

Creative Program Development to Rigorous Project Management

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Plan of Work

- Section 1: Building Better Projects
- Section 2: Rigor & Reflective Practice
- Section 3: Managing Projects
- Case Studies: WWG&MED?
- Q & A



Why talk about this?

- Our Goals
- Our Inspiration
- Has this happened to you?
- How to build Better Projects
- Connecting the Dots



Why talk about this?

– Our Goals

- Better projects
- Better management
- Success leads to... more success!
- Better outcomes!



Why talk about this?

- Our Goals
- Our Inspiration
 - We've all seen projects that “go bad”
 - Great proposals but not ready to launch when funded
 - Reallocation of resources at launch
 - Work not completed in timely way
 - Project “drift”
 - Time's up but product is nowhere in sight




Why talk about this?

- Our Goals
- Our Inspiration
- Has this happened to you?




Section 1: Building Better Projects

- What are you doing that you could do MORE of?
 - Is there an appropriate audience you're not reaching?
 - How can you increase impact?
 - What are the needs of your community?
 - Can you make new friends with valued partners?
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CONNECT THE DOTS!!!



Strategies for Success

- Stay close to home, and innovate
 - Work with people you know and make new friends
 - Don't chase the money
 - Engage advisors
 - Don't give it away for free
 - Work with an evaluator
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Section 2: The importance of RIGOR and creating a FOUNDATION for SUCCESS



If you don't know where you are going, any road will get you there.



Rigor

An evaluation frame of mind

Features of rigor:

- Ask good questions
- Ask hard questions
- Ask obvious questions
- Make yourself answer them
- Strategic thinking

Tools to achieve rigor:

- Reflective practice
- Logic model
- Strategic triangle

It begins with

BACKWARD DESIGN

Backward Design

Stage 1

Identify desired outcomes & results

Stage 2

Determine what constitutes acceptable evidence of success

Stage 3

Plan exhibition/experience elements and strategies that bring about desired outcomes

Reference: Gary Wiggins and Jay McTighe. **Understanding by Design**, 2nd ed. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2006



**EVALUATION ENTERS at the
BEGINNING**

- Our knowing is ordinarily tacit, implicit in our patterns of action and in our feeling for the stuff with which we are dealing. *It seems right to say that our knowing is IN our action.*
- . . . skillful action often reveals a “knowing more than we can say . . .”
- . . . A kind of knowing is inherent in intelligent action.

Donald Schon. A. *The Reflective Practitioner*. New York: Basic Books, 1983.



Reflective Practice

- Think together to advance your collective capacity for program design analysis
- Pose a practice-based question
- Identify key elements of program design and outcomes
- Engage in inquiry process
- Share stories and experiences
- Talk aloud about what is presented
- Look for big ideas
 - Underlying values
 - Guiding Principles
 - Strategies



