Lessons from the field on using the ECAI to frame and measure evaluation capacity

Presenter 1: Yolanda Suarez-Balcazar, University of Illinois-Chicago

Presenter 2: Louis Lafrado, L-&D Associates Consulting Group

Presenter 3: Sharon M. Wasco, Community Psychologist & Independent Consultant

Presenter 4: Tania Rempert, PIE Org, Jay Wade, Leanne Kallemeyn and David Ensminger, Loyola University

Presentation 5: Tina Taylor-Ritzler, Dominican University (Chair)

Evaluation Capacity Building Assessment Instrument (ECAI): Development & Validation

Yolanda Suarez-Balcazar

University of Illinois at Chicago

Tina Taylor-Ritzler

Dominican University

What is Evaluation Capacity?

- Intentional work to continuously create and sustain overall organizational processes that make quality evaluation and its uses routine (Baizerman, Compton, & Stockdill, 2002).

- Mainstreaming evaluation practices within an organization (Stockdill et al., 2002).

- Ability to conduct effective evaluations (Milstein & Cotton, 2000).

Evaluation Capacity Building Assessment Instrument (ECAI): Development & Validation

Development

- Literature review

- Longitudinal Case Study

- Mixed-methods single case study

- Trainings & consultations

The early synthesis model

See Suarez-Balcazar, Taylor-Ritzler, Garcia Iriarte et al. (2010)
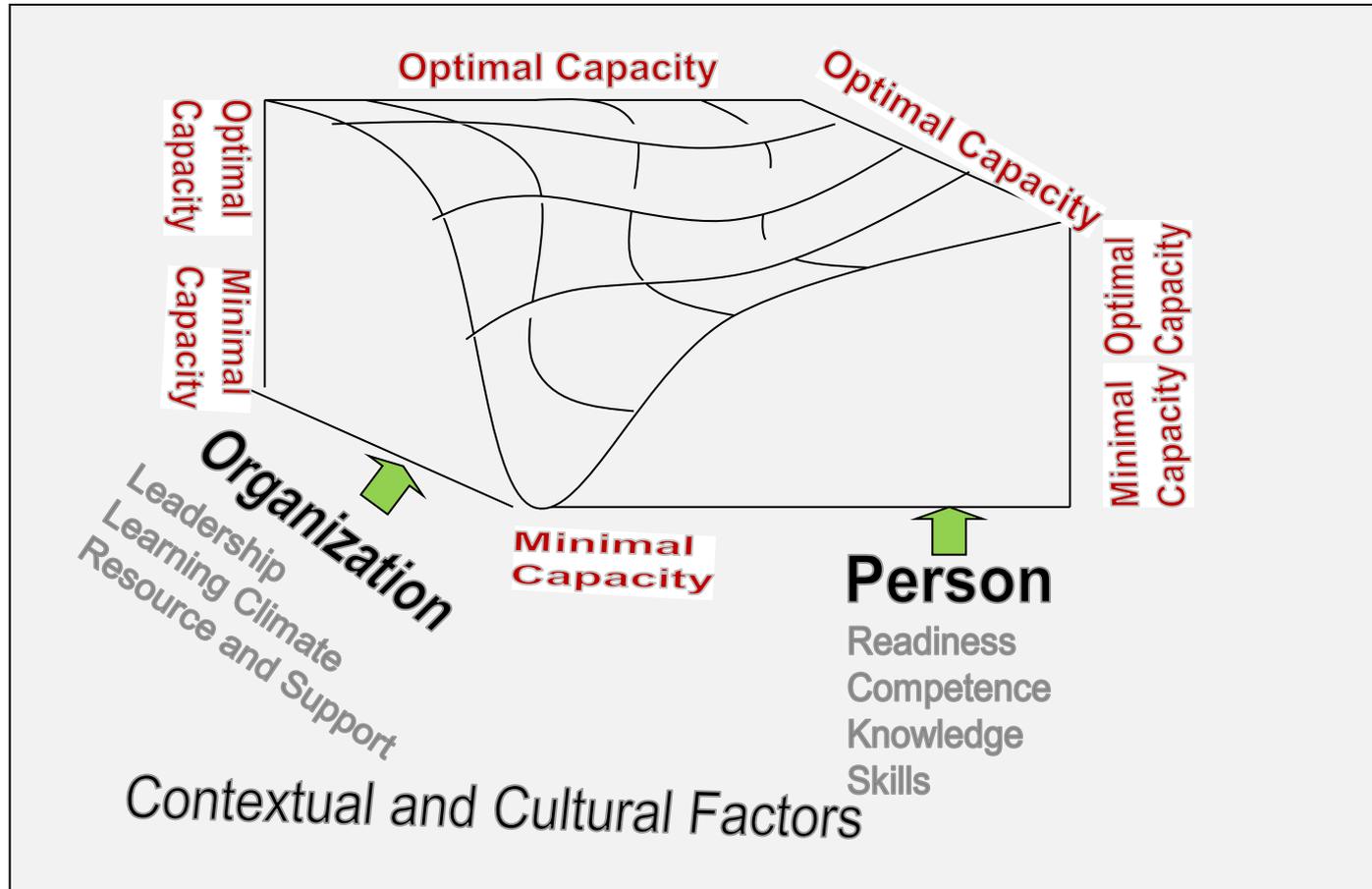
The validated model:
Conceptualizing & measuring evaluation capacity

Model	χ^2	df	χ^2/df	RMSEA	CFI	TLI
	16.83	12	1.40	.049	.990	.976

See Taylor-Ritzler, Suarez-Balcazar, Garcia-Iriarte, et al., (2013).

What is evaluation capacity?
How do we measure evaluation capacity?

Model	χ^2	df	χ^2/df	RMSEA	CFI	TLI
	16.83	12	1.40	.049	.990	.976

See Taylor-Ritzler, Suarez-Balcazar, Garcia-Iriarte, et al., (2013).

What is evaluation capacity?
How do we measure evaluation capacity?

EC Preconditions

EC Outcomes

Awareness

Motivation

Competence

Leadership

Learning Climate

Resources

Individual Factors

Organizational Factors

Mainstreaming

Use of Results

Model	χ^2	*df*	χ^2/df	RMSEA	CFI	TLI
	16.83	12	1.40	.049	.990	.976

See Taylor-Ritzler, Suarez-Balcazar, Garcia-Iriarte, et al., (2013)
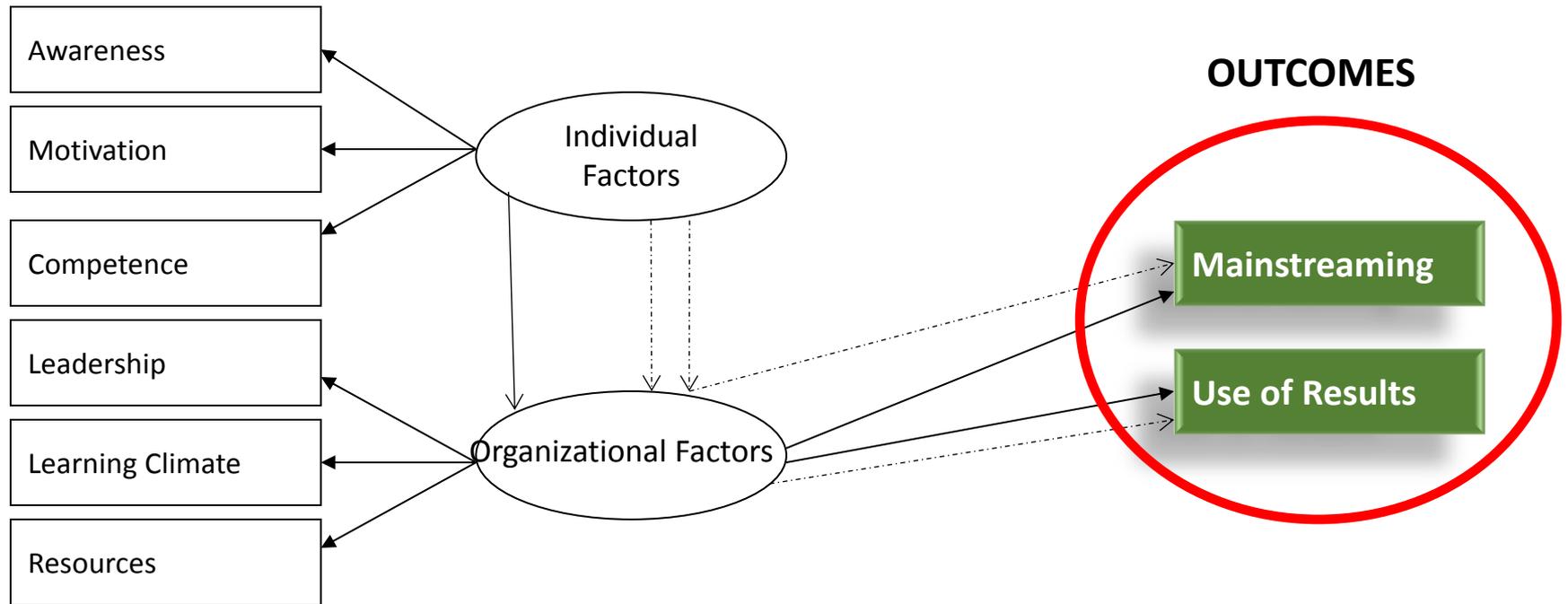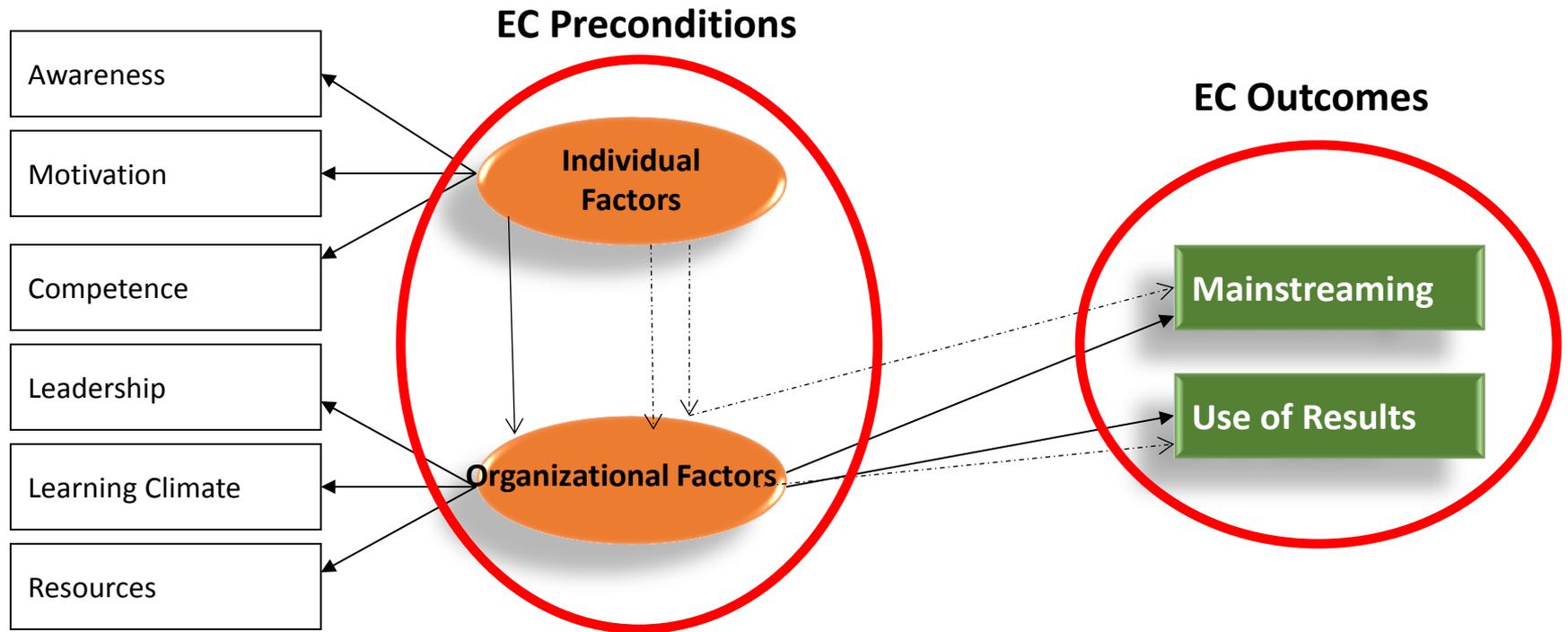
A transformative cycle for ECB

