

Evaluation in Organizations

A Systematic Approach to
Enhancing Learning,
Performance, and Change

2nd Edition

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BASIC

BOOKS

A Member of the Perseus Books Group
New York

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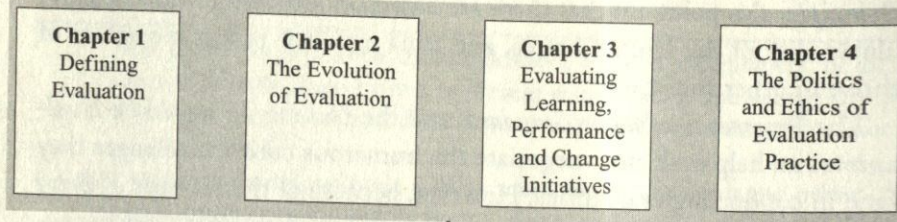
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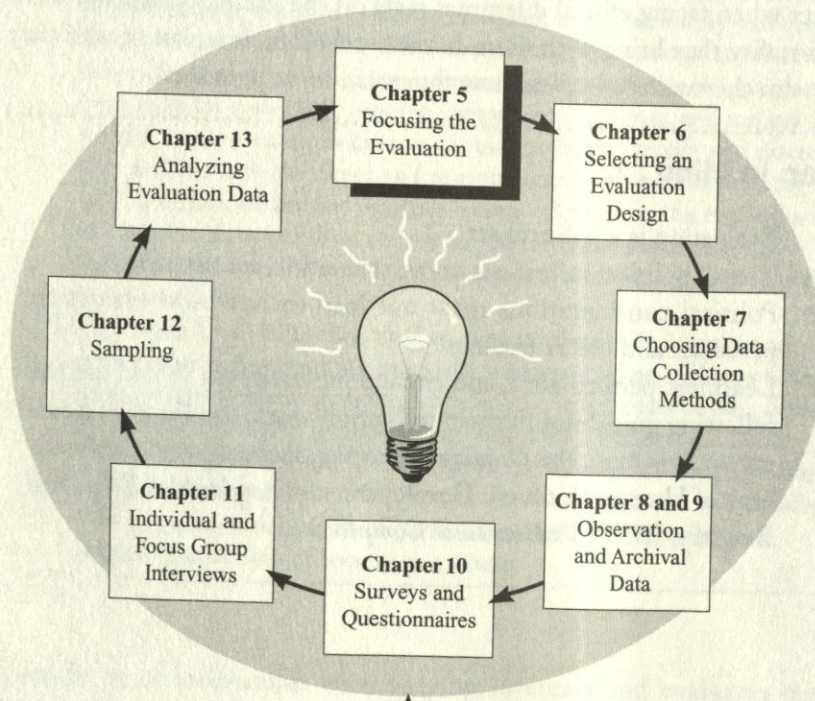
Designed by Linda Mark

A CIP catalog record for this book is available from the Library of Congress.
ISBN: 978-0-465-01866-6

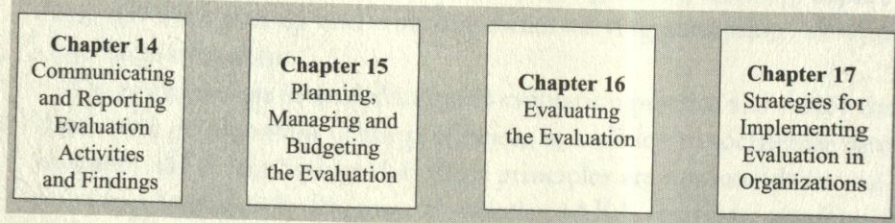
Background and Context of Evaluation



Designing and Implementing the Evaluation



Maximizing Evaluation Use



Focusing the Evaluation

- Developing an Evaluation Plan
- Developing the Evaluation's Rationale and Purpose
- Developing a Program Logic Model
- Developing the Evaluation's Rationale and Purpose
- Identifying the Evaluation's Stakeholders
- Developing Key Evaluation Questions

Vignette 2: Hit-and-Miss Evaluation at MyHome Furnishings

Judy: You know, we've worked long and hard on designing this new training program. It would probably be a good idea to evaluate its design before we roll it out to the whole organization.

Mark: Yes, you're right. I would hate it not to work in front of 250 employees! How about we invite some subject matter experts and a few future trainees to a meeting and talk with them about the program's design. Let's see what they think about it.

Judy: Great idea. I'll jot down a few questions and call a few people to come to a group interview.

Mark: Okay, let's not keep them longer than thirty minutes; you know how busy they are.

Judy: Right. I'll be back in touch.

Although Judy and Mark's idea to evaluate the program's design is a good one, their approach may well fall short of providing them accurate and useful information for making decisions about what might work or need to be changed in the training program's design. They have failed to reflect

on the background and history of the program and articulate the rationale and purpose of the evaluation, how the findings will be used, who the potential stakeholders and audiences may be, and what key questions the evaluation should answer. Without addressing these topics, the questions that Judy jots down may or may not be helpful or relevant to understanding the program design's effectiveness. Therefore, it is critical to take time to discuss the background of what is being evaluated (the evaluand), why it's being evaluated, what questions the evaluation should address, and who the intended users of the evaluation's findings will be.

We liken this phase of the evaluation process to developing goals and objectives in the instructional, curriculum, or program design process. As the old proverb goes, "If you don't know where you're headed, you'll likely end up somewhere else." Only after the focus of the evaluation has been developed should we determine which evaluation design and methods could be used to collect the data. When we jump to choosing a design and method before clearly understanding the evaluation's purpose and key questions, we may choose an approach that is less capable of answering the evaluation questions or we may collect data that will not meet our information needs.

Developing an Evaluation Plan

As discussed in Chapter 4, one way to mediate the political forces surrounding the evaluation is to develop an evaluation plan that clearly delineates what is being evaluated, as well as why, how, and when it is being evaluated. An evaluation plan functions as a contract between the evaluator(s) (whether they're internal or external) and the organization, and is the document that guides them through the evaluation process. The evaluation plan further defines the roles and responsibilities of the evaluator(s) so that all organization members and those involved in the evaluation have a clear sense of what the evaluation is intended to accomplish, by whom, and when.

In this chapter, we describe the first four steps in designing an evaluation plan. These include:

1. Describing the rationale and purpose of the evaluation
2. Developing a program logic model
3. Identifying the evaluation's stakeholders
4. Determining the evaluation's key questions

As suggested in the earlier chapters, we strongly recommend that a group or team of people who are interested in the evaluand and the evaluation findings be invited to participate in the evaluation process. We have found that their involvement significantly increases their understanding of evaluation, the program being evaluated, and the use of the evaluation results. These stakeholders tend to feel more connected to the evaluation process that increases their buy-in to the evaluation process and its outcomes. Participants' involvement may range from attending one meeting to help focus the evaluation to taking responsibility for several of the data collection and analysis activities. The number of people may vary throughout the evaluation process, though we have found that a core of three to eight individuals who are committed to the evaluation and are willing to see it through works best. For example, if we were evaluating a customer service training program, we would likely invite a sample of interested individuals to help in designing and implementing the evaluation, specifically the program's designers, trainers, past participants, future participants, participants' managers, and the organization's internal and external customers. We believe that, in most cases, a participatory, collaborative approach that focuses on learning from the evaluation will produce the most usable results from an evaluation study.

