

Common Errors Made in Impact Reports

1. **No impact reported**- only a description of an activity. Every impact needs to report the results of the program, not just the how and why it was conducted. What changes were made by our clientele as a result of our programs? Answer the “so what” question for your reader.
2. **Impact of activity reported was very small**- i.e. The amount saved by program participants was \$35.00 when four 4-H members learned to sew shirts or 15 Extension Homemakers saved \$6.00 per member by making a glass bottomed basket.
3. **Dollars reported are not focused on the intended outcome of a program**- For example, “The youth livestock program reported an increase of \$0.25 per pound for the grand champion steer at the county fair livestock sale this year.” The intended outcome should be focused on youth development and how individuals changed.
4. **Not showing economic impact when formulas are available or can easily be figured**- Programs, such as Extension Wellness, have formulas in place to demonstrate the economic impact of healthy living. Check with your specialists to see if they have an ROI (return on investment) formula in place.
5. **Title lacks description or creativity**- Title needs to grab the attention of your reader and give a glimpse of what the overall impact is going to be.
6. **Not proof-reading before submitting** – Have at least one more set of eyes look over your impact report before uploading them into AIMS.
7. **Gave more credit to other organizations and agencies** we collaborated with than to ourselves. For example, listing them first or gave them primary credit because they contributed to a grant. Remember, this is an Extension program impact report.
8. **Writing in first person**- Write statements in the third person. Not “my 4-Hers” but use “Pulaski County 4-H members” instead.
9. **Using acronyms or program names** only we, or only a few people, know what they mean. For example, BMPs, EHC, IPM, etc. Only after first spelling out the entire phrase/name, can you use acronyms.
10. **Drawing an impact from a single activity**- Many individual activities will not generate evidence of impact beyond an increase in knowledge. Programs will not generate measurable impact without follow up contact with participants.

Content compiled by Diane Mashburn, August 2017

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