I. Assess Evaluation Capacity

ECAI

2. Identify Strengths and Needs

3. Plan EC Strategies

4. Implement/evaluate ECB Activities

See Suarez-Balcazar, Taylor-Ritzler, & Morales-Curtin, 2015)

9
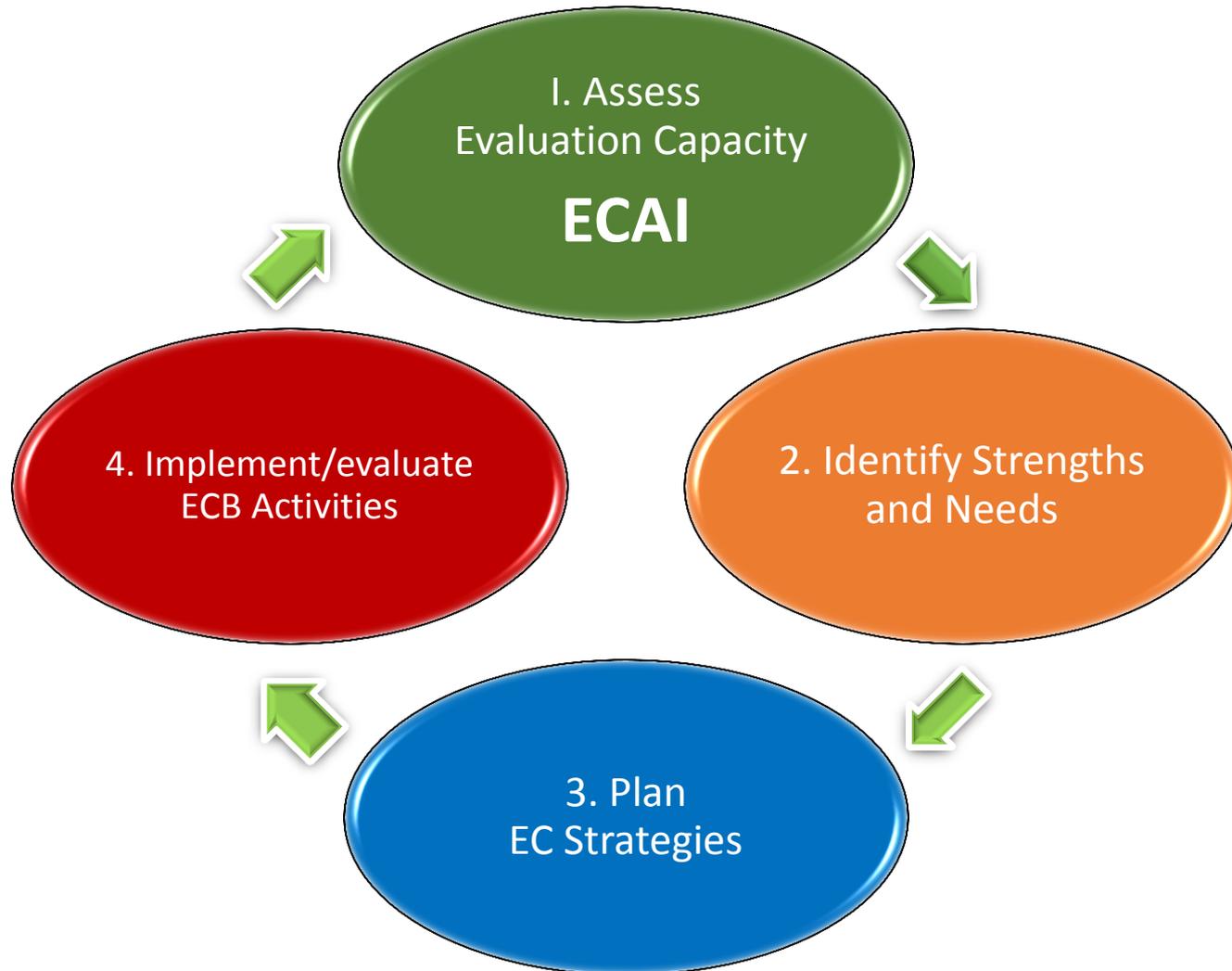
Transformative Cycle: A case study

1. Access EC - Baseline assessment
2. Identify strengths & needs
   - Compute means and standard deviations for each capacity component
   - Based on the means, identify *strengths* to celebrate and *needs* to target for ECB activities
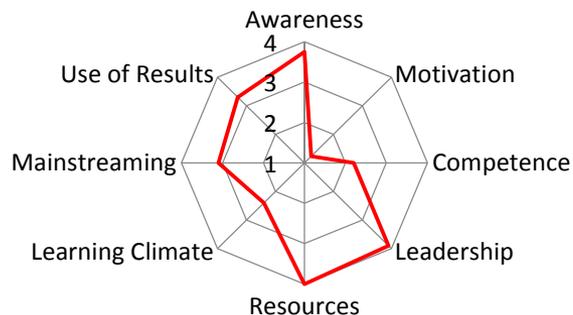
Capacity Component	Score of 4
Individual Factors	
Awareness	
Motivation	
Competence	
Organizational Factors	
Leadership	
Learning Climate	
Resources	
Evaluation Capacity Outcomes	
Mainstreaming	
Use of Results	

Evaluation Capacity

Baseline assessment: ECAI

| I think that an evaluation…	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Will help me understand my program.	1	2	3	4
2. Will inform the decisions I make about my program.	1	2	3	4
3. Will justify funding for my program.	1	2	3	4
4. Will help to convince managers that changes are needed in my program.	1	2	3	4
5. Will inform changes in our documentation systems.	1	2	3	4
6. Is absolutely necessary to improve my program.	1	2	3	4
7. Should involve program participants in the evaluation process.	1	2	3	4
8. Will influence policy relevant to my program.	1	2	3	4
9. Will help improve services to people from diverse ethnic backgrounds who also have disabilities	1	2	3	4
10. Is unnecessary because we already know what is best for our participants.	1	2	3	4
11. Is too complex for our staff to do.	1	2	3	4

(See Suarez-Balcazar, Taylor-Ritzler, & Morales-Curtin, 2015)

EMPOWERMENT EVALUATION 2
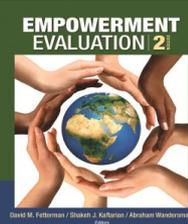
Motivation to Engage in Evaluation
valuation Knowledge and Skills

MOTIVATION I am motivated to…	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Learn about evaluation.	1	2	3	4
2. Start evaluating my program.	1	2	3	4
3. Support other staff to evaluate their program.	1	2	3	4
4. Encourage others to buy into evaluating our program.	1	2	3	4
KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS I know how to…	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Develop an evaluation plan.	1	2	3	4
2. Clearly state measurable goals and objectives for my program.	1	2	3	4
3. Identify strategies to collect information from participants.	1	2	3	4
4. Define outcome indicators of my program.	1	2	3	4
5. Decide what questions to answer in an evaluation.	1	2	3	4
6. Decide from whom to collect the information.	1	2	3	4
7. Collect evaluation information.	1	2	3	4
8. Analyze evaluation information.	1	2	3	4
9. Develop recommendations based on evaluation results.	1	2	3	4
10. Examine the impact of my program on people from diverse ethnic/racial backgrounds and/or people with disabilities.	1	2	3	4
11. Write an evaluation report.	1	2	3	4
12. Conduct an evaluation of my program on my own.	1	2	3	4
13. Conduct an evaluation of my program with support from others.	1	2	3	4
14. Present evaluation findings orally.	1	2	3	4

(See Suarez-Balcazar, Taylor-Ritzler, & Morales-Curtin, 2015)
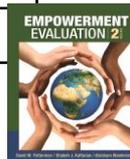
LEADERSHIP	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I provide effective leadership.	1	2	3	4
2. Staff understands how everyone's duties fit together as part of the overall mission of the program.	1	2	3	4
3. I communicate program goals and objectives clearly.	1	2	3	4
4. I have a clear plan for accomplishing program goals.	1	2	3	4
5. I have realistic expectations of what staff can accomplish given the resources they have available.	1	2	3	4
ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE **The program where I work fosters an environment in which…**	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Evaluation information is shared in open forums.	1	2	3	4
2. Staff is supported to introduce new approaches in the course of their work.	1	2	3	4
3. It is easy for staff to meet regularly to discuss issues.	1	2	3	4
4. Staff is provided opportunities to assess how well they are doing, what they can do better, and what is working.	1	2	3	4
5. Staff can encourage managers and peers to make use of evaluation findings.	1	2	3	4
6. Staff respects each other's perspectives and opinions.	1	2	3	4
7. Staff errors lead to teachable moments rather than criticisms.	1	2	3	4
8. Staff participates in making long-term plans for their program.	1	2	3	4
9. Staff concerns are ignored in most decisions regarding strategic planning and evaluation.	1	2	3	4

Transformative Cycle:
A case study

3. Plan EC activities – Consultation & brainstorming

Used an EE approach

- Redefine mission and purpose

- Take stock of current efforts

4. Implement & evaluate

- Train

- Facilitate, advocate & plan for the future

Post ECB assessment

- Other measures

- Examine ECB outcomes

(See Suarez-Balcazar, Taylor-Ritzler, & Morales-Curtin, 2015)

