

Sample Evaluation Project Plan

Continuing Professional Development through Extension In-service Education University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

Purpose of the Evaluation:

The purpose of the evaluation is to 1) review the past continuing education offered to UI Extension professionals and the methods used in generating the subject matter; 2) provide formative information on “what’s new” in professional development topics, especially in organizations undergoing transformational change; and, 3) assess specific in-service needs of newly-designed extension professional positions.

Focus of the Evaluation:

The focus will be on the identification of preferred processes for determining future professional development programs offered to extension professionals and on the specific process skills needed by extension educators.

Key Evaluation Questions:

1. What are the perceptions as to how in-service education offerings have been determined in the past?
2. What are the organizational processes suggested to keep continuing education relevant to the changing needs of Extension educators?
3. What are the necessary process skills identified by other extension organizations to improve the effectiveness and motivation of professionals in the midst of major transformational changes.

Information Sources:

1. Past in-service education documents and evaluation materials of UI Extension
2. Key stakeholders (e.g., Staff Development Directors within the north-central region; members of the Reorganization Plan, “Cooperative Extension 2000 Blueprint;” and, randomly-selected, new and long-service extension educators

Major Evaluation Methods:

1. Review of in-service education documents
2. Telephone interview with the key stakeholders, described above
3. Analysis of the “Research and Knowledge Taxonomies” for 4-H and extension agents, USDA publication
4. Review of preliminary findings with staff development director

Evaluation Reporting:

The report directed to the University of Illinois Extension Staff Development Committee will include a review of in-service education documents and a summary of themes drawn from telephone interviews of professionals in staff development and extension education. Preferred methods for determining in-service offerings and the process skills determined most relevant to staff needs in a rapidly changing work environment will be proposed.

A recommendation section of the report will list possible first steps in assuring the continuing professional development of Extension Educators as Illinois implements the CES 2000 Blueprint reorganization.

Time Line:

Review of literature	Ongoing, January-April
Approval of evaluation plan by sponsors	March 12
Development of interview questions with sponsors	March 27
Scheduling of interviews	April 1-10
Conduct of interviews	April 11-30
Analysis of data	April 11-May 15
Preparation of report	May 1-May 21
Presentation of final report to Staff Development Committee	May 21

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