

Universal Design for Evaluation Checklist

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The purpose of this checklist is to provide support for program evaluators who design, develop, implement, and disseminate evaluations. This checklist is designed to assist you in including people of all ages and abilities in your evaluation process. It was adapted from the seven principles of Universal Design developed by North Carolina State University, The Center for Universal Design (<http://www.ncsu.edu/www/ncsu/design/sod5/cud/index.htm>). The Adaptive Environments Center© (www.adaptenv.org) states “Universal design asks from the outset how to make the design work beautifully and seamlessly for as many people as possible. It seeks to consider the breadth of human diversity across the lifespan to create design solutions that work for all users”.

This checklist is best implemented during the planning phase of your evaluation project ensure participation for all populations.

Principle One: Equitable Use

The design is useful and marketable to people with diverse abilities.

- The evaluation design is inclusive to all users, even if the evaluation is not specifically focused on people with disabilities or other vulnerable populations.
- Men and women, people of all ages, people with disabilities, racial and ethnic minorities, and other groups are represented in the evaluation planning process as staff, advisors and/or co-researchers.
- Informed consent materials are simple and accessible. Alternate forms are available in other languages, in Braille, at lower reading levels, and in audio format.
- You recruit diverse study participants, and have thought through both ideas for how to locate participants and accessible recruitment materials.

Principle Two: Flexibility in Use

The design accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities.

- Project staff is aware of issues related to communicating with participants with diverse abilities.
- Provisions are made for requests for accommodations such as second language interpreters, sign language interpreters, large text, and Braille.
- You use a variety of data collection methods (interviews, focus groups, observations) to include people with different communication needs, abilities, and preferences.
- Your data collection instruments provide flexibility for those with different communication preferences or needs (e.g. paper vs. online surveys, phone vs. in-person vs. web chat for interviews, alternate formats for low-literate or non-verbal respondents, and availability of proxy respondents or co-interviewees).
- You embedded extra time for interviews, surveys, tests, particularly if interviewees have slower

cognition or language barriers.

Principle Three: Simple and Intuitive

Use of the design is easy to understand, regardless of the user's experience, knowledge, language skills, or current concentration level. Eliminate unnecessary complexity.

- Questionnaires, surveys, reports, and other documents are available to people with a variety of reading levels and backgrounds (this may involve making one version that is accessible to all audiences, having multiple versions for different respondent types, or having optional explanations or probe questions).
- You use simple language, concrete questions, and cultural competency (e.g. types of scales, number of units on scale, optional probes or explanations, keeping questionnaires short and simple, creating questions that incorporate cultural competency).
- The materials are provided in simple high contrast black on white or white on black, 12 point font or greater. Your chosen font(s) are evenly spaced, have high crossbars and consistent width. You avoid the use of cursive, italics, and colored text and backgrounds.
- Your instruments and materials are free from acronyms, jargon, slang, and colloquial terms.
- You allow for “thinking time”, remembering this may be the first time respondents are asked this question and they may just need time to gather their thoughts.

Principle Four: Perceptible Information

The design communicates necessary information effectively to the user, regardless of ambient conditions or the user's sensory abilities.

- You address sensory issues (lower lighting, lighting options other than flickering fluorescent lights, minimal noise distractions, seating away from doors and windows, quiet ‘fidget’ toys -think stress ball).
- You use multiple media options to present information (verbal, pictorial, Braille, large print, video and/or audio).
- All printed publications are available (immediately or in a timely manner) in alternate formats such as Braille, large print, and electronic text.
- You include a statement in your publications and materials about procedures for requesting accommodations.
- Your key documents are available in languages other than English.
- Your web pages adhere to accessibility standards such as those of the *Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI)* (www.w3.org/WAI/).

Principle Five: Tolerance for Error

The design minimizes hazards and the adverse consequences of accidental or unintended actions.

- You have included time to pilot test your instruments and protocols with participants who resemble your target audience.
- Your instruments are easy to understand and responses intuitive, even if people don't read the instructions (e.g. Likert-like responses increase from left to right in an intuitive manner and are

consistent throughout the survey).

- Your instruments avoid excessive “skipping” (e.g. “if you answer no please skip to number 17”).
- Your instruments avoid lengthy instructions (try to keep your instructions to 12 words or less).
- Your instruments avoid confusing instructions (e.g. of the following 20 items rank order your top three-instead you could have them rank them 1-20 or select their three top choices without ranking).
- You provide different response options for different reading and/or cognitive levels (e.g. a three-point Likert-like scale may be easier to understand than a five- or seven-point scale, or pictorial responses such as smiles or frowns may be used for younger or non-readers).
- You have included a way to capture and measure comments outside the standard instrument (either verbal or written).
- Your interview protocols include optional probes or explanations to make questions accessible to a wider audience.

Principle Six: Low Physical Effort

The design can be used efficiently and comfortably, and with a minimum of fatigue.

- You ensured the accessibility of sites (on bus line, central location, close parking, ramps, elevators, accessible to wheelchairs, etc.)
- You hold interviews, observations, focus groups, and advisory group meetings at times and locations of the participants’ choosing.
- You checked to ensure the accessibility of tools you are using to collect data, communicate, and/or share information online (web survey tools, webinar/e-learning platforms, options for mobile phones)
- You allow for break time, shortened time, or multiple sessions.
- You provide comfortable seating options.

Principle Seven: Size and Space for Approach and Use

Appropriate size and space is provided for approach, reach, manipulation, and use regardless of user's body size, posture, or mobility.

- You ensured the accessibility of sites used for interviews, focus groups, meetings, presentations, or any other project-related gatherings (in addition to above factors the site has accessible restrooms, the room is quiet, the space is well-lit and provides enough space for sign language interpreters, readers, or personal assistants).
- You considered transportation accessibility, timing the event around transportation availability, and need for transportation assistance (bus or cab fare for those with no transportation, buses that provide transportation from homes for seniors or those with disabilities may only run at pre-arranged times during the day, you may also need to plan something for personal drivers if they are not to be included in the study).
- You are prepared to include a reader or interpreter.

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