

Evaluation Support Toolkit

Step 5B

Supporting document to Step 5B of the **Better Health, Better Business: A Roadmap to Comprehensive Workplace Health Improvement*

Purpose of the Evaluation Support Toolkit

The Evaluation Support Toolkit was created to supplement the information provided in Step 5B of the Better Health Better Business (BHBB) Roadmap and website. The goal of this guide is to provide workplaces with easy to follow instructions on how to design an evaluation plan that is actionable and impactful.

BHBB Evaluation Planning offers two evaluation approaches: process and outcome. Process evaluation focuses on the lessons learned through program development & implementation, while outcome evaluation focuses on achievement of goals. Workplaces are encouraged to plan and carry out both methods as they will provide you with different types of information. However, based on the capacity of your workplace and the ultimate purpose of your evaluation, you may choose to put more time and resources into one type of evaluation.

Section 1: outlines how to develop a **process evaluation** plan

Section 2: outlines how to develop an **outcome evaluation** plan

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Why Evaluate?

Evaluation is a key component of any impactful, sustainable workplace health program. Evaluation **enables** you to:

- Share your successes and lessons learned
- Check your progress and make improvements to the program as you go
- Check whether what you are doing is still needed or desired in your workplace
- Identify strengths and/or weaknesses in your program
- Demonstrate if resources have been used effectively (time and money)
- Present learnings and achievements to leadership and other stakeholders

If you are just starting a workplace health program, it is best to establish an evaluation plan **before** you implement the program. That way you can determine *when* and *how* you will collect the information needed to answer your evaluation questions. This will also give you the opportunity to establish a baseline to measure the changes your program will generate.

“One of the great mistakes is to judge policies and programs by their intentions rather than their results”

Milton Friedman, economist

Before You Begin

- 1) **Collect your resources:** Prior to meeting with your workplace health committee to begin the evaluation planning process, ensure that you have copies of your action plan (Step 5A) on hand. You may also want to print copies of this toolkit to use at your committee meeting.

What resources do you need to gather?

- 2) **Identify your supports:** Evaluation is common practice in many organizations. Determine if anyone on your workplace health committee has prior evaluation planning experience and could take a lead. Discuss who in your organization could provide additional support if needed.

- 3) **Become familiar with the Online Process & Outcome Evaluation Planning Tools:** Take a moment to click through the evaluation planning tools found on the BHBB website. The tools are located in Step 5B and can be accessed by:

- Clicking on Step 5B on the BHBB home page. This will take you to a summary of evaluation planning. From there you will click on “Get Started” where you will be brought directly to the process evaluation tool. You must use the approach below to access the outcome evaluation tool.
- Scrolling over Step 5B in the Program Steps tab. From there you can select either the process or outcome evaluation tool.

Additional tips for using the online tool can be found in the “Tips for Using the Online Evaluation Planning Tools” section of this guide.

Please note that you are able to submit multiple evaluation plan drafts into the BHBB website. To avoid confusion, if you plan on submitting multiple plans ensure that you give them clear titles (example Draft 1, Draft 2, Final Plan).

4) **Engage leadership & other stakeholders** to ensure that your evaluation plan will provide information that is relevant to key decision makers in your organization. Questions to consider include:

- What do they want to know from the evaluation?
- Do they have expectations for the evaluation timeframe? (Use this timeframe to set realistic expectations for the results that can be expected in that period)
- What priorities, programs or objectives do they care most about?
- What sort of information is most impactful to them?
- How will they want evaluation findings reported back to them?

Which stakeholders will you speak with regarding your evaluation plan? What questions will you ask them?

5) **Delegate as you go:** Like your action plan, your evaluation plan will require the completion of specific tasks and responsibilities. Think about the following as you build your plan:

- Who will be responsible for creating the data collection tools?
- Who will be responsible for collecting the evaluation information?
- Who will analyze the evaluation data?
- Who will be responsible for summarizing the evaluation findings and deriving recommendations?
- How will you share your evaluation results?

More information on making your evaluation plan actionable can be found in the “Tips for Implementing Your Evaluation Plan” section of this guide.

SECTION 1: Process Evaluation

What is a process evaluation?

