

## Identify primary intended users

It is important to identify the people who are intended to actually use the evaluation, and to engage them in the evaluation in some way if possible.

This increases the likelihood that the evaluation will be done in ways that will be appropriate and that will actually be used.

Your primary intended users are not all those who have a stake in the evaluation, nor are they a general audience. They are the specific people, in a specific position, in a specific organization who will use the evaluation findings and who have the capacity to effect change (for example, change policies and procedures, improve management strategies). Who they are will depend on your evaluation.

Research into how evaluation findings are used shows the importance of the ‘personal factor’. The personal factor, a specific person or group of people who care about the evaluation findings, is the single most important predictor of evaluation finding use:

‘The personal factor is the presence of an identifiable individual or group of people who personally care about the evaluation and the findings it generates. Where such a person or group was present, evaluations were used; where the personal factor was absent, there was a correspondingly marked absence of evaluation impact.’

The tasks of identifying primary intended users and deciding the purposes of an evaluation are interconnected. You might begin by identifying the intended users, who will then decide the purpose of the evaluation. Or the purpose of an evaluation may have already been prescribed, which helps you to identify intended the users.

## Resources

- [Identifying the intended user\(s\) and use\(s\) of an evaluation](#)

This guideline from the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) highlights the importance of identifying the primary intended user(s) and the intended use(s) of an evaluation and outlines a variety of methods that can be used to achieve this in

- [Utilization-Focused Evaluation: 4th edition](#)

Useful for practitioners and students alike this book is both theoretical and practical. Features include follow-up exercises at the end of each chapter and a utilization-focused evaluation checklist.

- [Utilisation-focused evaluation \(U-FE\) checklist](#)

Composed by Michael Quinn Patton in 2002 and updated in 2013, this is a comprehensive checklist for undertaking a utilisation-focused evaluation.