

Workshop: Outcomes-Based Evaluation (OBE)

How to Measure Results so as to Serve Well and Attract Major Funding

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. Outputs are the things you do – your programs or activities. Outcomes are the changes that happen in peoples' lives as a result of the things you do. It's easier to measure outputs. It's more difficult to measure outcomes, but way more important.

Who Wants OBE?

Many foundations, major donors, and astute philanthropists ask, "What are you trying to accomplish?" and then, "How are you measuring that?" This requires responsible, professional OBE. More than that, OBE leads to program improvement. If a nonprofit evaluates its work and monitors its results, it can find out what's working well, what's working poorly, and what's not working at all. Funders respect the equation that says, "measure – change – measure again."

What Happens in This Workshop?

Participants learn about OBE – what is it, why it's important, and how to design evaluation systems. They develop basic skills in how to write outcome statements, choose data-gathering methods, create survey instruments, develop a *Research Plan*, and prepare and respond to an

Evaluation Report. These may be simple or sophisticated, depending on what best advances the work. The Workshop is divided between presentation of content, practical exercises, team tasks, and reporting back for discussion, comment, further learning, and refinement of plans. This process may or may not produce OBE plans that are ready for implementation – but either way, it provides an excellent start.

Evaluation and Innovation

OBE is especially powerful for innovations or new initiatives. The best time to plan the evaluation is when you are planning the program itself. Knitting evaluation in from the start forces leaders to 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, recruitment of participants, conducting the Workshop, and delivery of a *Post-Workshop Memorandum*.

- + Standard timeframe: a one-day Workshop.
- + Standard fee: \$2,600.
- + The content can also be presented in a three-hour seminar that provides only instruction and no guided exercises.

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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