

Program Evaluation 3.0:

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My Professional Journey



Goals for the Webinar

My Hope:

You will leave with the evaluation knowledge, tools, & inspiration to rethink and reshape evaluation in your everyday practices.



Let's Get To
Know Each
Other



Global
Pandemic

Evaluation 1.0 & 2.0

Evaluation Champion

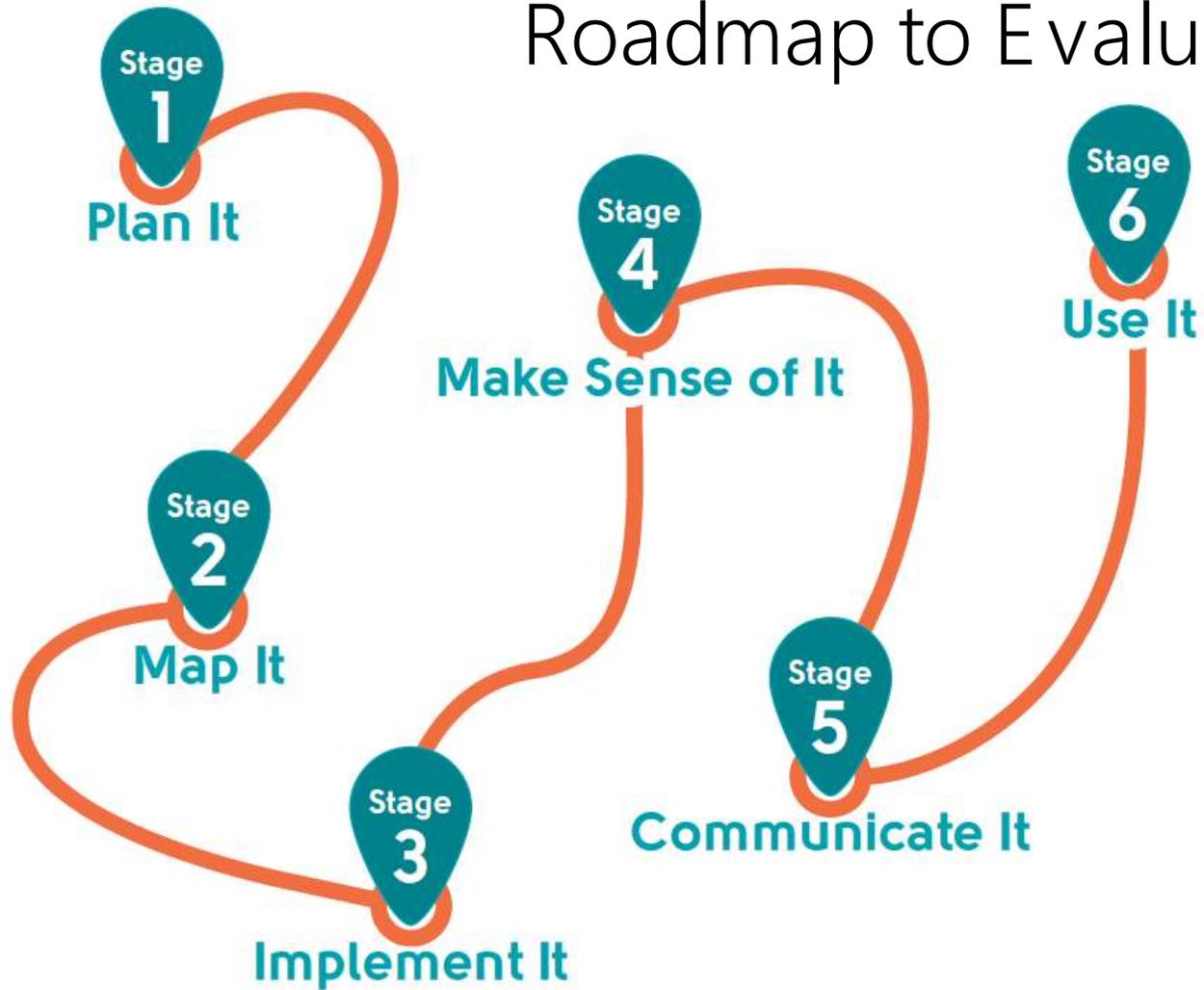
Ongoing work within the
post-secondary sector

Expertise in community-
based mental health



Meaningful, Interpretable & Usable

Roadmap to Evaluation



“If you don't know where you are going, you might wind up some place else” Yogi Berra



Program Evaluation Is...

