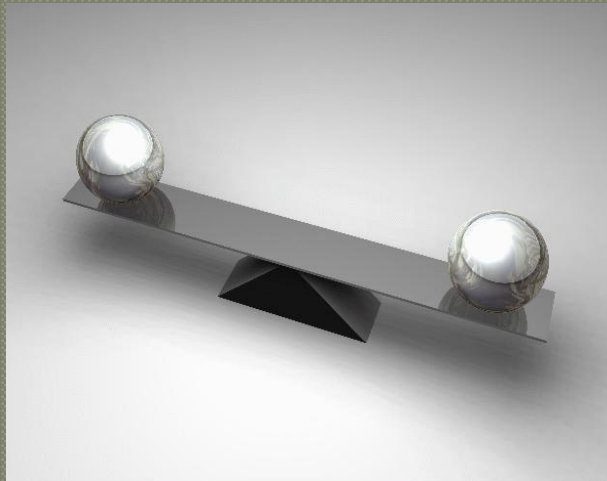


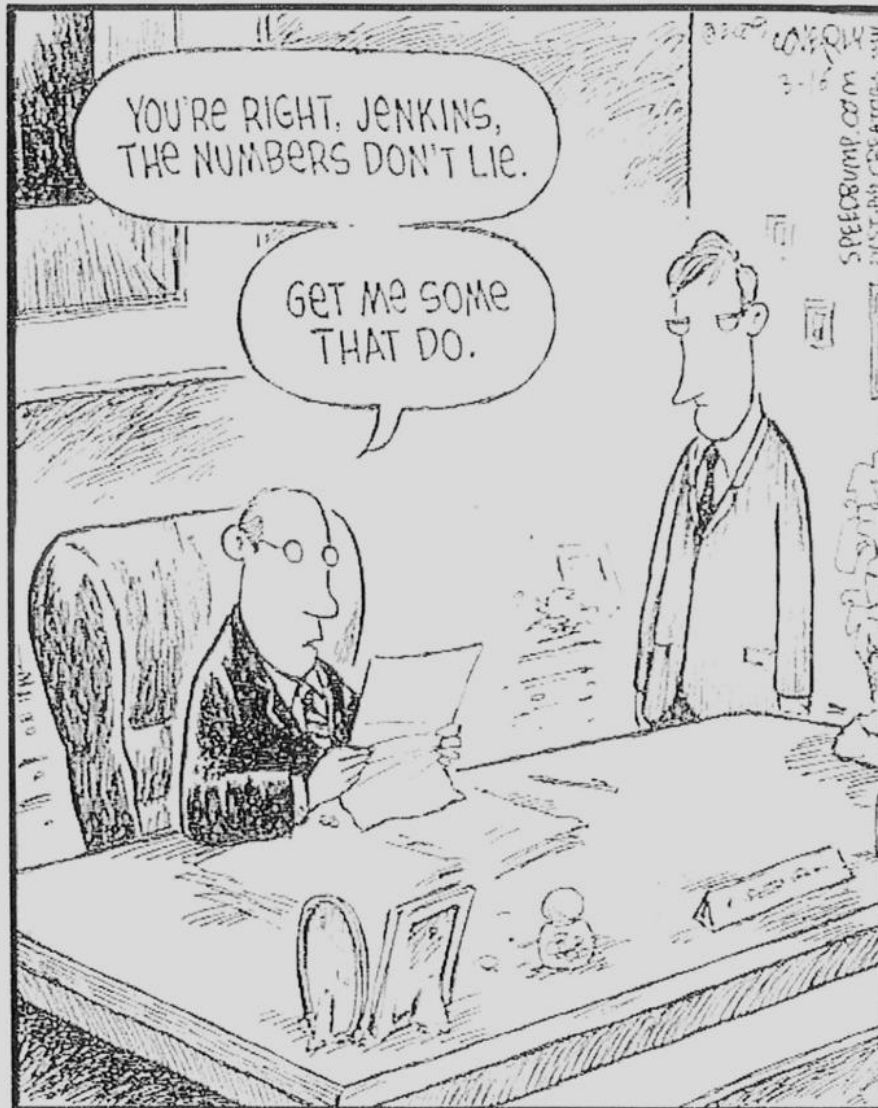
Anytime, Anywhere, Evaluation Ethics *DO* Matter!



Heather Buchanan
Wayne MacDonald

American Evaluation
Association Conference
Anaheim November 2011

SPEED BUMP



Key Questions

- How common are ethical challenges among Canadian evaluation community members?
- What types of ethical challenges are Canadian evaluators likely to encounter?
- How does this compare/contrast with the experiences within other evaluation communities (e.g. AEA)?
- What implications do the findings have for individuals, organizations, and associations?

Presentation Purpose

- Explore convergence and divergence in the Canadian and US data for ethically challenged and unchallenged evaluation groups
- Contribute a Canadian perspective to the growing dialogue on evaluation ethics
- Argue for a more proactive agenda, internationally to better understand and support the ethical challenges in evaluation

2010 Canadian Survey

Survey Objectives

- Identify the nature and extent of perceived evaluation ethical challenges;
- Assess the issue of alleged 'wrongdoing' revealed during an evaluation;
- Explore actions taken (and their relative success) in responding to ethical evaluation challenges.

