Introduction to Logic Models and Theory of Change

John R. Whitman, Ph.D.
Harvard Club of Birmingham

Preliminary Notes

- The logic model is a planning tool, but also an assessment and evaluation tool for:
  - Funders: *How well have you (the proposal writer) thought through your plan?*
  - Program developers: *How do we measure our progress and impact?*

- The theory of change is also a planning, assessment, and evaluation tool, but it explains HOW and WHY change will happen, not just WHAT will change.

Overview

1. Key Definitions
2. Structure
3. Elements
4. Generic Example
5. Steps
6. Review
7. Specific Example
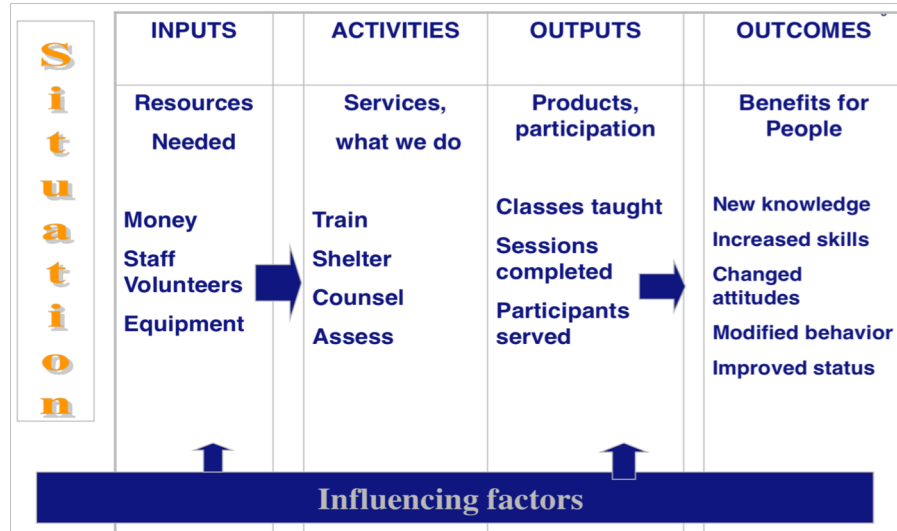8. What's Missing?
9. Sources

1. Key Definitions

- **Logic Model**: Describes steps to show the inputs that lead to outputs and outcomes (descriptive)
- **Theory of Change**: Explains how and why the logic model creates change (explanatory)

2. Structure

S i t u a t i o n	INPUTS	ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	OUTCOMES
	Resources Needed	Services, what we do	Products, participation	Benefits for People
	Money	Train	Classes taught	New knowledge
	Staff Volunteers	Shelter	Sessions completed	Increased skills
	Equipment	Counsel	Participants served	Changed attitudes
		Assess		Modified behavior
				Improved status

Influencing factors

3. Elements of a Logic Model

Note: the structure of the model is not fixed; be creative. But the following elements are all required in the model:

I. Inputs
II. Activities
III. Outputs
IV. Outcomes

i. Inputs

- The resources required:
  - Money
  - Staff
  - Volunteers
  - Equipment
  - Partners
  - Facility
  - Curriculum

ii. Activities

- The services to be delivered:
  - Training
  - Counseling
  - Tutoring
  - Mentoring
  - Building

iii. Outputs

- The quantifiable results of the activities:
  - Number of classes taught: *number of satisfied graduates*
  - Number of sessions completed
  - Number of youth served: *level of engagement*
  - Number of nights of shelter provided
  - Number of newsletters sent: *level of response*

  Note: Not everything that *can* be measured *should* be measured. Be mindful of tracking what has ultimate value relative to the goal.

iv. Outcomes

- The consequences/impact of the outputs:
  - New knowledge
  - Changed attitudes
  - New skills
  - Changed behaviors
  - Altered conditions
  - Changed status

