1

What Is Evaluation?

SCENARIO ONE

The administration at Grandview Retirement and Nursing Facility strongly promotes ongoing education and training for all staff. In fact, when new personnel are hired, they agree to take two courses each year, selected from a long list of possible courses decided upon by administration and staff. Topics are many and diverse, from the law and patient rights to medication in geriatric care to the mind-body connection. Two of the recent training programs were devoted to answering these questions: (1) Is there a connection between mental and physical activity and sustained good health and longevity? (2) How do you encourage residents to stay both mentally and physically active? Program and nursing staff alike found the answer to the first question compelling: activity is indeed linked to well-being and longevity (Wells, 1997). They decided to institute additional programs for residents that would involve mental and physical activity.

Coincidentally, a volunteer had been coming to the retirement and nursing facility for about six months to work with interested residents in an informal gardening program. The volunteer, Ruth, discovered that one of the things the residents missed most when they left their homes was their gardening. The activity helped them regain what they had enjoyed and gave them a real opportunity for mental and physical engagement. The facility had a limited budget, so Ruth made her own in-kind donations.

From the beginning, however, the activity was extremely popular and she knew that available resources would not be sufficient to serve all the people who wanted to take part in the program. Ruth volunteered to look for funds, a grant that would allow Grandview to continue and enlarge the program. The administrators said they would be delighted if she would do the legwork, but of course they would need to know exactly what she was doing along the way so that they could keep their board of directors apprised.

A short while later Ruth discovered that the Beed Foundation funded this kind of program and she got their grant application. One of the first items she saw on the application asked for an evaluation of the program. The items in the evaluation question included listing program objectives (for example, to increase residents' activity and mobility level) and listing measurements (both quantitative and qualitative) that would be used as indicators of achievement of those objectives. Ruth later learned that a quantitative measure might be the number of times residents took part in the gardening activities before the onset of the funded program compared to how many at the end of the program. A qualitative measure might be perceptions of garden activity staff regarding the focus and mood of residents.

The grant also called for explaining data collection methods, a discussion of any sampling that would be done, a description of the evaluation design, the data analysis that would occur, the staffing, and the final report.

Although she was puzzled about most of the items, Ruth hoped that subsequent meetings and discussions with the staff would answer her questions. She needed some basic questions answered first: Why do programs need to be evaluated? What is evaluation? What are you looking for when you evaluate a program? How is this different from research?

Unlike Ruth, readers of this book will not have to wait to have these questions answered. You just need to read Chapter One. After reading this chapter, you should be able to answer the following questions as they relate to the preceding scenario as well as to the chapter material:

1. What do all evaluations have in common?
2. How would you characterize the differences in the efficiency, effectiveness, and impact of a program?
3. Why evaluate in the first place?

Common Denominators

Before we embark on a definition of evaluation, we need to answer the volunteer's question. How does program evaluation differ from research? Unlike evaluation, research takes place in a precisely controlled environment. The Grandview gardening program could not comply with this definition. Among a number of other important reasons that we will discuss in Chapters Five and Eight, Grandview's project staff could not precisely control—nor would they want to—the number and choice of participants. In addition, research collects data to stretch the envelope of what is known in order to prove or disprove a hypothesis or presupposition. Evaluation looks at program and project objectives and asks whether they have been achieved, judges the worth of ongoing programs, decides upon the usefulness of new programs or projects, and so forth (Rossi and Freeman, 1993).

In both for-profit and nonprofit organizations, managers possess data (information) that could help to evaluate a program or project. These data are the one thing that all evaluations have in common regardless of the particular definition of evaluation one embraces: evaluation is the systematic process of collecting data that help identify the strengths and weaknesses of a program or project. The data may be as simple as records of attendance at training sessions or as complex as test scores showing the impact of a new educational program on increasing students' knowledge across an entire school system.

Whatever definition you apply to evaluation, when your task is to perform a program evaluation you will almost certainly include a number of common evaluation steps. You will find these listed as program cycles in the Putting It All Together section later in this chapter.

