Program Evaluation

To Serve Well, and to Attract Funding, Assess the Results of Your Work

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Some nonprofits carry out good activities, even exciting or inspiring activities, and are content with that. Other nonprofits know it's not the activities that count, but the results. To measure results – outcomes – changes in people's lives – requires research.

Who wants program evaluation?

Responsible, professional program evaluation is for nonprofits that want to serve well, serve better, and attract greater funding. Evaluation leads to change. Astute organizations want to change because there's always a way to improve, and because the world itself is always changing. Foundations and major funders want to know that programs are effective, in measurable terms.

What does program evaluation look like?

A *Program Evaluation Report* is a 15-page document that looks at one specific program, initiative, or department within the wider work of a nonprofit. It introduces the organization, describes the specific program and its rationale, explains the evaluation process, presents findings, and gives recommendations. It is a research report: factual and descriptive. The data is presented in an accessible, engaging, non-technical format that can lead directly to program improvement and fundraising applications.

For nonprofits with limited experience in evaluation, this product is a good place to start – to evaluate one element of the work before trying to roll out a more extensive plan for organization-wide assessment.

Evaluation and innovation

Program evaluation is especially powerful for innovations or new initiatives. The best time to plan evaluation is when the program itself is being planned. To knit evaluation in from the start forces leaders to carefully define desired outcomes, which improves the design of the innovation and sets it on a path to greater effectiveness and impact.

How do we get this?

The process usually involves agreeing on the project, a series of interviews with organization leadership and program staff, a site visit, collaborative research design, gathering of data, and a process of compilation, analysis, writing, review, and publication.

+ Standard cost: $8,000.
+ Standard timeframe: two months.

If this sounds interesting to you, please contact Michael for a no-obligation, initial conversation.

Michael Jaffarian is a consultant to nonprofits, with an emphasis on research. He

served as the executive director of a thriving nonprofit in Singapore, has worked as a professional researcher for 30 years, and has written and published 130+ articles and book contributions in the field. Michael helps nonprofits thrive and change the world!

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