

Our Data Isn't Doing Us Justice!

A provocative conversation on meaningful assessment in libraries with James P. Honen, PhD, Harvard. With connections made to content discovered at Computers in Libraries Conference, Washington, DC (April 2015).

Program Model

From W.K. Kellogg Foundation Evaluation Handbook
(1998)

Pg. 35



- **A program model is a picture of how your program works- the theory and assumptions underlying the program...This model provides a road map of your program, highlighting how it is expected to work, what activities need to come before others, and how desired outcomes are achieved.**
- **QUESTION TO ASK YOURSELF: What does the program model for your library look like? Do you know?**



Assessment and Outcome

How do we gage this?



Key Question:

Who cares about the library's performance?
What aspect of your performance do they care about?



Know Who Your Stakeholders Are!

Once you know who they are, you need to figure out what the people who provide money for your operation want to see? What are the qualitative and quantitative outcomes that will keep these stakeholders funding your library?

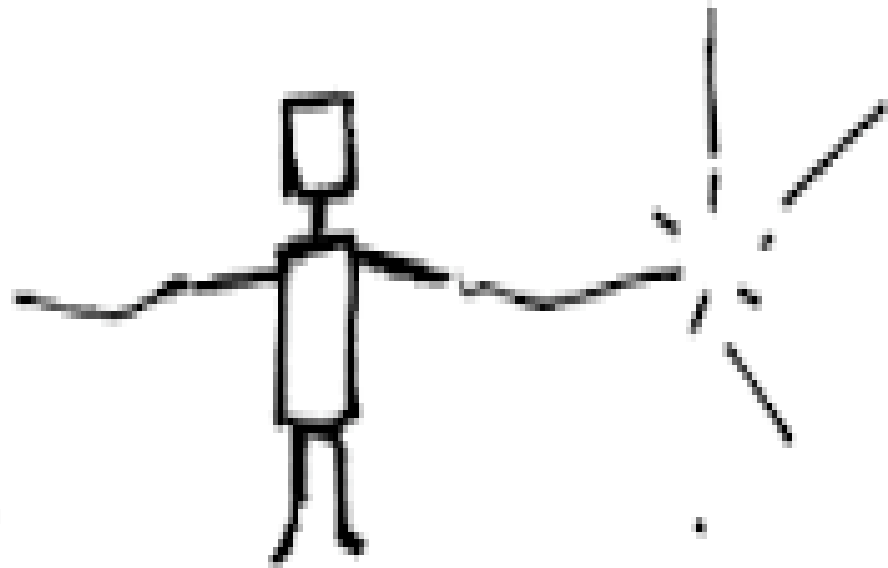


IT'S NOT
WHAT
BUT WHY
YOU DO IT



Figure out WHY

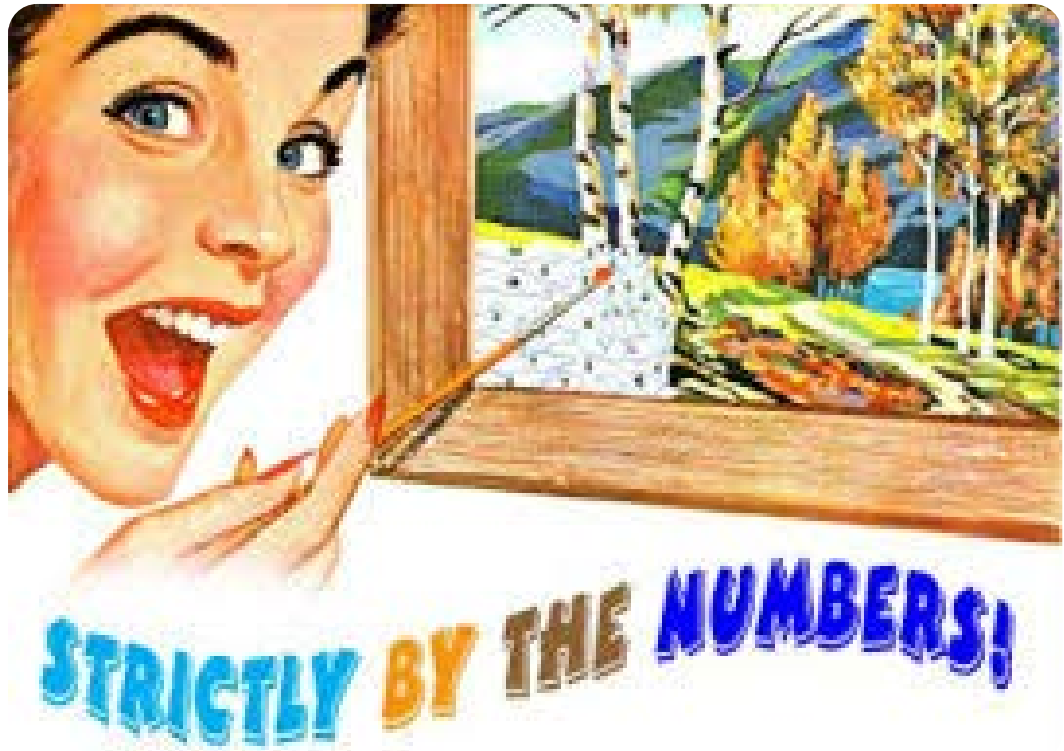
Can you answer the question why you are doing what you are doing? What is the why of your library? Can you connect the why to statistics that prove the why is being achieved?



MAKE CONNECTIONS

Tie the Why and How Together

Once you know the why of what you are doing, you need to pinpoint exactly how you accomplish the why. How you accomplish what you do involves the expenses involved. If you tie the two of them together, you will be able to explain the value you provide and explain the return on the investment of funds.