Two Definitions of Evaluation

People do not always agree on one definition of evaluation. Following are two different definitions:

- Evaluation is the systematic process of collecting and analyzing data in order to determine whether and to what degree objectives have been or are being achieved.
- Evaluation is the systematic process of collecting and analyzing data in order to make a decision.

Notice that the first ten words in each definition are the same. However, the reasons—the why—for collecting and analyzing the data reflect a notable difference in the philosophies behind each definition. The first reflects a philosophy that as an evaluator, you are interested in knowing only if something worked, that is, whether it was effective in doing what it was supposed to do. The second statement reflects the philosophy that evaluation makes claims on the value of something in relation to the overall operation of a program, project, or event. Indeed, many experts agree that an evaluation should not only assess program results but also identify ways to improve the program evaluated (Wholey, Hatry, and Newcomer, 1994). A program may be effective but of limited value to the client or sponsor. One can imagine, however, using an evaluation to make a decision (the second definition) even if a program has reached its objectives (the first definition). Federal grants are based on the first statement, that is, whether the program has achieved its objectives, but the harder decision to downsize or change may be a consequence of the second definition of evaluation.

Evaluating Efficiency, Effectiveness, and Impact

We can define evaluation even more precisely as a process that is guided by the reason for doing the evaluation in the first place. An evaluation might be a process of examining a training program in light of values or standards for the purpose of making certain decisions about the efficiency, effectiveness, or impact of the program. To carry out this task, you need to understand the concepts of efficiency, effectiveness, and impact. These three terms will be referred to from this point on as the levels of program evaluation. (See Table 1.1 later in this chapter.)

Efficiency relates to an analysis of the costs—dollars, people, time, facilities, materials, and so forth—that are expended as part of a program in comparison to either their benefits or effectiveness. How is efficiency, or the competence with which a program is carried out, measured in a program? The term itself gives clues to what this is about.

Program monitors look at the efficiency with which details are carried out in a program. Programs often begin with recruiting, gathering materials, providing for space, setting up fiscal procedures, and so forth. Thus the relationship between the costs and end products becomes the focus of an efficiency evaluation. Although very important, these aspects of efficiency may have no bearing on the program's effectiveness. If the investment in the program or project exceeds the returns, there may be little or no efficiency.

For example, let's consider a nuclear power facility that houses a rather substantial training and staff development enterprise. As part of this enterprise, ten instructors are responsible for ensuring that five hundred employees are cycled through training every six months, for a minimum of twenty hours of training each cycle. The training revisits the employees' basic knowledge of their jobs and introduces new concepts developed since the last training. The staff development enterprise might work very efficiently by making sure that all employees cycle through in a timely fashion, in small enough groups to utilize the best of what we know about how adults learn. The students' time on task is often not enough, however, and many of them do not retain much of what was covered in the training. Thus the program is not effective.

The enterprise may be efficient in that it fully utilizes the time of each of the available trainers, it stays within the parameters of the staff development budget, it keeps employee down time to a minimum, it uses materials and equipment that are available, and it completes the training agenda for the company. Yet there may be an increase in accidents or hazardous incidents because employees are making simple, basic mistakes. The enterprise's training has been efficient but not necessarily effective.

When you look at the effectiveness of your program, you are asking this question: "Did the activities do what they were supposed to do?" Simply put, a program's effectiveness is measured in terms of substantive changes in knowledge, attitudes, or skills on the part of a program's clients. Although the right number of participants may have been recruited and the best possible site may have been secured, the effectiveness test is this: Did the activities provide the skills to run the new equipment? Did the participants gain the knowledge they need to sell the new mortgage or other banking product?

In another example, the same nuclear power plant's staff development program may conduct a training session on a new procedure to decontaminate after entering a containment area. The trainer may pretest all the employees as they begin their training session. Upon completion, the employees are posttested and the results compared to determine whether their knowledge increased, decreased, or stayed the same. An increase in their knowledge would be an indication that the training was effective—it did what it was supposed to do. Yet two weeks after the training, when one of the employees was back at her job post, a situation arose in which she exited a hazardous area after spending some time checking water flow. She used the older, more comfortable procedure for decontamination and caused a problem that put her and her coworkers at risk. Here is an example of training that was effective—the worker passed all the posttests—but had little impact on changing the behavior of the employee.

