Evaluative Rubrics - Delivering well-reasoned answers to real evaluative questions

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Kinnect Group

Introduction to the session

Jane Davidson

Real Evaluation
Actionable evaluation for the real world

Session will cover

- Introduction to rubrics

- Values in rubrics

- Data collecting and sensemaking

- Reporting and communicating findings

Introduction to rubrics

Kate McKegg

Kinnect Group

What is a rubric?

Evaluative Criteria

Key Evaluation Question (KEQ): How effectively did we engage with whānau/families?
Evaluative criteria
Parents keep coming back to the sessions
Programme affirms what parents already know and teaches them new skills
Parents go home and do new activities with their children
The children do better at school

Levels of importance

Key Evaluation Question (KEQ): How effectively did we engage with whānau/families? Evaluative criteria	Importance
Programme affirms what parents already know and teaches them new skills	Very important
Parents go home and do new activities with their children	Crucial
Parents keep coming back to the sessions	Important
The children do better at school	Important in the longer term

Rating scale

	Rating	Descriptor
🟢	Excellent: (Always)	Clear example of exemplary performance or great practice. Very few or no gaps or weaknesses. No gaps or weaknesses identified.
🟢	Very good: (Almost Always)	Very good to excellent performance on virtually all aspects; strong overall but not exemplary; no weaknesses of any real consequence and these are managed effectively.
🟢	Good: (Mostly, with some exceptions)	Generally strong performance overall. Few gaps or weaknesses. Gaps and weaknesses have some impact but are mostly managed effectively.
🟡	Adequate: (Barely gets across the line)	Inconsistent performance overall. Gaps or weaknesses have impact, and are not being managed effectively. Meets minimum expectations/ requirements as far as can be determined.
🟠	Emerging: (Early signs but not yet across the line)	Fair performance given the expected stage of development, some capacity issues still to be worked through, early signs of progress on track for most milestones, with realistic timeframes
🟠	Not yet emerging: (Barely any signs of activity or progress, but not causing concern)	No clear evidence has yet emerged that the element being assessed has been implemented and/or produced any effect, but there is also no evidence of unsatisfactory functioning
🟤	Poor: Never (or occasionally with clear weaknesses evident)	Clear evidence of unsatisfactory functioning; serious weaknesses across the board on crucial aspects

Types of rubrics

Analytic

Describes the performance levels for each of the criteria

Rating	Criterion: Parents keep coming to the sessions
Excellent	All families are regularly attending almost all or all sessions
Very good	Nearly all families are attending most sessions and send their apologies when they cannot attend. When followed up, there are good reasons for non-attendance
Good	At least 60% of families regularly attend sessions; Some are unable to attend regularly, and between 10-15% are not able to be contacted to determine why they are not attending.

Types of rubrics

Holistic

Has a broad level of description of performance at each level

Rating	
Excellent	All of the families say there are high levels of attendance and most families report feeling affirmed, learning something new, and doing something with children at home.
Very good	Many families report there is widespread attendance. A fairly high number of those attending report learning something new and doing something with children at home.
Good	Over half the families report attending regularly. Many of these families report learning something new and doing something with children at home.

Values in rubrics

Nan Wehipeihana

We started with the literature

How effectively did we engage with whānau/families?
Evaluative criteria
Parents keep coming back to the sessions
Programme affirms what parents already know and teaches them new skills
Parents go home and try new activities with their children
The children do better at school

We responded to the cultural context

	How effectively did we engage with whānau/families? **Evaluative criteria**
New	Invitation to attend extended by someone known and trusted
New	whānau find the setting welcoming and safe
	Parents keep coming back to the sessions
	Programme affirms what parents already know and teaches them new skills
	Parents go home and do new activities with their children
	The children do better at school

Can embed cultural values

Use different terms on the scale
- Te Kakano (seed, latent potential)
- Tipuranga (grow, begin to develop)
- Oranga (well, healthy, fit)
- Puawaitanga (bloom, come to fruition)

Key take away messages

- All criteria are not equal
- Values are the basis for thinking about criteria
- They reflect what is valued / important in particular contexts
- Whose values hold sway matters

Data collection and sensemaking

Judy Oakden

Possible sources of evidence?

