**AFRICAN INSTITUTE FOR PROJECT MANAGEMENT STUDIES (AIPMS).**

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Course: **Diploma in Monitoring and Evaluation.**

Year: **2019.**

Assignment: **Four (4**):

Date: **31/5/2019**:

**Qn. 1:** **a) Collecting information or data is just one part of the process of monitoring and evaluation.**

**What is meant by data analysis?**

**Introduction:**

**Data collection** is the process of gathering and measuring information on variables of interest, in an established systematic fashion that enables one to answer stated research questions, test hypotheses, and evaluate outcomes. The data collection component of research is common to all fields of study including physical and social sciences, humanities, business, etc. While methods vary by discipline, the emphasis on ensuring accurate and honest collection remains the same.

With your question clearly defined and your measurement priorities set, now it’s time to collect your data.

Important points to consider when collecting and organising Data:

* Before you collect new data, determine what information could be collected from existing databases or sources on hand. Collect this data first.
* Determine a le storing and naming system ahead of time to help all tasked team members collaborate. This process saves time and prevents team members from collecting the same information twice.
* If you need to gather data via observation or interviews, then develop an interview template ahead of time to ensure consistency and save time.
* Keep your collected data organized in a log with collection dates and add any source notes as you go (including any data normalization performed). This practice validates your conclusions down the road.

**However, not only Data Collection, there are also other processes of Monitoring and Evaluation.**

1**. Define Your Questions:**

In your organizational or business data analysis, you must begin with the right question(s).

* Questions should be measurable, clear and concise.
* Design your questions to either qualify or disqualify potential solutions to your specific problem or opportunity.
* For example, start with a clearly defined problem: A government contractor is experiencing rising costs and is no longer able to submit competitive contract proposals.
* One of many questions to solve this business problem might include: Can the company reduce its staff without compromising quality?

**2. Set Clear Measurement Priorities:**

This step breaks down into two sub-steps: A) Decide what to measure, and B) Decide how to measure it.

**A) Decide What To Measure:**

Using the government contractor example, consider what kind of data you’d need to answer your key question. In this case, you’d need to know the number and cost of current sta and the percentage of time they spend on necessary business functions. In answering this question, you likely need to answer many sub-questions (e.g., Are sta currently under-utilized? If so, what process improvements would help?). Finally, in your decision on what to measure, be sure to include any reasonable objections any stakeholders might have (e.g., If sta are reduced, how would the company respond to surges in demand?).

**B) Decide How To Measure It:**

Thinking about how you measure your data is just as important, especially before the data collection phase, because your measuring process either backs up or discredits your analysis later on. Key questions to ask for this step include:

* What is your time frame? (e.g., annual versus quarterly costs)
* What is your unit of measure? (e.g., USD versus Euro)
* What factors should be included? (e.g., just annual salary versus annual salary plus cost of sta benets).

**3. Analyse Data:**

* After you’ve collected the right data to answer your question from Step 1, it’s time for deeper data analysis. Begin by manipulating your data in a number of different ways, such as plotting it out and finding correlations or by creating a pivot table in Excel. A pivot table lets you sort and lter data by different variables and lets you calculate the mean, maximum, minimum and standard deviation of your data – just be sure to avoid these five pitfalls of statistical data analysis.
* As you manipulate data, you may find you have the exact data you need, but more likely, you might need to revise your original question or collect more data.
* Either way, this initial analysis of trends, correlations, variations and outliers helps you focus your data analysis on better answering your question and any objections others might have.
* During this step, data analysis tools and software are extremely helpful. Visio, Minitab and Stata are all good software packages for advanced statistical data analysis.
* However, in most cases, nothing quite compares to Microsoft Excel in terms of decision-making tools.
* If you need a review or a primer on all the functions Excel accomplishes for your data analysis, we recommend this HARVARD BUSINESS REVIEW CLASS.

**4. Interpret Results:**

After analysing your data and possibly conducting further research, it’s nally time to interpret your results. As you interpret your analysis, keep in mind that you cannot ever prove a hypothesis true: rather, you can only fail to reject the hypothesis. Meaning that no matter how much data you collect, chance could always interfere with your results.

