Evaluation Capacity Building: Tips, Tricks, & Stories from Practice

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What is Evaluation Capacity Building?

“ECB is the intentional work to continuously create and sustain overall organizational processes that make quality evaluation and its uses routine”

Stockdill, Baizerman, & Compton, 2002
Areas for attention in building capacity:

- Resources, Structures, & Organizational Context (King & Volkov, 2005)

- Leadership, Culture, Systems & Structures, & Communication (Preskill & Boyle, 2008)
Evaluation Capacity Building

Purposes

- Teaches staff to understand and/or do evaluation themselves
- Can add internal evaluation skills and resources for organizations with limited funding or access to external evaluators
- Can affect an organization’s culture and structures in ways that make evaluation use more likely
More on the relationship between ECB and evaluation...

- ECB can be done in the midst of an evaluation, or worked in to an already existing evaluation

- An evaluation can be undertaken for the purpose of ECB

- ECB in the absence of a specific evaluation (examples: training & organizational development consulting)

- Or some or all of the above!
Discussion…

What are some barriers to evaluation or evaluation capacity building?

Things you have experienced…

Things you have heard about…

Things you hope/need us to cover…
Case Example 1: MACC

- No evaluation taking place directly related to ECB initiative
- Training and team facilitation
- Attention to individuals’ skills and organizational structure and culture
- Use of already existing skills, resources, and processes
Case Example 2: SPFT

- Single evaluation study

- Attention to individuals’ skills and organizational structure and culture

- Evaluation planned with ECB in mind and woven throughout. Use of already existing skills, resources, and processes.

- Has morphed into continuous capacity building, consultation, and involvement in program development
Tips for the ECB practitioner

- Recognize and honor existing skills and strengths
- Use familiar language (action research, quality improvement, etc.)
- Use familiar, accessible, and FREE systems and resources whenever possible
- Take the time to fully understand what “is” to see where evaluation fits
Tips for the ECB practitioner, cont.

- Meet them just beyond where they are (scaffolding)

- Demystify the difference between research and evaluation—for yourself and others.

- Consider the products, guidance, and roadmaps you can leave behind

- Reframe ECB not just as a process, but a valuable product or “deliverable”
Examples of Products…

Sexual Assault Response Teams, Evaluation, and Systems Change: A Resource for Multidisciplinary Team Leadership

(Goff, Haas, & Pejsa, 2014)

Parent/Teacher Home Visit Project Evaluation Toolkit

(Goff Pejsa & Associates, 2014)
Discussion…

1. What have you heard so far that you think you can use?

2. What questions or concerns remain?
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