

An Evaluation Guidebook

For The Arts

Prepared for the Arts Council of Greater Kalamazoo

By Evaluation Capacity Development Group

2007

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History of this Project

The Greater Kalamazoo Evaluation Project (GKEP) was a joint effort which began in 1997, involving Community Mental Health, the Irving S. Gilmore Foundation, the Greater Kalamazoo United Way, and the Kalamazoo Community Foundation. The purpose of this project was to increase the capacity of nonprofits to use evaluation for the learning and benefit of members of the Kalamazoo community.

This effort was expanded through a task force mandated to create a revised edition especially for arts organizations in the community. This was accomplished through the generous assistance of Mary Lou Boughton, Youth United Way; Ronda Cunningham, Greater Kalamazoo United Way; Dee Durkee, Consultant; Barbara Harkins, Arts Council of Greater Kalamazoo; Stephanie Harris, Kalamazoo Regional Educational Service Agency; Rick Hughey, Irving S. Gilmore Foundation; Anne Mehring, Arts Council of Greater Kalamazoo; and Dr. James Sanders, Professor Emeritus, The Evaluation Center, Western Michigan University.

This was followed by the decision to go to the source, the arts organizations themselves, to discover how they are using evaluation and what challenges they face in the process. This guidebook is the result of those discussions, interviews and focus groups by representatives of the arts. Dr. Meg Blinkiewicz and Evaluation Capacity Development Group, ECDG, collaborated to develop the framework to realize this vision. It became a reality due to a belief in the importance of evaluation for the arts by the following: Dr. James Sanders, The Evaluation Center, Western Michigan University; Kathleen Tosco and Barbara Harkins, Arts Council of Greater Kalamazoo; and Rick Hughey, Irving S. Gilmore Foundation.

A special thanks to the following individuals for sharing their knowledge and experience using evaluation:

Walter Ogston, Michigan Bach Collegium; Anne Berquist, Fontana Chamber Arts; Linda Kekic, West Michigan Glass Society; Elizabeth Start, Michigan Festival of Sacred Music; Kristen Chesak, Morrie Enders, Preston Misner, Helayne Smith, and Ben Zylman, Civic Theater; Anders Dahlberg, Bullock Performing Institute; Amy Culp, Individual Artist; MaryEllen Hains, Individual Artist; Gretchen Huggett, Individual Artists; Alice Kemerling, Gina Antoniotti, Carol Janowicz, and Susan Lawrence, Gilmore Keyboard Festival; Kim Dabbs, Michigan Youth Arts Festival; Jane Rooks Ross and Elizabeth Youker, Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra; Maria Suszynski. Wellspring/Cori Terry & Dancers; Deb Faling, Bach Festival Society; Mike Marcak, Kalamazoo Film Society; Diane Eberts, Kalamazoo Public Schools; Debra Natenshon, Center for What Works.

And thanks to those who went the extra mile during September, the beginning of their busy performance season, to sit together in a focus group and review the draft guidebook back at their organizations. To them, a standing ovation!

From the Gilmore Keyboard Festival: Alice Kemerling, Carol Janowicz, and Susan Lawrence

From the Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra: Jane Rooks Ross and Elizabeth Youker

From Wellspring/Cori Terry & Dancers: Maria Suszynski

Preface

Between May and July, 2007, Evaluation Capacity Development Group (ECDG) conducted a series of interviews and focus groups to determine how evaluation was being used by arts organizations in the Kalamazoo area. Questions were asked regarding factors that contributed to the organizations being able to conduct useful evaluation; things they would like to know but were not able to collect information on; things they would like to be able to communicate but did not know how to communicate to their board, public, or funders; challenges they had conducting useful evaluation; and what information and format would be most beneficial to have included in an evaluation guidebook.

Interviews were conducted by phone and in person with the leadership of 12 arts and cultural organizations and three individual artists who are members of the Arts Council of Greater Kalamazoo. Two nonprofit leaders who have published evaluation resources for arts organizations and an individual who is involved with arts programming in the Kalamazoo public school system were also interviewed. Three individual visual artists participated in a focus group. Key informant interviews were conducted as a means to capture the current environment of evaluation with three selected arts organizations.

Arts organizations, as other nonprofits, act on gut instinct. It is instinctual which director will work best with which stage manager, which work should be shown at a particular exhibit, what concerts or performances will fit best for the new season's schedule. Along with gut instinct, management needs confirmation that the director and stage manager did indeed work well together, the work shown during the exhibit was well-received, and the season was successful. In addition, planning for next season, developing appropriate marketing strategies, and obtaining the information and data to plug into grant applications require more than gut instinct. A tool for enhancing all these processes is evaluation.

One director put it this way. He experiences an event as being very positive. He has a gut feeling that this is so. Success is backed up with numbers. It is a reality check for him. He also finds the opposite can happen. When your gut and numbers disagree, it is an important reality check as well. Viewed as an analogy to navigational aids that help boaters, he considered evaluation to be an excellent navigation aid.

The following evaluation guidebook is the result of discussions with board members, management, and individual artists representing performance and visual arts organizations, as well as conversations with nonprofit and arts education leaders. Their invaluable feedback was instrumental in shaping this resource. The researchers would like to say a special thanks to all for opening their doors and taking our calls.

Karen Russon
Evaluation Capacity Development Group - ECDG

September 2007

The purpose of this Evaluation Guidebook is to assist you where you are. There are eight color-coded sections to make it easy to find what you're looking for. Examples, tables, and checklists provide guidance through the process. Include additional materials you come across to tailor the guidebook to your needs.

The *process* you go through in completing these sections has value in and of itself for learning.

WHY

Section 1 – ORANGE

Consider the **purposes** of evaluation and ways in which you can **use** the results of your evaluation efforts.

Section 2 – PURPLE

Examine the **big picture** of why you are doing what you do. Think backward in terms of how your mission translates into specific activities and what it takes to make those activities happen.

HOW

Section 3 – BLUE

Consider what your **focus** will be: what *you* do as an organization or what *they* do as stakeholders (participants, students, performers, donors, volunteers, members). Decide what you want to learn, improve or report.

Section 4 – GREEN

Select **key questions** in order to learn, improve, or report. And once the questions are answered, how will you know if you have met your goals and can celebrate your success? Consider **indicators** to measure your progress.

Section 5 – YELLOW

Track down the information. Whom to ask? Where to look? Options are presented to determine the appropriate methods of collecting the information to answer your questions.

Section 6 – PINK

Organize the information, **analyze** it, and draw illuminating **conclusions**.

WHAT NEXT

Section 7 – SILVER

Make changes in what you do based on evaluation **findings** after the report is completed.

Section 8 – GOLD

Evaluate the evaluation process you have just completed.

Budget for evaluation. *Note: Budgeting activities should be included in planning, monitoring and reviewing evaluation efforts.*

Section 1

Purpose and Use

EVALUATION PURPOSES

Why evaluate? The very process causes us to think more evaluatively when we ask questions about what we're doing and why we're doing it, and take the time to reflect on the answers. If we are able to learn as we go, we will be more flexible in making changes for the next class or production and more promptly handle staff or volunteer matters rather than wait for an end-of-season review.

There are three central purposes for organizations to perform an evaluation. They revolve around these themes:

1. Programming
2. Accountability
3. Organizational Learning

USES FOR EVALUATION

Here's a sampling – How do you see your organization using evaluation?

- Plan a new exhibit, project, program, performance
- Gain perspective on what you have done – measure progress in meeting your goals
- Identify resources needed, gaps to fill
- Make your case – annual report, funding (grant writing and reporting), marketing, public education
- Identify procedures or policies that are successful or need improvement
- Guide budget preparation and resource allocation
- Assess the roles of and relationships with board members, management, staff, presenters, volunteers, partners and collaborators
- Identification, recruitment, and training of staff and volunteers
- Compare your programming against other programming – internal and external
- Keep programming in line with mission relevancy
- Board development
- Realize communication and technology needs

The following table has you consider your *purpose* for evaluating, who will be involved in the evaluation process, and who your *audience* will be for the results.

The Evaluation Learning Continuum

Key Questions	Zero-to-Minimal Learning	Modest Learning	Significant Learning	High Learning
1. What's the purpose of the evaluation?	Accountability to funders	Accountability to funders and organizational leaders	Program planning	Organizational and program planning
2. Who is the audience for the finding?	Funders	Funders and organizational leaders	Funders, organizational leaders, and staff	Funders, organizational leaders, staff, and the broader field
3. Who will conduct the evaluations?	External evaluator	External evaluator (hired by funders) with assistance from organizational staff	External evaluator (hired by organization) in conjunction with organizational staff	Internal evaluator, perhaps with coaching from an external evaluator, if not trained in evaluation
4. Who will determine the evaluation questions and evaluation design process?	Funders and external evaluator	Funders, external evaluators, and organizational leaders	Funders, external evaluators, organizational leaders, and staff	Funders, external evaluators, organizational leaders, staff, and community stakeholders
5. What data are available to address evaluation questions?	Objective data gathering using only scientific methods	Objective data gathering using only scientific or quasi-scientific methods	Objective and subjective data	Objective, subjective, and alternative types of data (for example, pictures or stories)
6. What types of evaluation reports or presentations of data are provided?	Very detailed findings but no examination of recommendations beyond the data	Somewhat detailed, with some examination of recommendations beyond the data	User-friendly (that is, audience-defined), with examination of recommendations beyond the data	User friendly (that is, audience-defined) with examination of recommendations beyond the data, and incorporates a reflective process (for example, program-planning "scenarios")
7. Who will provide interpretive feedback on the findings?	Funders	Funders and organizational leaders	Funders, organizational leaders, and staff	Funders, organizational leaders, staff, clients, community stakeholders, and the broader field
8. How frequently will evaluations occur?	At the conclusion of program funding	At the conclusion of each program cycle	Periodically throughout the life of the program	Ongoing for all programs within the organization

Peter J. York, Learning As We Go: Making evaluation work for everyone. A briefing paper for funders and nonprofits. New York: TCC Group, www.tccgrp.com/pdfs/per_brief_lawg.pdf, 2003

Section 2

The Big Picture

THE BIG PICTURE

~ The Beloved Logic Model ~

Begin at the beginning, with your organization's *raison d'être* – your reason for being. This is your mission. It makes itself apparent through the impact on your community. How do you know you have made an impact? It occurs through a series of outcomes that take place over time. Outcomes are intended/unintended results – changes in knowledge, skills, attitudes, or behavior toward something. How do these changes come about? They occur through some output – a production, presentation, exhibit, class, or workshop. The activities are the things you do, specific tasks, to create that output – design the set, choreograph the dance, practice the musical piece, meet with partners, book the presenters, or create the jewelry/scarf/sculpture. And the inputs are the basic elements you start with – people, time, money, materials, and technology.