As you interpret the results of your data, ask yourself these key questions:

* Does the data answer your original question? How?
* Does the data help you defend against any objections? How?
* Are there any limitations on your conclusions, any angles you haven’t considered?

If your interpretation of the data holds up under all of these questions and considerations, then you likely have come to a productive conclusion. The only remaining step is to use the results of your data analysis process to decide your best course of action.

By following these ve steps in your data analysis process, you make better decisions for your business or government agency because your choices are backed by data that has been robustly

Collected and analysed. With practice, your data analysis gets faster and more accurate – meaning you make better, more informed decisions to run your organization most effectively.

Want to draw the most accurate conclusions from your data? Click below to download a free guide from Big Sky Associates and discover how the right data analysis drives success for your organization.

**Data Analysis:**

This is gathering data from various sources, reviewing it, as well as analysing it to discover certain findings, conclusions, or useful information to support decision-making.

Once data are collected and prepared, they can be analyzed. Data analysis will enable you to assess whether and how your program has achieved both program-level and population-level objectives.

**In baseline surveys, analysis can reveal:**

* Participants characteristics in terms of gender, age, marital status, schooling status, residence and other important attributes;
* The frequency of specific behaviors and risk and protective factors.

**In monitoring and process evaluations, analysis can reveal:**

* Program quality, coverage and exposure;
* Program functions.

**In outcome and impact evaluations, analysis can reveal:**

* If and how the program achieved its intended results;
* What portion of the changes in outcome indicators your program can take credit for.

**Some important definition used during Data Analysis:**

1. **Processing data:**

Refers to the steps needed to organize your data for analysis.

1. **Field editing:**

Involves systematically reviewing field notes; transcripts from focus group discussions, in-depth interviews and observations; and questionnaires.

1. **Transcription:**

This is verbatim records of what was said during a focus group discussion or interview. It is desirable to use a tape recorder to ensure accuracy.

1. **Coding:**

Refers to a process of organizing and assigning meaning to quantitative and qualitative data, Data analysis will be simpler if you assign codes to the answers.

1. **Data cleaning:**

Refers to checking for and correcting errors in data entry. Some software packages have built-in systems that check for data entry errors, such as inconsistencies between data items, data omissions and values entered that are out of the range possible.

**Types of error to be Consider in Data Cleansing:**

1. **Missing data:**

Missing data is the result of a respondent declining to answer a question, a data collector failing to ask or record a respondent’s answer or a data entry staff member skipping the entry of a response.

1. **Inconsistent data:**

Within one person’s survey, responses are sometimes not consistent. For example, a respondent might say that he had never had sex and then report that he had two sexual partners. The problem should be reconciled by referring to the original questionnaire, if possible. If the respondents answers are indeed inconsistent, develop a rule about which response to accept.

1. **Out-of-range values:**

Some data items may be impossible or implausible. For example, 35 is recorded for a 15-year-old female to the question, how many times have you been pregnant? Refer to the original survey. If the respondent did give an impossible or implausible answer, you can code the response no number.

**Conclusion:**

Analysing Data is so Vital because You can assess program objectives related to quality and coverage by comparing results to the baseline data, Combine monitoring data and qualitative data to assess program functioning and processes at any stage of the program, Compares changes in indicators over time as a way to measure program outcomes, evaluate results across sites can alert you to problems, as well as excellence in performance.

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**(b) State any three uses of monitoring and evaluation results.**

**Introduction:**

A Monitoring and evaluation result is one of the most basic requirements for data collection, Analysis, tracking **results**, **performance and improve accountability**.

**Elements of Results Monitoring (used for a range of interventions and strategies)**

* Baseline data to describe the problem or situation before the intervention
* Indicators for outcomes
* Data collection on outputs and how and whether they contribute toward achievement of outcomes
* More focus on perceptions of change among stakeholders
* Systemic reporting with more qualitative and quantitative information on the progress toward outcomes
* Done in conjunction with strategic partners
* Captures information on success or failure of partnership strategy in achieving desired outcomes

**Uses of Monitoring and Evaluation Result:**

1. **Clarifies program objectives and Analyses**: why intended results were or were not achieved by Linking activities and their resources to objectives and Assesses specific causal contributions of activities to results.
2. **Translates objectives into performance indicators process**, sets targets and Examines implementation processes, Routinely collects data on these indicators ,compares actual results with targets and Explores unintended results.
3. **Reports progress to high managers** and alert them to problems and provide lessons, highlight significant accomplishment or program potential and offer recommendations for improvement.

