

THE ADMINISTRATOR'S ROLE IN EVALUATION USE

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CSE Report No. 225
1984

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The work reported herein was supported in whole or in part under a grant to the Center for the Study of Evaluation from the National Institute of Education, U.S. Department of Education. However, the opinions and findings expressed here do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the National Institute of Education, and no official NIE endorsement should be inferred.

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INTRODUCTION

Evaluation is a potentially powerful decision-making tool. It can provide a valuable resource for administrators, for example, who are interested in finding out how well the programs they are responsible for are running, and deciding whether these programs could be improved. To have this potential, an evaluation should be planned around questions reflecting program operations and expectations. It must be conducted in ways to ensure, first, that these questions are answered and, second, that the answers can actually be put to use in making decisions about whether the program should continue to run as is or if it needs to be modified.

Although there are potential obstacles facing the administrator who wants an evaluation emphasizing practical uses, there are also organizing principles that can be applied to overcome these obstacles. This paper discusses the administrator's role in organizing an evaluation to minimize the obstacles and strengthen the potential for use.

Organizing for Evaluation Use

To have a high potential for use, an evaluation needs to be carefully planned, organized, conducted, and communicated to likely users of the information it provides. This kind of evaluation rarely happens by chance; someone has to take the responsibility to make it happen. Certainly, an evaluator can and should take some of the responsibility for organizing an evaluation for use. However, it has become clear that the role a program administrator takes with regard to the evaluation has a marked effect on its use potential. In this paper, therefore, we propose an organizing

framework that administrators, working by themselves or in cooperation with their evaluators, can apply to gain tactical influence over the direction the evaluation takes. That influence is intended to increase the evaluation's potential for use in decision making.

Evaluation Purpose

The framework we propose reflects a particular evaluation perspective. That is, we define evaluation as a means of providing information that can be used to make decisions about programs. These decisions might stem from questions about whether the program could be improved, or they might stem from questions about whether the kinds of attitudes people have about the program could be improved.

For an evaluation to be used for these kinds of decision areas, the intended users must be identified, their program questions and concerns must be carefully formulated, and appropriate evaluation procedures and reporting techniques must then be selected and implemented.

The extent to which a program administrator takes responsibility for identifying the intended users, determining their questions about the program, shaping the evaluation procedures for answering the questions, deciding what kinds of information will be collected, and ensuring that the information is effectively communicated can profoundly affect the degree to which the information is used in decision making.

Evaluation Use

By use we mean applying evaluation information to the resolution of specific problems, questions, or concerns about an educational program. To be sure, evaluation can have other, perhaps unintended consequences, but we do not emphasize these in this paper.

There are many potential users of evaluation information. In a school setting, for example, there might be a variety of programs in operation, such as: a state-funded bilingual program; a district-developed inservice program to train teachers to implement new curriculum materials; a remedial math or reading program designed for students in need of specialized instruction.

Each of these programs might be evaluated and each could have a variety of potential evaluation users. Users might include the people responsible for program operation, for instance, such as the director, other administrators, curriculum developers, instructional staff, and funding agencies. Other users might consist of parents, advisory councils, and community organizations with an interest in the program. Since each of these groups can have professional and personal interests in the program and its evaluation, each is a potential user of the information it provides. A central concern in organizing for evaluation use, therefore, is the selection of the intended users of the evaluation.

Evaluation information can be used in a variety of ways. For example, staff of an instructional program might use evaluation information in deciding about changes in program content or methods. An advisory council might refer to and apply evaluation findings as they consider their role in a program. A school principal might use findings to engender a positive attitudinal response in a group whose support is important to the well-being of school operations. These latter attitudinal uses, in any setting, are frequently necessary precursors to the more direct, programmatic applications.

In addition to careful selection of the intended users, therefore, the administrator organizing for evaluation use must also plan for the kinds of uses that are expected of each user or group.

