



# Understanding and Conducting Outcome-Based Evaluation

**A Workshop for the  
New York State Independent Living Council**

*presenter:*

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## **Workshop Objectives**

### **Better understand and be able to:**

1. Describe outcome based planning and evaluation.
2. Craft a meaningful, measurable outcome objective.
3. Structure and conduct an evaluation process.

### **Workshop Agenda:**

- Evaluation terms and concepts
- How to create measurable objectives that can be evaluated
- Strengthening SPIL objectives
- Understanding and designing the evaluation process for each objective

## Evaluation Terms and Concepts

**Goals** – a long term hoped for outcome; more immediate than a vision or mission statement, but not achievable in 1-3 years, if ever

**Objectives** – outcomes that can be achieved in 6 months to five years

**Action Plan** – a sequence of activities or strategies implemented to achieve an objective

**Outcome** – a result of an action or strategy

**Measurable Indicators** – a specification that can be measured to show if an objective or an action plan were accomplished.

**Performance Targets** – the actual numbers or desired level of accomplishment

**Methods for Measuring:** surveys, interviews, review records, observe in action  
– specify what information will be gathered, by whom, from whom, using what techniques, and delivered to whom.

**Evaluation** – compare the intended outcomes to the actual results measured, and report on the findings.

**Monitoring** – compare the actual activities delivered to those intended and report on the findings.

### **Meaningful, measurable outcome objective:**

A statement of a desired change (or maintenance of a change) that has specified performance targets which when achieved will have a valuable impact on the target group.

### **Logic Model:**

1. We provide some input (resources) ... that support activities or services.
2. These activities result in some outputs - number of services provided, amount of activities offered.
3. These outputs result in some change or outcome that moves us closer to our goals; e.g. benefits for participants or the system.  
These outcomes can be short term, medium term or long term.

**Need to run this in *reverse* for planning – start with goals and outcomes and work backwards. Once it's implemented, monitor steps 1 and 2, evaluate step 3.**

## How to Create Measurable Objectives That Can Be Evaluated

When developing a plan, aim for 3-4 goals, and 2-4 objectives per goal, 10-15 objectives maximum.

Start with your goals – how do you want the world to be different? What broad impact or outcomes are you hoping for?

Goal #1: NYSILC monitors, evaluates and effectively carries out duties related to the SPIL

Goal #2: People with disabilities are empowered through participation and choices.

Goal #3: Centers provide effective services to allow people with disabilities to control their lives.

For each goal will need 2-3 objectives – outcomes that move us closer from where we are now to where we want to be.

Goal # 1: NYSILC monitors, evaluates and effectively carries out duties related to the SPIL

- Objective 1: Support the basic operation of NYSILC each year through September 30, 2013.
- Objective 8: Support statewide strategic media services and promote public awareness about IL in multiple media markets each year through September 30, 2013.
- Objective 9: Support a statewide consumer satisfaction survey for the CIL network by September 30, 2011.
- Objective 10: Support a consultant to establish an outcome-based evaluation SPIL plan that the council can implement and operationalize, including its use and development towards the next SPIL, each year through September 30, 2013.

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Goal # 2: People with disabilities are empowered through participation and choices.

- Objective 2: CBVH will provide services on a fee-for-service basis to eligible individuals who are legally blind to enable them to meet independent living goals each year through September 30, 2013.
- Objective 3: Support a Statewide Systems Advocacy Network (SSAN) by developing local partnerships and coalitions, and engaging in community education about issues impacting people with disabilities, resulting in increased visibility about Independent Living, and at least one significant statewide system change each year through September 30, 2013.
- Objective 5: Support youth leadership by providing sponsorships for youth to attend and participate in IL conference, national disability and youth leadership trainings each year through September 30, 2013.
- Objective 7: Support a statewide consumer-controlled, non-partisan Get Out The Vote (GOTV) network for voters with disabilities to promote voter registration, voter education and use of the new accessible voting systems each year through September 30, 2013.

Goal # 3: Centers provide effective services to allow people with disabilities to control their lives.

- Objective 4: Support direct consulting services and coaching to the statewide network of centers each year through September 30, 2013.
- Objective 6: Support an annual training opportunity to promote the implementation of the Nursing Facility Transition and Diversion waiver in a manner consistent with the Independent Living philosophy, including best practices and technical assistance, each year through September 30, 2013.
- Objective 11: Provide four \$30,000 capacity building grant opportunities for three years in a competitive RFP to Centers for Independent Living (CILs) and Service Centers for Independent Living (SCILs) each year through September 30, 2013.