Administration

- Population - 1,889 CES members and Government of Canada Heads of Evaluation.
- Survey active from June to October, 2010
- Distributed by email with 3 direct reminders, including general CES messaging
- Non delivered (incorrect addresses) - 108
- 455 Responses

Response rate 25.5%

Demographic Profile

	Canada 2010 (Buchanan & MacDonald)	United States 1993 (Morris & Cohn)
Approach/Population	Census 1,781 (1,889 with 108 invalid addresses)	Random Sample 700/1,732 where data available
Response (%)	n-455 (25.5%)	n-459 (65.6%)
Gender %	Male 32%/Female 68%	Male 55%/Female 45%
Years in Evaluation	11.8 years	11.4 years
Number of evaluations conducted		
1-5	26%	23%
6-10	16%	17%
11-19	16%	20%
20+	42%	40%

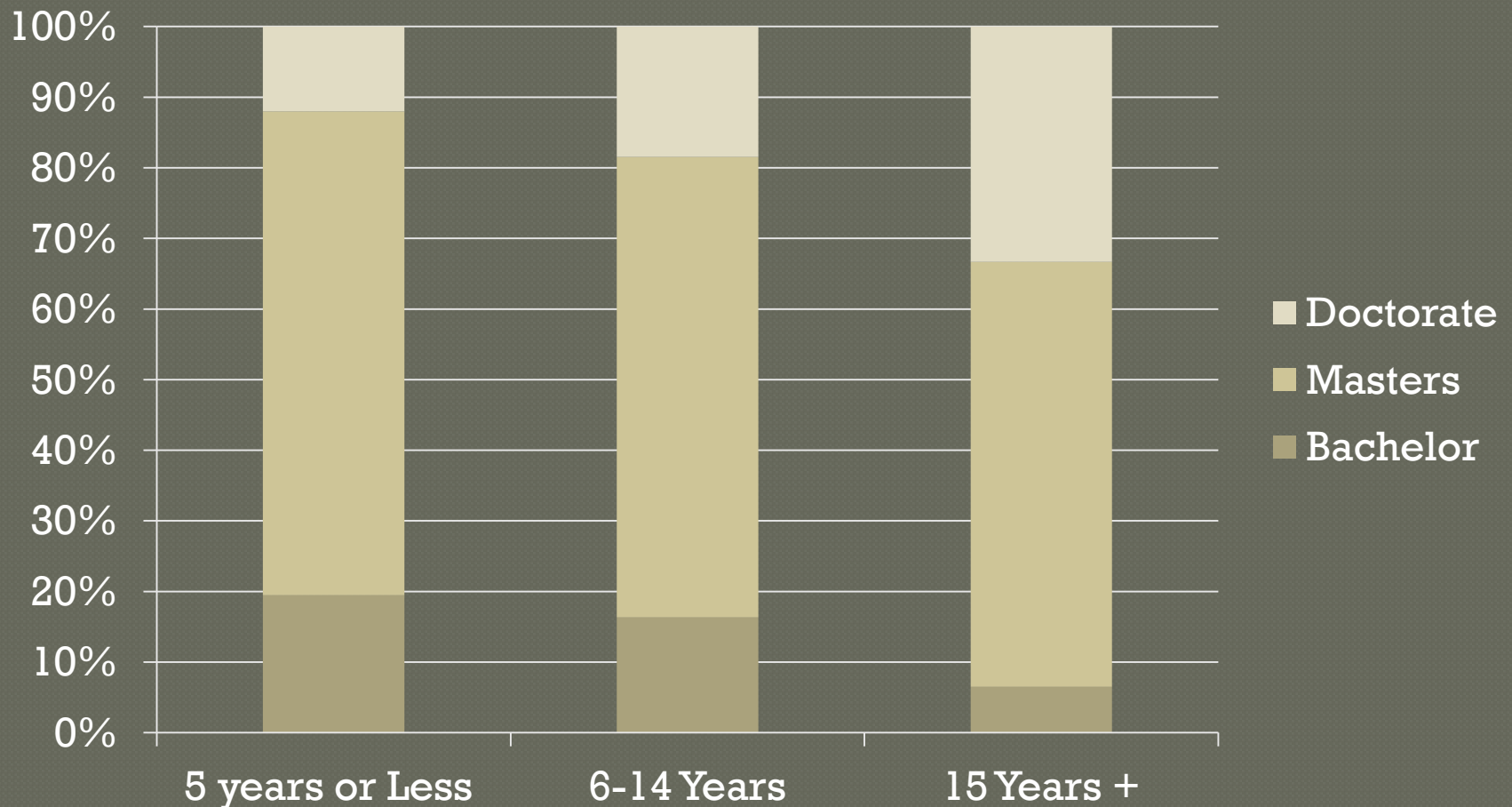
Demographic Profile

	Canada 2010 (Buchanan & MacDonald)	United States 1993 (Morris & Cohn)
Per cent as external evaluator		
1-24%	26%	34%
25-49%	6%	11%
50-74%	10%	12%
75-100%	40%	43%
Employment		
College/university	8%	43%
School system	1%	7%
Federal agency	25%	11%
Province/State/Terr.	8%	10%
Municipal/local	1%	3%
Private business	38%	11%
Not for profit	8%	10%
Health/Social Service/ Student/other	10%	4%