Factors Affecting Use

In any setting, there are many factors that can have an effect on evaluation use. By factor, we have in mind any characteristic or element present in a given situation that can affect the evaluation's potential for use. These factors stem not only from the conduct of the evaluation, but also from the surrounding social, political, organizational, administrative, and programmatic context. Factors potentially affecting an evaluation's use, for example, include the kind of role the evaluator chooses, the intended users' views about the program being evaluated, the various requirements for the evaluation, and its proposed methods.

If these factors are accepted as givens, they can reduce or negate the evaluation's use potential. For instance, if an intended group of users firmly believes that a program could not possibly be improved upon, it may be difficult to convince them to modify their view, no matter what the evaluation findings might reveal. On the other hand, if the evaluation is structured and organized around intended users and kinds of uses, and if the possible effects of various factors on the use potential are planned for, then the evaluation's likelihood for use can be greatly increased.

Later in the paper we will describe the full range of factors that have been shown to affect an evaluation's use and discuss an organizing framework administrators can follow to minimize negative factor influence and strengthen positive factor influence. The organizing framework, as

well as the associated operating terms we have discussed above, grew out of our research on use over the past several years (Alkin et al., 1983; Burry, 1983).

BACKGROUND ON EVALUATION USE

For a good number of years, the terms use or utilization have been cropping up in the evaluation literature. Up to about the mid 1970's, however, discussions of use relied fairly heavily on impressionistic and anecdotal information. There was a lot of talk reflecting what people thought use looked like, with explanations often relying on speculation (Rossi, 1972; Mann, 1972; Cohen & Garet, 1975).

Around the mid 1970's the picture began to change. Then we began to see the results of systematic research on use, research trying to discover what use actually means, whether or not it occurs, and what works for it or against it (Alkin, 1975; Patton et al., 1975).

To a great extent, the careful study of use grew out of the kinds of promises made for evaluation. For example, evaluation was to be an important tool for decision making and for improving policy and practice. All the evaluator had to do, it was thought, was to provide valid data. People would see the light and use the information provided; decision making would be more rational and policy and practice would improve.

By now we know this was a naive view. Certainly, information validity, especially when that term is mutually agreed upon by evaluator and potential user, can contribute to use. But so long as evaluation and its use were (1) seen as the sole responsibility of the evaluator, and (2) expected to produce quick, observable, and rational decisions in action, the promise was not met.

One of the things explaining the seeming lack of use was that for a long time many people thought that information received was necessarily put to use, and put to use quickly. When that did not bear up in practice, it was assumed that no use was taking place.

As the research was to show, however, use was occurring, though in a form quite different from and perhaps more modest than had been expected (Alkin et al., 1974; Patton et al., 1975). We began to understand that evaluation processes and evaluation information usually accumulate over time before they are finally put to use. And even when they are used in making a decision, that decision may also have been influenced by other kinds of information and forces outside of the evaluation. This kind of use can and does take place and when it does it can help to improve decision making and practice.

However, there is something else that helps explain actual lack of use. That is, for use to take place, we had thought, such technical factors as the quality of the evaluation's procedures would be important. And that is true. Procedural soundness can certainly contribute to use, but so can other factors, factors that are somewhat removed from the technical realm.

For example, when Alkin (1975) was looking at factors contributing to use, he discovered that the stance taken by the evaluator with respect to a program's social context could have an effect on the evaluation's use potential. Similarly, Patton's (1975) research pointed up the contribution to use of the "personal factor" which is typified, for instance, when someone takes direct responsibility for trying to make use happen.

Until recently, that "someone" was usually taken to be the evaluator, the "provider" of information. Our research, however, as it has amplified the "personal factor" and discovered others contributing to use, demonstrates that the role of the potential "user" of information, such as an administrator, is just as important as that of the evaluator in promoting use. We believe that in many situations the evaluator him- or herself will lack the power, prestige, political sensitivity, or contextual understanding necessary to promote use. Our work has shown that use will frequently require the influence of a program administrator who does possess these and other attributes. That is the administrator role, based on our research on use, that we propose in this paper.

