

What the Hell is Program Evaluation?

EDP 619 Week 1

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Defining Evaluations



Evaluation is the act or process of determining the *merit*, *worth*, or *significance* of something or the product of that process.



Explaining it to Everyone Else

Evaluation answers *if it works?* and *why does it work?*

We typically leave the *if it works?* to people with grounded knowledge in a particular area - aka *content experts*.

Merit, Worth, & Significance



First consider these

- What do **merit**, **worth**, and **significance** mean to you both separately and combined?
- Can you think of real world examples of each?

Evaluation



Evaluation is the act or process of determining the

merit (quality)

worth (value), or

significance (importance)

of something or the product of that process

Eval Stem



Evaluand

This is not always as obvious to define in practice as it may seem. Where are the boundaries of a particular program? Do the evaluator, their employer, and various other stakeholders agree on those boundaries?

Evaluator

Who you are matters... more on this later



Criteria, Standard, and Indicator

First consider these

- In addition to defining these for ourselves, what are examples from everyday?
- Which of the three is harder to identify? Why?

Primary Purposes of Evaluation



Formative

Conducted with the intent to improve

Summative

Conducted with the intent to inform decision making and/or determine judgment

Secondary Purposes of Evaluation



Developmental

To help develop an intervention or program

Accountability

To hold accountable

Monitoring

To assess implementation and gauge progress toward a desired end

Knowledge Generation

To generate knowledge about general patterns of effectiveness

Ascriptive

Merely for the sake of knowing

Developmental vs Formative Evaluation



The video can be found by clicking on the icon below



A bit more on Developmental Evaluation



Try This at Home



What might the purpose of the evaluation be?

What questions might the evaluation try to answer?

Formative Evaluation

The program has been designed and piloted with a group of 20 principals. What kind of evaluative feedback should the ASDC seek?

Summative Evaluation

The program has been delivered to all principals in the county. What kind of evaluative feedback should the ASDC seek?

Introduction to Roles and Styles



Evaluator Roles: Independent, Topical, External, Internal

The one that you fill in your evaluation will determine a lot!



Defining Culture

- What is culture?
- How do we recognize it?

Culture can be defined as the shared experiences of people, including their languages, values, customs, beliefs, and more. It also includes worldviews, ways of knowing, and ways of communicating. Culturally significant factors encompass, but are not limited to, race/ethnicity, religion, social class, language, disability, sexual orientation, age, and gender.

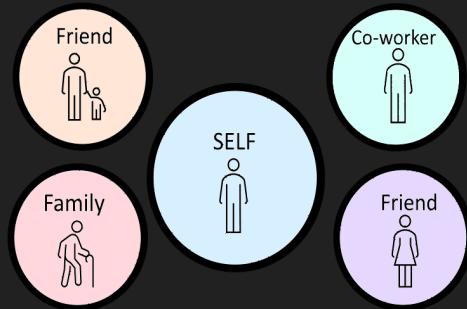
-- American Evaluation Association (2011)

The Iceberg

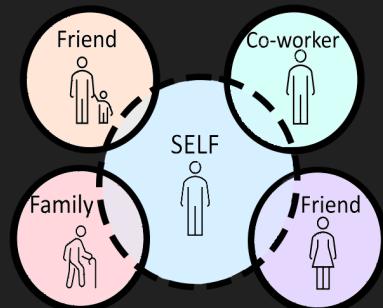


Markus & Kitayama (1991)

Independent view of self



Interdependent view of self





Cultural Influences Activity

How might each of the following influence an evaluation's design and implementation?

- Language of participants
- Role of food and eating
- Evaluators attire when interacting with participants
- Concept of time
- Communication styles
- Importance of family relationships
- Values/norms re: individualism, independence, conflict
- Understanding of social structure



Increasing your cultural sensitivity

Try to

Assess your own attitudes, beliefs, values

Incorporate culturally diverse groups and perspectives throughout evaluation process

Build in sufficient time to negotiate access and build trust in community / organization

Demystify evaluation, avoid jargon, build buy-in

Be flexible in choice of evaluation methods, use multiple data sources, multiple data collection methods, multiple perspectives



Meta-evaluation

A ***metaevaluation*** is an evaluation of an evaluation or evaluations

There are two main types

Formal

Extra, external study to authenticate the process or product of the evaluation

Informal

Evaluating an evaluation or evaluations

Things to Evaluate



- Evaluation criteria
- Evaluation standards
- Performance
- Program costs
- Program goals

Things to Consider



Evaluation Standards

Location

Stakeholder Needs

Sponsor Needs

Your costs



Goals Include

Preparatory conditions

- What does it take to be ready to target a goal?
- Progress toward that state is a goal

Intended operations

- What a program tries to implement to achieve a goal is a type of goal.

Targeted outcomes

- Short-term (initial)
- Medium-term (intermediate)
- Long-term (distant)

Whose Goals are Important?



It's not so clear cut!

How to Decide Which Goals Matter Most?



- Talk to stakeholders/sponsors; explicitly ask their perspective on recipient needs, program goals, and evaluation goals
- Figure out other ways to find needs
- Read all available program documentation
- Develop a logic model connecting needs through program activities, outputs and outcomes associated with goals



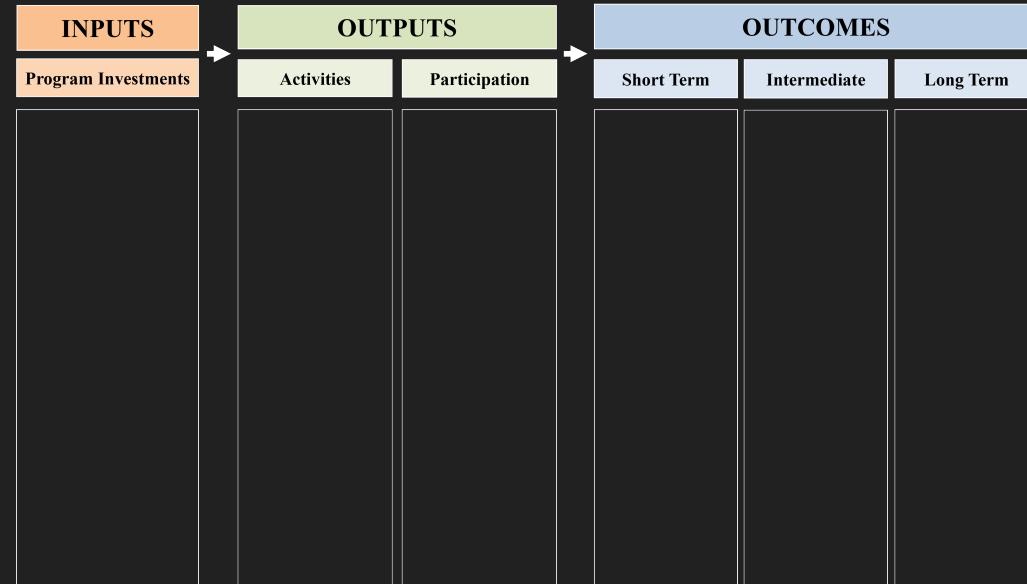
Logic Model Parts

- **Inputs.** what resources go into a program (aka investments)
- **Outputs.** what is produced through those activities
 - **Activities.** what activities the program assumes (what actually occurs)
 - **Participation.** who is part of the program and how are they served (who is served like stakeholders and sponsors and what engagement they have)
- **Outcomes.** changes or benefits that result from the program
 - **Short.** Learning (awareness, knowledge, attitudes, skills, opinions, aspirations, motivations)
 - **Medium or Intermediate.** Action (behavior, practice, decisions, policies)
 - **Long.** Consequences (civic, economic, environmental, political, professional, social, etc.)

