

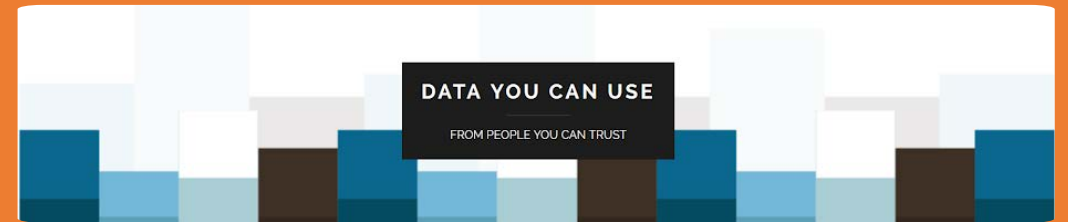
What's YOUR impact?

An Introduction to Measuring the
Results of Your Work

Data Day Workshop

Oct 15, 2025

Katie Pritchard



The Wealth of Data...

- Research shows that the probability of receiving funding is closely linked to applicants' ability to use data in proposals....

Successful proposals (\$)

- Used data well 100%
- Didn't use data well --

Unfunded proposals (No \$)

- Used data well 41%
- Didn't use data well 59%

Necessary but not sufficient

- [Building the Data Capacity of Local Nonprofits](#)
- **Analysis of Community Count proposals**



What's YOUR Impact? An Introduction to Measuring Your Organization's Impact

Our agenda—Three Tools

- Theory of Change- Impact Challenge
- Logic Models- Alignment, timing and measurement clues
- Asking Better Questions for Quality Data



Assumptions for this workshop

1. Funders, board members, staff and clients want to know our impact
2. We're not very good at knowing what our impact is.
3. We're not always clear about how our strategies lead to impact.
4. We're less good at measuring it.
5. Before we can measure it, we need to define it.
6. Sometimes our expectations are unrealistic.
7. There are tools that can help us get better at this.

What IS Impact?

- NOT just what you wish for
- NOT proving it's because of you
- **What's different because of what you've done?**
- Common Parlance: Impact = Influence or effect
- *Evaluator's Disclaimer

This is about gathering the evidence that you need to demonstrate that your organization's work is effective and makes a difference.

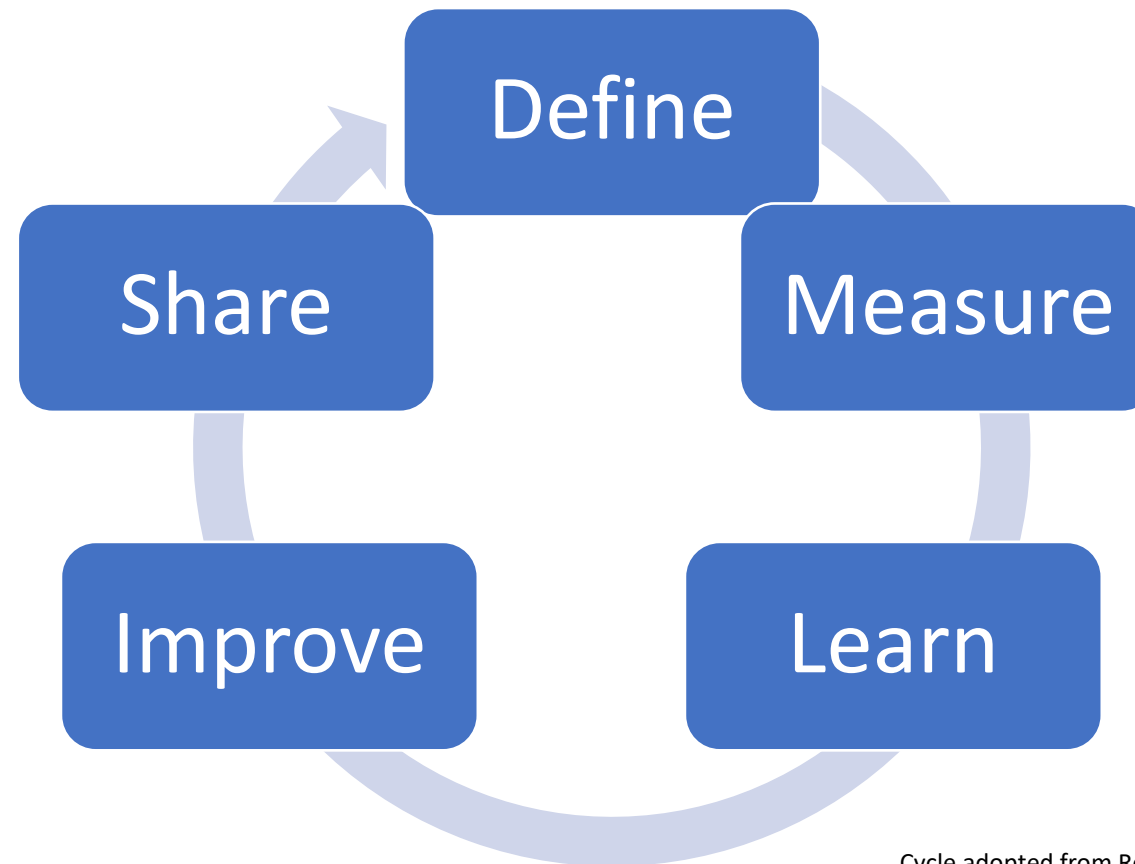


Before you worry
about how you'll
measure it.....

