

Assessment and Evaluation in Support of Diversity Initiatives



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Today's Goals



- Allow plenty of time for questions and applications that are meaningful to you
- Discuss and define *Diversity Initiatives* (DI) 😊
- Present and apply a model for Assessment and Evaluation in support of DI 😊
- Discuss assessment and evaluation principles and guidelines 😊

What do we mean by *Diversity Initiatives* ?



- **Organizational operations**
 - Policies, practices, regulations, regular repeated activities
- **Plans and proposals**
- **Programs, projects, and sub-projects**
- **Any component or element of the above**

...designed to increase, assist, maintain, and further diversity

What are the contexts for our DIs?



Organizational Assessment and Evaluation:

- Resource audits
- Cognitive audits
- Activity and intervention audits
- Output audits
 - Products, participation,
- Outcome and impact audits

Cognitive Audits



- **Investigate stakeholders' knowledge, beliefs, and values**
 - Influenced by cultures, languages, and backgrounds
 - Mutually interactive and influential
- **For diagnosis prior to planning and action**
 - Problems and needs
 - Strengths and growth opportunities
- **Understanding of Change models**
- **Understanding of Action models**

What is Diversity Initiative Evaluation?



DI evaluations help stakeholders make better decisions and judgments based on systematic, accurate investigations of

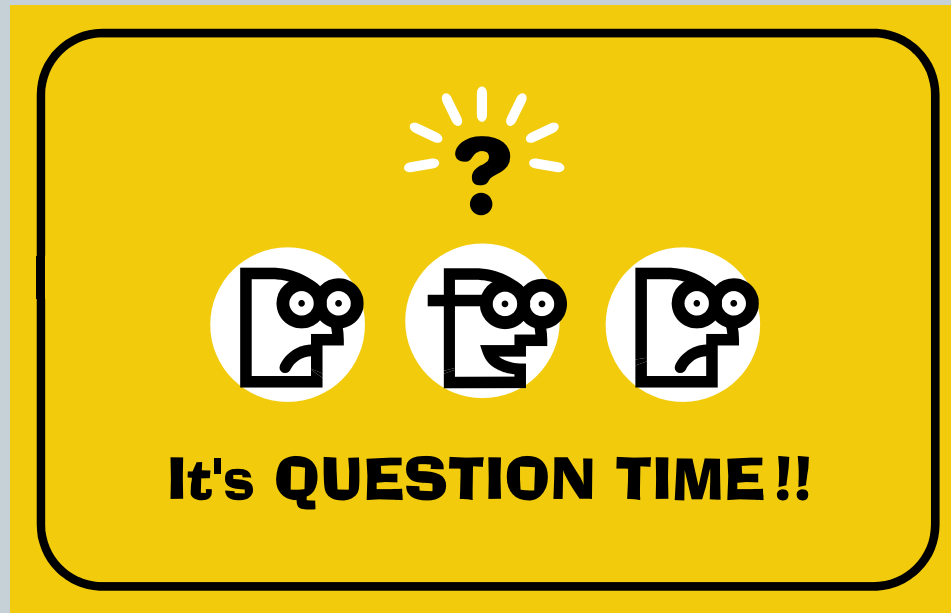
- *DI contexts*
- *DI sub-components*
- *DIs viewed holistically*

Specific Purposes of DI Evaluation



- Describing and monitoring
- Investigating causality
- Determining merit, worth, significance and ROI
- Improving organizational and programmatic decisions and functioning
- Contributing to useful knowledge, especially organizational communication and learning

Discussion and Questions



Chronology of Specific DI Evaluation



- 1. The Pre-Initiative Situation:** context and background, needs and opportunities, opportunity costs, potential participants, beneficiaries, and “losers”
- 2. Goals and Plans:** proposed inputs/resources, processes, activities, participation, products, outcomes and impacts
- 3. Implementation:** what actually happens
- 4. The Post-Initiative Situation:** conditions in the post-context, actual outcomes, and actual impacts

DI Phase 1



Prior Situation & Context for the Diversity Initiative



1. Context, setting & environment for the DI

2.1. Purposes that the DI might serve, including needs, problems, growth areas
2.2. Opportunity costs

3. Targeted beneficiaries, participants, clients, potential “losers”

4. Thoughts, beliefs and values informing how the problem and needs that the initiative will address are defined and diagnosed. These constructs reside in all those who design, manage and implement the initiative, in those who might be served, and in other stakeholders.

