Effective Reporting, Communicating and Visualization Tip Sheet

Three Key Questions to Ask Yourself throughout the Evaluation Process:
1. What are you trying to communicate?
2. What is the purpose?
3. Who is the audience?

just as you approach your evaluation with a specific purpose and use, you should also approach your reporting and communication with the same level of intent.

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<th>Seven Questions to Help You Think about Your Audience:</th>
<th>Essential Reporting Components:</th>
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<td>1. Who is a priority and why are they a priority?</td>
<td>• What the program is</td>
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<td>2. What do they already know about the topic?</td>
<td>• How the program operates and is implemented</td>
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<td>3. What is crucial for them to know?</td>
<td>• How the program makes a difference</td>
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<td>4. Where do they prefer to receive their information?</td>
<td>• Findings and recommendations (if any)</td>
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<td>5. What is their preferred format?</td>
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<td>6. What language level is appropriate?</td>
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<td>7. Within what time frame are evaluation updates and reports necessary?</td>
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Sample Checklist for an Evaluation Report
- Provide interim and final reports (no surprises!)
- Tailor the report to your audience
- Include an executive summary that completely summarizes your report and analysis
- Describe essential features of the program
- Explain the focus of the evaluation and its limitations
- Include an adequate summary of evaluation plan and procedures
- Specify the standards and criteria for evaluative judgments
- Explain evaluative judgments and how they are supported by evidence
- List strengths and weaknesses of the evaluation
- Discuss recommendations for action with their advantages, disadvantages and resource implications
- Anticipate how people or organizations might be affected by the findings
- Present minority opinions or rejoinders where necessary
- Verify that the report is accurate and unbiased
- Organize the report logically and include appropriate details
- No jargon
- Use examples, illustrations, graphics and stories
- Make your report clear, readable and interesting to your audience.

Tips for Writing Effective Reports
- Use active voice
- Make your report readable and interesting (no jargon)
- Emphasize findings and their meanings, rather than background and methodology
- Use strong visuals
- Be clear in the study's interpretations, conclusions and recommendations
- Make sure your report is useful to its intended audience, which will affect which areas you want to emphasize
Data Visualization

Nine Essential Tips for Good Data Visualization/Presentation

1. Use the full axis, starting at 0
2. Reduce clutter (no chart junk!)
3. Keep it simple (make one point per chart)
4. Integrate text and data
5. Use color carefully and considerately
6. Never use 3D effects
7. Use pie charts sparingly
8. Pass the "squint test" (can you get the main point even if you can't read anything?)
9. Ask for feedback (the things that make sense in your mind may not make sense to a third party)

Tables vs. Charts & Graphs

Tables are good when:

- looking at individual values
- Comparing individual values
- you need precise values
- You are using many units of measurement

Charts and graphs are good when:

- The message is in the shape of the values
- You are revealing relationships among multiple values

Sources and Further References

- www.visualisingdata.com
- flowingdata.com
- colorbrewer2.org
- http://guides.library.duke.edu/datavis/

The D-Lab at Berkeley also has great resources, including two upcoming classes on data visualization on Friday, April 18th and Monday, April 21st, both from 2-4 pm. Visit dlab.berkeley.edu for more information.