

# Think about These Questions before You Create a Basic End-of-Session Evaluation



Extension  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON



To get the most of your end-of-session evaluation, make sure you understand the purpose of your evaluation and include only the most important questions.

A brief end-of-session evaluation can help you gather useful information about improving your educational program, if you put enough thought into the questions you ask and how to use the information once you get it.

Before you decide what questions to ask your participants, ask yourself these questions

- Why are you doing this end-of-session evaluation? What do you hope to achieve?
- How will you use the information you collect?
- Have you or will you secure informed consent from your potential participants?
- Is the end-of-session evaluation where you need to focus most? Would formative, implementation, or process evaluation be more helpful?
- Would another approach (e.g., collecting verbal feedback, a survey sent after the fact, personal interviews, direct observation or another method) help you collect better information?

Advantages and disadvantages to using end-of-session evaluations

Advantages	Disadvantages
Allows people to remain anonymous	Inappropriate for young children, populations with low literacy
Provides written documentation of people's own perspectives	Participants are often tired and in a hurry to leave
Can reach a large number of people	Potential for positive bias since participants tend to respond to please the presenter
Convenient/easy to administer	Self-reports
Low cost	Requires careful question construction to obtain useful information



EVALUATION  
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## Consider including the following types of questions in your end-of-session evaluation, regardless of the evaluation method you choose

- Questions tied to your learning objectives for the program
- Questions about change in knowledge, attitudes or behavior relative to your intended outcomes
- Questions about if and how individuals intend to use what they learned
- Questions about ways to make improvements to the program
- Open ended questions, in order to allow for clarification of close ended responses and any additional comments participants choose to share, and to provide you quotes that may be valuable in sharing outcomes.
- Questions about how you can contact individuals if they are willing to participate in a follow-up evaluation

## Tips

- It is not practical to ask everything that you want to know in a typical end-of-session format, so focus on the most important questions that are tied to the goals of your educational programming.
- Participants are often in a rush to leave. Consider allowing time for participants to complete the evaluation during the session a bit before you end, perhaps before closing comments, rather than at the very end.
- From an ethical perspective, it is best practice **not** to collect demographic information (race, gender, etc.) on the same form as the evaluation in order to preserve anonymity of respondents. (There are exceptions to this, such as if your central evaluation question is to determine how the program outcomes may differ across different demographic audiences and you have a large enough group of participants to protect anonymity.)

## Further reading

UW-Madison Division of Extension. *Collecting Evaluation Data: End of Session Questionnaires*. Publication G3658-11. <https://go.wisc.edu/9w06g0>.

