

Ideas for facilitating logic model development

Because much of the value of logic modeling is in creating a shared understanding of a program, it is advisable to create a logic model using a group process. Broader participation in logic model development results in a higher quality and more useful logic model.

Think about time that will be devoted to the process, number of meetings, size and composition of the group. Create a “plan” for developing the logic model with roles, responsibilities, timeline and resources needed. Any of the following options can be broken into smaller segments and accomplished over several meetings.

Option #1

- Cover wall with paper. Write the long-term impact on the far right side (or top, or bottom).
- Identify resources, activities, participants & outcomes. Individuals or groups of two might write each of these on individual post-it notes – one item per post-it note. Ensure that outcomes are written as outcome statements and that “participants” are specified.
- Post the notes on the wall; work together to position all the post-it notes in a logical order. Check the “if-then” relationships. Identify gaps, missing links in the causal chain. Add more post-it notes as necessary. Remove those that are duplicates or fail to fit in the order – place these in a “parking lot” for later consideration.
- Use markers to draw arrows connecting the post-it notes.
- Record and make copies for all.
- Plan another meeting to review and refine the logic model.

Option #2

- Divide people working on the same program into smaller subgroups.
- Each subgroup creates a logic model of the program, using techniques described above.
- Sub-groups bring their individual models back to the whole group to compare and discuss.
- The whole group works together to merge and create one logic model for the program.

Option #3

1st meeting - Purpose: to create a ‘chain of outcomes’ for the program

- Invite members to a group meeting. Ask them to bring a list of program outcomes each outcome written on a 3x5 index card (one outcome per card). Instruct members how to write the outcome as an “outcome statement” that designates WHO is intended to change and the CHANGE expected (e.g., participating teens will increase their money management skills).
- Cover wall with paper. On the right side, at the top, write LONG-TERM OUTCOMES. On the left side, at the top, write SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES.
- Ask each individual to tape his/her index card along a continuum from shorter to longer-term outcomes.

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Ideas for facilitating logic model development (continued)

- Members should work together and line up their outcomes. Encourage members to cluster their outcomes by participant (target group) category with a chain of outcomes for each target group. You may wish to write the names of the various target audiences in a column on the left side.
- Facilitate discussion and consensus about what goes where. Identify gaps and add more cards as needed. Remove duplicates or any that fail to fit in the sequence, place them in a “parking lot” for later consideration.
- Discuss and list all assumptions underlying the chain of outcomes as depicted.
- Discuss and list all external factors that may influence or be influenced by the outcomes as depicted.
- Finalize the chain of outcomes and identify gaps, omissions, concerns, issues. Check the “parking lot” and include or reject items.
- Copy and send to each member. Schedule next meeting.

2nd meeting - Purpose: to link resources and activities to the identified outcomes

- Review and refine the “chain of outcomes.” Move to ACTIVITIES and RESOURCES.
Brainstorm:
 - o What do we do (the activities) and who do we reach (participation)
 - o What resources do we invest?
- Volunteers record each item on a separate index card as the group brainstorms.
- Place more paper to the left of the “chain of outcomes.” People place the index cards on the paper, connecting the resources and activities to the chain of outcomes.
- Draw lines and arrows connecting the various items on the logic model.
- Discuss and refine until members are satisfied with the composite logic model
- Some may want to spend more time than others trying to create the “perfect” logic model. They might be encouraged to work on the logic model separately.

Option #4

- Use web-based systems, email, or other distance communication methods to create a logic model for a geographically dispersed group.
- Adapt the preceding ideas to facilitate discussion and sharing of logic model drafts using distance communication.

Option # 5

- Subcommittee creates the logic model
- Certain individuals may have experience, interest, or particular expertise in logic model development. This individual or small group may be “in charge” of drafting the logic model. (You may hire an external consultant to do this)
- They create a draft for group review and input.
- They continue to refine and share the logic model with the full group until the logic model reflects the group’s description of the program

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Ideas for facilitating logic model development (continued)

TIPS:

- Work in small, interactive group settings that are collaborative and sensitive.
- Use everyday, culturally appropriate examples to introduce ideas.
- Do not fixate on the use of difficult terminology. Use words and terms that make the most sense. Sometimes, simply linking activities to a range of results, which in turn lead to other results, may be more appropriate (without using the language of inputs-outputs-outcomes).
- Build on a sense of shared vision and participatory decision-making. If this is lacking, the value and use of a logic model is likely to be minimal.
- Create a draft model; revise it; continue to refine it over time.
- Identify a mentor or coach for each logic model developed who questions the strengths and weaknesses of the underlying program theory and assumptions.
- Recognize that logic model development is not quick or easy.
- Encourage participants to post their logic models where they can be seen and used.
- Provide for ongoing technical assistance and support.

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