Thus the impact that the program has had on the people or organization for which it was planned becomes an important evaluation consideration. Impact evaluation examines whether and to what extent long-term and sustained changes occur in a target population. Has the program or project brought about these desired changes? Are employees using the new procedures? And in other scenarios: Are more people off welfare? Has the program changed a family's life? Do your employees have more job satisfaction?

Evaluators frequently pay too little attention to assessing impact. One reason is that impacts often manifest themselves over time, and program managers have already turned their attention elsewhere before computing this aspect of the evaluation. The actual impact that training in new procedures might have in people's everyday life often takes time to percolate and evolve. An attempt to collect impact data after allowing for this delay may run into a number of blocks, such as learner turnover (you cannot find them), job or circumstance change (they no longer need to use the skills), or lack of time or resources for the evaluator to conduct these follow-up activities.

Still, program and project sponsors are most interested in impacts. Whether a learner feels satisfied with the training, or the training results in knowledge gain means little to a sponsor or employer if the learning doesn't help the organization.

Evaluating Alternatives

The second philosophical statement that defines evaluation presents it as the process of delineating, obtaining, and providing useful information for the purpose of selecting among alternatives. Thus it may not matter whether the program was efficiently conducted, effective, or had an impact on behavior or functions. Instead, the value of the evaluation is in its being able to compare one activity to another, one program to another, or one employee to another so that decisions can be made in the presence of empirically collected data. Search committees perform this kind of evaluation. In the course of their work, they describe job candidates' strengths, outline previous experiences, and acquire other useful information that makes it possible to choose among a number of candidates. A company planning to adopt and purchase a computer system will perform this kind of evaluation on all the systems it is considering. It will select the one that performs the best given the company's needs and resources.

Identifying Areas to Improve

Finally, there is a third way of defining evaluation as the identification of discrepancies between where a program is currently and where it would like to be. For example, an organization's marketing department may have as one of its goals at least one face-to-face visit with customers per year. Currently, its sales force sees fewer than half the customers in a year. Records of face-to-face calls indicate the discrepancy between where XYZ Corporation is currently and where the organization wants to be.

Personnel evaluations often take on this definition as well. A new employee's first evaluation may be an example of the first definition, that is, an evaluation against some minimal standard of performance. After this initial evaluation, certain performance goals are set for the employee, either mutually or by the supervisor or team. The next and all the subsequent evaluations of that employee are compared with those performance goals or standards. The discrepancies are identified and remediation strategies are developed.

Each of the individuals identified here who have some interest in or ownership of the evaluation are stakeholders in the organization being evaluated. As such, they have a specific focus on what is evaluated and a particular expectation of how they might use evaluation results. Project directors and project managers might focus their attention on how efficiently the project activities are performed and the effectiveness of these activities in reaching predetermined goals and objectives. Project staff (teachers, trainers, counselors, human resource workers, line staff, and volunteers) might focus their attention on how effective the project activities have been in achieving the short-term objectives of their clients and the impact of the activities in sustaining long-term changes in the client. Parent institution administrators and management might focus their attention on the impact of project activities on any significant changes in how the organization functions and the fundamental products of the organization.

Consequently, each of the stakeholders has specific responsibilities before, during, and after the evaluation. Project managers and directors need to determine what aspects of the project *must* be evaluated as stipulated by funding sources, accreditation requirements, or strategic plans. They also need to identify aspects of the project that should be evaluated to assist them in determining what (or who) is working, not working, no longer needed, and in need of updating. Also, it is usually their responsibility to appoint or hire the evaluator based upon that person's (or agency's) experience, capability, and reputation.

Project staff need to assist in helping the project managers and evaluator in identifying those aspects of the project that should be evaluated that would result in answers for them to improve their practice and product. Also, staff need to assist in data collection both during and after the project cycle to assure that data are collected in a consistent, rigorous, and relevant manner. They act as the reality filter for evaluators to communicate which data collection practices and instruments are realistic given the work being performed.

