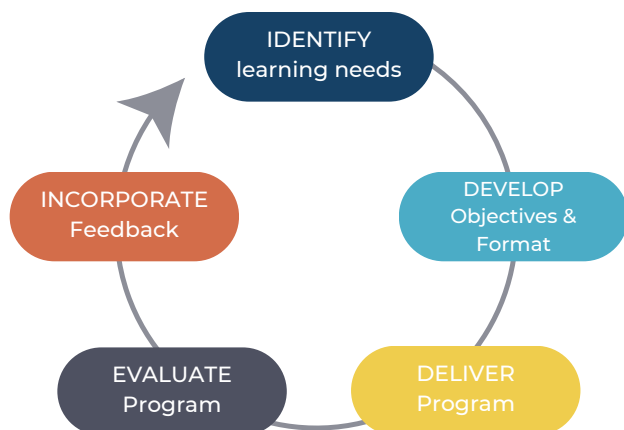


Getting Better Program Evaluations



Why Evaluate Education Programs?

Evaluations provide information on increasing the impact of education programs and the attendee learning experience. Incorporating evaluation data is a crucial component of planning or improving an education program.

Why Does the Program Evaluation Response Rate Matter?

It is key that the observations and comments included in program evaluations are representative of attendees. Effective improvements are based on robust and valid data. Programs with a small number of attendees require higher response rates for valid data.

Number of Attendees	Valid Evaluation Response Rate
15	10 (68%)
20	12 (58%)
25	13 (53%)
30	14 (48%)
35	15 (44%)



Strategies to Increase Evaluation Response Rates

- 1 Design evaluations to gather meaningful feedback and support attendee reflection.
- 2 Let attendees know you value their evaluation comments and feedback.
- 3 Articulate that completing evaluations will increase attendees' learning of program content.
- 4 Include a slide asking attendees to complete their evaluations.
- 5 Protect time in the program to complete the evaluations.
- 6 Provide multiple ways to access the evaluations.

Getting Better Program Evaluations

Reflecting on Your Program Evaluations

- ✓ What was the impact of the program?
- ✓ Are there any evaluation patterns?
- ✓ Are the evaluation comments what I expected?
- ✓ What are 2-3 recommendations for improving the next program?
- ✓ What are several program strengths that worked well and can be used again?
- ✓ What are the next steps?

Consider making brief notes to review when developing future programs.

Key Quotation: Optimizing Evaluation Response Rates

Available evidence suggests strategies are additive and implementing multiple approaches will result in higher evaluation response rates (Duncan Nulty).



Key Takeaways

Optimizing program evaluations often feels like one more chore as a planning committee. However, evaluations are valuable for planning committees, presenters, and attendees.

Evaluations are a key aspect of effective programs:

- 1 Evaluations provide planning committees and presenters with opportunities to receive attendee feedback.
- 2 Completing evaluations reinforces attendees' learning.
- 3 Attendee feedback often provides strategies to improve programs and presentation skills.



Interested in learning more? A Resource to Extend Your Learning:

The Adequacy of Response Rates to Online and Paper Surveys: What Can Be Done? by Duncan Nulty, published in *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education* 33(3), 2008.

[Access the article online.](#)