- Previous research
- Individual in-depth interviews with parents
- Focus groups with session providers
- Online survey of students
- Administrative data
- Photos from sessions

Example

How effectively did we engage with whānau/families? Evaluative criteria	Individual in-depth interviews with parents	Provider focus groups	Online survey with students	Administrative data	Photos from sessions
Invitation to attend extended by someone known and trusted	X	X		X	
whānau find the setting welcoming and safe	X	X			X
Parents keep coming back to the sessions				X	X
Programme affirms what parents already know and teaches them new skills	X	X	X		
Parents go home and do new activities with their children	X		X		
The children do better at school	X		X	X	

Rubrics help frame data collection

Integrated data collection approach

Designed to answer the evaluation questions

Can use a wide range of evidence, mixed methods, other research

Three different steps to making sense of data

1 Analysis

2 Synthesis

3 Sensemaking

Stage 1

Analysis

Types of data

- Qualitative
- Quantitative
- Other reports
- Administrative or monitoring data

- Breaking something down into its component parts and examining each part separately (King et al, 2013)

Stage 2

Synthesis

But this data doesn't 'fit'

- Putting things together; "a complex whole made up of a number of parts or elements united" OED online.
- Assembling the different sources of data against the criteria

When undertaking data synthesis...

- What's more important?

- How to capture this?

- **Deal breakers?**

All aspects of performance are not created equal – if we treat them as equal this leads to judgments that don't give us the best result

Stage 3

Sensemaking

Sensemaking – "the action or process of making sense of or giving meaning to something, especially new developments and experiences"   OED online.

Sensemaking helps…

- Clarify: address ambiguity (What)

- Create: notice and extract cues (What)

- Interpret: flesh out the initial sense generated (So What)

- Enact: act on what's been sensed (Now What)

Adapted from Sandberg and Tsoukas (2015)

One way we do sensemaking

Process

Generalisation	In general I noticed …
Exception	In general…except…
Contradiction	On the one hand…but on the other hand…
Surprise	I was surprised by…
Puzzle	I wonder…

Adaptation of Pattern Spotters from HSD Wiki http://wiki.hsdinstitute.org/pattern_spotters
Also see: Capper, P. & Williams, B. (2004) *Enhancing evaluation using systems concepts CHAT*. Presented at the American Evaluation Association Conference, November, 2004, City http://www.bobwilliams.co.nz/Systems_Resources_files/activity.pdf

Two key takeaway messages

1 Rubrics can help frame data collection

2 Analysis, synthesis and sensemaking are different processes

Having a rubric helps do all three steps
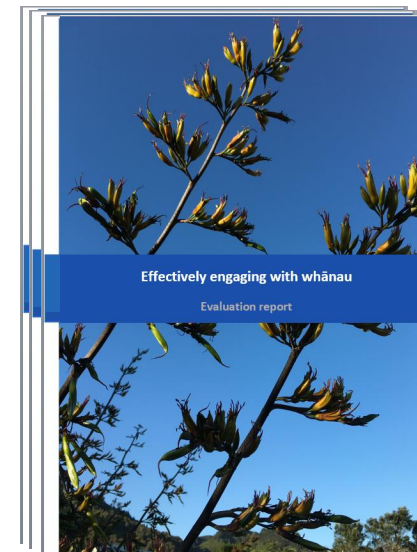
Reporting and communicating findings

Julian King

Kinnect Group

Getting from a rubric to a report

- Determine structure and content of report

- Support clear communication of transparent, actionable conclusions

Effectively engaging with whānau

Evaluation report

A good evaluation report:

- Tells a performance story
  - Focused on the things that matter
  - And the level of quality/value/importance