- Focuses on the lessons learned through program development & implementation
- Seeks to identify the strengths & weaknesses and successes & challenges of your workplace health program
- Also known as program tracking & monitoring
- Focuses on the actions taken to get to your outcomes, rather than the final results themselves
- Can inform why you did or did not achieve your outcomes
- Might focus on specific activities, implementation efficiency and/or the structure of programs

Question 1: What do you hope to learn from your process evaluation?

To help shape your process evaluation, and ensure that it will be impactful, start by thinking “big picture:” what do you hope to learn from the information collected through your process evaluation?

Examples

- Ways to improve the program
- What went well and what didn't
- The value of the program
- Whether we did what we planned to do

Question 2: What specific questions would like to answer?

The quality of your evaluation plan is **dependent** on your evaluation questions. Many questions can be asked about a project, more than can be answered given resource limitations such as time, money and expertise¹. To ensure that your evaluation plan meets your needs, you will need to ask **relevant, realistic and useful questions** that will aid future decision-making.

Before you can choose process evaluation questions it is important to understand what you will do with them. Quite simply, you will use these questions to **reflect on your workplace health program**, both specific activities and/or the program as a whole. Depending on the questions that you choose & your process evaluation goal identified in Question 1, you may ask these questions **before, during or after implementing an activity or program**. You will collect the answers to these questions and use this information to guide future decision making about your workplace health efforts.

To begin, you will brainstorm potential process evaluation questions. Then you will narrow your list to **a few questions** that will be the most impactful.

Tip: Questions to Avoid

- Yes or no questions
- Questions that you cannot afford to answer
- Leading or biased questions
- Questions with only one possible answer
- Questions that will not provide you with actionable information

Examples of Process Evaluation Questions:

- Were the activities implemented as planned? What was? What wasn't?
- What worked? What didn't work?
- What were the strengths and weaknesses of the implementation process?
- What were the strengths and weaknesses of the program, activity or event?
- What were the participants' reactions to the activities (e.g. training)?
- How satisfied were the participants with the program?
- Who did the program or activity reach? Was it the intended participants/audience?
- How should the activities be modified to better meet participant needs?
- How should the activities be modified to make implementation smoother or easier?
- What were the implementation facilitators & barriers?
- What lessons can be learned from the way in which the program or activity unfolded?

- What key changes should be made to the program to enhance achievement of objectives?
- What did you learn during this program that you could use in future workplace health programs?
- How do the outcomes and costs for this program compare with other options?
- Were program materials created and utilized as planned?
- Were the outputs outlined in the Action Plan created & executed as planned?

Brainstorm the process evaluation questions that you would like to answer:

Prioritize and select process evaluation questions

Now that you have a list of potential process evaluation questions, take a moment to prioritize and **choose a few** to move forward with. There **isn't a "right" number** of evaluation questions. Choose a few questions that will provide you with the most actionable information. Here are some **factors to consider** when prioritizing evaluation questions:

- Consider your workplace health committee's capacity
- Determine if a specific question is 'nice to have' vs. 'need to have'
- Consider who your stakeholders are (e.g., leadership, etc.) and what information they will want or need to know for future decision-making purposes
- Consider how you will use the information provided by a question: is it actionable? Impactful?
- Reflect back on what you hope to learn through your process evaluation (Question 1): which questions will enable that learning?

What are your process evaluation questions?

Question 3: What information (or indicators) do you need to gather?

You will need to collect data or information throughout your workplace health program to answer your process evaluation questions. The pieces of information collected are called **indicators**. Review your process evaluation questions and determine the information or indicators needed to **answer** them.

Examples of Indicators

- Participant feedback:
 - Satisfaction
 - Successes
 - Challenges and mitigation strategies
 - Suggestions for improvement
- Program or activity organizer feedback:
 - Satisfaction
 - Successes
 - Challenges and mitigation strategies
 - Lessons learned
 - Suggestions for improvement
- Comparison between the number and nature of planned activities and completed activities
- Comparison between planned outputs and delivered outputs
- Number or proportion of targeted employees who participated in programming compared to targets
- Feedback from key stakeholders on the relevance and need for the program
- Cost of the program relative to other activities
- Identification of other factors (events, programs or initiatives) that may have influenced the outcomes achieved

Example:

Process evaluation question: *“How should the health & wellness lunch and learn series be modified to better meet employee needs?”*

Indicator: *Participant feedback on satisfaction and suggestions for improvement*

What information do you need to gather to answer your process evaluation questions?

