

Process and Outcome Evaluation Approaches

Roger A. Boothroyd, Ph.D.

Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute

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CRIMINAL JUSTICE
MENTAL HEALTH & SUBSTANCE ABUSE
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CENTER
The Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute

Evaluation Defined

- Evaluation involves the ***systematic collection of information*** about the program characteristics, activities, and/or outcomes ***for use*** by people to ***make decisions*** about what the programs are doing and how to ***improve*** program effectiveness. (Michael Quinn Patton)



Evaluation versus Research

- Evaluators and researchers use many of the same designs and qualitative and quantitative methodologies.
- Evaluations are as rigorous and systematic in collecting data as traditional social science research.
- However, the primary purpose of evaluation is to provide timely and constructive information for decision-making about particular programs, whereas research is to advance more wide-ranging knowledge or theory.

I can't tell you
how valuable
your program is



Researcher

I can

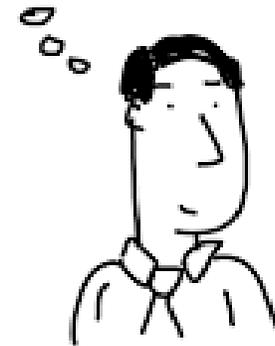


Evaluator

Evaluation versus Research

- Evaluation is typically more client-focused than traditional research in that evaluators work closely with program staff to create and carry-out a plan that attends to the particular needs of their program.
- Evaluation is more action-oriented than traditional research which is more theory focused: some form of program modifications usually result from evaluation.

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



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



Reasons for Conducting Program Evaluation

- Required by funding source
 - Demonstrate the program is being effective
 - Justify our program expenditures
 - Provide support for continued funding
- Helps organizations manage limited resources
- Helps improve program implementation and effectiveness



Reasons for Conducting Program Evaluation

- Allows documentation of program accomplishments
- Helps ensure successful program replications
- Improves decision-making
- Can be used for marketing and promotional purposes



Formative Evaluation

(Michael Scriven, 1967)

- **Formative Evaluation** – involves gathering information during early stage of program implementation or when programs have undertaken major redesigns, with a focus on finding out whether your efforts are unfolding as planned, uncovering any obstacles, barriers or unexpected opportunities that may have emerged, and identifying mid-course adjustments and corrections which can help insure the program's success.

Summative Evaluation

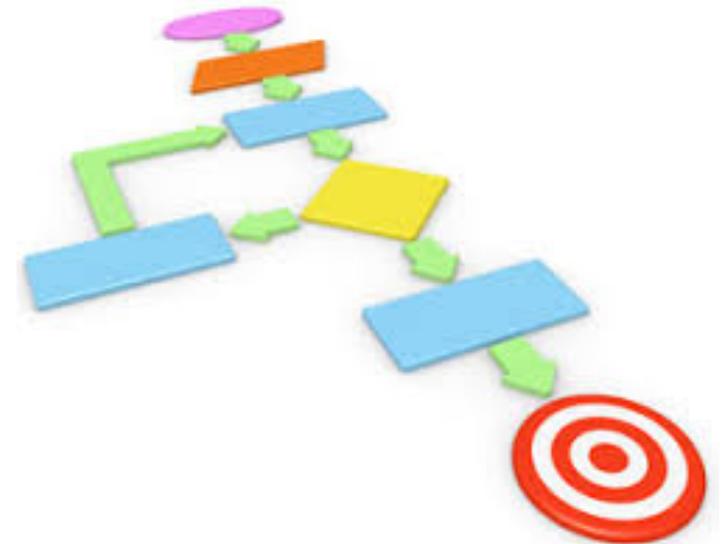
(Michael Scriven, 1967)

- **Summative Evaluation** – involves gathering information once programs have been fully implemented (usually at the end of an operating cycle), to assess the impact and outcomes of the program to help make decisions about whether the program should be adopted, continued, or modified for improvement.



Process Evaluation

- **Process Evaluation** – allows an organization to examine *how it develops its structures and its programs* in order to attain the outcomes everyone wants it to achieve.
- In other words, process evaluation documents the process of a program's implementation. Process evaluations help stakeholders see *how* a program outcomes or impacts are (or will be) achieved.
- The focus of a process evaluation is on the types and quantities of services delivered, the beneficiaries of those services, the resources used to deliver the services, the practical problems encountered, and the ways such problems were resolved.