Focusing the evaluation may take anywhere from two hours to several hours, depending on the complexity of the evaluation, the political nature of the evaluand, and the number of people attending the meeting. Though we recognize this may sound like a lot of time, it is time extremely well spent. If these issues are not discussed and the goals for the evaluation are unclear, the process and outcomes of the evaluation may be compromised in terms of their quality and usefulness.

Developing the Evaluation's Rationale and Purpose

Have you ever had the experience of inviting a group of people to a meeting that you thought was going to be straightforward, where you assumed everyone would be on the same page, only to discover that your assumption was unfounded? When it comes to discussing the evaluand's background or history, the rationale for the evaluation, and how the evaluation should be conducted, we have learned that the ensuing conversation is strongly influenced by myriad experiences and perceptions

of those who have experiences with the evaluand, their stake in the evaluand, and the potential outcomes of the evaluation. Thus the task of focusing the evaluation becomes one of clarifying the program's underlying assumptions, activities, resources, short- and long-term outcomes, as well as the stakeholders' needs and expectations for the evaluation. The dialogue that takes place during the focusing meeting often surfaces facts, myths, and values people have about the program being evaluated. Group members may be able to detect differences or errors in their thinking, and it opens them up to new understandings about the evaluand, things they had not thought of before. The discussion of the evaluand's background and history also helps clarify how the evaluation results will be used. If there are competing agendas for the evaluation, these can be negotiated and resolved. The outcome of this dialogue ensures that the most critical issues about the evaluand will be addressed during the evaluation. Examples of three different evaluation rationales can be seen in Figures 5.1-5.3.

We are totally convinced of the importance and value of collaboratively understanding the evaluand's background and rationale for the evaluation. At the very least, this meeting helps bring clarity about what is being evaluated as well as the evaluation process, reinforces the organization's interest in growing and learning from evaluation, and builds commitment to the evaluation process.

This part of the evaluation plan can be developed in several ways. One process we have used successfully involves asking each group member first to describe his or her experiences with the evaluand (we'll use "program" in this example). This initial conversation often reveals information that others did not know. We might ask each person around the table to discuss the following:

- Their role in the program
- How long they've been involved with the program
- Why they're interested in the evaluation (and level of interest)
- Any trends that they've observed
- Their concerns about the program
- What they hope to learn from the evaluation
- What decisions they want to make based on the evaluation results

After each person offers this information, we ask the group members to explain what they believe are the goals of the program. We have often found that people will recite the explicit goals as they are written in the program's documentation but often add other goals they think are important. This situation creates an opportunity for negotiating which goals should be evaluated, as well as the origin and viability of certain unstated goals.

Patton similarly asks group members to explain what claims they wish to make about the program. In other words, if the program were working well, what would you say about it? He also finds that asking the following questions provides greater clarity about the purpose and focus of the evaluation as well as how the findings will be used (2008, p. 147):

- What decisions, if any, are the evaluation findings expected to influence?
- When will decisions be made? By whom? When, then, must the evaluation findings be presented to be timely and influential?
- What is at stake in the decisions? For whom? What controversies or issues surround the decisions?
- What's the history and context of the decision-making process?
- What other factors (values, politics, personalities, promises already made) will affect the decision-making? What might happen to make the decision irrelevant or keep it from being made? In other words, how volatile is the decision making environment?
- How much influence do you expect the evaluation to have—realistically?
- To what extent has the outcome of the decision already been determined?
- What data and findings are needed to support decision making?
- What needs to be done to achieve that level of influence?
- How will we know afterward if the evaluation was used as intended?

The answers to these questions help clarify the explicit, as well as the unstated or tacit, goals and objectives of any program, process, product, or object being evaluated.

FIGURE 5.1 Evaluation Plan Example: Focusing the Evaluation*

Performance Measures Workshop Evaluation Plan

A workshop or other structured learning intervention can yield benefits for the participants and other stakeholders. There are also costs associated with such an activity. Organizations can use evaluation as a tool for determining the worth of the learning interventions it sponsors.

Clark College provides a variety of workshops and other professional development activities for faculty and staff. As stewards of public resources, the College is obligated to focus its resources on activities that are of the greatest value. The evaluation plan presented here will be used to identify modifications that could improve the effectiveness of a workshop designed for faculty at Clark College. The stakeholders associated with the workshop can also consider the evaluation's results in light of the workshop's costs to determine if the workshop should be repeated.

Evaluation Rationale

The evaluand is a two-hour workshop entitled *The Use and Importance of Training Performance Measures* that has been designed as one in a series of six workshops. The series, entitled *Program Data, Retraining Policy and Funding, and Their Impact on Professional Technical Students and Programs: A Series of Workshops* is intended to help Clark College professional technical faculty (e.g., welding, nursing, automotive, etc.) understand, prepare for, and respond to workforce training policies and the impacts of those policies on students and programs. The workshop can stand alone; participants do not have to complete any of the other offerings in the series to benefit from this workshop. It is designed to respond to a need for Clark College professional technical faculty to be aware of measures that are used to gauge the performance of their programs and understand how those measures are used and how they impact their program.

This evaluation is being conducted to identify modifications that could improve the workshop's effectiveness in meeting its outcomes and the needs and expectations of the target audience. The results of the evaluation will also be considered in relation to the workshop's costs to determine if the workshop should be repeated.

The primary factors leading to the evaluation are the desire to deliver an effective and valuable workshop and the consideration that this will be the first in a series of related workshops offered to faculty. As such, it is likely that the value that faculty assign to this workshop will influence the decisions they make about participating in others in the series. It would be ideal for faculty to attend most or all of the workshops. However, faculty are very busy and typically have little patience with programs they consider to be a waste of time. A positive experience in this workshop should increase the likelihood of faculty attending others in the series.

* Adapted from an evaluation plan developed by George Reese, Vancouver, WA. Used with permission.

The need for the workshop is linked to Washington State workforce policies. State agencies including the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges and the Workforce Education and Training Coordinating Board collect and report data on professional technical training programs, including those offered by community and technical colleges. The data are used to determine eligibility for the Eligible Training Provider (ETP) List. Students who receive federal or state funding for training can only enroll in training programs that are on the List, which is available to the public via the Internet. Strong enrollments are important to the maintenance of college programs and, in order to maximize enrollments, it is important that professional technical programs remain on the List. To remain on the List, a professional technical program must meet or exceed the targets for three performance measures: completion rate, employment rate, and earnings of all students who left the program.

Most Clark College programs have little difficulty remaining on the ETP List. On occasion, however, a program will be notified that it has failed to meet the performance targets. This situation creates a great deal of frustration for faculty and requires significant time and energy to gather alternative sources of data and file an appeal.

The evaluation for this workshop is not required by the College or any external agency. It is being created solely at the initiative of the College's Vocational Director who is also the designer of all of the workshops in the series. While the secondary and tertiary stakeholders identified below will likely be interested in the results of the survey, neither the evaluation nor the workshops have been requested or commissioned by any other person.

Figure 1 shows the logic model for the Use and Importance of Training Performance Measures workshop. The model illustrates the resources and assumptions upon which the activities are based. The activities are designed and organized to meet the workshop's objective, which in turn should produce the short-term outcomes. The short-term outcomes are expected to result in the long-term outcomes. The logic model also indicates the factors that are expected to work in support of, and in opposition to, meeting the objective and realizing the outcomes.

Purpose

The purpose of this evaluation is to determine the extent to which the workshop meets the needs and expectations of the participants and results in the intended outcomes. The results will be used to determine if the workshop should continue to be offered and, if continued, to identify modifications of the content or activities to increase attainment of outcomes and fulfillment of target audience's needs and expectations.