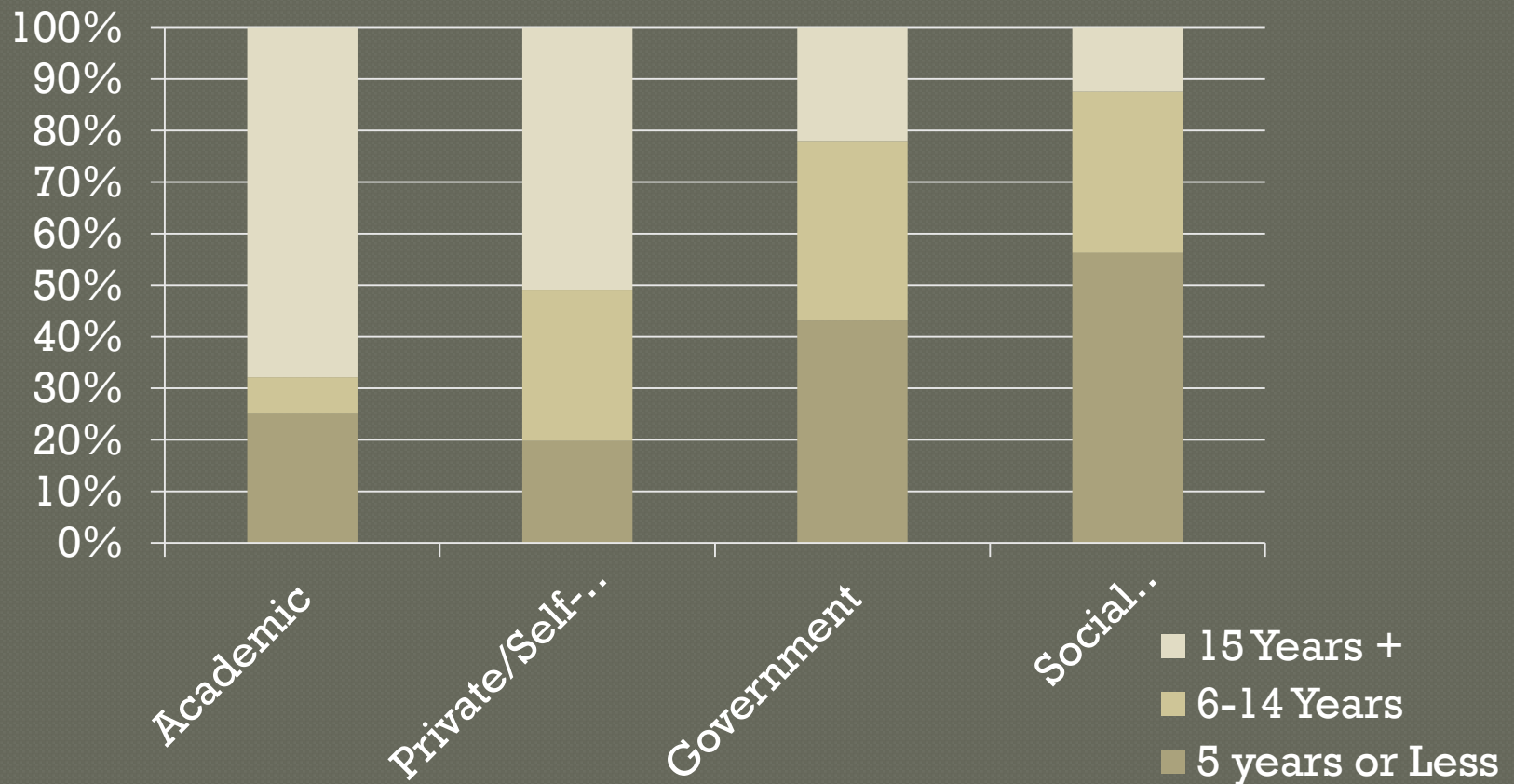
Demographic Profile

	Canada 2010 (Buchanan & MacDonald)	United States 1993 (Morris & Cohn)
Highest Education		
Doctoral	21%	66%
Masters	62%	28%
Bachelors	13%	4%
Others	3%	3%
Primary Discipline		
Anthropology	2%	2%
Business	7%	2%
Education	9%	27%
Evaluation	7%	9%
Political Science	7%	2%
Psychology	10%	19%
Statistics/Research	2%	12%
Sociology	12%	7%
Other (Econ./Health/)	44%	20%

CANADA – Years of Evaluation Experience by Education Level



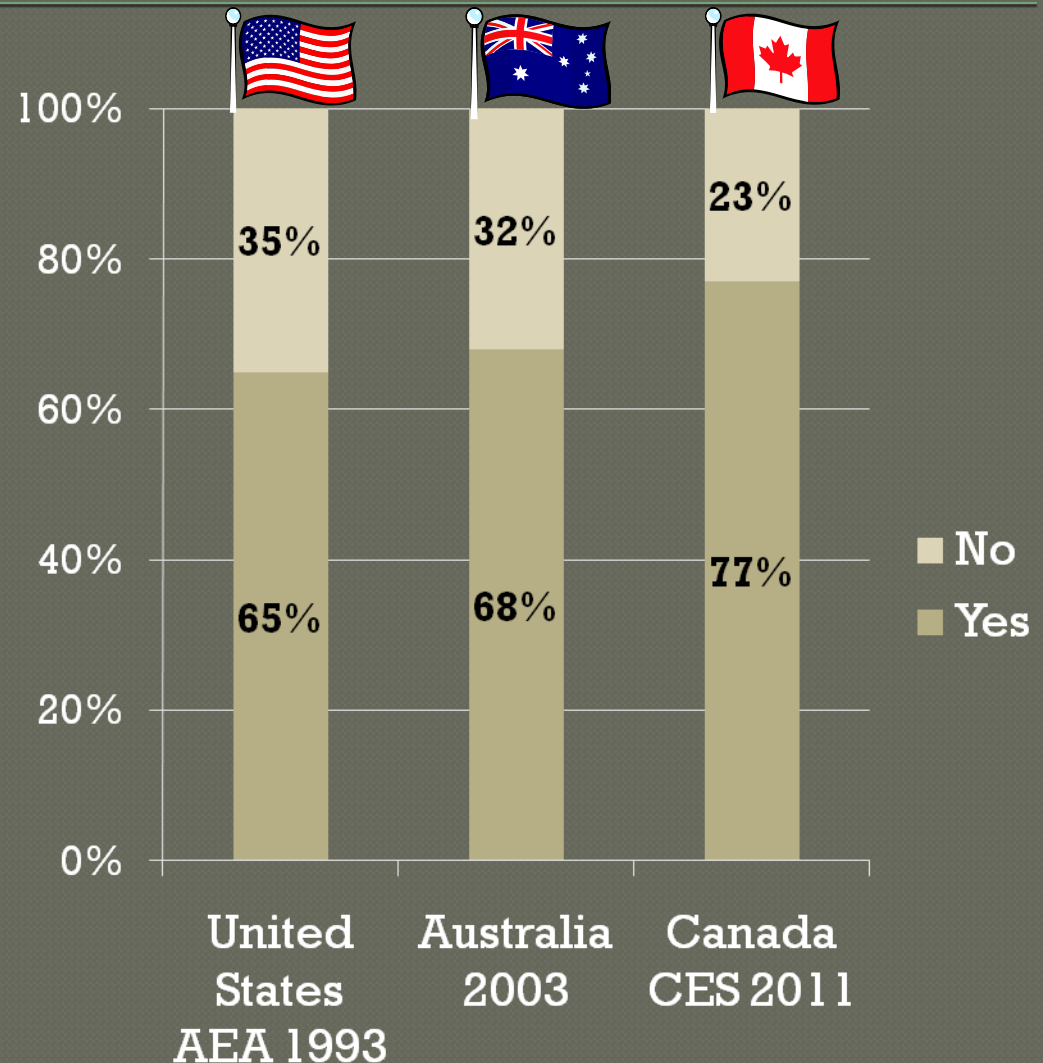
Canada - Years of Evaluation Experience by Sector of Employment