There you have it: The Big Picture – The why and how you do the things you are doing. This is one version of a logic model, called so because it is so darn logical.

“So what”, you may say.

So, if you think through this deductive process, beginning with your mission, through the specific activities you do, you will be mapping the path to fulfilling your organizational vision.

“And how does this lead to enlightenment?” you may ask.

This map is the foundation for the evaluation plan. You can select an element of it to investigate further. What you select will be the basis for the evaluation questions you will develop in the next section. “It reflects rather than dictates your thinking and programs and helps to regulate expectations about ‘what it takes’ to deliver a program.”

Ready to give it a try?

¹ Suzanne Callahan, *Singing Our Praises: Case Studies in the Art of Evaluation*, Association of Performing Arts Presenters, 2006

Gather a group of passionate souls, otherwise known as **stakeholders** (staff, board members, volunteers, donors, participants, presenters, teachers, collaborators), and complete the table on the next page. A sample has been provided.

TIP:

In addition to including obvious stakeholders in this process, consider asking a *critical friend* to work with you at various stages. This is someone who has experience in this area. It could be a colleague from another nonprofit service or support organization. If funds are available, it could be an outside evaluator with whom you worked in the past and developed a relationship.

This individual can be of particular help when mapping out a logic model, determining appropriate measures of success (see Questions and Indicators section), the best method of gathering data, as well as pointers in analyzing and interpreting the information you gather.

THE BIG PICTURE – A Logic Model

Organizational Mission	Impact Community-wide change (social or economic)	Outcome Changes in knowledge, skills, or attitudes of individuals	Output Production, presentation, exhibit, class, or workshop that results in an outcome	Activities Things you do to prepare for <i>each</i> output	Inputs Personnel, volunteers, time, money, and materials needed for <i>each</i> activity

THE BIG PICTURE – A Logic Model

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To provide professional performances and educational programs which foster a life-long interest in music	Community-wide appreciation of music	Increased music appreciation in elementary-aged children	An after school music program	Reserve classroom space with school admin. Market program Recruit teacher Develop teaching materials Reproduce materials	Time from: Staff Volunteers Teacher Material costs: Copying Paper Marketing Costs: development printing mailing Space rental

Section 3

Evaluation Focus

DETERMINE THE FOCUS OF YOUR EVALUATION

If you completed the logic model in the previous section, The Big Picture, look it over carefully. Focus in on one area. What do you want to learn, improve or report?

Here's a broad way to approach that question.

LOOKING AT WHAT *WE* DO:

- Focus on what we do compared to what we said we would do
- Focus on what we do compared to what others do – are there best practices/ standards, innovations, or best ways to deal with common problems
- Focus on services

LOOKING AT WHAT *THEY* DO:

- Focus on participants, students, audience, presenters, donors, or members
- Focus on *change* questions that involve for example: growing, learning, improving, discovering, understanding, or appreciating

Here's another way to consider your evaluation focus.²

What Do We Want to Learn?	
If You're Interested In	Consider Looking At
PROGRAM	
How our program works; the quality of the program (“ <i>If we do this....</i> ”)	Our own practices and program operations; outputs (what you produce) What's working well; what's not working How closely our work aligns with industry standards or best practices in our field
Results of our program (“ <i>Then they will do that....</i> ”)	Our <i>community's</i> practices or behaviors; outcomes (what conditions change because of your work) Potential positive effects; potential negative effects
If You're Interested In	Consider Looking At
ORGANIZATION	
Our board	Level of engagement in their work Adherence to governance standards for nonprofits Composition, structure
Organizational capacity	Staff structure, job descriptions, budget history/growth/expense ratios
Internal operations; administration	Efficiency, timeliness, policies Technology

² Marcia Festen and Marianne Philbin, *Level Best: How Small and Grassroots Nonprofits Can Tackle Evaluation and Talk Results*. Copyright © 2007 John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

WHAT DO FUNDERS WANT TO KNOW?

Funders generally want to know what you are attempting to do, what you have accomplished, and what you have learned from the experience. Here are some specific evaluation-related questions and information requirements from local arts organization funders. The focus of your evaluation should enable you to learn about your organization and programming with a by-product of providing this information to your funders.

Arcus Foundation

- Describe the evaluation plans, including how success will be defined and measured.
- Explain how evaluation results will be used and/or disseminated and, if appropriate, how the project will be replicated.
- Describe how your constituents will be actively involved in evaluating the program.

Gilmore Foundation

- Description of the project/program/purpose to include: the perceived "need"; the results ("outcomes") being sought; and the means ("outputs") by which the outcomes can be achieved.
- The methodology to be utilized in evaluating: the result(s) of the proposed program/project/purpose; and the process through which such results are (or are not) achieved. Anecdotal accounts are an acceptable method of evaluation, especially when utilized in conjunction with "hard data".

Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs – Arts Projects Program

Partial review criteria for Project Management and Feasibility

- Are roles and responsibilities clearly defined and described?
- Is the plan of work realistic and clearly outlined?
- Is the budget reasonable, accurate and complete?
- Is the evaluation plan appropriate?

Monroe-Brown Foundation

- Plans for evaluation, including how success will be defined and measured.
- Description of how evaluation results will be used by the organization.

National Endowment for the Arts

Partial review criteria for artistic merit of the project

- Plans for documentation, evaluation, and dissemination, as appropriate, of the project.
- Likelihood that the project will achieve the identified outcome(s) and the feasibility of the proposed performance measurements. (*See table of outcome indicators for performance programs in the Questions and Indicators section of the guidebook.*)

Section 4

Questions and Indicators

Key Questions and Indicators: Narrowing the Evaluation Focus

In **The Big Picture** section, you mapped your programming with the various elements which, when combined, lead to the fulfillment of your mission. In the **Evaluation Focus** section, you identified an area of particular interest which was selected from The Big Picture section.

Besides gut instinct, how do you know how well you are doing in this particular area? You can back up that instinct by *systematically* tracking or gathering information regarding your organization or program. You gather information to answer questions about things that can be measured. What can you measure?

Impacts are costly to measure and challenging to prove because there are so many factors that can affect economic and social change, systemic change, in a community at large. Did you find it difficult to fill in that part of the table in the Big Picture section?

Outcomes, outputs, activities, and inputs are all measurable with outcomes being the most common indication of success. Outcomes may be immediate or longer-term. An immediate outcome of a successful event is measured by a sold-out performance. A longer-term outcome of successful programming is measured by increased sales over multiple seasons.

The **questions** you chose will most likely coincide with outcomes, outputs or activities. You measure the degree of success in meeting your outcomes, outputs, or activities with **indicators**. This will influence where you look to find the information and how you go about gathering it. It all comes together in an **evaluation plan**.

Begin with **inspiration**:

As an artist is first open to inspiration before deciding upon his or her creative work, be open to the possible evaluation questions that may emerge.

- Think about concerns, questions and values of your stakeholders – audience, participants, sponsors, donors, collaborators, members, students, presenters, board, staff and volunteers
- Look at questions that were asked from past evaluation reports

Next comes **creation**:

Winnow your ideas down to create a few key evaluation questions. Following are some important considerations to guide you in this process.

OUTCOMES: Consider how you would measure changes in knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, behavior, condition or status. You might measure this against some known benchmark. It could be related to audience diversity, altered status, an increased understanding or skill, or changed views about something. And then there's measuring joy. Look at the end of this section for thoughts on that outcome.

OUTPUTS: Consider things you can count such as the number of audience members attending; tickets sold; press releases; dollars raised; performers involved; works viewed; professional development hours; and performances, exhibits or classes held.

ACTIVITIES: Think about such things as holding meetings; talking with partners or artists; presenting smaller preparatory engagements; building sets; painting or sculpting work; fund raising; scheduling residencies; or musical/dress rehearsals.

INPUTS: You'll take into account how to measure the staff and volunteers, time, money, equipment/supplies and technology that went into doing your activities. Did you spend what you thought you would? Was the time required what you expected? Did you have the appropriate staff and skills required to do the various activities? Were the materials appropriate and adequate to get the work accomplished? What documents could you examine and what people could you speak with to measure these?

Consider the following:

- Are you interested in how your programs function (us), what your programs' results are (them), or both? Go back to the Evaluation Focus section.
- The evaluation questions should concentrate on what is critically important to learn, not what is merely interesting.
- What do you want to know this time next year that you don't know today?
- Ask questions that relate to processes and products.
- Ask questions that look at both strengths and weaknesses, to build strong programs.
- Ask ambiguous questions, and you'll get incomplete or vague answers.
- The evaluation should address simple questions that will answer important questions to your organization.³
- A few key questions may end up generating information that answer a variety of smaller or more grant-specific questions; or they may show how the work that one particular grant supported fits into the larger context of what a program is accomplishing overall.⁴

³ Points taken from The Greater Kalamazoo Evaluation Project, 1997, Evaluation for Learning, Participant Manual, 2nd edition 2005 and Innovations Network, Inc., www.innonet.org

⁴ Marcia Festen and Marianne Philbin, Level Best: How Small and Grassroots Nonprofits Can Tackle Evaluation and Talk Results, 2007

Narrow the possibilities until you develop a few targeted evaluation questions. Rate your potential questions against the following factors⁵:

Factors influencing evaluation question selection	Rating			
	Low			High
1. Is the evaluation question of interest to key audiences? Who would use the information? Who wants to know? Who will be upset if this evaluation question is dropped? If it upsets no one, then think about dropping it.	1	2	3	4
2. Does the evaluation question reduce present uncertainty? Would it provide information not readily available? If the answer is readily available, don't waste resources with a formal evaluation question.	1	2	3	4
3. Does the evaluation question yield important information? That means more than just curiosity.	1	2	3	4
4. Is the evaluation question of continuing (not fleeting) interest? Give priority to critical questions of continuing importance.	1	2	3	4
5. Is the evaluation question critical to your ability to comprehend your evaluation focus and limit it if the question were deleted? If so, hang onto it.	1	2	3	4
6. Would the answer to the evaluation question have an impact on the course of events? If the question could affect policy or operating decisions, there is a good reason to address it if resources permit.	1	2	3	4
7. Is it feasible to answer the evaluation question given available financial and human resources, time, methods, and technology? Limited resources render many important questions unanswerable. Better to delete them early than to breed frustration by pursuing impossible dreams.	1	2	3	4

⁵ Adapted from Blaine R. Worthen and James R. Sanders, Educational Evaluation: Alternative Approaches and Practical Guidelines, 1987.

Some Thoughts on Indicators

Indicators should be:

- Meaningful – present information that is important to key stakeholders. *Success* means different things to different people so reach a consensus on its meaning.
- Direct – capture enough of the essential components of the outcome to represent the outcome.
- Useful – gather practical information that will help with program improvement, organizational learning, or accountability – whatever your desired purpose for evaluation.
- Realistic to measure – affordable, accessible, and reasonable.