Moving forward in ECB

Systems & policies

Community context & culture

Organizational Context & culture

Science

- Conceptualization & Synthesis models

Stakeholders

Practice

- Evidence-based process

Diagnostic tool

See Suarez-Balcazar & Taylor-Ritzler 2014
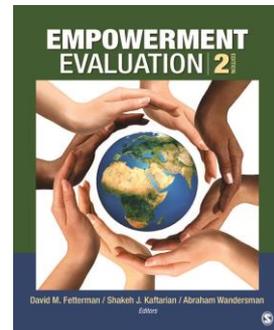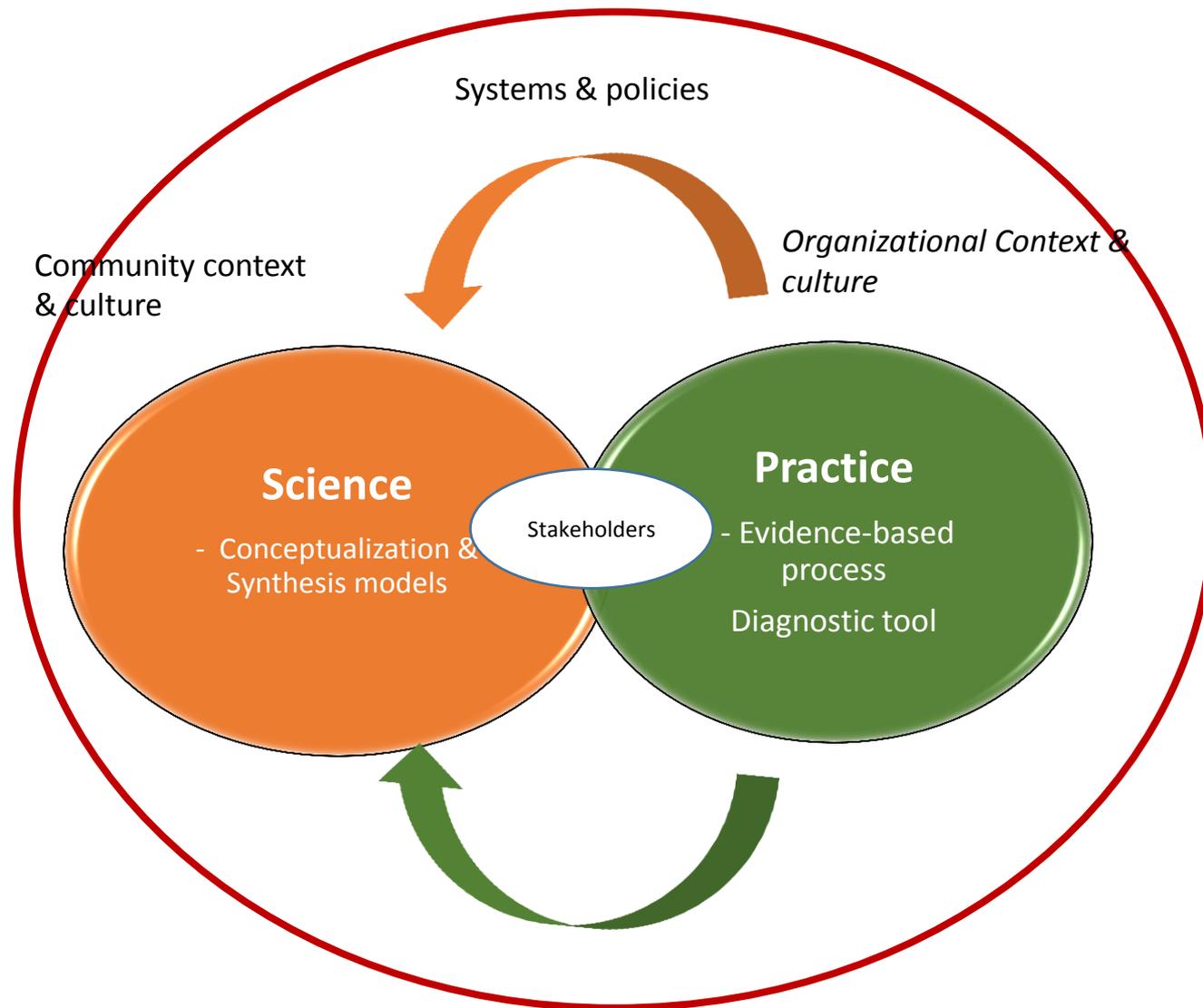
USING THE MODEL TO FRAME THE GOALS AND PROCESSES INVOLVED IN EVALUATION PROJECTS

ADAPTING THE MODEL TO EVALUATION USE IN AMERICAN INDIAN COMMUNITIES, ORGANIZATIONS AND TRIBES

- Where does the model fit with evaluation processes in American Indian settings?

  - "Adapting" is the key to the evaluation process. Taking any model off the shelf and using it without considering the audience (researcher, service provider, stakeholder, Elder, Tribal Leadership) misses the mark and limits the evaluation and the results.

ADAPT THE MODEL AND THE EVALUATION SCHEMA

- Specific issues with the model that should be considered before addressing American Indian evaluation processes
  - Culture, tradition, language
  - Sovereignty
  - Experience. Awareness,
  - Relationship
  - Capacity building
  - Data ownership

ADAPT THE MODEL AND THE EVALUATION SCHEMA

- Two issues are the most important when working <u>with</u> Tribes and Tribal organizations
  - Relationship – far too often bona fides are built on "that one time I worked with a Tribe"
    - Understand the resistance to and pressure by the dominant society on the Tribe.
      - It means staying with the project (sustainability) long after the funding has stopped

ADAPT THE MODEL AND THE EVALUATION SCHEMA

- Listening
  - Evaluators enter communities as out town experts with a rack of slides and ideas on how things have been done elsewhere
  - Evidence-based does not mean it will work in the community
  - Evaluation is welcome but not when forced without partnership or listening to local concerns

ADAPT THE MODEL AND THE EVALUATION SCHEMA

- Quantitative data are as important in evaluating Tribal programs as anywhere

- Qualitative data are more important than almost anywhere else
  - Listen
  - Evaluate the qualitative data that is the wealth of any American Indian program
  - Respect and honor the culture, tradition and language
  - Put the notebook away
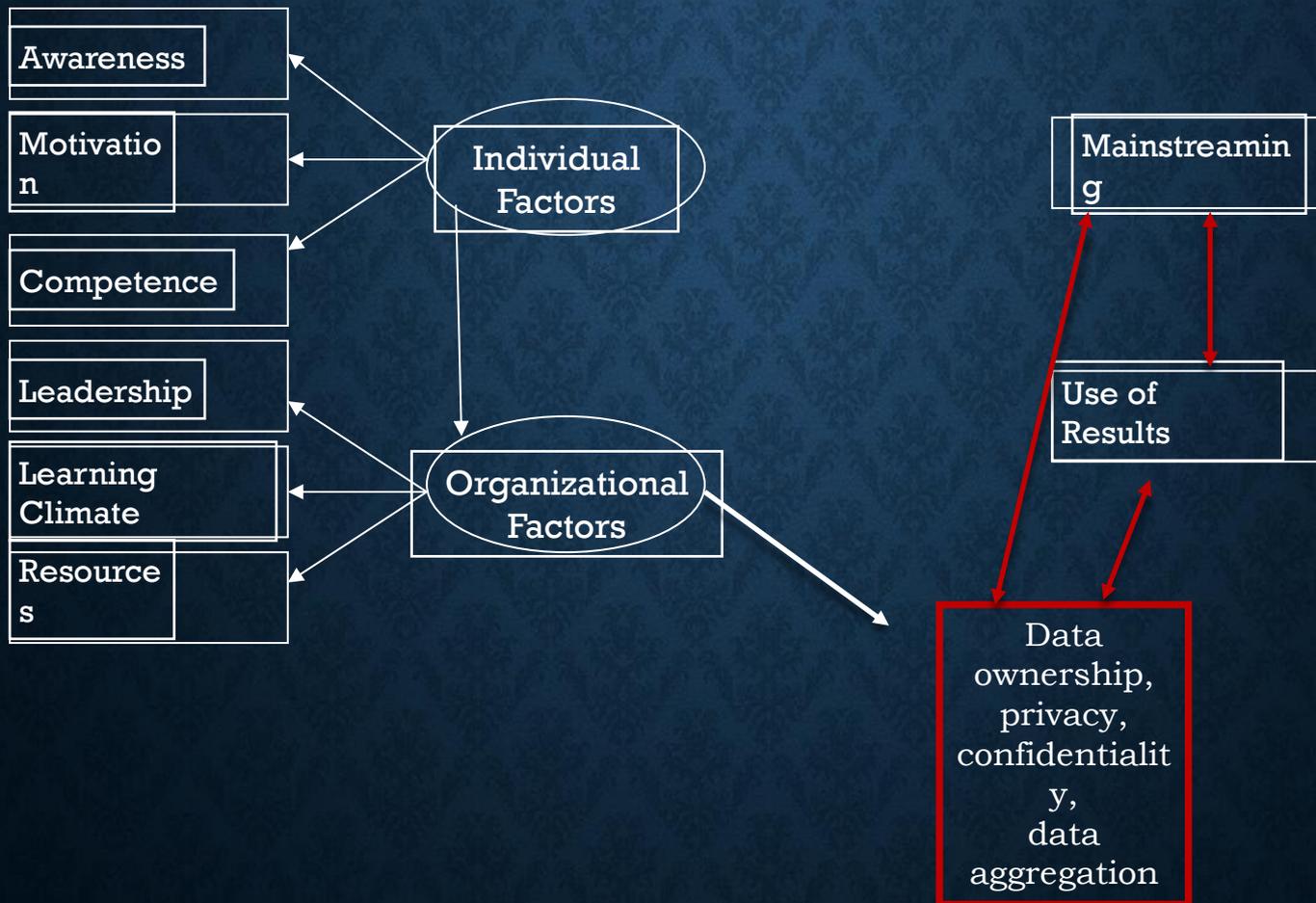
NOT SO SIMPLE IMAGE