Ethical Challenges

**Have you
encountered what
you consider to be
an ethical
challenge in your
evaluation-related
work?**

Three out of four in
Canada responded
affirmatively



Who Are the Challenged and Unchallenged (CES)?

	CHALLENGED	UNCHALLENGED
Encountered ethical challenge?	Yes 77% (229)	No 23% (103)
Gender	Male 68% /Female 32%	Male 71% /Female 29%
Highest Education		
Doctoral	21%	20%
Masters	62%	56%
Bachelors	13%	19%
Others	3%	5%
Employment		
Private business	38%	31%
Government (all levels)	34%	39%
Not for profit	14%	18%
University/college/school	9%	8%
Other	4%	6 %

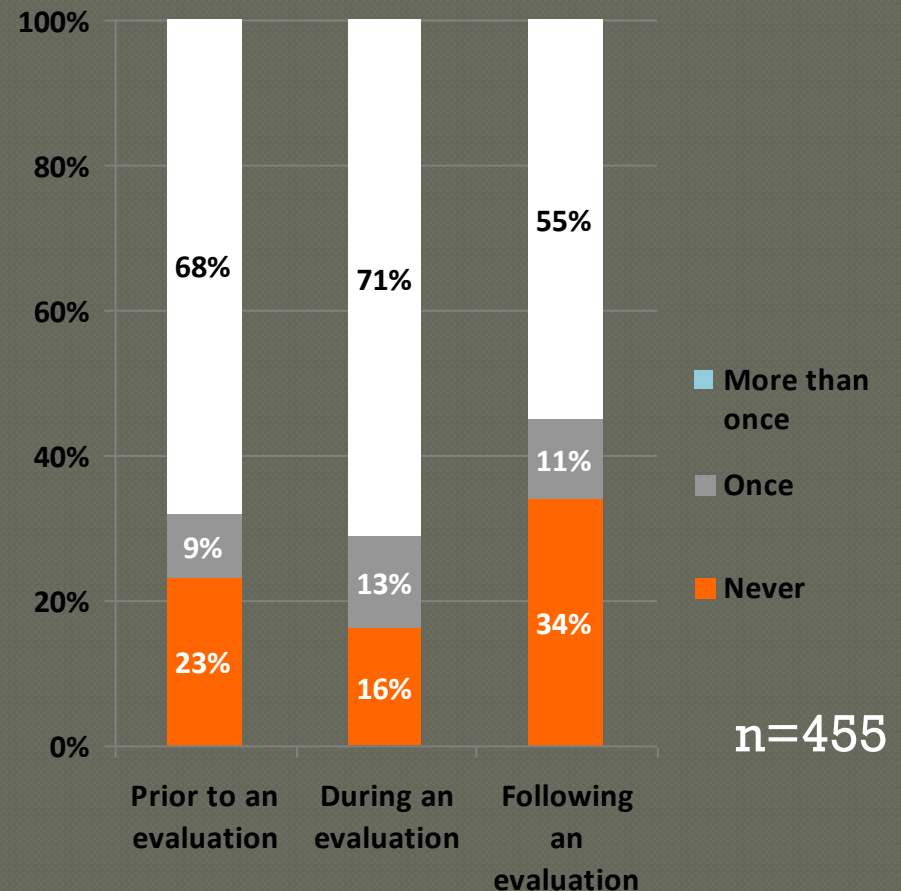
Who Are the Challenged and Unchallenged (CES)?

		CHALLENGED 77% (229)	UNCHALLENGED 23% (103)
Years in Evaluation		11.9 years	8.5 years
Number of evaluations conducted	1-5	26%	39%
	6-10	16%	24%
	11-19	16%	14%
	20+	42%	24%
Per cent as an <u>Internal</u> Evaluator	None	13%	16%
	1-24%	38%	32%
	25-49%	8%	5%
	50-74%	13%	13%
	75-100%	27%	34%
Percent as an <u>External</u> Evaluator	None	0%	29%
	1-24%	21%	29%
	25-49%	12%	2%
	50-74%	17%	7%
	75-100%	49%	33%