CSE Research on Use

Drawing on the early studies mentioned above (Alkin, 1975; Patton, 1975), we conducted several empirical studies of evaluation use. Among these were: (1) evaluation case studies; (2) an evaluator field study; and (3) a user survey. These studies contributed to our synthesis of the knowledge on use and led to a practical handbook for administrators who wish to organize their program evaluations for use.

The evaluation case studies: The case studies (Alkin, Daillak, & White, 1979) focused, over a period of two years, on five different programs with required evaluations. These cases provided detailed descriptions of school-level program implementation and evaluation, and how the evaluation process unfolded in each program. Our analyses uncovered the people who shaped the evaluation process, how it was used in each case, how it fitted in with other school operations, and how it influenced

decisions about the program. Further, by identifying some of the factors promoting these uses, we were able to develop a conceptual framework to guide our future study of use.

The evaluator field study: Drawing on the emerging framework, Daillak (1980) spent a year as a participant-observer working closely with three school-district program evaluators in the belief that observation and analyses of evaluators -- the providers of information -- at work would illuminate conditions of use. By observing these evaluators at work Daillak was able to elaborate some of our previously identified factors, particularly those reflecting the evaluation's organizational setting, as well as the kinds of tactics that evaluators adopted to increase their use-enhancing effect.

The user survey: The user survey (Stecher, Alkin, & Flesher, 1981) took place over the course of a year in 22 schools in the district in which the field study had previously been conducted. Our concern here was to characterize the role of a particular information user, the program administrator, in terms of the nature of the decisions typically confronting administrators, and to uncover how and what kinds of information come to shape these decisions.

The interviews provided a picture of the kinds of decisions -- programmatic and other -- school administrators need to make to do their jobs, the ways that they use evaluation and other information -- to pinpoint a need, to amplify a previous conclusion -- as they form these decisions, and the broad strategies they adopt to stimulate others to use information in their programmatic responsibilities.

Synthesis and handbook: To help synthesize the knowledge on use we developed an annotated review of the relevant empirical and conceptual-theoretical literature, drawn from educational and other settings, (Burry, 1983), and a handbook for the administrator-user who plans to build use into his or her program evaluation (Alkin et al., 1983). All of our work to this point illustrated the importance of user-evaluator collaboration in promoting use given various factor impacts. The handbook therefore clusters factors into recognizable patterns which reflect the stages of the use process and which can be influenced to promote use.

Factors Affecting Evaluation Use

On the basis of the work described above, we identified and classified the individual factors affecting evaluation use into three related categories -- human, context, and procedural or methodological. How these factors interact together determines the extent to which evaluation is likely to be used.

Figure 1 lists the three kinds of factors. Those in the human category reflect evaluator and user characteristics that have a strong influence on use. Included here are such factors as people's attitude toward and interest in the program and its evaluation, their backgrounds and organizational positions, and their professional styles.

Context factors include the kinds of requirements and fiscal constraints the evaluation faces, and the relationships between the program being evaluated and other segments of its larger organization and surrounding community.

Figure 1: Factors Affecting Use

I. Human Factors

A. Evaluator Characteristics

1. commitment to use
2. willingness to involve users
3. choice of role
4. rapport with users
5. political sensitivity
6. credibility
7. background and identity
 - a. gender
 - b. title

B. User Characteristics

1. identity
 - a. range of potential users
 - b. organizational positions
 - c. professional experience levels
2. interest in the evaluation
 - a. views about the project being evaluated
 - b. expectations for the evaluation
 - c. predisposition toward the evaluation
 - d. perceived need
 - e. perceived risks
3. commitment to use
4. professional style
 - a. administrative and organizational skills
 - b. initiative
 - c. openness to new ideas or change
5. information processing
 - a. preferences for particular forms
 - b. how information is processed