- Program evaluation is a systematic way to gain insight as to how your program or project is being implemented from an operational and service perspective

What Program Evaluation is *Not?*

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



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



freshspectrum.com

'Research seeks to prove, evaluation seeks to improve'
(Michael Patton)

How does program evaluation differ from QI?

What is Quality Improvement?

- *“The combined and unceasing efforts of everyone—professionals, participants and their families, human service providers, researchers, payers, planners and educators, etc.—to make the changes that will lead to better participant outcomes, better system performance, and better professional development”*

Source: Adapted from the Journal Lists, Qual Saf Health Care, v.16(1); 2007 Feb, PMC2264920

Types of Evaluation: Process,
Outcome & Developmental

Process Evaluation

Process Evaluation (Formative)

- Monitors the program's implementation from the beginning of the program or project through the end

Seeks to Answer:

- Is the program being carried out according to plan?
- Is it working the way its supposed to work?
- How can program implementation be improved?

Outcome Evaluation

Outcome Evaluation (Summative)

- Is usually done at the conclusion of the program (although the data collection is done throughout the program).

Seeks to Answer

- Did the program achieve its purpose? (i.e. did it have the intended/desired impact or did it benefit the participants in the way that was expected?)

Developmental Evaluation

- Probably the most relevant approach to evaluation in clinical settings, especially with young adults
- Very responsive to context
- Activities and decisions that allow an organization to create value by design
- In clinical practice, service is an evolving event, dynamic and changing making traditional approaches less meaningful

“Everyone has a plan...until he gets hit.”

Former World Heavyweight boxing champion,
Mike Tyson

STAGE 1 & 2: Plan It and Map It

What is the first thing you do when
planning/mapping out an
evaluation?

Stage 1 and 2 is all about
planning and mapping out your
evaluation activities

My four non-negotiable first steps in planning my evaluations... .

1. Determine the “Why”
2. Decide on the evaluation design
3. Determine my evaluation questions
4. Measurement and data sources



And I do not recommend walking alone... .

1. Determine the Why of the evaluation

Why?

Why do you want to evaluate this program?

What do you want to be able to decide as a result of the evaluation?

Always keep in mind that we evaluate in order to improve programs, not to undertake evaluations for their own sake.

2. Decide on the evaluation design

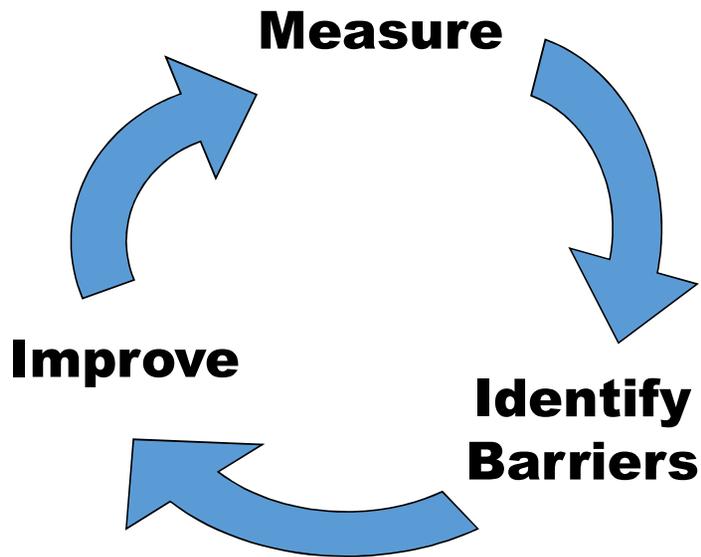
- Post-only evaluation
- Pre-Post evaluation
- Pre-Post-Follow-Up evaluation

- *And ...there is no "perfect" evaluation design*

One-Time Evaluation

- Finish it and your done!
 - Special projects
 - Special funding
 - Graduate student thesis
 - Pilot program

Intermediate Evaluation



- Measure (access, best practices, client satisfaction, provider satisfaction, clinical outcomes)
- Identify Barriers
- Make Improvements
- Re-Measure

Advanced: Ongoing Data Management

- Real-time monitoring of important indicators
- Requires automatic data capture (EMR, Oscar, EMH-Ware)

3. Determine your evaluation questions

- Part of the success of program evaluation starts with *good* evaluation questions
- It is sometimes hard to know **where** to start in forming evaluation questions:
 - First define the program: what are the goals, purpose, and scope?



