

TEMPLATE FOR INTERPRETING EVIDENCE

“What do the data tell us?”

This worksheet supports the interpretation of assessment evidence through review, reflection, and dialogue. Interpreting evidence involves organizing and examining data, identifying patterns and themes, and considering what the results may mean in relation to your assessment questions and goals. This step emphasizes shared interpretation and thoughtful reflection as part of evidence-based decision making.

Step 1: Restate the Program or Service Context

Use this section to base your interpretation on the specific program, service, or assessment effort.

Program or Service Name: _____

Assessment or Data Source Reviewed:

(i.e. survey results, focus group responses, rubric scores, etc.)

Assessment Question or Purpose:

(What were you trying to learn from this assessment?)

Step 2: Organize and Review the Data

Use this section to ensure the data are organized and ready to be interpreted. Focus on reviewing the data before drawing conclusions.

What type of data are you reviewing?

- Qualitative
- Quantitative
- Both

How was the data organized for review?

(i.e. spreadsheets, tables, coded themes, summaries, etc.)

What initial patterns or trends stand out at first glance?

Commented [MP1]: Part of the assessment cycle?

I think saying step here is confusing since right below that you have step one.

Commented [MP2R1]: I like that the other template for decision making more clearly references the assessment cycle here.

Step 3a: Examine Quantitative Data (if applicable)

Use this section to interpret numerical data such as survey responses, ratings, or counts. Focus on identifying trends, distributions, and notable differences.

What do the numbers tell you?

(i.e. frequencies, averages, ranges, or changes over time, etc.)

Are there clear trends or patterns in the data?

Are there any results that stand out as higher, lower, unexpected, etc.?

Step 3b: Examine Qualitative Data (if applicable)

Use this section to interpret non-numerical data such as open-ended responses, interviews, or focus groups. Focus on themes, recurring ideas, and meaningful responses.

What themes or common ideas appear in the data?

Were themes identified based on predefined ideas, emerging patterns, or a combination of both?

Are there any responses or quotes that strongly illustrate a theme?

Step 4: Data Dialogue & Interpreterion

Use this section to support discussion and collective interpretation. Interpretation is most effective when multiple perspectives are involved.

Who participated in reviewing or discussing this data?

What surprised you or others during this review?

How does this data align or not align with other data sources you have?

If you could explore one area further, what would you want to learn more about?

Step 5: Identify Areas of Strength

Use this section to focus on what is working well. Identifying strengths helps recognize effective practices and areas to build upon.

Based on the evidence, what are we doing well?

What should be celebrated or acknowledged?

What practices, programs, or approaches may be contributing to these strengths?

Step 6: Identify Areas for Growth

Use this section to reflect on areas where the evidence suggests opportunities for improvement.

What areas may need attention or improvement?

Are there gaps, inconsistencies, or areas of concern in the results?

How do these areas for growth align with recent department or program priorities?

Step 7: Representation and Perspective

Use this section to consider who is represented in the data and whose perspectives may be missing.

Does this data reflect a range of perspectives and experiences?

Who may be missing from the data?

How might conclusions drawn from this data affect different groups?

Step 8: Synthesize the Data

Use this section to reflect on the meaning and implications of the evidence.

What do the data tell you about your assessment question?

What limitations should be considered when interpreting these results?

What insights feel most important to carry forward?

Step 9: Prepare for [Decision Making](#)

Use this section to prepare for the transition from interpreting evidence to using it to inform actions and decisions.

What questions remain after reviewing this evidence?

What additional information, if any, is needed before taking action?
