Introduction to Logic Models and Theory of Change

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Preliminary Notes

• The logic model is a planning tool, but also an assessment and evaluation tool for:
  • Funders: How well have you (the proposal writer) thought through your plan?
  • Program developers: How do we measure our progress and impact?

• The theory of change is also a planning, assessment, and evaluation tool, but it explains HOW and WHY change will happen, not just WHAT will change.
Overview

1. Key Definitions
2. Structure
3. Elements
4. Generic Example
5. Steps
6. Review
7. Specific Example
8. What’s Missing?
9. Sources

1. Key Definitions

- **Logic Model**: Describes steps to show the inputs that lead to outputs and outcomes (descriptive)
- **Theory of Change**: Explains how and why the logic model creates change (explanatory)
2. Structure

![Logic Model Diagram]

3. Elements of a Logic Model

Note: the structure of the model is not fixed; be creative. But the following elements are all required in the model:

I. Inputs
II. Activities
III. Outputs
IV. Outcomes
i. Inputs

- The resources required:
  - Money
  - Staff
  - Volunteers
  - Equipment
  - Partners
  - Facility
  - Curriculum

ii. Activities

- The services to be delivered:
  - Training
  - Counseling
  - Tutoring
  - Mentoring
  - Building
iii. Outputs

• The quantifiable results of the activities:
  • Number of classes taught: number of satisfied graduates
  • Number of sessions completed
  • Number of youth served: level of engagement
  • Number of nights of shelter provided
  • Number of newsletters sent: level of response

Note: Not everything that can be measured should be measured. Be mindful of tracking what has ultimate value relative to the goal.

iv. Outcomes

• The consequences/impact of the outputs:
  • New knowledge
  • Changed attitudes
  • New skills
  • Changed behaviors
  • Altered conditions
  • Changed status
Chain of Outcomes

• **Initial** outcomes/primary beneficiaries
  • E.g., single mothers who attend a workshop
  • Changes in knowledge, skills, attitudes, behaviors
  • Important indicators

• **Intermediate** outcomes/secondary beneficiaries
  • E.g., their children benefit from the mom applying learnings
  • Changes in behavior

• **Longer-term** outcomes
  • E.g., the kids engage earlier in reading, display larger vocabulary
  • Systemic change
  • Permanent change in condition or status
  • Kids grow up, get well-paying jobs, help mom exit poverty

Examples of Outcomes

• **Initial**
  • Clients learn how to establish a budget and savings plan

• **Intermediate**
  • Clients follow budget and save money monthly

• **Long term**
  • Clients reduce debt and increase financial stability
### 4. Generic Example

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inputs</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Outputs</th>
<th>Initial Outcomes</th>
<th>Intern. Outcomes</th>
<th>Longer Term Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meeting space</td>
<td>Complete 1 on 1 intake and job skills assessment;</td>
<td># of clients enrolled;</td>
<td>Clients learn: What jobs match their skills and interests;</td>
<td>Clients prep a resume;</td>
<td>Clients obtain a full time job;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview space</td>
<td>Group training sessions conducted daily;</td>
<td># of clients attending daily group sessions;</td>
<td>how to dress &amp; groom;</td>
<td>Clients demonstrate strong interview skills during practice;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 computer stations</td>
<td>Link clients with select employers;</td>
<td># of clients completing initial skills training;</td>
<td>how to prep a resume and application; interview skills</td>
<td>Clients plan transportation and child care;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Counselor</td>
<td>Hold 1 on 1 meetings weekly;</td>
<td># of companies signing partner agreements</td>
<td>How to complete a job search;</td>
<td>Clients apply for jobs that match their skills;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job coaches</td>
<td>Active recruitment of partner companies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Clients appear well groomed and neatly dressed.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Example of a Logic Model**

### United Way: Logic Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inputs</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Outputs</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resources Needed</td>
<td>Services, what we do</td>
<td>Products, participation</td>
<td>Benefits for People</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Money</td>
<td>Train</td>
<td>Classes taught</td>
<td>New knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>Shelter</td>
<td>Sessions completed</td>
<td>Increased skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteers</td>
<td>Counsel</td>
<td>Participants served</td>
<td>Changed attitudes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment</td>
<td>Assess</td>
<td></td>
<td>Modified behavior</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Influencing factors:

- New knowledge
- Increased skills
- Changed attitudes
- Modified behavior
- Improved status
5. Steps

I. Identify need and target population
II. Determine long-term outcomes
III. Determine initial and intermediate outcomes
IV. Describe outputs
V. Define activities
VI. Identify inputs

i. Identify Need and Target Population

• Is there really a critical need for your program?
  • What social values are informing this need?
  • Who shares these values?
• Document the need among your target population
  • Be very specific; use numbers where possible
  • Use data to support the need
• Can you address this problem alone?
  • Do you need partners to collaborate (Collective Impact)?
  • Is your approach scalable?
• Backward design: Start with the change you want
ii. Determine Long-Term Outcomes

• What change in condition or process in the status quo are you trying to achieve?
• Start with the ultimate objective—Your vision: “Pregnant teens, ages 12-17, in the ABC Program will deliver healthy babies”
• This defines what success will look like

iii. Determine Initial and Intermediate Outcomes

• What behaviors or other changes will lead to the long-term objectives of change?
iv. Describe Outputs

• Outputs are the measurable consequences of the activities
• Usually presented in terms of number of:
  • People served
  • Courses offered
  • Pamphlets distributed

v. Define Activities

• What specific activities will be undertaken to achieve the desired change?
vi. Identify Inputs

• Specifically what resources will be required to undertake these activities?
• These typically will require money and/or time

6. Review

• Is the need for the program clear and justifiable?
• Is the target population clearly identified?
• Are the outcomes focused on the client?
• Are the outcomes achievable by the program?
• Could the outcomes be achieved better through a collaboration with other groups, such as through Collective Impact?
• How important are the outcomes to others?
• Will people understand your language?
• What might be the unintended consequences?
• Is the program realistically scalable and sustainable?
7. Specific Example

- Note the vertical presentation
- Note the reverse sequence: outcomes first
8. What’s Missing?

- **Social Values**: Explicit identification of preferred social values is neglected, but social values underlie all social programs and funding
- **Explanation of how or why**: Causality is better addressed in a Theory of Change
- **Contingencies**: Logic models do not address “what if” possibilities
- **Feedback loops**: Logic models appear linear and do not explicitly identify feedback processes

Theory of Change (TOC)

- A theory of change is a conceptual framework or model that simplifies reality to make it more understandable
- The theory of change conceptual framework shows how and why the elements of a program cause desired outcomes
- The key contribution is the explanation of why a proposed intervention will cause desired outcomes
- Graphical representation (model) of your action plan
- Indicate WHY your inputs will create the anticipated change (outcomes)
  - Annie E. Casey: “Theory of Change: A practical tool for action, results, and learning”
  - [https://www.aecf.org/resources/theory-of-change/](https://www.aecf.org/resources/theory-of-change/)
TOC Example

Folks want to create change

- They learn how to create a theory of change

PATH B

They get to work

PATH A

- They get to work
- Insufficiency and wasted effort squander resources
- Some give up out of frustration
- Lots of midcourse corrections

Annie E. Casey: Theory of Change

Theory of Change: A Practical Tool for Action, Results, and Learning

SOAR Opportunity Fund

Theory of Change

Funding priority issues

Increased amount of funding directed to priority issues

Increased ability to influence community growth

Increased ability to leverage resources to support communities

Collaborative grants and development

Increased stability of funding and increased attention to priority issues

Increased knowledge of local needs and increased awareness of priority issues

Increased outreach of community leaders and increased coordination

Improved effectiveness of grants

Improved outcomes for "school readiness" goals

Improved outcomes for "family, friends, and neighbors" goals

Improved outcomes for "strong start" goals

All children have an equal opportunity to succeed in school and as adults
Questions?

9. Principal Sources

   http://www.yourunitedway.org/outcome-measurements


   http://www.actknowledge.org/