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# All about Outcomes, and Outcome-Based Evaluation

Sam Wallin, Analyst and Project Coordinator, FVRL

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## In this session...

- The data trifecta and the Logic Model
  - What is an outcome? How do I identify them?
  - Techniques for developing good outcome statements
  - Evaluating outcomes, and taking action!
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# The Data Trifecta

- **Input:** measure of resources used to provide a service
    - Examples: 10 staff hours. 500 square feet. \$10,000 spent.
  - **Output:** measure of services delivered
    - Examples: 10 events, 500 attendees, \$10,000 raised for charity.
  - **Outcome:** Specific benefits for users of the service, or 'what does success look like?'
    - Examples: "Community members engage in participatory, active learning." "People strengthen social connections."
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# The Logic Model

	Input	Output	Outcome	Impact
What it is	Resources the library uses to create, maintain, and promote services.	Services we provide, and measures of the use of those services.	Change as a result of using library services	Long-term, community level change, in part from use of library services
Questions we should ask	What resources are needed to create, maintain and promote planned library services?	What kind of services would help people reach their goals? When and where would these services be most accessible?	What do people need to be successful? What is stopping some people from achieving their goals? What can the library do to help?	What change is needed in the community? What efforts are being planned? Does our work fit?

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# What does an outcome statement look like?

An outcome statement is a little like a Mad-Lib, with three blanks. The first blank is the target audience. If you don't have a specific audience, use a general one, like "People" or "Community members."

People \_\_\_\_\_ .

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# What does an outcome statement look like?

The second blank is the change. This should be something like "improve" or "use" or "feel confident." Side note: "have access to" is not usually strong enough for a good outcome - go a step farther and ask what happens, ideally, when people "have access to" that thing?

People strengthen \_\_\_\_\_.

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# What does an outcome statement look like?

The third blank is the thing that needs to be changed for the target audience. It can be general or specific. For a 'big picture' outcome, I recommend staying general. For example, "social connections" is general, while "connections with other theater connoisseurs" is specific.

People strengthen social connections.

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# Outcomes can be nested

"People strengthen social connections."

"Teens strengthen social connections."

"At-risk teens strengthen connections with support organizations."

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# A great outcome...

Can be supported by a variety of OUTPUTS

We help “Teens strengthen social connections” by providing...

- A teen space in the library
  - Outreach to high schools
  - Parts of the library collection
  - Programs and events for teens
  - Opportunities for teen volunteers
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# To support the outcome...

The library provides inputs like...

- Space in the library to set up a teen area
  - A vehicle and supplies for outreach visits
  - Funding for teen collections and programs
  - Dedicated staff to work with and provide services to teens
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# Measurement

Short term, medium term, and long term outcomes may need to be measured differently.

- Short: "Teens improve conversation skills"
  - Medium: "Teens strengthen social connections"
  - Long: "Teens develop into successful adults."
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# Measurement

- Immediate change vs. change over time.
  - Observable change vs. reported change.
  - Casual vs. rigorous
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# Measurement

What's the NUB?

- Who NEEDS the outcome?
  - Who of those people USES the service you provide?
  - Who of those users BENEFITS from the service?
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# Measurement leads to action

- If it doesn't, then it isn't useful.
  - If people need a service but don't use it, then make changes that make it more accessible and visible.
  - If people use a service but don't benefit from it, then make changes to the content or delivery methods.
  - If people don't need a service, then do something different.
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# Thank you!

Sam Wallin, Analyst and Project Coordinator, FVRL

[swallin@fvrl.org](mailto:swallin@fvrl.org)

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