

## **Component for Module 370**

### **Evaluating a Curriculum-based Program or Service**

#### **PURPOSE**

One of the essential elements of every curriculum-based program/service is evaluation. The purpose of this component plan is to help the interpreter think through the development of a tool to evaluate his/her curriculum-based program.

#### **OBJECTIVES**

Upon completion of this component the learner will be able to:

- Articulate the role evaluation plays in the development of a curriculum-based program;
- Describe the process and rationale for the type of evaluation tool developed; and
- Create an evaluation tool for the program/service developed.

#### **APPROACH**

Understanding the role that program evaluation plays in an effective curriculum-based program/service is key to developing an effective evaluation tool. Program evaluation assesses the program's structure as well as its strengths and weaknesses. To develop the evaluation tool, the interpreter needs to have basic understanding of the role of evaluation in the development process. The three key evaluation questions provide a structure to understand the why, what, and so what of evaluation tools. An explanation of different types of evaluation data collection tools provides the interpreter with examples to assist with the development of the tool.

#### **CONTENT OUTLINE**

##### **I. What is program evaluation?**

Program evaluation is

- Systematic effort to develop information
- Designed to create understanding of processes and contexts,
- Helps the interpreter discover the strengths and weaknesses
- Helps produce reasoned judgments about the quality of program/service
- Assists with decision making
- Informs new efforts

Program evaluation is NOT

- A performance audit
- A way to point out only the weaknesses
- A way to point out only the strengths

##### **II. Key Evaluation Questions**

- help you structure your evaluation to:

- know why you are conducting the evaluation
- figure out exactly what you want to know (specific information)
- decide how you will use the information collected (improve program, marketing, funding, etc.)

#### The Three Evaluation Questions to ask and answer

- What is the purpose of the evaluation?
- What do you want to know?
- How will you use this information?

### III. Different types of evaluation forms

- Group Leader Feedback – A short set of written questions that can easily be answered by the teacher or organized group leader and provides information from that point of view
- Presenter Feedback – A structured form that gives all presenters an opportunity to assess their program in a way that the data can be viewed across programs.
- Student Feedback – *Caution: written forms that all students are asked to complete are viewed in the same way as visitor surveys and require OMB approval.*
- Observations – Single or multiple observations require a format that allows the programs to be assessed using a set of criteria developed for that purpose.
- Focus Groups – A discussion among teachers, staff, developers, etc. that uses a standard set of questions about the program. Usually, focus groups contain 6-12 participants, last about 60 minutes and look at three areas of concern or issues.

### IV. Additional Tips for Successful Tool Development

- Length – keep the form short enough so people will be willing to complete it but long enough to provide needed data
- Types of questions:
  - Yes/No – easy to answer but do not always provide enough information
  - Open-ended – take longer to complete; provide additional information; don't use too many on the form
  - Likert Scale – strongly disagree to strongly agree; scale of 1 – 5; good for attitude or opinion questions
  - Multiple choice
  - Writing the questions
  - Carefully word the questions so that you are not leading the participant to a particular question
  - Pilot test the questions so that participants interpret them in similar ways
  - Administer Tool
  - Figure out best time for administering tool
  - Send it out ahead of time is helpful
  - Give instrument at the end of program/service
  - Provide a stamped envelope for return
  - Let people know that you will be providing an evaluation tool