- Gives clear answers to important questions
  - Straight to the point
  - Transparent evidence
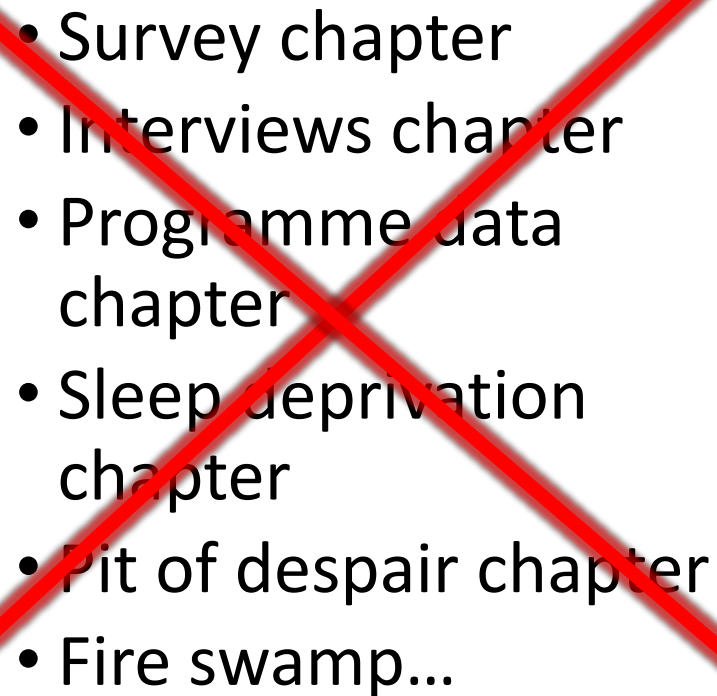 - Transparent reasoning – *"show your working"*

Spoiler – Evidence – Discussion

- NOT:
  - Survey chapter
  - Interviews chapter
  - Programme data chapter
  - Sleep deprivation chapter
  - Pit of despair chapter
  - Fire swamp…

Spoiler – Evidence – Discussion

- NOT:
  - Survey chapter
  - Interviews chapter
  - Programme data chapter
  - Sleep deprivation chapter
  - Pit of despair chapter
  - Fire swamp…

- INSTEAD:

  - **Answer the question**

  - **Key evidence + reasoning**

  - **Extra info**

Example

How effectively did we engage with whānau/families? **Evaluative criteria**
Invitation to attend extended by someone known and trusted
whānau find the setting welcoming and safe
Parents keep coming back to the sessions
Programme affirms what parents already know and teaches them new skills
Parents go home and do new activities with their children
The children do better at school

FINDINGS

Spoiler

Evidence

- Spoiler 1
- Evidence 1
- Discussion 1

- Spoiler 2
- Evidence 2
- Discussion 2

- Etc

Discussion

FINDINGS

<mark>Spoiler</mark>

Evidence

- Spoiler 1
- Evidence 1
- Discussion 1

- Spoiler 2
- Evidence 2
- Discussion 2

- Etc

Discussion

The programme engages effectively with whānau/families overall, though improvements in children's academic performance at school have not yet been demonstrated.

FINDINGS

Spoiler

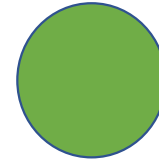Evidence

- Spoiler 1
- Evidence 1
- Discussion 1

- Spoiler 2
- Evidence 2
- Discussion 2

- Etc

Discussion

Invitation to attend

An invitation to attend is always extended by someone known and trusted by the whānau/family.

This was consistently evidenced in survey and interview feedback from all stakeholders.

Some parents would have preferred text rather than phone communications.
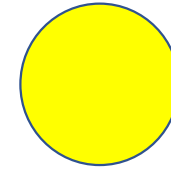
FINDINGS

Spoiler

Evidence

- Spoiler 1
- Evidence 1
- Discussion 1

- Spoiler 2
- Evidence 2
- Discussion 2

- Etc

Discussion

A welcoming, safe setting ⬤

In the main, whānau found the setting welcoming and safe. However, there were some significant exceptions, highlighting areas for improvement.

Figure 1 shows the distribution of survey responses...

[INSERT FIGURE HERE]

The majority of parent's comments were very positive...

[INSERT QUOTES HERE]

However, two parents felt intimidated by a teacher...

FINDINGS

Spoiler

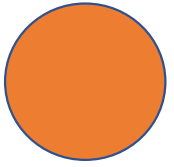Evidence

- Spoiler 1
- Evidence 1
- Discussion 1

- Spoiler 2
- Evidence 2
- Discussion 2

- Etc

Discussion

Are children doing better at school?

It is early days for the programme, and improvements in children's academic performance at school have not yet been demonstrated...