A Visualization of Evaluation Capacity That Points Out the Importance of Organizational Change and Evaluation Use
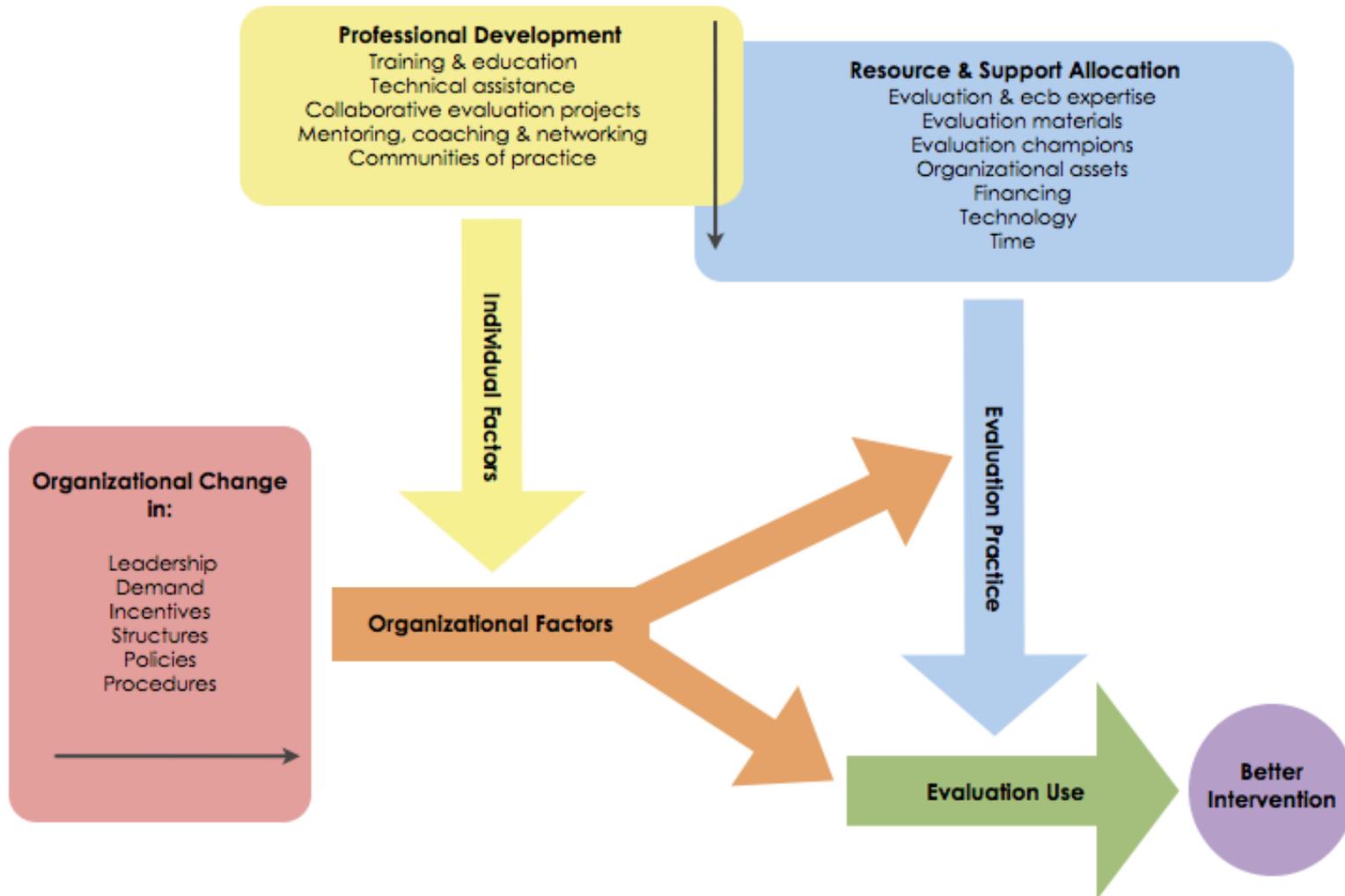
© 2013 Sharon M. Wasco, PhD

Evolution of the Pitch

- <u>Initially</u>, I focused on the nature of evaluation capacity: that there were four components, and that they were interrelated.

- <u>Over time</u>, five ways to improve the DESIGN and DELIVERY of the information

Investing in Evidence

Building Capacity to Evaluate Sexual Violence Prevention Work in Texas

WII: Three Things*

Ind + Org = O

WII: Three Things*

Ind + Org = O

Individual Factors:
- Awareness (11) .72*
- Motivation (4) .86*
- Competence (14) .46*

Organizational Factors:
- Leadership (5) .75*
- Learning Climate (9) .93*
- Resources (9) .61*