II. Context Factors

A. Pre-existing Evaluation Bounds

1. written requirements
2. other contractual obligations
3. fiscal constraints

B. Organizational Features

1. intraorganizational
 - a. role of central/district office
 - b. interrelationship between unit and central/district administration
 - c. institutional arrangements
 - d. unit level autonomy
 - e. sources of information beyond evaluation likely to be in use
 - f. perceived institutional risk
2. external features
 - a. community climate
 - b. community influence
 - c. role of other agencies

C. Project Characteristics

1. age/maturity
2. innovativeness
3. overlap with other projects

III. Evaluation Factors

A. Evaluation Procedures

1. methods used
 - a. appropriateness
 - b. rigor
2. dealing with mandated tasks
3. used of a general model

B. Information Dialogue

1. amount and quality of interaction between evaluator and users

C. Substance of Evaluation Information

1. information relevance
2. information specificity

D. Evaluation Reporting

1. frequency of information provided
2. timing of information
3. format presentations
 - a. oral presentations
 - b. written reports
 - c. statistical and narrative data

The evaluation factors refer to the actual conduct of the evaluation, and include how the evaluator and users work together, the procedures used in the evaluation, and the quality of the information it provides.

The factors in each of the three groups have a demonstrated importance to use, and some of them will likely require administrative influence to promote use. In the next section of the paper, therefore, we will offer a series of observations drawn from the empirical studies of use. These observations help define each factor and suggest the kinds of influence each may have, as a precursor to discussion of (1) factor interaction patterns, and (2) administrative organizing to promote use.

Observations Drawn from Empirical Studies

With respect to the human factors affecting use, an evaluation's use potential is likely to increase to the extent that:

1. The evaluator --

- is personally committed to seeing his or her work put to use, and actively makes efforts to facilitate the use of information;
- is willing to involve users in the evaluation through cooperative planning and conduct of the evaluation and its uses;
- recognizes that alternative evaluation roles exist, chooses a role that is appropriate in the given setting, and focuses on serving program needs and questions in addition to any external requirements;
- develops rapport with users by earning their trust in an atmosphere of harmony and agreement;
- is politically sensitive to the program and understands the relationship among formal and informal power sources, opinion makers, decision making processes, and the function of evaluation as one of the inputs to these processes;
- establishes credibility in terms of technical competence and personal and professional manner.

2. The users --

- are clearly identified so that the evaluator understands the range of organizational positions and professional experience levels -- administrative vs. operational, sole or shared decision-making authority, familiarity with evaluation -- which are represented among the users and which bear on their potential for using information;
- view the project in such ways that they would be willing to modify these views, if warranted;
- have specific expectations for the evaluation -- determining the program's efficiency, understanding its processes, assessing its outcomes -- which are translated into questions and concerns that the evaluation will address;
- are predisposed to accepting the evaluation's findings, which may be because they
- have a high perceived need for evaluative answers to their questions, and
- perceive the risks of the evaluation as outweighed by the potential benefits. In addition, they
- are personally committed to using evaluation information as their questions and concerns are answered, and
- have sufficient administrative and organizational skills to act on information, to get things done. They will
- take the initiative to use evaluation information in their own area of responsibility and, if necessary, to stimulate others to follow their example. Further, they
- are open to new ideas or change that stem from the findings, even if these findings suggest they need to modify their original views of the project. And, as the evaluation process unfolds, their positive interest in the evaluation remains high, because they
- ask for and receive the kinds of information they prefer to use -- narrative, descriptive, or some combination -- through the kinds of processes -- oral reports, written reports, detailed or summary treatments -- they are most comfortable or routinely familiar with.

With respect to the context factors affecting use, an evaluation's use potential is likely to increase to the extent that:

1. The pre-existing evaluation bounds --
 - ° are characterized by a guided harmony rather than by conflict and tension. The evaluation's written requirements -- legal codes, federal/state requirements -- permit sufficient flexibility so that the evaluator can respond to such other contractual requirements as those set by program administrators or operators.