Organization administrators need to establish a credible atmosphere for the evaluation. They must communicate to all parties involved that the evaluation activities are meaningful, important, and necessary. This means that from the outset they have to get people to understand that the evaluation is not a punitive exercise, but one that will provide important insights to improving the operation of the organization. This sense of improvement must be maintained throughout the evaluation by informing those involved, making changes if activities have been identified as in need of change, and encouraging staff to use interim evaluation findings to improve their practice. At the end of the program cycle, they must *use* the evaluation findings to alter or maintain project operations, instead of just filing the report or forwarding it to the project sponsor.

Other Levels

There are other levels of evaluation as defined by Kirkpatrick (1994; 2009). These levels refer to the eventual use of the evaluation data and who might make use of the results. Kirkpatrick's four levels of evaluation are as follows:

Level 1, Reaction: Participant impressions

Level 2, Learning: Learning acquired

Level 3, Behavior: Application of the learning

Level 4, Results: Extent that targeted outcomes occur for the company, agency, or school system

In level 1 you are examining the perceptions of individuals who were directly involved as clients of your program. You are interested in their perceptions of how they benefited from the program, what they thought of the program activities, and how they might use what they gained from the program. Program staff will be particularly interested in this level because the feedback will tell them how their efforts are being perceived and used.

In level 2 you are measuring the effectiveness of the program in doing what it set out to do. At this stage you usually compare a set of standards—criteria, goals, or objectives—with the actual results. You might perform pretesting and posttesting of clients to ascertain their change, or, to see the benefits of program participation, compare one group who received the activities of the program with a group who did not. Here you measure the extent to which individuals acquired the knowledge, skills, and attitudes originally projected. Program staff and sponsors will be particularly interested in the results of this level of evaluation.

In level 3 you are attempting to discover the overall impact of the program on clients: Did the program change their long-term behavior, attitudes, or performance? Were the changes observed in the level 2 evaluation sustainable over time? To what degree did they apply what they learned? Sponsors, program staff, and clients will be interested in this level of evaluation.

In level 4 you want to determine the extent to which the parent institution (sponsor) benefited from the program. Here you examine whether targeted outcomes have resulted due to the activities examined under the first three levels. Here your focus shifts from the relative benefit to the client to the relative benefit to the sponsor. To gauge efficiency, you need to determine whether the program's outcome warranted the sponsor's expenditure of resources. To gauge effectiveness, you are investigating whether the productivity of a certain group of employees increased. And to gauge impact, you need to discover whether the program changed the performance, the product, or the image of the sponsor. By addressing these macro concerns at this level of evaluation, you enable decision makers to see more clearly what programs do to help their parent institution.

Formal Reasons to Evaluate

To know what type of evaluation to use, managers first set out their reasons for undertaking an evaluation. In the public sector, for example, federal or state-sponsored programs demand third-party or internal evaluations; these evaluations are not optional. The evaluation may be required for fiscal purposes, with the program's future funding hinging on the results of the evaluation. Or an evaluation may be needed for comparison purposes to find out which of several methods would be the most effective to continue funding.

Certain questions need to be addressed in a formally mandated evaluation. Questions of efficiency might be: When did you begin the program or project? How much did it cost? How long did it take? Questions of effectiveness might be: What did you do? How well did you do it? What were the outcomes? Questions of impact might be: Did the program influence lives? Did the program add value? Table 1.1 shows sample questions for an evaluation of a project to develop an affirmative action plan.

Table 1.1 Questions of Efficiency, Effectiveness, and Impact (Affirmative Action Example).

Levels	*Resources (manager working on the project)*	*Activities (obtaining commitment of representatives to serve on task force)*	*Strategy (task force of employees to develop plan)*	*Objective (affirmative action plan with support of employee advocate groups)*
Efficiency	Cost per person contacted versus planned cost?	Cost per group endorsing plan?	Cost of group-developed plan versus manager-developed plan sent to groups for comment?	Cost per group actually supporting plan versus planned cost?
Effectiveness	Was the selection of this manager the correct selection?	How does diversity of the groups compare to diversity of the company?	How many groups endorse the plan?	How many groups actually adopt the plan?
Impact	How many staff hours were expended on this project versus another project?	Has this generated interest from employees in sharing new ideas?	Has this approach been used in solving other problems?	Have the number of grievances filed been reduced?

