

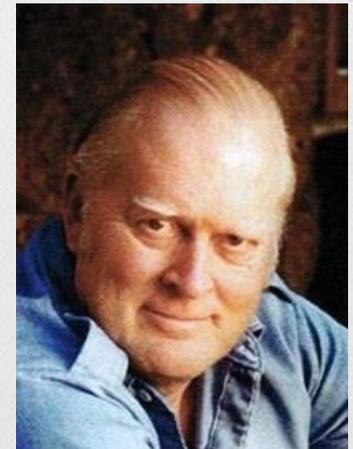
# Overview of Evaluation Designs

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# What is evaluation?

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- “The systematic determination of merit, worth or significance” -Michael Scriven
  - Systematic: Done methodically, following a clear plan
  - Merit/worth/significance: What is the value or benefit?



# What is evaluation?

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- Evaluation is the use of research methods to assess a program's design, implementation, outcomes, or impacts.
- Evaluation looks at the results of your investment of time, expertise, resources, and energy, and compares those results with what you said you wanted to achieve in your program's logic model.

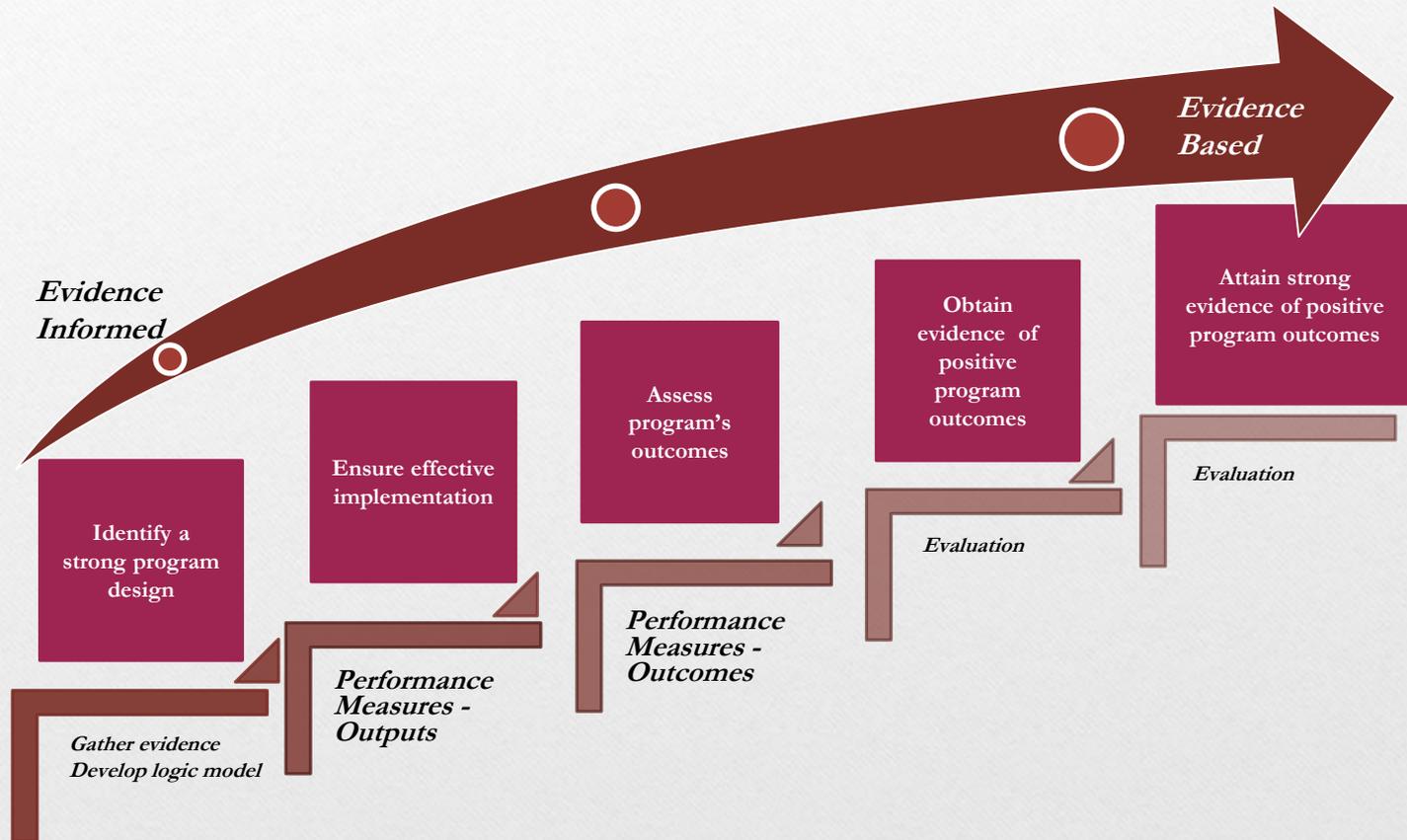
# What is program evaluation?