[KEY GRAPHS AND TABLES]

More time is needed before these impacts can be properly evaluated...

FINDINGS

Spoiler

Evidence

- Spoiler 1
- Evidence 1
- Discussion 1

- Spoiler 2
- Evidence 2
- Discussion 2

- Etc

Discussion

Discussion

This programme is showing promising results considering it has been in operation for six months. Parents report positive engagement with the school, find the setting welcoming and safe, (etc...).

It is too soon to measure impacts on learning, and it is recommended that a follow up evaluation be conducted in 2018...

Summary of findings

	How effectively did we engage with whānau/families? Evaluative criteria
🟢 (light green)	Overall judgement
🟢	Invitation to attend extended by someone known and trusted
🟡	whānau find the setting welcoming and safe
🟢	Parents keep coming back to the sessions
🟢	Programme affirms what parents already know and teaches them new skills
🟢	Parents go home and do new activities with their children
🟠	The children do better at school

Rubrics aid focused and succinct reporting

Concluding comments

Jane Davidson

Real Evaluation
Actionable evaluation for the real world

Summary

- Shown what a rubric is and the different forms
- Shown how you get the values into a rubric
- Shown more about how to use a rubric to frame data collection, and help with analysis, synthesis and sensemaking
- Shown how rubrics help with reporting and communicating findings

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If you want to use rubrics in your own work…

How can we help? Having just attended our conference presentation on evaluation rubrics, you are probably excited to share these ideas with colleagues and give rubrics a shot yourselves. But when you do, you might find that it's not quite as easy as it seemed while you were listening to our presentation. Yikes!

Don't panic; help is at hand.

Buying a copy of *Actionable Evaluation Basics*, Jane's succinct easy-to-read minibook (available in French, Spanish, and English) is a good place to start. It provides a bit of a blueprint to work from.

Then, one of the most powerful things you can do to get the most out of your conference learnings is to follow it up with some help, either in person or via Skype or webinar.

We all regularly provide mentoring and coaching for individuals and teams using rubrics for the first time. This paper – To rubrics or not to rubrics describes the experience of one person going through this process.

We are also able to support you to deliver a short presentation for your colleagues, where they can hear about rubrics first hand and ask the questions you may not yet have the right words to answer.

We all offer coaching sessions and have the expertise to guide your team through the development and rollout of rubrics. *Remember, we are in different parts of the world, Judy, Kate, Nan and Julian are based in New Zealand, and Jane is based in the USA in Seattle.*

Currently Jane also offers a package of coaching sessions you can order online.

And finally, another option is to pre-enroll in Jane's forthcoming Real Evaluation Academy, where you'll get access to video tutorials, handouts, cheat sheets, exemplars, virtual office hours, and an online discussion community where Jane helps you grapple with some of the nuanced know-how you will need to use rubrics successfully.

We hope one of these options might help you on your journey to use evaluative rubrics in your practice.

Further reading

Davidson, E.J. (2005). *Evaluation methodology basics: The nuts and bolts of sound evaluation.* Thousand Oaks: Sage. ISBN: 978-0-471-98606-5

Davidson, E. J. (2012). *Actionable evaluation basics: getting succinct answers to the most important questions* [minibook]. Auckland: Real Evaluation Ltd

Eoyang G, & Oakden J. (2016) Adaptive Evaluation: A synergy between complexity theory and evaluation practice. *Emergence: Complexity and Organization. 18:3-4*

King, J., McKegg, K., Oakden, J., & Wehipeihana, N. (2013) Rubrics: a method for surfacing values and improving the credibility of evaluation *Journal of MultiDisciplinary Evaluation Vol 9* No 21 pgs11–20 http://journals.sfu.ca/jmde/index.php/jmde_1/article/view/374/373

King, J. (2016). Using economic methods evaluatively. *American Journal of Evaluation , 1-13. DOI: 10.1177/1098214016641211*

Oakden, J. (2013) *Evaluation rubrics: how to ensure transparent and clear assessment that respects diverse lines of evidence.* BetterEvaluation, Melbourne, Victoria. http://betterevaluation.org/sites/default/files/Evaluation%20rubrics.pdf