Another formal reason for evaluating is to make a case for a new program. For example, a superior may want you to evaluate or you may do it for yourself. Often teachers learn about new ideas at conferences, through reading, or from talking to colleagues; however, they may feel tentative about trying out the new ideas because they are under the scrutiny of administrators, parents, and other teachers. A person who is committed to a process that has merit will evaluate the process so that support can be garnered on the basis of data. Gut feelings, perceptions, innuendo, and anecdotes are comforting, but they are not convincing to the people who require more objective evidence. Data may not always convince people, but data at least act as a common currency to demonstrate the value of your case.

Good managers routinely collect data about their programs or projects in anticipation of the need to justify. These are some good questions to ask: How does this program compare to similar efforts? What would I have done if I had not begun this program? Are the goals or objectives justifiable as viewed by clients, staff, or the funding source? Did we accomplish what we set out to do?

The final reason for evaluating is to improve or change a program. In this instance, you collect data to show to people who will make decisions about changing or improving a program. Questions to answer are these: How will I use the evaluation in the program planning process? Is it meant, for example, to upgrade or change program personnel or to ensure accountability for expenditures?

Evaluation may also be performed as part of the preparation to seek funding from either internal or external sources. A good example is the teacher who learned at a recent conference about a new technique of computer conferencing used to improve writing skills. Knowing it was highly unlikely that the school had the resources to equip her classroom with sufficient technology, she brought her own computer from home and allowed the students to experiment with conferencing in their writing assignments. An evaluator then used the data collected from this activity to support her efforts to obtain funds from the school system or some other external funding source for the purchase of the required technology. Granted, this evaluation effort will do little for the current learners. The data collected from them, however, will benefit future learners in that teacher's classroom. This evaluation's most useful contribution serves the program planning process.

Practical Application

When XYZ Corporation—which aims for a sales representative to meet face-to-face with each client annually—decides to train its sales department, executives will want to look at how evaluation fits into the company's overall sales program. That goal requires taking a look at more than the current training program for sales personnel. XYZ will need to identify the standards by which training can be evaluated, evaluate its training and other possible programs, and then make decisions on the benefit to the company.

Think of the process in this simplified way: a company that places a high value on customer service will want to be sure its sales force sees clients face-to-face. Now the company wants to use its contact records and tracking program to plan the training program. Program planning will ensue and will include the criteria, goals, and objectives that allow for evaluation during and following training. XYZ knows from its simple tracking program the number of times customers are seen and who among the staff are seeing them. It also knows how much of its product is sold each year; thus, planners can build in benchmarks, the criteria of success that will guide their evaluation process.

Because evaluation means looking at change, evaluation shows up in every stage of the program. Monitoring begins as soon as XYZ chooses a training program. Have all possible trainees been recruited? Do these trainees have the prerequisite skills to succeed in the training? Do the trainers have the necessary knowledge and skill level to train?

Ongoing evaluation at this point allows for midcourse corrections and can make a huge difference in the success of the program. (Chapter Three discusses monitoring in more detail.)

Finally, evaluation is done after the program or project concludes. The evaluator looks only at final data. What happened to the trainees? Did the program do what it set out to do? This question, of course, brings you full circle to your philosophy. In XYZ Corporation's case, what is happening to the sales force? Are they meeting their goal of seeing each customer more frequently? You, the evaluator, can clearly see the final outcome with an evaluation at the end of a program cycle.

Formative and Summative Evaluations

Evaluations that focus on examining and changing processes as they are happening are called formative evaluations; those that focus on reporting what occurred at the end of the program cycle are called summative evaluations. These concepts are amplified in Chapter Three.

Putting It All Together

When you define evaluation, you can think in terms of cycles. Consider XYZ Corporation's sales training program and how its circumstances pass through the cycles of goals → needs analysis → program planning → implementation → formative or summative evaluation.