Question 4: How will you gather information (data sources)?

Now that you have determined the indicators needed to answer your process evaluation questions, you need to consider where you will collect this information from, meaning which data sources you will use. There are **four main methods to collecting data for evaluation**:

- Talking to people
- Getting written feedback
- Reviewing existing data & documentation
- Observing/tracking.

Tip: A lot of useful data can be collected simply by keeping detailed, organized record of events (i.e., meeting minutes, attendance, sign up lists, meeting agendas, short post-meeting debrief notes, etc.)

Some **specific data collection tools** are described below. When deciding which data collection tool is right for you consider the following:

- How easily the tool can be created (cost, skill required)
- How easy it will be to implement the tool (time, resources needed, internal approvals required)
- How easily the information can be collected
- How usable (meaningful, actionable, impactful) the information collected will be
- How easily the information collected can be analyzed
- The target audience that you will want to collect responses from

Regardless of the data collection method used, ensure that employee anonymity and confidentiality is respected and that employees are kept in the loop on results when possible.

Tool	Tips for Use	Example
Observations	Collecting data based on what you can observe; you should determine in advance what observations you are looking for.	Head count of employees who participate in a workplace health program or the number of employees who ask questions in a discussion.
Individual Interviews	Helpful when you have a small number of participants; allows you to get detailed, descriptive information about a person’s feeling, insights, and perceptions; can be conducted face-to-face or by telephone.	Individual interviews with team leads regarding a potential workplace health initiative and how it may be accepted by employees or interviews with a small number of employees about their experience participating in the program.

Focus Groups (i.e., group interviews)	Best conducted in small groups of 7-10 employees; beneficial over individual interviews if group discussion and interaction is of particular interest; typically conducted face-to-face.	Group discussion and feedback on a large-scale workplace health initiative such as a policy or strategy.
Questionnaires	Allows you to quickly and easily gather information from a large number of employees; doesn't allow for gathering as detailed information as an interview or focus group, but can give a better sense of overall perspective; can be online or paper-based.	Employee interest surveys.
Document Reviews	Review of existing documents (e.g., workplace policies, meeting minutes, newsletters/intranet articles, etc.) to get background information and/or an overview of the workplace on a specific topic.	Review of workplace health policies to assess current implementation/enforcement, or review for areas where additional policies could be developed.
After Action Reviews	Allows for a formal debriefing after important meeting, workshop or training to assess whether key objectives were met. Typically conducted in a group.	10 minutes debriefing with the group at the end of a workplace health committee meeting.
Event Evaluations	Feedback from employees to assess whether the objectives of an event were met and whether people were satisfied with the event.	Short paper survey for people to fill out after participating in a workplace health event.

Example:

Process evaluation question: *“How should the health & wellness lunch and learn series be modified to better meet employee needs?”*

Indicator: *Participant feedback on satisfaction and suggestions for improvement*

Data Sources: *Electronic survey sent to participants post-lunch & learn sessions to gather participant feedback on satisfaction and suggestions for improvements*

How will you collect the information needed to answer your process evaluation questions?

Question 4a: How often do you need to gather the information (collection frequency)?

Once you have determined the tools that you will use to collect your process evaluation data, plan when and how often you will collect this information. For process evaluation, data collection typically occurs throughout implementation and/or post-program.

Tip: If you want to understand implementation barriers and successes, data collection throughout the implementation process would be beneficial. If you want to understand how participants felt about a program and gather improvement ideas, a post-program interview would be appropriate

Examples of when to collect data:

- Participant feedback survey emailed to participants after wellness fair
- Annual questionnaire to confirm health interests of employees
- Semi-annual focus groups with workplace health advocates
- Debrief session with organizing team for wellness fair

Example:

Process evaluation question: *“How should the health & wellness lunch and learn series be modified to better meet employee needs?”*

Indicator: *Participant feedback on satisfaction and suggestions for improvement*

Data Sources: *Electronic survey sent to participants post-lunch & learn sessions to gather participant feedback on satisfaction and suggestions for improvements*

Frequency: *After every lunch & learn*

When will you gather your process evaluation information?

Question 5: How will you analyze the information collected?