Be very clear about what “IT” is



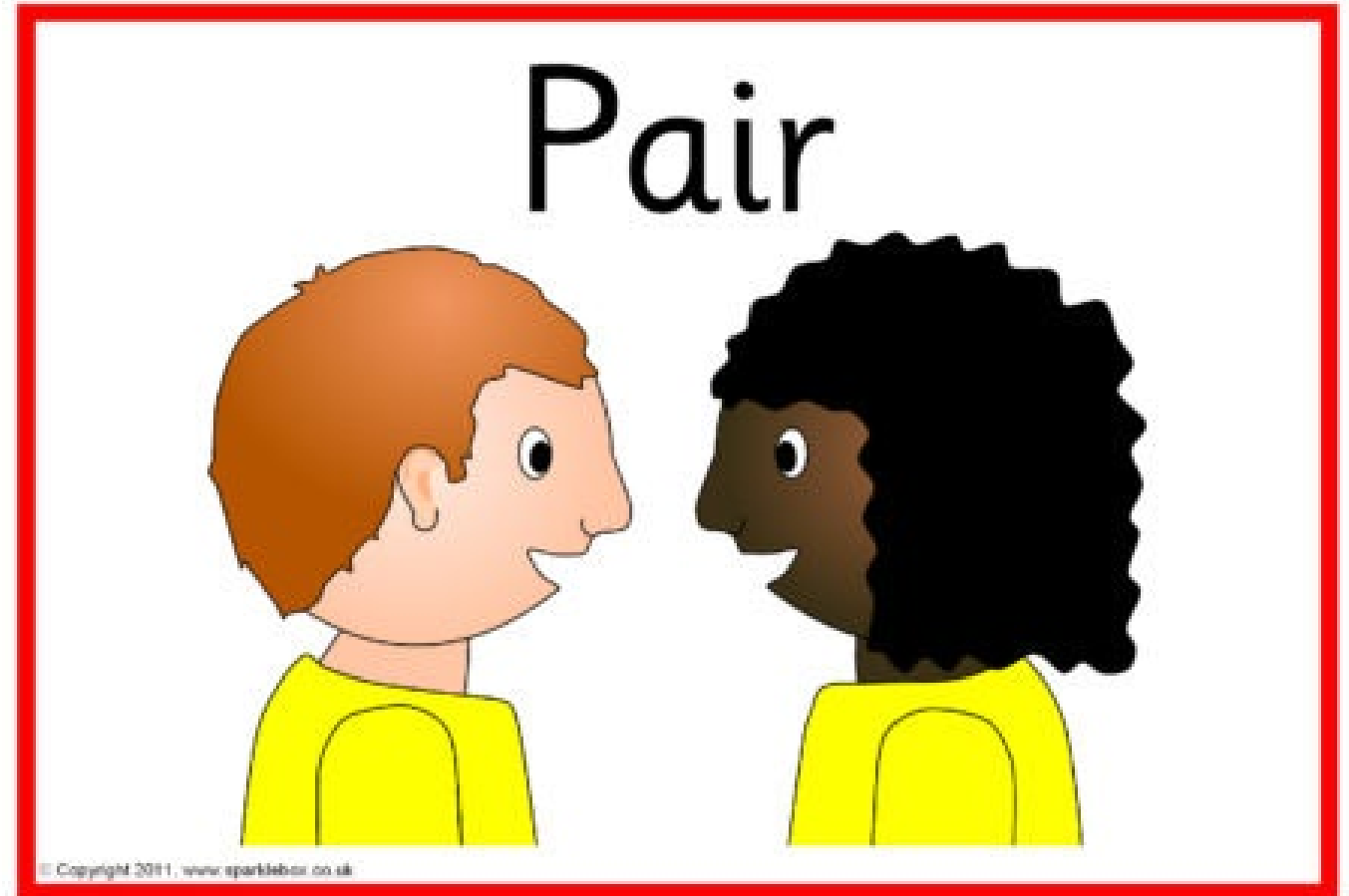
Measuring anything is an Ongoing Process



Cycle adopted from Results Lab, DataKind UK and Bridgespan

Impact– 5 minute Pair Share

- Find someone you don't know.
- Introduce yourself and your organization
- Describe your organization's impact
- Do you have evidence to support that?



Where is your organization in this process?



What's impact?



We have a pretty good idea of what it is, but need help measuring and telling the story.



We know our impact, measure it regularly, report our results and use our data to improve our services.



Where to look to find impact?

- Ask Board
- Ask Staff
- Ask Partners
- Ask Funders
- **Ask Clients**
- Grant applications
- Annual reports
- Mission statements
- Similar organizations

Take the impact challenge!

(adopted from Jake Cohen)

- Talk to Three People: Think of 3 people who use your programs or services
- Ask: What did you learn from the program? What decisions or changes did it help you with? Did you do anything differently?
- Be curious: Ask if that made a difference for others? How?
- Be really curious: Were there unexpected changes or other things that happened?

A large orange circle on the left side of the slide, partially cut off by the edge.