There are a number of variations on the acronym **SMART** for choosing indicators. Here's one:

Specific – Specific to the desired results

Measurable – Be able to measure the output/outcome

Agreed to – Agreed to by all stakeholders

Reliable and Realistic – The measure should be stable over time and be achievable

Time-bound – Appropriate for the type of results: short-, medium-, or long-term

TIP:

If you found your outcomes, outputs, activities or inputs were not measurable, reexamine them so you can answer the question, "How can we tell?"

Following are a modified table of outcome indicators for performing arts programs and suggestions regarding indicators which were developed by the Center for What Works and The Urban Institute. Arts education and visual arts organizations should consider modifying the matrix to fit their needs. The entire document, including an outcome sequence chart, is included as an appendix.⁶

- Involve others in deciding which indicators to track – staff, board members, and clients.
- Start with a small number of indicators. You can add more outcomes and indicators later as you find that information will be useful. *We can't emphasize this enough!*
- Tabulate the outcome information by various categories of clients to see if outcomes are different for different clients (e.g., gender, age group, income level, handicap level, and race/ethnicity). Use that information to help better target your efforts.
- Outcome information seldom, if ever, tells *why* the outcomes have occurred. Use the outcome data to identify *what* works well and what does not. Use the data to determine for which *categories of clients* your procedures and policies are working well and for which your procedures and policies are not working well. Then find out why. This leads to continuous learning for your organization.

⁶ Adapted from The Center for What Works and The Urban Institute, Candidate Outcome Indicators: Performing Arts Program www.urban.org/center/met/projects/upload/Performing_Arts.pdf Note: See complete text in appendix.

**Candidate Outcome Indicators:
Performing Arts Program**

	Common Outcome	Program Specific Outcome	Indicator	Data Collection Strategy	Note
1	Increased awareness	Increased awareness of arts programs and activities	# and % of community awareness of the particular performing arts opportunities	Citizen survey	See Note #1
2	Increased access to services	Increased access to diverse audience	# and % of community reporting that performances are too costly	Audience survey after performance	See Note #2
3	Increased access to services	Increased access to diverse audience	# and % of community reporting that performances are too hard to reach	Citizen survey	
4	Increased access to services	Increased access to diverse audience	# and % of community reporting that performances are inaccessible for disabled people	Citizen survey	
5	Increased access to services	Increased access to diverse audience	# and % of community (by pop. type) who report that they believe the particular performing art is sensitive to their culture	Citizen survey	See Note #2
6	Increased access to services	Increased access to diverse audience	# of free tickets provided	Reviews or press and other media/venue records	
7	Positive benefit as a result of program	Achieve external recognition	# and % of favorable critic reviews/awards given by the media (or peers)	Reviews or press and other media/venue records	

8	Increased participation/ attendance	Increased attendance	# and % of individuals (population type X) attending arts performances at least once per month; and/or avg. attendance at events (by type of event)	Survey of citizens/ audience/ticket stub count	See Note #2 and Note #3
9	Increased participation/ attendance	Increased attendance	% of facility capacity filled per performance	Ticket stub count	See Note #3
10	Increased participation/ attendance	Increased attendance	% of subscriptions (seasonal, series, or annual)	Survey of clients/ audience	See Note #3
11	Increased participation/ attendance	Increased attendance	# and % of renewed subscription as a percent of total sales	Survey of clients/ audience	See Note #3
12	Increased participation/ attendance	Increased attendance	% of subscribers who are donors	Organizational records	See Note #3
13	Build skills/ knowledge	Increased knowledge	# and % of audience (by population type) who report gaining increased knowledge of local culture as a result of attendance/program	Audience survey after performance	See Note #2
14	Develop understanding about an issue/ topic	Increased appreciation for the arts	# and % of audience/ community residents (by population type) reporting increased appreciation of arts from the programs/ performances	Audience survey after performance/ citizen survey	See Note #2

15	Develop understanding about an issue/topic	Increased appreciation for the arts	# and % of audience (population type X) deciding to pursue additional arts programs after performance	Audience survey after performance	See Note #2
16	Positive benefit as a result of program	Enriched life experience	# of outside programs/services offered by arts group	Survey of community residents	
17	Positive benefit as a result of program	Increased community meaning/understanding	# of community organization partnerships; # of non-ticketed performances	Organizational records	
18	Citizen satisfaction	Audience satisfaction	# of audience (by population type) reporting being very satisfied with their performing arts experience		

Note #1: Note that if a survey is conducted, this permits obtaining considerable info on many aspects of a program -- information likely to be of particular operational value to the program.

Note #2: Population types may be defined as demographic groups including but not limited to age, race or gender. It may also include distance traveled and from which specific geographic area. It may also include disabled individuals to assess access.

Note #3: Attendance Outcome should be understood as including increased participation: broadening, diversifying, and deepening the engagement².

⁷ Adapted from The Center for What Works and The Urban Institute, *Candidate Outcome Indicators: Performing Arts Program* www.urban.org/center/met/projects/upload/Performing_Arts.pdf Note: See complete text in appendix.

One More Thought on Outcomes and Indicators: Measuring Joy

Traditional evaluation wisdom dictates that outcomes are measurable changes in skills, attitudes or behaviors. This leaves out the senses – the heart of art. Awed by beautiful visual art, feeling a sense of peace or having our spirits raised through inspirational music, laughing/crying/contemplating a stage production are all personal reactions to experiencing some form of performing or visual art. Art brings us joy. But how do we measure joy?

Deborah Bedwell, Executive Director of Baltimore Clayworks, a nonprofit ceramic art center, wrote an article entitled, *Measuring Joy: Evaluation at Baltimore Clayworks*⁸. In it, she describes how she and her board grappled with the core questions of how to know when the artistic experience is authentic and how to measure joy. The consensus was, “You know it when you see it”.

Bedwell and Baltimore Clayworks devised a means to measure observable behaviors by youth participating in their community arts program. Here are the questions they came up with to determine a measurable degree of joy obtained:

- 1 = not at all
- 2 = occasionally
- 3 = sometimes
- 4 = frequently
- 5 = frequently, with enthusiasm

Shows work to peers	1	2	3	4	5
Concentrates on techniques	1	2	3	4	5
Talks about work to others	1	2	3	4	5
Talks to artist/teacher	1	2	3	4	5
Holds work close to body	1	2	3	4	5
Uses clay vocabulary	1	2	3	4	5
Anxious to continue; doesn't want to stop	1	2	3	4	5
Is working on group project (if applicable)	1	2	3	4	5

⁸ Deborah Bedwell, *Measuring Joy: Evaluation at Baltimore Clayworks*, found at www.nea.gov/grants/apply/out/joy.html

Section 5

Tracking and Data Gathering

TRACKING THE INFORMATION

At this point, you have decided what information you want to know and the questions to ask to learn that information. But how do you gather the information in order to answer the questions?

First, do you already have a system in place to track/collect this specific information?

If not, what is the best way to gather the information?

Take a look at the following methods for collecting information to help you determine which best suits your needs.

There are two basic ways to track information. It can be tracked systematically or unsystematically. **Unsystematic evaluation** usually involves making casual observations of the results of one's work. This can provide a snapshot of how things are going. However, the danger lies in that we often remember only the good things and we have a tendency to forget the bad. As a result, casual observations can lead to a distorted perception of the results of one's work. We may only have the opportunity to view one aspect of a project, speak to a few select participants, or attend an event for a limited time. Watching an audience's reaction to one scene may not be generalizable to an overall reaction once the performance is complete. Likewise, speaking to those who lingered following the performance could yield different reactions about their experience than speaking to those who left immediately following its conclusion.⁹

⁹ Adapted from Craig Russon and Antoinette Brown, Evaluation Capacity Development Group Job Design manuscript, 2006

Overview of Methods to Collect Information¹⁰

Method	Overall Purpose	Advantages	Challenges
questionnaires, surveys, checklists	to quickly and/or easily get lots of information from people in a non threatening way	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -can complete anonymously -inexpensive to administer -easy to compare and analyze -can administer to many people -can get lots of data -many sample questionnaires already exist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -might not get careful feedback -wording can bias client's responses -are impersonal -in surveys, may need sampling expert -doesn't get full story
interviews	to fully understand someone's impressions or experiences, or learn more about their answers to questionnaires	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -gets full range and depth of information -develops relationship with client -can be flexible with client 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -can take much time -can be hard to analyze and compare -can be costly -interviewer can bias client's responses
documentation review	to get an impression of how a program operates without interrupting the program; comes from review of applications, finances, memos, minutes, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -gets comprehensive and historical information -doesn't interrupt program or client's routine in program -information already exists -few biases about information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -often takes much time -info may be incomplete -need to be quite clear about what looking for -not a flexible means to get data; data restricted to what already exists
observation	to gather accurate information about how a program actually operates, particularly about processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -can view operations of a program as they are actually occurring -can adapt to events as they occur 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -can be difficult to interpret seen behaviors -can be complex to categorize observations -can influence behaviors of program participants -can be expensive
focus groups	to explore a topic in depth through group discussion, e.g., about reactions to an experience or suggestion, understanding common complaints, etc.; useful in evaluation and marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -quickly and reliably get common impressions -can be efficient way to get much range and depth of information in short time -can convey key information about programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -can be hard to analyze responses -need good facilitator for safety and closure -difficult to schedule 6-8 people together
case studies	to fully understand or depict a client's experiences in a program, and conduct comprehensive examination through cross comparison of cases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -fully depicts client's experience in program input, process and results -powerful means to portray program to outsiders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -usually quite time consuming to collect, organize and describe -represents depth of information, rather than breadth

¹⁰ Carter McNamara, Authenticity Consulting, LLC. Adapted from *The Field Guide to Nonprofit Program Design, Marketing and Evaluation*. www.managementhelp.org/evaluatn/fnl_eval.htm#anchor1316141

Some Additional Methods ¹¹:

Action cards: use index cards on which participants record what they did, the action, and when they reach their goal; primarily used in self-assessment.

Creative expression: use art forms to represent people's ideas and feeling as through stories, drama, dance, music, art.

Document review: review previous final reports to funders, review membership/ audience categories, examine classroom or program records, search the internet for similar studies, and consult with agencies in other states that have done similar projects

Examine: examine CVs, biographies and resumes

Experience: experience the program firsthand as a participant, then write an anecdotal description of what it is like to participate.

Problem stories: use narrative accounts of past, present or future situations as a means of identifying perceptions using fictional characters to externalize the problem situation.

Simulations: use models or mock-ups to solicit perceptions and reactions.

Storytelling: gather narrative accounts, true stories, about people's experiences

Testing: use a testing instrument to measure knowledge, skills, or reactions.

Unobtrusive measures: gather information without the knowledge of the people in the setting such as the wear and tear on a *planted* mat in front of a display.

