Planning and Evaluation: Workshop for Managers
September 19, 2016

The purpose of this handout is to share resources that promote the use of critical and evaluative thinking into public health program planning, implementation and evaluation. This handout is supplementary material for a workshop by PHO health promotion consultant Allison Meserve presented on September 19, 2016 to managers at Chatham Kent Public Health.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

Following the workshop, participants will be able to…
- Identify strategies to increase critical/evaluative thinking;
- Appraise logic models created by staff;
- Design evaluation questions for evidence-informed public health;
- Prioritize ideas to increase evaluation capacity at CK; and
- Summarize evaluation plan components, including what to look for when assessing staff-created plans
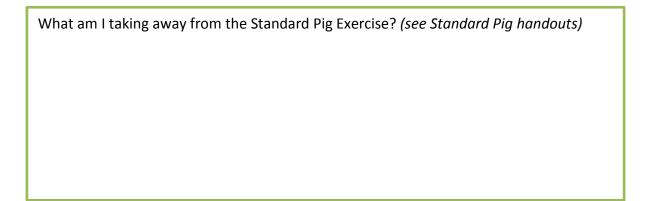
1. CRITICAL AND EVALUATIVE THINKING

Everyday thinking, like ordinary walking, is a natural performance we all pick up. But good thinking, like running the 100 meter dash or rock climbing, is a technical performance, full of artifice. In a number of ways, good thinking goes against the natural human grain. People tend not to consider the other side of the case, look beyond the first decent solution that presents itself, or ponder the problem before rushing to candidate solutions. – David Perkins as quoted in Klein and Wall[1(p. 4-5)]

What am I currently doing and what can I start doing to encourage critical/evaluative thinking and reflective practice?

Table 1. Strategies and activities to increase the use of critical/evaluative thinking

Practical Strategies	Activity Examples
Create an intentional learning environment	• Display logic models • Encourage staff to record questions and assupmtions in public spaces • Highlight learnings from evaluations (both positive and negative) • •
Include meeting time focused on critical/evaluative thinking	• Use logic model to determine questions and assumptions you have about your program • Ask open questions about assumptions being made (see questions for reflection at the end) • Hold journal/critical appraisal clubs • •
Use role-play when planning programs or evaluations	• Wear different stakeholder 'hats' when planning • Simulate data collection and analysis • Identify assumptions in current program plans • •
Diagram, map or illustrate thinking	• Create a logic model or theory of change • Develop a timeline of the project/program • Create a 'vision' statement through pictures • •
Critically review colleagues' work	• Review logic models created by peers • Engage in appreciative interview[2] • Review evaluation data collection tools and reports created by peers • •
Evaluate	• Expand evaluation activities beyond the evaluator • Engage stakeholders in the design and analysis of an evaluation • Encourage formal and informal evaluation efforts • Support evaluations with necessary internal and external expertise • Prioritize resources for evaluation • •

Adapted from Buckley and Archibald[3]

What am I taking away from the Standard Pig Exercise? *(see Standard Pig handouts)*

2. LOGIC MODELS

Table 2. Suggested componets of logic models[4]

Common Components	Description
Goal	What the program hopes to achieve
Inputs	Resources invested (time, money, etc.)
Activities	What program staff will do
Audience	Who will be reached through the activities; Primary (target) and secondary groups
Outputs	What is produced from activities
Outcomes	What knowledge, attitude, behaviour, practice, policy, community, health changes you expect to see (short-, medium- and long-term)
Additional Components	**Description**
Situation/context	Situation or issue(s) that lead to the program
Assumptions	Underlying assumptions and beliefs about the program and its context
External factors	Uncontrolled factors that impact the program

The sequence of events in logic models can be derived from two types of logical thinking:

Forward logic: 'If and then' AND 'But why'
Inputs/Activities → Outcomes
OR
Backward/reverse logic: 'But how'
Outcomes → Inputs/Activities[4]

3. EVALUATION QUESTIONS

Evaluation questions can be determined by:

- Brainstorming
- Asking what do know, what do we think we know, what do we need more information about?
- Looking at logic model
- Thinking from a stakeholder's perspective
- Asking stakeholders what they want to know about a program
- Determining what information is needed for upcoming decisions

Resource: Preskill H, Jones N. A practical guide for engaging stakeholders in developing evaluation questions. Available from: http://www.rwjf.org/content/dam/web-assets/2009/01/a-practical-guide-for-engaging-stakeholders-in-developing-evalua

4. EVALUATION PLAN COMPONENTS

- Background and rationale
- Purpose
- Evaluation questions
- Team members
- Methodology
  - Design
  - Outcomes/Measures
  - Sample selection and identification
  - Sample recruitment process
  - Data collection and/or retrieval procedures
  - Data analysis plan
  - Dissemination or knowledge translation plan
  - Limitations
- Informed consent process and documentation
- Security measures for data or materials
- Appendices (as applicable)
  - Program logic model/description
  - Recruitment emails/letters
  - Data collection tools
  - Timelines[5]

For reflection:
- What's been missing from this analysis?
- What most needs further scrutiny?
- What are the chief critiques of what we've been saying or doing?
- What unresolved questions am I left with?
- What are the most important questions we've raised today?
- What important contexts, ideas have we missed?
  Adapted from Brookfield[6]

REFERENCES

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5. Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion (Public Health Ontario). Standard Project Parameters for Evaluation of an Educational Activity. Toronto, ON: Queen's Printer for Ontario; [forthcoming].
6. Brookfiled SD. Workshops. More information available at: http://www.stephenbrookfield.com/workshop/

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