Program Cycles

Goals Needs analysis Program planning Implementation	Fulfill XYZ Corporation's mission: to serve internal customers by providing training to develop sales skills and a highly motivated commitment to customer satisfaction. Serve external customers by understanding and

Formative or summative evaluation	providing for their needs, both stated and inferred. Identify needs—for example, the sales force's need for an introduction to the concepts of the high-performance work environment, customer satisfaction, and continuous improvement. Select a sales training program that addresses the needs. Decide on evaluation criteria: How will we know we have succeeded? Do we have measures already in place or do we need to develop or identify new ones? The program begins, but it is still fluid; are we reaching those salespeople who need the training? Changes can still be made. Formative, because ongoing feedback helps the trainers correct any problems.

The person charged with performing a program evaluation will find it helpful to think of evaluation in terms of a format. You should conduct an evaluation with the evaluation design format in mind, allowing it to guide you through the steps to a conclusion. You can use the format shown in Exhibit 1.1 in conjunction with the information in this chapter to plan and conduct any program or project evaluation.

Strategically, your work on developing the format should begin at the last section of the exhibit: audience. Your first task—not your last—is to ask who is interested in the results of this evaluation. The term is placed last on the chart because it is to the audience—the funding source, the management, the team facilitator, or other audience—that an evaluator delivers the evaluation report. Determining the audience, or stakeholders, is an essential step. Not only does this step help an

Exhibit 1.1. Evaluation Design Format.

Project ____________________

Focus *(formative, summative, or both)*

Evaluation Question	*Activities to Observe*	*Data Source*	*Population Sample Design*	*Data Collection*	*Responsibility*	*Data Analysis*	*Audience*

evaluator focus the evaluation activities but it also gives an early view of how the results of the evaluation might, or might not, be used.

In XYZ Corporation the audience for the evaluation might be the sales team facilitator, who needs to know how the team members are progressing toward the team's goals. However, the audience might also be the XYZ human resource director, who wishes information on the effectiveness of the newest customer service training. Or the audience might be the XYZ plant manager, who needs to consider the impact the sales force has had on the marketing of the latest product line. Given these three examples, the evaluator might (1) focus the report on suggestions for program improvement as the teams are meeting, or (2) include knowledge gains from pretesting to posttesting, or (3) track and link six-month changes in sales to training. Each of these possibilities suggests different evaluation questions, data sources, subjects, data collection strategies, data analysis techniques, and interpretations.

These are the essential parts of the design format:

Evaluation questions are those that your audience needs to have answered in order to make cogent decisions. Examples of evaluation questions might be these: Did those who participated in the first quarter training program perform significantly better in the second quarter than those who did not? Did team leaders evaluate trainees' time management skills as being satisfactory? Did the overall number of face-to-face meetings with customers increase over the three-month period? These decisions might come during the program cycle (for a formative evaluation) or at the end of the program cycle (for a summative evaluation).

Activities are those program activities that will result in accomplishing the program objectives. The objectives may already exist as statements used to communicate to staff, clients, sponsors, and the powers that be the intended outcomes (accomplishments) of the program. Some examples include helping the sales force recognize cues to customer satisfaction or dissatisfaction, teaching the sales force how to apply available technology to time management, and teaching the sales force to turn face-to-face meetings into sales.

Whether or not the objectives have been stated, the desired activities still need to be stipulated so that the evaluator can make at least some causal connections between what the program did and what resulted. For example, trainees attend sessions in which they are taught how to use the company's available technology to enhance their time management skills. The sales force meets with the trainer to discuss customer cues and to role-play responses to those cues.

Data sources can be both existing records the evaluator can examine for data and the instruments that will be used to collect new data. At XYZ Corporation, the sales records prior to training and after training could become data sources. Others include individual achievement records of the sales force before and after training. Attitude surveys might be administered to internal customers, such as the sales force, as well as to external customers. Pretests and posttests may be administered to measure growth in time management and technology concepts and skills.

Population sample identifies those individuals from whom or about whom the data will be collected. In the case of XYZ, the individuals from whom or about whom the data will be collected are the sales force as well as their customers. There are 18 people in the sales force sample and 162 customers in the external sample.