(continues)

FIGURE 5.1 (continued)

Stakeholders

Stakeholders are individuals who have an interest in the evaluation and can use the evaluation results. There are three levels of stakeholders for the Use and Importance of Training Performance Measures workshop.

Primary stakeholders include the program developer (who is also the facilitator) and the program participants. The program developer initiated this workshop and the others in the series in response to a stated need among faculty for more information about the performance measures and related concepts. Having invested significant time and effort in the development and delivery of the workshop, the developer is motivated to use the evaluation results to maximize the outcomes of that effort. Also, the developer believes that, if the workshops are effective, faculty will be able to increase program performance relative to the performance measures. Finally, the developer must demonstrate to his supervisors that his work is resulting in positive outcomes.

Secondary stakeholders include Clark College deans and the Clark College Vice President of Instruction. These individuals supervise the faculty and want to ensure that professional development activities benefit faculty and improve program performance. They will only encourage and support faculty participation in the workshop if the evaluation demonstrates that the workshop is meeting faculty needs and expectations and is resulting in positive outcomes. The Vice President of Instruction directly supervises the workshop developer and needs evidence that the developer's time is yielding positive outcomes.

Tertiary stakeholders include faculty, vocational directors, and administrators from other Washington community and technical colleges and the staff from the State's Board for Community and Technical Colleges and Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board. The performance measures that are the foundation of this workshop apply to all community and technical colleges in Washington State. If the evaluation demonstrates that the workshop is effective or results in modifications that improve workshop effectiveness, faculty and administrators from other community and technical colleges might want to replicate the workshops at their campuses. The State Boards support efforts to increase awareness about the performance measures and improve program performance. Staff from the State Boards might support the replication of the workshops at other institutions if they prove to be effective.

Key Questions

1. To what extent is the workshop meeting the needs and expectations of the participants?
 2. To what extent are the short-term and long-term outcomes realized?
 3. In what way does the workshop need to be modified to better meet the expectations and needs of the target audience and fulfill the intended outcomes?
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FIGURE 5.1a Logic model for the workshop: The Use and Importance of Training Performance Measures

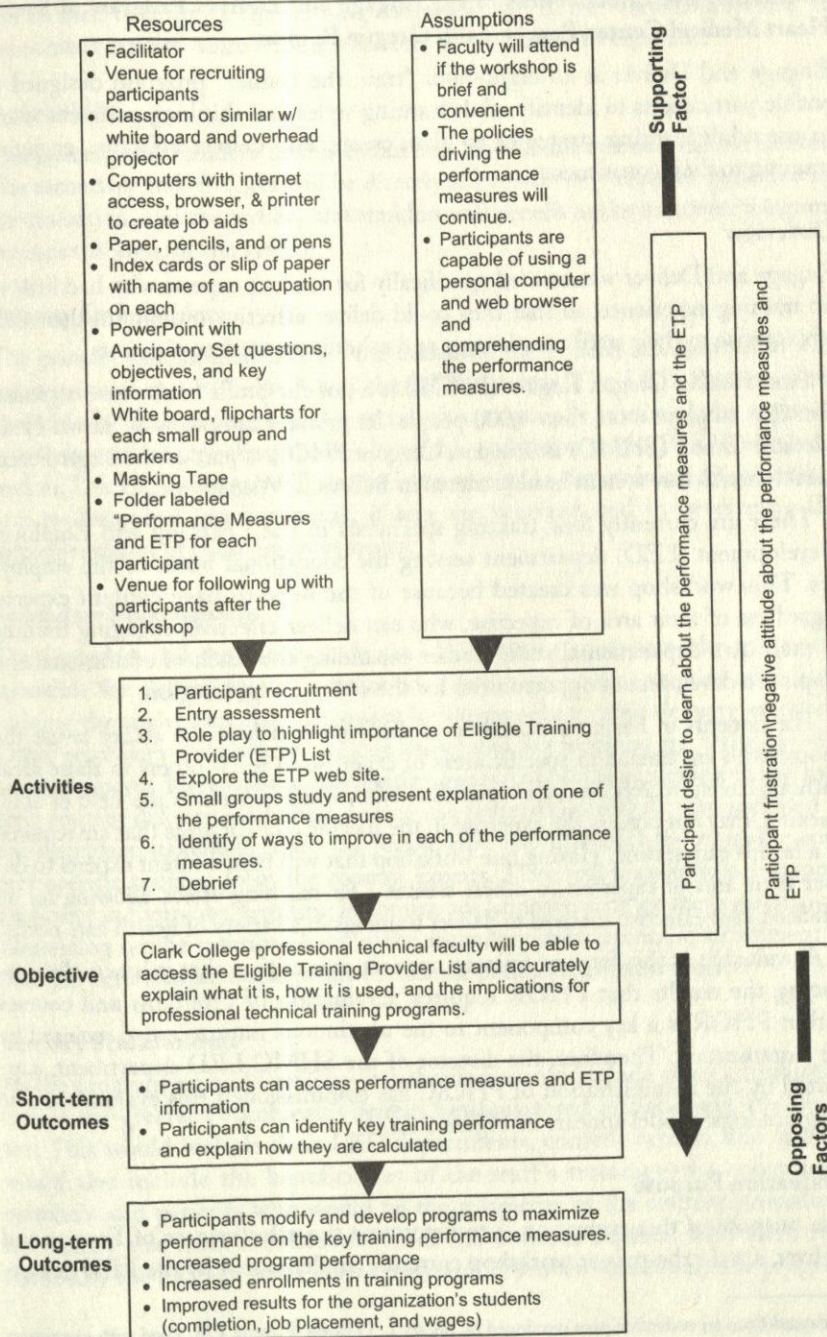


FIGURE 5.2 Evaluation Plan Example: Focusing the Evaluation*

Evaluating the Effectiveness of the Engage and Deliver Program at Sacred Heart Medical Center, PeaceHealth Oregon Region

Engage and Deliver is an eight-hour "train the trainer" program designed to enable participants to identify adult learning styles and thinking preferences and to use adult learning strategies to plan, create, and deliver effective, engaging training to their constituency.

Overview

Engage and Deliver was created specifically for content experts who had little or no training experience, so that they could deliver effective training in their field of expertise to their staff/constituents and other interested participants.

PeaceHealth, Oregon Region (PHOR) is a not-for-profit health care organization that employs more than 4,000 people. Its primary campus is at Sacred Heart Medical Center (SHMC) in Eugene, Oregon. PHOR is part of the larger PeaceHealth health care system headquartered in Bellevue, Washington.

There are currently four training specialists in the Learning and Employee Development (LED) department serving the educational needs of the employees. This workshop was created because of the need to have content experts, regardless of their area of expertise, who can deliver effective, engaging training to their own departmental staff, further expanding the reach of educational and employee development opportunities for the entire Oregon region.

The benefits of having a workshop of this nature include the ability to use the people who are trained in specific areas of expertise to teach others in those areas without having to rely on LED specialists who, while experts in the field of adult learning, may not possess the expertise in the specific content areas that are required in a health care setting. Having one workshop that will train content experts to deliver their area of expertise to others creates a far-reaching effect, allowing for an efficient, cost-effective method to deliver trainings in a variety of health care needs.

As valuable as this form of training appears, it is critical that it is actually producing the results that PHOR requires. Evaluation of programs and courses within PHOR is a key component to the continuous improvement required by the organization. Therefore, the director of the SHMC LED department, supported by the administration of PHOR, has commissioned this evaluation. The program logic model appears in Figure 5.2a.