¹¹ Adapted from the Greater Kalamazoo Evaluation Project, 1997, Evaluation for Learning, Participant Manual, 2nd edition 2005 and Program Development and Evaluation, Methods for Collecting Information, Quick Tips #8, University of Wisconsin-Extension, Madison, WI. 2002. www.uwex.edu/ces/pdande/resources/index.html

Qualitative vs Quantitative Data Collection

Qualitative data collection

- It produces an abundance of detailed information about a small number of people.
- Direct quotations; testimonials; and descriptions of programs, events, people, interactions, and observed behaviors collected as open-ended narratives can be useful for grant reports or future funding proposals.
- It does not attempt to fit program activities or people's experiences into predetermined, standardized categories (as is the case with quantitative surveys) - the character and richness of the data itself dictates the way in which it is analyzed.
- A major drawback is that data collection and analysis is time-consuming. Furthermore, funders and other stakeholders may be more interested in and convinced by quantitative data.

Quantitative data collection

- You can draw conclusions with a certain degree of confidence about the effects of the program, such as the exact percentage of program participants that showed increases in knowledge and favorable attitudes.
- If the sample has been carefully selected, you can also generalize results to similar populations.
- Collection methods are often assumed to yield more objective data than qualitative methods because you are somewhat removed from the program and participants.
- Designed beforehand, it does not necessarily develop or change as the process unfolds.
- Quantitative studies have their own set of biases. You decide where to focus, which data to collect, and how to interpret the findings.

Section 5

Tracking

Storytelling

STORYTELLING¹²

There are many ways to gather information. An array of methods was previously mentioned. One method not usually considered is that of storytelling. An individual story is like a snapshot from one moment in time and can provide an unexpected insight into an event or program.

A collection of stories can reveal patterns and identify trends to clarify questions about some aspect of that event or program. Examining a series of stories can add richness to understanding how a program works. It can complement other methods you use to gather information or be a principal source of that information.

Look in the Analysis and Interpreting section of the guidebook for hints on how to analyze your stories.

Remember:

- Before beginning, make a plan of what you are looking for – what questions you want answered
- Be open for the unexpected
- Respect confidentiality
- Take good notes – even if you must wait until later to write them down
- Keep track of evidence and be able to verify it from the primary source
- Be aware of personal biases; try to remain impartial and neutral

¹² Adapted from Richard Krueger website, www.tc.umn.edu/%7Erkrueger/index.html

Topics for Storytelling Use

- **Organizational**
 - The importance of teamwork
 - Going above and beyond what was expected
 - A major change and how we handled it
 - Who knows the ropes around here?
 - Sometimes it's OK to break the rules
 - Taking care of the customer, audience member, presenter, participant, student
 - Showing initiative and taking risks
- **Programs**
 - Something happened that was wonderful
 - My most successful experience with the program
 - The best thing about the program was . . .
- **Learning and change**
 - Learning from mistakes
 - Something I learned when I've failed
 - I learned something that changed my life
 - How I changed the music I listen to
 - The biggest change I've ever made was . . .
- **Education**
 - Great teachers/mentors I've had
 - Something a teacher/mentor did that meant a lot to me
 - The most important thing I've ever learned was. . .
 - The best class I've ever had was . . .
- **Customer Satisfaction**
 - Disappointments I've had with
 - A time when I was delighted with the experience I had
 - At first I was disappointed, but then they fixed it¹³

¹³ Adapted from Richard Krueger website, www.tc.umn.edu/%7Erkrueger/index.html

How To Find The Story

- **Develop a shopping list**
Know what you're looking for but keep other good stories for possible future use
- **Enlist the help of others** Getting help from others multiplies your ability to obtain stories
- **Getting people to remember-What you can do to avoid the blank look?**
If you want to hear stories, do one or more of the following:
 - Let people be comfortable and relax
 - Food and beverages help
 - Avoid times when people feel pressure or are anxious
 - Take your time-There will be many "dead ends"
 - Have several "provocative" questions
 - Use cues to stimulate memory, such as timelines, photographs, objects, etc.
 - Let people listen to stories of others
 - Show interest in their stories-smile & eye contact
 - Tell a story to prime the pump
- **Hanging around - Walking around**
Think about where stories are often told. Go there, ask questions and listen.
 - Water coolers
 - Vending machines
 - Coffee shops
 - Smoke breaks
 - Barber shops
 - Taverns
- **Listen at meal times**
Stories go well with food
- **Listen at staff meetings**
 - Set a designated time at staff meetings to share brief stories.
 - Ask for the story and also the message of the story
 - Expect that staff will vary-some will be very skillful and others will need encouragement

- **Use small focus groups**
 - Ask a few questions to a handful of people
 - Develop 3-5 questions that are sequenced
 - Invite colleagues, customers, decision-makers, influentials, etc to join you to share experiences
 - Serve food or snacks
 - Set aside about 45 - 60 minutes
- **Ask people to be ready to do something when they first hear the story**
 - Record in diaries or journals
 - Make a phone call and leave a message
 - Send a note or email message
- **Listen for the "point" of the story**
 - There can be multiple points.
 - What was originally intended by the teller?
 - Do those who listen hear a different point?
- **Capture the story**
 - Memory
 - Take notes
 - Tape recorders-audio & video¹⁴

¹⁴ Richard Krueger website, www.tc.umn.edu/%7Erkrueger/index.html

Section 5

Tracking

Survey Questionnaire

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRES

Tips for Designing a Survey Questionnaire

- Start with a title, who you are, and why you are doing the survey
- Keep the survey short and simple – ask yourself what you’ll do with the information from each question; if it’s not important to answering your evaluation questions, don’t ask it
- Allowing “don’t know” or “not applicable” results in more honest answers
- Allow “other” or “none” when listing possible opinions, preferences, or behaviors and provide space to note what the “other” is
- If using a text open-ended question such as, “How can we improve...”, allow enough space to adequately answer
- Latest research shows offering four rather than five options of a multiple choice questions, forces the respondent to lean one way or another – for example: never seldom sometimes frequently
- Consider a rational or logical order of sequencing questions
- Group questions on the same topic
- Watch out for biased questions, ones that don’t make sense, or may be misunderstood
- Don’t put two questions into one (double-barreled) such as, “Was the class educational and fun?” or “Did you do this, and if so, did you enjoy it?”
- Avoid jargon, technical terms, and acronyms that may be unfamiliar
- Save demographic questions for the end (gender, income, education), if they are necessary
- Allow space for “other comments”
- **Pretest** the survey. Administer it to a small number of people. After they have completed it, brainstorm with them to see if they had problems answering any questions. They can explain what the question meant to them and whether or not it was valid to the questionnaire as well as identify awkward or unclear wording. You will also get a sense of how much time it takes to complete the survey.

Tips for a Web Survey

- Specify a background color, even if white, as some browsers show a background color you may not want
- Use graphics sparingly as some respondents may have dialup and slow access to large files
- Use text only as some SPAN filters look for HTML
- Include contact information
- Give a deadline for submission and
- Provide an estimate of time to complete the survey (under 20-30 min) Track progress for long questions such as “25% complete” or “50% done”
- List choices vertically, down the center of the page, rather than horizontally
- Keep your introduction and welcome page simple with an explanation for the survey
- Putting questions and answers in two or more columns looks attractive, saves space, and helps to avoid vertical scrolling
- Allow space for long replies and comments. Some respondents will type more on web surveys than they will on paper surveys
- Vary reminder emails by changing the time of day and day of the week they are sent. Remove names of those who have responded from reminder emails
- Mixed methods work best such as send a follow-up postcard reminder to potential survey respondents
- Include a thank you page following submission to denote an end to the survey
- Publish results online for survey participants to see

Survey Response Rates

The percentage of people who respond to a survey is called the **response rate**. High survey response rates help to ensure that survey results are representative of the target population so that you can make generalizations or inferences (claims) about that larger population. Low response rates make your sample vulnerable to *response bias*.

Note: The response rate is less important if the purpose of your survey is simply to gain insight into your program and not make generalizations about it.

Obtain the response rate by dividing the number of people who submitted a completed survey (80% or more of questions answered) by the number of people you attempted to contact. If you asked 200 participants to complete the survey and 120 responded, the response rate is 120/200 or 60%.

$$\frac{\text{\# of completed surveys}}{\text{\# of people contacted}} = \text{Response Rate}$$

Examine the profile of the people who responded

Are they about the same as the people who didn't respond?

Are they about the same as the overall population that you're sampling?

- ❖ The better your respondents know *you*, the better your response rate.
- ❖ If you know *them* by name or have regular contact with them, respondents are more likely to respond to your survey than those you do not know.

Acceptable response rates vary by the topic, the method you use to collect the data and the total number of individuals you are attempting to survey.

Your goal should be to obtain a *representative sample* of your population rather than a specific number of respondents. (Note the profile questions in the textbox on the previous page.) However, that said, the larger the number of respondents, the more likely you will indeed have a representative sample. So aim high to avoid **response bias** – where respondents answer questions how they think they *should* answer them rather than according to their true belief.

There is no magic number for a response rate. It is a function of the population that you are surveying, the topic, AND the method of data collection. So for example, if you mail a questionnaire to politicians, about issues outside of their jurisdiction, you will get a response rate of zero. The only way that one can survey politicians is face-to-face interviews. A web-based survey of the homeless, seeking information about their views on survey response rates, will also yield a low response rate. The majority of this population would not care about survey response rates and would not have computers.

Continue to refine your survey to improve the response rate for subsequent surveys. Keep it simple and ask only what you *need* to know when you need to know it. (*Further in this section, note how redesigning a survey resulted in improved response rates for the Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra.*)

In general, people in our society are suffering from survey fatigue. We have all been over-surveyed. So to obtain high response rates, you must have a well-defined population, a relevant topic, and an appropriate data collection method.

To Maximize Survey Response Rates

- KISS rule: Keep It Simple and Straightforward. Ask just what you *need* to know in order to answer your evaluation questions. (See Questions and Indicators section)
- The survey should be designed so it is easy to read and follow.
- Notify participants ahead of time when the survey will take place, its purpose, and how the results will be used.
- Provide clear instructions on how to complete the survey and what to do with it when it is completed
- Advise participants regarding anonymity and confidentiality.
- Offer an incentive for participating such as a drawing or discounts on ticket purchases.
- Give respondents ample time to complete the survey.
 - o In-class surveys – allow 1 minute per question and additional time for open-ended questions.
 - o Mail surveys – provide a self-addressed stamped envelope. Send a note during the survey period thanking those who have completed it.
 - o Online surveys – allow 7-10 days. Provide a link to the survey and send a reminder the day before closing the survey.

What You Should Do If You Haven't Gotten a Respectable Response Rate¹⁵

If you got a poor response to your mail, e-mail or telephone survey:

Use follow-up methods for improving response. Most surveys will take more than one follow-up method to reach a respectable response rate.

