



# Strengthening and Learning from Your Organizational Impact

*Evaluation 201*

Susie Quern Pratt  
And Jenny Ellis Richards  
Principals, Pratt Richards Group

*Course content developed and presented by  
the Pratt Richards Group*

## INTRODUCTIONS

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- Name
- Organization
- Title/Role
- Brief description of your involvement in evaluation work



## TODAY'S AGENDA

### Implementation Issues

- 9:15** Navigating the tricky business of Indicator Development  
**9:45** Creating Tools that are Meaningful and Manageable  
**10:15** Fostering Staff Engagement  
**10:45** *Break*

### Learning & Communicating

- 11:15** Effectively Communicating your Evaluation Findings  
**11:45** Other Issues, Ideas, or Best Practices to Share?  
**12:00** Adjourn



## WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES

### **Or....What you are going to leave here with?**

1. New ideas about how to effectively implement your evaluation work, and communicate evaluation findings with stakeholders
2. Resources and best practices from peers who are engaged in this work
3. A sense of how to move your evaluation work forward and make it sustainable



# Indicator Development



Knowing what to measure...  
and what to trust!



## MANY OF YOU HAVE THESE ALREADY...

### INDICATORS

*Some examples:*

quantitative  
data

- % of students who increase their number of volunteer hours

metrics

signposts

- % of students who find a new organization to volunteer with

Progress  
towards  
outcomes

- # of compelling stories of effective connection to the community

benchmarks



## BUT YOU MAY BE WONDERING...

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**Q:** How do we know which indicators are most “telling” and trustworthy?

**A:** THIS TAKES A LONG TIME TO GET RIGHT (3 years, on average) Creating indicators is more of an art than a science!



## WHAT IS AN INDICATOR?

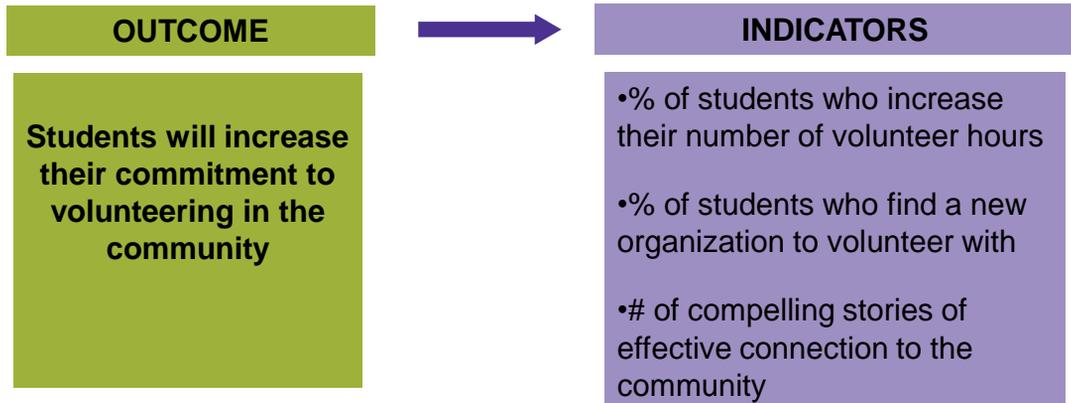
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It's the information (data) that tells you if you are making progress toward your **desired outcomes**

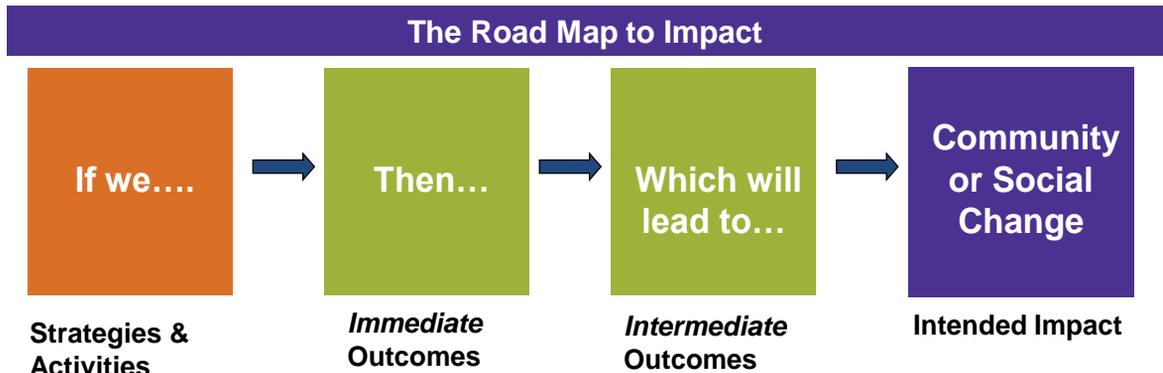


## INDICATORS: KEY INGREDIENTS

\* Tied to Measurable Outcomes



## Best Place to Focus Measurement: Green Box Outcomes



Pratt Richards Group  
Theory of Change Process



## INDICATORS: KEY INGREDIENTS

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- \* Less is more
- \* Make them SMART
- \* Measure what is within your *realm* of control
- \* Focus on both narratives & numbers