Illustrative Phase 1 Questions



- Did we identify significant needs and opportunities for growth in our locale?
- Did we define these accurately?
- Would people from other backgrounds or cultures (for example the beneficiaries) define these differently?
- Did we overlook more important growth opportunities?
- How diverse are the beliefs, values, and thoughts about these issues among all stakeholders

Phase 1 Questions, cont.



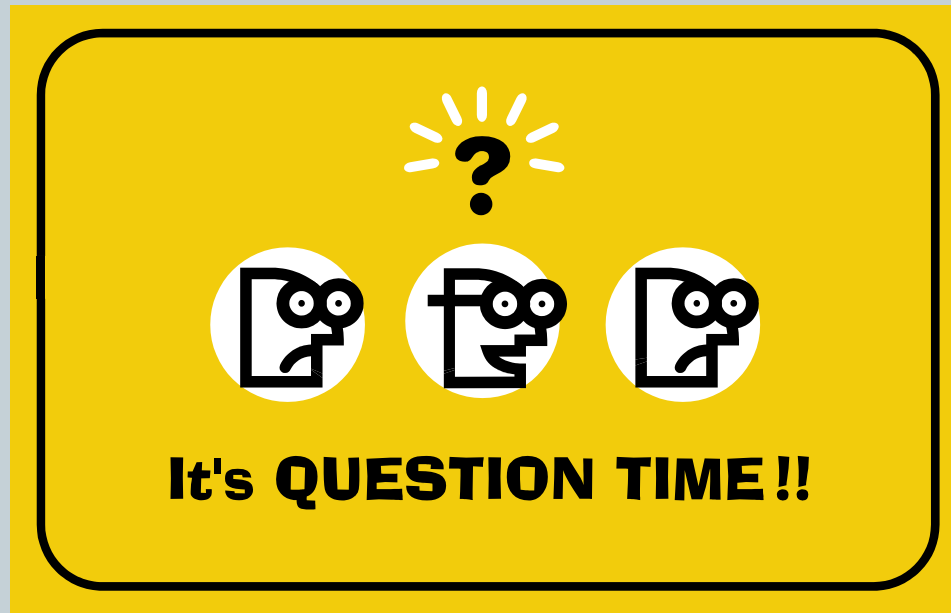
- To what extent are specific approaches language- or culture-specific (universals vs. particulars)
- Are specific local individuals or groups hostile to or supportive of solving these problems or addressing these growth opportunities?
- Are there other initiatives in this context that complement, compete with, or would otherwise interact with this DI?
- Have we identified the most important opportunity costs?

Phase 1 Questions, cont.



- Do we and how do we justify taking resources from other initiatives or opportunities to fund this specific DI?
- Have we identified the most important beneficiaries?
- Who might be negatively affected and in what ways?
- What supports our change model and what argues against it? How sound is it?
- What supports our action model and what argues against it? How can it be made more effective and efficient?

Discussion and Questions



DI Phases 2 & 3



Intervention Focus →

Planning

Implementation

5. Identified inputs, strategies, interventions, & solutions

6. Specific process & activity goals

7. Specific output, outcome and impact goals & objectives

8. Specific resources & inputs actually used

9. Specific activities, methods, & procedures actually used

10. Specific participation, materials, products, & outputs

11. Change model describing causal factors and the intervention and impact hypotheses

12. Action model guiding the service delivery, administration & management

Illustrative Phase 2 & 3 Evaluation Questions



- Are we choosing the soundest approaches to facilitating growth or addressing our identified problems?
- Which stakeholders are supportive and not supportive of these approaches?
- Are our process goals sound and supported by sound change models?
- Do we have adequate resources?
- Are our input, process, output, and outcome goals logically linked to one another?

Phase 2 & 3 Evaluation Questions, cont.