Chain of Outcomes

- **Initial** outcomes/primary beneficiaries
  - E.g., single mothers who attend a workshop
  - Changes in knowledge, skills, attitudes, behaviors
  - Important indicators
- **Intermediate** outcomes/secondary beneficiaries
  - E.g., their children benefit from the mom applying learnings
  - Changes in behavior
- **Longer-term** outcomes
  - E.g., the kids engage earlier in reading, display larger vocabulary
  - Systemic change
  - Permanent change in condition or status
  - Kids grow up, get well-paying jobs, help mom exit poverty
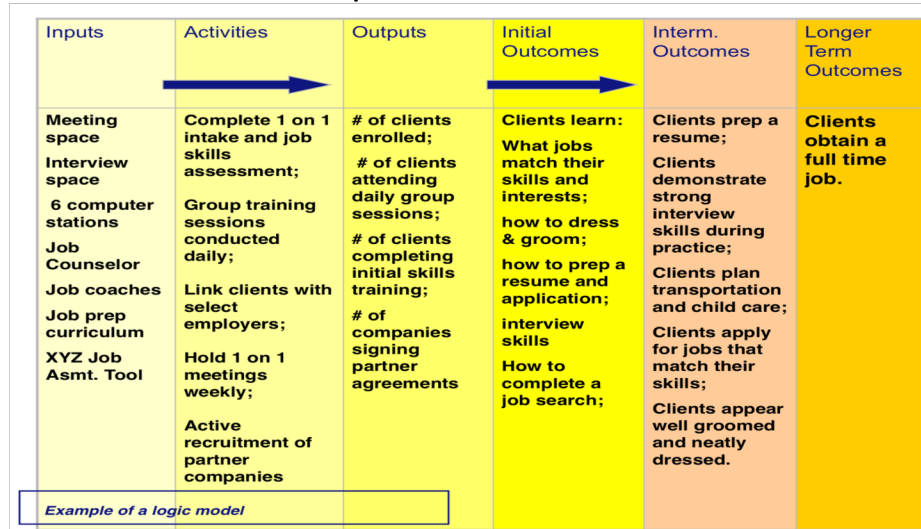
Examples of Outcomes

- **Initial**
  - Clients learn how to establish a budget and savings plan
- **Intermediate**
  - Clients follow budget and save money monthly
- **Long term**
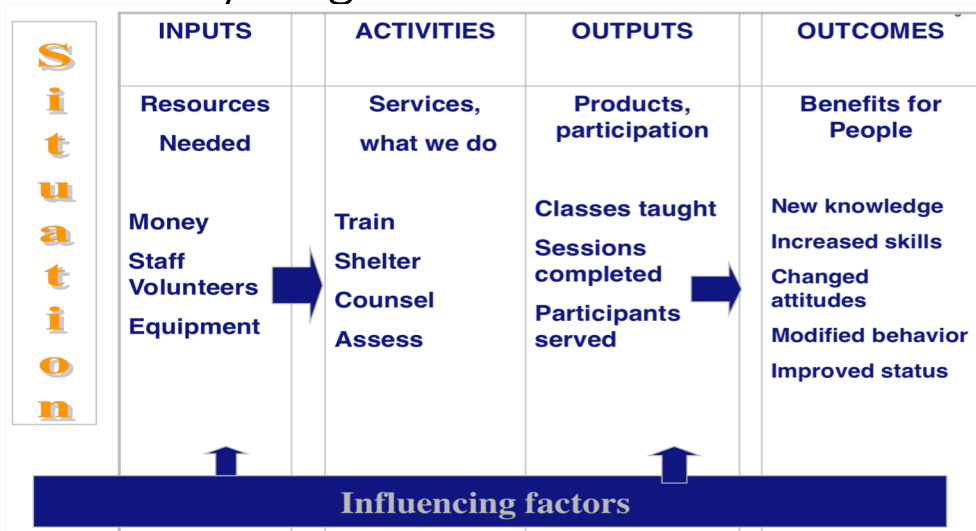 - Clients reduce debt and increase financial stability