Data collection design illustrates the context and schedule for the data collection. At XYZ, some data might be collected from pretests and posttests, that is, collected prior to the training initiative and following it. Data from existing records could be assembled before the training. Attitude scales would be administered to customers prior to the sales force training and again six months after the training.

Responsibility delineates who will have the responsibility to perform each evaluation activity.

Data analysis outlines how the evaluator will analyze and interpret the data after collection.

As you progress through *The ABCs of Evaluation,* you will learn more about each of the sections of the evaluation design. For now, just read through the design that follows to become familiar with how the process works under a specific circumstance. Later, you will have an opportunity to use the evaluation design format to set up your own evaluation.

Exhibit 1.2 shows the steps in the formulation of an evaluation design that resulted from a human resource department's (HRD's) need to evaluate a professional development program already in existence. The course, taken by all new hires, was called Technology Training for Administrative Assistants. Note how the evaluation questions spring

Exhibit 1.2. Evaluation Design: Administrative Assistants' Technology Training.

Focus: *(formative, summative, or both)*

Evaluation Question	*Program Objectives*
1. Have professional development courses related to technology changed the way administrative assistants organize and conduct office tasks?	To modify administrative assistants' practices and work to incorporate current information technologies and accommodate technology changes in the future.
2. Do the use and variety of technology in coursework increase the quality or quantity of administrative assistants' work?	To create an office environment where assistants utilize current information technologies in their work.
3. Does the infusion of technology into the introductory professional development courses affect new hires?	

EXERCISE I

Everyone is involved in projects of one kind or another. Think about a particular project—it could be something at work such as a new training program, something in the community such as the latest fund-raising effort for the local YMCA, or something in your personal life such as planning for the purchase of a new automobile. Now begin thinking about how you might evaluate that effort. Do the following:

1. Briefly describe the project, including its purpose, goals, activities that will be performed, and expected outcomes.
2. Explain why you would want to evaluate it.
3. Reread the statements in Two Definitions of Evaluation that reflect two different philosophies of evaluation. To which do you subscribe? Explain why.

EXERCISE II

Recall that an evaluation is guided by your reason(s) for doing the evaluation in the first place. Therefore, you need to determine whether you want to assess the efficiency, the effectiveness, or the impact of the program. For each of the following four scenarios, determine the evaluator's reason—whether efficiency, effectiveness, or impact—for the described evaluation scenario and then justify your choice.

1. A navy hospital's program to train nurses to work with terminally ill patients is in its second year. An evaluation will be

conducted to find out whether the participating nurses have access to the texts and audiovisual materials they need and if they are actually counseling patients. This information will be used to examine the use of resources.

Context: Efficiency Effectiveness Impact

Justification:

2. One of the northeastern states has commissioned an evaluation to measure the attainment of its capital management goals. Based on the evaluation's findings, the state may launch a personnel search.

   Context: Efficiency Effectiveness Impact

   Justification:

3. The federal Department of Health is conducting an evaluation of its ten-year-old blood donor program. The evaluation will produce information about the number and characteristics of people involved in the program and the nature of the communities being served. The evaluation information will be used to determine whether modifications in the program are needed and, if so, where.

   Context: Efficiency Effectiveness Impact

   Justification:

4. The University of Rhode Island has begun a program to stimulate research about how adults learn. The foundation that sponsors the program requires an evaluation at the end of the first year to be used as a basis for deciding whether to fund the program again.

   Context: Efficiency Effectiveness Impact

   Justification:

from one of the project's objectives. This example shows the relationship between the planned program (objectives) and the focus of evaluation activities (evaluation questions).

Key Words and Concepts

Efficiency: The degree to which a program or project has been productive in relationship to its resources
Effectiveness: The degree to which goals have been reached
Impact: The degree to which a program or project resulted in changes

Questions and Exercises

Now that you have read Chapter One, you are better equipped to answer the three questions we posed at the beginning of the chapter:

1. What do all evaluations have in common?
2. How would you characterize the differences between the efficiency, effectiveness, and impact of a program?
3. Why evaluate in the first place?

