

How to Write an Impact Statement

Impact statements are not activity reports. An impact statement is not a description of what you did. **Impact is the difference in people's lives that resulted from what you did.**

An impact statement is a brief summary, in ordinary language, of the economic, environmental, or social results of your efforts. An impact statement answers the questions:

- What did this activity do for your community or state economy?
- What examples do you have of these effects?
- What is the potential for impact?

Impact reporting provides a way to increase awareness of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Volunteer Program, to demonstrate a return on the taxpayer investment in the program, and to show that we are accountable to the taxpayers. Quantifying the impact of our programs helps us to obtain and maintain funding.

Remember:

1) **It takes two to communicate, a sender and a receiver.** Writing is not an end in itself. You want the receiver to understand what you have now come to understand. No jargon. No acronyms. If you have to use unique terms, explain them.

2) **Be specific. State the impact in the first sentence.** Use the rest of your report to show your evidence. Use some, not a lot, of facts and figures.

3) **Use feedback from participants.** The people who can best tell our story are the people who have been affected by our programs. If someone else can say how great you are, it is so much more effective than when you do it.

Having trouble describing your project's impact? **Report potential impact.** Sometimes it's hard to define or quantify the impact of your volunteer activity. This is especially true when providing recommendations without means of a follow-up or participating in public education at community events. If this describes your work, consider including potential impact. Tell us:

- The most likely benefactors of the volunteer activity.
- What you expect the outcome to be and why.
- An idea of how long it would take to reach expected outcomes.
- Real or hypothetical examples of expected outcomes.

EXAMPLES OF IMPACT STATEMENTS:

Shade tree workshop explained that a recommended tree variety, properly planted and maintained, will save a homeowner an average of \$250 annually for 20 years for a total savings of \$5,000.

Workshop reached 76 people on 'Methods to Garden Safely'. An evaluation completed at the conclusion of the presentation indicated that 64% learned techniques new to them and 89% think that practicing the information presented will reduce their discomfort associated with gardening, especially discomfort in the neck, hand and lower back. This will result in a more productive life and reduce related medical costs.

EXAMPLE OF A "POTENTIAL" IMPACT STATEMENT:

We bought special software for classroom computers. The students learned to analyze the total true cost of producing food products. Using the same software that industry uses makes these students ready for the job market and ready to enhance the food economy.