

Program Evaluation: What Is It and How Can You Use It To Improve Program Performance?

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Program Evaluation: Webinar 1

- Understanding program evaluation
 - What is program evaluation?
 - Why is program evaluation important?
 - Evaluation methods
 - Types of evaluations
- Evaluation framework
 - Engaging Stakeholders
 - Describing the program/project
- Evaluation purpose statement
- Evaluation questions
- Understanding and setting program objectives
- Introduction to the logic model

Program Evaluation: Webinar 2

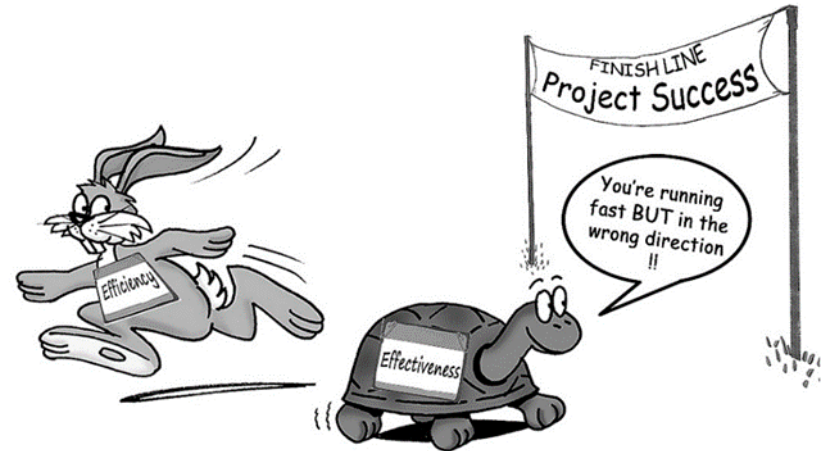
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 - Review of the logic model
 - Using the logic model to develop evaluations
 - Gathering data
 - Justifying conclusions
 - Use and share lessons learned
 - Standards for effective evaluation

What is Program Evaluation?

- Program evaluation is a “systematic method for collecting, analyzing, and using data to examine the effectiveness and efficiency of programs and to contribute to continuous program improvement.” <https://www.cdc.gov/eval>
- Determines if programs or projects are:
 - Performing activities as agreed to or as outlined in the approved work plans
 - Achieving or exceeding goals or objectives
 - Spending funds in an appropriate manner
 - Operating efficiently
 - Operating effectively

Efficiency and Effectiveness

- “Efficiency is doing things right; effectiveness is doing the right things.”^a
- Efficiency can include conducting a project cost-effectively or without errors
- Effectiveness is about achieving the goals or having success, including serving the correct target population
- Need both to succeed



^a Peter F. Drucker, *The Effective Executive: The Definitive Guide to Getting the Right Things Done*.

Why Is Program Evaluation Important?

- Evaluations assist project managers in understanding the links between goals, activities, resource consumption, and outcomes
- Program evaluations can assist funding entities or project managers in both identifying successes or issues and potential corrective actions, including:
 - Adjusting the activities
 - Adjusting funding and resources
 - Streamlining, refining, or redesigning the project (eg, to meet changes in project funding)
 - Setting more realistic objectives for the project
 - Discontinuing ineffective project components
 - Discontinuing the project

Program Evaluation Methods

- Experimental
 - Comparing the of impact of intervention on the experimental and control groups
 - Matching groups by age, gender, diagnoses, etc.
- Non-Experimental
 - Pre-test/Post-test
 - Time-series (aggregated data)
 - Longitudinal (follow cases)
 - Post-test only

Types of Evaluations

- Formative
 - Process
- Summative
 - Outcomes
 - Impact
 - Cost-effective
 - Cost-benefit
- Needs assessment/gap analysis

Types of Evaluations

- Process
 - Assess the extent to which project activities are completed as intended
- Needs assessment/gap analysis
 - Assess the differences between “what currently is” and “what could be” or “what is needed” to solve the defined problem

Types of Evaluations

- Outcomes
 - Assess the extent to which program outcomes are achieved
- Impact
 - Assess the effect of the program compared to having no program
 - Assess the unintended consequences of the program
- Cost-effective
 - Assess the cost of meeting the outcomes of the program overall or per participant compared to other potential activities and/or projects
- Cost-benefit
 - Assess the total cost of a project to the community compared to the total value of the benefits to the community