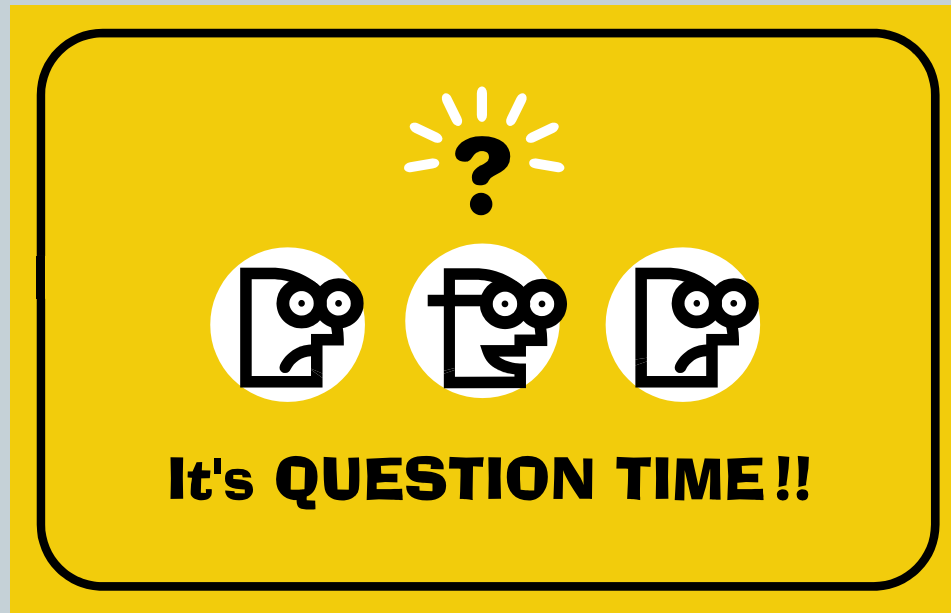
- Are our change models and action models logically consistent?
- How do experts and stakeholders evaluate our change and action models?
- Did we implement using our resources/inputs as proposed?
- What is and is not going according to plan?
- How have our goals, resources, or plans changed during implementation?

Phase 2 & 3 Evaluation Questions, cont.



- **What positive and negative innovations took place during the intervention?**
- **Are there any unexpected events or other procedural consequences of note during the intervention?**
- **How engaged are participants and beneficiaries in the processes and activities?**
- **How is the context, setting, and environment affecting the implementation of the DI?**

Discussion and Questions



DI Phase 4



Post Implementation Situation & Results Focus



13. Post-initiative context and environment

14. Gross and net outcomes of the initiative

15. Organizational impacts of the initiative

16. Costs, efficiencies, benefits, and return on investment

17. Post implementation change and action models with any revisions as a result of the assessment and evaluation

Illustrative Post-Initiative Evaluation Questions



- What effects did the DI have on factors in the context, setting, and environment?
 - Expected or unexpected
 - Positive or negative
- What other changes took place in the context, setting and environment during implementation?
- How did the context, setting and environment interact with or otherwise influence the DI?

Post-Initiative Evaluation Questions, cont.



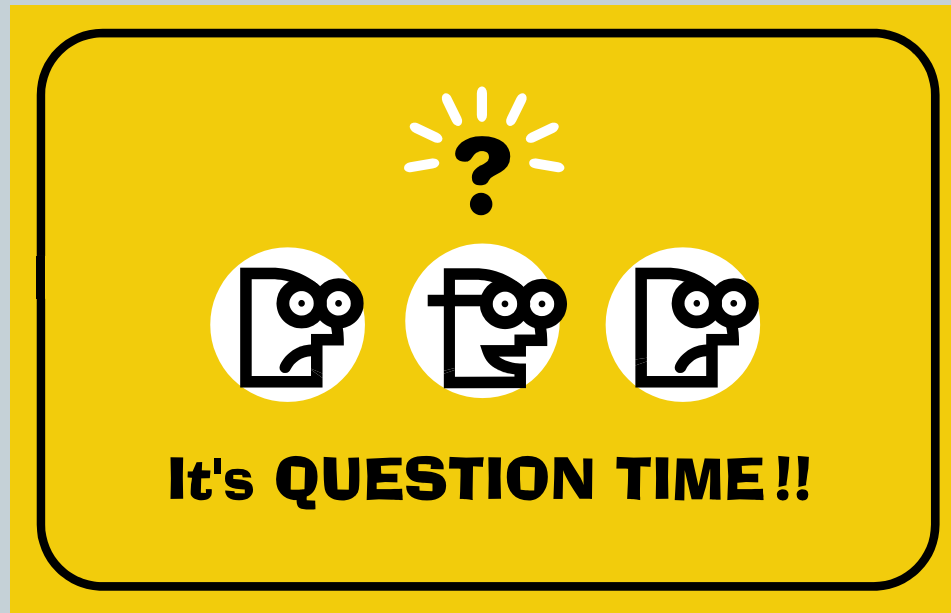
- **What outcomes did the DI produce?**
 - Intended or unintended
 - Gross or net
 - Positive negative
 - Short-, mid-, and long-term
- **What institutional or organizational impacts resulted?**
- **If we are arguing for causal effects of the DI, what is/are the plausible change/causal models?**

Post-Initiative Evaluation Questions, cont.