Three paths to improvement-

- Theory of Change
- A useful logic model
- Better data gathering – questions



Theory of Change

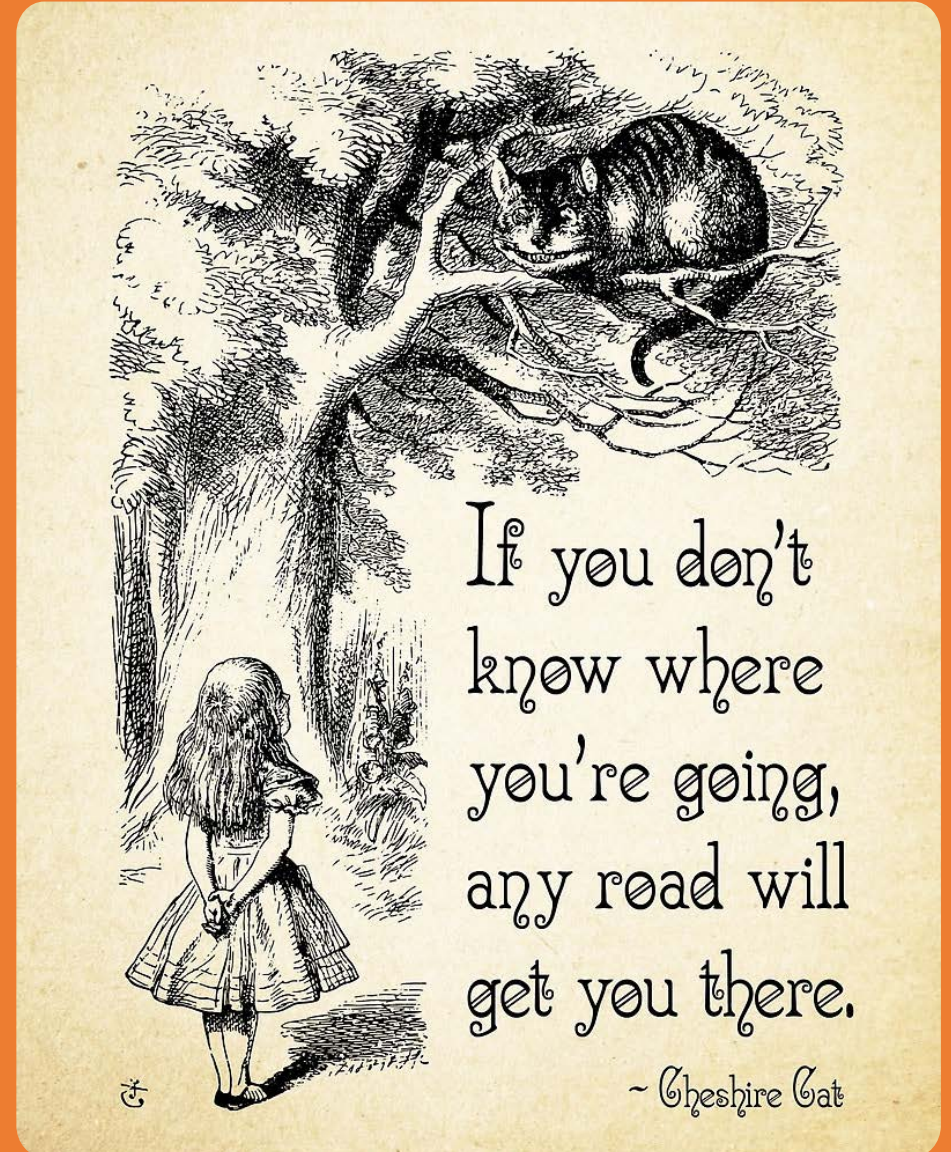
Theory of Change

What is a Theory of Change?

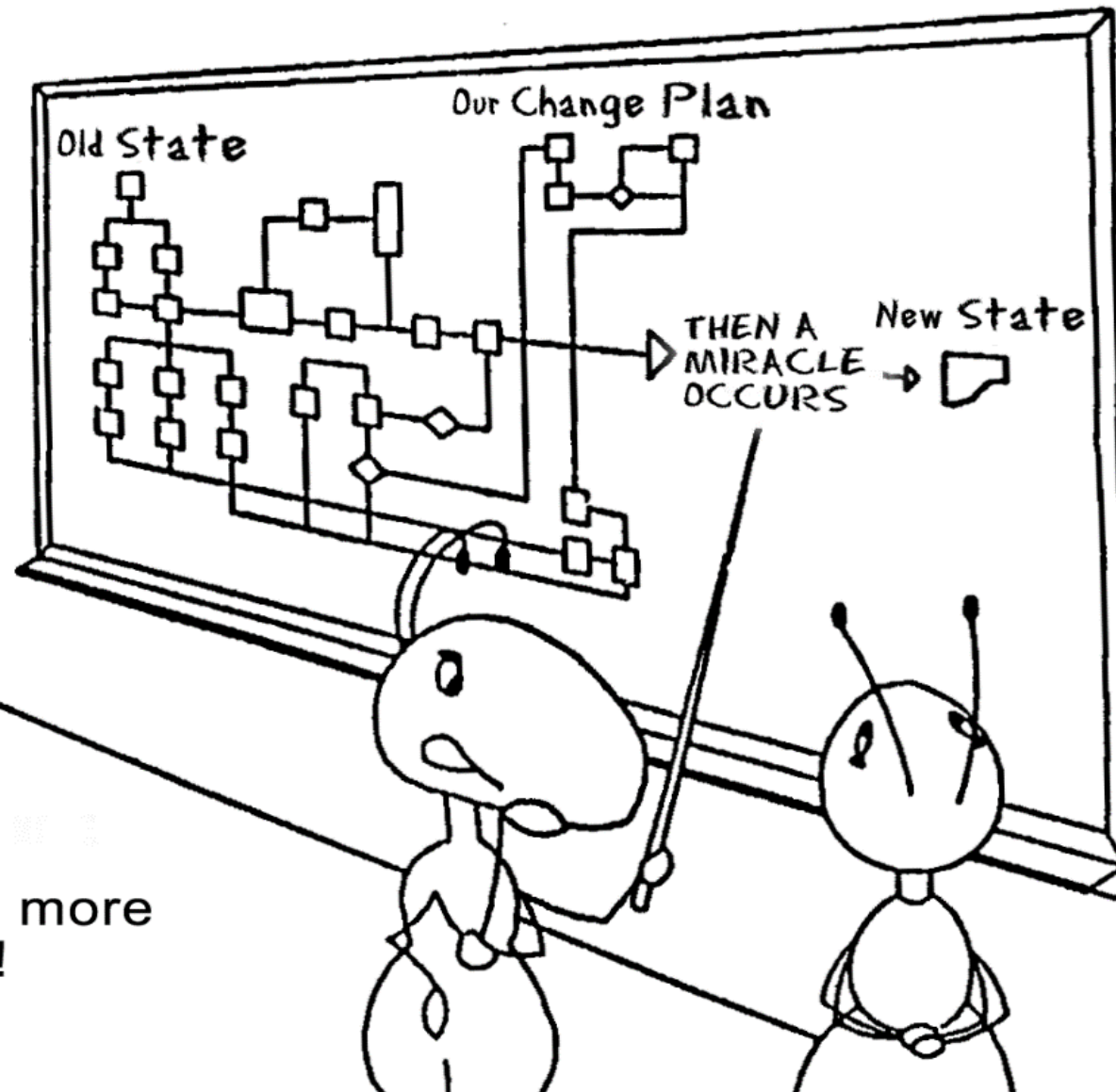
- Both a “process” and a “product.”
- A team sport that requires you to be explicit or specific about:
 - what you are trying to achieve (your big, hairy, audacious goal) – BHAG
 - what needs to happen for this to be true
 - what strategies do you need to undertake to make it happen
 - what are your underlying assumptions



Why?



Good work,
But I think we
need just a little more
detail right here!



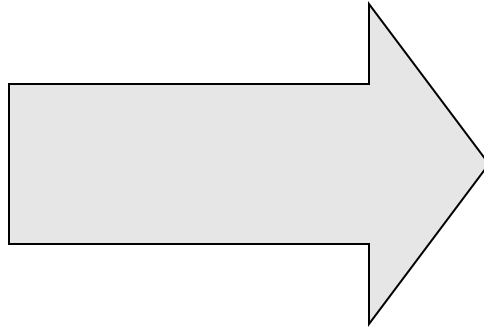
**Hope is
not a
plan**

What Is the Value of Creating a TOC?

- Articulates **assumptions** about the change process
- Creates an **honest picture** of the steps required to reach a goal.
- Opportunity to incorporate **stakeholders *input and insights***
- Encourages a realistic assessment of whether it is **reasonable** to expect to accomplish goals with the time and resources available.