Focus on keeping your data analysis simple and meaningful. As with collecting data, when analyzing data it is important to keep the purpose of your evaluation in mind². Consider how you will analyze the data early so that you don't collect data that will not be used².

Quantitative analysis

For information you gather that is numerical

- **Group the data** – group into categories that are relevant for your purposes (e.g., full-time vs. part-time employees, different job classes, by age groups, etc.)
- **Visualize** – use graphs (like bar charts or pie charts) or tables to present an overview or summary of your findings
- **Report** – frequencies (i.e., number/count of people, events, outputs, etc.), percentages, and averages (most commonly the mean) as they relate to answering your evaluation questions

Tip: Online survey programs often provide some analysis for you

Qualitative analysis

For information you gather that is not numerical

- Look for **common themes**, trends and patterns in responses (from interviews, focus groups, feedback forms, etc.)

Tip: Create a summary of all your qualitative feedback in a word or excel document so that it is all in one place and easy to keep track of; invest time in labeling and organizing the document upfront so that the information entered into it is easier to sort through

How will you analyze the process evaluation information collected?

Question 6: How will you use the evaluation information to continuously improve?

Process evaluation is intended to track and monitor progress, and inform changes for improvements to your workplace health initiatives. For example, low participation rates and findings in feedback surveys could be used as rationale to improve or change the workplace health program to better suit employee interests.

Think about how you will use the information collected & analyzed in your process evaluation.

Examples of How to Use Evaluation Results

- Discuss your evaluation results with your workplace health committee and establish recommendations for change
- Write reports to share with leadership
- Present findings to appropriate stakeholder & employee groups

Question 3: What information (indicators) do you need to assess if the outcomes/ anticipated changes were achieved?

To assess whether you achieved your outcomes you will need to collect data or information. The pieces of information collected are called **indicators**. As discussed during action planning, different outcomes take varying lengths of time to achieve.

- Changes in individual levels of **awareness, knowledge and attitudes** take less time to achieve (one to two years)
- Changes in **skills and behaviors** tend to take longer to accomplish (two or more years)
- **Organizational changes** can take varying lengths of time with changes in culture or engagement taking up to five years

The table below summarizes potential indicators that can be used to assess different outcomes.

Examples of Indicators

<p><u><i>Awareness (tend to be shorter term changes)</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of participants who attend workplace health training and education sessions • Number of participants who attend workplace health activities • Number of inquiries/ sign-ups about a workplace health program • Number of emails downloaded relating to health content • Number of employees who visit an intra-net health website • Employees' comments/responses to an event
<p><u><i>Knowledge (tend to be shorter term changes)</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test Scores (Pre/Post) administered at training & education sessions to test effectiveness at increasing knowledge • Feedback on benefits of or suggested improvements for a program • Feedback on whether the program fits the needs of employees
<p><u><i>Behaviour (tend to be longer term changes)</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants' level of satisfaction or engagement • Number of employees using onsite gym or accessing passes • Increased number of steps/physical activity • Number of employees choosing healthy food options in cafeteria • Number of employees participating in smoking cessation program through a workplace health program • Increase in number of employees practicing better sun safety due to awareness program at workplace • Number of employees accessing better mental health resources at work • Number of employees participating in on-site cancer screening programs

- Perception of changes in workplace culture regarding workplace health

Organizational (tend to be longer term changes)

- Dedicated budget for the workplace health program
- Changes in productivity
- Changes in presenteeism/absenteeism/ lost or sick time
- Changes in labour turnover
- Reduction in short-term / long-term disability claims
- Reduction in drug costs
- Reduction in labour turnover costs

Example:

Outcome: *Increased awareness of mental health supports*

Indicators:

- 1) *Number of employees that attended an overview presentation from EFAP provider*
- 2) *Number of EFAP brochures picked up from Human Resources*

What information do you need to gather to assess whether you achieved your intended outcomes?

Question 4: How will you gather information (data sources)?

