**Outcomes-based evaluation tools for digital literacy programs**

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**BACKGROUND**

- Digital literacy is the ability to use information and communication technologies to find, evaluate, create, and communicate information.
- Community Technology Centers (CTCs) offer technology programs, services, and access to increase digital literacy of adults.
- My sponsor, Communities Connect Network (CCN), supports CTC sustainability and best practices through training and an online resource library.

**PROBLEM**

- CTCs need to evaluate the outcomes of their programs in order to make improvements and communicate impacts to funders.
- What outcomes should digital literacy programs measure?
- What evaluation techniques should digital literacy programs use to measure their outcomes?

**METHODS**

- Literature review
- Survey of digital literacy program practitioners
- Theory of change
- Analysis of evaluation tools
- Tool creation

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**ANALYSIS**

**How CTCs currently use evaluations:**

- 71% revise curricula
- 29% evaluate instructors
- 25% reports to funders
- 18% not used
- 7% outreach/advocacy

**Evaluation options**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evidence</th>
<th>FOCUS GROUPS</th>
<th>OBSERVATION GUIDE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indirect: self-evaluation of skills and attitudes</td>
<td>Indirect: in-depth inquiry into attitudes and beliefs</td>
<td>Direct: watching what individuals learn and do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium-high</td>
<td>Low-medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need to have at least 50% response rate</td>
<td>Selection of individuals could change results</td>
<td>Observer may have conflict of interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High: 86% &quot;extremely likely&quot; or &quot;likely&quot; to use</td>
<td>Low: 24% &quot;extremely likely&quot; or &quot;likely&quot; to use</td>
<td>Medium: 67% &quot;extremely likely&quot; or &quot;likely&quot; to use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need strong command of English</td>
<td>Need to feel comfortable stating opinion in front of group</td>
<td>Could misinterpret behavior</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOOL CREATION**

**Output**

Person received one-on-one help

**Outcome**

Person able to search the Internet

**Considerations**

- An individual's self-assessments of satisfaction and skill ability don't accurately measure if the person actually learned anything.
- Satisfaction is important but not the only indicator.
- Evaluations should measure changes in both behavior and ability.

**Sample evaluation tool**

**Observation guide for Internet search training**

- Breaks down skill into levels of learning
- Use for one-on-one training or small class
- Turns anecdotal evidence into quantitative data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participated in instructed activities</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Some-what</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Not observed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</table>

| Shows confidence in ability to complete tasks | X |
| Demonstrated skills in the following: |

| Using keywords in search | X |
| A search that returns desired results | X |
| Altering key words to get alternate results | X |
| Understanding difference between ads and search results | X |