Things to Consider in an Evaluation

- The purpose of the evaluation and the evaluation question(s) being posed
- Who is conducting the evaluation?
- Evaluation design and scope
- Method(s) of data collection (if needed)

Understanding the Evaluation Framework



<https://www.cdc.gov/eval/framework/>
<https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr4811a1.htm>

Initial Steps in Program Evaluation

- Identifying and engaging stakeholders
 - Who are they?
 - What are their interest roles and expectations in the program/project and evaluation?
- Describing the program
 - Overall objective
 - Activities
 - Resources needed
 - Projected outcomes
- Understanding context
 - Organization's mission, vision, and values
 - Current health policy

Evaluation Purpose Statement

- Evaluation Purpose Statements
 - Identifies overall goal of program
 - What is being assessed?
 - Why it is being assessed?
- Process Evaluation
 - “The purpose of the evaluation is to assess whether project activities for Regional Telehealth Resource Center Program funded projects were completed within the approved time frames.”
- Outcomes Evaluation
 - “The purpose of the evaluation is to determine whether the project objectives for the Federal Home Visiting Program were met.”
- Cost-effective Evaluation
 - “The purpose of this evaluation is to assess the cost-effectiveness of the Area Health Education Center’s pipeline activities in successfully recruiting high school students into health care careers.”

Evaluation Questions

- Considers the causal relationship
 - How, why, and impacts
- Differs by type of evaluation
 - The process evaluation
 - Who, what, when, where, why, and how
 - The summative (outcomes, impact, and cost-effective)
 - Effects
 - Impacts
 - Costs
 - The needs assessment
 - What are the current needs?
 - Are the current projects meeting those needs?
 - What activities are occurring within existing projects to meet those needs?

Evaluation Question Examples

Process Evaluation

Purpose: “The purpose of this evaluation is to assess whether project activities for Regional Telehealth Resource Center Program funded projects were completed within the approved time frames.”

Research Question: “How are projects funded under the Regional Telehealth Resource Center Program being implementing, including what are the specific activities, how are staff carrying out those activities, and how do the activities relate both to the time line and to the approved work plan for the project?”

Evaluation Question Examples

Outcome Evaluation

Purpose: “The purpose of this evaluation is to determine whether the project objectives for the Federal Home Visiting Program were met.”

Research Questions: “Did each of the projects funded under the Federal Home Visiting Program meet their objectives, and what were the impacts on the eligible families? How did the organizations that received funding through the Federal Home Visiting Program benefit from meeting their objectives?”

Evaluation Question Examples

Cost-effective Evaluation

Purpose: “The purpose of this evaluation is to assess the cost-effectiveness of the Area Health Education Center’s pipeline activities in successfully recruiting high school students into health care careers.”

Research Question: “What are the resources and costs associated with Area Health Education Center pipeline activities? What is the cost per student? What are other, similar programs that support pipeline activities? How does the cost per student compare to other similar programs that conduct pipeline activities?”

Setting and Using Program/Project Objectives

- Objectives can be:
 - Short-term
 - Long-term
- Objectives should:
 - Include time frames
 - Be measurable
 - Identify:
 - Activities
 - Resources/inputs needed (to achieve activities)
 - Who is responsible
 - Outputs (products of the activities)

Bad Example of an Objective

“Hospital president will create a committee to increase staffing satisfaction.”

Why?

Better Example of an Objective

“Staffing turnover will decrease by 10% within the next 18 months. Director of Human Resources will head committee to review staff turnover issue. ”

What is still missing?