Discussion of Ethics

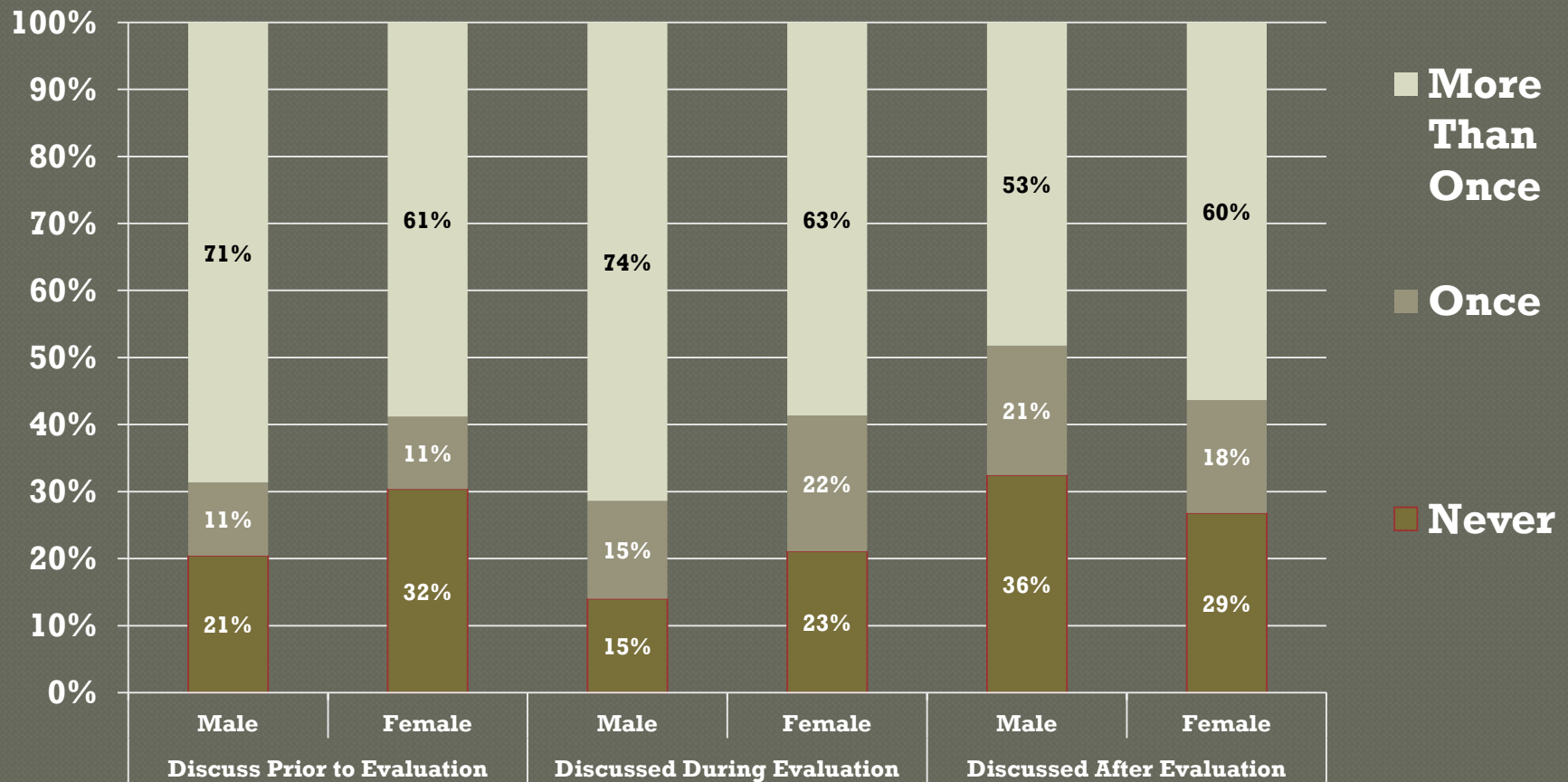
In your evaluation-related work, has a discussion of ethics ever occurred?

If it did occur, it was more likely during or prior to an evaluation and was less likely after the fact.



