

The Making a Difference report is the key annual document for your Program Focus Team. It helps communicate your group’s work and key messages to an academic audience (administrators, colleagues, national extension database); and can help demonstrate to external stakeholders the value or potential value of your programs in their lives.

The Making a Difference report should be clear, succinct, and one page in length. It is a summary of your PFT’s value, not a summary of individual programs. Items to think about for each section:

The Situation

Write 1-2 paragraphs about the area in which your group is “making a difference.” This section should include background information. **Ask yourself:**

1. What prompted this work?
2. Why is this work important to a certain region, state or nation?
3. What issue, problem, or conflict is your PFT trying to resolve?

What We Did

Write 1-2 paragraphs that explain the methodology behind trying to resolve said issue, problem, or conflict. It should be a brief, general overview of activities and processes. **Ask yourself:**

1. What was the project goal?
2. By what methods did your PFT try to reach this goal?

Outcomes

Outcomes are the results. 1-2 paragraphs or bullet points should explain these results. Knowledge gained and knowledge changed are great examples of outcomes. **Ask yourself:**

1. What happened because of our work?
2. What do we know because of this work, and what more do we seek to know?
3. Did we reach our goal, and if not, what did we learn?
4. Are there any potential outcomes?

Success Stories

Success stories explain how ‘The Situation’ was made better (or potentially better) because of your work. While outcomes show knowledge gained or changed, success stories show action and how knowledge was applied. Briefly explain your success in 1-2 paragraphs or bullet points. Use data to measure success. Testimonials are ok, but they often do not show the overall impact. **Ask yourself:**

1. How was change applied or how could change be applied?
2. What improvements were made in the issue, problem, or conflict presented in ‘The Situation?’
3. If no improvement or change was shown or could be measured at the current time, what was learned to move forward?

Anatomy of a well-written 'Making a Difference' report



Making a Difference

2012-2013

Learn about Options for Traumatic Brain Injury

The Situation

Approximately 1.7 million people annually sustain a traumatic brain injury (TBI). Kansas ranks above the national rate for TBI hospitalizations. The injury can occur at any age, but young children, teens, and older adults are more commonly affected than others. Military personnel may also experience traumatic brain injury.

Research shows that survivors of traumatic brain injury and their caregivers want to raise public awareness of TBI to improve acceptance and become integrated members of the community.

What We Did

A USDA grant allowed us to develop an educational program, "TBIoptions: Promoting Knowledge," to raise awareness of traumatic brain injury and the need for support for survivors and family members in local communities. Program content includes the effects and consequences of TBI, the importance of individual and community support, and an introduction to an online directory of community resources. Participants learn through short lectures, videos, application of reflective questions, and print materials to reinforce key messages. Trained leaders in local communities and an online version brought the program to more than 220 people.

Outcomes

- 95% of respondents indicated they learned something new after participating in the program.
- 83% of respondents indicated they planned to take action or change something in their own lives.
- General ratings of self-reported knowledge on five content items increased by more than one rating level from pre- to post-assessment.

Success Story

Participants provided written comments that they learned:

- "... how attitudes of others affect survivors."
- "... to recognize how serious any injury to the brain can be."
- "Effects of TBI aren't always visible."
- "A person with a TBI can set and achieve goals."
- "Community support may be lacking but is very important to survivors and their families."
- "We, as individuals or as a community, can help those affected by TBI."
- "Everyone can make a difference."
- "... how I can make a difference."

Participants said they planned to:

- "... share what I learned with family and friends and encourage them to attend the program."
- "... see if my daughter might need attention."
- "... locate resources for a friend recently diagnosed with TBI."
- "... not judge anyone."
- "... reach out to those with TBI."
- "... be more open to talking with these families in my community."

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The Situation: Clearly explained, with background statistics. In this report, it is very clear that the issue to be addressed is relevant to people in Kansas.

What we did: This outlines the specific methods by which K-State staff worked to address the issue. This section should not address outcomes, but is the right place to indicate numbers of participants, materials used, etc....

Outcomes: Very direct statements on the results of what we did. These indicate that change took place, that our work improved the situation or knowledge.

Success Story: These show how the outcomes are being applied.

See the 2013 Making a Difference reports at www.ksre.ksu.edu/programming/p.aspx?tabid=357