

# Challenges to program evaluation?

A beginners guide

## What is evaluation

This is the second in a set of handouts on challenges to program evaluation. This is about a second major challenge in program evaluation:

### *Getting information useful to you*

An evaluation may include recommendations, but they may not be useful to the program.

Possible causes are that the evaluator does not fully understand the program or has different ideas about what may be important. So, in the end, “evaluation findings might be ignored, criticized, or resisted because they do not address the stakeholders' questions or values.”

Getting useful results requires that the people involved in the program be involved in all stages of the evaluation.

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**Based on, and quoted from:**

Engaging Stakeholders

<http://www.cdc.gov/eval/steps.htm#stakeholders>

From CDC Evaluation Working Group

## What is evaluation

Those involved in the program include:

- ✓ Those involved in program operations (e.g., sponsors, collaborators, coalition partners, funding officials, administrators, managers, and staff)
- ✓ Those served or affected by the program (e.g., clients, family members, neighborhood organizations, academic institutions, elected officials, advocacy groups, professional associations, skeptics, opponents, and staff of related or competing organizations)
- ✓ Primary users of the evaluation (e.g., the specific persons who are in a position to do or decide something regarding the program.)

A successful evaluation will designate ... users early in its development and maintain frequent interaction with them so that the evaluation addresses their values and satisfies their unique information needs.

### All of the above quoted from:

Engaging Stakeholders

<http://www.cdc.gov/eval/steps.htm#stakeholders>

From CDC Evaluation Working Group

## What is evaluation

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I also benefited greatly from feedback from folks on various email lists, and I thank them all!

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