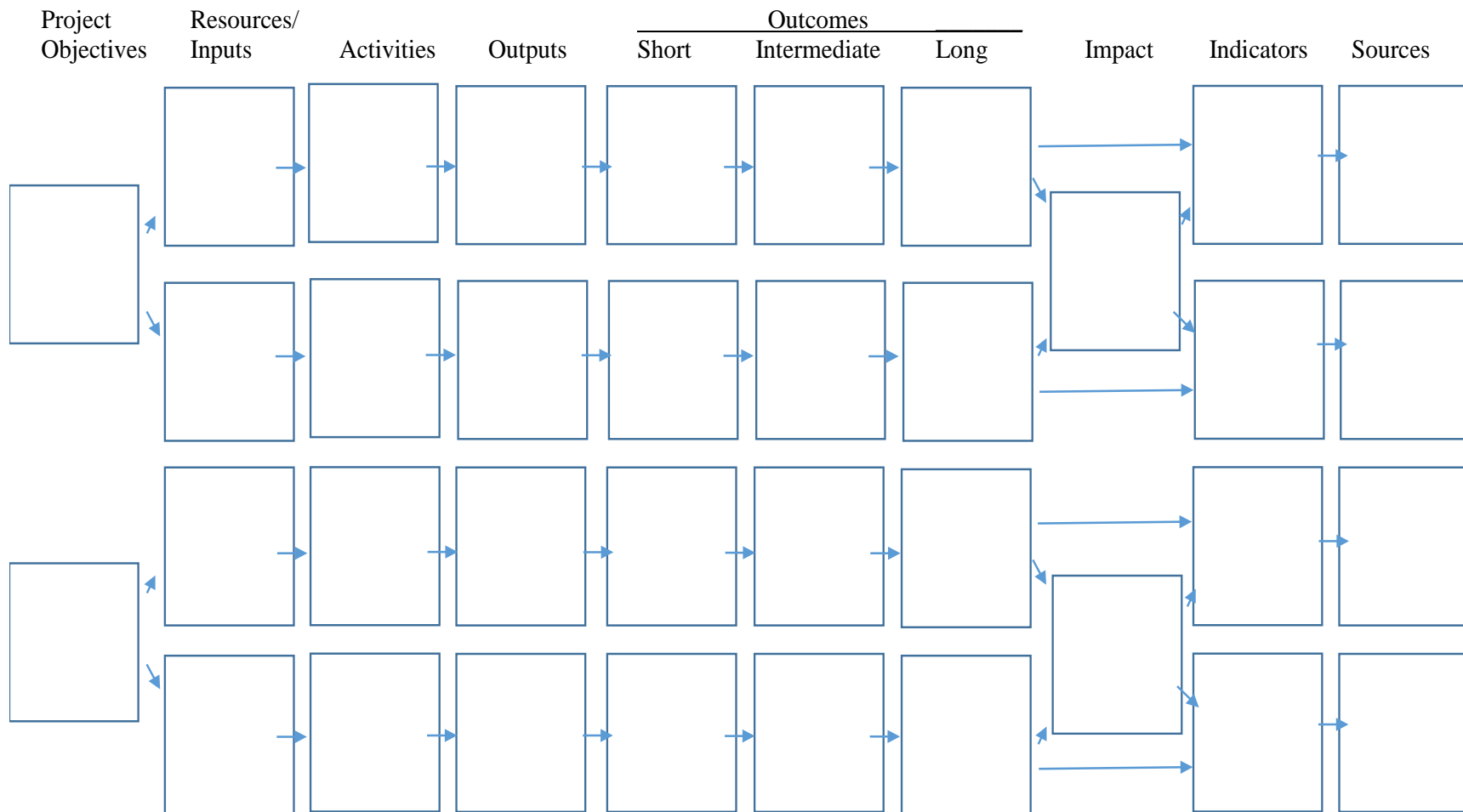
Best Example of an Objective

“Staffing turnover will decrease by 10% within the next 18 months. Director of Human Resources will head committee to review staff turnover issue; committee will include the Director of Nursing, Chief Financial Officer, and other staff as identified by the Chief Operating Office. Turnover will be assessed using HR personnel information and status reports will be prepared for the Chief Executive Office and the Board of Directors at month 9 and within two months of closing the project.”

Using the Logic Model for Developing an Evaluation

- Logic models can be used to design evaluations as well as programs or projects
- Logic models include:
 - Program/Project Objectives
 - Resources/Inputs
 - Activities
 - Outputs
 - Outcomes
 - Impact
 - Indicator(s)
 - Source(s)

Example of a Logic Model



Logic Model Components

- Program/Project Objectives
 - Describe the program or project objectives or goals
- Resources/Inputs
 - The resources needed to accomplish the objectives and the activities:
 - Staff
 - Internal or external (financial) resources
 - Equipment
 - Other organizational infrastructure

Logic Model Components

- Activities
 - The program or project actions that are supported by the resources and inputs that will accomplish the objectives:
 - Trainings
 - Curriculum development
 - Relationship building
 - Meetings
 - Webinars
 - Web pages
 - Other activities
- Outputs
 - Products produced as a result of the activities:
 - How many more patients were served?
 - How many webinars or trainings were provided?
 - How many new partnerships were developed?

