

## Evaluation Methods, Advantages/Challenges and Resources Needed

Method	Purpose	Advantages and Challenges	Resources Needed
<b>Document Review</b>	To gather information from pre-existing written materials, such as meeting minutes, reports, budgets, newspaper articles, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Most common method for evaluation</li> <li>+ Good method for reviewing materials on how a program was implemented</li> <li>+ Uses information that is already available</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Can be done by program staff themselves</li> <li>- Takes a lot of time to review existing files, especially if program is complex and of long duration</li> </ul>
<b>Observation</b>	To gather information on how the program operates, or on visual changes that have resulted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Good for process evaluation, because you can get an immediate impression about how the program is progressing</li> <li>- Information can be difficult to interpret</li> <li>- May be biased by how staff interpret the information</li> <li>- Events that are seen can be time-dependent, and not representative of what is really going on</li> <li>- If people know they are being observed, they may act differently than usual</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Can be done by program staff themselves</li> <li>- Takes a lot of time to review existing files, especially if program is complex and of long duration</li> </ul>
<b>Interviews</b>	To obtain information from individuals about their experiences, or to learn more about their answers to surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Excellent for both process and outcome evaluation, because you can get in-depth information from participants</li> <li>+ Can ask sensitive questions that require confidentiality</li> <li>- Data can be difficult and complex to analyze</li> <li>- Interviewer can bias the responses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Can take a lot of time to conduct</li> <li>- May require data inputting and analysis programs</li> <li>- May require assistance from a consultant to design the interview protocol and develop the database program</li> </ul>

Source: Asian Pacific Partners for Empowerment and Leadership (APPEAL), *Integrating Evaluation into Tobacco Programs for Asian American and Pacific Islander Communities*, 2001. [www.appealforcommunities.org](http://www.appealforcommunities.org)

KEY: + advantages  
- disadvantages

Evaluation method, advantages/challenges and resources needed *continued*

Method	Purpose	Advantages and Challenges	Resources Needed
<b>Focus Groups</b>	To hold discussions with groups of people (10-12) to understand in-depth what they believe were the effects of the program, or how they saw the program implemented.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Good for outcome evaluation, because you can ask people to explain how the program affected them</li> <li>+ Can identify a lot of issues and effects</li> <li>+ Can give staff better understanding of the program from participants' own words</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Can be done relatively quickly (1-2 hours per focus group)</li> <li>- Requires a good facilitator</li> <li>- Takes time to analyze and interpret the discussion</li> <li>- May require extra resources for facilitator's time and participant incentives</li> </ul>
<b>Case studies</b>	To describe a program or experience in depth, often using some or all of the other evaluation methods to construct a case study.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Good for combining process and outcome evaluation</li> <li>+ Can be a powerful way to describe the program</li> <li>+ Can depict personal experiences, quotes, and unique program processes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Can take a lot of time to collect information, organize and describe the program</li> </ul>
<b>Surveys and questionnaires</b>	To get information from individual people about their changes in tobacco use knowledge, attitudes, and behavior.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Excellent for outcome evaluation</li> <li>+ Can get information from a lot of people</li> <li>+ Can be done confidentially or anonymously, so may be more valid</li> <li>+ Can be used as pre/post tests to measure changes from program educational sessions</li> <li>+ Can use questions from existing surveys</li> <li>- More effective when using yes/no or true/false type questions</li> <li>- Are more impersonal for participants, and usually not good for getting quotes in participants' own words</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Takes time to develop questionnaire</li> <li>- May require database program to manage and analyze a lot of data</li> <li>- May require extra resources for participant incentives and data analysis</li> </ul>

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