Peer Mentoring Program Example

- Voluntary program for first year students
- Participation is two-hours a week/8 weeks of training in semester 1
- Goals and purpose of the program:
 - Improve relationship skills in first year students
 - Connect them to resources on campus
 - Better prepare them to support their peers
 - Increase student retention
 - Improve self-efficacy, confidence and wellbeing

If you had to develop an evaluation question for this program... what would it be?



Example of Evaluation Questions

- Was the program implemented as intended? (Process)
- Who are the participants that volunteered for this program? (Process)
- How can implementation of the program be improved? (Process)
- Are students and facilitators satisfied with the program? (Process)

- Does participation in the peer mentoring program improve student retention in first year? (Outcome)
- Does participation in the peer mentoring program improve student's confidence in accessing support resources on campus? (Outcome)
- Does participation in the peer mentoring program improve relationship skills? (Outcome)

General Guidelines for Evaluation Questions

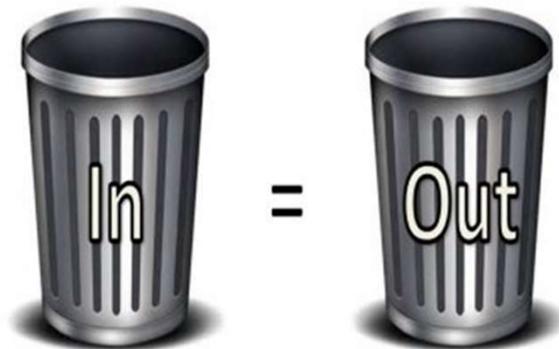
- Clear, specific, and well-defined
- Need to be measurable by the evaluation
- Feasible
- Delineate the goals of the evaluation clearly
- Be prepared for refinement



Are you all still with me?

4. Measurement and Data Sources

- “That which is measured improves”
- Likely one of the more challenging steps in planning the evaluation, but arguably the most critical
- The better your measurements/assessments/data, the better your evaluation
- “Garbage in, Garbage out’



In planning your measurements for your evaluation... .

- First, go back to your evaluation questions... .
- Does participation in the peer mentoring program improve **student retention** in first year? (Outcome)
- Brainstorm:
 - What are all the possible ways I can measure/assess student retention?
 - Evaluate them based on feasibility and accuracy/validity
 - Ask them
 - Use official student record data

General rules of thumb when considering your evaluation measurements

- Some data will be more time consuming and expensive to collect and analyze
 - Qualitative data
 - Factor in the burden needed to collect each indicator before collection
- Use existing data sources if possible (e.g., exit surveys, monitoring or tracking data, intake data)
- Assessment that is simple, precise and measurable is best
 - Useful for decision-makers
- You can aspire to the SMART analogy
 - Specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and timely

Some other considerations when planning your measurements

- Ask yourself the following questions:
- Is your measurement gathering information to answer your key evaluation questions?
- Will my stakeholders agree that what I am measuring is actually what I intend to measure?
- Given resources available, is it feasible to gather this information?
- If I am measuring psychological outcomes, am I using standardized assessment tools?
- Am I capturing the successes AND barriers of my program implementation efforts?

Stage 3 is all about **implementing**
your evaluation

Methods to Collect Data

- Questionnaires, surveys, checklists
- Interviews
- Documentation review
- Observation
- Focus groups
- Case studies
- Other narrative accounts
- Photos
- **Existing data sources**

Stage 4 is all about **making sense**
of your evaluation

How do I make sense of the data that has been collected?

- Ability to transform, summarize, or repurpose data for different audiences and purposes
- Create visualizations and outputs that are accessible to different audiences
- Look at the quality of data and how this can be improved by data collection

What are some questions you can ask yourself as you are interpreting your data?

- Are the results what you would have expected based on your experience and knowledge of your setting? How about others?
- Do the results align with the existing literature? What is similar? What is different?
- Is there another source of data that you can compare the results to?
- Are you able to identify any potential issues with the data?
- Have you identified any potential privacy issues with the data, such as limits to how it can be shared or concerns about identifying respondents, staff, or individual programs?