Evaluation Purpose

The purpose of this evaluation is to determine the effectiveness of Engage and Deliver, a train the trainer workshop currently implemented by the LED depart-

* Adapted from an evaluation plan developed by Sherry L. O'Boyle, Eugene, OR. Used with permission.

ment at SHMC to assist content experts in planning, creating, and delivering their own training programs to their constituents. The results of this evaluation will be used to improve the training strategies used in the workshop, leading to the content experts' more efficient delivery of their areas of expertise.

Stakeholders

The primary stakeholders in this evaluation have commissioned the evaluation. The secondary stakeholders will be directly affected by any changes indicated by the evaluation, and the tertiary stakeholders will benefit as the improved program expands throughout the system.

Primary Stakeholders

The primary stakeholders include the evaluator, the PHOR administration who commissioned the evaluation, and the LED director. The LED director is responsible for determining whether or not this program is producing the expected outcomes and for reporting the results of this evaluation to the PHOR administration. The LED director will also be instrumental in determining what curriculum re-designing improvements, if any, are required and in overseeing the implementation of those improvements.

Secondary Stakeholders

The secondary stakeholders include the LED training specialists who will be responsible for delivering the instruction. They may need to acquire additional training themselves to make necessary improvements to their delivery methods. Other secondary stakeholders include those who are receiving the training—the content experts. They will use information generated by the evaluation to improve their content delivery methods, resulting in a better-trained staff. Also included in the secondary stakeholders are the people who will ultimately be receiving content-specific training from the content experts. They will benefit by being more proficient in their jobs, resulting in continuous improvement for the organization. Depending on the positions held by the secondary stakeholders, improvement in their job performance could positively impact patient/client outcomes.

Tertiary Stakeholders

As the program expands, tertiary stakeholders would include other administrators in the greater PeaceHealth system headquartered in Bellevue, Washington. This would include their LED departments, content experts, and staff. It would also include the beneficiaries of the staff's training—the community members and patients who would be the recipients of the content procedures learned by the staff/constituents from the content experts, who were first trained by the Engage and Deliver program. If proven successful, this program

(continues)

FIGURE 5.2 (continued)

could significantly improve the educational outreach of PeaceHealth's entire organizational system. It may provide a model for instruction for other institutions, leading ultimately to a better-educated workforce and positive patient outcomes.

Key Questions

This evaluation will attempt to answer the following questions:

1. What is the correlation, if any, between how well the training was received by the content experts (based on the primary evaluation they provided at the end of the Engage and Deliver workshop) and the ability of their staff/constituents to apply what was learned from the content experts?
2. How do content experts use the training to deliver an effective, engaging training of their own?
3. What barriers, if any, do the content experts experience when they attempt to implement the methods learned to their own training delivery?
4. What changes could improve the delivery of the training to the content experts, enabling them to better train their staff/constituents?

FIGURE 5.2a Logic Model of the Evaluation Plan of PHOR's Engage and Deliver Program

Underlying Assumptions

- Utilization of the Engage and Deliver Program will effectively increase the ability of PHOR to train more employees in specific, content-driven areas.
- Content experts will become competent to create, design, and deliver effective, engaging training to their staff/constituents.
- Better-trained staff/constituents will result in better patient/client outcomes.

Resources

Needed personnel resources include financial/time commitment for:

- PHOR LED director
- Lead administrators/supervisors
- LED training specialists (who will train the content experts in adult training strategies)
- Content experts
- Trainees (those receiving training from the content experts)

Material needs include:

- Evaluation program materials

Logistical resources needed include:

- Training room
- Travel time for those not already on campus

Activities

- LED training specialists provide the Engage and Deliver program to content experts.
- Based on the training received from the LED training specialists, content experts create and deliver their own training to their staff/constituents.
- Staff/constituents provide the services in which they have been trained.

Short-Term Outcomes

- LED training specialists train content experts in adult learning strategies.
- Content experts create and deliver training in their field of expertise to their staff/constituents.
- A wider population of staff/constituents will be trained.
- Better-trained staff/constituents experience increased confidence in their job performance, leading to increased staff morale.

Long-Term Outcomes

- Better-trained staff/constituents apply the content expertise they have learned to patients/clients.
- Effective use of staff time (for training specialists, content experts, and staff/constituents)
- Better use of resources
- Increased staff education
- Benefit to the community in the form of increased quality of provision of health information and training
- Better patient/client outcomes
- PeaceHealth system-wide improvement as other regions adopt and implement plan

FIGURE 5.3 Evaluation Plan Example: Focusing the Evaluation

Evaluation Plan for the Center for California Cultural and Social Issues**Background and Rationale**

The Center for California Cultural and Social Issues (CCCSI) is located within Pitzer College to help students successfully complete service learning as part of the mission statement at the school. The CCCSI was founded with a grant of five million dollars in 1998 by Dr. Allen Jones, who is currently the dean of faculty. He wanted to create a program that would help students complete their service learning, as well as give two alumni (Urban Fellows) the opportunity to gain managerial experience. CCCSI is overseen by the Pitzer College Board of Directors, and is accountable to Campus Compact and WASC. A logic model of the program is presented in Figure 5.3a.

Currently, the CCCSI staff is comprised of a director, an assistant director, and two Urban Fellows. The director's time is divided into 2/5's CCCSI staff and 3/5's faculty, since the position functions as a liaison between the program and Pitzer faculty. The assistant director is primarily responsible for the majority of the program, including placing students and maintaining relationships with local non-profit organizations. The two Urban Fellows are hired for the length of one year to manage three or four key sites.

CCCSI has expanded through the years from teaching students to be aware and active in their local and international communities to placing students in non-profit organizations. Students complete their required 40 hours of service learning through courses that have a mandatory service learning component or by coming to CCCSI on their own. The assistant director gives the students questionnaires to accurately match them up with non-profit organizations based on their location, needs, and interests. After this meeting, students are given a list of non-profits that fit their interests. It is their responsibility to make contact with the non-profit and acquire a position. If they have further needs or difficulties, they may contact CCCSI for assistance.

Despite the staff's diligent efforts, the assistant director reports that there are difficulties and inefficiencies within the organization that require attention. CCCSI suffers from being understaffed, as there are over 700 Pitzer students who must fulfill the service learning component, and a majority of them utilize CCCSI, which overwhelms the small staff. Other non-Pitzer students from the surrounding Claremont Colleges also rely on CCCSI's resources, which further adds to the demand for services. Additionally, CCCSI would like more faculty to integrate the service learning component into their courses, but the staff has little time to facilitate this process. By focusing all of their resources on aiding students to find service learning sites, CCCSI has little time to improve the overall service learning process or lack of internal organization.

There is no system to accurately catalog the number of students involved with CCCSI or to maintain the complete list of non-profits that are currently working with Pitzer students. The center has a plethora of valuable information stashed in disorganized files. For example, most of the information on the intake surveys has been left unanalyzed, and therefore, has yet to be utilized for program improvement. This makes it difficult to disseminate information to students and other interested parties regarding the non-profits that work with CCCSI. Also, the center's record-keeping method is unsystematic with regard to student placement and tracking successful outcomes. Due to reduced contact with the students after a position at a site is acquired, a small percentage of students fill out an out-take form, which has the potential to provide valuable information regarding students' experiences. After graduation, many of the students are hired as full-time employees within the non-profit organizations at which they volunteered; however, this also fails to be accurately documented. This lack of organization prevents useful information from being used to make program decisions and further program improvement efforts.