Outcomes:
- Evaluation Capacity Outcomes → Mainstreaming (5)
- Evaluation Capacity Outcomes → Use (11)
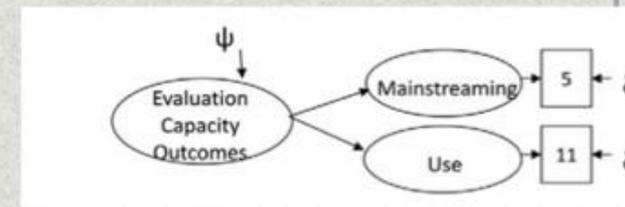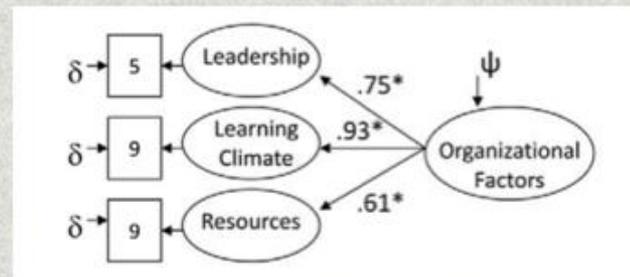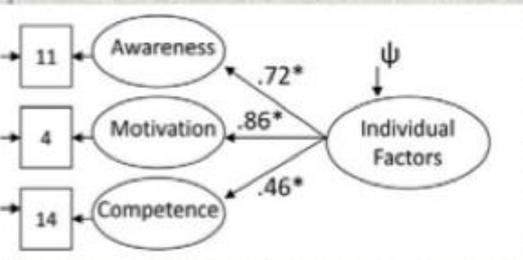
WII: Three Things*
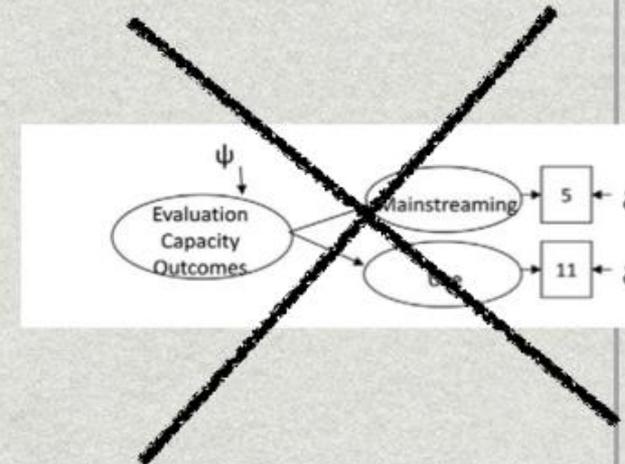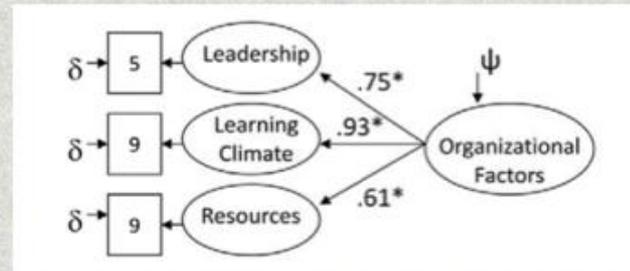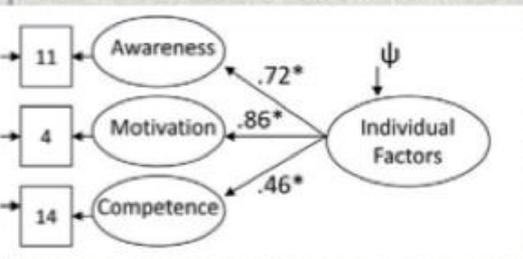
WII: Four Things
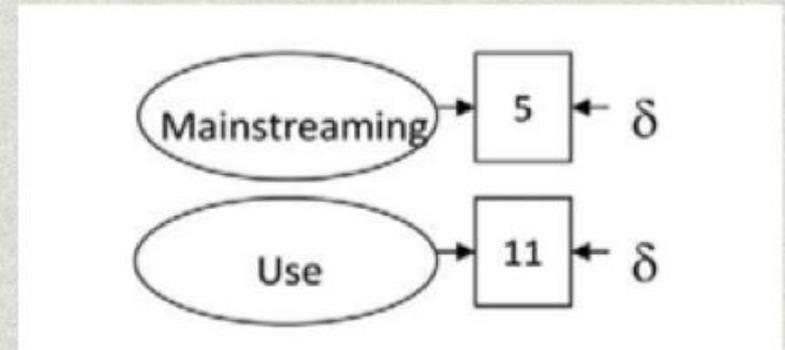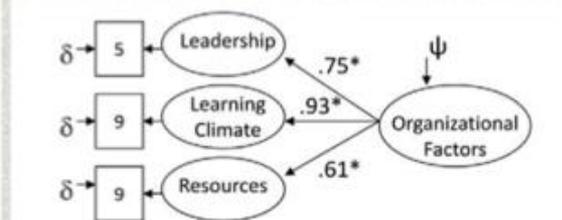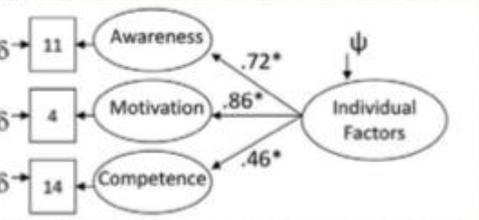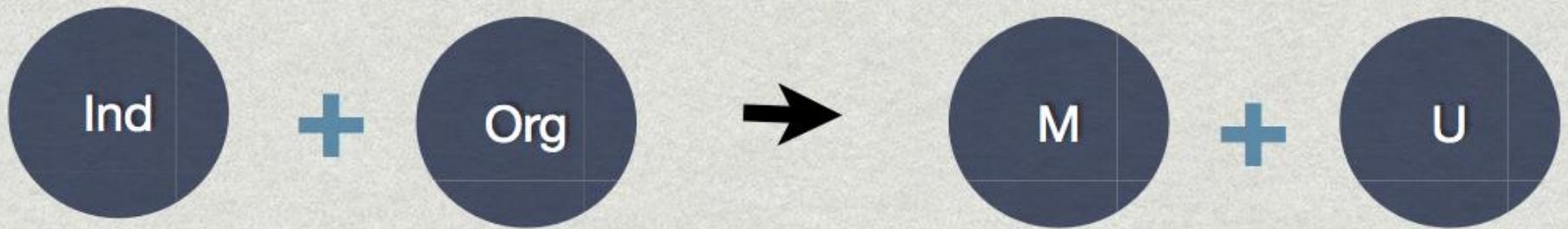
# WII: Relationships among the four things
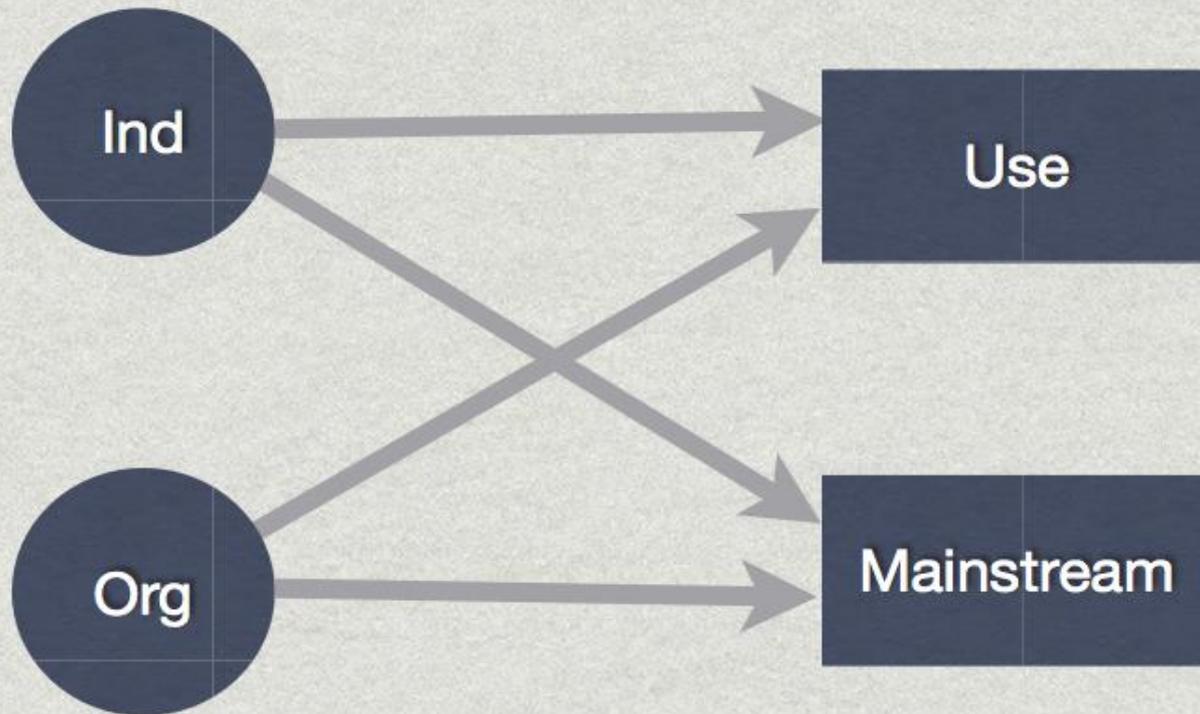
WII: Relationships among the four things
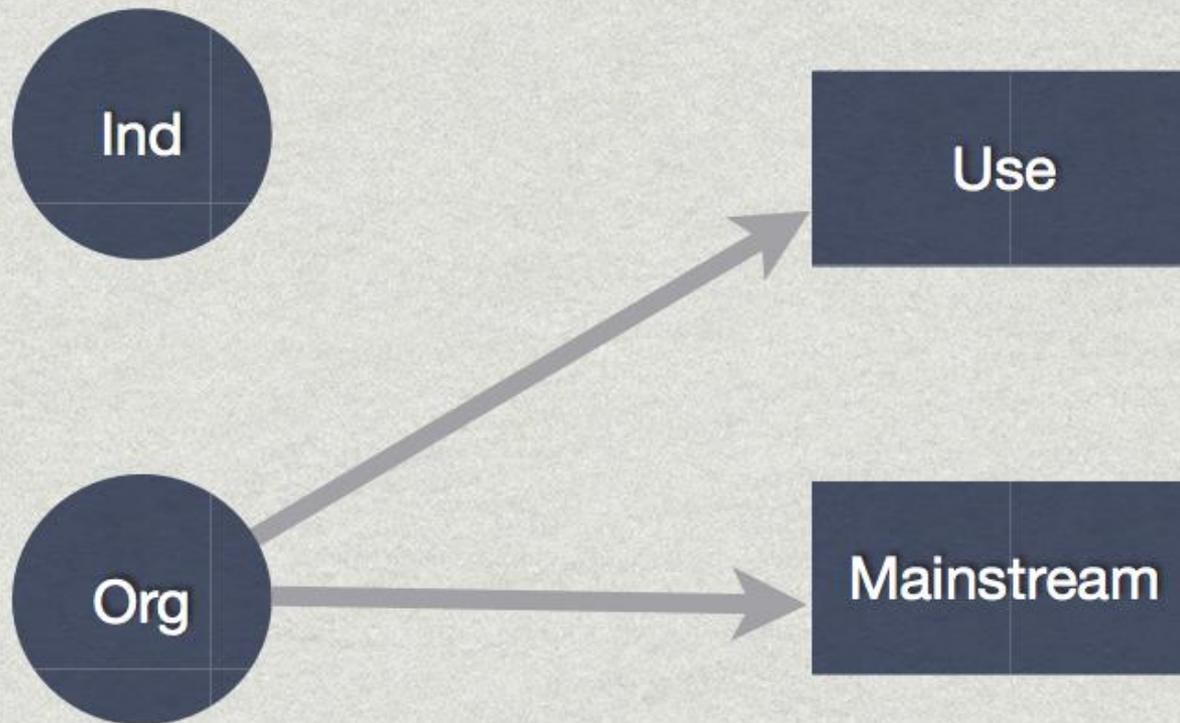
WII: Relationships among the four things
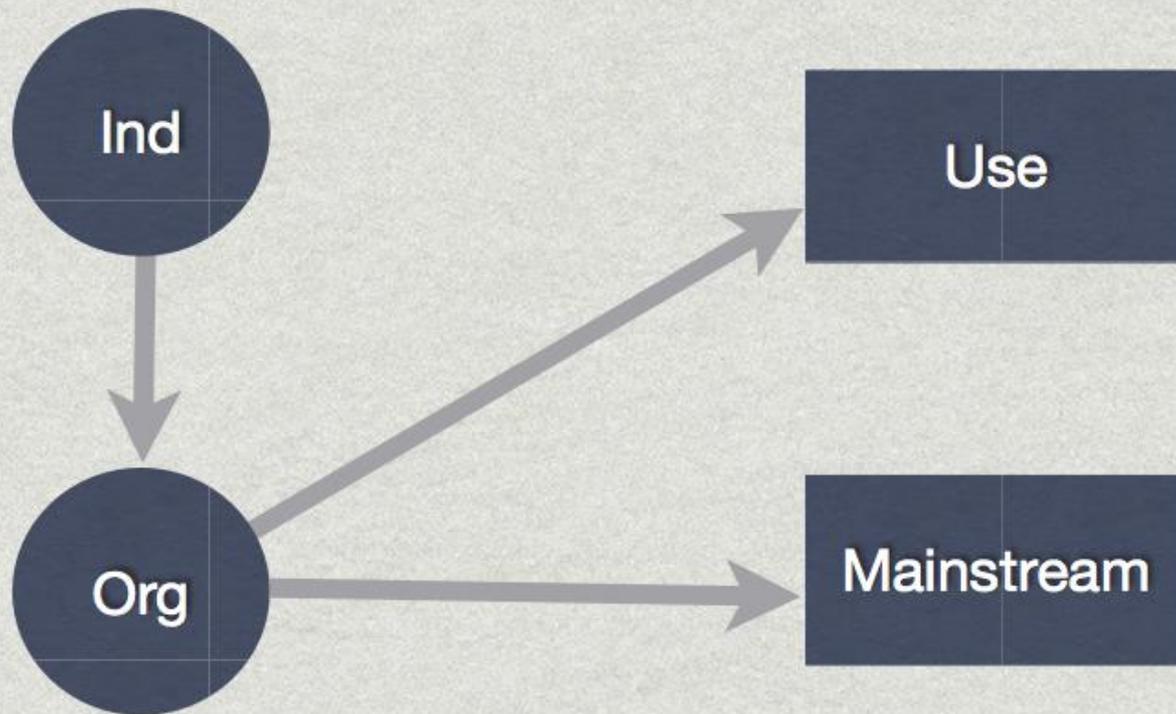
WII: Relationships among the four things
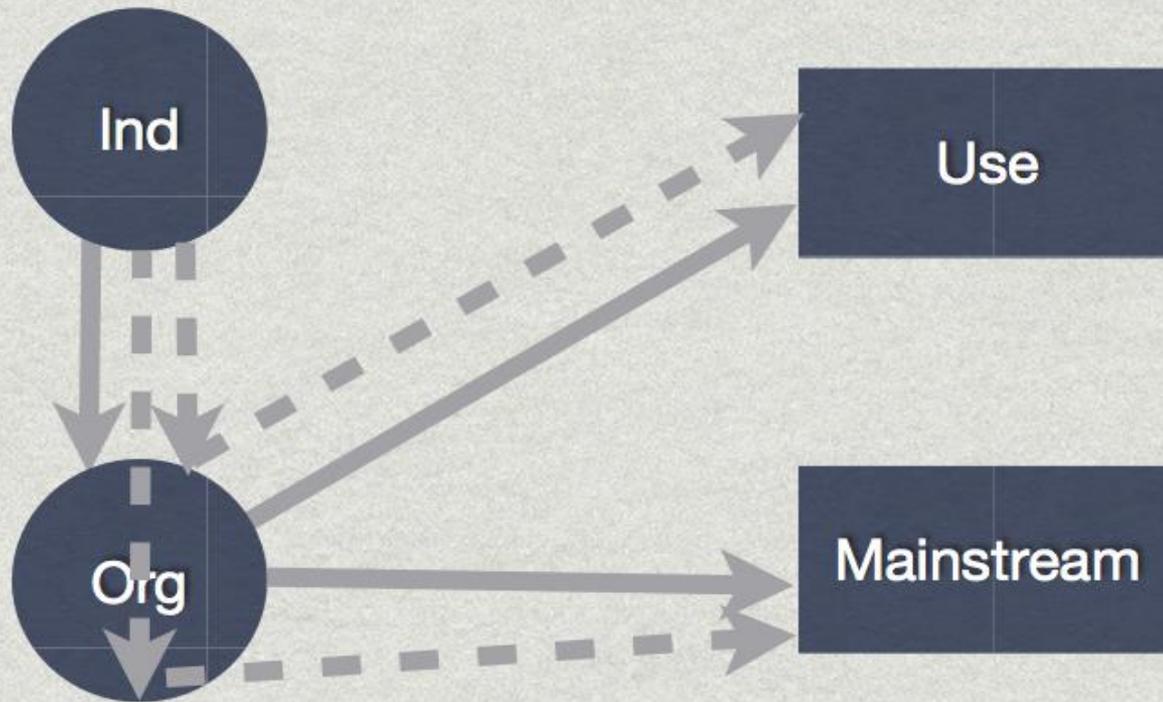
Evolution of the Pitch

- Initially, I focused on the nature of evaluation capacity: that there were four components, and that they were interrelated.
- Over time, five ways to improve the DESIGN and DELIVERY of the information
  - Added elements that increased relevancy
  - Color
  - Form
  - Metaphor
  - Story

Added the *why*

Better
Intervention

Taylor-Powell, E., & Boyd, H. H. (2008). Evaluation capacity building in complex organizations. In M. T. Braverman, M. Engle, M. E. Arnold, & R. A. Rennekamp (Eds.), *Program evaluation in a complex organizational system: Lessons from Cooperative Extension. New Directions for Evaluation, 120,* 55–69.

