

Choosing Evaluation Activities



HELPFUL PROMPTS FOR DEVELOPING PLAN COMPONENTS

1. **Starting with the objective and plan type, what steps need to happen to get decision makers or the population of interest to take the desired action?**
 - a. **What is the issue? Document the scope of the problem.**
 - i. What information already exists?
 - ii. Is it current, accurate, local, and specific to the population of interest?
 - iii. What information still needs to be collected/examined? These will be the components of the project's evaluation activities.
 - b. **Who needs to hear/see the issue? (Educate key players/actors)**
 - i. Learn how they frame/prioritize the issue and discover what type/amount/source of evidence will be convincing. Find out concerns of those with the power to create the change desired (e.g., elected officials or their staff; decision makers for voluntary policies) through key informant interviews with the decision makers.
 - ii. Identify and/or assess constituents, allies, opponents/critics, community thought leaders, decision makers, and gatekeepers. This happens during community-based strategic planning session, utilizing the Midwest Academy Strategy Chart as a guide to build the plan.
 - iii. Explore the best way to frame the issue. Projects may need focus groups, public opinion polling, public intercept surveys, or key informant interviews with community leaders to explore and identify the best options to move forward.
 - c. **How can projects build/mobilize a groundswell of support?**
 - i. Engage the community and affected stakeholders. This will be done through a variety of intervention activities such as educational presentations, trainings, paid and earned media, collaborations with other organizations and interest groups, and community-led advocacy activities.
 - ii. Utilize and support project assets (coalition, advisory board, campaign committees, volunteers, alliances) to carry out activities. Incorporate collaboration activities as needed into the plan. Ensure appropriate time is planned for relationship building, training, and collaboration. Include partners as responsible parties for scope of work activities.
 - d. **How can projects make their case/exert leverage?**
 - i. What forms of outreach/communication/public acts will spread the message? Based on the evaluation findings, engage assets to conduct information sharing, public education (often through presentations and town halls), tailored decision maker education (e.g., one-on-one meetings, presentations), paid and earned media campaign tactics, social media outreach, engagement tactics (e.g., petitioning, sending letters of support, or making phone calls to

decision makers), and providing decision makers and their staff with necessary technical assistance support.

- 2. Confirm and document the actions taken**
 - a. Build in evaluation activities such as observations, public opinion surveys, policy record review, and/or interviews that capture what happened and with what effect.
- 3. Share the path/process with contributors, stakeholders, and the broader tobacco control field**
 - a. Each objective requires a written evaluation report at the end of the funding period for writing the report which summarizes the project's efforts. These reports are commonly referred to as Final Evaluation Reports or Brief Evaluation Reports.
 - b. After a policy objective has been met or failed in a jurisdiction, such as at a mid-point of the funding period, a review process and report can help summarize lessons learned to be applied to future work in other jurisdictions.
 - c. Strongly consider building in modes for sharing (and celebrating/making sense of) evaluation results in real time throughout the workplan with all of these actors.
- 4. Document decisions made along the way. This will make it easier to write the evaluation narrative summary once the plan is fully fleshed out.**