



Checklist for Selecting Data Collection Methods

From Resiman, Jane and Judith Clegg. *Outcomes for Success!* (Seattle, WA: The Evaluation Forum, 2000), 94-97.

SURVEYS		
1. Do I need data from the perspective of the participant, client, beneficiary, or customer?	Yes	No
2. Do I have a systematic way to get it from these individuals?	Yes	No
3. Do I need data that are standardized so that statistical comparisons can be made? (For example, will I need to report percents or other statistics?)	Yes	No
4. Will participants be able to understand the survey questions? (Consider age, cultural backgrounds, etc.)	Yes	No
5. Do participants have the necessary knowledge or awareness to accurately answer questions about the outcomes?	Yes	No
<i>If you answered Yes to question 1 through 5, surveys may be appropriate for collecting data on your outcomes and indicators.</i>		

INTERVIEWS		
6. Are more in-depth answers necessary to adequately measure the indicators or to get information on what is needed or what should change?	Yes	No
7. Will it be necessary for someone to personally ask participants questions (either on the phone or in person) in order to collect the information related to this outcome? (Consider age, cultural background, as well as state of mind or receptivity of participants)	Yes	No
<i>If you answered Yes to questions 6 and 7, interviews may be appropriate for collecting data on your outcomes and indicators.</i>		

OBSERVATION		
8. Is it difficult to accurately measure the indicators by asking people questions about opinions or perceptions?	Yes	No
9. Can this outcome or indicator be assessed accurately by someone trained to observe it in action (ie, can something actually be observed)?	Yes	No
10. Do you have the staff resources for someone to observe events, conditions, interactions, or behaviors?	Yes	No
<i>If you answered Yes to questions 8, 9, and 10, observation may be appropriate for collecting data on your outcomes and indicators.</i>		

INTERNAL RECORD REVIEW		
11. Do you have individualized records, reports, logs, or other systematic ways that you track things in your program or services?	Yes	No
12. If an information system exists, are the data consistently entered into it in a timely way?	Yes	No
13. If a system exists, can information be extracted from it easily?	Yes	No
<i>If you answered Yes to questions 11, 12, and 13, internal record review may be appropriate for collecting data on your outcomes and indicators.</i>		

OFFICIAL RECORD REVIEW		
14. Do official records exist that track the data you need on your outcomes and indicators?	Yes	No
15. Are the data accessible to your (ie., will it be possible to get the cooperation of outside agencies or institutions in order to get access to official records)?	Yes	No
<i>If you answered Yes to questions 14 and 15, official record review may be appropriate for collecting data on your outcomes and indicators.</i>		