


What is Evaluation?




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Evaluation: What is it, really?

Program evaluation is the systematic collection and analysis of information about program activities, characteristics, and outcomes to make judgements about the program, improve program effectiveness, and/or inform decisions about future programming.


Patton, M.Q. (1997) Utilization-focused Evaluation, Sage Publications



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Evaluation: What is it, really?

- In other, less fancy words:
 - How do we know we are doing what we say we are doing?
 - It answers the 'so what' question - are we any good at it?



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Why Do We Practice Evaluation?

Learning Communication

Capacity Building Accountability

Purposes of Evaluation

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How Do We Evaluate?

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When to Begin?

- From the very beginning and throughout the life-cycle of the program
- Design programs to include evaluation

Standards
Utility
Feasibility
Propriety
Accuracy

Engage Stakeholders

Describe the Program

Rigorous Evaluation Design

Gather Credible Evidence

Justify Conclusions

Use and Share Lessons Learned

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Who Evaluates?

- What's the purpose?
 - How will we use the feedback?
 - Who is best positioned to deliver the message?
- What are the stakes?
 - High stakes
 - Low stakes

What Do You Want to Evaluate?


Process	Outcome
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What actually happens during implementation of a program – implementation “fidelity”	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Looks at what changes because of the results of the program

What are the Evaluation Steps?



Program Description is Always Needed

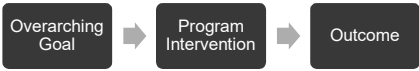
- What **need** does your program address?
- What **target groups** need to take action?
- What **actions** do they need to take?
- What **activities** are needed to meet intended outcomes?
- What is the **relationship** between activities and intended outcomes?




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Program Theory of Change

- Start with the end in mind: what is the ultimate goal of the thing you are doing?
- Start with an overarching goal and then identify what approaches or activities are required to meet that goal.


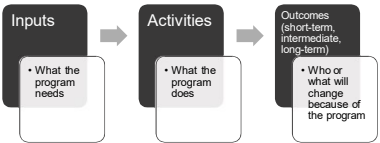


- Note: Program description makes the theory of change **clear, not true!**



Logic Model

- Visual representation of the relationships between your program's activities and its intended outcomes (i.e., what you hope happens as a result of your program)




Breakout Groups

Case Study

- A university has a program for graduating college students looking for a job. The program offers career services to help them transition into the workforce.

Activity

- In small groups, create a logic model (inputs, activities, outcomes) that the university can use for their career services program.


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How Do We Use and Share the Lessons We Learn?

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Using and Sharing Lessons Learned

- **Share** results and lessons learned with **stakeholders and others**
- **Use** findings to **modify, strengthen, and improve your program**
- **Consider** information needs of the audience and stakeholders
- **Tailor message and format** to the users of the evaluation
 - Oral
 - Written (full report, executive summary, etc.)


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Reporting

- Provide an **executive summary**
- Use examples, graphics, quotes to **highlight findings**
- Present data **simply and concisely**
- Use active verbs to **shorten sentences**
- **Organize** results by **evaluation question**
- Eliminate **redundancies**


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Question?



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