The assistant director called for the evaluation in hopes that the results will demonstrate that the center is meeting its goals and the needs of students, yet that it also requires additional funding in order to be more successful. The purpose of the evaluation is to ensure that students are benefiting from the process and to learn new ways to improve the process. The assistant director wants to use the results to improve the center, as well as share the results with the Pitzer College Board of Directors and Campus Compact to receive supplementary funding. The goal would be to expand and organize the program in order to hire more staff members, including a grant writer and a data processor to keep detailed records. Both positive and negative evaluation results would be beneficial in making any necessary program improvements. For example, if the evaluation results indicate that the program process is upholding the mission, but also shows that the lack of organization is affecting the efficiency and success of the program, then increased funding would be consequential. Additional funding could be used to hire additional staff, which would help to further increase productivity and the success of the program. In addition, results and data gathered through increased efficiency could be presented to other colleges and organizations that admire CCCSI and are looking to model their own service learning program after them.

Evaluation Purpose

The purpose of this evaluation is to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the process by which students complete their service learning requirement through CCCSI. The results will be used to modify or refine the current program. The Assistant Director hopes to use the results to secure additional funding to hire new employees and make program improvements.

(continues)

FIGURE 5.3 (continued)

Stakeholder Involvement

The primary stakeholders include the CCCSI Director and Assistant Director. They hope to use the evaluation results to improve program components. Results will be reported to the relevant college administrative staff and faculty, as well as current and potential funders, in order to secure additional staff, increase office space, encourage faculty to integrate service learning into their courses, and further the goal of the service learning mission statement.

The secondary stakeholders include the Urban Fellows, the Board of Directors, current and potential program funders, the faculty, and students. The Urban Fellows will use the evaluation results to improve their effectiveness in fulfilling their role by having a better understanding of the program process. The Board of Directors and funders will use the results to make decisions to increase or decrease funding based on more accurate data than currently available. The faculty will be affected by changes that may occur from evaluation results and will be informed if the service learning component of courses becomes more or less necessary. Also, in the event that the results are used to increase availability of information regarding the advantages or disadvantages of potential sites, the faculty could utilize this information to make decisions about integrating service learning into their courses. Students will also be affected in this way, in that their interactions with CCCSI may increase, decrease, or change in some manner. In addition, they must remain knowledgeable about service learning requirements and will be informed of any modifications.

The tertiary stakeholders include the current non-profit organizations who work with CCCSI and other colleges who are looking to model their own programs after CCCSI's program. Any program changes made as a result of the evaluation may affect the interactions between CCCSI and the non-profits who are currently involved with them. Also, any reports or results from the evaluation could potentially be used as informational sources by other colleges or other non-profits.

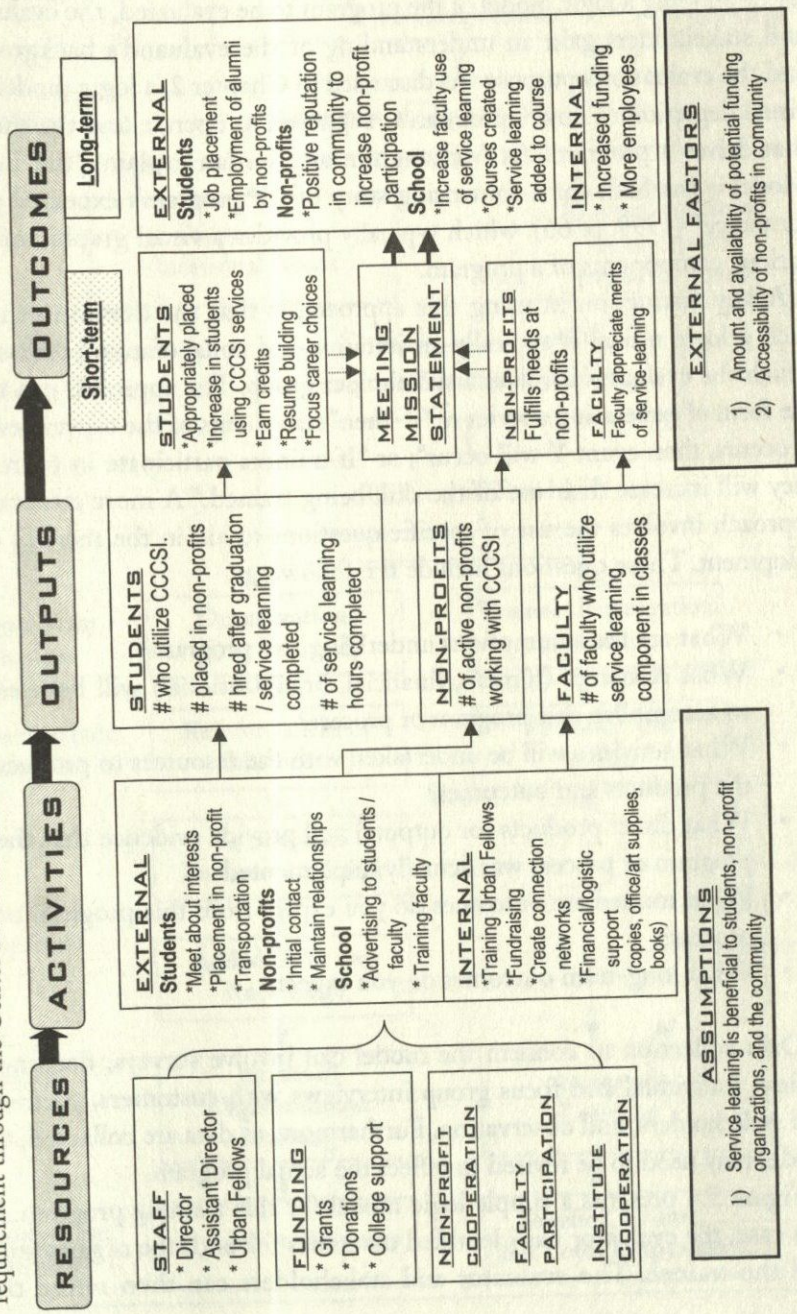
Key Questions

1. How is the process by which students complete the service learning program through CCCSI implemented?
2. How do the various individuals who are involved in service learning at Pitzer College experience and describe the process with CCCSI?
3. How do students benefit from and value service learning?
4. In what ways can the current record-keeping process be improved to ensure greater efficiency and accuracy?

SOURCE: Reprinted with permission from Jacquelyn Christensen, Bree Lienemann, Yasie Malek, and Sarah Martin.

FIGURE 5.3a Logic Model- CCCSI non-profit program

SITUATION: Identify the strengths and weaknesses of the process by which students complete their service learning requirement through the Center for California Cultural and Social Issues (CCCSI) at Pitzer College.



SOURCE: Adapted from an evaluation plan developed by George Reese, Vancouver, WA. Used with permission.

Developing a Program Logic Model

By developing a logic model of the program to be evaluated, the evaluator and stakeholders gain an understanding of the evaluand's background and the evaluation's purpose. As discussed in Chapter 2, a logic model is a visual depiction of how a program is supposed to operate and the theory that drives a program. As McLaughlin and Jordan explain, "the Logic Model is the basis for a convincing story of the program's expected performance" (1999, p. 66), which typically provides a visual graphic of the various components of a program.

A key distinction in using this approach is that the development of such a logic model is typically an iterative and collaborative process, in which the evaluator involves a stakeholder group. The approach can take the form of generating a series of "if-then" statements of the type: "If event X occurs, then event Y will occur"; or "If trainees participate in training, they will increase their use of the skill being trained." A more structured approach involves the use of specific questions to aid in the model's development. These questions include the following:

- What are the assumptions underlying this program?
- What resources (human, financial, organizational) will be used to accomplish this program or process?
- What activities will be undertaken with the resources to produce the products and outcomes?
- What direct products (or outputs) will provide evidence that the program or process was actually implemented?
- What immediate outcomes do you expect from this program or process?
- What long-term outcomes do you expect?