**WRING EVERY DROP
OF LEARNING FROM
ANALYSIS (REFLECTION)
OF YOUR ACTIONS AND
DECISIONS**

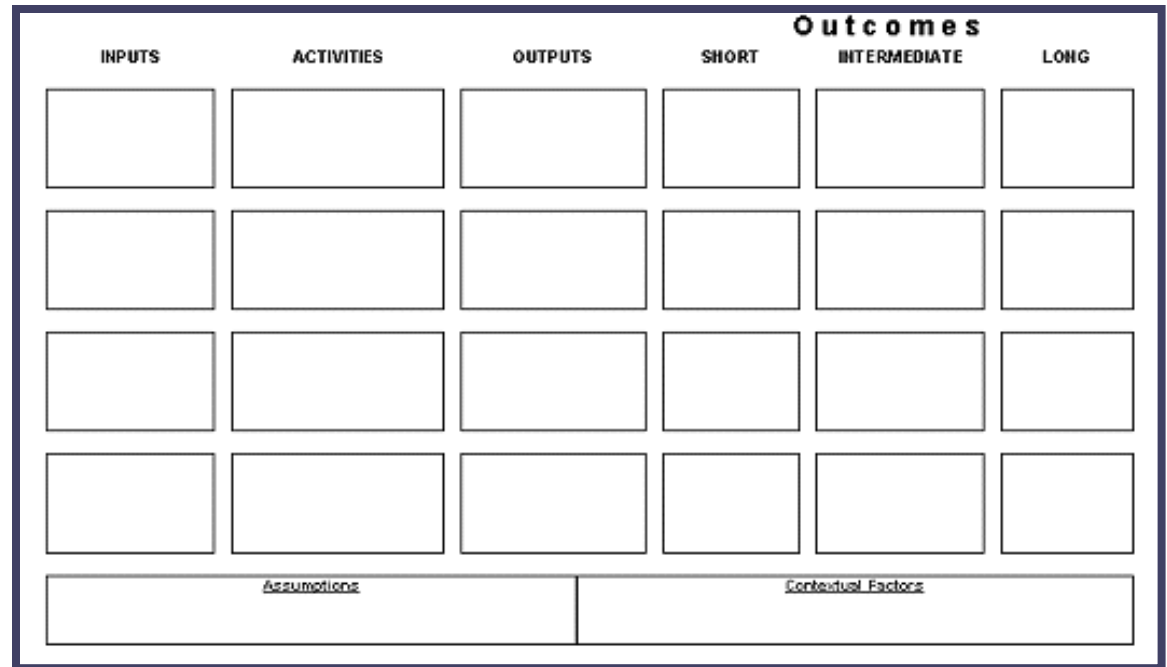
Logic Model

Elements of Model

- Resources
- Activities
- Outputs
- Outcomes
- Impact

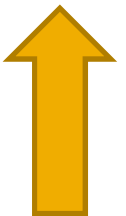
Relationship to Evaluation

- Front end and Needs Assessment
- Formative
- Process
- Product



START HERE

**MAKE INTENTIONAL
CONNECTIONS**



Strategic Triangle

Public Value

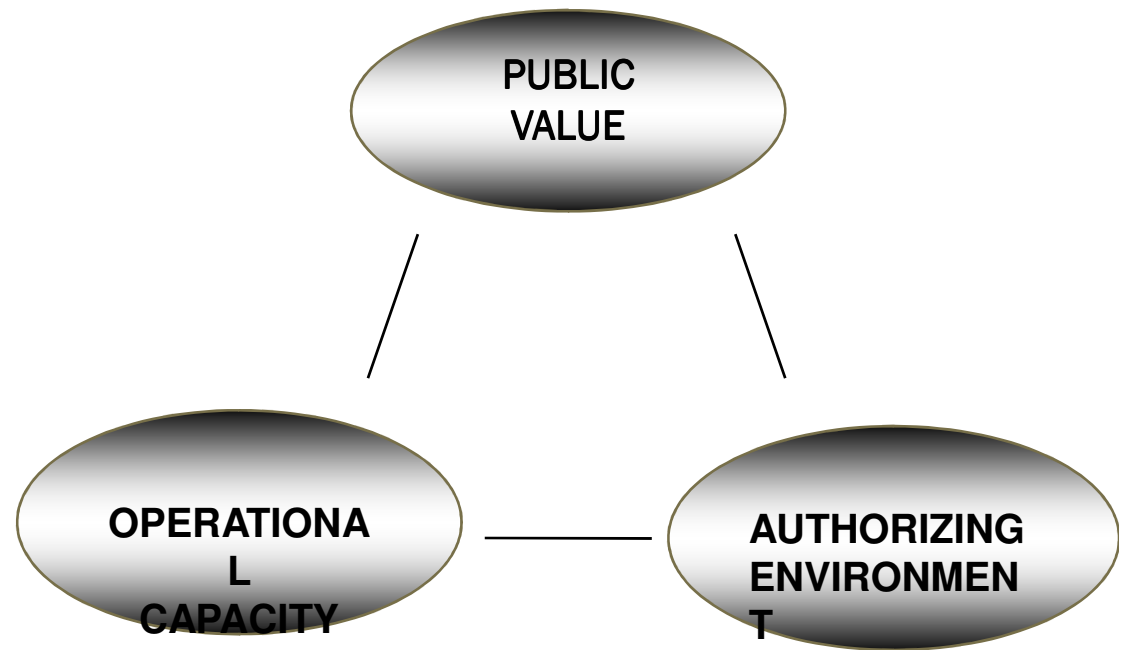
The value (vision, mission, goals) your organization creates that is considered worth investment by the public

Operational Capacity

The ability of the organization to deliver value using internal and external assets

Authorizing Environment

The Deciders. Those who authorize the work of the organization, provide resources and legitimacy



**IT IS ALL about
ALIGNMENT**

What rigor contributes

Intelligence

Confidence

Options

Persuasive defense of
decisions

Outcomes/Impact



**FOUNDATION
for SUCCESS**

Section 3: Managing Projects

- What is a schedule and why do you need one?
- What is a budget and why do you need one?
- Who's on your team and what are they doing there?
- What is a work plan?
- Why communication is important




Section 3: Managing Projects

- What is a schedule and why do you need one?
 - Keep the team coordinated
 - Keep in-house team in sync with consultants/contractors
 - Keep exhibit work in tune with building “progress”
 - Critical Path management
 - What are project milestones, anyway?