4. Generic Example

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Initial Outcomes	Interm. Outcomes	Longer Term Outcomes
Meeting space Interview space 6 computer stations Job Counselor Job coaches Job prep curriculum XYZ Job Asmt. Tool	Complete 1 on 1 intake and job skills assessment; Group training sessions conducted daily; Link clients with select employers; Hold 1 on 1 meetings weekly; Active recruitment of partner companies	# of clients enrolled; # of clients attending daily group sessions; # of clients completing initial skills training; # of companies signing partner agreements	Clients learn: What jobs match their skills and interests; how to dress & groom; how to prep a resume and application; interview skills How to complete a job search;	Clients prep a resume; Clients demonstrate strong interview skills during practice; Clients plan transportation and child care; Clients apply for jobs that match their skills; Clients appear well groomed and neatly dressed.	Clients obtain a full time job.

Example of a logic model

United Way: Logic Model

	INPUTS	ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	OUTCOMES
S **i** **t** **u** **a** **t** **i** **o** **n**	Resources Needed Money Staff Volunteers Equipment	Services, what we do Train Shelter Counsel Assess	Products, participation Classes taught Sessions completed Participants served	Benefits for People New knowledge Increased skills Changed attitudes Modified behavior Improved status

Influencing factors

5. Steps

I.   Identify need and target population
II. Determine long-term outcomes
III. Determine initial and intermediate outcomes
IV. Describe outputs
V.   Define activities
VI. Identify inputs

i. Identify Need and Target Population

- Is there really a critical need for your program?
  - What social values are informing this need?
  - Who shares these values?
- Document the need among your target population
  - Be very specific; use numbers where possible
  - Use data to support the need
- Can you address this problem alone?
  - Do you need partners to collaborate (Collective Impact)?
  - Is your approach scalable?
- Backward design: Start with the change you want

ii. Determine Long-Term Outcomes

- What change in condition or process in the status quo are you trying to achieve?
- Start with the ultimate objective—Your vision: "Pregnant teens, ages 12-17, in the ABC Program will deliver healthy babies"
- This defines what success will look like

iii. Determine Initial and Intermediate Outcomes

- What behaviors or other changes will lead to the long-term objectives of change?

iv. Describe Outputs

- Outputs are the measurable consequences of the activities
- Usually presented in terms of number of:
  - People served
  - Courses offered
  - Pamphlets distributed

v. Define Activities

- What specific activities will be undertaken to achieve the desired change?

vi. Identify Inputs

- Specifically what resources will be required to undertake these activities?
- These typically will require money and/or time

