

ACTIVITY: WARM-UP

Overview

This participatory activity illustrates the basic principles of evaluation.

Objective

To create an understanding of the importance of evaluation questions in focusing an evaluation

Materials Needed

“Evaluation” worksheet, page 41

Pens

Three different brands of chocolate chip cookies, enough for each participant to have one cookie of each brand

Time Required

Approximately 40 minutes

WHAT	TIME	HOW	MATERIAL
Step 1 Setting the context	2 min.	Say to the group, “You are about to conduct an evaluation activity. The subject of the evaluation will be chocolate chip cookies. During this activity, we are going to develop evaluation questions, gather evidence from the samples provided, and determine which samples best meet our expectations.”	
Step 2 Establish- ing criteria	5 min.	Give each person a copy of the “Evaluation” worksheet on the following page. Say, “First, I want you to think about the information you need to make an informed decision about which brand of cookie to buy. What questions would you want answered before you bought a particular brand of cookie? Write those questions in the left column of the worksheet. You will use the same questions as a guide for evaluating each cookie.”	“Evaluation” worksheet Pens
Step 3 Gathering evidence	10 min.	Have each person come forward and get one cookie of each brand. Say, “Use whatever methods you choose to gather evidence that helps you answer each of the evaluation questions you have identified. Record your findings in the second column of the worksheet.”	Three different brands of chocolate chip cookies

WHAT	TIME	HOW	MATERIAL
Step 4 Judgment	5 min.	Say, “Now use the evidence you obtained to rate each cookie on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the highest.”	
Step 5 Sharing	5 min.	Now tell the participants to form groups of three and share their evaluation questions, methods of gathering evidence, and their judgments about the cookies.	
Step 6 Reflection and discussion	13 min.	<p>Lead a full-group discussion: Read each of the following questions to the group, allowing for responses after each one:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * What are some of the evaluation questions you identified? * Why did people develop different evaluation questions? * Did any of you have particular standards or expectations that the cookie must meet, such as a particular number of chocolate chips? * What methods did people use to gather data about their cookies? * What judgments did you make about the cookies? * How might the selection of evaluation questions affect one’s judgments about which cookie to buy? * In what ways is this like evaluating community building? * In what ways is it different? 	

Adapted from Preskill, H., and D. Russ-Eft. (2005). *Building Evaluation Capacity: 72 Activities for Teaching and Training*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, www.sagepub.com.

WORKSHEET: COOKIE EVALUATION

Brand of Cookie _____			
Questions	Data or Findings	Method	Rating
Final Rating or Score			

Brand of Cookie _____			
Questions	Data or Findings	Method	Rating
Final Rating or Score			

Brand of Cookie _____			
Questions	Data or Findings	Method	Rating
Final Rating or Score			