Maximizing Outreach Impact Through Evaluation

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Evaluation for Outreach

• Key Elements:
  – Which steps are involved?

• Planning and Implementation
  – How do I make it happen?

• Results and Reporting
  – How should I show it?
Key Elements of Quality Measurement

- Objectives:
- Inputs:
- Processes:
- Outputs: the product of services
- Outcomes: the effects and changes as the result of the outputs
Key Elements of Quality Measurement

What Do We Usually Capture and Report?

Objectives → Inputs → Processes → Outputs → Outcomes

Most people prefer to look at internal measures (inputs, processes, and outputs) to judge performance as they are much easier to control and monitor.
Key Elements of Quality Measurement

What Matters to External Stakeholders?

Objectives → Inputs → Processes → Outputs → Outcomes

But increasingly activities are assessed on what they achieve (outcomes) rather than what they produce (outputs).
Win-Win

- Satisfy Multiple stakeholders
  - target audience
  - service provider
  - funder
Key Elements of Quality Measurement

For NRC Outreach:

To what extent do outreach activities (training and resources) have a significant impact on the target audience?

Evaluation Informs Every Stage of Your Program

- Objectives
- Inputs
- Processes
- Outputs
- Outcomes
The Evaluation Map

1. Define and Refine Outreach Goals
2. Identify Desired Outcomes
3. Plan Outreach Activities
4. Choose Evaluation Tools
5. Collect Data
6. Summarize Data
7. Use Findings to Revise Goals and Improve Program
8. Report Findings
Planning

- Define Outreach Goals
- Identify Outcomes
- Plan Outreach Activities

A team should begin by reaching agreement on its purpose.
Planning

- An upstream and iterative journey
  - Do objectives and potential outcomes align?
  - What actions may lead to the results?
  - How different, how much more, and how much better than before?
Planning

• Ask:
  – Do objectives and potential outcomes align?
  – What actions lead to the results?
  – How different, how much more, and how much better than before?

• For Example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal/Objective</th>
<th>Activities (Process)</th>
<th>Output</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enhance K-12 students’ and teachers’ understanding of different cultures</td>
<td>Provide cultural presentations at 30 schools per semester</td>
<td>Increase cultural presentations to at least 400 students and their teachers in the school district</td>
<td>80% of students and teachers will report increased knowledge of international culture</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Implementation

- Choose Evaluation Tools
- Collect Data

![Implementation Diagram]

1. Choose Evaluation Tools
2. Collect Data
3. Identify Desired Outcomes
4. Plan Outreach Activities
5. Define and Refine Outreach Goals
6. Choose Evaluation Tools
7. Collect Data
8. Summarize Data
9. Use Findings to Revise Goals and Improve Program
10. Report Findings
11. Define and Refine Outreach Goals
12. Identify Desired Outcomes
Implementation

• Ask:
  – What evidence is needed?
  – What instrument is suitable to collect this information?

• For Example:

<table>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Evidence Necessary</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation records</td>
<td>Self-reported or verifiable gained knowledge</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Tools to Use</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Attendance logs (database of visits) | *Pre-Post Surveys  
*Ex post facto interview  
*Formal assessment |
Implementation

- Guide to Good Data Collection
  - Quantitative and Qualitative Data
  - Validity and Reliability
  - Representative Sample
  - Stability
  - Good Timing
Implementation

- Quantitative or Qualitative?
  - Quantitative (numerical)
    - volume, exposure, breadth, trend
    - Enrollment, participation, close-end survey results
  - Qualitative (narrative)
    - Depth, explanation
    - Interviews, stories, open-ended survey feedback
Implementation

• **Validity:** Does your tool measure what you intend to measure?

• **Ways to Improve Validity:**
  – Ask folks who do the work (expert panel)
  – Pilot your instrument
    - Cognitive interview (think aloud)
    - Field trial

*Lacks accuracy; precise*
Implementation

- Reliability: Does your method yield consistent and precise results?

- Ways to improve reliability:
  - Test-retest
    - for the same audience: stable overtime?
    - For different audiences: stable with similar participants?
Implementation

- Valid and Reliable Measurement Tools

Accurate (on target); precise (spread)
Implementation

• Representative Sample: Can you get generalizable results?

• Ways to ensure representativeness:
  – Random sampling with sufficient size for quantitative
  – Purposive sampling for qualitative
Implementation

• Two More Things to Remember
  – Stability
  – Good Timing
Reporting

- Summarize Data
- Report Findings
- Feedback and Improvement
Reporting

Clear-at-a-glance please!

Identify Desired Outcomes
Plan Outreach Activities
Define and Refine Outreach Goals
Choose Evaluation Tools
Collect Data
Summarize Data
Report Findings
Use Findings to Revise Goals and Improve Program
Identify Desired Outcomes
Reporting

• **Summarize Data**
  – **Quantitative**
    • Any differences?
      – Before vs. after
      – Treated vs. control group
    • Any trends? (over time)
      – Improvement
      – Increase
  – **Qualitative**
    • See themes?
    • Any uniqueness?
Reporting

• Report Findings
  – Consider program evaluation as “micro-” and “macro-” level activities.
  – Support quantifiable data with anecdotal/qualitative examples.
Reporting

A Clear-at-a-glance report has:
- Short description of the program
- Description of the evaluation
- Outcomes/Results
- Conclusions/Recommendations
Reporting

• Feedback and Improvement

A brainstorming session is used to solicit ideas.
Rethinking evaluation for outreach

• Can you provide an evaluation plan that is comprehensive, objective, and will produce quantifiable, outcome-oriented data?

• To what extent can your evaluations be used to improve what you do?
Resources

• The Evaluation Tool Kit for K-12 International Outreach Programs
  – www.gi.unc.edu/k12toolkit

• Basic Guide to Program Evaluation for Nonprofit Organizations with Very Limited Resources.
  – http://www.mapnp.org/library/evaluatn/outcomes.htm

• Taking Stock – A Practical Guide to Evaluating Your Own Programs. (Horizon Research, Inc.)