Use other methods to get the information you need. For example, if you get a low response rate from a mail survey, call people on the phone. If you used a telephone survey, try a visit or an appointment.

Compare those who responded to those who did not. Describe the characteristics of people who did not respond. Are they different from those who did? This can help you address non-response error. You might already have information from a mailing list, administrative data base or another source that would tell you their age, gender, work status or other information that is important to the outcomes you are measuring.

Ask for information less often or ask other people. Perhaps you recently asked for information from them about this or a different program. Maybe you are asking too many questions or questions that they have answered for other evaluations. Try other sources of information that may be able to answer your questions.

Ask questions that are important or relevant to your respondents. Perhaps the evaluation questions do not interest them. If this is the case, maybe the program did not interest them. Try to find out why.

Demonstrate how you will use the information. Share past, if any, results and/or how the information will be used to make improvements to the program.

If what information you have gives a skewed picture of your program, don't use it. If you have a poor response rate, consider not using the results to report successes or to make decisions about program improvement. Your best decision might be to use a different method or methods to evaluate your program. Fewer high quality evaluations are better than many poor quality evaluations.

¹⁵ Program Development and Evaluation, *What Should You Do if You Haven't Gotten a Respectable Response Rate, Quick Tips #2*, University of Wisconsin-Extension, Madison, WI. 2002. www.uwex.edu/ces/pdande/resources/index.html

Developing and Revising a Survey – One Experience

As an example of the process of developing and revising a survey, the Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra, KSO, has graciously agreed to share the evolution of the survey used for their "Music on the Move" ensemble program in the schools. These survey formats appear on the following pages sequentially in the order in which they were developed.

KSO initially began using a letter format in 1995 which was distributed to the school music teacher or principal by the leader of the ensemble after the performance. The return rate was low and also inconsistent among ensembles. For the 2001-2002 school year, 13 of 80 schools participating responded to the survey, a 16.25% response rate. SKO found that ensemble leaders sometimes forgot or didn't have a chance to hand out the survey before the music teacher or principal left the assembly. Often when the survey was distributed, it was not mailed back to the KSO.

This paper survey was followed by a postcard to be mailed in. The postcard was designed to be easier for the ensemble leader to transport. A stack of cards could be kept in a case or bag where the musician would remember to hand them out. With a return address printed on the card, the music teacher or principal could simply fill it out and drop it by the office to be mailed. For the school year 2004-2005, 26 of 80 schools participating responded to the survey, a 32.5% response rate. This rate was slightly higher with the postcard, but the distribution rate by ensembles was still inconsistent.

The survey was modified in 2005 to an evaluation form that is faxed to the school, at the same time as a concert reminder, several days before the ensemble visit. Addressed to the music teacher, the form can be filled out after the performance and faxed back to the KSO. This has enhanced both the distribution rate and the return rate. For the school year 2005-2006, 38 of 80 participating schools responded, a 47.5% response rate.

KSO is considering further revisions to the form. One option is to e-mail the form directly to the music teacher or principal on the day of the performance rather than faxing it to the school office ahead of time. The other possibility is to offer an online form through the KSO website. However, schools would still need a prompt of some kind to visit the sight.

KSO is continually revising the evaluation forms they use for this and other programs, both to make them easier to implement and to keep the content relevant and meaningful. The challenge is to enhance utility while not increasing the amount of staff or musician time required to implement the process.¹⁶

¹⁶ Contributed by Elizabeth Youker, Director of Education, Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra, September 2007

2001-2002 Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra STRING QUARTET

We hope you enjoyed the recent lecture/demonstration presented by our Kalamazoo Symphony ensemble. Please take a few moments to complete this questionnaire and return it to the Symphony office. The information requested lets us know how we can improve our program, and provides statistics vital to our fundraising efforts for the program. Thank you!

School/Institution

School _____

District _____

Address _____ City _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Contact Person _____ (Principal, Music Teacher, Other: _____)

Grades levels attending _____

Total number in audience _____

Approximate percentage in audience of:

Racial or Ethnic Minorities ___%

Physically or emotionally challenged ___%

Elderly ___%

Please rate each answer by the following scale:


1 = poor, 2 = fair, 3 = good, 4 = excellent.

1. How well were pre-performance arrangements managed? 1 2 3 4
2. Was the ensemble prompt and professional? 1 2 3 4
3. Was the program well-received by the audience? 1 2 3 4
4. Was the program well-paced and interesting? 1 2 3 4
5. Were the performers enthusiastic? 1 2 3 4
6. Was the program content appropriate for the age of the students? 1 2 3 4
7. What is your level of interest in having this ensemble back again? 1 2 3 4

Please make any comments or suggestions on the back of this sheet. Thank you!

KSO Ensemble Evaluation Postcard

Front



Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra
Attn: Education Assistant
359 S. Kalamazoo Mall, Suite 100
Kalamazoo, MI 49007

Please stamp and return this postcard survey to the KSO office.
Questions? Please call 349-7759, Ext. 20.

Back

2004-2005 Kalamzoo Symphony Ensemble Evaluation
Date: _____ **Ensemble:** Strings Percussion Winds Brass

We hope you enjoyed today's presentation by our Kalamazoo Symphony ensemble! Please take a moment to reply to this survey. Your evaluation will help us with program improvements and important fund raising efforts.

Attendance: Grades _____ Total Number in Audience _____

Please rate each answer: 1=poor, 2=fair, 3=good, 4=excellent	
1. How well were pre-performance arrangements managed?	1 2 3 4
2. Was the ensemble prompt and professional?	1 2 3 4
3. Was the program well received by the audience?	1 2 3 4
4. Was the program well-balanced and interesting?	1 2 3 4
5. Were the performers enthusiastic?	1 2 3 4
6. Was the program content age-appropriate?	1 2 3 4
7. What is your level of interest in having this ensemble return?	1 2 3 4

Comments: _____

Your Name _____ Music Teacher Principal

Question? Please call 349-7759, Ext. 20 **Thank you!**

KSO add label with school
Fax: 1 page

2005-2006 Kalamazoo Symphony Ensemble Evaluation



How Are We Doing?

KSO String Quartet



We hope you enjoy the KSO ensemble!

After the performance, please fill out and fax this evaluation to 349-9229. Thank you!
(Your evaluation will help us with program improvements and important fund raising efforts.)

Your Name _____ Music Teacher Principal

Attendance:

Grades: K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 Band Orch Choir

Total Number in Audience _____

- | | | | | |
|---|------|------|------|-----------|
| 1. How well were pre-performance arrangements managed? | Poor | Fair | Good | Excellent |
| 2. Was the ensemble prompt and professional? | Poor | Fair | Good | Excellent |
| 3. Was the program well received by the audience? | Poor | Fair | Good | Excellent |
| 4. Was the program well-balanced and interesting? | Poor | Fair | Good | Excellent |
| 5. Were the performers enthusiastic? | Poor | Fair | Good | Excellent |
| 6. Was the program content age-appropriate? | Poor | Fair | Good | Excellent |
| 7. What is your level of interest in having this ensemble return? | Poor | Fair | Good | Excellent |



Comments: _____

Please **FAX BACK** after performance. (No need for a cover page.)

KSO FAX: 349-9229 ATTN: Education Assistant

Section 5

Tracking

Focus Groups

FOCUS GROUPS

A focus group is an interview with a small group of people on a specific topic. Groups are typically six to eight people who participate in the interview for one-half to two hours. It is an interview. It is neither a discussion nor a problem-solving session. It is not a decision-making group. Typically, a relatively homogeneous group of people are asked to reflect on the questions asked by the interviewer. Participants hear each other's responses and make additional comments beyond their own original responses as they hear what other people have to say. They consider their own views in the context of the views of others. It is not necessary for the group to reach any kind of consensus nor is it necessary for disagreement.¹⁷

Look in the Analysis and Interpreting section of the guidebook for helpful hints on analyzing the information. Below is an outline for introducing a focus group session.

Introducing a Focus Group

Welcome

- Introduce moderator and assistant

Our topic is ...

- The results will be used for ...
- You were selected because ...

Guidelines

- No right or wrong answers, only differing points of view
- We're tape recording, one person speaking at a time
- We're on a first name basis
- You don't need to agree with others, but you must listen respectfully as others share their views
- Rules for cellular phones and pagers if applicable. For example: We ask that you turn off your phones or pagers. If you must respond to a call, please do so as quietly as possible and rejoin us as quickly as you can.
- My role as moderator will be to guide the discussion
- Talk to each other

Opening question¹⁸

¹⁷ Michael Quinn Patton, *How to Use Qualitative Methods in Evaluation*, 1987

¹⁸ Richard Krueger website, www.tc.umn.edu/%7Erkrueger/index.html

Features of a Good Focus Group Moderator

- Ask all the questions that have been prepared
- Give minimal encouragers
- Use neutral probes: "Would you explain further?"; "Would you give an example?"; "I don't understand."
- Ask for clarification or elaboration
- Comment (into tape recorder) when participants nod their heads in agreement with whomever is speaking
- Use linking (of ideas that appeared early with those that appeared late)
- Let a roll develop and stop it when it gets off the topic
- Stop a participant when he/she does not answer the question
- Never suggest answers
- Recognize a shy person and bring him/her into discussion
- Courteously but firmly stop a 'chatty' participant
- Deflect a request by a participant to give your opinion
- Assert respect for all opinions by handling participant who puts another respondent's answer 'down'¹⁹

¹⁹ Adapted from Nancy Ellen, *Focus Group Moderator Critique. Tipsheet #73*, University Park, PA: Penn State Cooperative Extension, 2005. www.extension.psu.edu/evaluation/pdf/TS73.pdf and Richard Krueger website, www.tc.umn.edu/%7Erkrueger/index.html

Asking Questions That Yield Powerful Information

- **Use open-ended questions**
"What did you think of the program?"
"Where do you get new information?"
"What do you like best about the proposed program?"
Be cautious of phrases such as "how satisfied" or "to what extent"
- **Avoid dichotomous questions**
These questions can be answered with a "yes" or "no"
- **“Why?” is rarely asked**
Instead, ask about attributes and/or influences. Attributes are characteristics or features of the topic. Influences are things that prompt or cause action.
- **Use "think back" questions.**
Take people back to an experience and not forward to the future
- **Use different types of questions**
Identify potential questions
Five Types of Questions
 1. Opening Question (round robin)
 2. Introductory Question
 3. Transition Questions
 4. Key Questions
 5. Ending Questions
- **Use questions that get participants involved**
Use reflection, examples, choices, rating scales, drawings, etc.
- **Focus the questions**
Sequence that goes from general to specific
- **Be cautious of serendipitous questions**
Save for the end of the discussion²⁰

²⁰ Richard Krueger website, www.tc.umn.edu/%7Erkrueger/index.html

Strategies for Focus Group Questions

- Choose among alternatives
- Make a list
- Fill in the blank
- Rate with blank card
- Semantic differential
- Projection, fantasy and daydreams
- Draw a picture
- Develop a campaign
- Role playing
- Questions that foster ownership
What can you do...?

