CAP Project

MODULE 3 VIDEO 3 COLLECTING COST DATA USING EVENT AND TIME LOGS

Hello and welcome to Module 3 Video 3 "Collecting Cost Data Using Event and Time Logs." In Module 3 Video 2, I shared the CAP Project Interview template and how you can use it to collect cost data via interviews. In this video, we will explore two other data collection resources, time logs and event logs. The CAP Project created time log templates and an event log template to help to collect cost data.

Let us start with time logs. Personnel time is one of the biggest drivers of cost for implementing a program. It often is the majority of the costs, up to 80% or more for education interventions, so it is important to accurately capture the investment. Time logs are one way to capture the time personnel spend on designated activities related to the program or intervention.

The CAP Project templates for time logs can be customized to track personnel time for the activities relevant to the program you are studying. The goal is to capture the frequency with which these activities happen (for example, daily, twice per week, etc.), along with how much time is spent on each.

The time log template document includes steps you can take to customize the time log templates for your study. There are two different time log templates. Both collect similar information (activity, the date it occurred, and the number of hours) and are set up for one week. You can copy rows or columns to add more weeks and change the dates to suit your timeframe.

One of the templates lists the activities horizontally and the dates vertically. This option might be best when you have a lot of dates and not many different activities. When personnel engage in each activity frequently, having the option to have many dates going down could be better. There is also a notes column for each activity.

The second one lists the activities vertically and the dates horizontally. This second option might be best if you have a lot of activities but not a lot of different dates.

When personnel engage in each activity infrequently, having the option for the dates to go across may be easier to log.

When customizing the log, you can update the activity placeholders to list descriptors that personnel would recognize. For example, with Reading Recovery, you may ask the Reading Recovery teacher to log time for the one-on-one sessions with students. You could update the descriptor to be "Sessions with Students" instead of "Activity 1," so the Reading Recovery teacher knows what to log there. This will ensure you capture data for the intended activities.

There are multiple ways you could share the log with participants once you create it. You could share it as an Excel file, Google sheet, or even an online survey. Providing weekly reminders that prompt participants to complete the log can help increase participation. For example, this could be through email, the survey platform if you use that option, or SMS messaging.

Here is an example of a completed time log for a reading specialist for a hypothetical program. We made some changes to customize it for the program. You can see that we replaced the activity place holders with the activity names. For example, the first line states "Support classroom teacher with whole class reading instruction." We added the day of the week in addition to the date.

The person completing the log entered the number of hours spent on each activity for each day listed. You can see that they spent 1 hour supporting the classroom teacher each weekday totaling 5 hours for that week. They spent time prepping and on other activities on the weekend, so it is important for this study to include those days in the log. You may want to do the same if you know personnel spend time on activities beyond the work week of Monday through Friday. With the log complete, you can see the total number of hours spent on each activity and the total hours for the week.

Though it is not a part of the template, you could add a column similar to the one here to calculate the percentage of the total hours that the person spent on each activity. The 5 hours spent supporting the classroom teacher is 12% of the total 43 hours spent on the program that week.

Now let us switch to the event log. Programs may include training sessions or other events such as workshops or coaching sessions that are required to fully

implement the program. To collect cost-related data about these events, you can use an event log. As I shared earlier, the CAP Project provides an event log template. You can ask personnel who are leading the event or the program implementation to complete this event log and you can follow-up about the information entered.

The event log is a table that collects some basic information about the event. This information includes: the date it occurred; the length of time for the event; where the event took place; the number of people who were present, including facilitators; total number of attendees; the specific counts for the types of participants such as principals or other administrative staff, coaches, teachers, and other personnel.

The template also requests information about the physical space used for the event; any special equipment used; needed materials; parking fees. On the second page, the items mostly relate to travel costs and there are also questions about stipends and substitute teachers.

Next to the requested information is a place for the data collector to enter the information. For many of the entries, the information will be simple such as a single number for how many trainers were present. For other entries such as special equipment or travel costs, you may need more descriptive information.

For example, for special equipment, the data collector would ideally name each type of equipment used and how many were needed. In the example we provide, the data collector indicated 1 whiteboard and laptops for each attendee. It was helpful that they clarified it was 30 laptops total. Implementers completing the log may not automatically include each piece of information so providing them with an example log can help.

One additional note about travel: in addition to collecting information on which personnel incurred travel expenses, the event log can also be used to gather details such as who paid the travel expenses so you are able to report which entity bore what costs. You can see the response to the top item indicates that attendees were reimbursed for mileage using the IRS rate of 57.5 cents per mile, a total of 600 miles were reimbursed, and the district covered these costs. However, travel costs for the 2 trainers were included in their overall fees, so you will not need to account for them separately. But there is still more to think about with

travel costs. As the response to the second item indicates, 28 attendees spent an average of 15 mins each way to attend the workshop. Two of the principals were coming from out of town and spent 2 hours traveling each way. There is an opportunity cost of personnel time spent traveling so you will need to include this in the total time each person spent on the program.

After the event log is complete, you may need to follow up to get additional details on the type, quantity, or price of the entries. For example, going back to the special equipment, the person completing the event log may only list the word "laptops." While accurate for the type of equipment, we need to know the quantity: how many laptops. We don't know if the laptops were for only for the facilitators or whether all of the participants needed a laptop, so the quantity is important. In this case, it seems only the 30 attendees needed laptops, but not the facilitators.

As I noted with the time logs, feel free to customize the event log for your study. You can revise the requested information to ask about different resources or to include questions that can guide the person to provide complete information. You can find the event log and time log templates at capproject.org. Be sure to check out videos 6-9 in this module where Fiona shares more about the specific data you will need to collect for each type of ingredient and how to use the CAPCAT template to document it.