Adaptive Action: Options in Evaluation

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You Can’t Evaluate
What You Can’t See
Future of Evaluation

The world is becoming more ...
- Evidence-based
- Interdependent
- Unpredictable
- Global
- Diverse
- Fast-paced
- Power neutral
- Heterarchical
- Resource-constrained

So evaluation must be more ...
- Evidence-based
- Flexible
- Inquiry-based
- Systemic
- Adaptive
- Developmental
- Participative
- Multi-stakeholder
- Cheaper
Options in Evaluation

Help you see so you can evaluate the world as it is and as your clients need it to be...

» One assumption: Complex Adaptive Systems

» One method: Adaptive Action

» Three models:
  » Finite and Infinite Games
  » Four Truths
  » Three Kinds of Change
One Assumption:
Complex Adaptive System (CAS)
Self-Organizing System

A collection of individual agents who have the freedom to act in unpredictable ways, and whose actions are interconnected such that they produce system-wide patterns.
One Assumption: Complex Adaptive System (CAS) Self-Organizing System

Those system-wide patterns, in turn, influence the behaviors of the agents

System-wide patterns emerge

Agents interact
Evaluation in a CAS

» When might you be asked to evaluate a CAS?
» What evaluation approaches would not work?
» What evaluation approaches might work?
» What assumptions would you have to make for
  » Outcome evaluation
  » Summative evaluation
  » Logic model
Evaluation as Adaptive Action

» When might you use Adaptive Action as an evaluation method?
» What assumptions would you need to make?
» What agreements would you have with your clients?
» What disciplines or practices would you need to apply?
Model 1

Finite and Infinite Games

Finite Game

Infinite Game

## Model 1
### Finite and Infinite Games

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Finite Game</th>
<th>Infinite Game</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Defined field of play</td>
<td>Fuzzy boundaries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opponents are known</td>
<td>Everybody plays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rules are constant</td>
<td>Changing rules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expertise is clear</td>
<td>Looking for fit</td>
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<tr>
<td>Been there before</td>
<td>New territory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easy to keep score</td>
<td>Everything may matter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose:</strong> To Win</td>
<td><strong>Purpose:</strong> Keep Playing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Evaluation in Finite and Infinite Games

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluating a finite game ...</th>
<th>Evaluating an infinite game ...</th>
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Model 2
Four Truths

Objective

Normative

Subjective

Complex
### Evaluating for Truths

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective Truth</th>
<th>Subjective Truth</th>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Normative Truth</th>
<th>Complex Truth</th>
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Model 3
Three Kinds of Change

Static

Dynamic

Dynamical

## Evaluating Kinds of Change

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<th>Static Change</th>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Dynamic Change</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dynamical Change</th>
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Putting It All Together

You have been asked to evaluate teaching and learning in a classroom. You select:

» Age of students
» Subject of learning
» Community and social contexts
You will receive a card that sets the requirements for your evaluation as

- Finite or infinite; and
- Subjective, objective, normative, or complex; and
- Static, dynamic, or dynamical

Use Adaptive Action as your core evaluation method and design your evaluation to match those criteria.

Be prepared to present your design.
More resources

» Books
  » Facilitating Organization Change (Olson & Eoyang)
  » Coping with Chaos (Eoyang)
  » Patterns (Holladay & Quade)
  » Adaptive Action: Leveraging Uncertainty in Your Organization (Eoyang & Holladay)

» Web
  » www.adaptiveaction.org
  » Wiki.hsdinstitute.org
  » www.hsdinstitute.org
  » Hsdcommunity.ning.com
  » Twitter: #hsd #adaptact @GlendaEoyang
Even More Resources

» Training
  » Webinars (free monthly)
  » HSD Professional Certification (Portland, 2013)
  » Custom training

» Adaptive Action Laboratories
  » Focus on your own sticky issues
  » Learn HSD models and methods
  » Build adaptive capacity for individuals and groups
  » Involve large groups or small
  » Address major issues or “trivial”
  » Commit to half-day to three-day sessions
You CAN Evaluate What You CAN See