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- It is the collection of information used to:
  - Learn how well a program is doing
  - Show how program activities have contributed to change
  - Identify ways to improve the program

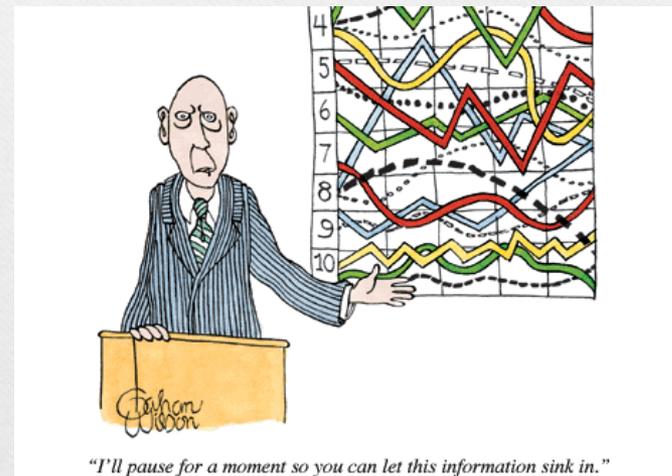
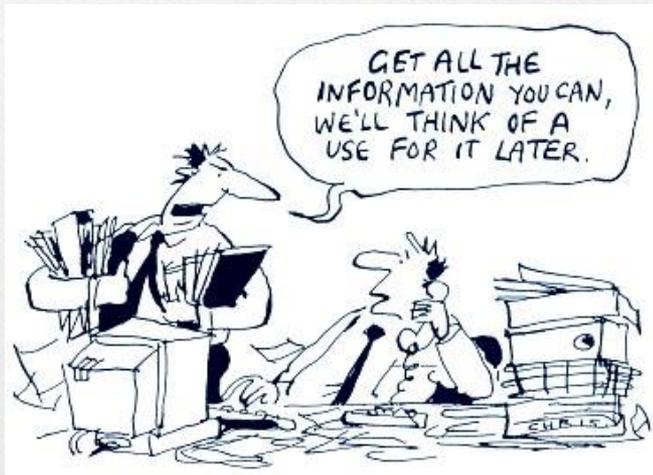


# Building evidence of effectiveness



# What evaluation is NOT

- An attempt to prove the success or failure of a program.
- Generating lots of information with useless conclusions.



# Why is evaluation important?

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- Provides accountability



- Measures goal attainment



- Assists decision making



- Enacts social change



# Types of evaluation

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- **Formative evaluation:**
  - Aims to improve the program prior to start
- **Process evaluation:**
  - Describes how well a program is functioning
- **Outcome evaluation:**
  - Assesses the effectiveness of the program

\*Ideally, all types are used



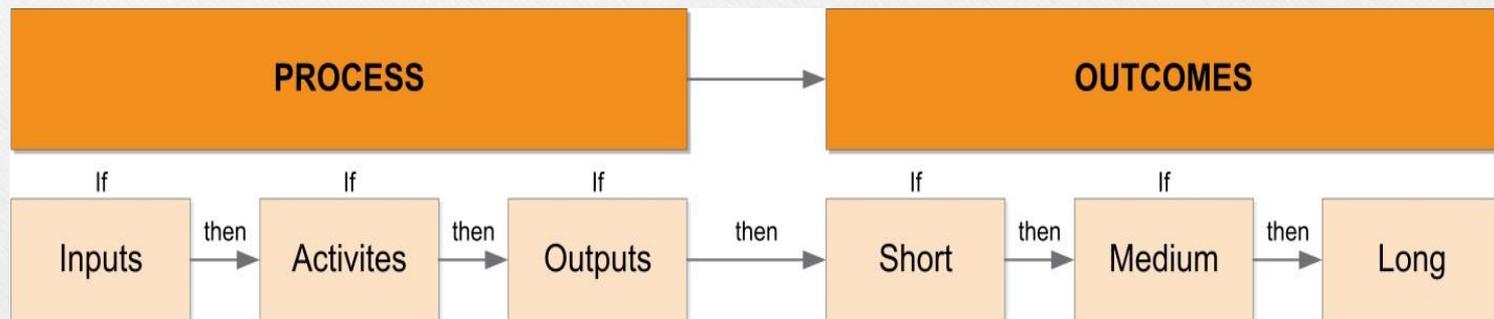
# What is evaluation design?

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- Evaluation design is the structure that provides information to answer questions you have about your program. Evaluation design means thinking about:
  - Why conduct an evaluation
  - What to measure
  - Who to include in the evaluation (e.g. all beneficiaries or a sample)
  - When and how often data will be collected
  - What methods will be used to collect data
  - Whether comparison with another group is appropriate and feasible
- The evaluation design you choose depends on what kinds of questions your evaluation is meant to answer.