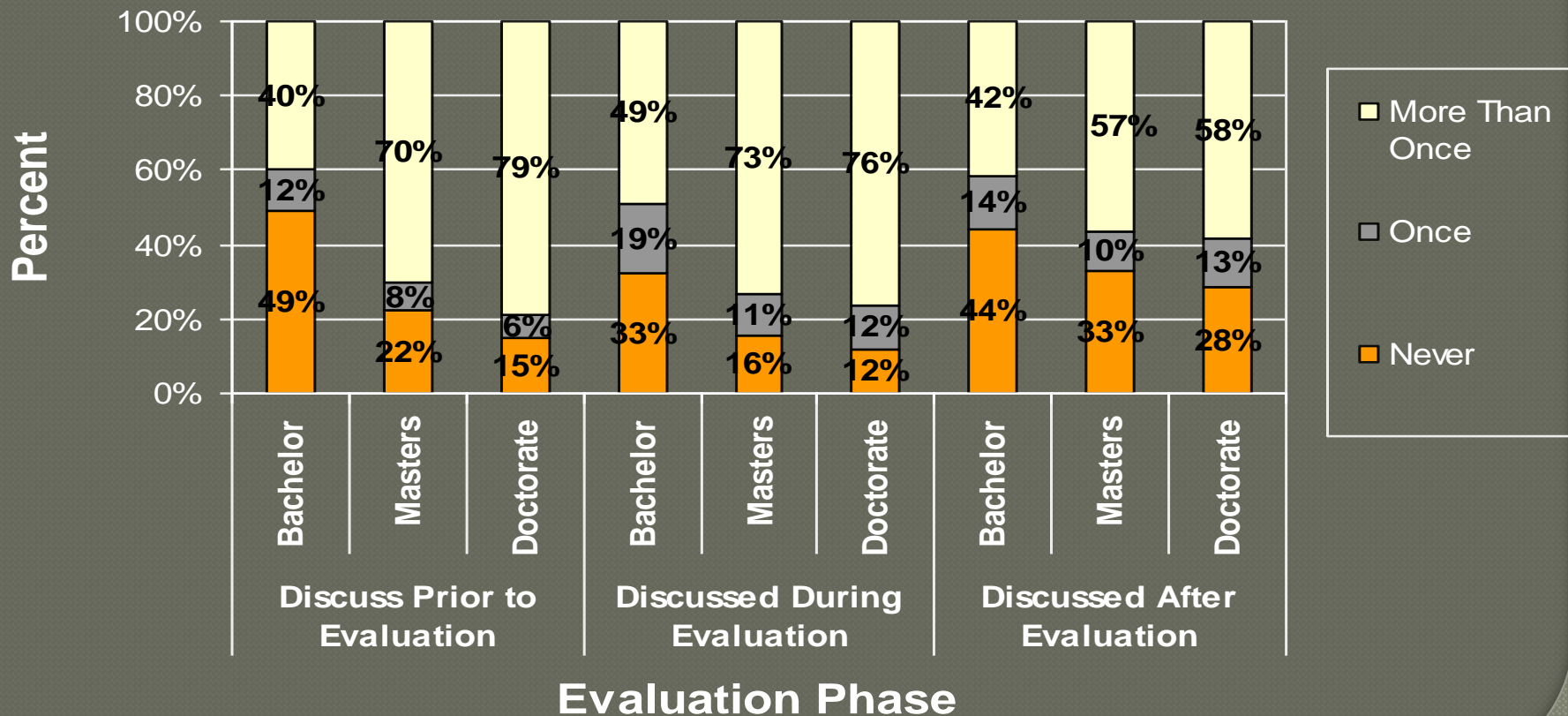
Discussion of Ethics

Extent to Which Discussion of Ethics Has Occurred Prior, During or Following an Evaluation by Gender



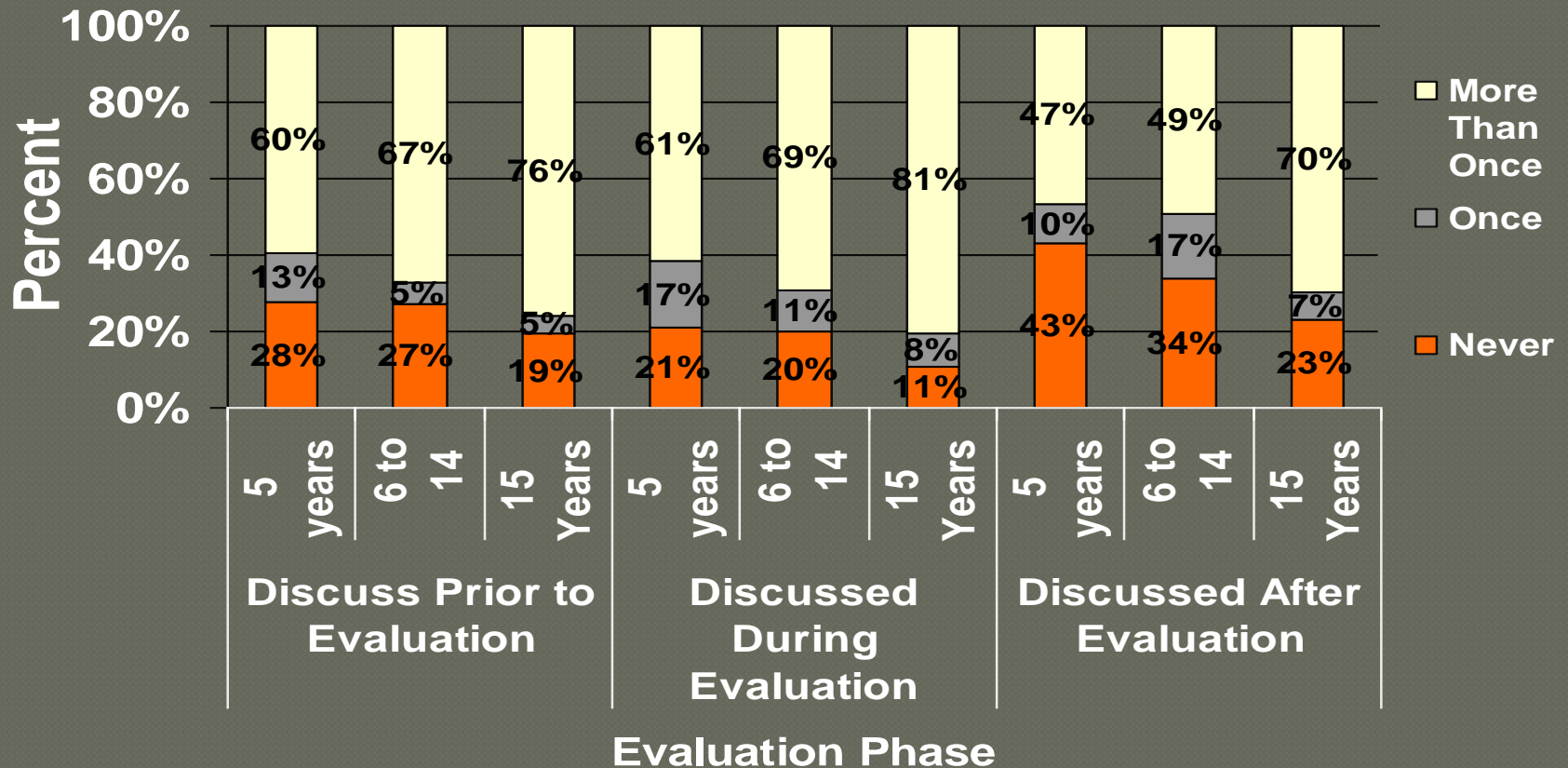
Discussion of Evaluation Ethics

Discussion of Ethics Prior, During and Following an Evaluation By Education Level



Discussion of Evaluation Ethics

Discussion of Ethics Prior, During and After An Evaluation by Years of Evaluation Experience



Defining an Ethical Challenge

◉ Australia

- Guidelines for Ethical Conduct 1997 and Code of Ethics 2000

◉ USA

- Standards for Program Evaluation (SPE 1982), Program Evaluation Standards (1981, 1994 & 2011) and the Guiding Principles for Evaluators (1995 and 2004)

◉ Canada

- Guidelines for Ethical Conduct (1996, 2006) and Program Evaluation Standards (2008)

Top Four Challenges

54% clear, accurate and fair findings and recommendations with limitations

54% confidentiality, privacy and ownership of reports

30% design, methods and data collection

21% conflict of interest, bias, impartiality

Top Four Challenges



CANADA 2010

1. **54% clear, accurate findings**
2. **54% confidentiality, privacy and ownership of reports**
3. **30% design, methods and data collection**
4. **21% conflict of interest, bias, impartiality**