Generic Questions

1. How have you been involved in _____?
2. Think back over all the years that you've participated and tell us your fondest, most enjoyable memory.
3. Think back over the past year of the things that (name of organization) did. What went particularly well?
4. What needs improvement?
5. If you were inviting a friend to participate in (name of organization), what would you say in the invitation?
6. Suppose that you were in charge and could make one change that would make the program better. What would you do?
7. What can each one of us do to make the program better?²¹

²¹ Richard Krueger website, www.tc.umn.edu/%7Erkrueger/index.html

Ending Questions²²

- **All things considered question**

This question asks participants to reflect on the entire discussion and then offer their positions or opinions on topics of central importance to the researchers.

Example:

"Suppose that you had one minute to talk to the governor on merit pay, the topic of today's discussion. What would you say?" or "Of all the things we discussed, what, to you, is the most important?"

- **Summary question**

After the brief oral summary, the question asked is:

"Is this an adequate summary?"

- **Final question**

The moderator reviews the purpose of the study and then asks the participants:

"Have we missed anything?"

²² Richard Krueger website, www.tc.umn.edu/%7Erkrueger/index.html

Section 6

Putting it all
Together

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

How to organize the information

Organizing the information you collect makes it easier to see patterns and themes and to interpret meanings. You can make sense of your information through these steps:²³

Organize information, by

- Taking notes on observations
- Writing up interviews
- Summarizing responses to questions
- Sorting data into categories
- Drawing a table or making a chart

Analyze information, by asking

- What stands out?
- What are the patterns?
- What are the similarities?
- What are the differences?
- Is more information needed?

Interpret information, by asking

- Do the activities accomplish their purpose?
- What are the effects and outcomes?
- What findings are significant?
- What lessons can be learned?
- What is to be done?

²³ Marcia Festen and Marianne Philbin, *Level Best: How Small and Grassroots Nonprofits Can Tackle Evaluation and Talk Results*, 2007

In **The Big Picture** section, you identified outcomes, outputs, activities and inputs for your programming. In the **Evaluation Focus** section, you narrowed your focus to one area. In the **Questions and Indicators** section, you considered how to measure success in this area with specific indicators. You chose a few evaluation questions, determined where to go to find answers to the questions, and the means to collect the information. Presto, you now have an evaluation plan. Customize your evaluation plan by adding who will do what, when, and with whom you will share the results. Here's a simple example:

A Sample Evaluation Plan

Outcome/Output Activity/ Input (from logic model)	Evaluation question	Indicator of success meeting outcome/output/ activity/input (Number/percent)	Information source (staff, audience, presenters, students)	Means of collecting information (survey, focus group, interviews, document review)
Output – After-school music program	How effective were we at encouraging musical exploration?	- Increased knowledge of music genres	Students Teachers	Observation Survey
		- Increased knowledge of music theory	Students Teachers	Observation Survey
		- Increased enthusiasm for different genres of music	Students	Observation Conversation Survey (Joy survey in indicator section)

An Evaluation Plan

Outcome/Output Activity/Input (from logic model)	Evaluation question	Indicator of success meeting outcome/output/ activity/input (Number/percent)	Information source (staff, audience, presenters, students)	Means of collecting information (survey, focus group, interviews, document review)

A Sample Evaluation Plan

Evaluation Questions	Indicators	Source of Data	Method to Collect	Who Will Collect	How Often	Cost	Who Will Analyze
1							
2							
3							
4							

Section 6

Putting it all
Together

Analyze and
Interpret

ANALYZING AND INTERPRETING INFORMATION

Analyzing quantitative and qualitative data is often performed by statisticians. But don't feel intimidated. There are certain basics which can help to make sense of your data.

Always start with your evaluation goals

When analyzing data (whether from questionnaires, interviews, focus groups, or whatever), always start with a review of your evaluation goals – the reason you undertook the evaluation in the first place. This will help you organize your data and focus your analysis.

- If you wanted to improve your program by identifying its strengths and weaknesses, you can organize data into program strengths, weaknesses and suggestions to improve the program.
- If you wanted to fully understand how your program works, you could organize data in the chronological order in which events occur.
- If your evaluation is focused on outcomes, you can categorize data according to the indicators for each outcome.

Basic analysis of quantitative information

For information other than commentary – ratings, rankings, yes's, no's,

- Make copies of your data and store the master copy away. Use the copy for making edits, cutting and pasting, etc.
- Tabulate the information, i.e., add up the number of ratings, rankings, yes's, and no's for each question.
- For ratings and rankings, consider computing a mean, or average, for each question. For example, "For question #1, the average ranking was 2.4". This is more meaningful than indicating, e.g., how many respondents ranked 1, 2, or 3.
- Consider conveying the range of answers, e.g., 20 people ranked "1", 30 ranked "2", and 20 people ranked "3".

Basic analysis of qualitative information

Respondents' verbal answers in interviews, focus groups, or written commentary on questionnaires

- Read through all the data
- Organize comments into similar categories such as: concerns, suggestions, strengths, weaknesses, similar experiences, program inputs, recommendations, outputs, or outcome indicators
- Label the categories or themes such as concerns or suggestions
- Attempt to identify patterns or associations and causal relationships in the themes such as: all people who attended programs in the evening had similar concerns; most people came from the same geographic area; most people were in the same salary range; or what processes or events respondents experienced during the program
- Keep all commentary for several years after completion in case it is needed for future reference²⁴

²⁴ Adapted from Carter McNamara, Authenticity Consulting, LLC. Adapted from *The Field Guide to Nonprofit Program Design, Marketing and Evaluation*. www.managementhelp.org/evaluatn/fnl_eval.htm#anchor1316141

Want to know how well individual programs are performing, determine what areas need improvement, or identify staff or programs that merit recognition? Compare the following:

- Recent outcomes with those from previous reporting periods
- Outcomes to targets, if the program has set such targets
- Client outcomes grouped by client characteristics such as age, gender, race and ethnicity, education level, zip code, household size
- Client outcomes grouped by various service characteristics, such as amount of service provided, location of service or venue of production, program content, or the particular staff providing the service to the client
- Outcomes with outcomes of similar programs in other organizations, if available

Seeking Explanations for Unusual Outcomes

- Talk with individual service delivery personnel and supervisors
- Hold “How Are We Doing?” meetings with staff to review results
- Form a working group of staff and volunteers to examine the problem
- Review client responses to survey questions that asked clients to rate specific service characteristics
- Review responses to open-ended questions in client surveys and those that probe specific aspects of services
- Hold focus group sessions with samples of clients to obtain their input
- Consider performing an in-depth evaluation, if findings are particularly important and resources are available²⁵

²⁵ Adapted from Elaine Morley and Linda M. Lampkin, The Urban Institute, *Using Outcome Information: Making data pay off*, 2004. <http://www.urban.org/publications/311040.html>

HOW TO ANALYZE THE STORY IN STORYTELLING

- **Group similar stories together**
- **Think about the representativeness of the stories**
Are they typical, extreme cases, special circumstances or what?
- **Step back and look for patterns**
- **Describe the patterns in writing**
- **Seek verification from research colleagues**
- **Compare results to other research findings**
- **Problems with credibility**
 - Authenticity - Truth
 - Accuracy - Memory Problems
 - Representativeness and Sampling
 - Generalizability / Transferability²⁶

²⁶ Richard Krueger website, www.tc.umn.edu/%7Erkrueger/index.html

FOCUS GROUP ANALYSIS

1. Start while still in the group

- Listen for inconsistent comments and probe for understanding
- Listen for vague or cryptic comments and probe for understanding
- Consider asking each participant a final preference question
- Offer a summary of key questions and seek confirmation

2. Immediately after the focus group

- Draw a diagram of seating arrangement
- Spot check tape recording to ensure proper operation
- Conduct moderator and assistant moderator debriefing
- Note themes, hunches, interpretations, and ideas
- Compare and contrast this focus group to other groups
- Label and file field notes, tapes and other materials

3. Soon after the focus group--within hours analyze individual focus group

- Make back-up copy of tapes and send tape to transcriptionist for computer entry if transcript is wanted
- Analyst listens to tape, reviews field notes and reads transcript if available
- Prepare report of the individual focus group in a question-by-question format with amplifying quotes
- Share report for verification with other researchers who were present at the focus group

4. Later--within days analyze the series of focus groups

- Compare and contrast results by categories of individual focus groups
- Look for emerging themes by question and then overall
- Construct typologies or diagram the analysis
- Describe findings and use quotes to illustrate

5. Finally, prepare the report

- Consider narrative style versus bulleted style
- Use a few quotes to illustrate
- Sequence could be question by question or by theme
- Share report for verification with other researchers
- Revise and finalize report

Focus Group Analysis Tips

WORDS

Think about both the actual words used by the participants and the meanings of those words. A variety of words and phrases will be used. You will need to determine the degree of similarity between these responses.

CONTEXT

Participant responses were triggered by a stimulus – a question asked by the moderator or a comment from another participant. Examine the context by finding the triggering stimulus and then interpret the comment in light of that environment. The response is interpreted in light of the preceding discussion and also by the tone and intensity of the oral comment.

INTERNAL CONSISTENCY

Participants in focus groups change and sometimes even reverse their positions after interaction with others. When there is a shift in opinion, trace the flow of the conversation to determine clues that might explain the change.

FREQUENCY OR EXTENSIVENESS

Some topics are discussed more by participants (extensiveness) and also some comments are made more often (frequency) than others. These topics could be more important or of special interest to participants. Also, consider what wasn't said or what received limited attention. Did you expect but not hear certain comments?

INTENSITY

Participants may talk about a topic with a special intensity or depth of feeling. They will use words that connote intensity or tell you directly about their strength of feeling. Intensity may be difficult to spot with transcripts alone because it is also communicated by the voice tone, speed, and emphasis on certain words. Some may display strength of feeling with a speed or excitement in the voice whereas others will speak slowly and deliberately.

SPECIFICITY

Responses that are specific and based on experiences should be given more weight than responses that are vague and impersonal. To what degree can the respondent provide details when asked a follow up probe? Greater attention is often placed on responses that are in the first person as opposed to hypothetical third person answers.

FINDING BIG IDEAS

One of the traps of analysis is not seeing the big ideas. Step back from the discussions by allowing an extra day for big ideas to percolate. For example, after finishing the analysis the researcher might set the report aside for a brief period and then jot down three or four of the most important findings. Assistant moderators or others skilled in qualitative analysis might review the process and verify the big ideas.²⁷

²⁷ Adapted from Richard Krueger website, www.tc.umn.edu/%7Erkrueger/index.html

INTERPRETING INFORMATION

- ❖ Consider using an **interpretation group**. This is a small group of 5-8 people with different backgrounds and involvements in the program or organization. This might include board members, management, staff members such as a program expert or bookkeeper, clients, funder, and content experts. Remember diversity of race, gender, and type of employer. This group is supplied with data analyses charts.