Logical Arguments

If **X**



Then **Y**



Here is my Theory of Change for this Workshop

1. If we were better at defining our impact, we'd be better at knowing what to measure
2. If we asked the right people about our impact, we'd have better results
3. If we were better at measuring our impact, we'd know ways to strengthen our impact (we'd have better results)
4. If we asked better questions, we'd have better data
5. If we had better data, we'd have more funding.
6. If we had more funding, we'd have greater impact!

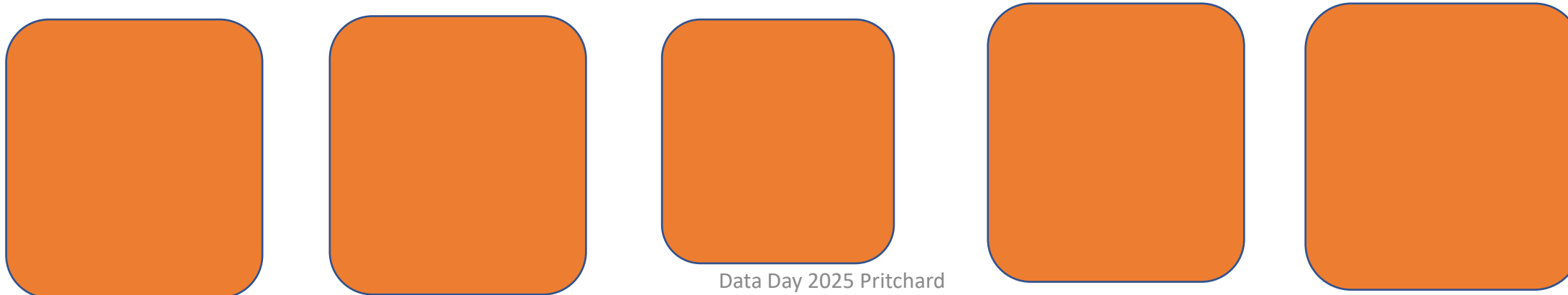
1. Long-term goal:
BHAG

Milwaukee's nonprofits, governments and
philanthropy use data to improve services and results

2. Pre-conditions: (what outcomes are required?)



3. strategies/interventions: (what strategies are required?)



1. Long-term impact:
(BHAG*)

Milwaukee's nonprofits, government and philanthropy have measurable impact

2. Pre-conditions: (what **outcomes** are required?)

Better understanding of impact

Greater understanding of what it takes to accomplish goals

Strategies that are better aligned with goals

Improved Ways to measure what matters

Increased evidence that strategies work

3. **Strategies**/interventions: (what strategies are required?)

Introductory Workshop at Data Day focusing on 3 tools

Develop a Theory of Change

Create and Validate Logic Models

Promote Quality Data

Offer additional, ongoing data capacity building



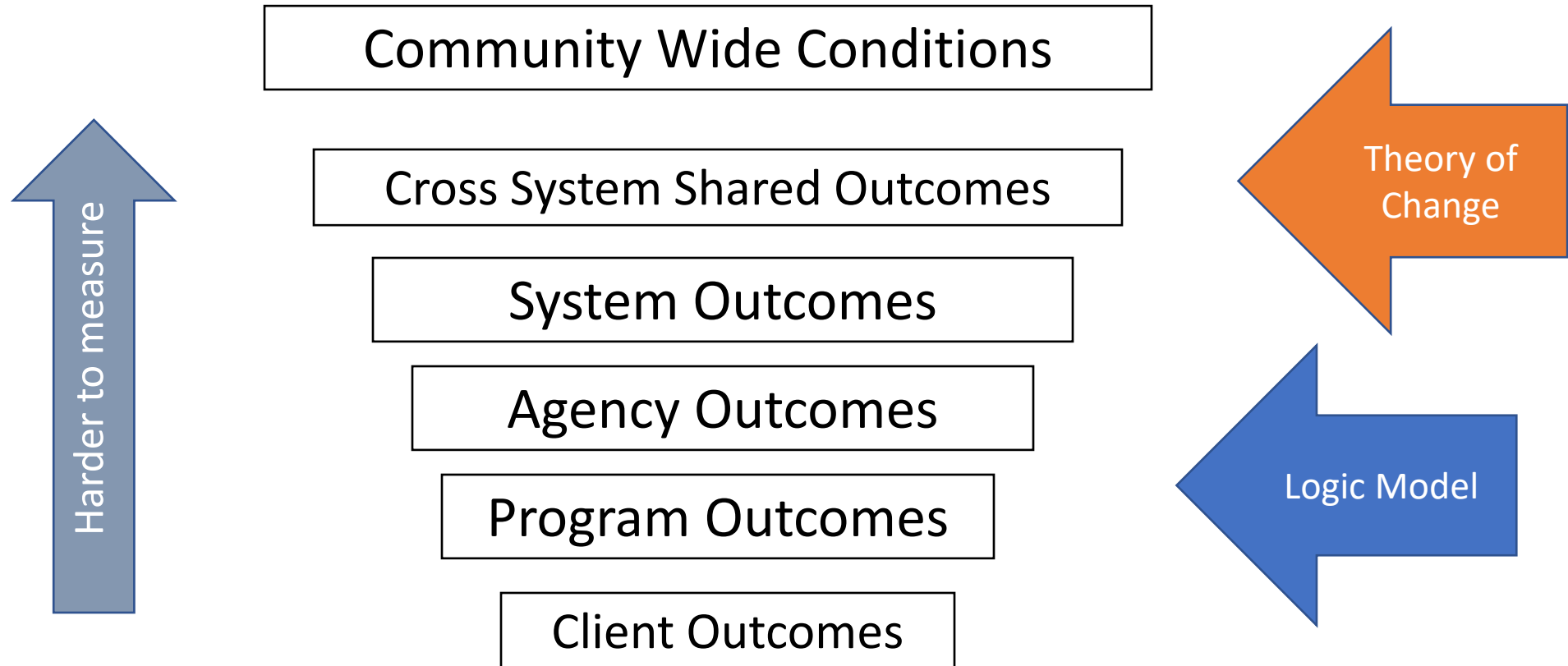
Where would
you put your
measurement
efforts?

- ☐ The long-term goal (BHAG)
- ☐ The preconditions (outcomes)
- ☐ The strategies/ activities
- ☐ All of the above

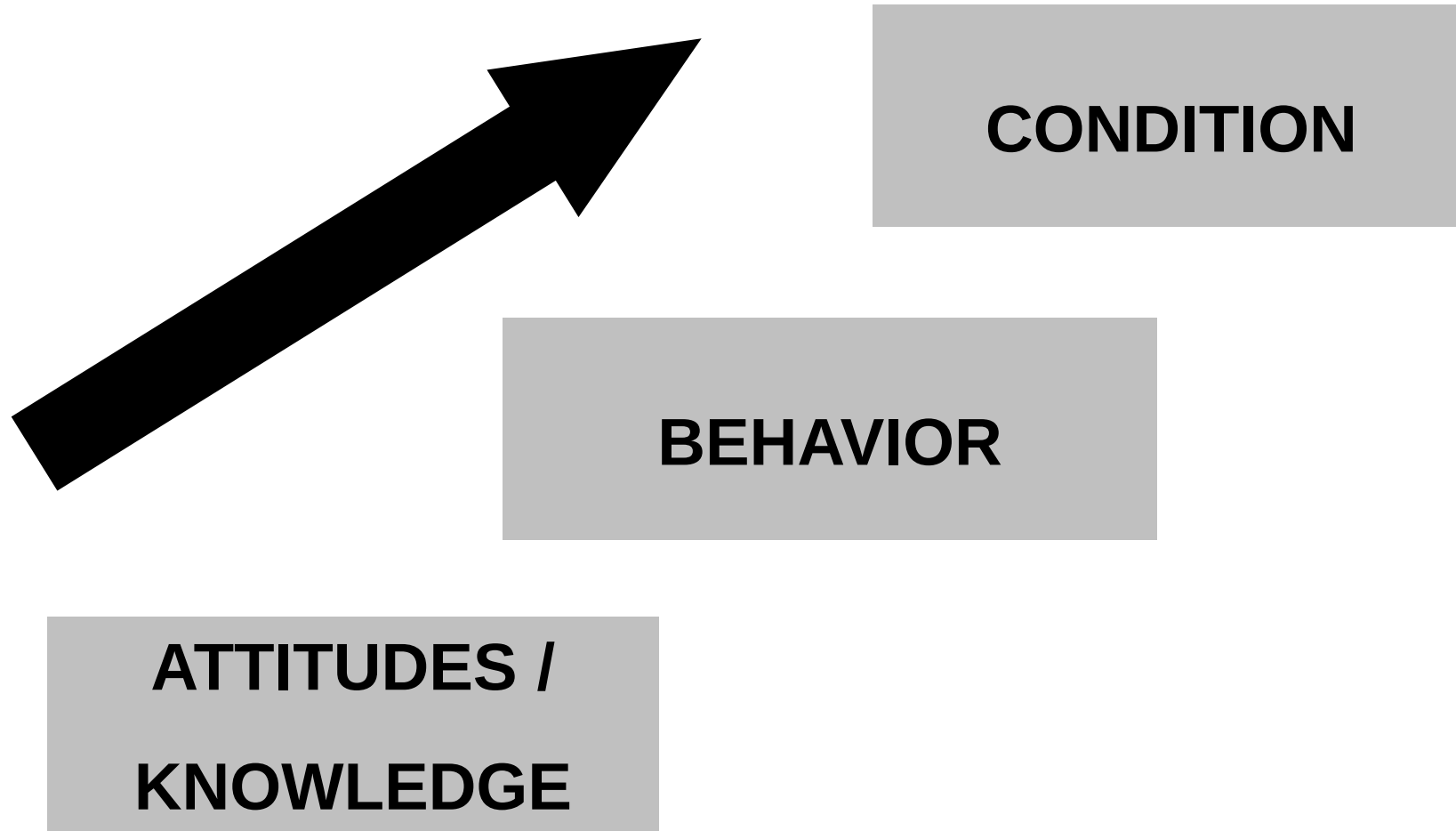


Logic Models

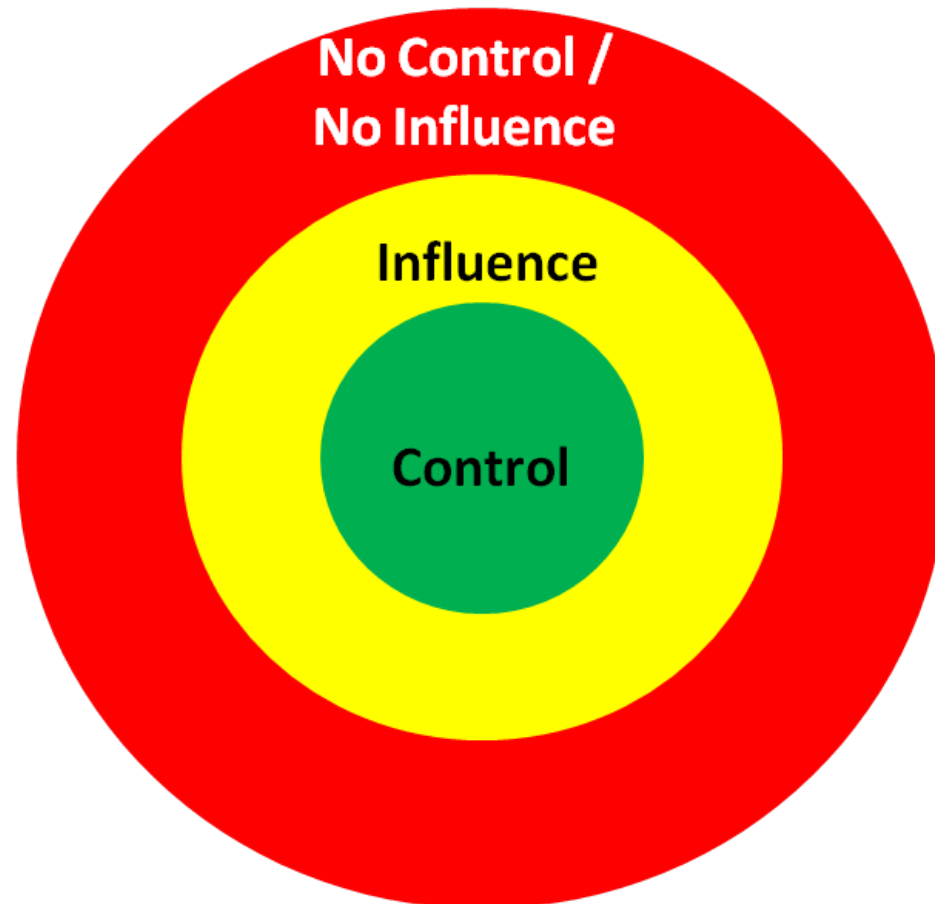
Levels of Impact



The ABC Change Process - (Simplified)



Think about what you can reasonably control.