5

Added the *how*

Evaluation Capacity Building in Complex Organizations

Ellen Taylor-Powell, Heather H. Boyd

Abstract

Evaluation capacity building, or ECB, is an area of great interest within the field of evaluation as well as in Extension evaluation. Internal Extension evaluators have long offered training and technical assistance to help Extension educators conduct evaluation. Today ECB in Extension encompasses myriad activities and processes to advance evaluation practice and evaluative think-

Professional Development
Training & education
Technical assistance
Collaborative evaluation projects
Mentoring, coaching & networking
Communities of practice

Resource & Support Allocation
Evaluation & ecb expertise
Evaluation materials
Evaluation champions
Organizational assets
Financing
Technology
Time

Added the _how_

Organizational Change in:

Leadership
Demand
Incentives
Structures
Policies
Procedures

Better Intervention

The Importance of Color

Professional Development
Training & education
Technical assistance
Collaborative evaluation projects
Mentoring, coaching & networking
Communities of practice

Resource & Support Allocation
Evaluation & ecb expertise
Evaluation materials
Evaluation champions
Organizational assets
Financing
Technology
Time

**Organizational Change in:**

Leadership
Demand
Incentives
Structures
Policies
Procedures

Better Intervention

Color Interacting with Form

© 2013 Sharon M. Wasco, PhD
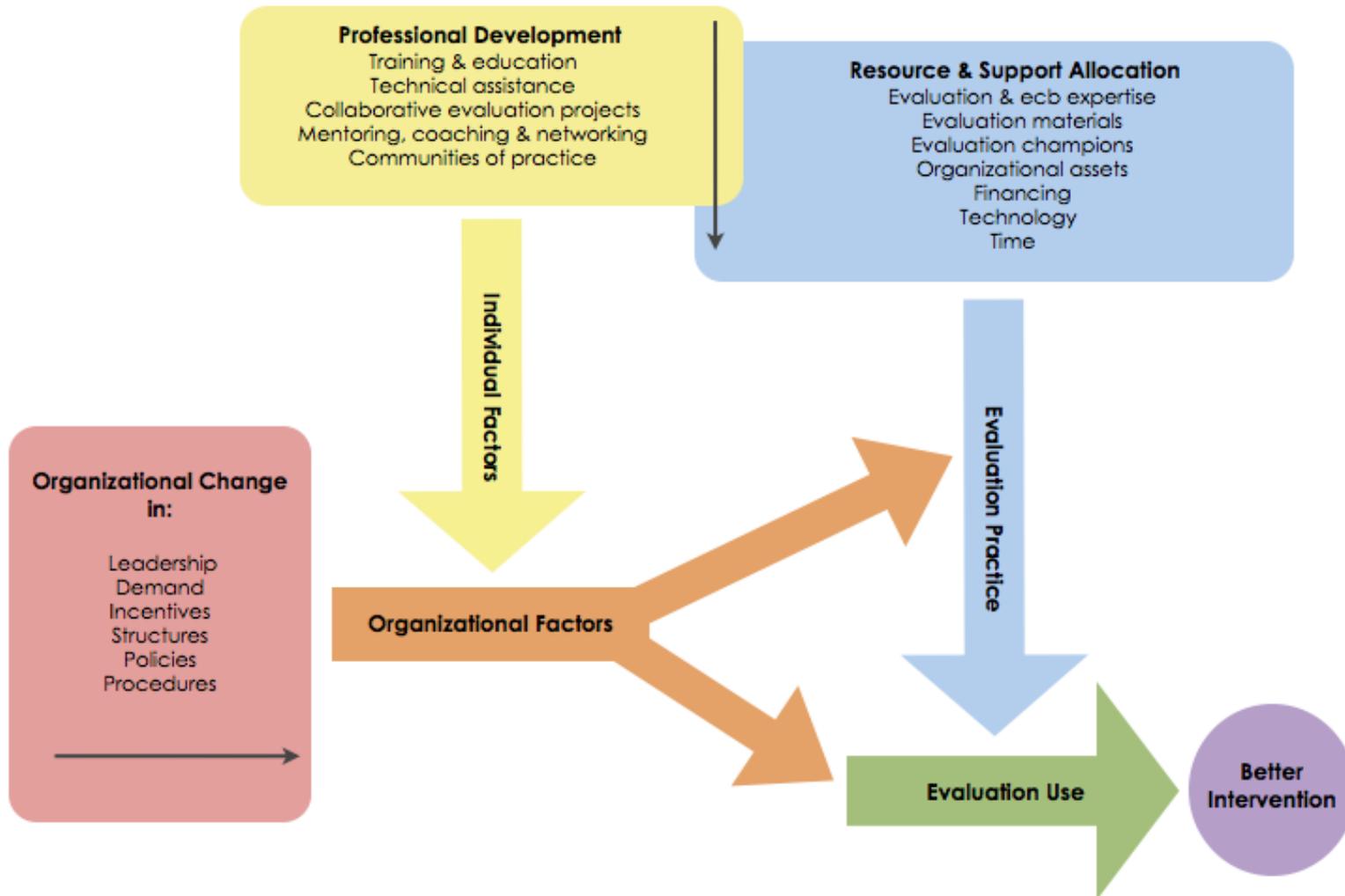
I played around with form to show the "links" or "chain" of connections
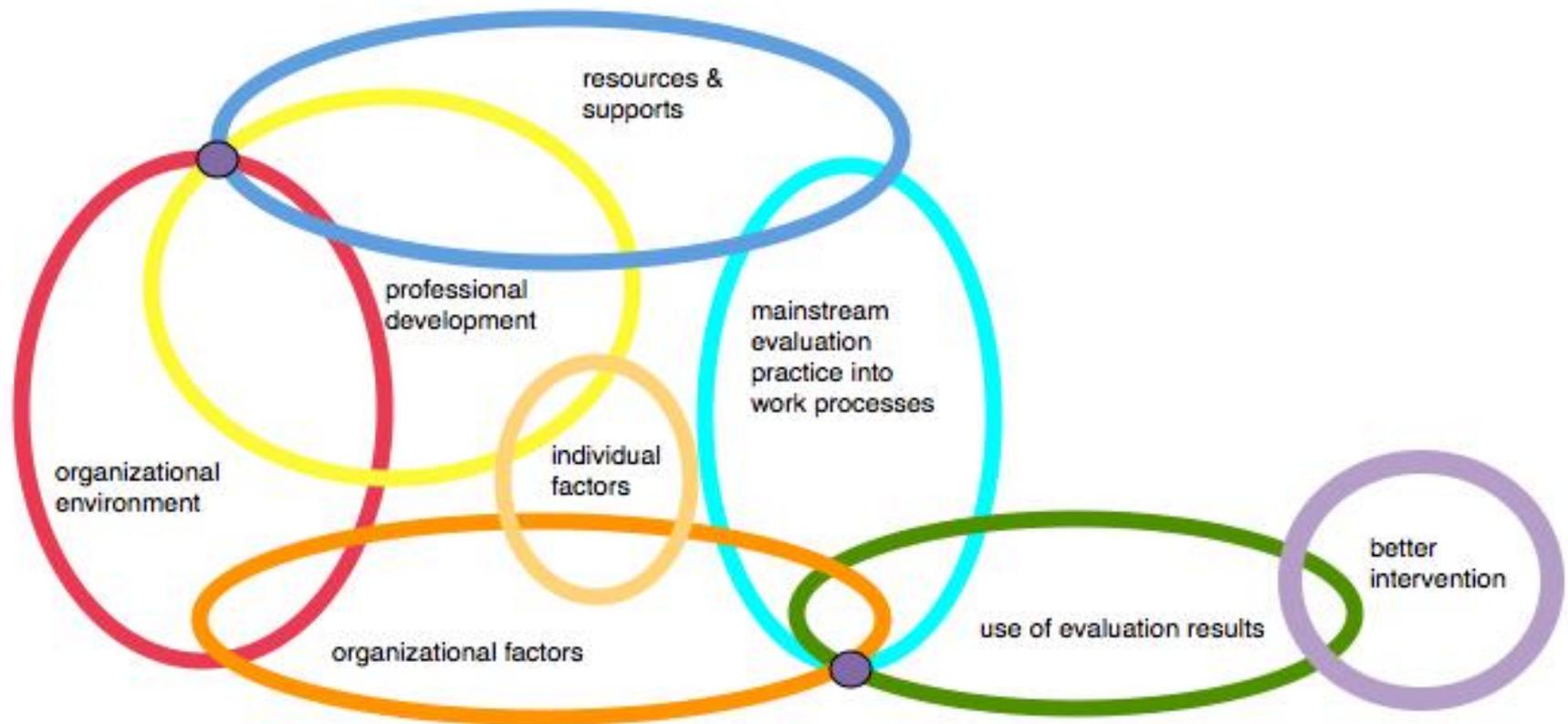
But found that the arrows best depicted the critical nature of evaluation use
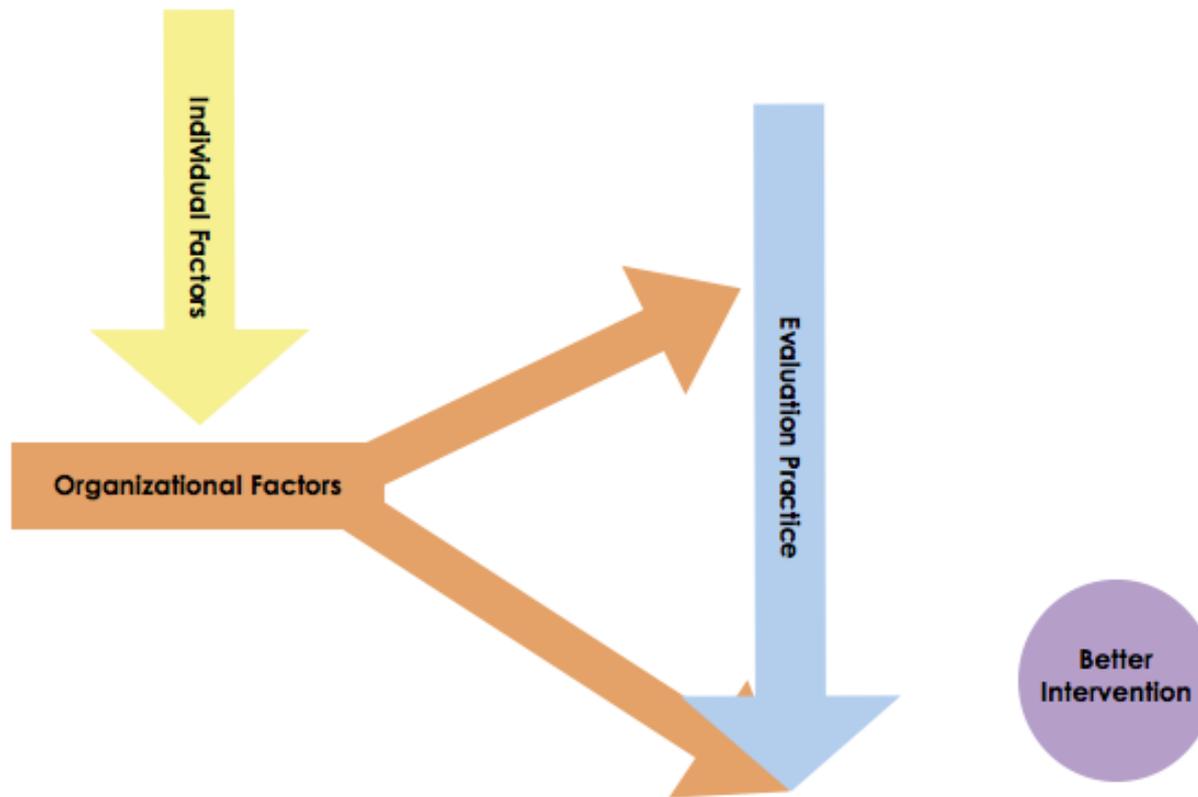
Adding layer of metaphor helped clients apply the ideas
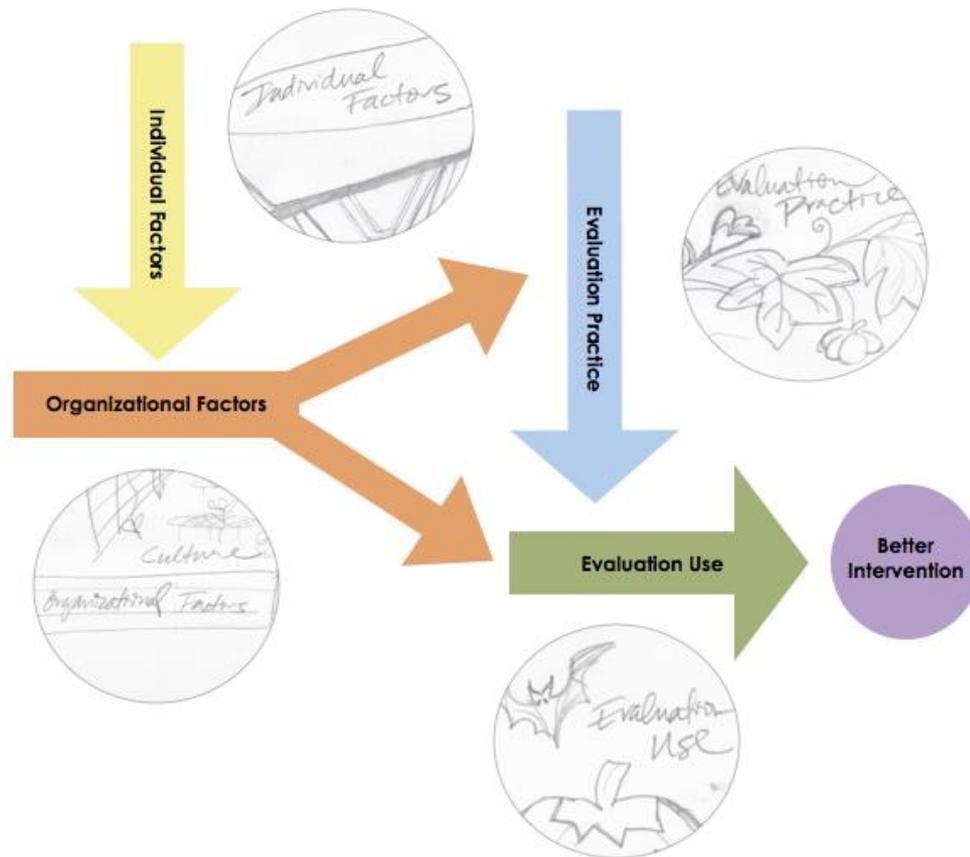
Individual Factors.
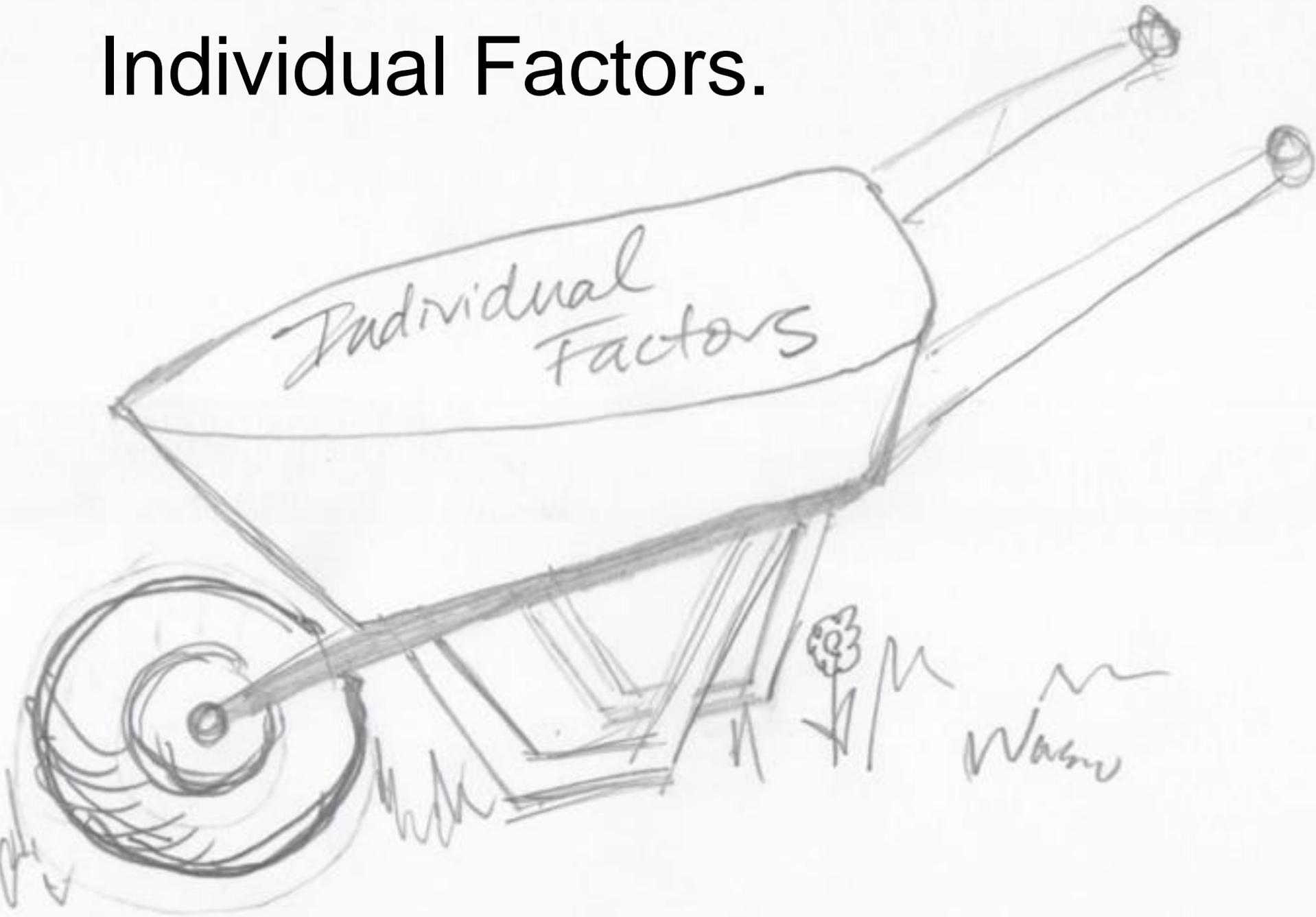
Individual Factors.