Now that you have determined the indicators needed to measure your progress, you need to consider where you will collect this information from, meaning which data sources you will use. There are **four main methods to collecting data for evaluation**:

- Talking to people
- Getting written feedback
- Reviewing existing data & documentation
- Observing/tracking

Some **specific data collection tools** are described below. Consider the following factors to determine which data collection tools to use:

- Which tools are already in place
- How easily new tools can be created (cost, skill required)
- How easy it will be to implement the tool (time, resources needed, internal approvals required)
- How easily the information can be collected
- How usable (meaningful, actionable, impactful) the information collected will be
- How easily the information collected can be analyzed
- The target audience that you will want to collect responses from

Regardless of the data collection method used, ensure that employee anonymity and confidentiality is respected and that employees are kept in the loop on results when possible.

Tool	Tips for Use	Example
Observations	Collecting data based on what you can observe; you should determine in advance what observations you are looking for.	Head count of employees who participate in a workplace health program or the number of employees who ask questions in a discussion. Noting enquires from management on workplace wellness resources available.
Individual Interviews	Helpful when you have a small number of participants; allows you to get detailed, descriptive information about a person’s feeling, insights, and perceptions; can be conducted face-to-face or by telephone.	Individual interviews with team leads regarding a potential workplace health initiative and how it may be accepted by employees, or interviews with a small number of employees about their experience participating in the program.

Focus Groups (i.e., group interviews)	Best conducted in small groups of 7-10 employees; beneficial over individual interviews if group discussion and interaction is of particular interest; typically conducted face-to-face.	Group discussion and feedback on a large-scale workplace health initiative such as a policy or strategy.
Questionnaires	Allows you to quickly and easily gather information from a large number of employees; doesn't allow for gathering as detailed information as an interview or focus group, but can give a better sense of overall perspective; can be online or paper-based.	Employee interest surveys.
Document Reviews	Review of existing documents (e.g., workplace policies, meeting minutes, newsletters/intranet articles, etc.) to get background information and/or an overview of the workplace on a specific topic.	Review of workplace health policies to assess current implementation/enforcement, or review for areas where additional policies could be developed. Review reports from benefits providers, EFAP, Human Resources.
Event Evaluations	Feedback from employees to assess whether the objectives of an event were met and whether people were satisfied with the event.	Short paper survey for people to fill out after participating in a workplace health event.

Example:

Outcome: *Increased awareness of mental health supports*

Indicators:

- 1) *Number of employees that attended an overview presentation from EFAP provider*
- 2) *Number of EFAP brochures picked up from Human Resources*

Data Sources:

- 1) *Observation: head count at EFAP provider presentation*
- 2) *Observation: counting number of brochures picked up*

How will you collect the information needed to evaluate your outcomes?

Question 4a: How often do you need to gather the information (collection frequency)?

Once you have determined the tools you will use to collect your process evaluation data, plan when and how often you will collect this information.

Benchmark Needed? If you would like to understand changes that took place as a result of your program ideally you will gather before (pre-program), after (post-program) and follow up (months after program) information. In other cases you may collect evaluation information on an ongoing basis throughout your program.

Examples of when to collect data:

- To measure improvements in absenteeism due to your workplace health efforts as a whole, you may choose to gather information on the number of absenteeism days before your program starts (pre-program) and once you have completed the activities outlined in your action plan (post-program)
- To measure changes in knowledge due to your workplace health efforts, such as employee training sessions, you may choose to conduct a pre-and post-training survey.
- To measure changes in behaviour due to your workplace health efforts, such as employee training sessions, you may also include a follow up survey six months post-event

Example:

Outcome: *Increased awareness of mental health supports*

Indicators:

- 1) *Number of employees that attended an overview presentation from EFAP provider*
- 2) *Number of EFAP brochures picked up from Human Resources*

Data Sources & Frequency:

- 1) *Head count at each EFAP provider presentation*
- 2) *Monthly counting of the number of brochures picked up*

When will you gather your outcome evaluation information?

Question 5: How will you analyze the information collected?

Focus on keeping your data analysis simple and meaningful. As with collecting data, when analyzing data it is important to keep the purpose of your evaluation in mind². Consider how you will analyze the data early so that you don't collect data that will not be used².

Quantitative analysis

For information you gather that is numerical

- **Group the data** – group into categories that are relevant for your purposes (e.g., full-time vs. part-time employees, different job classes, by age groups, etc.)
- **Visualize** – use graphs (like bar charts or pie charts) or tables to present an overview or summary of your findings
- **Report** – frequencies (i.e., number/count of people, events, outputs etc.), increases/decreases, percentages and averages (most commonly the mean) as they relate to answering your evaluation questions

Tip: Online survey programs often provide some analysis for you

Qualitative analysis

For information you gather that is not numerical

- Look for **common themes**, trends and patterns in responses (from interviews, focus groups, feedback forms, etc.)