Data collection to confirm the model can involve surveys, document review, individual and focus group interviews with customers, partners, and stakeholders, and observation. Furthermore, as data are collected, the model may need to be revised to reflect the actual program.

Figure 5.4 presents a simple logic model for this training program. In this case, the evaluator has identified outcomes for both the organization and the trainee. The evaluator and stakeholders can then refine this

FIGURE 5.4 Logic Model for a Training Program

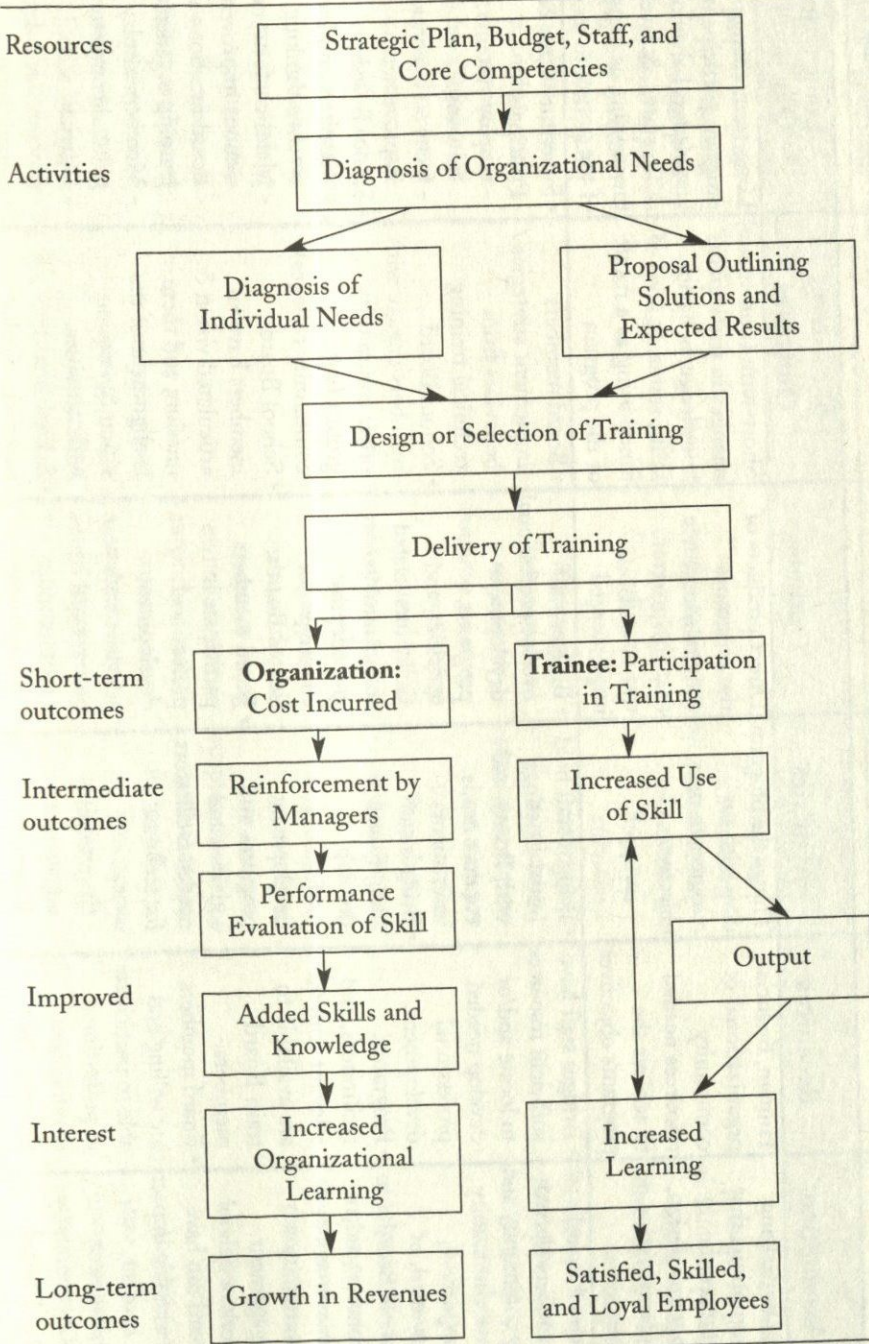


FIGURE 5.5 Logic Model of the Oregon School Board Association Bridges to Achievement (excerpt) (from Preskill and Russ-Eft, 2006)

Assumptions	Resources	Activities	Outputs	Short-term Outcomes	Long-term Outcomes
<p>The underlying assumptions that influence the program's design, implementation or goals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Board members elected by community and have community support. • Key work of School Board is to promote student achievement and community engagement. • Work of School Board can have measurable impact on student achievement. • Policy actions by School Board influences policy 	<p>Human, financial, organizational & community resources needed to achieve the program's objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bridges staff have sufficient resources to locate and/or develop needed professional development. • Programs, facilitators, and relevant content are available to train Board members. • Board members are willing and able to participate in professional development. • Community provides needed 	<p>Things the program does with the resources to meet its objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bridges staff hold initial meetings with Boards and conduct needs assessments. • Bridges staff identify and/or develop professional development programs and activities and needed facilitators for technical issues: - Community engagement - Vision & mission 	<p>Direct products of the program's activities/evidence that the program was actually implemented</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bridges staff oversee professional development programs, activities, and facilitators related to technical issues and adaptive challenges for School Boards. • Board members participate in two professional development activities each year on technical issues: - Community engagement - Vision & mission 	<p>Short-term (immediate) changes in participants' knowledge, behavior, skills, status, & level of functioning as a result of the program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board members implement strategies / behaviors from technical training • School Board members engage with other community groups (e.g., community colleges) • School Board members have an articulated vision & mission; and there is alignment of the vision & mission with activities. • School Board members display collaborative leadership 	<p>Long-term changes in program participants' knowledge, behavior, skills, status, & level of functioning as a result of the program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Superintendents & Principals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - employ systems thinking. - focus on continuous improvement. • School Board: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Members employ systems thinking. - Members focus on continuous improvement. - Board functions as a learning organization. - Members display cultural competence. - District / school functions as a learning organization. - Display cultural

<p>at other education levels.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An identifiable set of "core elements of success" exist for systemic education governance models. • Systemic Board governance can be supported and strengthened by relevant professional development. • Such development involves technical issues and adaptive challenges. • Such development involves both formal training as well as informal experiences. 	<p>resources to School Board.</p>	<p>- Alignment of vision & mission- Collaborative leadership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Using data for improvement - Focus on student achievement • Bridges staff identify and/or develop professional development programs and activities and needed facilitators for adaptive challenges: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Systems thinking - Continuous improvement - Becoming a learning organization - Cultural competence 	<p>- Alignment of vision & mission</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collaborative leadership - Using data for improvement - Focus on student achievement • Board members participate in two professional development activities each year on adaptive challenges: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Systems thinking - Continuous improvement - Becoming a learning organization - Cultural competence 	<p>behaviors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Board members use data for improvement • School Board members focus 	<p>competence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Employ systems thinking. - Focus on continuous improvement. - Participate as members of a learning organization. - Display cultural competence. • Students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Show improved attendance rates. - Show improved performance on state assessments. - Show improved retention rates. - Participate in increased numbers of college credits prior to graduation. - Participate in increased numbers in dual enrollment programs. - Show increased number of associate degrees prior to HS graduation.
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model to include external variables that may affect the training activities as well as the outcomes.