Awareness of the benefits of evaluation

Individual Factors.

Motivation to conduct evaluation

Individual Factors.

Competence to engage in evaluation practice

(i.e., knowledge & skills)

shovel

Individual Factors
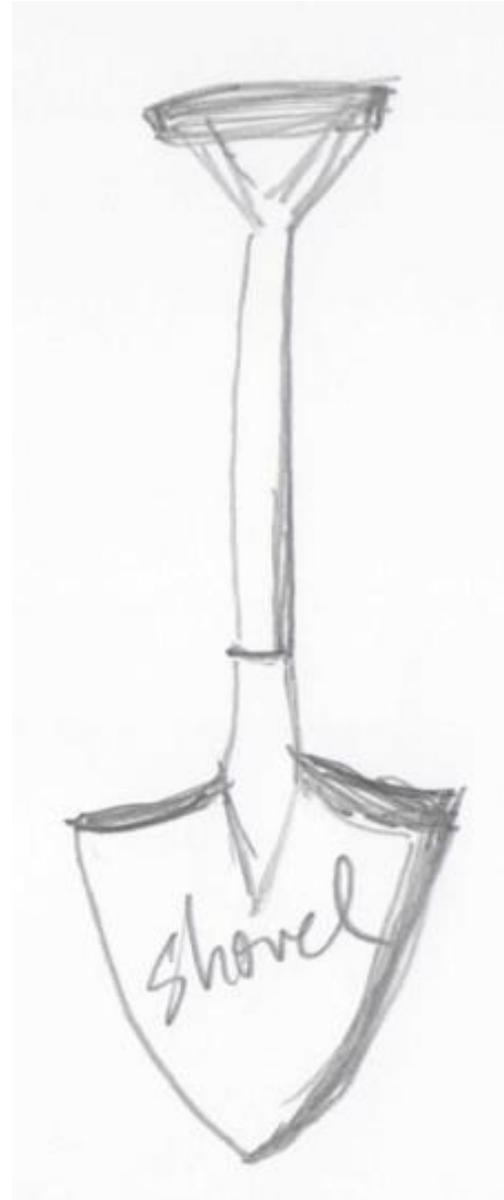
Awareness of the benefits of evaluation

Motivation to conduct evaluation

Competence to engage in evaluation practice

Organizational Factors

Evaluation Practice

Evaluation Use

Better Intervention

Organizational Factors.