Tip: Create a summary of all your qualitative feedback in a word or excel document so that it is all in one place and easy to keep track of; invest time in labeling and organizing the document upfront so that the information entered into it is easier to sort through.

How will you analyze the outcome evaluation information collected?

Question 6: How will you use the evaluation information to continuously improve?

Outcome evaluation is intended to measure the changes produced by your workplace health program, and assess whether the changes that were intended were achieved. Think about how you will use the information collected & analyzed in your outcome evaluation.

For example, no increase in participation rates and no change measured in absenteeism could be used as rationale to improve or change the workplace health program to better meet employee needs.

Examples of How to Use Evaluation Results

- Discuss your evaluation results with your workplace health committee and use to inform future strategic planning
- Write reports to share with leadership
- Present findings to appropriate stakeholder & employee groups

Tips for Implementing Your Evaluation Plan

- Your evaluation plan is an **extension of your action plan**; when defining tasks for implementing a specific activity include the evaluation components as part of the planning process so that they are not forgotten
 - Include who will be responsible for different components of the evaluation, resources required, and the timeline for completion
- Like action planning implementation progress, make evaluation progress a **standing item** for discussion at your workplace health committee meetings
- In addition to using evaluation findings to inform future improvements, utilize feedback to make **immediate changes** as needed
- Consolidate your evaluation results into a **report** that summarizes findings & recommendations; for ideas on what to include in your report see the box below
- Talk to your **leaders** about how they want to receive evaluation information, including preferred format & frequency of updates
- Consider **other stakeholders** (union groups, human resources, OHS) that you will be sharing this information with; consider how they want to receive evaluation information, including preferred format & frequency of updates
- When possible **keep employees in the loop** on the results of your workplace health evaluation; this is especially important if employees' opinions have been collected as part of the evaluation process

Evaluation Report Key Components

- 1) An executive summary that consists of "Findings at a Glance"
- 2) An overview of the evaluation methods utilized
- 3) A summary of your workplace health program activities with findings from your process evaluation
- 4) A summary of your workplace health outcomes with findings from your outcome evaluation
- 5) Conclusions: identification of the most important evaluation data
- 6) Recommendations
 - a. Pay attention to the economic and political context
 - b. Provide options for improvement
 - c. Specific requests from leaders
 - d. Consider timelines

Tips for Using the Online Evaluation Planning Tools

- Use the **“Program Steps” tab** at the top of the BHBB website to access the process and outcome evaluation documents and to access your completed drafts
- Do not use the browser back button; instead use the **“Previous” button** at the bottom of each page
- **Use a modern browser:** The BHBB website has been optimized for viewing in a common, modern web browser (i.e., Windows Internet Explorer version 9 and above, Firefox, Safari and Chrome) with JavaScript turned on. If you are running any other browser or older browser versions, you may encounter problems with certain sections of the website
- **Save your content:** While all information auto-saves when you hit the “Next” button, save frequently to ensure that you don’t lose your work
- **Error message:** If you receive an error message at any time please log out and log back into the BHBB website. If the problem persists please make your BHBB contact aware
- **Time out:** The BHBB website connection times out after a period of inactivity. If you will not be working on your tool for a period of time please save what you have done and close the webpage
- We encourage you to **create drafts of your evaluation plan** on the BHBB Website. If you choose to create a draft document please ensure that it is labeled clearly
- **Provide feedback:** BHBB is a pilot project. Feedback on your experiences with our tools is invaluable. Please take the time to complete the tool evaluation survey that will appear when you submit your Evaluation Plan

References

- ¹ Fraser Health Authority (2009). A Guide to Planning and Conducting Program Evaluation. Retrieved from <https://www.fraserhealth.ca/media/2009-05-11-A-Guide-to-Planning-and-Conducting-Program-Evaluation-v2.pdf>
- ² Ontario Public Health Association (2009). Towards Evidence Informed Practice: Program Evaluation Tool. Retrieved from http://www.healthincommon.ca/wp-content/uploads/TEIP_Program_Evaluation_Tool_CompletePackage.pdf