**Conclusion:**

Monitoring and evaluation results are important because, it can be used to measure and evaluate the results, and then provide information for decision making, Evaluation gives evidence of why targets and outcomes are or are not being achieved.

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**(c) Describe any seven factors that may lead to project failure.**

**Introduction:**

A project is an activity to meet the creation of a unique product or service.

Examples of Project: Planning a large party or an event, that is a project. This is because, it was a specific party for a specific reason and It was held on a specific date and time. That means party was unique, temporary, and it had a defined beginning and end, and party created a specific product or service, therefore,

A project is considered a failure when it has not delivered what was required, in line with costs, Quality, Time and expectations.

**Factors that leads to Project Failure;**

**1. Poor Planning:**

You need to have a clear picture of what you’re going to do, in advance – as much as possible. Otherwise, you may find yourself up stream without a paddle. You need to know what project success looks like at the beginning and don’t loose focus of it. Hence, if you don’t have a clear focus at the earliest stage of the process, you are making things harder on yourself. Have a meeting, even if it is lengthy, with stakeholders to discuss their expectations on cost, time and product quality. Know how you will execute your tasks in order to meet everyone’s expectations.

**2. Inadequate Documentation and Tracking:**

This is the responsibility of the project manager. Tracking milestones is how you are going to know whether you are meeting expectations. Proper recording and monitoring lets the PM identify where more resources are needed to complete a project on time.

**3. Bad Leadership:**

When we see this word, leader, we usually think, the project manager. However, the people at each management-level have a responsibility to ensure that the project is successful. Management should not micromanage but provide support to ensure that the PM can follow through with the expectations placed upon them.

**4. Failure to Define Parameters and Enforce Them When you’re a leader, Project Manager**:

It’s imperative that you’re able to work well with your team. If and when tasks or goals are not met to standard, there should be ramifications. Rank tasks by priority and assign them to the most proficient individual.

**5. Inexperienced Project Managers:**

A project manager has a lot of responsibility. You need to assign people to management roles who have matching education and experience. In some cases, and perhaps more often than not, inexperienced managers are given projects. They may be very capable of managing projects, but the key is to keep them at a level where they can succeed. Otherwise, you will set them up for failure. On the other hand, there’s nothing wrong with a challenge, just don’t make it beyond their reach.

**6. Inaccurate Cost Estimations:**

There may be times when your cost estimates are completely off. As you know, when resources run-out, the project stops. Prevent this by identifying the lack of resources early on.

**7. Inconsistent Communication at Every Level of Management Whether it’s between upper management, middle or with the team:**

It’s disastrous to have poor communication. Everyone should feel free to come forward to express their concern or give suggestions. When everyone is on the same page and there’s transparency, workflow is at an optimum level.

**Not only that, there are some important factors that leads to Project failure and need to be discuss, these includes the following;**

**8. Culture or Ethical Misalignment:**

Company culture must be comprised of competence, pro-activeness, and professionalism. If it isn’t, team members will not be motivated to do their best. Basically, everyone involved must be invested in their part of the project to successfully complete it.

**9. Competing Priorities:**

When there’re not enough resources, there’s bound to be competition between personnel resources and funding. Having good cost estimations at the start will eliminate this problem.

**10. Disregarding Project Warning Signs:**

When a project is on the verge of failing, there will have always been warning signs. Taking action immediately can save the project. Otherwise, the whole endeavour goes down the drain.

Well there you have it, reasons for project failure. This is the time when you should consider ways to prevent this failure. Adequate employee training, project management software and management transparency will lead you to project success. Finding the right project management software is one of the easiest steps to take so that you’re on right track – the successful project track. A tool such as these eliminates project failure. They serve to easily manage tasks like time tracking, cost tracking, cost estimations and more. Here are a few that can set your project on the road to success.