**For each objective:**

- State the desired change or outcome.
- Need measurable indicators and performance targets
  - what will change, for whom, where, when, and by how much; and how will you measure it?
- Objectives usually use words such as to increase, decrease, prevent, or reduce.
- They should be action statements – statements of measurable change in behavior or situation (back to school, employed, etc.). You can also show a change in knowledge, skill, or attitude, but these are of secondary value – behavior or situational changes are the bottom lines.
- They should include a baseline or reference point – what it is like now (before the program) and how will it be different as a result of the program. (Note: after the first year, if your baseline improves greatly due to your intervention, you can reference as a baseline what it was like before the program and/or what it's like in other regions.)
- They should include numbers – size of target population you'll serve and the number who will demonstrate the desired outcome.
- They should include a timeframe – usually within the funding cycle.

Objectives should be SMART: specific, measurable, agreed upon, realistic and time bound.

Some objectives are too long term or too difficult to gather data around. In these cases, we can use the Measurable Indicators, as a subsidiary objective. If these indicators are met, then the objective is likely to be met. .

e.g. Objective – *Conduct a media campaign to increase awareness of Independent Living*

Measurable Indicators:

- Increased services to support independent living
- Increased attendance at independent living programs and services
- Increased participation in fund raising events
- Increased hits on a web site or blog readership
- Demonstrates gain in some independent living skill

These are all indicators that there has likely been some success in increasing awareness of independent living.

Objective 7: Support a statewide consumer-controlled, non-partisan Get Out The Vote (GOTV) network for voters with disabilities to promote voter registration, voter education and use of the new accessible voting systems each year through September 30, 2013.

- Measurable Indicators:
  - Number of network partners within the GOTV.
  - Number of people with disabilities registered to vote within the GOTV network.
  - Number of voter education issues addressed through the GOTV network.
- Geographic Scope:
  - Statewide.
- 3-Year Performance Targets:
  - 60 partners within the GOTV network.
  - 10,000 people with disabilities registered to vote within the GOTV network.
  - 18 voter education issues addressed through the GOTV network.
- Timeframes/Interim Progress: (Year 1, Year 2, Year 3)
- 2011 Performance Targets:
  - 15 partners within the GOTV network.
  - 2,000 people with disabilities registered to vote within the GOTV network.
  - 6 voter education issues addressed through the GOTV network.
- Action Steps:
  - The DSU will develop and distribute the competitive RFP regarding the coordination of the GOTV network.
  - The coordinator of the GOTV network will submit a quarterly report to the DSU which will update information related to the performance targets. The information will be shared at full council meetings and with the SPIL Subcommittee for evaluation.
- Potential/Additional Future Impacts/Consideration (Year Two):
  - *Number of people with disabilities registered to vote within the GOTV network.*
    - *Increase in the number of people with disabilities who vote in New York*
    - *Increase in the number of people with disabilities using the Ballot Marking Device*
    - *Decrease in the number of voting access complaints.*
    - *Decrease in the number of absentee ballots.*

## Application

**Vision statement:** NYSILC is a champion of systemic change promoting opportunities and full participation in all aspects of society for people with disabilities.

**Mission statement:** NYSILC is an independent federally mandated state council that advances Independent Living philosophy through the network of CIL's and statewide partnerships by engaging in or supporting research, education, employment, community organization, advocacy, and systems reform.

**Need to get more specific.... First what does IL mean?**

**Independent Living** means controlling and directing your own life, taking risks, and being allowed to succeed and fail on your own terms.

*How* does NYSILC do that?

NYSILC is responsible for the development, implementation and monitoring of the 3-year **Statewide Plan for Independent Living (SPIL)**. The council is jointly responsible for the SPIL with its state plan partners. Statewide Independent Living Councils (SILCs) established under Title VII of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, are state appointed councils **which coordinate the functions related to the planning, monitoring and evaluation of the SPIL.**

**NYSILC provides support and technical assistance** to 37 independent living centers-community-based organizations directed by and for people with disabilities. Finally, **NYSILC assists in** the drafting of disability legislation, promotes selected research projects and coordinates the collection of polling data.

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With this background, look at one of the objectives your committee is charged with and see if you can make it more of a meaningful, measurable, outcome objective.



## Conducting an Evaluation

### **Formative and Summative Evaluation:**

The major purpose of evaluation should be to influence decision-making through the provision of data-driven feedback.

Evaluation is mostly looked at as an accountability mechanism – did you do what you said you would do.

We can do both.

**Formative evaluation** gets input as the process unfolds. This is used to see if a project is producing the results that were intended and if not, what need's to be done to adjust it to make it better.

This is best done as a collaborative activity; including the beneficiaries of the project, the service deliverers and the funders or regulators.

Data is collected and compiled and a group involving all the stakeholders reviews it and draws conclusions and recommendations.

Also known as “implementation” or “process” evaluation.

**Summative evaluation** is conducted at the end of a project to judge its outcomes and report on the results. This is usually done for accountability purposes, but can also be used to learn about how to do things differently the next time.

Also known as “outcome” or “impact” evaluation; also cost-effectiveness assessment.