Section 3: Managing Projects

- What is a schedule and why do you need one?
 - What is a budget and why do you need one?
 - The budget is a living document
 - Budgets as decision making tools
 - Difference between project budget and cost estimate
 - What is a contingency and why does it keep changing?
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Ways of Thinking

Reality-Based

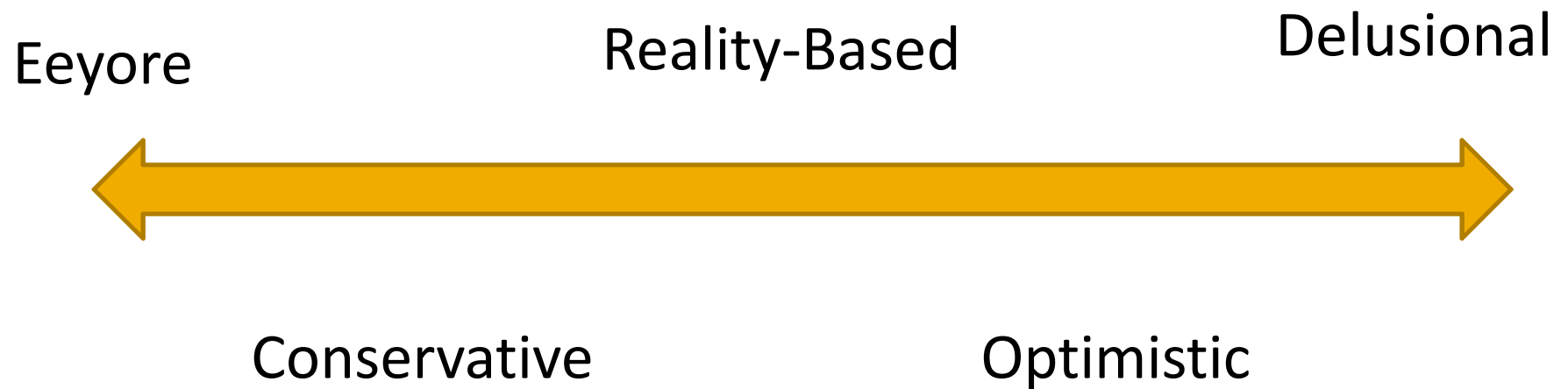


Conservative

Optimistic



Ways of Thinking



Section 3: Managing Projects

- What is a schedule and why do you need one?
- What is a budget and why do you need one?
- Who's on your team and what are they doing there?
 - We are not all here for the same reason
 - How to create the best environment for productive activity
 - You never know where good ideas will come from



Section 3: Managing Projects

- What is a schedule and why do you need one?
- What is a budget and why do you need one?
- Who's on your team and what are they doing there?
- What is a work plan?
 - Planning for reviews and approval
 - Avoid doing things twice, or even more often...
 - How to plan for things you can't plan for
 - Do not stand in the way of progress!!!



Section 3: Managing Projects

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You can't fix anything if you're not paying attention.

If you're paying attention, you can fix almost anything!



We can't solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them.

-- Albert Einstein



Karma

Good Karma Projects and Bad Karma projects
In the end, they all look alike!



BAD KARMA



GOOD KARMA



Why Good Projects Go Bad

- Start out with wrong people on the team
- “Project Drift” undiagnosed and untreated
- Unrealistic expectations
- Collaboration runs aground
- Forgot to ask for help
- Once project started, nobody looked back to review the goals



Case Studies: WWG&MED?

- Case Study # 1: A Project that “fails to thrive”


Symptoms:

Diagnosis: PROJECT DRIFT



A Project that “fails to thrive”

Possible Actions

1. Do nothing; they’re about to have a “break through” and all will be well;
 2. Discuss lack of progress with “in-house” team; offer additional outside help to move project forward;
 3. Content developer is not performing; replace consultant with new developer;
 4. Project manager not doing her job; replace with more experienced manager and manage project more closely;
 5. “In-house” team is not capable; hire outside designer to “save” project.
 6. None of the Above – think outside the box!
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The definition of insanity is doing the same thing
over and over again and expecting different
results

-- Albert Einstein



Case Studies: WWG&MED?

- Case Study # 2: Disappointing Results

Symptoms:

Diagnosis: WRONG PEOPLE ON THE TEAM



Disappointing Results

Possible Actions

1. Do nothing -- the product *content* is on target; this is as good as it gets.
2. Start from scratch with all new project team.
3. Renegotiate delivery schedule with publisher and start over with same team.
4. Add graphic designer from the exhibit project to DVD team for revisions to DVD materials.
5. None of the above – think outside the box!



Anyone who has never made a mistake has
never tried anything new.

-- Albert Einstein