USA 1993

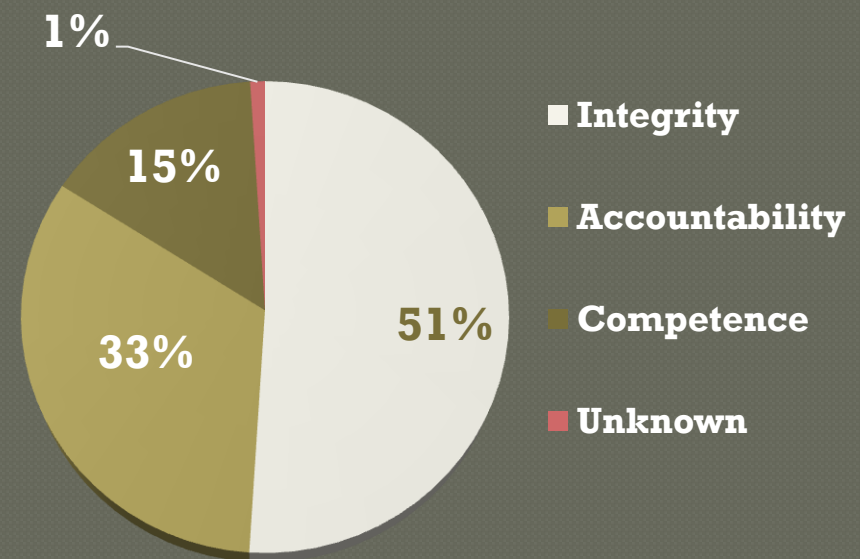
1. **59% presenting findings**
2. **28% misinterpretation / misuse of results**
3. **24% stakeholder identification and needs**
4. **22% disclosure agreement adherence**

Defining the Type of Challenges

Please describe up to three ethical challenges you have encountered over the course of your evaluation-related work?

Only 4 ethical challenges or 1% could not be aligned to the CES Guideline for Ethical Conduct.

Types of challenge by CES Guideline for Ethics



n=615 ethical challenges
identified by 258 respondents

CES Guideline for Ethical Conduct

51% Integrity Challenges cited by 74%

Evaluators are to act with INTEGRITY in their relationships with stakeholders	% of challenges	% of respondents
1. Evaluators should accurately represent their level of skills and knowledge.	0.3%	1%
2. Evaluators should declare any conflict of interest to clients before embarking on an evaluation project and at any point where such conflict occurs. This includes conflict of interest on the part of either evaluator or stakeholder.	10%	21%
3. Evaluators should be sensitive to the cultural and social environment of all stakeholders and conduct themselves in a manner appropriate to this environment.	7%	12%
4. Evaluators should confer with the client on contractual decisions such as: confidentiality; privacy; communication; and, ownership of findings and reports.	34%	54%

CES Guideline for Ethical Conduct

33% Accountability Challenges cited by 57%

Evaluators are to be ACCOUNTABLE for their performance and their product	% of challenges	% of respondents
1. Evaluators should be responsible for the provision of information to clients to facilitate their decision-making concerning the selection of appropriate evaluation strategies and methodologies. Such information should include the limitations of selected methodology.	2%	4%
2. Evaluators should be responsible for the clear, accurate, and fair, written and/or oral presentation of study findings and limitations, and recommendations.	30%	54%
3. Evaluators should be responsible in their fiscal decision-making so that expenditures are accounted for and clients receive good value for their dollars.	0.7%	1%
4. Evaluators should be responsible for the completion of the evaluation within a reasonable time as agreed to with the clients. Such agreements should acknowledge unprecedented delays resulting from factors beyond the evaluator's control.	0.8%	2%

CES Guideline for Ethical Conduct

15% Competency Challenges cited by 31%

Evaluators are to be COMPETENT in their provision of services	% of challenges	% of respondents
1. Evaluators should apply systematic methods of inquiry appropriate to the evaluation	14%	30%
2. Evaluators should possess or provide content knowledge appropriate for the evaluation	0.3%	1%
3. Evaluators should continuously strive to improve their methodological and practice skills	0%	0%

Commonalities & Differences



Percentage of challenge group identifying challenges with:

n= 290

Whether or not you consider this an ethical challenge, have you encountered:

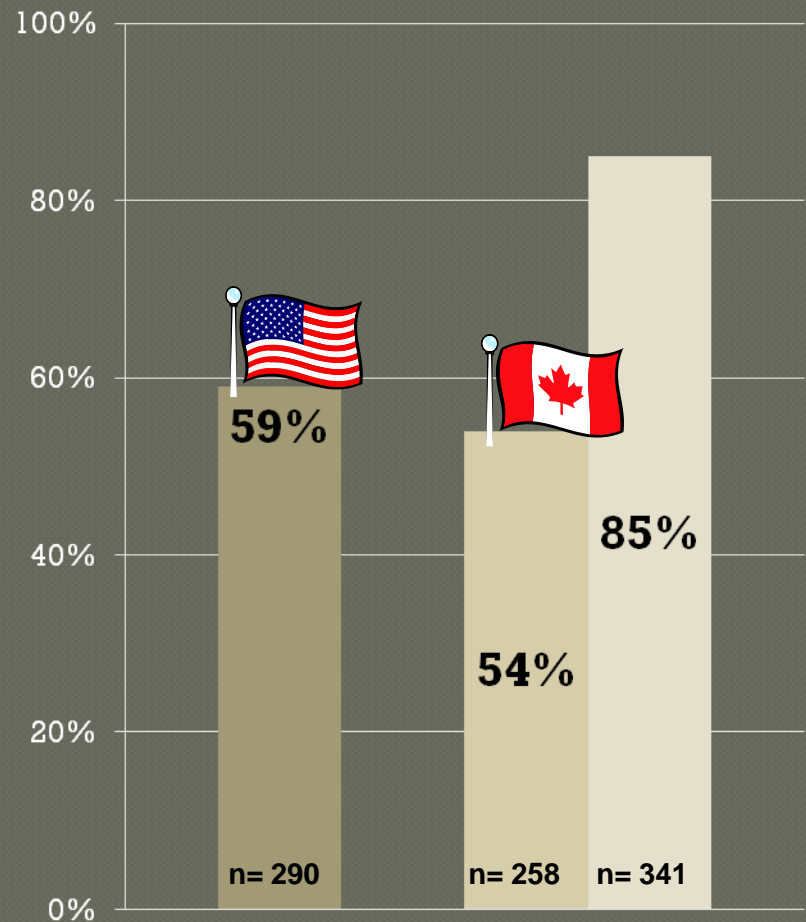


n= 341

59%	SPE 40- Findings should be presented clearly, completely and fairly	85%
28%	SPE 51 - Misinterpretation and misuse of evaluation results should be prevented	79%
24%	SPE 2 - Stakeholders should be identified and their needs clarified	91%
22%	SPE 47 - Disclosure agreements should be adhered to	70%

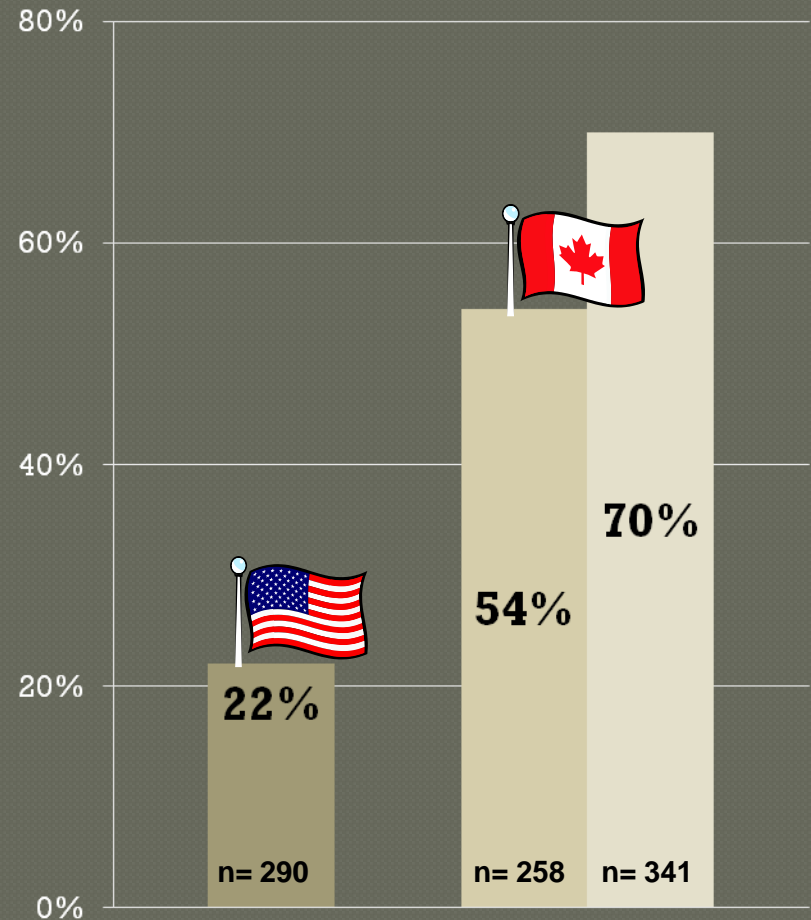
Presenting Findings

- Findings should be presented clearly, completely and fairly - *including evaluator is pressured to alter findings, is reluctant to present findings, has uncovered illegal or unethical behaviour or is unsure of ability to be objective.*
- Evaluators should be responsible for the clear, accurate and fair written and/or oral presentation of study findings, limitations and recommendations.



Confidentiality & Disclosure

- Disclosure statements should be adhered to - *including disputes or uncertainties re ownership of final report; concern that findings may breach confidentiality and evaluator is pressured to violate confidentiality*
- Evaluators should confer with the client on contractual decisions such as confidentiality; privacy; communication and ownership of findings and reports



Guidance on Ethical Challenges

**Are you aware of the ...
code / guideline?**

76%



76%



**Have you ever needed to
use the ... code /
guideline?**

72%



41%



Actions on Ethical Challenges

n=259

What actions have you used to deal with ethical challenges?

- Respondents asked to identify all that apply.
- 38% report taking 'other' actions.

ACTION	TAKEN BY	HELPFUL TO
Discussed with those who commissioned the evaluation	88%	61%
Sought other advice	73%	57%
Discussed with the evaluand	63%	43%
Consulted a lawyer	15%	11%
Did not take any special actions to deal with this situation	14%	1%
Reported wrongdoing to authorities	13%	6%
Consulted an Ombudsperson	5%	5%
Went to media	1%	1%

Support for Ethical Challenges

From whom do you feel support would be helpful in dealing with ethical issues?

n=203

- Nearly three out of four put the advice of colleagues first
- CES was next....and
- Over half cited supervisors, superiors, steering and advisory committees
- Over one-quarter said 'elsewhere'

Source	%
From Colleagues	74%
From CES	62%
From supervisors or superiors	53%
From advisory, steering or other committees	51%
No support required	5%

Conclusions

- Ethics is a serious issue for Canadian evaluators, especially concerns over integrity, neutrality and conflicts of interest.
- There are more similarities than differences across evaluation communities.
- There is a role for professional organizations, although one might question if an international approach is not better suited to this issue.

Author Contacts

- This material may be freely cited as follows:
Buchanan, H., MacDonald, W. “*Anytime, Anywhere, Evaluation Ethics Do Matter!*”.
American Evaluation Association Conference,
Anaheim, California (November, 2011).
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