2. The organizational features --
 - ° are marked by amicable co-existence in an atmosphere stressing discussion and the negotiation of problems and needs;
 - ° facilitate the central/district office -- often the evaluation sponsor -- role in balancing broad system concerns with those of the individual units, such as the schools who are subject to evaluation;
 - ° permit sufficient unit level autonomy so that unit (e.g., a school) questions receive a fair share of the evaluator's attention as he or she addresses a variety of broad organizational and unit questions of interest;
 - ° promote frank discussion of the perceived institutional risks and, where there is a question of whether the evaluation benefits will outweigh the risks, consider the possible outcomes and resultant actions the organization might take;
 - ° are free from undue or negative influence from the surrounding community or other agencies.

3. Program characteristics --
 - ° are clearly defined on such dimensions as age/maturity, innovativeness, and overlap with other programs because these characteristics have a bearing on the kinds of procedures the evaluator should select and the kinds of information he or she should provide in order to stimulate use.

With respect to the evaluation factors affecting use, the use potential is likely to increase to the extent that:

1. The evaluation procedures --

- are appropriate to the particular project. A selected procedure must be appropriate as a method for addressing the given question, and also appropriate in the context of the project;
- address the matter of rigor from the dual standpoint of accepted standards of evaluation practice and the users' conception of what constitutes rigor;
- deal with mandated tasks -- funding agency requirements, central office needs, unit level questions -- in a balanced manner so that no single point of view is seen to dominate;
- reflect the viewpoint that no single evaluation model is inherently superior; instead, evaluation is seen as a tool for decision making and the selection of evaluation procedures is guided by the decision-making process.

2. Information dialogue --

- reflects purposeful, guided sharing of ideas between evaluator and users;
- is ongoing, in sufficient amounts to stimulate or maintain user interest in the evaluation, with quality growing out of collegiality and reciprocity.

3. Evaluation substance --

- is relevant from users' standpoint because it constitutes pertinent answers to the questions they have raised; and
- is specific by focusing its content on the needs and interests of the particular user or user group.

4. Evaluation reporting --

- is marked by frequent and well-focused provision of information;
- is timely in that it reflects program chronology and meshes with important events stemming from the program's decision needs;
- uses whatever variety of presentation formats -- oral, written, statistical/narrative, formal or informal -- that is appropriate to the range of users and their evaluation interests.

Factor Interactions

The preceding observations begin to suggest that factors are likely to

interact to affect use. Here we will discuss a few possible interaction patterns to suggest the kinds of phenomena the administrator might need to consider as he or she organizes the evaluation for use, primarily because many of the factors are beyond the control of the evaluator.

For example, to help promote program-level use, the evaluator should address questions relevant to the program, questions of interest to program staff. The extent to which the evaluator is successful will depend, in part, on the various requirements for the evaluation, such as those set by a funding agency, and whether any particular requirement is allowed to dominate. But it will also depend on users' interest in the evaluation and their commitment to applying its findings. However, users' predisposition to make this application can be affected by perceived institutional risk, pressures from the program's community, and the timing at which reports are provided, to mention but a few of the possibilities.

Many of the factors and interactions suggested above may not be amenable to evaluator influence in the interest of use. For example, while the evaluator may commit him- or herself to use, the associated user commitment, which also contributes to the application of results, is properly in the administrator's sphere of influence.

In short, to the extent that the factors mentioned above are subject to influence in a given setting, many are in the administrator's domain and are therefore perhaps more amenable to his or her influence. And, this influence, if necessary, can cut across all three factor categories, not only the context category traditionally associated with administrative responsibility.

In the concluding section of this paper we will suggest a way of organizing factor patterns for evaluation use.

ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZING TO PROMOTE USE

Figure 2, which is excerpted from the handbook (Alkin et al, 1983), places the factors which we believe are central to use in most evaluation contexts into a pattern which will facilitate organizing for use. In this pattern the factors are grouped to reflect stages in the process of planning for and conducting an evaluation to maximize its use potential.

The administrator who assumes the use-organizing responsibility can use this factor pattern -- with any appropriate emphasis, addition, or deletion of factors given the particular context -- while he or she considers the program, its evaluation, and the setting in which it takes place. This consideration consists of asking oneself a series of questions in light of the listed factors with the intention of determining how the program embodies each factor; that is, deciding whether that embodiment is likely to have a positive, neutral, or negative effect on use, and then devising strategies to strengthen or maintain positive effects while minimizing negative effects. These strategies may then be implemented by the administrator and/or the evaluator or some other potential user.

For example, assume that a program administrator, going through the process described above and using the scheme suggested in Figure 2, asks him- or herself the following question about setting the stage: "As part of the intra-organizational features, is there any perceived institutional risk that might hamper use?" After due deliberation and discussion

FIGURE 2:
Factor Pattern For Evaluation Use

A. Setting the Stage

Pre-existing evaluation bounds
User identity
Program characteristics
Intra-organizational features
External features



B. Identifying/Organizing the Participants

User interest in evaluation
User commitment to use
Evaluator characteristics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • background/identity • commitment to use • willingness to involve user in evaluation • choice of role • political sensitivity • credibility
Evaluation procedures—plan
User professional style(s)



C. Operationalizing the Interactive Process

Evaluation procedures—execution
Substance of evaluation information
Evaluator commitment to use
Information dialogue—formative
User information processing preferences



D. Adding the Finishing Touches

Evaluation reporting
Evaluator characteristics (selected)
Information dialogue—summative
User commitment to use



with potential users, the administrator decides that one particular user group feels that the evaluation poses some risk to the institution and that the degree of risk is likely to outweigh possible benefits. Other potential users either feel that the evaluation presents little or no risk or that benefits to be accrued outweigh any possible risks.

Now, a particular user group's reluctance to apply evaluation findings is one manifestation of a two-part problem. First, this group's acceptance and application of information may be important to a larger decision area, one that may need to be made consensually by all users. Given the reluctance of one segment of the decision-making group to participate, it may be that the resultant decision concern is never fully resolved.

Second, those with the sense of institutional risk may advance beyond reluctance to participate to outright attempts to convince others of potential dangers. If they are successful, then initially receptive users may later opt to remove themselves from the evaluation effort and, further, may attempt to thwart the entire effort.

In such a situation, the administrator-organizer would need to ask other questions in order to determine: the reason for the sense of risk on the part of one user group; whether or not that perception is justified; the extent to which the group in question may attempt to convince others of the imminent risk; the likelihood of success. The organizer would then need to devise appropriate strategies given the answers to the preceding questions.

For example, it may be that the sense of risk is unjustified or has become magnified, perhaps on the basis of some previous evaluation

experience. In this situation, the administrator would need to convince the hesitant group that this perception is unjustified so that the evaluator's credibility does not suffer and the necessary user group involvement is achieved.

To the extent that the administrator him- or herself encounters difficulty in minimizing sense of risk, then it may be possible to enlist trusted and respected staff members from among the more receptive users to help convince their colleagues that, in this particular setting, the risk factor is unwarranted and that participation in the use process is justified and important to the larger institution.

Keeping the above potentially inhibiting factor example in mind, and the kinds of question-raising process and associated strategy formulation the administrator considered, we will now suggest possible questions for factors in each of the four stages in the use process, as depicted in Figure 2. These questions are intended to guide administrative organizing for evaluation use, and their answers, as with those of all the factors displayed, should inform the administrator's selection of strategies to build use into the evaluation.

Setting the Stage

Setting the stage involves determining, before the evaluation planning process begins, the kinds of factor interactions likely to affect use in a given setting. While these factors may be set to some extent, they are not necessarily "givens." Note in Figure 2 that this determination considers possible effects stemming from the pre-existing evaluation bounds, the potential users identified, program characteristics, and intra-organizational and external features.

