Integrating Evaluation for Learning Throughout Your Program

Olivia M. Chesniak¹, Denise Drane¹, Celine Young², Sarah Chobot Hokanson², Bennett B. Goldberg¹

¹Searle Center for Advancing Learning and Teaching at Northwestern University, Evanston, IL
²Professional Development and Postdoctoral Affairs at Boston University, Boston, MA
What process have you used to plan your program evaluation?

Consider:

- How did you approach planning that evaluation?
- What tools did you use?
- Did you map it out?
- Did you plan the evaluation while the program was being designed? Or after it was designed?
Interactive online and in-person content built on the National Postdoctoral Association competencies to support skill development throughout postdoc training, from orientation to the next career step.

Available to postdocs nationwide

92% Respondents would share Postdoc Academy with a colleague

5000+ Registered in 72 countries

Developed by a team at 4 partner institutions:

Funded by NIGMS 1R25GM121257

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Evaluation is Asking Questions

What do you want (or need) to learn about your program?

**Process**
- Has the program been implemented correctly?

**Outcomes / Impact**
- Did participants achieve the learning objectives?

**Efficiency**
- Does the program use resources efficiently?
Planning for Evaluation

Learning Objectives

Activities

Short-Term Outcomes

Long-Term Outcomes

Impacts
Focusing Evaluation using Theory of Change

Learning Objectives

Activities
Knowledge
Behaviors
Attitudes

Short-Term Outcomes
Long-Term Outcomes
Impacts

Knowledge
Activities
Behaviors
Attitudes

Impacts
Theory of Change for Career Plan

Module Learning Objective (one of several)

Compose a broad career objective
Identify SMART goals that support broad career objective
Map goals onto timeline
Identify skills and experiences important to career goal
Peer review of career plan
Increased ability to overcome obstacles
Increased connectivity to community
Potential challenges in career search are normalized
Develop skills that were identified as relevant to career goal
Continued professional development/career planning

Describe and prioritize your goals for your postdoc and connect them to longer-term career goals or ideas.
Making Meaning in Evaluation using Theory of Change

- **Articulates** *how* learning and behavioral change happen in a given program
- Forces us to **identify intended outcomes and mechanisms**, rather than just on activities
- Helps in **prioritizing evaluation**, especially when faced with many questions and limited resources
- Helps to identify **interim outcomes**, that can be measured in place of long term outcomes
Questions so far?
From Theory of Change to Evaluation Plan

Activities

Immediate Outcomes

Post-Module Survey Items

Short-Term Outcomes

Long-Term Outcomes

Impacts

Post-Course Survey Items

6 month follow up Survey Items

Aspirational, more difficult to measure
From Theory of Change to Evaluation Plan

Activities

Immediate Outcomes

Post-Module Survey Items

Survey Item % of respondents agreed

Short-Term Outcomes

Post-Course Survey Items

Survey Item % of respondents agreed

Long-Term Outcomes

6 month follow up Survey Items

Survey Item % of respondents agreed
Compose a broad career objective

Identify skills and experiences important to career goal

Develop skills that were identified as relevant to career goal

Continued professional development/career planning

Describe and prioritize your goals for your postdoc and connect them to longer-term career goals or ideas

I have identified objectives that are relevant to my long-term career goal.  88% Somewhat Agreed or Strongly Agreed

This module helped me identify skills and experiences important to my career goal.  83% Somewhat Agreed or Strongly Agreed

As a result of this module, I have developed skills that I identified as relevant to my career goal.  89% Somewhat Agreed or Strongly Agreed

I intend to develop the skills and seek the experiences I have identified in order to reach my career goal.  86% Somewhat Agreed or Strongly Agreed
Compose a broad career objective

I have identified objectives that are relevant to my long-term career goal.

Identify skills and experiences important to career goal*

This module helped me identify skills and experiences important to my career goal.

Develop skills that were identified as relevant to career goal *

As a result of this module, I have developed skills that I identified as relevant to my career goal.

I intend to develop the skills and seek the experiences I have identified in order to reach my career goal.

Describe and prioritize your goals for your postdoc and connect them to longer-term career goals or ideas

Continued professional development/career planning
Did participants gain skills?

Respondents reported skill gains from pre- to post-course (n = 59)

- Planning my career*: 2.9 to 3.6
- Engaging in self-reflection*: 3.4 to 3.9
- Making training/career transitions skillfully*: 2.8 to 3.2
- Rebounding from setbacks or challenges*: 3.4 to 3.8
- Developing collaborative research relationships: 3.1 to 3.3

Skills were self-reported on a 5-point Likert scale where 1 = Not Proficient and 5 = Extremely Proficient, * indicates statistical significance (p ≤ 0.05), standard deviations are approx. 0.9
Implementing your Evaluation Plan

Program Timeline

Initial Program Design
- Craft a Theory of Change
- Create an Evaluation Plan

Implementation
Is the program proceeding as expected?