Process Evaluation

- Process evaluations examine the degree to which program activities are being: (1) implemented and delivered as planned, (2) if they are reaching the intended target audience(s), and (3) producing the desired outputs.
- Progress toward project milestones is successive, and therefore, data should be collected on an ongoing basis over the course of the demonstration to monitor and describe how well the established goals are being met. This information will enable grantees to demonstrate to the funding agency whether they were able to provide the services that they were funded to provide.

Process Evaluation

- Process evaluations are conducted periodically throughout program implementation and are useful in helping to make adjustments during implementation. Process evaluations are *formative* in nature.
- These examine program activities that are considered necessary but not sufficient conditions for intended outcomes to occur.

Examples of Process Activities

- Update MOU with current and new Bradford partners
- Hire a Forensic Recovery Specialist at Bradford County jail.
- Train Forensic Team in motivational interviewing.
- Train staff and implement use of RN assessment tools.

Examples of Process Outputs

- Number of staff trained in the use of RN assessment tools.
- Number of MH and SA screenings and re-entry planning measures completed by the Forensic Recovery Specialist at Bradford County jail.
- Number of GAINS Reentry Checklist and Historical Clinical Risk Management-20s completed at admission, discharge, quarterly and at any change in client status for individuals assigned.
- Number of service satisfaction/coordination surveys that have been completed.

Outcome Evaluation

- **Outcome Evaluation** – assesses the effectiveness of a program in producing change. Outcome evaluations (or impact evaluations) focus on the questions that ask what happened to program participants and how much of a difference the program made for them. Impact or outcome evaluations are undertaken when one wants to assess whether and how well the objectives of a program were met.
- Focuses on the changes in comprehension, attitudes, behaviors, and practices that result from modifications in programs activities. Outcome evaluations are ***summative*** in nature.



Examples of Outcome Indicators

- 65% reduction in number of jail days among program participants while in program compared to one year prior.
- 60% reduction in arrests among program participants within a one-year period following program discharge.
- 65% of program participants not employed and who express a desire to work at program admission are employed full or part time within one year of program admission.

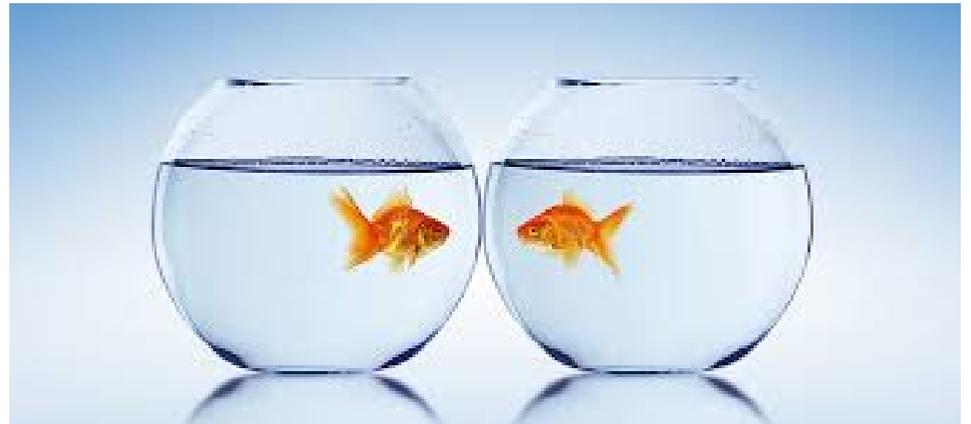
Barriers to Effective Evaluation

- Evaluations require time, money, and technical skills: requirements that are often perceived as diverting limited resources from programmatic goals that are focused on serving clients.
- Program staff are often concerned that evaluation activities will inhibit timely accessibility to services or compromise the quality of the services clients receive.
- Data collection or data sharing can be perceived as an issue (HIPAA).



Barriers to Effective Evaluation

- Evaluation may necessitate alliances between historically separate community organizations.
- There are no specific funds allocated for the evaluation.
- Often times no person is specifically in charge of the evaluation (*i.e.*, no project evaluator).





**Discussion
Questions**