Stage 5 is all about
communicating your evaluation
findings

Communicating your evaluation results

- Not everyone always see the importance, use or need for an evaluation
- Steps I have found useful along the way:
 - Consider the audience and tailor your findings to each audience
 - Prepare an executive summary of your results; or evaluation brief, infographic
 - Develop a PowerPoint presentation of your executive summary
 - Present evaluation results to interested parties and tailor each presentation to the audience

Stage 6 is all about using data

Using Data to Inform Decision-Making

- How we can use data more effectively to inform decision making and improve our work is an important yet neglected question
- As a sector we can improve the impact on people's lives if we use evidence to inform our work by:
 - Making better decisions by learning which interventions/programs are likely to be most effective;
 - Improve day-to-day practice, being more efficient, and getting the most from your resources;
 - Ensure you learn from experiences and improve;
 - Be more accountable, credible and open about what works and what doesn't.

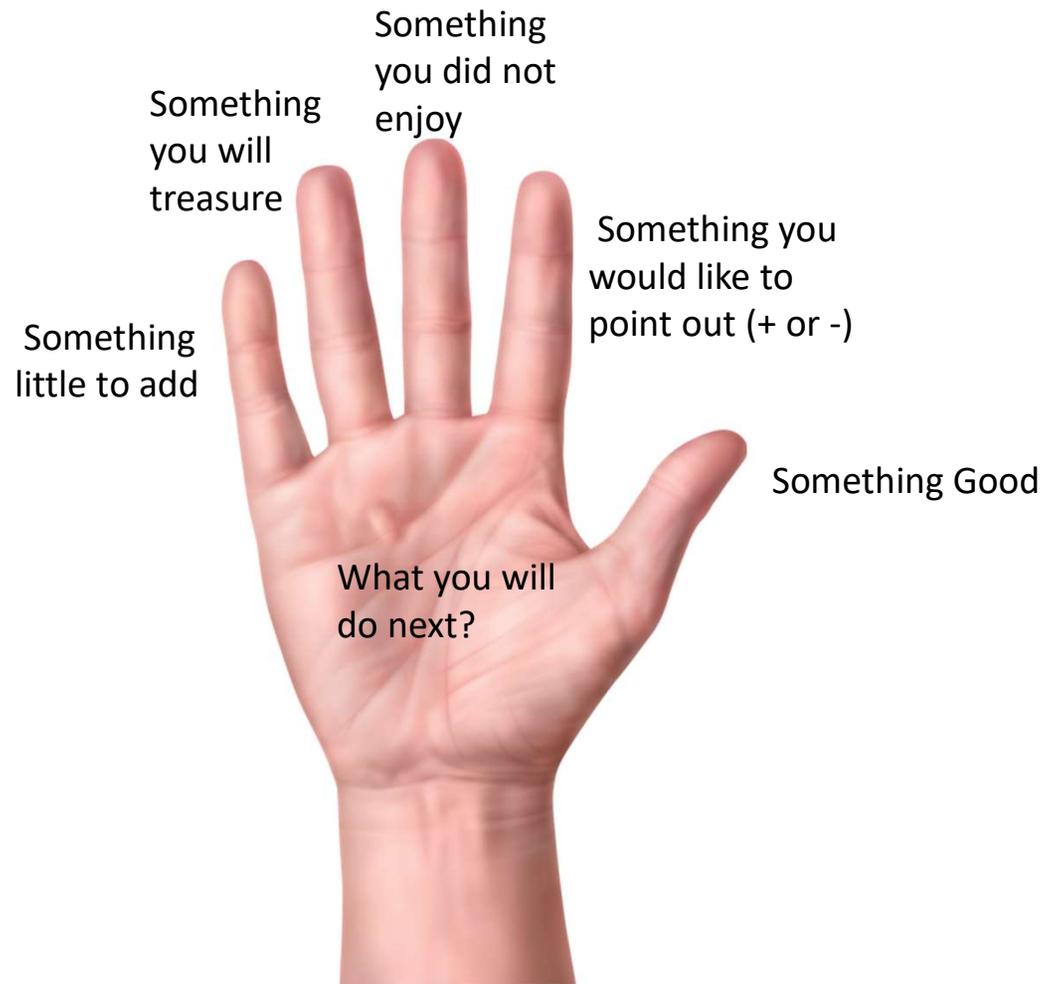
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BREAKOUT ROOMS

Breakout Rooms

- Share at least one evaluation success you have had in the last year.
- Share at least one evaluation barrier you have had in the last year, *besides the pandemic*
- Share one evaluation activity you are working on that you would like advice on from your breakout group
- Exchange contacts so you can connect moving forward

If you have any evaluation questions, please don't hesitate to reach out

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Something little to add

Something you will treasure

Something you did not enjoy

Something you would like to point out (+ or -)

Something Good

What you will do next?