

Developing an Evaluation Plan

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By the end of this session, you should be able to:

- **Identify basic evaluation types you might need to include**
- **Know where to go to identify evaluators (if needed)**
- **Know the components of a basic evaluation plan**

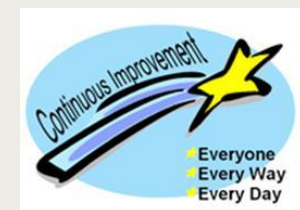
Not addressed: Methodological issues: design, instrument development, data collection, analysis, and reporting

Evaluation Background



When Do You Build Evaluation Into a Grant Proposal? When...

- Explicitly required
 - Grant RFP—NIH, NSF, USDA, ACF, foundation
 - Program grants—evaluation may not be the main focus but supports the program
- It's the purpose of the proposal—e.g., evaluation of an intervention *is* the objective
- It's needed for program development/modification and you can justify the funds



Types of Evaluation

- **Formative evaluation.** Identification of ways to improve. Ongoing
 - *Are activities implemented as intended? (fidelity)*
 - *How can this program reach the targeted group?*
 - *What is needed to provide this program more effectively?*
- **Summative evaluation.** A determination of merit, worth, or significance (Scriven, 1967).
At project end
 - *Does this program work?*



Who Conducts the Evaluation?

- The evaluator might be:
 - You (potential for bias)
 - Faculty partners (multidisciplinary team)
 - An external evaluator (see resources)
- Be aware:
 - External evaluator may be required
 - Evaluators may or may not charge for evaluation plan development
 - Occasionally, meta-evaluator may be required (evaluation of the evaluation—foundation)

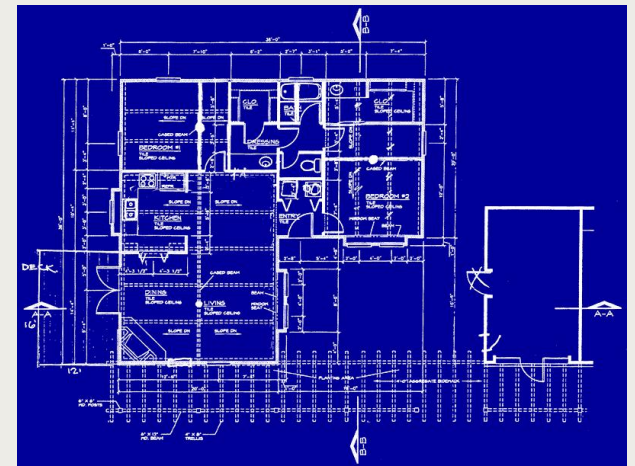


How Important is the Evaluation Plan?

- Critical! Should be integrated into grant planning from the beginning (not as an afterthought)
- Demonstrates:
 - Conceptual thinking; understanding of links between activities and outcomes
 - Effectiveness—the value of the work
 - Awareness of context and challenges
 - Capacity to do the work
- The point of evaluation is use.



Creating an Evaluation Plan



Step 1. Develop conceptual model (logic model)

- How do the activities/program link to the expected outcomes?
- Are the expected outcomes reasonable given what you will do?
- Are the perspectives of multiple stakeholders taken into account?



Table Logic Model

Objective:					
Pre-inputs (assumptions)	Inputs (activities)	Outputs	Initial outcomes	Intermediate outcomes	Long-term outcomes
<p>What your activities need to be successful.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing • Resources • Expertise • Partnerships • Design • Fit with intended impacts • Leadership • Dissemination strategies 	<p>The activities conducted that are expected to result in change.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service programs • Education • Information • Support • Connections 	<p>The immediate products of your inputs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # served • # completed • # offered • # contacted • # distributed • # recruited • \$ generated 	<p>What you expect participants to get if they are exposed to the activities.</p> <p><i>Change in:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge • Skills • Resources • Attitudes • Behaviors (short-term) 	<p><i>If your participants show the intermediate outcomes, what you expect to then result.</i></p> <p><i>Change in:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaviors (long-term) 	<p>The ultimate goal. Usually affected by many other factors. Very difficult to assess your impact at this level.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More vital communities • Healthier, more successful individuals and families • Sustainable practices