6. Review

- Is the need for the program clear and justifiable?
- Is the target population clearly identified?
- Are the outcomes focused on the client?
- Are the outcomes achievable by the program?
- Could the outcomes be achieved better through a collaboration with other groups, such as through Collective Impact?
- How important are the outcomes to others?
- Will people understand your language?
- What might be the unintended consequences?
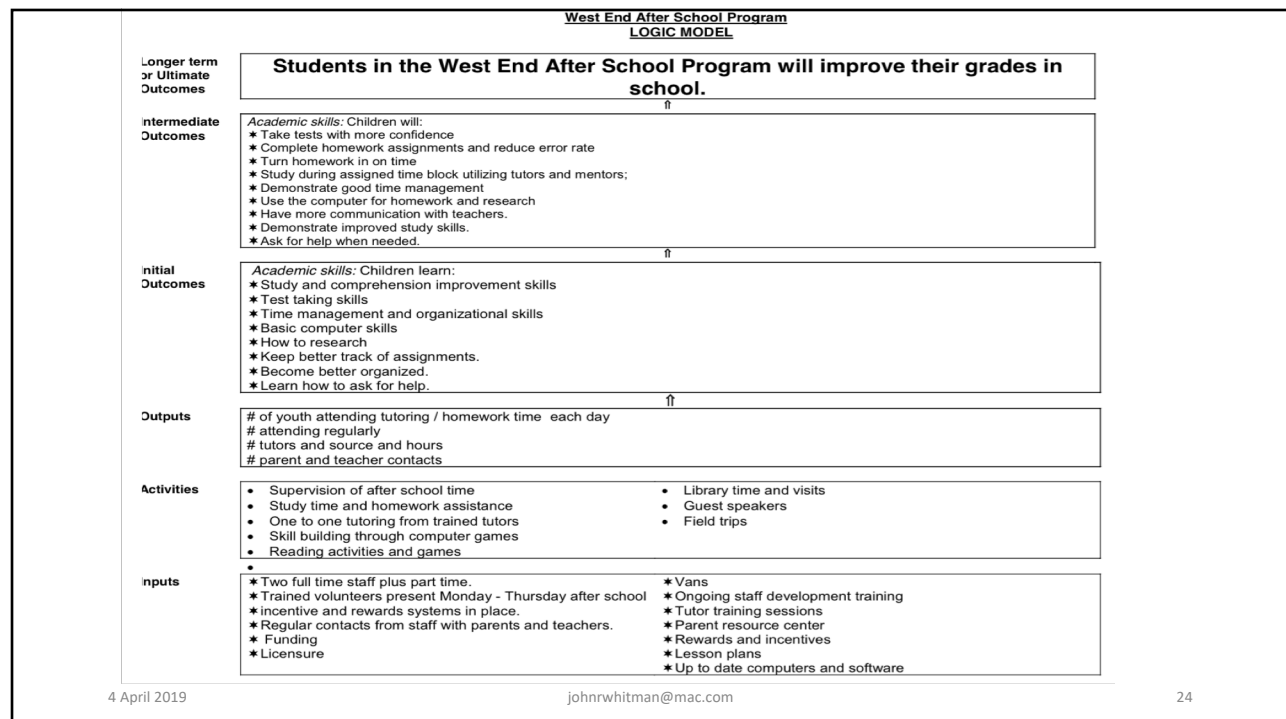- Is the program realistically scalable and sustainable?

7. Specific Example

- Note the vertical presentation
- Note the reverse sequence: outcomes first

West End After School Program
LOGIC MODEL

Longer term or Ultimate Outcomes	**Students in the West End After School Program will improve their grades in school.**
	⇑
Intermediate Outcomes	*Academic skills:* Children will: ✳ Take tests with more confidence ✳ Complete homework assignments and reduce error rate ✳ Turn homework in on time ✳ Study during assigned time block utilizing tutors and mentors; ✳ Demonstrate good time management ✳ Use the computer for homework and research ✳ Have more communication with teachers. ✳ Demonstrate improved study skills. ✳ Ask for help when needed.
	⇑
Initial Outcomes	*Academic skills:* Children learn: ✳ Study and comprehension improvement skills ✳ Test taking skills ✳ Time management and organizational skills ✳ Basic computer skills ✳ How to research ✳ Keep better track of assignments. ✳ Become better organized. ✳ Learn how to ask for help.
	⇑
Outputs	# of youth attending tutoring / homework time each day # attending regularly # tutors and source and hours # parent and teacher contacts
Activities	• Supervision of after school time • Library time and visits • Study time and homework assistance • Guest speakers • One to one tutoring from trained tutors • Field trips • Skill building through computer games • Reading activities and games •
Inputs	✳ Two full time staff plus part time. ✳ Vans ✳ Trained volunteers present Monday - Thursday after school ✳ Ongoing staff development training ✳ incentive and rewards systems in place. ✳ Tutor training sessions ✳ Regular contacts from staff with parents and teachers. ✳ Parent resource center ✳ Funding ✳ Rewards and incentives ✳ Licensure ✳ Lesson plans ✳ Up to date computers and software

