

Approaches to Training Evaluation—How Training Effectiveness Can Be Measured

Tom McQuiston, Dr. P.H.
USW - Tony Mazzocchi Center for Health, Safety and
Environmental Education (TMC)



NIHES
National Institute of
Environmental Health Sciences

PROVE IT MAKES A DIFFERENCE:
Evaluation Best Practices for
Health and Safety Training

AWARDEE MEETING:
October 10

WORKSHOP:
October 11–12



NIH...Turning Discovery Into Health®

PROJECT RESOURCES
IMPACTS
ACTIVITIES
OUTPUTS



In the beginning (~1987) there was no evaluation

- Reviewers from the 1st round of NIEHS WETP proposals:

This is a training grant not a research grant. The grantee should drop its extravagant plans for evaluation.

(Paraphrased)

About this same time...

- Votjecky and Schmitz (1986) conducted a study of 100 U.S. safety and health professionals and concluded:
 - Limited evaluation information is being collected
 - What is collected, is little used.



The paths traveled since

- 1992, 1994, 1995 – WETP articles special issues of three occupational health and safety journals – emphasis on empowerment
- 1996 & 2012 – NIEHS evaluation reviews
- 1997-2000 – Solidarity Research and Evaluation Project (SREP).



Other paths traveled ...

- 1998, 2010 – NIOSH, Reviews of the Effectiveness of Training and Education for the Protection of Workers

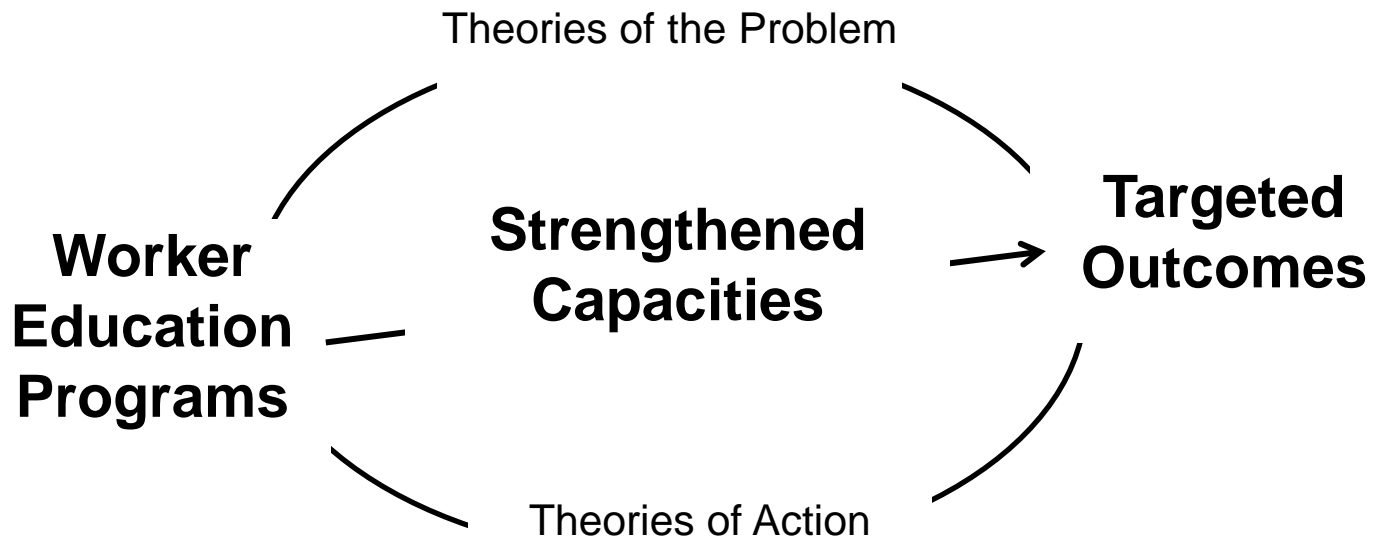


WETP's and NIOSH's paths have not crossed.

- How could we benefit from exploring bridges and sharing learnings?
- We should talk.

Models and Practice

(Theories of the Program)





The Subjects and Focus of Evaluation

What we assess and how we assess it should depend on our:

- Perceptions of the problems workers confront,
- Knowledge and beliefs about how to solve those problems,
- Outcomes targeted, and
- How our training reflects these.