Program Outcome Model



Resources

- money
- staff
- volunteers
- equipment & supplies

Constraints

- laws
- regulations
- funders' requirements

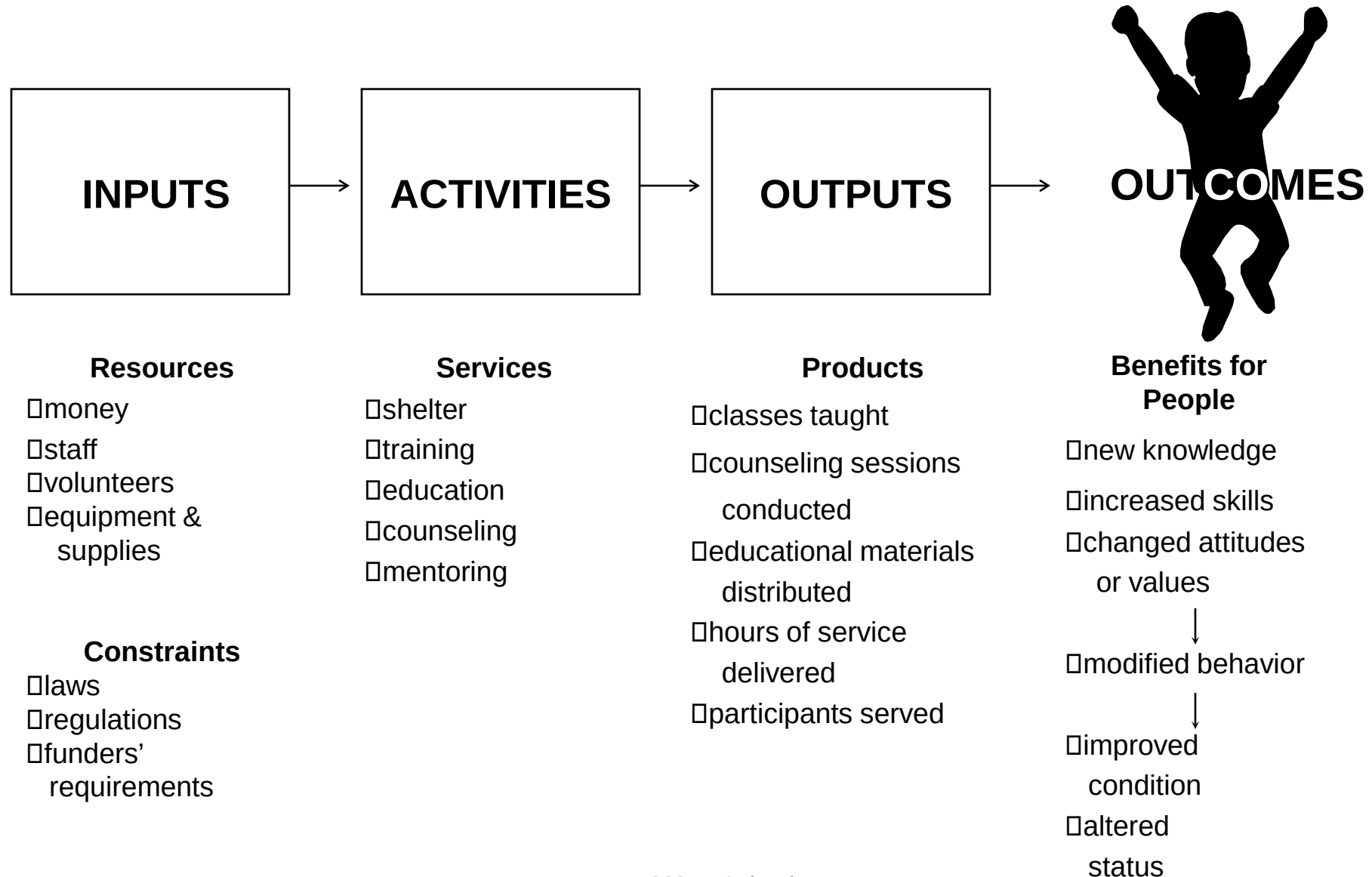
Services

- shelter
- training
- education
- counseling
- mentoring

Products

- classes taught
- counseling sessions conducted
- educational materials distributed
- hours of service delivered
- participants served

Program Outcome Model

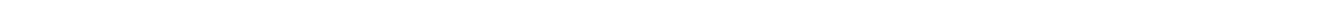


A “Formula” for Outcomes

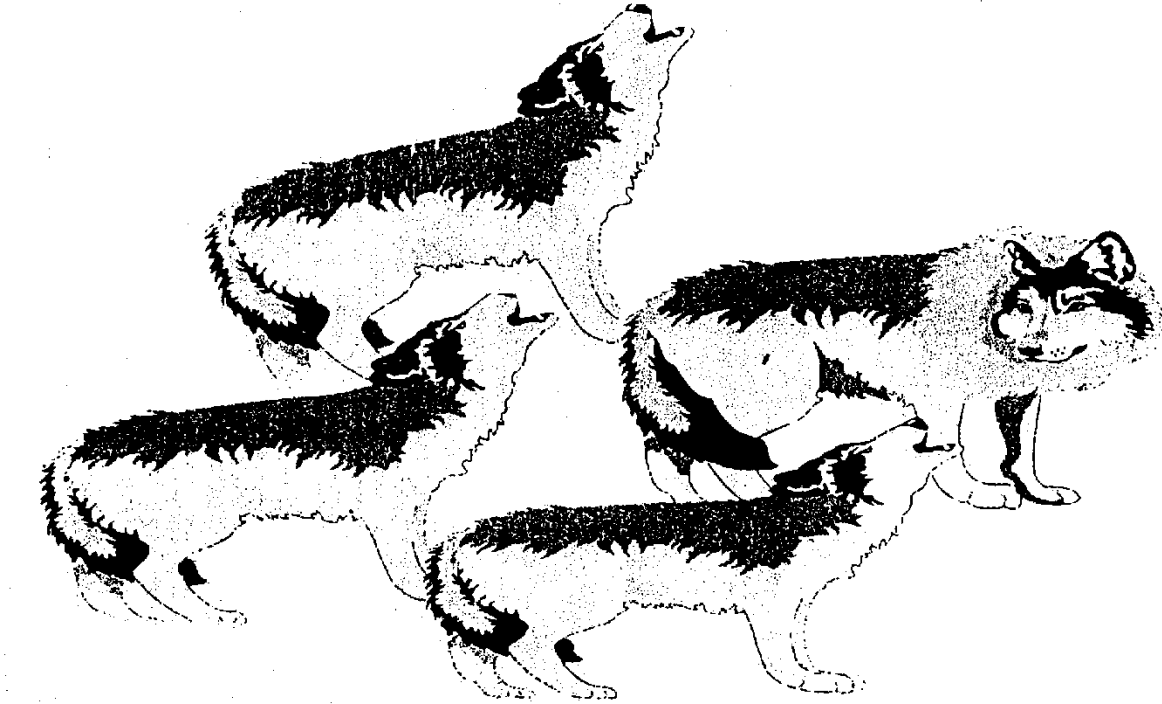
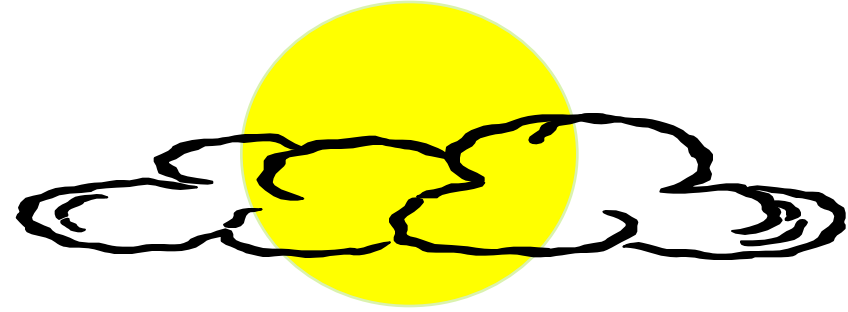
Client	Verb	Desired Effect
Parents..	Improve...	Their parenting skills
Older adults...	Maintain...	Their independence
Participants...	Obtain...	Employment
Youth...	Are aware...	Of the effects of smoking

