
WHAT TO DO
IF...?
Quality edition

WHAT IF...?

Evaluation is rarely a smooth-sailing journey and difficulties may arise all the time. With this game, you can learn collectively how to handle with them – or even better - to prevent them from arising. This deck of cards focuses on quality issues with evaluation reports.

How to play?

Position the cards on the table and select three of them. For each card, ask yourselves:
- What should I do in this specific situation?
- What can I do in the future to prevent this from happening?

Discuss the answers collectively.
You're done? Select three other cards and start again!

ABOUT...

This game was created by Thomas Delahais, Quadrant Conseil.

It is largely based on a work led by Claire Tourmen and Euréval on "Action rules for evaluators". Special thanks to Lydia Greunz for editing the cards.

QUADRANT
CONSEIL

WHAT IF...?

"I have received the draft final report but it doesn't answer the evaluation questions."

WHAT IF...?

"The conclusions in the final report don't seem to be based on facts or on systematic analysis."

WHAT IF...?

"The recommendations in the final report seem insufficiently linked to findings and conclusions of the evaluation."

WHAT IF...?

"The findings in the draft final report are not always sufficiently supported by evidence. Some of them look like expert statements on the evaluated issue."

WHAT IF...?

"A member of the Steering Committee said at the final meeting that the report is only here to 'exonerate' our administration of all criticism."

WHAT IF...?

"There are quality issues in the final report but the evaluator refuses to amend it (or accepts only marginal revisions)."

WHAT IF...?

"Colleagues in the administration question the quality of the final report, but it's really because they don't agree with one specific finding."

WHAT IF...?

"The quality of the final report is poor, but we don't have time or resources to change that now."

WHAT IF...?

"At the final meeting, a member of the Steering Committee disagrees with the methodological approach that was adopted and rejects the findings accordingly."

WHAT IF...?

"The evaluation team is not responding to some of the basic requirements relating to the evaluation (e.g. a theory of change, questions and criteria, methodological protocols…)."

WHAT IF...?

"The evaluation team was expecting to be able to compile the data sets which are needed to answer an evaluation question but they were unavailable / of poor quality."

WHAT IF...?

"We are facing political 'interferences' on methodological choices and/or on how findings and conclusions should be presented and phrased."

WHAT IF...?

"The evaluation team is not clearly spelling out the concepts or models which are used or is using an inappropriate approach."

WHAT IF...?

"The members of the Steering Committee disagree about the priorities for the evaluation and the team has just announced they will now follow their own."

WHAT IF...?

"A member of the Steering Committee said that if the report doesn't contain a quantitative assessment, the credibility of findings is doubtful".

WHAT IF...?

"There are too many questions asked in this evaluation for the budget and we know it."

WHAT IF...?

"The evaluation asks whether the objectives pursued were reached but we know that these were unclear / were only partially followed or have changed."

WHAT IF...?

"The evaluation is supposed to answer questions formulated when the intervention was first launched but which are not relevant anymore today."

WHAT IF...?

"Some findings are counter-intuitive / controversial / have strong implications and I fear that colleagues and other stakeholders will react with disbelief."

WHAT IF...?

"We sent the final report to the colleagues in charge of the intervention but they did not read it / did not seem interested."

WHAT IF...?

"The press is interested in the content of the report but our colleagues fear that it will be used to attack the administration."

WHAT IF...?

"The evaluation was supposed to be 'theory-based' and a theory has been developed at the inception stage, but then it does not seem to have been used later on in the process."

WHAT IF...?

"The report contains 'promising' figures that our administration wants to use in future communication, but the sources and references are not clearly spelt out."

WHAT IF...?

"The evaluation intends to assess the impact of intervention on specific group(s) of people but data on them was not systematically collected."

WHAT IF...?

"At the final meeting, a stakeholder pretends that the intervention has a negative effect on some groups, but that the report omits to mention this"

WHAT IF...?

"Some findings and conclusions seem not to be robust but we don't have the know-how or competencies internally to challenge them."

WHAT IF...?

"At the inception meeting a stakeholder says the evaluation will not be credible because the evaluation team has 'undocumented' conflicts of interest."

WHAT IF...?

"The Terms of Reference say the evaluation team should do 50 interviews. They did 40 but refuse to do more, arguing the resources would be better used elsewhere."

WHAT IF...?

"Colleagues in the administration say the report is not credible because there are some factual mistakes in the information reported."

WHAT IF...?

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WHAT IF...?

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