## TIPS FOR KNOWING WHICH TO KEEP

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- Staff “gut” reaction – strong emotional response to a piece of data
- Board requests for a piece of data
- Relative consistency within a finding over 1-2 years
- Ability to benchmark against a larger population



## SOME HELPFUL RESOURCES

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- **Grantcraft**

*Making Measures Work for You*

[www.grantcraft.org](http://www.grantcraft.org)

- **Harvard Family Research Project**

*Learning from Logic Models*

[www.hfrp.org](http://www.hfrp.org)



## DISCUSSION

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- What indicators have been most helpful for your organization and why?
- What happens when a good indicator requires an extra data collection effort? Is the payoff from the data worth the extra hassle for staff?



## TOOL CREATION



## MOST COMMON TYPES OF EVALUATION TOOLS

- Surveys
- Focus Groups
- Interviews
- Direct Observation
- Other?

**Discussion Question:** What type of tool has yielded the best results for your evaluation efforts?



## SURVEYS

- Beware the Biggest Survey Pit Falls:
  - Loaded/Double-headed questions
  - Too many questions
  - Terms that are unfamiliar to your audience
  - Forgetting the upfront “demographic” data
- Make Friends with Survey Monkey!

**Examples? Favorite Questions?**



## FOCUS GROUPS & INTERVIEWS

- Less = More
  - Ensure questions are focused and tied to evaluation priorities (and, ideally, mapping to your evaluation framework/Theory of Change)
  - Keep overall number of groups/interviews small
- Confidentiality is paramount – good role for an intern or external evaluator
- iPhone = recording device

**Examples? Favorite Questions?**



## DIRECT OBSERVATION

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- This is the best source of data, when possible!
- Be smart about using attendance data (aggregate by the individual)
- Train staff so that collection is consistent

**Examples? Methods that have worked for you?**



## Staff Engagement

Encouraging staff buy-in  
throughout the evaluation process



## BUILD EVALUATION CAPACITY AMONG STAFF

### 3 Concrete Ways

1. Send clear and consistent messages about why you are doing this evaluation work (learning, responding to funders, etc.)
2. Create internal structures which help you think about, track, and report information – such as an Evaluation Working Group
3. Create feedback loops, and disseminate, share and discuss what you have learned across the organization and with key stakeholders



## EVALUATION WORKING GROUP

- Group of 8-10 stakeholders: staff, board, community members, or other constituents
- Meet on a regular basis to create evaluation frameworks and tools, analyze data, consider what you can learn and improve
- Creates a set of champions for your evaluation work!



## DISCUSSION

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- What has worked well for fostering staff engagement at your organization?
- What are the biggest obstacles to staff engagement?



## Learning and Communicating

Tips for sharing your  
evaluation findings



## CONSIDER YOUR AUDIENCE

- Internal – Board Members, Staff
- External – Funders, Community Members
- Other Stakeholders??

**What does each audience need to know?**



## CREATE A REPORTING TOOL

Indicator (and corresponding outcome)	Actual Results	Strategic Questions or Implications
Identify your indicator (#/%), as well as and the outcome (from your evaluation framework/ Theory of Change) that you were measuring progress towards.	Highlight the actual results (i.e. 75% of participants reporting increased awareness).	<p>Consider what this information is telling you/ what you are learning: How might you change your program strategy or activities in the future?</p> <p>If the data is unclear or not telling you very much, you might consider selecting a different indicator, or asking the question differently, in the future.</p>



## DISCUSSION

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- What are some of the challenges with communicating your evaluation findings?
- Do you have any suggestions for effectively communicating your these findings, either internally or externally?



## Other Ideas to Share?

Best practices & lessons learned  
from evaluating impact



# Thank you for attending today's workshop!

*A link to a short evaluation survey is on the back of  
your materials. Your feedback is important as we  
work to improve our programs.*

## Contact Information

Susie Quern Pratt and Jenny Ellis Richards  
Principals, Pratt Richards Group  
[www.prattrichardsgroup.com](http://www.prattrichardsgroup.com)

