, participation and funding down the line.

# Step 6: Share

Communicate the Results of Your Evaluation and Use Them to Improve Upon Your Efforts



## A. Develop a Communications Plan

### Consider some basic questions:

- What is the purpose of sharing your results?
  - Do community stakeholders want to learn about your progress?
  - Do your funders have any reporting requirements?
- Who is the target audience(s)?
- What is your message?
- How would you like to communicate it?
- How will you actually distribute it?
  - What is your timeframe?
  - What format would you like the results to be in?



## B. Create Media and Share Your Results

Identify which type of content is needed to reach your target groups and assign people to develop them.

Disseminate information through appropriate methods such as mailings, web sites, community forums, listservs, and media.

You can utilize online venues, such as your website or the HCI platform, to share findings and engage stakeholders. Get in touch with whoever manages your local platform to publish your evaluation results.

**Need more ideas to share your evaluation results?** Check out the Communications Tools located in the HCI Help Center for more information.



## C. Use Your Evaluation Findings

**As a result of the evaluation, there may be recommendations for actions to consider.**

You can utilize the evaluation findings to adjust program activities or guide decisions about future program implementation.

Findings might also help you advocate for your efforts with potential funders. Further, your findings can contribute to the knowledge base of what works and does not work in your program area. There might be both positive and negative implications of potential results so be mindful of your stakeholders when crafting your message.

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## Conduent Community Health Solutions

As hospitals, health systems, public health departments and community-based health improvement collaboratives focus on more efficient paths to better outcomes, it is especially critical to think beyond “defined” population health management, where the focus is on individuals. Understanding risk factors within a community can help you implement evidence-based programs to meet the health needs of specific populations and geographies.

Learn more at [www.conduent.com/community-population-health](http://www.conduent.com/community-population-health)

Contact us at [communityhealth@conduent.com](mailto:communityhealth@conduent.com) or 866.499.6423