Basic Logic Model



Logic Model



Other types of logic models

Example Logic Model



Pre-Advising Logic Model

INPUTS	OUTPUTS		OUTCOMES		
	Activities	Participation	Short Term	Intermediate	Long Term
Program Investments Academic advisors Advising Notes Data warehouse Early Warning System First Year Experience First-Year Seminars Institutional research In Out Evaluation System Orientation Outreach Social Media Presence Student Level tracking data	Advertising Advising survey Attendance data and flag tracking Drawing persistence, progression and retention data Modeling advising Major explorations Peer advising Resident hall advising Short answers (given to simple advising questions) Standard advising sessions Statistical analysis of current student data	All students who are not in a specialized program and less than 90 credit hours. Academic advisors in the central unit	Students attend gateway classes Student study plan completed Student satisfaction Student understanding of university policy and procedures Student trust gained	Student gain entrance in school of choice (if applicable) Students provide detailed constructive feedback on advising experience Increases in progression rates. Sequential progression Student success beyond 90 hours but prior to graduation.	Improved graduation rates. Increases in persistence rates. Increases in retention rates. Student success beyond graduation.

More examples of logic models



Identifying Criteria

What matters enough to measure given what you know about all the other factors?

- Any relevant past performance data
- Costs
- Existing literature and standards
- Needs and Goals



Estimating Cost

- Often very hard to do well
- Almost always addressed in a relative way
 - Relative resource intensity of alternative programs (including development and/or retraining costs)
 - Proportion of resources allocated to different program activities (logic modeling can be very helpful for thinking about this)

Measuring Performances



Sponsor perception

Staff performance / perception

Stakeholder performance / perception

In a nutshell

Who is best positioned to really know?

Multiple times, multiple perspectives

Evaluation Statements





Developing a Purpose

Step 1. Critique sample evaluation purpose statements (see following slides) to better understand what might go into crafting a good one.

Step 2. Write preliminary evaluation statement for the program you'll evaluate

Step 3. Write 3 - 7 potential evaluation questions relevant to the evaluation purpose statement you wrote for step 2



Thinking About Statements

In the next two slides, take a look at the sample evaluation purpose statements and *for each* try to identify

- what is being evaluated?
- how will results be used?
- what kind of evaluation (developmental, formative, or summative)?
- how could the purpose statement be improved?

Sample Evaluation Statements (1/2)



1. The purpose of the evaluation is to determine employees' level of awareness of the new vision for the organization. This information will be used to decide whether further training or communication about the new vision is needed.
2. The purpose of this evaluation is to understand the knowledge and skills needed by customer service representatives as they prepare to implement a new order entry system. This information will be used to develop a training program for teaching customer service representatives how to use the new system.
3. The purpose of the evaluation is to determine the cost-effectiveness of providing online word-processing training. The results will be used to determine whether this approach serves the organization's needs better than providing the training in a traditional classroom format.
4. The purpose of the evaluation is to determine whether the listening skills course should continue to be offered.

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Sample Evaluation Statements (2/2)



5. The purpose of the evaluation is to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the newly developed online course on healthy communities. The results will be used to modify and refine the design and content of the course.
6. The purpose of the evaluation is to determine if students' test scores have increased as a result of teachers' involvement in the new professional development program.
7. The purpose of the evaluation is to determine the extent to which supervisors followed the procedures for employees' performance review as presented in the New Supervisors Workshop. In addition to concerns about the design and content of the workshop, the evaluation will examine the factors that support or prevent the use of these skills. The results will be used to modify the workshop design and content, identify interventions to support the use of these skills, or both.
8. The purpose of the evaluation is to obtain the reactions of employees to the newly established program development process. The results will be presented to the Executive Team.

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Tips



- Be clear
- Be concise
- Be truthful
- Get buy in
- Be confident but **never** demeaning or overpowering
- Don't overpromise and underdeliver!
- Write in a way that's meaningful to your sponsor(s)/stakeholder(s)

Thats it!

If you have any questions, please reach out



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