

12. Wrap up/review to planning

12.1 Planning success

12.2 Some 'truisms' regarding evaluation

12.1 *Planning success*

Your planning has been successful if you now have:

- key questions for investigation
- a set of evaluation criteria
- the involvement of major stakeholders in the enterprise
- a variety of data gathering and analysis tools to be used
- the confidence that evaluation results will be of use, and will be used, by those that need them
- a plan to monitor and evaluate the evaluation itself.

12.2 *Some 'truisms' regarding evaluation*

'Truisms' abound in evaluation – here are some from Scriven, a renowned writer on evaluation.

- 'Pure outcome evaluation usually yields too little too late; and pure process evaluation is usually invalid or premature.
- Non comparative evaluations are comparatively useless.
- Formative evaluation is attractive, but summative evaluation is imperative.
- 'Pulling it all together' is where most evaluations fall apart.
- Validity does not ensure credibility.
- Validity and credibility do not ensure utility.
- Program evaluation involves research and ends with a report, but research reports are negative paradigms for evaluation reports.
- Preference and commitment do not entail bias.'

From Scriven, M. S. (1993). *Hard-won Lessons in Program Evaluation (New Directions in Program Evaluation, No. 58)*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

[One could add

- 'There is no one 'right' way to evaluate. Use the approach (or approaches) that suits you, the questions you wish to explore, and the particular evaluation situation.]

Let's hope all goes well. Finally remember that a plan is just a guide map or tool to get you to an end destination. Plans are not meant to be immutable, nor are they meant to 'take over' and get in the way of the actual enterprise.

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