Accountability Modules

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| POSSIBLE QUESTIONS | WHERE TO FIND THE ANSWER |
|---|--|
| Plan the Project | |
| What are the best approaches to my project, given the project objectives? | See Introduction and Designing the Evaluation |
| Identify Available Data | |
| Are the data I need available? | See descriptions of statewide systems at Data Retrieval |
| | Agency-level data: get CAATs assistance in reading and manipulating agency files. |
| Collect Additional Data, if Needed | |
| What should I consider when collecting new data? | See Designing the Evaluation, Sampling, Descriptive Statistics, and Hypothesis Testing. Consider costs/benefits of collecting new data and data reliability (see GAO publication, "Determining Data Reliability" and/or SAO EDP programs). |
| What are some common ways to collect new data? | See <u>Interviews</u> , <u>Questionnaires/Surveys</u> , and <u>Data Retrieval</u> . Consider agency records, direct observation, focus groups. |
| Analyze the Data | |
| What software can I use to analyze data? | See Available Analysis Tools |
| How can I organize and present raw data? | See <u>Frequency Distribution</u> , <u>Descriptive Statistics</u> , <u>Graphs</u> , and <u>Deception with Graphs</u> |
| How can I draw conclusions from the data? | See <u>Hypothesis Testing</u> , <u>Inferential Statistics</u> , and <u>Other</u> <u>Audit Techniques</u> |
| What if I don't need quantification/generalization? | See Case Studies, Sampling, and Descriptive Statistics |
| How can I summarize/analyze the written material I have collected? | See Content Analysis |
| How can I document and analyze processes? | See <u>Flowcharting</u> , <u>Case Studies</u> , <u>Ratio Analysis</u> , <u>Trend</u> <u>Analysis</u> , <u>Cost-Benefit Analysis</u> , and <u>Other Audit</u> <u>Techniques</u> |
| Are there standard indicators for me to use? | See Ratio Analysis and the Performance Measures module |
| Other | |
| Where can I get more information? | Review the list of <u>resources</u> at the end of the Data Analysis Section. Also, contact the SAO Methodology Coordinator(s). |
| I didn't find some standard methods. Where are they? | Methods are condensed into basic building blocks. For example, <i>substantive testing</i> may involve ratio and trend analysis and inferential statistics, <i>reasonableness testing</i> may involve fluctuation analysis, <i>walkthroughs</i> may involve interviews, flowcharting, and observations. |