The outcome of developing a logic model is a common understanding of how and why the initiative or intervention is supposed to work, what it actually does, and what expectations stakeholders have for its impact. From a discussion about the program's objectives, elements, processes, and approaches, the group can come to understand the history and background of the evaluand. Some resources for learning more about logic models include the W. K. Kellogg Foundation Logic Model Development Guide (www.wkkf.org/Pubs/Tools/Evaluation/Pub3669.pdf) and an online course for developing and applying logic models from the University of Wisconsin Extension (www.uwex.edu/ces/lmcourse).

Figure 5.5 provides an example of such a logic model. It was developed as part of the evaluation plan for the Bridges to Achievement Program, developed by the Oregon School Board Association. The initiative involves providing professional development experiences for K-12 school board members, education service district (ESD) board members, and community college board members (and community members) throughout Oregon via the development of systemic networks, professional development activities, and research services for these board members. The initial activities focus on four small, rural, and micropolitan community educational partnerships. Each partnership consists of two neighboring school districts, their local ESD, and their local community college.

As part of the evaluation process, a team consisting of evaluators, school district staff, school board members, and state agency personnel developed a logic model of the program. The logic model provides the evaluator with critical information needed to plan the evaluation. First, it clarifies the background and context for the initiative, the rationale for the evaluation, and the program's short- and long-term goals. In addition, it helps to identify key stakeholders. In this particular case, we can see that key stakeholders include school board members, Bridges staff, facilitators for the development efforts, community groups including community colleges, superintendents and principals, teachers, and students. The evaluator can then determine how each stakeholder group is involved in the initiative and the evaluation, as well as the ways in which each group plans to use the evaluation findings.

FIGURE 5.6 Sample Purpose Statements

- The purpose of the evaluation is to identify the knowledge and skills needed by newly hired customer service representatives. The results will be used to develop a training program to be implemented as part of the orientation for new hires. (Needs assessment, evaluating knowledge and skills)
- The purpose of the evaluation is to determine the effects of an online program on sales reps' knowledge and skills in using a new sales management software package. The results will be used to decide whether to continue using the e-learning program with other employees. (Summative evaluation, evaluating knowledge and skills)
- The purpose of the evaluation is to identify the strengths and weaknesses of a new classroom-based course, Making Effective Presentations, prior to rolling it out to all organization members. The results will be used to modify or refine the course design prior to full-scale implementation. (Formative evaluation, evaluating a program's design)
- The purpose of the evaluation is to determine participants' plan to use the two-hour classroom-based course on project management. The results will be used to determine whether or not to continue offering this course on a monthly basis and what changes might be needed. (Formative and summative evaluation, evaluating participants' intended use of the learning experience)
- The purpose of the evaluation is to identify if and how trainees use the skills they learned from the training program. In addition, the evaluation will examine what factors support or hinder skill use. The results will be used to modify the course content and to determine what other interventions may be needed to support trainees' use of the skills on the job. (Formative evaluation and needs assessment, evaluating the transfer of the training to the job)
- The purpose of the evaluation is to determine the goals and objectives, the best design, and the activities and strategies for the new supervisor program. It will also identify the best candidates for the program, the structures and processes that will be needed, and the criteria or standards for designing the program. The findings will be used to create the program blueprint and to develop and launch the new program. (Developmental evaluation, evaluating the program design)
- The purpose of the evaluation is to determine what and how much participants learned in the course Preventing Toxic Spills, delivered via distance technologies. The results will be used to determine whether e-learning modules will replace classroom-based training on this topic. (Primarily summative evaluation, evaluating the amount and type of learning)
- The purpose of the evaluation is to determine the cost-effectiveness of reorganizing the distribution center that serves the organization's field offices around the world. The results will be used to determine whether this reorganization is cost-effective, as well as whether this serves the organization's needs better than outsourcing the function. (Summative evaluation, evaluating the cost-effectiveness of a reorganization effort)

Using the logic model approach to evaluating learning, performance, and change efforts provides some distinct advantages. First, key stakeholders become involved with the initiative from the program's initial design through the evaluation process. These stakeholders should come to realize that specific outcomes can result only if certain resources are allocated and certain activities occur. Second, because the evaluator and stakeholders are examining the process from beginning to end, needed modifications and improvements can be undertaken to enhance the impact of the program. Finally, because external factors and other intervening variables are identified up front, action can be taken if such factors threaten the outcomes and evaluation.

The overall result of discussing the evaluand's background and developing the evaluation's rationale is a description or summary of what has been agreed upon. Within an evaluation plan, this may be covered in a couple of pages or an entire section or chapter of the report, depending on the level of detail necessary to lay the foundation for the evaluation.

Developing the Evaluation's Purpose Statement

Once the rationale for the evaluation has been established and potential uses of the evaluation findings have been discussed, it is helpful to sum up the purpose of the evaluation into a two- or three-sentence purpose statement. It is not unusual for there to be several purposes for conducting an evaluation. For example, the purpose of the evaluation might be to make decisions about the program's improvement, continuance, expansion, or certification, or to monitor a program's implementation for compliance. Other purposes might include obtaining evidence of a program's success to build support for additional resources or gain a better understanding of the program's effects on different groups. Whatever the purpose, it should be clearly explained in the purpose statement.

To reinforce the concept of use, we also recommend including a sentence or two that indicates how the evaluation results will be used. Figures 5.1–5.3 and 5.6 provide examples of purpose statements. As you will notice, they are succinct explanations of what the evaluation will focus on and how the results will be used.

Identifying the Evaluation's Stakeholders

Evaluation is conducted to serve the interests and information needs of several individuals or groups of people. These might be the program's designers, developers, deliverers, customers, future and former participants, community members, members of professional organizations, legislative committees, managers, administrators, and advisory boards. Each of these individuals or groups may have a stake in the outcomes of the evaluation. The word stakeholder dates back to 1708. As William Safire explains:

When Western land was made available to those who would work and live on it, a stake became a section of land marked off by stakes and claimed by the farmer. By extension, a grubstake was money advanced for food, or grub, as an investment or loan. Stakeholder, in the sense of one who holds the stake of a bet or wager, dates back to 1708; an article in *Sporting magazine* in 1815 mentions "a Bank of England note, which was lodged in the hands of a stake-holder, as a deposit." (*New York Times*, May 5, 1996, p. 26)

The more recent use of the term stakeholder was invented as an analogy for shareholders in the early 1960s (Freeman 1964) and was later used in the management literature when talking about people who had a direct stake in the organization, such as owners and employees. Interestingly, a survey conducted between 1998 and 1999 by Walker Information Global Network covering twenty-six countries and more than a thousand large corporations found that many organizations and countries use the term stakeholder, defined as "those groups of individuals who have a stake in or an effect on a business, such as customers, shareholders, employees, and suppliers." South Africa was found to have the most stakeholder-savvy executives (Salopek 1999, p. 16). The survey found that 99 percent of business leaders in South Africa were aware of the term, and 93 percent of Canadian leaders and 83 percent of U.S. leaders were familiar with it. However, the overall findings indicated that "one-third of the executives of major corporations world-wide are unfamiliar with the term 'stakeholder' as it relates to business organizations" (1999, p. 16).

In the evaluation field, the word stakeholder, with regard to a program, refers to one who has substantial ego, credibility, power, futures, or other capital invested in the program, and thus can be held to be to some

degree of risk with it. This includes program staff and many who are not actively involved in the day-to-day operations—for example, inventors or instigators or supporters of the program (Scriven 1991, p. 334).