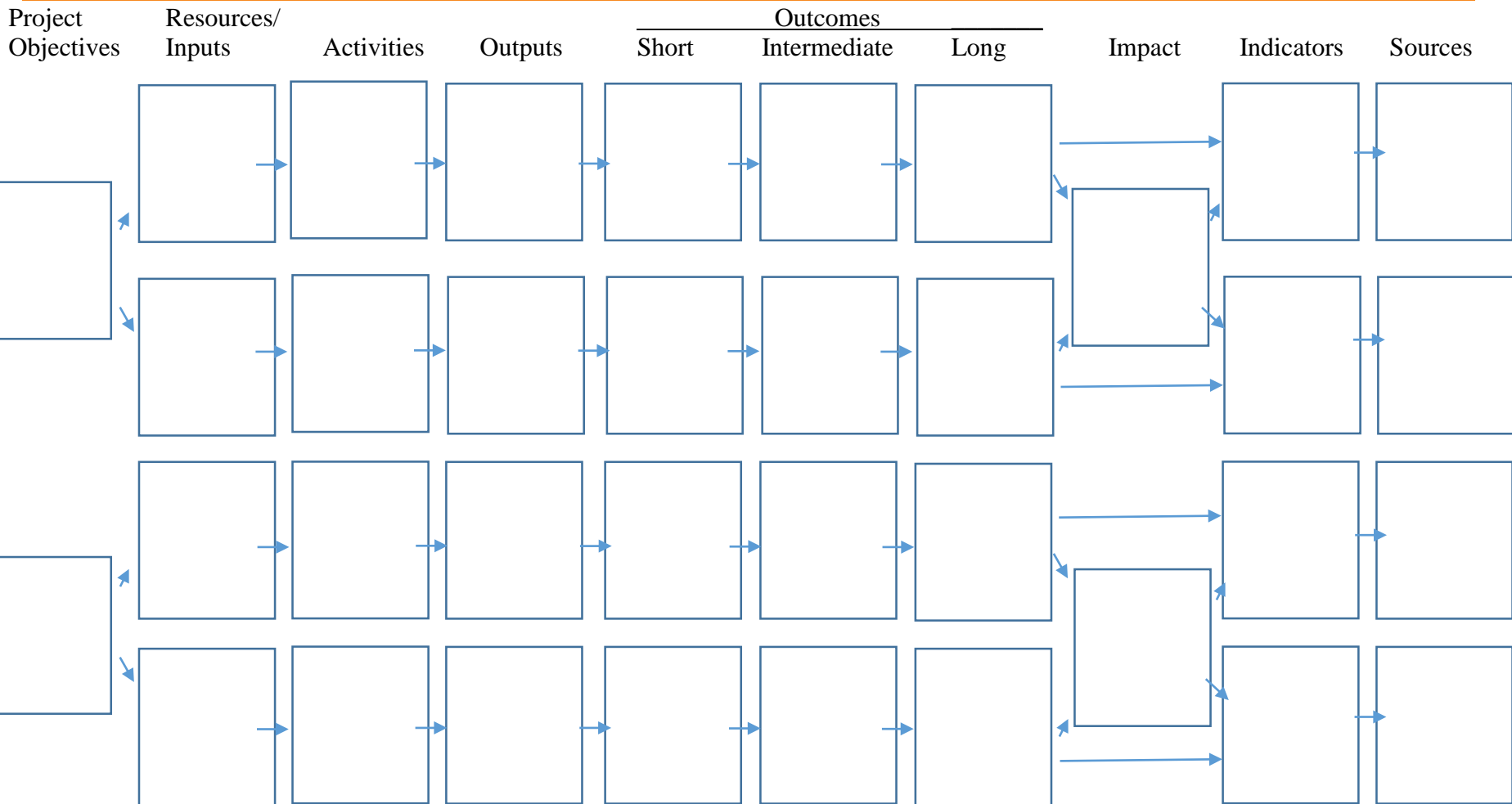
Logic Model Components

- Outcomes
 - The expected benefit or change as a result of the activities and outputs:
 - Related to a change in behavior, skills, knowledge, status, ideas, etc.
 - Direct or indirect result of the implementing the objectives
 - Short-term, intermediate, and long-term
- Impact
 - The ultimate result of the activities, outputs, and outcomes
 - Should be considered long-term:
 - How individuals are trained
 - How individuals access care

Logic Model Components

- Indicator(s)
 - The data used to measure the objective
- Source(s)
 - The sources of the data being used to assess the outcome:
 - Surveys, focus groups, etc.
 - Secondary data

Example of a Logic Model



Questions?

- For more information, please email me at: rmartiniano@albany.edu

- Visit us on:

