

Stakeholder Interview Guide

Purpose: to gather insights and perspective from key stakeholders of the program being evaluated, in order to get a more full view of

- what the program is or could be
- what outcomes or impact it does or could have
- relevant aspects of the context in which the program operates
- (possibly) key assumptions that should be articulated in the program model
- stakeholder priorities that could affect program development and evaluation

Use: This input will be used in several ways:

- To sharpen and enrich the Program Description
- To create or improve the Program Models
- As guidance for focusing the evaluation later

Steps:

1. Identify 2-4 key stakeholders, particularly those who are likely to have perspectives different from those of program staff. Any of the following might be useful:
 - Participants
 - Staff who've worked on this program or in this area before
 - Funders
 - Community leaders
 - County legislators
 - Faculty
 - Collaborators
 - Industry representatives, suppliers, end-users, etc.
2. Contact your selected stakeholders to explain what you are interested in, why you selected them, why you value their input and how it will be used, and how you will be capturing the information (if you are planning to record the conversation, get permission to do so). Set up time for a brief interview.
3. Review the candidate questions on the next page and select the ones you will use, adapting as needed for this particular stakeholder, your relationship with him/her, etc. Keep a record of the questions you ask.
4. Prepare for how you will capture their comments (if you intend to quote them, ask permission).

Candidate Stakeholder Interview Questions

This list is suggestive, but not exhaustive. Some of these are more appropriate for programs that are just being developed; others are more relevant for programs that have already been operating. Use what fits.

1. How would you describe this program?
2. How do you perceive your relationship to this program?
3. Who do you think are the primary beneficiaries?
4. What do you think motivates/will motivate participants to do the program?
5. How do participants get involved?
6. How does this program work/how would you imagine it working?
7. What do you see as the main value or contribution of this program?
8. What are the desired outcomes for participants?
9. What other outcomes do you see or foresee?
10. What do you think are the most important outcomes?
11. What are key elements of context that influence success or failure of the program?
(community or industry needs or challenges, strengths or vulnerabilities, relevant history, political or regulatory issues, ...)
12. Are there similar programs being offered elsewhere that we should be aware of?
13. Are there other programs or organizations working on this in this area? What is this program's niche?
14. Looking ahead to evaluation, what do you think will be the most important questions to explore?