Evaluation stakeholders are those who have a vested interest in the evaluand and are in a position to use the evaluation results in some way. As discussed in Chapter 1, some stakeholders who have responsibility for the program might use the findings to make certain decisions (instrumental use) or to better understand the program for future planning (conceptual use). In other cases, stakeholders, because of their relationship to the program, merely have a “right to know” the results and just wish to stay informed about how the program is faring (conceptual use).

We think it's helpful to differentiate various stakeholders by their level of investment and stake in the program and the evaluation findings. For example, primary stakeholders typically are those who allow the evaluand to exist or make it happen. They are typically responsible for the successful design, development, implementation, and funding of the evaluand. These stakeholders might include the program's:

- Funding agencies, organizations, departments
- Designers
- Developers
- Implementers
- Staff

Secondary stakeholders are often more removed from the daily operations of the program and may not have financial controls over the evaluation, but have an important stake in the program and the evaluation's outcomes. Examples of secondary stakeholders include:

- Managers
- Administrators
- Participants/students
- Customers
- Clients
- Trainers
- Parents

Tertiary stakeholders are those who have some interest in the evaluation for future planning or decision making, or have a general interest or right to know the evaluation's results. These might include:

- Future participants
- Potential users/adopters
- Professional colleagues
- Professional organizations
- Governing boards
- Government agencies
- Community members
- Legislators

Though there is no hard-and-fast rule about what makes an individual or group a primary, secondary, or tertiary stakeholder, those charged with oversight or implementation of the evaluand tend to make instrumental uses of the findings and thus are often considered to be primary or secondary stakeholders. The farther removed individuals or groups are from the program's daily operations and responsibility for funding, the more likely they are to be secondary or tertiary stakeholders. Primary stakeholders would probably receive the full report of the evaluation's findings, whereas secondary or tertiary stakeholders would normally receive abbreviated versions of the findings (see Chapter 14 for more details on how to communicate and report evaluation findings to various stakeholders).

What is most important in this step is the comprehensive identification of all potential stakeholders. Evaluators should ask themselves the following questions to identify the stakeholders:

- Who has a vested interest in the evaluand and evaluation outcomes?
- Whose position could be affected by the evaluation's findings and the actions taken on the findings?
- Who cares about the evaluand?
- How might the evaluation findings be used and by whom?
- What groups will be affected by the evaluation if recommendations are made and acted upon?

- Who are the clients or customers of the evaluand and what stake might they have in the outcomes of the evaluation?
- Who has a “right to know” the evaluation’s results?

The answers they give to the above questions help evaluators make decisions about how inclusive and diverse the stakeholder group should be.

Remember that those you identify as stakeholders will not necessarily be the people from whom you will be collecting data. Although you may contact some of these individuals during the data collection phase, it is important not to equate stakeholders with data sources. This step in the evaluation planning ensures that all potential users of the evaluation findings are identified so that maximum use of the evaluation’s findings can be made—both from a program improvement standpoint as well as for the purpose of marketing and education. Figures 5.1–5.3 provide examples of stakeholders and their potential uses of the evaluation findings.

Developing Key Evaluation Questions

A major outcome of the focusing phase is a list of broad, guiding questions the evaluation will seek to address. They form the boundary and scope of the evaluation and serve to communicate to others what the evaluation will and won’t attend to. The questions that are developed are the result of the input and negotiations among the evaluator and stakeholders. As a group is guided through the process of developing these key questions, anywhere from ten to fifty questions may be generated. Given that answering so many questions is often not feasible because of various time and resource constraints, we recommend that the group:

- Examine the questions to make sure that they are truly overarching, general questions and are not so specific that they might be considered survey or interview questions
- If possible, and where appropriate, change yes/no types of questions to open-ended types of questions
- Group the questions by themes or categories

- Prioritize the questions in each category according to those that are “need to answer now” versus “would be nice to answer” (It may help to ask “What decision will be made based on the results of this question?” If no decisions will or can be made, you might suggest that the question should be considered “nice to answer.”)
- Prioritize the categories of questions to determine if there are some categories that are more important now versus later
- Determine whether the “would be nice to answer” questions can be addressed in another way or considered as the basis for a future evaluation
- Agree on a set of questions that are of the most immediate concern

Figure 5.7 provides some example key questions.

It is impossible to say how many questions one evaluation should seek to answer, but we have found that most program evaluations include anywhere from three to five key questions, although some complex and multifaceted evaluations may require as many as ten to twelve questions. Unsurprisingly, the more questions the evaluation addresses, the more time-consuming and costly the evaluation will be. Figures 5.1–5.3 provide examples of evaluation questions within the context of an evaluation plan.

We want to restate here that these key questions focus and guide the entire evaluation process. If we fail to develop these questions and instead jump to writing questions for surveys or interview guides, as Judy and Mark did in the opening vignette of this chapter, we are simply hoping we ask the right questions. We may or may not end up asking questions that will address what we really need to know to make decisions about our programs.

Once you have completed the evaluation’s focusing phase, you will (1) understand the program’s theory of change from developing the program logic model, (2) understand the background and history of the program being evaluated, (3) have developed the rationale for the evaluation as well as its purpose, (4) have identified the stakeholder groups, and (5) have developed a set of questions that the evaluation will seek to answer. Once this is done, it is time to consider the various evaluation designs and methods to address the key questions. Chapters 6–11 will guide you in this process.

FIGURE 5.7 Example of Poorly Worded Key Questions and Revisions of These Questions

Poorly Worded Questions	Problems with Questions	Revisions of Those Initial Questions
Is the Supervisor Now program effective?	This is a simply yes-no question. In addition, it fails to describe how effectiveness might be defined.	In what ways do the participants use the skills learned in the Supervisor Now program?
What have you learned in the Customer Service program?	This represents a type of question that might be asked of a participant, and therefore is better suited for an interview guide or a survey.	What knowledge and skills have participants acquired in the Customer Service program?
If any of the members of the nursing assistant study group have their credits audited, will the study group be held responsible for classes that are not applicable for accreditation?	This question is very complex. In addition, it is a yes-no question.	In what ways, if any, will the nursing assistant study group be held responsible for unaccredited classes being used for accreditation purposes?
Does Report Card Night achieve its goals?	The question doesn't capture the main purpose of the evaluation, which is to improve teacher-parent communication.	To what extent does Report Card Night facilitate increased parent-teacher communication?
Is a one-day orientation sufficient for leadership training, or would a two-day orientation be more effective?	The question only offers two options as a solution. It is also unnecessarily a closed-ended question.	How much time is needed for the leadership training orientation program to be most effective?
Are docents happy with their job?	The question is worded to result in a yes-no response, when the answer is likely to be more complex. The word "happy" is also problematic in that it is difficult to operationalize.	To what extent are the docents satisfied with their experience and plan to continue volunteering at the Museum?
What impact has the Community Food Bank had on people?	The question is a bit too general. By adding children and families, it focuses the evaluation in ways that will enhance the questions used on the data collection instruments.	What impact has the Community Food Bank program had on the children of the families it has served?

Keep in Mind . . .

- An evaluation plan should be developed for every evaluation.
- Developing a program logic model will help articulate the program's theory of action and change, and is critical for determining the focus of the evaluation.
- The focusing phase of the evaluation should include the evaluation's
 - Rationale
 - Purpose
 - Stakeholders
 - Key questions
- This phase of the evaluation must be completed before the evaluation's design and data collection methods are determined.