

Fictional Examples of Measurable Outcomes And Methods of Measurement (Both Good and Not-So-Good)

Good Measurable Outcome Example #1

“Of 50 persons receiving counselling, 45 (90% of 50) will experience a reduction in anxiety and depression.”

Analysis: This does a good job of separating the service provided (50 persons will receive counselling) from the Measurable Outcome (90% will experience a reduction in anxiety).

Good Method of Measurement Example #1

In the above example, how does the applicant know that the clients have experienced a reduction in anxiety and depression? Each application must explain *each method of measurement* used to assess the Measurable Outcomes. Here is a fictional example of a good Method of Measurement:

“We use two methods to determine the Measurable Outcomes of our program. The first is the CSOS-1 which is a client screening and outcome scale administered by a counsellor that assesses the subjective experiences of the client. This is administered at the initial intake and after every six sessions as well as at the completion of the counselling. The SOS-1 is a standard scale use throughout the state in evaluation of counselling outcomes. The second method is a simple client satisfaction survey used to gather the perspective of the clients on the value of the services they receive.”

Good Measurable Outcome Example #2

“Of 100 homeless persons sheltered, 20 (20% of 100) will enter permanent housing at the completion of their stay.”

Analysis: Again, this separated the service (provide shelter to 100 homeless persons) from the Measurable Outcome (20 will enter permanent housing).

Good Method of Measurement Example #2

In this example, the applicant should explain the methods used to document and track the needs of each client related to housing and other needs, and all contact with service providers and housing providers. If a case manager assists with developing a housing plan, that should be noted.

Good Measurable Outcome Example #3

“Of 50 summer program student participants, 42 (84% of 50) will report improvement in at least three areas of their lives which they have identified as problematic.”

Analysis: Good statement of Measureable Outcome. The important factor here will be how well the program is able to measure these Outcomes among the student participants.

Good Method of Measurement Example #3

“Pre-surveys administered to each student gather demographic information and provide baseline information about problematic areas of participants' lives. Participants fill out a post-survey that once again measures the same potentially problematic areas. Statistical analysis is used to measure shifts. These data are compiled in a document which contains graphic representations of impact in terms of % of problematic areas improved. We gather anonymous written feedback from students as well.”

Example of a Measurable Outcome that *Needs Improvement* #1

“100 homeless clients will receive service through the program. Of those, 60 will receive counselling and assistance in increasing self-sufficiency and becoming contributing and productive members of society.”

Analysis: This does not define a Measurable Outcome. Instead, it defines services that are to be offered. But what outcomes are to be expected from the counselling services? Will any clients actually become contributing members of society as a result of the counseling?

Here’s an example of a better approach:

“Of the homeless persons in our program, 60 will receive counselling and assistance in increasing self-sufficiency and becoming contributing and productive members of society, and of those, 10 (17% of 60) will secure paid employment within three months of completion of the counselling services.”

The methods of measurement will need to explain how the employment statistics are tracked.

Example of a Measurable Outcome that *Needs Improvement* #2

“120 children will receive after-school cooking instruction and of these 60 will demonstrate improved grades at the end of the school year.” Or:

“120 children will receive after-school cooking instruction and of these 80 will demonstrate improved self-confidence at the end of the school year.”

Analysis: Although these do set desired outcomes from the services, how can we know that any improvements in grades of self-confidence are the result of the cooking classes? Maybe the students who aren't in the after-school classes would show similar improvements. The challenge with a program such as this is to have Methods of Measurement that clearly and reliably link the results to the program. Sometimes this is very hard to do.

One thing that could help establish this link is a large-scale academic study that demonstrates that similar after-school programs in other schools have resulted in similar measurable objectives.