PLG: Learning and Evaluation

Blueprint

Blueprint: Who we are

Founded on a simple idea that **evidence is a powerful tool for change**

- We help decision-makers use evidence to solve complex challenges and **improve outcomes** for people in Canada
- 45 employees with **diverse capabilities** in policy research, design, data analytics, evaluation, implementation, and knowledge mobilization

Comfort with Evalaution

Please visit the Mentimeter and answer the following question:

On a scale from 1 to 10 where 1 is not at all comfortable and 10 is extremely comfortable, what would you rate your comfort level with evaluation?

MYTHS

Myth 1: I am not an evaluator, I can't do "evaluation-y" things.

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Many of the skills needed to be an effective evaluator you use daily.

- Critical Thinking
- Communication
- Project Management
- Interpersonal Skills
- Analytica Skills
- Adaptability

A critical component to any evalaution is being able to ask "why".

Myth 2: Evaluation only looks at outcomes.

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While outcomes are important, it can be only one aspect of an evaluation.

Relevance	Coherence	Effectiveness	Efficiency	Impact	Sustainability
Is the intervention doing the right things?	How well does the intervention fit?	Is the intervention achieving its objectives?	How well are resources used?	What difference is the intervention making?	Will the benefits last long term?

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Myth 3: Evaluations only occur at the end of the project.

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Evaluation, or more broadly evidence generation, should occur at every stage of your project.

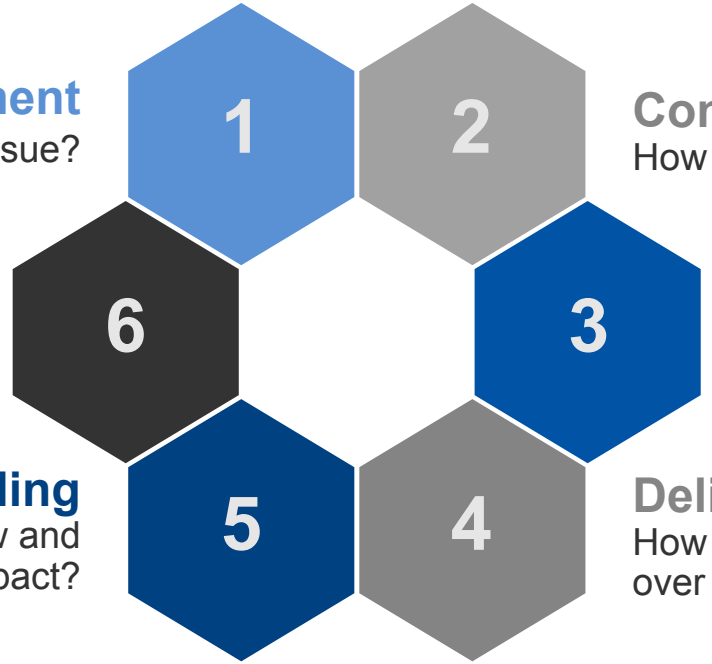
- **Evaluation:** is the process of assessing merit of something

- **Evidence Generation**: is the process of creating data to support a claim.

Right Size Evidence Generation Activities through the Innovation Cycle

Needs Assessment
What's the issue?

Concept Generation
How might we address the issue?



Research, Design, Prototype
How do we bring this concept to life and de-risk its development?

Delivery and Iteration
How do we both improve our offering over time and prove that it works

Scaling
How do we grow and maximize reach and impact?

Sustainable Scale/ Systems Change
How do we ensure sustainability and move the needle on systems change?

Blueprint's Evidence Framework

Needs assessment	Concept generation	Research, design prototyping	Delivery			Scaling
			Pilot	Iteration	Model stabilization	
Understand what's happening	Discover and document promising ideas	Develop feasible and plausible models	Implement	Improve	Prove	Test adaptations and continuously generate evidence to sustain impact

Research and Ideate

- Analyze user needs
- Map ecosystem
- Forecast trends
- Review evidence and case studies
- Generate hypotheses about how to address needs
- Engage stakeholders

Design and Deliver

- Develop and test prototypes with users
- Iterate model design
- Define implementation plan
- Monitor implementation quality

Evaluate and Learn

- Conduct rapid learning loops
- Conduct process evaluation
- Define outcomes
- Conduct outcomes evaluation
- Analyze costs
- Conduct rigorous impact evaluation and cost-benefit analysis
- Ongoing evidence generation and learning

Integrated knowledge mobilization and policy dialogue

Myth 4: If I can’t do an impact evaluation, there is no point of doing an evaluation.

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While beneficial at the right time and place, impact evaluations are not everything.

- Stanford Social Innovation Review highlights that our over reliance on impact evaluation leads to **ineffective use of time and money** – which often leads to **inflated results**.
- You should look to do impact evaluations if: you have a clear testable hypothesis, the project is stable and been delivered for some time, you have sufficient resources including funding, and you see value in this work.
- This website has lots of great tools to help you assess whether you are ready for an impact evalaution and what to consider.

Just because it is not causal, it doesn't mean it isn't worth knowing.

We need to create a culture where data is something we regularly collect, analyze and use to improve programming.

Myth 5: There are no helpful resources for me.

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It can be overwhelming with the number of resources out there. Here are some of my favourites:

- **Project Evidence: A Beginner's Guide to Evidence Building**
- **Better Evaluation: Manager's Guide to Evaluation**
- **Knowledge Institute on Child and Youth Mental Health and Addictions: A program Evaluation Toolkit**

Thank You

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