

Evaluation Summary Title



Descriptive statement of project impact

The title should be focused on outcome measure; the first word should be an active verb (ending in -ing).

The subtitle should be a plain language summary of the project impact.

Summary

Include brief sentences that clearly and directly state the need, identify the project goal, summarize key findings, and describe how findings will be used, connecting them to the agency/administration priority (the “so what”).

Agency Priority

In 3-4 sentences, clearly describe your agency partner’s priority (why it’s important to the agency, the goals and objectives of the program/intervention, etc.) and the overarching purpose of the evaluation.

How We Evaluated

In 3-4 sentences, describe the program change/intervention and basic analysis design or the descriptive analysis. Describe the data source (briefly!), sample, and time frame for the study.

What We Learned

Include 4-5 sentences with the topline results. Include secondary outcomes and exploratory analyses only if highly relevant for key takeaways.

Figure

Descriptive Figure Title

The title should be descriptive and stand on its own (i.e., understood if removed from the summary).

- For information on styling figures, refer to the OES style guide [APA style guide](#), or OES guidance on reporting statistical results in text and in graphs.

Applying the Findings

This is a 3-4 sentence summary of how the findings will be used for program improvement.

Lead with the important points/application of findings. Tie back to the “so what” of the study – i.e., how findings can (potentially) lead to achieving outcomes such as efficiency and cost savings. Then provide more specific information

on how the findings can be used and recommendations for next steps, which may depend on evaluation type.

This could include identifying concrete or potential applications, specific agencies or programs that could use the evaluation findings, how process/operational lessons can be applied to strengthen other programs, any evaluation considerations or next steps, etc. Also note implications/recommendations for agency operations or program improvement.

Checklist for all Evaluation Summaries:

- ☐ Is the summary written such that a lay (non-scientific) audience could understand it? These audiences could include policymakers, agency leadership, program staff, and the general public.
- ☐ Is the summary limited to two pages? Aim for two, and remember that you can always include images of intervention material or additional figures on the web page version if they don't fit in this summary.
- ☐ Is the summary written in first person (we did, we found) using active voice?
- ☐ If necessary, have you listed specific (agency partner) roles when important to do so for ownership and collaboration reasons (e.g., data access, analysis, randomization, intervention implementation) or when OES was not involved in a process and cannot attest to it?
- ☐ Are acronyms spelled out the first time they're used on the page? (After that, it's ok to use the acronym. The only exception is that you can use the acronym in the title if you need to save space.)
- ☐ Does the summary avoid directing policy or resources? Avoid the word "should" and instead use, "may," "might," "could," or "consider".
- ☐ Does the summary use the terminology our agency partners use when describing the intervention, individuals, outcomes, etc.?
- ☐ Does the summary include terms in the left column? If so, adjust to the phrasing in the right column unless there is a strong reason to retain the term.

Instead of	Use
"experiment"	"test," "evaluate," or "evaluation"
"research" or "researcher", "study"	"evaluation" or "evaluators", "program"

- ☐ Does the summary cite external sources? Link to government sources or websites (preferred) in-text, not in footnotes.
- ☐ Does the summary need to include footnotes? Remember to keep to those that are strictly necessary.

Section-by-section Checklist

Summary:

- ☐ Is this section a plain language, bottom line up front (BLUF), non-technical overview highlighting the tie-in to agency priorities, key takeaways on what we did and what we learned, and how the results will be used for program improvement and addressing agency priorities?
- ☐ Does the last sentence note how the results will be used for program improvement and addressing agency priorities ("so what")?

Agency priority:

- ☐ Does this section clearly describe why it's important to the agency, the goals and objectives of the program/intervention, and the overarching purpose of the evaluation?

How we evaluated:

- ☐ Does this section describe the program change/intervention and basic analysis design or the descriptive analysis, briefly describe the data source and the sample, and note the time frame?

What we learned:

- ☐ Does this section highlight topline results? Secondary outcomes and exploratory analyses should only be included if highly relevant for key takeaways.
- ☐ Are the figures and tables formatted correctly? Can they stand on their own with descriptive titles, clearly labeled axes, etc. following APA style?

Applying the findings:

- ☐ Does this section read as a short summary of how the findings will be used for program improvement? Does it lead with the important points and tie back to the "so what"?