Looking for Lift in Final Evaluation Reports

by Robin Kipke

Final Evaluation Reports. When enough descriptive detail is included and linkages are made between key elements, a report can lift readers high enough so they see the bigger picture of what happened as a project worked to achieve an objective. But when there are gaps either in logic or facts, the document can fall somewhat flat, rather like a deflated balloon which can't quite get off the ground.
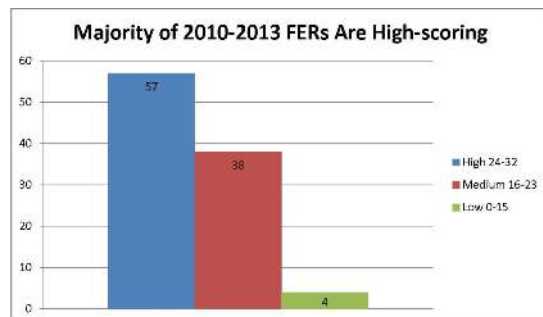

Scores and feedback from Tobacco Control Evaluation Center (TCEC) reviewers pinpoint where your report filled its "sails" with enough context and rationale and where holes in your story left unanswered questions in the minds of readers. After spending all that effort to write the report, it's worth knowing if it is doing an effective job of relating what your project achieved. The last thing you want is to leave room for critics to discount your findings!

Photos by: Bob Jagendorf

Using the rubric in *Tell Your Story,* most reports were rated by one of two TCEC reviewers. However, to ensure that reviewers adhered to the scoring rubric consistently across time, 25% of the reports were double-scored by both reviewers. In the rare case where there was a difference of more than two points between reviewers, the scores were discussed and reconciled. Only final evaluation reports for primary objectives were reviewed by TCEC; brief evaluation reports were looked at by program consultants, but not by the Evaluation Center.

Of the 99 reports submitted, 57 received a "high" score (24-32 points), 38 received a "medium" score (16-23 points) and 4 received a "low" (0-15 points). Of the reports local lead agencies submitted, scores ranged from 0-31, averaging 23.4 points. Reports from competitive grantees ranged from 16-31, averaging 24.4 points.

By now all project directors should have received email notification that their Final Evaluation Reports have been scored and are ready for viewing. To see the feedback and scores from Tobacco Control Evaluation Center reviewers, in OTIS go to the link for each of your project's primary objectives and select Progress Reports on the left side bar, then Final Evaluation Reports, then View and View Ratings.

Our hope is that project directors will sit down with their evaluator to go over the feedback and discuss how future reports might be improved. Sometimes an outside perspective can reveal things that weren't otherwise apparent at the time of writing.