A Broad Focus

Collectively, we should be examining:

- Prevention
- Preparedness
- Response
- *Relationships among these*



A Broad Focus (Cont'd)

We should be examining:

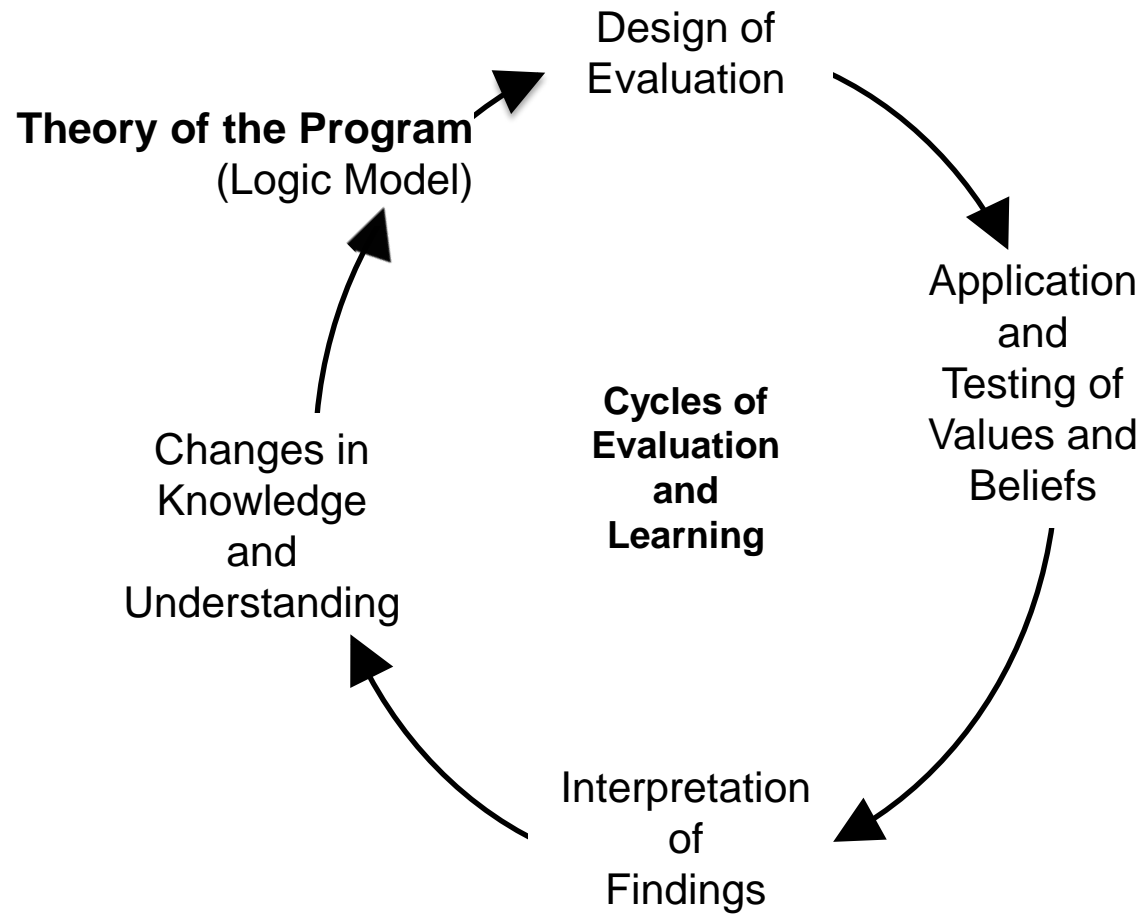
- Occupational Safety and Health
- Environmental Health
- Community Health and Environmental Justice
- *Relationships among these*

A Broad Focus (Cont'd)

We should be examining:

- Individuals and collectives
- Processes and outcomes, and
- *Relationships among these*

Evaluation for Learning





“Evaluation is power.”

Carlos Siqueira at a workshop of the Solidarity
Research and Evaluation Project (SREP)



Evaluation is a Knowledge-making Process

It establishes:

- The criteria used to measure success
- The questions that get asked, and often, the possible answers
- How the data are analyzed



Evaluation is a Knowledge-making Process (cont'd)

It establishes:

- Who decides what the data mean, and sometimes,
 - Who is in and who is out,
 - Who passes and who fails,
 - Who wins and who loses.



Strengthening Evaluation for the Future

1. Evaluation should check assumptions about:
 - Participants' work environments
 - How training programs affect change
 - How programs lead to increased knowledge and skills, strengthened capacities and improved safety and health



Strengthening Evaluation (Cont'd)

2. We should align it with the values of participation and empowerment.
3. It should help participants become more critically aware of problems and what needs to be changed.



Strengthening Evaluation (Cont'd)

5. Evaluation should be a vehicle for applying learnings to program development.
6. Evaluation should promote sharing and building solidarity within and across programs.

“If we cannot tell a story of what happened to us, nothing happened to us.”

Quoted in Timothy Pyrch's *Breaking Free: A facilitators Guide to Participatory Action Research Practice*. (2012)

James Carse. 1986. *Finite And Infinite Games: A Vision Of Life As Play And Possibility*. New York: Ballentine.