Questions to be raised by the administrator-organizer here would include, for example:

- Who are the intended users of the evaluation information?
- Are the pre-existing evaluation bounds such that there may be potential conflict, real or perceived, between program expectations and other requirements?
- How is the program best characterized with respect to its maturity, innovativeness, and overlap with other programs?

Identifying/Organizing the Participants

After setting the stage for evaluation planning has taken place, a series of questions which clarify user interest at the same time as detecting relevant evaluator characteristics should be raised. This process should result in the formulation of the evaluator's role and the evaluation procedures, carefully matched to users' interests, expectations, and professional styles, which will be used.

Among the questions that ought to be considered at this stage are:

- Are the intended users committed to use and, if so, is their commitment rhetorical or real?
- What do the intended users expect from the evaluation; are these expectations likely to affect their desire or ability to apply information?
- Is the evaluator committed to use and, if so, is his/her commitment active or passive?
- What would be the most appropriate role for the evaluator to take with respect to the program, and will the evaluator be willing and able to assume this role?
- What kind of evaluation procedures will provide the best match with users' professional styles?

Operationalizing the Interactive Process

Up to this point, the administrator-organizer has been anticipating

future evaluation actions and effects; in this third stage the carefully planned evaluation procedures are put into effect. The central factor in this group, execution of evaluation procedures, will temper all other factors grouped here.

Among the questions that should be considered are:

- What is the most effective data-collection schedule, and are there any possible impediments to this schedule?
- Do any of the proposed procedures require any special arrangements and, if so, with whom?
- For each intended user, what particular kinds of information and in what kinds of format will be deemed relevant?
- What kinds of dialogue, via what techniques, will best match users' routine information processing styles?

Adding the Finishing Touches

This activity is the final phase in maximizing the potential for evaluation use. The group of factors of interest here represents that point in the evaluation process where most, or all, of the evaluation information has actually been collected. That information must now be communicated in such a way that the designated users will actually apply the information.

Among the questions the administrator-organizer should consider here are:

- What combination of written and oral reporting will most enhance use of information?
- At what time(s) should these reports be provided?
- After the reports are provided, will any final arguments be needed to convince users to act on the information?

Finally, note that the answers arrived at in any one stage will influence questions and organizing strategies stemming from a subsequent stage. Further, the process is cyclical and permits specifications proposed at an earlier stage to be modified (e.g., stressing/de-emphasizing one of the evaluation questions) in light of subsequent planning, conduct, and emerging receptivity toward the evaluation and its use.

IMPLICATIONS

It is clear on the basis of research findings that administrators and evaluators need to become more aware of and sensitive to each other's role in the use of evaluation information. It is equally apparent that we cannot assume that an evaluator working alone will be able to build use potential into his or her work. That is, an evaluator, acting without administrative direction and support in the design and conduct of the evaluation, is unlikely to be able to ensure that the evaluation will be put to maximum use. The finding of central significance is that evaluation's use potential is highest when a user, frequently a program administrator, assumes some of the responsibility for building use into the evaluation. The administrator can act on this responsibility by ensuring that the procedures, focus, and tone of the evaluation are technically and contextually appropriate for specified users and their information uses in a particular setting.

It is essential that those of us who have responsibilities in either the administrative or the evaluative endeavor -- perhaps as teachers, practitioners, theorists -- make what efforts we can to advance the view of shared administrator-evaluator responsibility in promoting the use of

evaluation. The organizing framework we have outlined here, with its matching-up of evaluation characteristics and associated use-enhancing strategies, is intended as a stimulus to promote this shared responsibility.

Such shared responsibility, representing as it does both programmatic and evaluative points of view, will increase evaluation's decision-making relevance and power, and provide an improved means of demonstrating a program's overall effectiveness.

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