**11. Poor Monitoring and Risk Management:**

Just assigning roles to all your team members is not enough, you have to constantly monitor the progress and hold your team members accountable to what they are doing. Once they are responsible for their actions, they will perform better and deliver better results.

Most project managers will tell you that risk management is an important part of project management yet, you will find many projects in which little or no emphasis is put on risk management. As a result, these projects fail to achieve their targets and go well beyond the specified deadline or budget.

**12. Unrealistic Expectation:**

Failed projects have a deadline of less than a year. Setting an unrealistic deadline and expectations dragged all these projects down the drain. Consider all the factors and constraints involved that might adversely affect your project and then set a deadline.

Instead of having unrealistic expectations, keep a buffer that gives you the liberty of completing the project without rushing through it. Having a buffer not only reduces the workload of your team member but also let them focus on each task in a better way.

**13. Poor Human Resource Management**: Key staff leaving the project and/or company Due to Lack of Coordination, Delegation, Motivation and granting leaves to Project Staff.

**Conclusion:**

Most senior executives believe that successful projects are critical for their business success and help them gain a competitive advantage over their competitors. Keep an eye on aforementioned factors and try to overcome them to reduce the risk of project failure. This will help project managers to complete more projects on time and within the allocated budget

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**Qn. 2: Identify any six parts of a monitoring and evaluation** report

A report is a communication tool to present M&E results by presenting raw data, information and an opportunity for project implementers to inform themselves & others (stakeholders, partners, donors, etc.) on the progress, problems, difficulties encountered, successes & lessons learned during implementation of programs & activities.

**Parts of M&E Reports:**

**1. Introduction:**

* Brief one to two paragraph introductions & concise presentation of the objectives of the project, 
* The need for this report and 
* What the report includes).

**2. Comparison of planned versus actual events:** 

* Brief narrative comparing planned activities & budget to actual activities undertaken & budget spent during the quarter. 
* The basis of this narrative is what you had planned & how you are responding (tells the donor why something that was planned did not take place & what you plan to do about it); and/or the facilitating factors that helped you achieve activities faster than expected (tells the donor if you are ahead of schedule & why).

**3. Administrative review:** 

* Discuss the status of your administration of the programme.
* During the reporting period, were there any changes in staffing, organizational development issues (new systems, failing systems, etc.), managerial issues, or results on special awards conditions (if applicable)?

**4. Financial review/expenditure report/cost share report:**

* Provide a brief management review of the organization’s financial status (compare what the organization planned to spend to what the organization actually spent). 
* Do you need a budget realignment? 
* Will rescheduling of activities affect the budget? How are the cost-share components functioning? 
* Are these on track with expectations? 
* Explain any very low or very high expenditure rates. V. INDICATOR DATA &

**5. Indicator data & Monitoring and evaluation databases:** 

* Discuss your progress in collecting & storing project indicator data. 
* When you have new data, report the baseline figures & provide a brief analysis of the new information.
* Provide updated protocols if changes occurred.

**6. Notable lessons, innovations, or quotes:** 

Briefly capture any lessons learned during the recording period, interesting anecdotes suggesting programme impacts, or small success stories.

**Therefore, not only the six Parts of M&E mentioned above;**

**7. Issues requiring immediate support/attention by the donor:** 

* In bullet form note any issues requiring the immediate assistance or attention of donor personnel in support of your project. 
* (This is a concise list of items that may be mentioned otherwise in the report.)
* Project budget re-alignment is requested to account for change in workshops venue.

**Qn.3: Why is feedback an important component of project monitoring and evaluation?**

**Introduction:**

Feedback is referred to information which allows an individual or organisation to understand their relationship to others within any given environment. Feedback can be useful for understanding the state of systems or relationships and for guiding actions taken to effect change. The ability of individuals or organisations to collect feedback, translate this information into action, and evaluate outcomes enables improvement in activities such as product development, service provision, etc.

**Not only that,**

The term ‘feedback’ is used to describe the helpful information or criticism about prior action or behaviour from an individual, communicated to another individual (or a group) who can use that information to adjust and **improve current** and **future actions and behaviours**.