*"When the cook tastes the soup, that's formative; when the guests taste the soup, that's summative."*  
Robert Stakes

## Understanding and Conducting Outcome-Based Evaluations

The focus in both formative and summative is on the *outcome* – *did the program make the changes or impacts that it was supposed to?*

Evaluation can help you see if you are appropriating resources in a useful way – are you focusing on critical consumer needs and having positive outcomes on these needs. Is there a good “return on investment”.

We don't evaluate activities or services, we evaluate the impact or outcome. Monitoring assessed compliance with the plan in terms of activities or services.

Evaluation can answer:

- Does your program accomplish what it is supposed to?
- Is the result of value?
- Does it accomplish this in an efficient/cost-effective way?
- Does it help our target population?

Evaluation may also address:

- What obstacles came up in implementing the program and what was their impact?
- Were there any unintended consequences or results?

*"The true worth of a researcher lies in pursuing what he did not seek in his experiment as well as what he sought."*

–Claude Bernard, (1813–1878) French physiologist

## The Evaluation Process

**Objective 8:** Support statewide strategic media services and promote public awareness about IL in multiple media markets.

- Outcomes/Measurable Indicators:
  - Number of media hits that appear in statewide media markets (newsprint, radio, television, online media).
  - Number of media hits that appear in statewide media markets (television, radio, newsprint, online media), either purchased or PSA, part of a statewide campaign to promote IL.
    - Increased visibility of people with disabilities and IL in the media.
    - People with disabilities get roles to portray us rather than able-bodied actors (Glee, House).
  - Number of media hits that appear in local media markets (television, radio, newsprint, and online media) by providing support to CILs.
    - Increase in the number of CILs with media plans.
    - Increased attendance and giving at CIL events publicized in media.
- 2011 Performance Targets:
  - 6 media hits that appear in statewide media markets.
  - 40 media hits that appear in statewide media markets, either purchased or PSA, as part of a statewide campaign to promote Independent Living.
  - 12 media hits that appear in local media markets by providing support to CILs.
- How are they measured?
  - Data for media hits, statewide media hits, PSA or statewide campaigns, and local media markets directed by CILs based on monthly reports provided by media consultant and yearend report to ACCES, along with copies of and/or links to media hits.
  - Also, the media consultant documents work directly with CILs with an initial assessment, written media plans, lists of targeted media buys, facilitates press releases and opinions, and clips of subsequent media hits.
- How or who do we obtain the information/data from?
  - NYSILC executive director has immediate access to all of this information including direct source documents.
- Do we need to develop an instrument to collect the data? No.

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- Evaluation:
  - Once the data and information has been collected, it should be summarized into an email communication and sent to the committee members responsible for the evaluation and review.
  - The committee will review and analyze the data and compile the results in a short report.
  - The committee will verify that all the data for measurable indicators is included in the report. If there is any missing or unclear data, the committee will request additional data from NYSILC staff.
  - When the evaluation is complete, the results should be emailed to the SPIL Subcommittee, NYSILC office, and SPIL Evaluator.
- What committee/subcommittee is responsible for evaluation of the objective? SPIL Subcommittee.
- Potential/Additional Future Impacts/Consideration (Year Two):
  - Number of media hits that appear in statewide media markets (newsprint, radio, television, online media) that promote NYSILC's initiatives – media hits have specific information to support this
  - Number of media hits that appear in statewide media markets (television, radio, newsprint, online media), either purchased or PSA, part of a statewide campaign to promote IL.
    - Increased visibility of people with disabilities and IL in the media.
    - People with disabilities get roles to portray us rather than able-bodied actors (Glee, House).
    - Increased visibility of services and the IL system statewide – media hits have specific information
  - Number of media hits that appear in local media markets (television, radio, newsprint, and online media) by providing support to CILs.
    - Increase in the number of CILs with media plans.
    - Increased attendance and giving at CIL events publicized in media. Or number of media hits that promote specific event and have sufficient information
    - Increased awareness of local services – media hits have specific information – location, services, contact info, etc.

### **Additional Thoughts on the Evaluation Process**

Once you've completed the evaluation and before you've filed the report:

- Discuss what steps might be taken to improve any deficiencies and/or build on any successes.
- Discuss whether the SPIL needs to be amended if any of the objectives seem impossible to measure or complete, or counter productive (unintended consequences).

**Evaluation Timeline:**

- Review SPIL objective & outcome criteria (By 7/11).
- Discuss evaluation with SPIL Evaluator (By 8/11).
- Develop and/or provide input on instruments to collect evaluation data (if needed) (By 9/11).
- Evaluation training (by 9/11).
- Collection data and evaluate SPIL objective(s) (10-11/11).
- Report results back to NYSILC office & SPIL Subcommittee (By 12/11).
- Discuss Additional Future Impacts/Year 2 (By 12/11).

**Application**

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Look at the objectives your committee worked on earlier and see what you might have to do to successfully evaluate it.