

Five-Tiered Approach to Program Evaluation

To develop an appropriate evaluation strategy, we have chosen to present a modified version of Jacobs' five-tiered approach to program evaluation (1988). Each tier focuses on purposes of evaluation and tasks to be accomplished (see Table 1). The tasks of the first three tiers are primarily concerned with process evaluation, the fourth with short-term outcome evaluation, and the fifth with long-term outcome evaluation.

As you go through the process of evaluation, keep in mind that evaluation is a fluid, ongoing process. It is possible to work in two tiers simultaneously or move from later tiers back to earlier ones.

We have developed a set of worksheets to facilitate the discussion and documentation of the team's evaluation plan. These worksheets are found at the end of each tier.

**Table 1: Summary Of Five-Tiered Approach To
Program Evaluation**

<u>Tier</u>	<u>Purpose</u>	<u>Tasks</u>
Tier 1: Program Definition	Document need for a particular program in a community	Work with stakeholders to assess community needs and assets
	Use literature to justify planned program relative to community needs and assets	Review pertinent literature base
	Define planned program	Describe program vision, mission, goals, objectives and characteristics
Tier 2: Accountability	Examine if program serves those it was intended to in the manner proposed	Identify stakeholders
		Document program participants, activities, and how services are delivered.
Tier 3: Understanding and Refining	Improve program by providing information to program staff, participants & other stakeholders	Gather program satisfaction data
		Examine the fit between data collected in Tiers 1 and 2
		Examine process data and identify lessons learned
		Identify program strengths & weaknesses
Tier 4: Progress Toward Objectives	Document program effectiveness and short-term outcomes	Revisit literature
		Sort objectives by short-term outcomes and long-term outcomes
		Select short-term outcome indicators and identify measures
		Decide on design issues & data analysis
Tier 5: Program Long-Term Outcome	Demonstrate long-term improvements in quality of life of children, youth, families & communities	Report findings
		Plan to document long-term outcomes
		Provide evidence of program sustainability
		Identify program components worthy of replication
	Contribute to Extension's ability to serve children, youth, families & communities at risk and to the professional literature	Distribute findings of long-term outcomes

Based on Jacobs' (1988) Five-Tiered Approach to Program Evaluation