Feedback occurs when an environment reacts to an action or behaviour. For example, ‘customer feedback’ is the buyers’ reaction to a company’s products, services, or policies; and ’employee performance feedback’ is the employees’ reaction to feedback from their manager – the exchange of information involves both performance expected and performance exhibited.

**Importance of Feedback in Monitoring and Evaluation:**

1. **Employees’ on-going development/Performance**: Feedback clarifies expectations, helps people learn from their mistakes and builds confidence. Positive feedback is easy – it’s not hard to find the right words to tell someone they’ve done a good job, or congratulate them on meeting a sales target. When things are going well it can be easy to become complacent about giving praise but stopping and smelling the roses is important to build employee confidence and encourage a culture in which employees nurture and support one another.

2.**Spontaneous and regular:** For more serious issues a formal meeting is appropriate or a discussion as part of performance review, but building feedback into your day to day encounters with employees is a great way to develop rapport, and encourage an environment in which people feel comfortable to give and receive feedback.

**3. Reinforce positive behaviour**: Constructive feedback is one of the best things managers can provide to their employees. When delivered properly it can correct any negative performance and ensure a strong culture remains in your team since some managers, however, are reluctant to provide constructive feedback, thinking that it may turn negative or be perceived as a harsh criticism by the employee.

### 4. **Tool for continued learning:**

Invest time in asking and learning about how others experience working with your organization. Continued feedback is important across the entire organization in order to remain aligned to goals, create strategies, develop products and services improvements, improve relationships, and much more. Continued learning is the key to improving.

### 5. **Feedback can motivate:**

By asking for feedback, it can actually motivate employees to perform better. Employees like to feel valued and appreciate being asked to provide feedback that can help formulate business decisions. And feedback from client, suppliers, vendors, and stakeholders can be used to motivate to build better working relations

**However, there are some ways of giving Constructive feedback, these includes;**

**1. Act immediately:**

Feedback is best given shortly after you’ve observed the behaviour or event. Don’t wait weeks or even months to pull someone up after a bad incident or observed behaviour. Depending on the severity, perhaps it can wait until your weekly meeting to broach the subject. However, if the incident was more severe, address it as soon as possible. Make sure you are properly prepared beforehand so you can provide solid, actionable feedback. The same goes for positive reinforcement – praise your employee’s work in a timely manner. Productive feedback means giving it frequently.

**2. Pick the right time and place to provide the feedback:**

Picking the right time and place is essential in providing feedback to your employee. How serious is the matter? Do you need to schedule a formal meeting to discuss the issue or can you have an informal chat in the tearoom? Wherever you decide to talk, make sure it’s private so you can have an open and honest conversation without worrying about others overhearing you.

**3. Be specific and use examples:**

No one likes receiving vague feedback.  For example telling an employee he has lousy people skills is neither constructive nor effective. Make sure you prepare some specific examples of the behaviour or incident you observed.  Explain the effects it has had on you and/or the team. By providing clear suggestions as to how the employee could do things differently will help foster a positive relationship with the employee for the future.

**4. Avoid negative language:**

Avoid using negative phrases that discourage and exclude, such as “You shouldn’t …,” and “I don’t think…” when speaking. This kind of language puts people on the defensive.  This may cause the employee to shut down, ignoring and disregarding your feedback. Always try to be encouraging and use phrases that start with “Maybe you could try…”, or “Have you considered doing…?”

**5. Use positive language:**

When we receive feedback using positive language, it stimulates our brain and leaves us open to taking on new ways of learning. Try to give at least as much positive feedback as you do negative. Providing only negative feedback can turn on the threat response in people’s minds and defensiveness may set in. You don’t need to avoid negative feedback altogether- many times you have to address negative behaviour when giving feedback- just make sure you follow it up with a suggested solution or outcome. It has to be clear from the start that you’re providing this feedback to help the other person – not to hurt or embarrass them.

**Conclusion:**

Therefore, feedback is a two-way street. You need to know how to give it effectively and how to receive it constructively & when feedback is done in the right way and with the right intentions; it can lead to outstanding performance. Employees have to know what they are doing well and not so well. For them to really hear your thoughts and suggestions on ways to improve, though, that feedback has to be delivered carefully and frequently.

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