Program Conclusion
Immediate outcomes - what will I learn about my program?

Follow Up
When should I study long-term outcomes?

How might I modify my Theory of Change?
Using Theory of Change in Existing Programs

- Discover potential short-term outcomes
- Identify short-term outcomes that may lead to long-term impacts
- Reevaluate if program components need to be adjusted to reach intended outcomes
- Test your existing Theory of Change
How might Theory of Change be useful in your context?

Share what you plan to add to your process.
Questions?

Developed by:
- Sarah Chobot Hokanson
- Olivia Chesniak
- Celine Young
- Denise Drane
- Bennett Goldberg
- Henry (Rique) Campa III
- Noah Green
- Robin Greenler
- Jessica Maher
- Rick McGee
- Antonio Nunez

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Fig. 3. Assessment criteria for performance monitoring of MOOC projects.

Some Quick Highlights

- 1274 enrolled
- 8% earned a certificate of completion
- Our completion rate is 2-4% above average
- 89% were satisfied with the MOOC
- 90% would recommend the MOOC to a friend
- 66% have changed how they think about their role as a postdoc
- 89% have made plans to transition into their community of practice
- 53% have discussed professional goals with their advisor
Evaluation Methods

**Logic Model**

- Inputs
- Activities
- Outcomes
- Impacts

**Theory of Change**

- Activities
- Behaviors
- Outcomes
- Attitudes
- Impacts
From Theory of Change to Evaluation Plan

Module Activities

Immediate Outcomes

Post-Module Survey Items

Short-term Outcomes

Post-Course Survey Items

Long-term Outcomes

6 month follow up Survey Items

Impacts

Aspirational, more difficult to measure
Long-term Outcomes

Short-term Outcomes

Survey Item
% of respondents agreed

Immediate Outcomes

Survey Item
% of respondents agreed

Survey Item
Not yet measured

Goals for Activities

Module Learning Objectives

Theory of Change → Evaluation
Module 2: Building an Actionable Career Plan

Learn about different career planning tools
Use values skills and interests as compass
Identify where they are in career exploration
Prepare for an informational interview
Compose a broad career objective
Identify SMART goals that support broad career objective
Identify obstacles to career planning
Strategize how to overcome obstacles

I have identified objectives that are relevant to my long-term career goal. 88% agreed
Identify tools that are most applicable
Use tools/resources to Clarify career goals
Align plans with expectations and priorities
complete an informational interview*
Identify skills and experiences important to career goal*
I am more aware of obstacles I may face in career planning. 81% agreed
Peer review of career plan
Practice strategies to overcome obstacles*

This module helped me identify skills important to my career goals. 83% agreed
This module helped me identify skills and experiences important to my career goal. 83% agreed
I intend to develop the skills and seek the experiences I have identified in order to reach my career goal. 86% agreed
I have identified obstacles I am facing in my career path. 87% agreed
I intend to employ the strategies shared in the “Overcoming Obstacles on Your Pathway to Success” activity to overcome the career obstacles I am facing. 87% agreed

I am more aware of career planning tools that are relevant to my interests. 95% agreed
I plan to complete an informational interview 68% agreed
I am better able to articulate my long-term career goal. 85% agreed
I have identified objectives that are relevant to my long-term career goal. 88% agreed
I am more aware of strategies that may help me overcome career planning obstacles. 81% agreed
As a result of this module/the Postdoc Academy...

Module 2 Skills Post-Module (n = 124)

- I am more aware of career planning tools that are relevant to my interests: 4.5
- I would recommend this module to a friend: 4.5
- I have identified goals that are relevant to my broad career objective: 4.3
- I am better able to articulate my long-term career goal: 4.2
- I am more aware of obstacles I may face in career planning: 4.1
- I am more aware of strategies that may help me overcome career planning obstacles: 4.1
- I plan to complete an informational interview: 3.9

Module 2 Skills Post-Course (n = 195)

- I intend to develop the skills I have identified in order to reach my career goals: 4.4
- I have identified obstacles I am facing in my career path: 4.4
- This module helped me clarify my career goals: 4.3
- This module helped me identify skills important to my career goals: 4.3
- I intend to employ the strategies shared in the “Overcoming Obstacles on Your Pathway to Success” activity to overcome the career obstacles I am facing: 4.2

Skills were self-reported on a 5-point Likert scale where 1 = Strongly Disagree and 5 = Strongly Agree, standard deviations are approx. 0.8 for Module 2 Skills Post-Module and approx. 0.9 for Module 2 Skills Post-Course.
Evaluation Resources

- [BetterEvaluation.org](http://BetterEvaluation.org)
  - [Formulating Key Evaluation Questions](http://BetterEvaluation.org/Formulating-Key-Evaluation-Questions)
- Chapman 2016
Another example: resilience module