Designing the Evaluation Plan

Sondra LoRe
National Institute for STEM Evaluation and Research (NISER)
sondra@utk.edu
Our agenda

1. What is it?
2. When to start?
3. Program Mapping
4. Stakeholders
5. Evaluation Questions
6. Sharing results

This is our evaluator. Every time she collects data it will help us remember what we said we were going to do in the first place.
What is program evaluation?

A systematic way for collecting, analyzing, and using information to answer questions about projects and programs.
When is the **right time** to get **started** with an **evaluation**?

*Begin with the end in mind*

Consider:

- What is it that we want to accomplish?
- What steps will we take and how and when will we measure success?
One way to map your program is with a **Logic Model**

**Inputs**
- What you invest

**Activities:**
- What you do

**Participants:**
- Who you involve

**Outputs**

**Intermediate:**
- Learning: Knowledge, skill, behaviors...

**Long-Term**
- Actions: behavior, practice, policy.

**Outcomes**

**Goals**

**Intermediate-Term**
- Conditions for long term goals

**Long-Term**
- Broad, general statement about what the project intends to accomplish
An example project
Logic Model for Hands On Classrooms

**Situation:**
Increase number of participating schools and sustain enrollment through engagement with social media.

**Inputs**
- Social media professional
- Customer Contact Information
- Hands On website, Facebook, Twitter, & YouTube accounts
- Hands On curriculum
- Current and former employee contact information
- Grant sponsor information
- Program retention data

**Activities:**
- Increased posts to Facebook & Twitter
- Initiate blogging
- Update curriculum on website
- Develop and initiate direct mail marketing
- Interview program sponsors, director, graduate students, teacher and administrative sampling
- Generate and conduct survey

**Outputs**
- Middle school teachers & administrators
- Graduate Students
- Funding and Sponsor Agents
- Program Director

**Outcomes**

**Short-Term:**
Increase number of participants in our social media outlets

**Medium-Term:**
Increase interaction between teachers and Hands On

**Long-Term:**
Increase number of school and teachers participating in Hands On
Retention of teachers in the program
Pros and Cons of Logic Models

Pros:
✓ Links outcomes and activities to explain how and why desired change is expected to happen.
✓ Requires justifications at each step (evidence) “Causal Model”

Cons:
Ø Doesn’t always identify indicators or
Ø Evidence to measure whether outcomes are met.
Another way to map a project is with a Theory of Change (TOC) Model.
Increase online engagement and participation in Hands On Classrooms Program

Long-term Outcomes

Intermediate Goals

Intermediated Outcomes

Activities

Initiatives

Challenges

- Teachers become regulars and user ship increases
- Teachers continue to use curriculum
- Follows increase
- More likes, shares, and comments on SM platforms
- Daily posts
- Roll-out SM platforms
- Continued engagement for T
Pros and Cons of theory of change (TOC) models

Pros:
✓ Graphically illustrates program components.
✓ Helps stakeholders clearly identify components.

Cons:
➢ Time intensive to make
➢ Have a shorter history than logic models- less known”
Who are your **Stakeholders**?

Identify stakeholders to maximize your impact, sustainability and growth.
## Mapping Stakeholders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Involvement in the project</th>
<th>Importance in the project</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Keep Satisfied</td>
<td>Manage Closely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invest Minimum Effort</td>
<td>Keep Informed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Mapping Stakeholders in our example project

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Importance in the project</th>
<th>Keep Satisfied</th>
<th>Manage Closely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Funding agency</td>
<td>Teachers using the social media platforms</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundation support</td>
<td>Hands On staff</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Graduate students</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invest Minimum Effort</td>
<td>Keep Informed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials suppliers</td>
<td>Program managers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box packers and shippers</td>
<td>Graduate student mentors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Website designers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Evaluation
Questions

Wait, how will more Twitter followers help us reach our target outcomes?

Why don't we just let the evaluators figure that one out.
Evaluation vs. Research

This research is really going to help move our field forward.

This evaluation is really going to help our program become more effective.

What is the relationship between research and evaluation?

Why is it important to define?
## Evaluation Questions for **Hands On Classrooms** example

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholders</th>
<th>Evaluation Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hands On Teachers</td>
<td>To what extent do teachers participate with Hands On Facebook page?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Do they find the social media posts useful?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Which platforms do they use most?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Student Hands On Videos</td>
<td>Did graduate students receive appropriate information and training regarding their roles in the project?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To what extent did Hands On graduate students become involved with planning videos?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sharing your results: Understanding the content.

Who:
- Audience
- You

What:
- Action
- Mechanism
- Tone

So what?
- Story

(Knaflic, 2015, pg. 24)
We used to have only one or two ugly visuals in every report. But then we heard how important visuals can be. So now we have an ugly visual on every page.

When we said we wanted you to visualize the data, this isn't what we meant.

Visualize your data meaningfully
I'm not a visual person.

How about your audience?

I'm not a visual person.

So I will deliver my report in song, hit it boys.

Sharing your results
Hey guys, did you read this part?

It basically says we need an evaluation to keep getting money.

Our agenda

1. When to start
2. Program Mapping
3. Stakeholders
4. Evaluation Questions
5. Sharing results