# Basic types of evaluation designs

- The two “sides” of a program’s logic model align with the two types of evaluation designs: Process and Outcome.



# Key considerations in selecting a design

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- The appropriate design will largely depend upon:
  - Your program model
  - The primary purpose or goal of the evaluation
  - The specific question(s) the evaluation will address
  - Resources available for the evaluation
  - Funder evaluation requirements

# Evaluation designs and CNCS's requirements

<b>Evaluation Study Designs</b>	<b>Meet Requirements</b>	
	<b>Large Grantees</b>	<b>Small Grantees/ EAP Programs</b>
<b>Process Design (Non-Experimental Design Studies)</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Outcome Design (Non-Experimental Design Studies)</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Outcome (Impact) Design (Quasi-Experimental* or Experimental Design Studies)</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>

\*Fulfills CNCS evaluation design requirement for large, recompute grantees if a reasonable comparison group is identified and appropriate matching/propensity scoring is used in the analysis.

# Define purpose and scope

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- Each evaluation should have a primary purpose around which it can be designed and planned.
  - Why is the evaluation being done?
  - What do you want to learn?
  - How will the results be used? By whom?

# Process Evaluation: Goals

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- Documents what the program is doing
- Documents to what extent and how consistently the program has been implemented as intended
- Informs changes or improvements in the program's operations
- Common features:
  - Does not require a comparison group
  - Includes qualitative and quantitative data collection
  - Does not require advanced statistical methods

# Process Evaluation: Sample Questions

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- Is the program being implemented as designed or planned?
- Are there any components of the program that are not working well? Why or why not?
- Are program beneficiaries generally satisfied with the program? Why or why not?
- Are the resources adequate for the successful implementation of the program?

# Example: Designing a process evaluation for a literacy program

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- Research question:
  - Is the literacy program being implemented consistent with the program's logic model and theory of change?
- Design considerations:
  - What to measure
  - Who to include in the evaluation
  - When and how often data will be collected
  - What methods will be used to collect data

# Example: Designing a process evaluation for a literacy program

**Crosswalk for Process Evaluation of a Literacy Program**

Research question	Indicators	From whom / data sources?	When collected and by whom?	How will you analyze the data?
Is the literacy program being implemented as designed?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Member use of program curriculum during tutoring</li> <li>b) Duration of tutoring</li> <li>c) Student participation rates</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a, b, c) Members</li> <li>a, b) Evaluator observes members tutoring students</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a, b, c) Members report details of sessions in tutoring logs quarterly</li> <li>a) Quarterly observations by the evaluator(s) using structured observation protocols</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a, b, c) Generate frequencies on use of curriculum; average duration of sessions; and average rate of student attendance</li> <li>c) Generate frequencies and averages on quantitative data (e.g., ratings scales, frequency scales) and thematically code and analyze open-ended comments/notes</li> </ul>

# Outcome Evaluation: Goals

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- **Goals:**
  - Identifies the results or effects of a program
  - Measures program beneficiaries' changes in knowledge, attitude(s), and/or behavior(s) that result from a program
- **Common Features:**
  - May include a comparison group (impact evaluation)
  - Typically requires quantitative data
  - Often requires advanced statistical methods

# Outcome Evaluation: Questions

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- Are there differences in outcomes for program beneficiaries compared to those not in the program?
- Did all types of program beneficiaries benefit from the program or only specific subgroups?
- Did the program change beneficiaries' knowledge, attitude, behavior, or condition?

# Example: Designing an outcome evaluation of a literacy program

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- Research question:
  - What impact does the literacy intervention program have on student reading levels relative to a comparison group of students?
- Design considerations:
  - What to measure
  - Who to include in the evaluation
  - When and how often data will be collected
  - What methods will be used to collect data

# Example: Designing an outcome evaluation of a literacy program

**Crosswalk for Outcome Evaluation of a Literacy Program**

Research question	What is collected and how?	From whom / data sources?	When collected and by whom?	How will you analyze the data?
What impact does the literacy intervention program have on student reading levels relative to a comparison group of students?	Student reading achievement is measured with literacy assessment tests.	Students participating in the program serve as the intervention group. Students enrolled at a similar school with no program serve as the comparison group.	The evaluator administers the assessments at two time points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- At the beginning of the school semester</li> <li>- At the end of the school semester</li> </ul>	Calculate the difference in average outcome in the intervention group minus the difference in average outcome in the comparison group before and after treatment (difference in differences method)

# Resources

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- CNCS's Knowledge Network
  - <https://www.nationalserviceresources.gov/evaluation-amicorps>
- The American Evaluation Association
  - <http://www.eval.org>
- The Evaluation Center
  - <http://www.wmich.edu/evalctr/>
- Innovation Network's Point K Learning Center
  - <http://www.innonet.org>
- Digital Resources for Evaluators
  - <http://www.resources4evaluators.info/CommunitiesOfEvaluators.html>