Answer those questions in two ways:

- Write a general answer that applies to the chapter material.
- Use your new understanding to write a specific answer that applies to Scenario 1. Be sure to address these issues:

  Should the program or project be evaluated?

  Which level of evaluation—efficiency, effectiveness, or impact—do you think would be most appropriate?

  What philosophy of evaluation applies?

SCENARIO IA

After spending just a brief time talking to the Grandview staff and the Beed Foundation, Ruth began to appreciate just why a program director or provider would be interested in evaluating a program. She knew from working with the residents of Grandview that they were very positive about what they accomplished in the gardening program. They always left the activity room smiling. However, the question in Ruth's mind was how she could demonstrate or document this positive response. She was quite sure that the Beed Foundation would not fund the program based only on the positive demeanor she noted. Though she was given a small amount of information regarding the residents, especially about those who were somewhat depressed or lacking the desire for physical activity and interaction with others, her knowledge of each was incomplete. Ruth needed a way to gather information about the residents before they started the program and then follow-up information once the program concluded.

Ruth needed concrete answers to some important questions. For example:

A. Do participants maintain their positive, upbeat attitudes from week to week following the activity?

B. At the end of the program, has the budget been maintained?

C. Did participants gain knowledge regarding using different soils for different plants, container gardening needs, and light requirements of various plants?

Question: Based on what you read in this chapter, label questions A, B, and C as questions of efficiency, effectiveness, or impact.

SCENARIO IB

Marge Benson teaches a GED class of 20 adults, ages 19–52. The class meets on Tuesday and Thursday nights for twelve weeks, for two hours each session. On Tuesday, the class reviews English grammar and reading skills. Thursday sessions are devoted to mathematics. At the end of Marge's first year of teaching this class, all her students took the GED exam and 95 percent of them passed the test. Marge learned that a few participants had passed one of the tests (English or math) but not both.

Marge was about to start organizing for her second year of teaching in this program. At the outset, the director told Marge that she needed to evaluate the program this year. The director noted that planning for the evaluation shouldn't wait until she was actually teaching. Instead, activities, strategies, and other important data should be documented from the beginning, an especially important concept in a GED program where baseline data are essential.

The program needed to be evaluated for two reasons:

1. The federal money the program received required an evaluation that would spell out resources, objectives, strategies, and objectives for each subject area.
2. The state education department required an evaluation to justify their fiscal involvement and to compare results of this community (completion rates, number of high school diplomas earned, and so on) as compared to others.

As you just read, the "why" of evaluation emanates from different sources. Clearly, in Marge's program, "management," both local and federal, demanded an evaluation. Interestingly, though, Marge herself had wondered whether supplying her students with more data would help them to prepare for the GED tests. She felt that she needed to develop a measure that would tell each student what skills he or she had acquired at any given time.

Marge knew what skills were measured on the GED Test of English. What she did not know was which students had covered the skills and successfully acquired them. She decided to introduce a simple checklist that would help her to identify the students' accomplishments as well as their specific needs.

Question: According to what you read earlier in this chapter, which of the two definitions of evaluation applies to Marge's evaluation?

Question: Look back to Exhibit 1.1, where you will find the Evaluation Design Format. The chapter goes on to describe the essential parts of the Design Format. You are encouraged to "begin at the last section of the exhibit: audience." The text goes on to say that your first task is to ask yourself who is interested in the results of this evaluation. Suppose Marge decides to measure students' success with each English skill. Can you predict how Marge would answer the question regarding the audience? What would she write in that space?

Further Reading

Kirkpatrick, D. "50 Years of Evaluation." *Training and Development*. American Society for Training and Development, January 2010, 14.

Kirkpatrick, D., and Kirkpatrick, J. *Evaluating Training Programs: The Four Levels*. (3rd ed.) San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler, 1998.

Kirkpatrick, J., and Kayser Kirkpatrick, W. *The Kirkpatrick Four Levels: A Fresh Look After 50 Years, 1959–2009*. April 2009. Available at http://www.managesmarter.com/managesmarter/images/pdfs/trg_20090417_kirkpatrickwhitepaper.pdf.