

Surveys and Evaluation

Adapted from Public Library Association's [Project Outcome: Measuring the True Impact of Libraries](#) and Colorado State Library's [Library Research Service](#).

DRAFTING OUTCOMES MEASURES

Step 1: Program Goals - the intended result of the program, for example:

- Education
- Skill building
- Engagement
- Creativity
- Entertainment

[42: The answer to every bad evaluation question](#)

Special considerations:

- New goals for crisis (e.g. online engagement)
- Keep program goals short
- Keep goals achievable

Step 2: Desired Outcomes - benefits to the patron based on program goals above, for example:

- Knowledge/Understanding
- Confidence
- Skills
- Attitudes/Opinions
- Behaviors/Actions
- Status/Condition

Special considerations:

- Focus on only one or two benefits
- Identify benefits based on what you can most influence
- Share with patrons the intended benefits

Step 3: Outcome Measures - Did the program have a change or effect on desired outcomes (step 2) for the patron or community?

- Outcome Measure #1
- Outcome Measure #2

- Outcome Measure #3

Special considerations:

- Focus on the short term
- Allow time for patrons to share back
- Engage using chat and open-ended questions
- Share examples with participants

TOOLS FOR MEASUREMENT

[Are you ready to learn about surveys?](#)

Immediate surveys

- Patron reported learning
- Use immediately after completion of a program/service
- Inform changes
- Get a “snapshot” for reporting and advocacy
- Use 4 short Likert-scale questions and get open-ended feedback

Follow-up surveys

- Patron reported adoption
- Use 4-8 weeks after completion of a program/service
- Inform internal planning
- Measure progress towards strategic goals
- Provide evidence for advocacy

Outcome Measurement Guidelines

- Use to design your own surveys
- Implement other data collection methods
- Capture long-term impact
- Develop strategies for working with partners

Free survey tools

- [Project Outcome](#) (Public Library Association)
 - Outcome measurement guidelines
- Google Forms
- Survey Monkey (has paid features)

Alternative Data Collection Methods

- Interviews
- Focus groups
- Observation
 - [Why Observe? Watch and Learn](#)
- Online discussion

[Does the \(Data Collection Method\) Shoe Fit?](#)

MEASUREMENT LOGISTICS

What measurement system will you use?

[Ready to meet your \(data\) match? Introducing number data and story data](#)

When will you measure?

- Don't measure everything
- Determine frequency
- Set a schedule

How will you get enough responses?

- Discuss evaluation needs with patrons
- Recruit community volunteers
- Keep anonymous surveys short
- Expect to promote results

What tools will you use to analyze results?

- Project Outcome (Public Library Association)
 - Analyzing Qualitative Data worksheet
- Excel Pivot Tables
- Tableau

Who will analyze the data?

- Commit adequate staff time to review results
- Qualitative --> more insights, more time
- Quantitative --> limited insights, less time

How will you communicate/use results?

- Plan to take action!
- Keep results actionable (not research)
- Transparency builds trust

See also: Research Institute for Public Libraries, an initiative of the Colorado State Library and the Colorado Library Consortium, [Data Bootcamp webinars](#).