- **What are plausible threats to our causal conclusions?**
- **Do others from other cultures or backgrounds have other competing causal explanations for documented results?**
- **What quality of return on investment did the DI produce?**
- **How could the DI have been made more efficient and effective?**

Discussion and Questions



Prerequisites for Conducting Effective Assessment and Evaluation



- When there are feasible, proper and useful purposes that can be served
- When additional assessment and evaluation processes and information are needed
- When the “policy space” invites assessment information as a basis for decisions and judgments
- When it is contractually or legally required
- When the resources are available and the benefits are greater than the costs

When do we NOT assess and evaluate?



- **When results will not be used**
- **When results will be misused**
- **When the required assessment and evaluation procedures are not feasible**
- **When the assessment or evaluation would violate the law or major ethical principles or human rights**
- **When there are inadequate resources or other prerequisites to conduct sufficiently useful, proper, feasible and accurate assessment and evaluation**

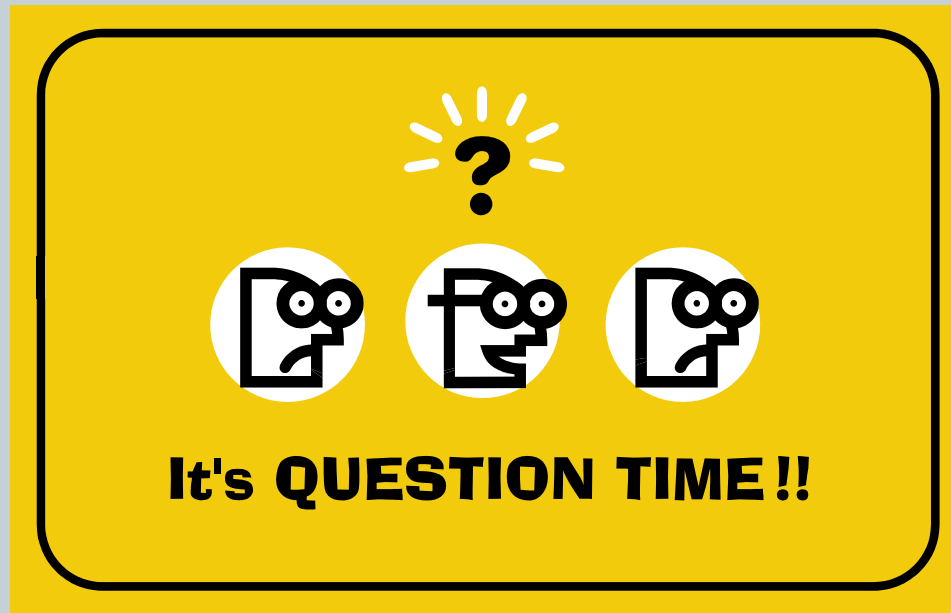
Specific-Purpose-Focused Evaluation



Key Considerations:

- 1. When should we put all of our resources into diversity initiative outcomes assessment and when not?**
 - Which elements and/or components are most in need of attention?
 - Who needs which specific information for which specific purposes?
 - Which evaluation questions are most pressing?
- 2. How can we fully describe diversity initiatives and their contexts in order to answer question 1?**

Discussion and Questions



What is Assessment?



- **Learner, client, and personnel assessment is the definition, characterization, and documentation of**
 - aptitudes
 - motivations, personality factors, & dispositions
 - abilities, skills, & performance samples
 - other types of achievement
 - other cognitive and affective outcomes, attitudes, or beliefs

What is assessment, continued:



- **Tools for learner, client, and personnel assessment include**
 - performance and product documentation,
 - standardized tests, inventories, batteries
 - surveys and interviews,
 - documents and portfolios
 - performance sampling and observational data
 - other formal documents or data
 - expert (clinical) perceptions

What is assessment, continued:



Assessments of Diversity Initiatives, *in addition to learner, client, and personnel assessment*, also include the definition and documentation of

- organizational and individual needs, problems, & areas for growth
- beliefs, theories, and understandings about the initiative (change models)
- resources available and used
- activity, process, output and outcome goals (action models)
- actual implemented activities, processes, and products
- actual outputs, outcomes, and impacts

What is assessment, continued:



Typical assessment tools for diversity initiatives include

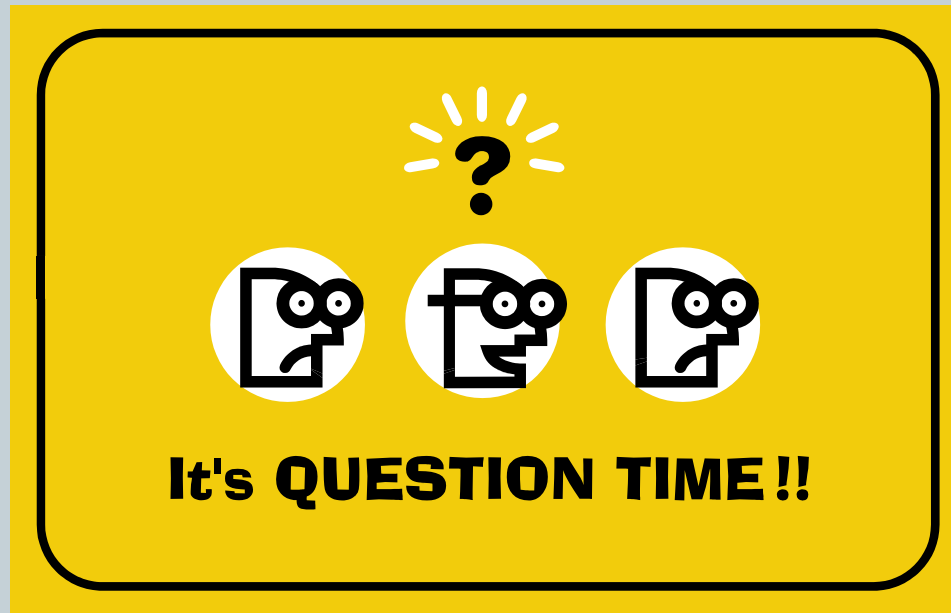
- observations
- surveys
- interviews
- document and materials reviews
- portfolio, product, or performance analyses
- other formal documents or data
- expert perceptions and analyses

Purposes of Evaluation: General



- **Improve formative decisions:**
 - maintenance and improvement related
- **Improve summative decisions:**
 - accountability
 - selection, retention, adoption
 - participation related
 - funding related

Discussion and Questions



Guidelines and Principles for Evaluation and Assessment



- **GAO Performance Standards**
- **AEA Guiding Principles**
- **JCSEE: Program Evaluation Standards**

Guiding Principles for Evaluators



American Evaluation Association, <http://www.eval.org/>)

- Systematic inquiry
- Competence
- Integrity/honesty
- Respect for people
- Responsibilities for General and Public Welfare

Program Evaluation Standards



Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluations, 1994, in press;

<http://www.jcsee.org>

<http://www.wmich.edu/evalctr/jc>

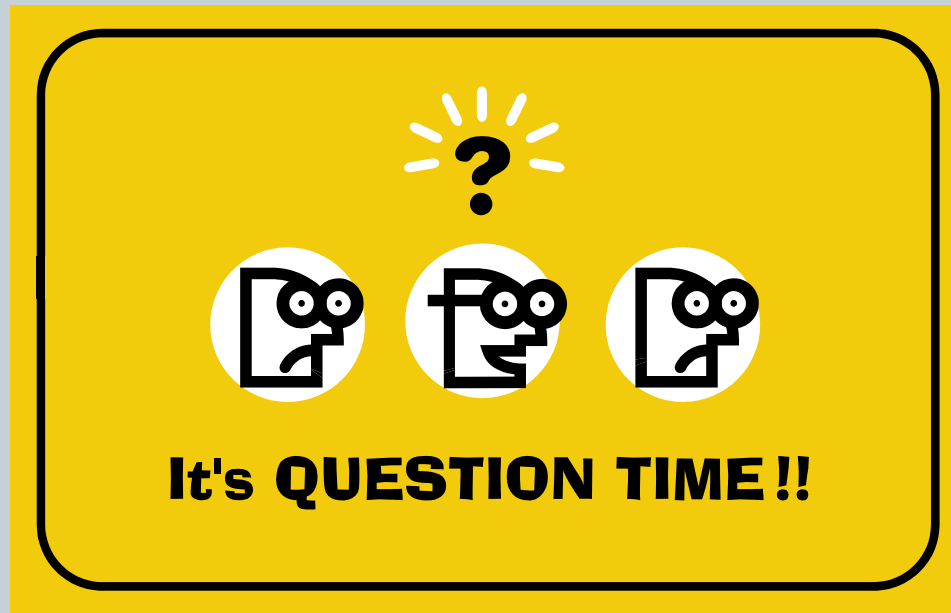
- Utility, 8 standards
- Feasibility, 4 standards
- Propriety, 7 standards
- Accuracy, 8 standards
- Evaluation Accountability, 3 standards

Managing Assessment & Evaluation Sub-Projects



- **Integration**
- **Scope**
- **Time, costs & human resources**
- **Procurement**
- **Quality**
- **Communications**
- **Risk**

Discussion and Questions



Discussion and Questions