Ask each person to prepare their interpretation of the data before the meeting. They should ask themselves: What does this mean for the organization/program? What if anything needs to be done? Have each participant present their interpretations: strengths and weaknesses of the program or organization. The evaluator takes notes and writes the report.²⁸

- ❖ Attempt to put the information in perspective e.g., compare results to what you expected; management or program staff; any common standards for your services; original program goals (especially if you're conducting a program evaluation); indications of accomplishing outcomes; description of the program's experiences, strengths, weaknesses.
- ❖ Remember that statistics tell you *how many* but they don't tell you *how*.
- ❖ Consider recommendations to help program staff improve the program, conclusions about program operations or meeting goals.
- ❖ Record conclusions and recommendations in a report document, and associate interpretations to justify your conclusions or recommendations.

Section 6

Putting it all
Together

Reporting

REPORTING EVALUATION RESULTS

- The level and scope of content depends on to whom the report is intended, e.g., to funders, staff, audience, donors, the public, etc.
- Be sure the staff has a chance to carefully review and discuss the report. Translate recommendations to action plans, including who is going to do what about the program and by when.
- Funders will likely require a report that includes an executive summary (this is a summary of conclusions and recommendations, not a listing of what sections of information are in the report -- that's a table of contents); description of the organization and the program under evaluation; explanation of the evaluation goals, methods, and analysis procedures; listing of conclusions and recommendations; and any relevant attachments, e.g., inclusion of evaluation questionnaires, interview guides, etc. The funder may want the report to be delivered as a presentation, accompanied by an overview of the report. Or, the funder may want to review the report alone.
- Be sure to record the evaluation plans and activities in an **evaluation plan** which can be referenced when a similar program evaluation is needed in the future.²⁹
(See Putting It All Together section.)

Strategies for Presenting and Reporting Evaluation Findings

- Formal meetings to discuss findings
- Formal written reports
- Individual and informal conversations – over coffee, before/after staff meetings
- Memos
- E-mail messages
- Visual media – photos, videos, PowerPoint presentations, a one-sheet synopsis
- Funder reports (may require specific formats)
- Marketing or capital campaigns – information brochures, proposals for new initiatives
- Organizational website and newsletter

²⁹ Adapted from Carter McNamara, Authenticity Consulting, LLC. Adapted from *The Field Guide to Nonprofit Program Design, Marketing and Evaluation*. www.managementhelp.org/evaluatn/fnl_eval.htm#anchor1316141

THE REPORT

Create useful displays of the analyses of your data. Producing a report that is *clear, comprehensive, and concise* may be challenging. However, users have limited time and must be able to read a report and draw conclusions without being overwhelmed with data.

An initial detailed report might be created for internal use with subsequent lighter versions developed for external stakeholders (funders, donors, partners, collaborators, community).

Introduction

- Note the purpose of the evaluation
- Emphasize the issues or questions to be discussed
- Include the source of the data you're discussing

Presentation

- Display the results in graphs or tables to summarize findings – be succinct and visual
- Summarize your findings regarding
 - how the program is working – its strengths, weaknesses, and effectiveness
 - if the program was implemented as planned
 - factors affecting the program
 - progress made toward meeting outcomes (See Big Picture section.)

Recommendation

- Describe how the program, staff, and support are affected. On the basis of the findings, suggest possible appropriate next steps.
- Discuss the implications for further evaluation activities. (See What Next section.)

To present the information effectively:

- Keep it simple
- Include a summary of major points
- Don't crowd too much on a page
- Avoid technical jargon and define any unfamiliar terms
- Define each outcome indicator
- Highlight points of interest on tables with bold type, circles, or arrows
- If feasible, use color to help highlight and distinguish key findings
- Label charts and tables clearly—titles, rows, columns, axes
- Identify source and date of the data presented and note limitations
- Provide context (perhaps a history or comparisons with other arts organizations or the community)
- Add variety to data presentation by using bar or pie charts to illustrate points³⁰

³⁰ Adapted from Elaine Morley and Linda M. Lampkin, The Urban Institute, *Using Outcome Information: Making data pay off*, 2004. <http://www.urban.org/publications/311040.html>

COMMUNICATION PLAN WORKSHEET

Who Needs	What Information	When	How

Section 7

**Change Based
on Evaluation
Findings**

NEXT STEPS: CHANGE BASED ON EVALUATION FINDINGS

You have worked hard to ask the right questions, received the answers, analyzed the data and reported your findings. So what will you do with this glossy report?

How to use evaluation findings – In House

- Discuss the findings at staff meetings, rehearsals, board meetings, volunteer get-togethers - wherever you have stakeholders gathered together. Use these findings as the basis for a dialogue about what is going well and why. Also discuss what has not gone so well and why.
- Ask stakeholders if they agree with the findings. How does it influence their perception of how things are going?
- The results should show where changes might be made in your programming or within your organizational structure. What will you do differently in your classroom, workshop, or production planning as a result of this evaluation?
- Do the results identify staff needs/training, volunteer training, board training or technology assistance that is required?
- Don't just discuss it, make a plan of action. The results may support short-term, annual, or long-range planning.
- Take a look at what you are trying to accomplish: outcomes, outputs, and activities. Do the findings show they are realistic? Should you raise or lower the bar in expectations for your next program cycle?
- The data you have collected guides budget planning and justifies resource allocation or reallocation.³¹

³¹ Adapted from the Greater Kalamazoo Evaluation Project, 1997, *Evaluation for Learning, Participant Manual*, 2nd edition 2005

How to use evaluation findings – Externally

- **Evidence** – Your evaluation can provide anecdotes and numbers (qualitative and quantitative data). This evidence documents credibility to the public and all stakeholders. Annual reports, newsletters, television and radio interviews highlight program benefits to potential participants.
- **Partnering** – The findings help organizations identify various opportunities for partnering with others, leading to joint programming.
- **Funding** – Findings assist the organization in obtaining funding. Organizations use outcome findings in their requests for funding, progress reports and final reports. Qualitative and quantitative data further strengthen the case for programs seeking new or expanding services.³²

³² Adapted from the Greater Kalamazoo Evaluation Project, 1997, *Evaluation for Learning, Participant Manual*, 2nd edition 2005

Section 8

Evaluating the Evaluation Process

EVALUATING THE EVALUATION PROCESS

Periodically, a committee of representatives should take a look at the evaluation process in your organization and look for ways to improve it. Basic questions to ask are:

- Is evaluation appropriate? Is it useful? Has it led to improvements in programs and services? Are stakeholders engaged in evaluation? Does staff need further training in evaluation?
- Is it practical? Does it work well? Does the value of evaluation to participants, the organization, the community, and funders justify the costs involved?
- Are there any ethical issues related to evaluation?
- Are results of evaluation accurate and unbiased?
- What could be done to improve the evaluation process?³³

³³ Adapted from the Greater Kalamazoo Evaluation Project, 1997, Evaluation for Learning, Participant Manual, 2nd edition 2005

BUDGETING FOR EVALUATION³⁴

Keys to Effective Budgeting

- Know the organization's evaluation vision – See The Big Picture section
- Know the program areas to be evaluated
- Establish a timeframe and specific deadlines to keep the process moving smoothly
- Identify responsibilities for each task
- Consider the material costs associated with each activity as well as the time required of staff
- Keep the process simple and the budget realistic
- The evaluation budget must be consistent with the organization's long-term objectives
- Confer with those who have or will participate in the evaluation process
- Create a draft budget
- Seek review and comment from appropriate shareholders
- Revise as many times as needed before submitting budget for approval
- Schedule periodic reviews of evaluation expenditures during the year to ensure budget is a true reflection of current conditions and needs
- Be flexible and amend the budget if necessary

BUDGET CATEGORIES

OPERATIONAL

Staff salaries

Benefits

PROGRAMMATIC

Communication (postage, phone, fax)

Printing/Copying (preparation of data collection instruments, reports)

Printed Materials (purchase of data collection instruments, books)

Supplies/Equipment (computers, scanners and software)

Travel (to sites, professional conferences, or workshops)

³⁴ Karen Russon and Craig Russon, Evaluation Capacity Development Group Toolkit, 2007

Some budgeting rules of thumb³⁵

- An evaluation budget will range from five to ten percent of the total programming budget.
- Typically the higher the total programming budget, the lower the percentage devoted to evaluation.
- The most significant cost for evaluation is that of staff time allocated to evaluation.
- Data collection and analysis typically takes up about one-half of the evaluation budget; the other half goes to evaluation design and reporting.
- Be sure to consider the trade-offs between evaluation quality and budget; a larger budget USUALLY allows for higher quality work.
- Highly visible or political evaluations are more expensive as they will be more heavily scrutinized for comprehensiveness and accuracy. More routine evaluations may use existing data and are thus less expensive.
- Evaluation expenses are reduced when there are collaborative efforts with other organizations performing similar activities or joint programs.

³⁵ Karen Russon and Craig Russon, Evaluation Capacity Development Group Toolkit, 2007

REDUCING COSTS

Small organizations should consider leveraging their resources for conducting evaluation by collaborating with other organizations to conduct evaluation work involving the same issues or initiatives. Group numerous external and internal data collection and analysis exercises as much as possible to avoid redundancy and achieve economies of scale in data collection. Also, search for extra funding from government agencies for special issues or groups such as issues relating to women, youth, minorities, or the environment.

Involving assistants is a good way to reduce costs, speed up the flow of work, and train younger administrators, staff, and volunteers working in the organization. Graduate students from local universities can be energetic; good typists; who are familiar with statistical, graphic, and other practical software; plus they are usually genuinely interested in learning about the work of the organization. Use of in-kind services such as conference rooms and long-distance phone service can help keep costs down. Board members can be a good source for everything from evaluation skills and experience they may possess to being able to provide a venue or refreshments for a focus group or access to a high-end copier to print and collate survey materials. Thinking creatively, there may be untapped resources right in front of you

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REFERENCES

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APPENDIX



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Candidate Outcome Indicators: Performing Arts Program

Implementing an outcome monitoring process enables organizations to track progress in achieving the program's mission. With this information, program managers can better develop budgets, allocate resources and improve their services. This document includes the following suggestions for starting or improving outcome measurement efforts:

1. **Outcome sequence chart** – *Identifies key outcomes presented in the sequence that are normally expected to occur.* The chart illustrates how one outcome leads to the next and identifies specific indicators that might be used to track each outcome. Intermediate outcomes tend to be on the left, and end (or final) outcomes are on the right. The program description at the top of the chart is meant to encompass a range of similar programs.
2. **Candidate outcome indicators** – *Lists outcomes and associated indicators as a starting point for deciding which outcomes to track.* They were chosen based on a review of the program area and consultation with program experts. Only outcome indicators are included (not physical outputs, such as number of classes held; not efficiency, such as cost per counseling session; and not organization issues, such as success in fundraising or staffing). The focus is on program beneficiaries (clients, customers, citizens, participants) and what has been accomplished for them. A data source or collection procedure is suggested for each indicator.