8. What's Missing?

- **Social Values**: Explicit identification of preferred social values is neglected, but social values underlie all social programs and funding
- **Explanation of how or why**: Causality is better addressed in a Theory of Change
- **Contingencies**: Logic models do not address "what if" possibilities
- **Feedback loops**: Logic models appear linear and do not explicitly identify feedback processes
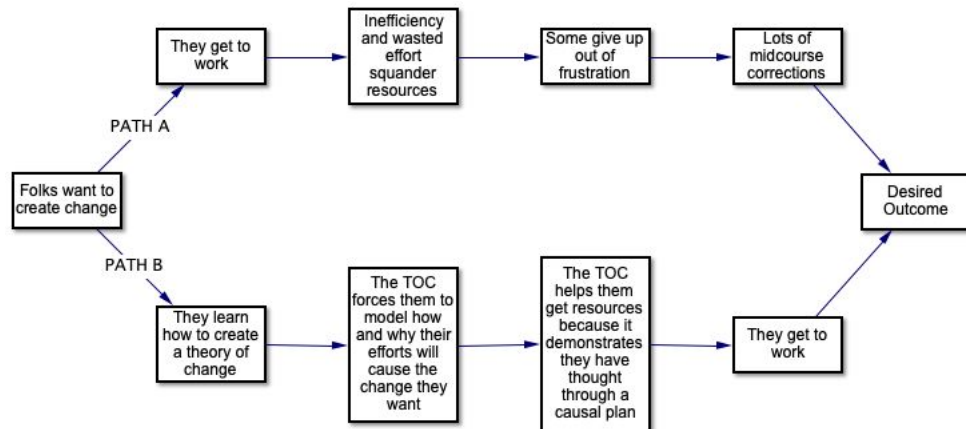
Theory of Change (TOC)

- A theory of change is a conceptual framework or model that simplifies reality to make it more understandable
- The theory of change conceptual framework shows how and why the elements of a program cause desired outcomes
- The key contribution is the explanation of why a proposed intervention will cause desired outcomes
- Graphical representation (model) of your action plan
- Indicate WHY your inputs will create the anticipated change (outcomes)
  - Annie E. Casey: "Theory of Change: A practical tool for action, results, and learning"
  - https://www.aecf.org/resources/theory-of-change/

TOC Example

Annie E. Casey: Theory of Change
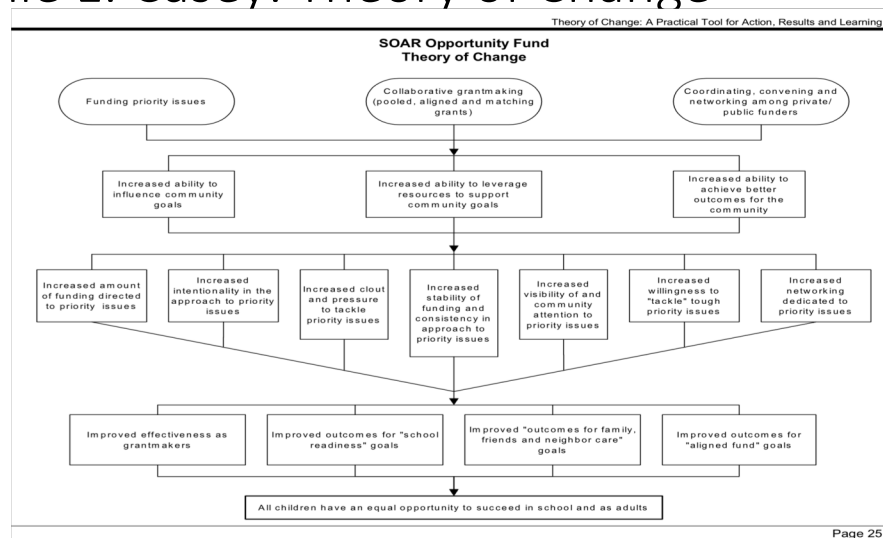
Questions?

9. Principal Sources

1. "A Guide to Developing and Outcome Logic Model and Measurement Plan," United Way of Greater Richmond & Petersburg [A valuable source for this presentation, used with permission.] http://www.yourunitedway.org/outcome-measurements

2. "Logic Model Development Guide," W.K. Kellogg Foundation (January 2004) http://www.wkkf.org/resource-directory/resource/2006/02/wk-kellogg-foundation-logic-model-development-guide

3. "Introduction to 'Theory of Change'," Theory of Change Community, January 2012. http://www.theoryofchange.org/

4. "Theories of Change and Logic Models: Telling Them Apart," Helène Clark and Andrea A. Anderson, November 2004. http://www.actknowledge.org/