PROGRAM LOGIC MODEL

Inputs	Activities or Strategies	Outputs	Outcomes		
			Initial	Intermediate	Longer-term
			Knowledge/ attitude	Behavior	Condition



But are we
having any effect?





Quality Data

Evidence of Impact

What makes quality data?

- Relevant
- Meaningful
- Minimal
- Confidence
- Versatile
- Invest in collecting and cleaning
- Shared across teams and departments
- Supplemented with publicly available data and external research
- Data assets are mapped and valued

Aim for Elegance and Parsimony



Use the data





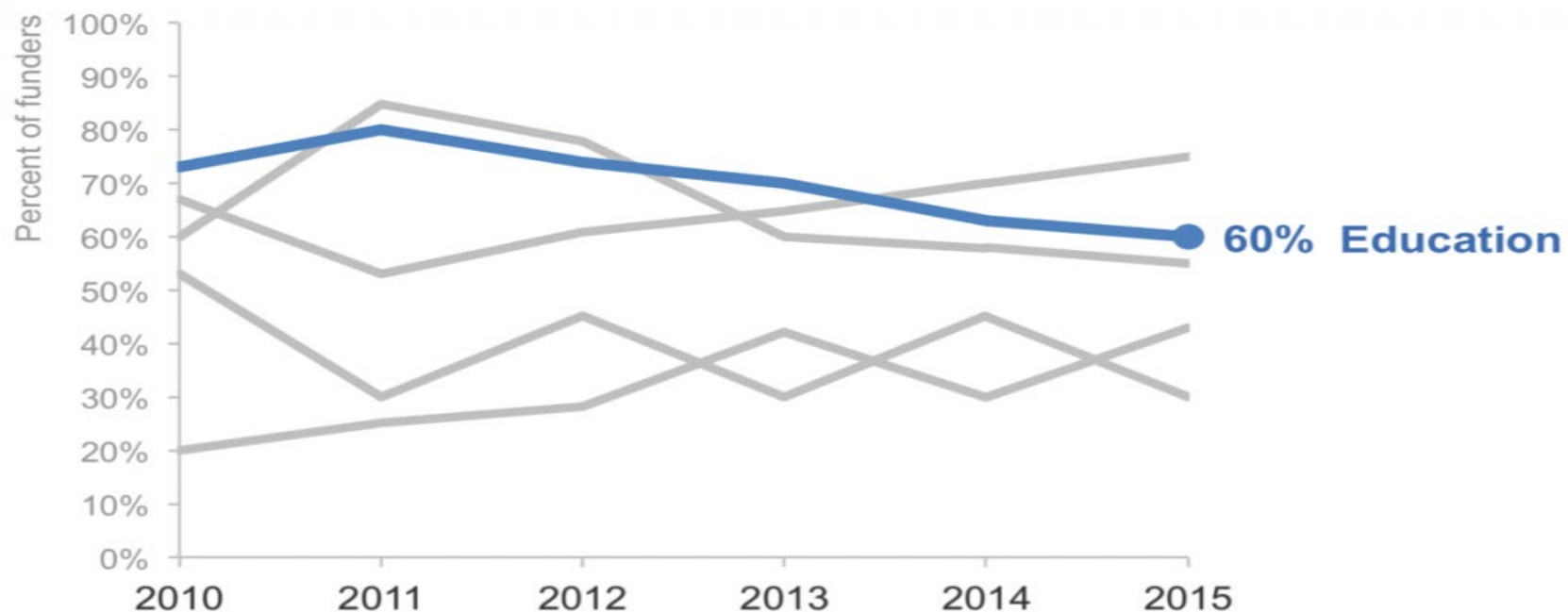
Data Use Drives Quality

- Use it regularly
- Small doses more frequently
- Data Point a Month
 - Staff Meetings
 - Board meetings
- May use a different data point with different audiences
 - Funders
 - Participants
 - Staff
 - Board
- Context
- Proximity
- Asset Framing

Tell the Story

Support for education non-profits has decreased markedly over the past 5 years.

Types of non-profits supported by area funders



Data is self-reported by funders; percents sum to greater than 100 because respondents can make multiple selections.

A poorly designed instrument or procedure will not produce reliable results.

Can you find a pre-tested instrument?

Do you have a plan for the use of each piece of data you are asking for?

Do you have a confidentiality statement for collectors?

Do you need a consent form for minors or people with disabilities?

Pretest with at least 6-10 people

The Pre-Survey... for YOU!

What are you trying to learn?

What do you need to know?

How have other people gotten this information?

Why do you think a survey is the right way to get the information?

What do you already know?

What resources do you have?

Who is the survey going to?

How many responses do you want? Why?

Where will it be distributed?