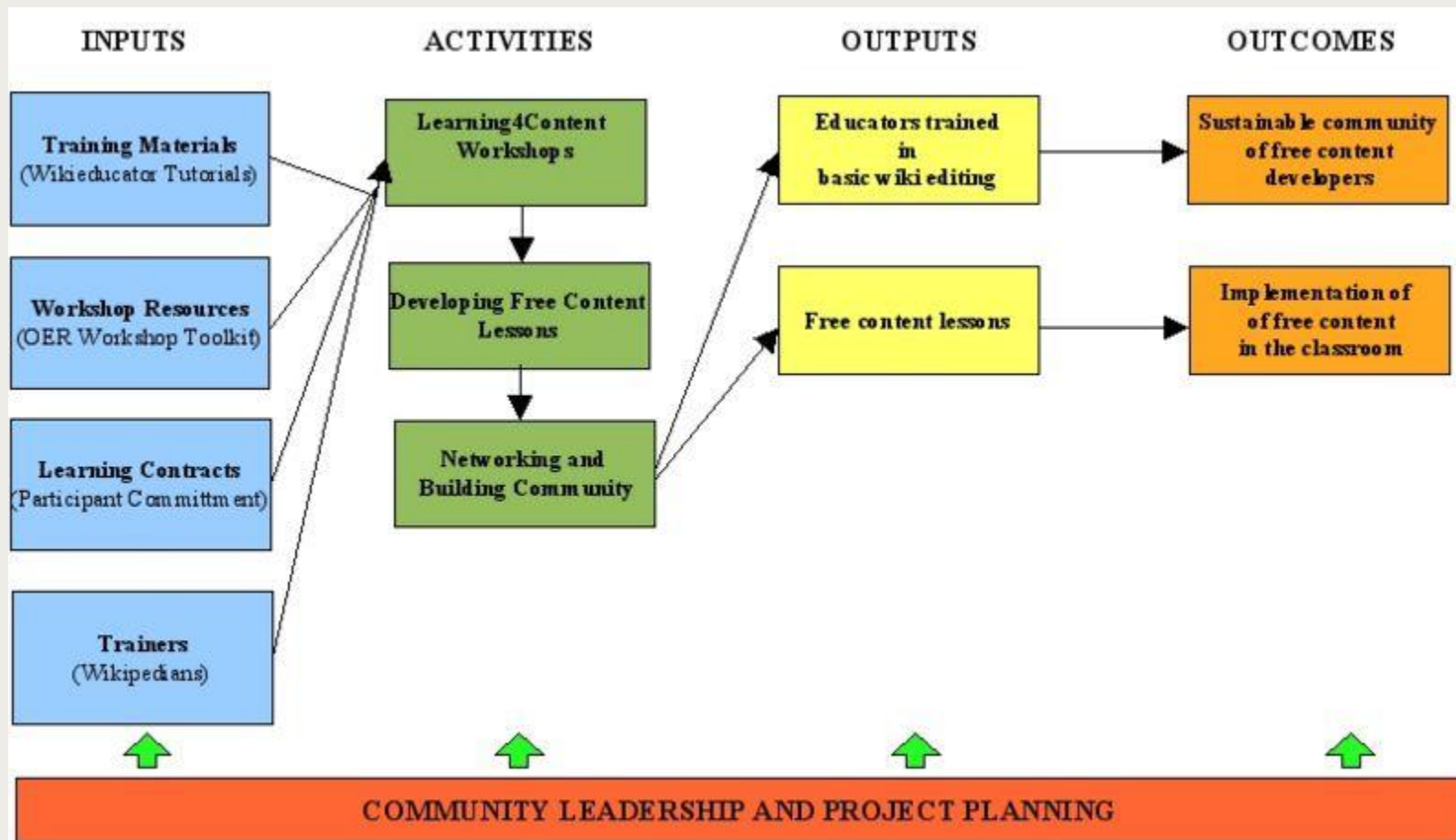


Example: Entrepreneurship Program

Pre-inputs (assumptions)	Inputs (activities)	Immediate outcomes (outputs)	Intermediate outcomes	Long-term outcomes	Ultimate outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizations will partner • Team requirements are suitable • The training program is high-quality • Experienced coaches are identified 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application process • Week-long training program • One year of coaching • Ongoing support 	<p>Teams will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and stabilize • Develop action plan and activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective team processes • Activities implemented • Expanded network of key community members supporting entrepreneurship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More positive attitudes about entrepreneurship in community • Increased community leaders' support • Implementation of supportive policies for entrepreneurs • Increased resources for entrepreneurs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in # new small business • Increase in # of new jobs • Increase in employment rate



Graphic Logic Model



Conceptual Models

- The point is that the conceptual model gives you:
 - Confirmation that your activities can reasonably be linked to your expected outcomes
 - A blueprint for evaluation questions, indicators, and measures



Step 2. Identify evaluation questions

- May be already identified by funding agency
- Identify from conceptual model (next slide)



Example: Entrepreneurship Program

Formative		Formative and Summative	Summative		
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Step 3. Identify Approach and Measures

- Quantitative? (e.g., surveys)
 - More respondents
 - Numerical measurement
 - Statistical analysis
 - If properly designed, causal inference
- Qualitative? (e.g., interviews, focus groups, observations)
 - Fewer participants
 - Descriptive, generative, rich, provides stories
- Mixed methods? (both quant and qual)



Step 3. Write evaluation plan narrative – handout

- **Section I:**
 - Introduction to the problem
 - A description of the evaluation framework which specifies what you want to evaluate
 - What questions are to be addressed in the evaluation
 - The timeframe for conducting the evaluation.
- **Section II:**
 - A description of the program implementation objectives.
- **Section III:**
 - A description of the program outcome objectives and performance measures.
- **Section IV:**
 - Procedures for managing and monitoring the evaluation.
 - Personnel, including responsibilities and experience
 - Capacity of the organization
 - Deliverables and dissemination plan
- **Timeline**



Step 4. Write evaluation plan table – see samples

- Many evaluation plans include an evaluation plan in table format
- They can be constructed in multiple ways
- May include:
 - Evaluation questions
 - Tasks and subtasks
 - Who is responsible for what (evaluation team/specific team members, partner)
 - Data source
 - Data collection method
 - Instrument
 - Time period
 - Due dates
 - Analytic method



Resources

- **Evaluation:**

- NSF 2002 User-Friendly Handbook for Project Evaluation, <http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2002/nsf02057/start.htm>
- NSF Online Evaluation Resource Library, oerl.sri.com
- CERC resource list: outreach.msu.edu/cerc
- University of Wisconsin – Extension: <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/pdande/evaluation/index.html>

- **Find an evaluator**

- MSU Faculty partners—send message through CERC listserv (contact vanegere@msu.edu)
- Michigan Association For Evaluation: <http://maeeval.org/EvalSearch.cfm>
- American Evaluation Association: http://www.eval.org/find_an_evaluator/evaluator_search.asp
- The Evaluation Center (Western Michigan University) evaluator directory: <http://ec.wmich.edu/evaldir/>

- **Consultation**

- CERC: outreach.msu.edu/cerc
- Center for Statistical Training and Consulting (CSTAT): cstat.msu.edu, “Register for Consulting” button



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