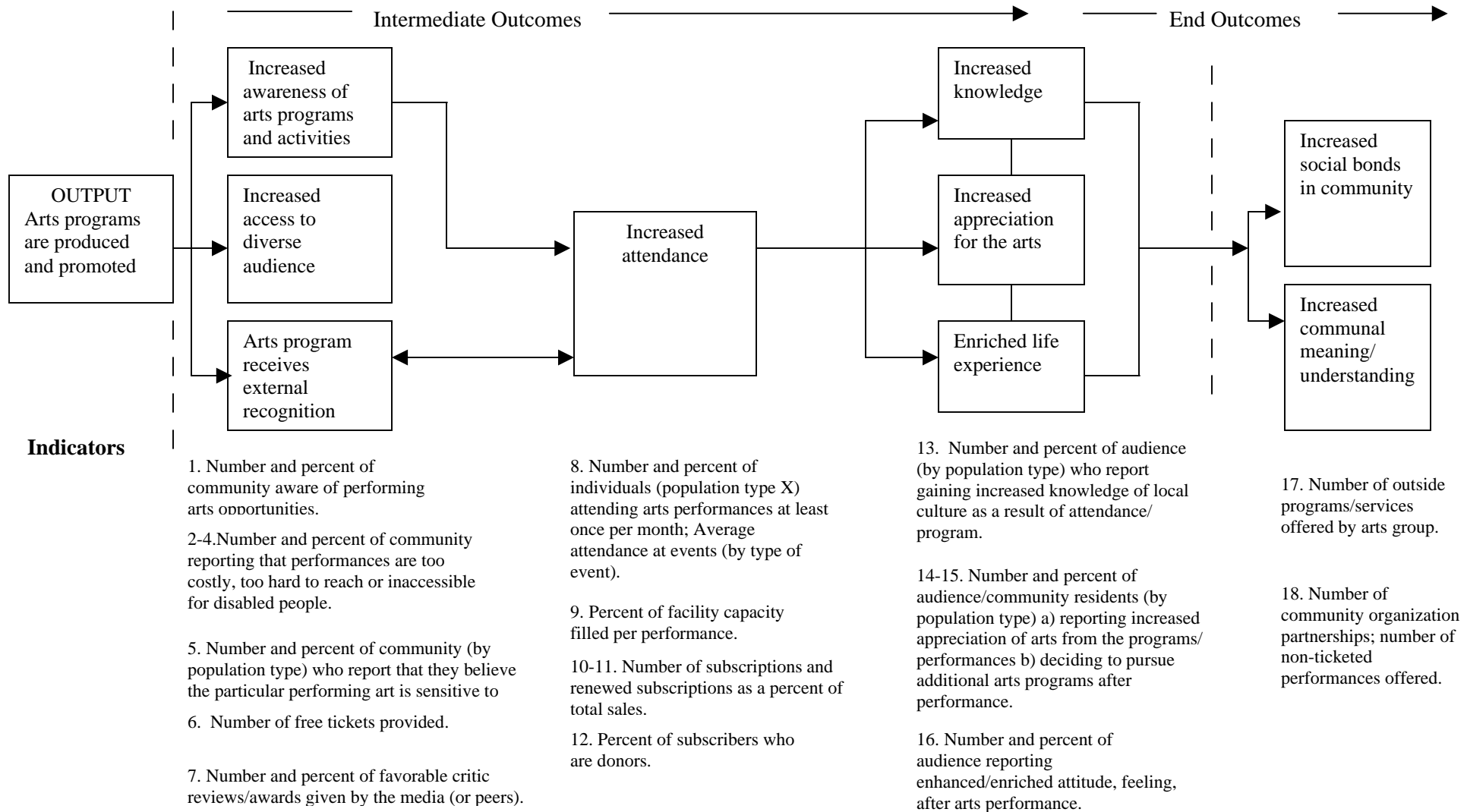
Suggestions and Limitations for Use of the Materials

- Involve others in deciding which outcomes and indicators to track. Obtain input from staff, board members, and clients. As an early step, prepare your own version of an outcome sequence chart—one that you believe fits the needs of your program.
- Review the project report for additional ideas on relevant indicators and additional resources: *Building a Common Framework to Measure Nonprofit Performance.*
- Tabulate the outcome information by various categories of clients to see if outcomes are different for different clients (e.g., gender, age group, income level, handicap level, and race/ethnicity). Use that information to help better target your efforts.
- Start with a small number of the indicators, especially if you have had only very little experience with such data collection and have very limited resources. Add more outcomes and indicators to the performance measurement system later, as you find that information is likely to be useful.
- Outcome information seldom, if ever, tells *why* the outcomes have occurred. Many internal and external factors can contribute to any outcome. Instead, use the outcome data to identify *what* works well and what does not. Use the data to determine for which *categories of clients* your procedures and policies are working well and for which they are not working well. To the extent that the program is not working as well as expected, then attempt to find out the reasons. This investigation process leads to continuous learning and program improvement.

Performing Arts Program Description

To increase arts appreciation and social bonds in the community, these organizations provide either communal or specific performing arts programs in music, theater, and dance. This program area includes both institutional value and social value. This program area does not include arts education or visual arts.

Outcomes Sequence Chart



Audience satisfaction

Satisfaction with program services is an outcome that occurs within almost every program area, yet does not necessarily have a sequential placement. The indicator may be: Percent of audience (by population type) reporting being very satisfied with their performing arts experience.

Sources Consulted: Community Foundations, America's Children: Key National Indicators of Well-Being (Annual) (Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics), 2000; Audit Commission and Improvement and Development Agency's Library of Local Performance Indicators, 2003; National Endowment for the Arts: FY 2004 Performance Plan, 200; Gifts of the Muse: Reframing the Debate about the Benefits of the Arts, 2004, Chicago Community Trust

PERFORMING ARTS

Program Description:

To increase arts appreciation and social bonds in the community, these organizations provide either communal or specific performing arts programs in music, theater, and dance. This program area includes both institutional value and social value. This program area does not include arts education or visual arts.

	Common Outcomes	Program Specific Outcome	Indicator	Data Collection Strategy	Note	Outcome Stage
1	Increased Awareness	Increased awareness of arts programs and activities	Number and percent of community aware of the particular performing arts opportunities.	Citizen survey	See Note #1	Intermediate
2	Increased Access to Services	Increased access to diverse audience	Number and percent of community reporting that performances are too costly.	Audience survey after performance	See Note #2	Intermediate
3	Increased Access to Services	Increased access to diverse audience	Number and percent of community reporting that performances are too hard to reach.	Citizen survey		Intermediate
4	Increased Access to Services	Increased access to diverse audience	Number and percent of community reporting that performances are inaccessible for disabled people.	Citizen survey		Intermediate
5	Increased Access to Services	Increased access to diverse audience	Number and percent of community (by population type) who report that they believe the particular performing art is sensitive to their culture.	Citizen survey	See Note #2	Intermediate
6	Increased Access to Services	Increased access to diverse audience	Number of free tickets provided.	Reviews or press and other media/venue Records		Intermediate
7	Positive Benefit as a Result of Program	Achieve external recognition	Number and percent of favorable critic reviews/awards given by the media (or peers).	Reviews or press and other media/venue Records		Intermediate
8	Increased Participation/ Attendance	Increased attendance	Number and percent of individuals (population type X) attending arts performances at least once per month; and/or average attendance at events (by type of event).	Survey of citizens/audience/ ticket stub count	See Note #2 See Note #3	Intermediate
9	Increased Participation/ Attendance	Increased attendance	Percent of facility capacity filled per performance.	Ticket stub count	See Note #3	Intermediate
10	Increased Participation/ Attendance	Increased attendance	Number of subscriptions (seasonal, series, or annual)	Survey of clients/audience	See Note #3	Intermediate
11	Increased Participation/ Attendance	Increased attendance	Number and percent of renewed subscription as a percent of total sales	Survey of clients/audience	See Note #3	Intermediate
12	Increased Participation/ Attendance	Increased attendance	Percent of subscribers who are donors	Organizational records	See Note #3	Intermediate
13	Build Skills/ Knowledge	Increased knowledge	Number and percent of audience (by population type) who report gaining increased knowledge of local culture as a result of attendance/ program.	Audience survey after performance	See Note #2	Intermediate

PERFORMING ARTS

Program Description:

To increase arts appreciation and social bonds in the community, these organizations provide either communal or specific performing arts programs in music, theater, and dance. This program area includes both institutional value and social value. This program area does not include arts education or visual arts.

	Common Outcomes	Program Specific Outcome	Indicator	Data Collection Strategy	Note	Outcome Stage
14	Develop Understanding about an Issue/ Topic	Increased appreciation for arts	Number and percent of audience/community residents (by population type) reporting increased appreciation of arts from the programs/performances.	Audience survey after performance /citizen survey	See Note #2	Intermediate
15	Develop Understanding about an Issue/ Topic	Increased appreciation for arts	Number and percent of audience (population type X) deciding to pursue additional arts programs after performance	Audience survey after performance	See Note #2	Intermediate/End
16	Positive Benefit as a Result of Program	Enriched life experience	Number and percent of audience reporting enhanced/enriched attitude, feeling, after arts performance	Audience survey after performance		Intermediate/End
17	Positive Benefit as a Result of Program	Increased social bonds in community	Number of outside programs/services offered by arts group	Survey of community residents		End
18	Develop Understanding about an Issue/ Topic	Increased community meaning/understanding	Number of community organization partnerships; number of non-ticketed performances	Organizational records		End
	Client Satisfaction	Audience satisfaction	Percent of audience (by population type) reporting being very satisfied with their performing arts experience			

Note #1: Note that if a survey is conducted this permits obtaining considerable info on many aspects of a program -- information likely to be of particular operational value to the program.

Note #2: Population types may be defined as demographic groups including but not limited to age, race or gender. It may also include distance traveled and from which specific geographic area. It may also include disabled individuals to assess access.

Note #3: Attendance Outcome should be understood as including increased participation: broadening, diversifying, and deepening the engagement

Note #4: While it is important to recognize these end outcomes as important, they are unlikely to be measured in a practical way by the program.

Sources Consulted: Community Foundations, America's Children: Key National Indicators of Well-Being (Annual) (Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics), 2000; Audit Commission and Improvement and Development Agency's Library of Local Performance Indicators, 2003; National Endowment for the Arts: FY 2004 Performance Plan, 200; Gifts of the Muse: Reframing the Debate about the Benefits of the Arts, 2004, Chicago Community Trust