How will people respond (paper, electronic, interview)?

Is there an incentive for taking it? (raffle, gift card?)

What is the lead in?

Do you want any demographic information on respondents?

Is there a particular age group you are targeting?

The Pre-Survey... for YOU! (p.2)

Are there safety issues involved in getting survey responses?

Are there implications for service eligibility involved?

Are there cultural issues?

Do you have time to pre-test the survey for language/literacy levels?

Can you pre-test for time?

Do you need translation?

How will surveyors be trained?

Who does the completed survey go back to?

Who will clean the data?

Who will analyze results?

How will you use results?

Will results be shared with respondents?

Do you expect to repeat this?

At what intervals?

Practical Tips

Make sure nothing implies the right answer

Be specific about time frames

Have someone from the population test it

Have someone who knows about surveys review it

Group related questions together

Demographics go last

Share the results

Know when to get help.



Measurement is on Ongoing Process



THERE IS NO FINISH LINE.

Someone later the serious runner goes through a special, very personal experience that is unknown to most people.

Someone call it euphoria. Others say it's a new kind of spiritual experience that propels you into an elevated state of consciousness.

A kind of joy. A sense of floating on your own. The experience is not a one-time thing, but rather it suggests that there is a hidden that separates you from your mind.

And there that point you, there is no finish line. Now, you can see the line. You know it's the end of the road.

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(BHAG*)

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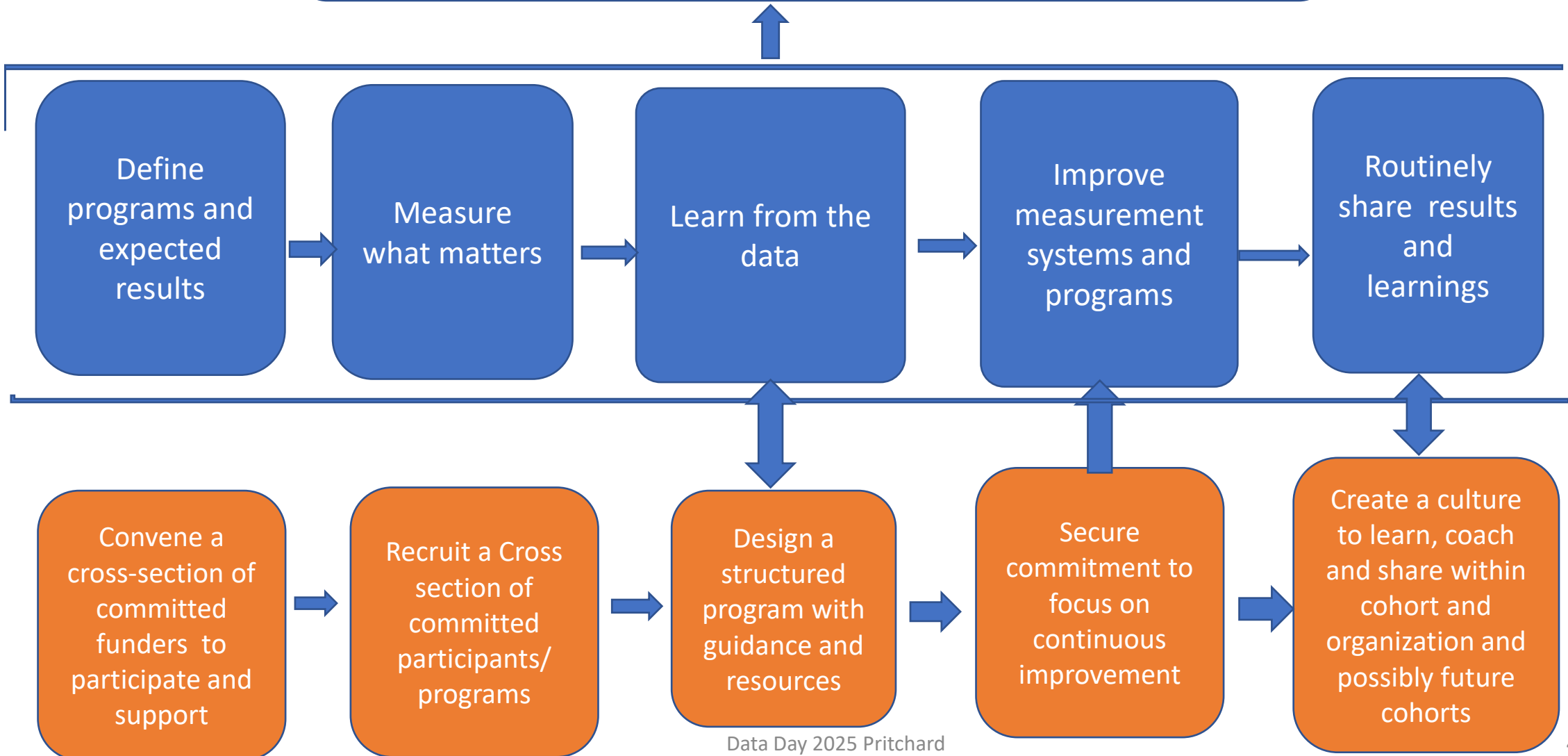
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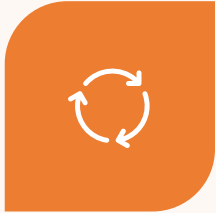
What's Your Take-Away?

- Learned?
 - Confirmed?
 - Will do?
 - Surprised you?
 - Want to learn more about?
- 

Milwaukee's philanthropic and nonprofit sectors use data to increase impact.



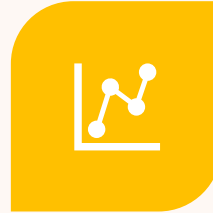
Topics



DEFINE--- THEORY OF
CHANGE- LOGIC MODEL



MEASURE---CHOOSING
THE DATA



LEARN—ANALYZING
THE DATA



IMPROVE—IMPROVING
MEASUREMENT AND
ADJUSTING PROGRAMS



SHARE—REPORTING
RESULTS



ADVISE— REFLECTIONS
AND SUGGESTIONS

Acknowledgements

- Thanks to the five Milwaukee Foundations and 18 organizations that co-designed the larger capacity building effort.
- Special thanks to the late Edgar Russel for spearheading the idea
- Gratitude to the Data You Can Use team for convening and continuing this work
- Appreciation for you for the work you do
- Cheers to us and the impact we have, together.

We want your feedback!

Please fill out the Data Day Feedback Form.

