Forms of Evaluation

Evaluation Models
- The Traditional Model
  - Informal
  - Conducted in-house
  - Usually flattering

- Social Science Research Model
  - Experimental and quasi-experimental design

Evaluation Models
- Industrial Inspection Model
  - Just looks at outputs of products
  - Does not correct problems soon enough

- Black Box Evaluation
  - No understanding of why a program works or does not work
Evaluation Models

- Objectives-Based Evaluation
  - Work with goals or objectives then measure if they have been met
  - Sometimes narrowly focuses things too much and program improvements or modifications are missed
- Goal-Free Evaluation
  - Case study approach, open-ended
  - Makes people nervous

Evaluation Models

- Fiscal Evaluation
  - Calculations of financial investments and returns
  - Hard to place values of social programs on prevention
- Accountability Model
  - Did what you said you would do
  - Fiscal evaluation

Evaluation Models

- Expert Opinion Model
  - Usually outside experts evaluate programs
  - College Accreditation
- Naturalistic Model
  - Idiographic, qualitative approach
Evaluation Models

- Theory Driven Evaluation
  - Well planned approach for behavior change
  - Multi-causality

- Improvement Focused Model
  - Focus on program improvement, not a specific methodology
  - Formative and summative
  - Multiple methodology
  - Input from all stakeholders

Dysfunctional Attitudes Toward Program Evaluation

- Expectation of “Slam Bang” effect
  - Expect dramatic and unrealistic results from programs

- Worry that asking about program quality is unprofessional
  - Hints that quality of work is less than ideal

Dysfunctional Attitudes Toward Program Evaluation

- Evaluation will inhibit innovation
  - Especially suspect to objective-based evaluation

- Fear that the program will be terminated

- Fear that information will be misused

- Fear that qualitative understanding may be supplanted
Dysfunctional Attitudes Toward Program Evaluation

- Fear that evaluation drains program resources
- Fear of losing control of the program
- Fear that evaluation has little impact
- The sum of all fears

Purposes of Evaluation

- To contribute to the provision of quality services to people in need
  - Formative Evaluation (feedback)
  - Summative Evaluation (outcome)
  - Accountability (efficiency)

Why Do Evaluation?

- To Determine if:
  - If Human Services are needed and will be used
  - If the Human Service is intensive enough to meet unmet needs.
  - Whether the Human Service is delivered as planned
  - Whether the Human Service actually helps at a reasonable cost and does not have unacceptable side effects
Evaluation Tasks That Need to Be Done

• Verify resources are devoted to meeting unmet needs
• Verify that planned programs do provide services
• Examine the results
• Determine which services produce the best results

Common Types of Program Evaluation

• The Evaluation of Need (Needs Assessment)
• The Evaluation of Process (Formative Evaluation)
• The Evaluation of Outcome (Summative Evaluation)
• The Evaluation of Efficiency (Accountability)

Who Hires Professional Evaluators?

• All human service workers will likely have to conduct some form of program evaluation (formative, summative, accountability)
• There are people who are professional fulltime evaluators, usually in one of the following categories:
  – Internal agency evaluator
  – Governmental or Regulatory Body (external)
  – Private research firm (external)
Related Activities of Program Evaluation

• Research
• Education and Staff Development
• Auditing
• Planning
• Human Resources