

Evaluation Planning Brief: Data Visualization, Presentation, and Communication

Now that you have collected your data and carried out analysis, it is time to present your analysis to stakeholders so that everyone can put the findings to use. An effective way to do this is through strategic communication pieces that include data visualizations.

Data visualizations make the findings of your evaluation easier to understand. They can help your stakeholders more easily detect patterns, trends, and outliers. This brief provides step by step guidance to help you plan visualizing, presenting, and communicating findings effectively.

1. Identify your audiences for your evaluation findings.

Who needs to know about your evaluation findings? This could be any combination of stakeholder groups. Consider audiences such as: program participants, program managers, program staff, funders, partner organizations, the public, policymakers, and other professionals working on a similar project.

2. For each audience or stakeholder group, determine what they want or need to know.

Not every group needs to know every detail of your evaluation. Even more, not every group will need to know all your findings. Consider what each group is interested in and what information they need to know. Keep things actionable for each group. In the time of information overload, targeted messaging will be the most effective way to encourage engagement with your evaluation findings.

3. Consider the best way to engage each audience or stakeholder group.

The most important thing is that the evaluation findings reach the people who need them. This might mean thinking creatively about the best way to communicate findings to various groups. Communication products may include the full narrative report, summary reports (1 or 2 pages), newspaper articles, infographics, social media posts, interactive website posts, blogs, presentations/slide decks, or facilitated discussions. The best way to engage an audience will depend upon that audience's time, level of engagement with the project, and data literacy.

Steps 1 to 3 can be consolidated into a dissemination plan, as follows:

Audience	Information Needs	Engagement Strategy

4. Create effective data visualization

Now that you have articulated how you will be communicating to your various audiences, it is important to create effective data visualizations to display your findings. An important recommendation to keep in mind while creating data visualizations is that **simple is best**.

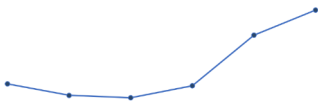
Step 1: Choose the right type of graph or chart.

Below are a few common types of graphs.

A **bar graph** is helpful if you are trying to compare values across discrete categories.



A **line graph** displays the relationship between two types of information, most often for displaying trends over time.



A **pie chart** is helpful if you need to emphasize one number.



Stacked bars are useful for comparing the makeup of components across categories.



Step 2: Simplify your results so that the key message is communicated.

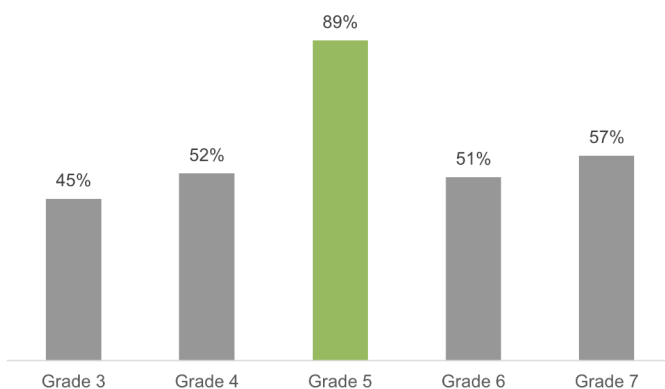
This may require sub-categories to be collapsed so that data is more easily interpreted. For qualitative data, consider highlighting or emphasizing a particularly poignant quote.

Step 3: Use colors, sizes, shapes and labels to direct attention to key messages.

Step 4: Title the visualization to clearly communicate the purpose/findings.

Percent of School Community Attending Workshop by Grade

Grade 5 children had the highest levels of attendance.



Attendee agreement with the statement: *This workshop was beneficial for me.*

Workshop participants that identified as heterosexual or lesbian/gay found the workshop more beneficial than those identifying as bisexual or queer.