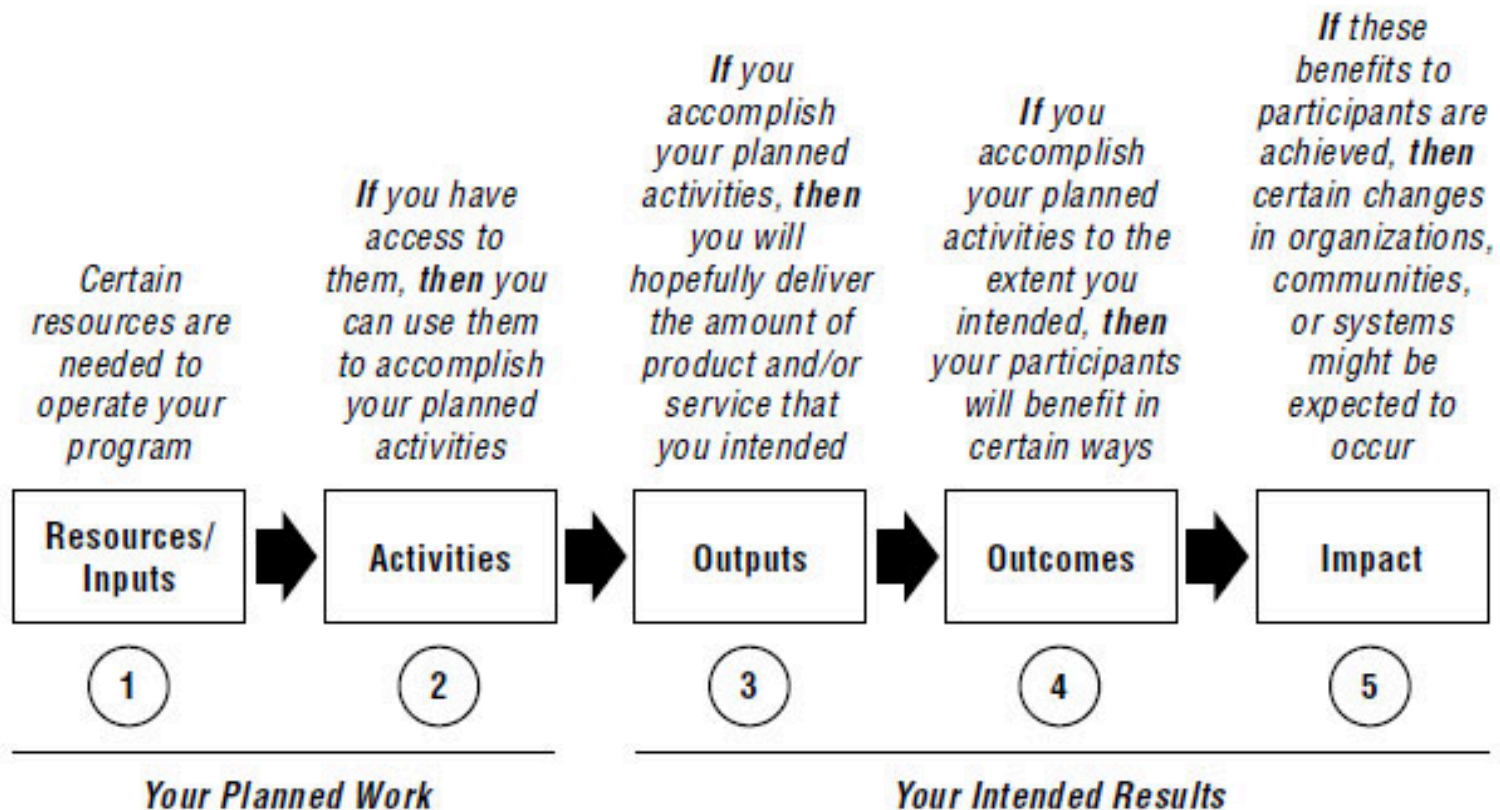


Statistics Need to Paint a Picture

Figure out a way to measure outcomes. No one really cares how many books circulate in one year. It's a fun piece of trivia, but it is not very useful. What outcome can you connect book circulation to directly? For example, how many adults report learning how to do a new skill after reading books in the nonfiction section?

Make sure you paint a picture that is easy for all to comprehend!

THE PROGRAM MODEL



THINK BACKWARDS



Think of a major success you have had. Think backwards. What connections can you make to why by referring to the process shown above.

Think of a major failure you have had. Think backwards. Use the process to figure out what went wrong.



THE CYCLE

Find a project that is small enough to be manageable for you.

Talk to LOTS of people about it.

Implement the project.

Talk more to lots of people & get feedback.

Implement tweak as necessary.

Grow.

End the project when there is more time, energy and funds being spent than positive impact being returned.

****Entrepreneurs kill things that are not working efficiently. They save their time, energy and funds for useful projects. Do not be afraid to kill a project if it is not working! Be shrewd when assessing.***



In a Nutshell

We need to develop an assessment strategy to best be able to articulate our values to our stakeholders who will understand the importance of their investment

We need to measure success and learn new ways to collaborate with others

Use of [material or service] correlates to [value-proposition connected to our mission and stakeholder's values] and [this measurable outcome].

If you can tell this story, you will be able to justify and receive funding.



The only real voyage of discovery consists not in seeing new landscapes, but in having new eyes, in seeing the universe with the eyes of another, of hundreds of others, in seeing the hundreds of universes that each of them sees.

-Marcel Proust