Leadership for evaluation

Learning climate that fosters evaluative thinking
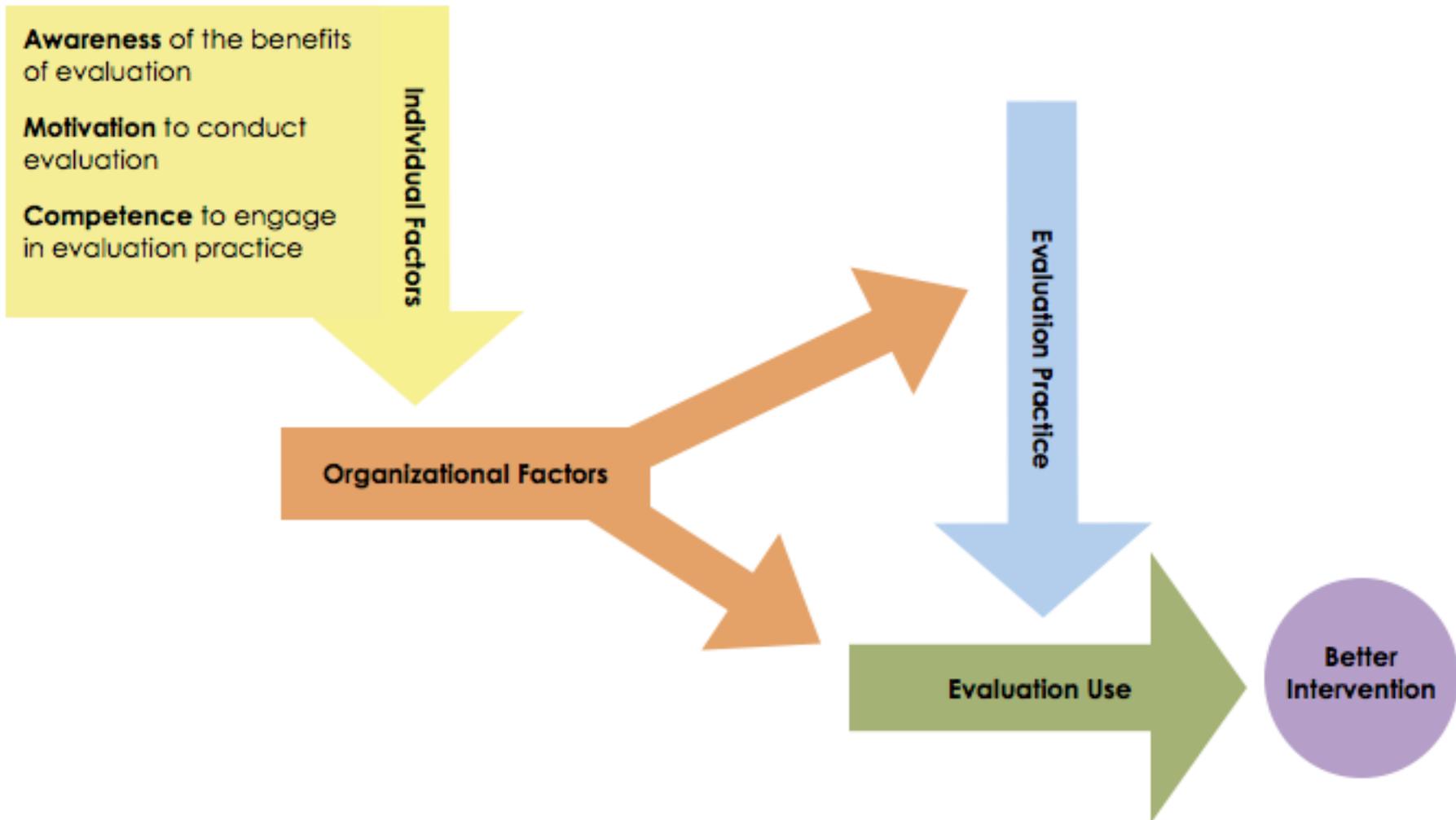
Resources that support evaluation

Individual Factors

Organizational Factors

Leadership for evaluation

Learning climate that fosters evaluative thinking

Resources that support evaluation
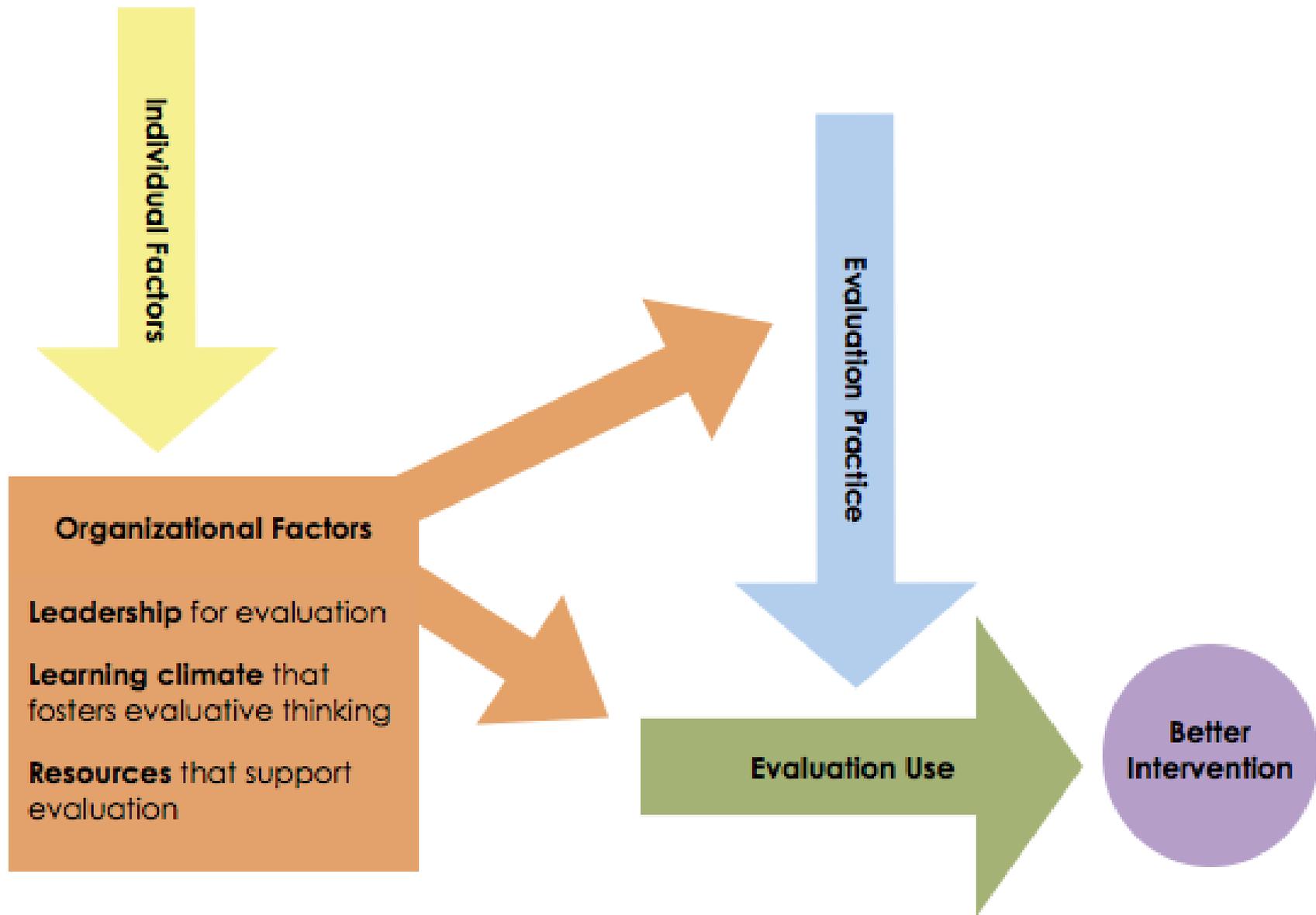
Evaluation Practice
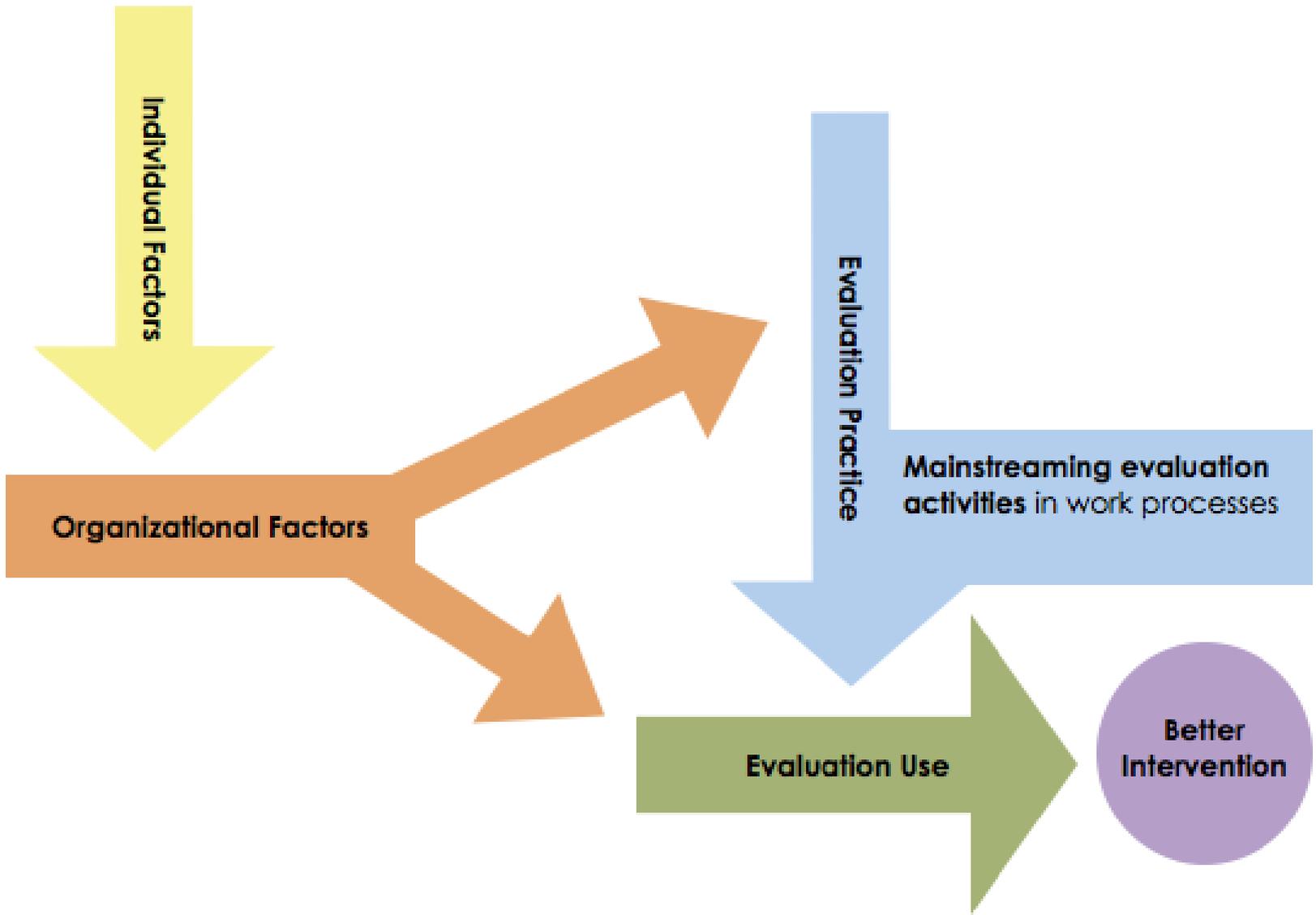
Evaluation Use

Better Intervention

Evaluation Practice.

Pumpkin plant

Evaluation Use.

Jack-o-lantern

Use(s) of evaluation outcomes.
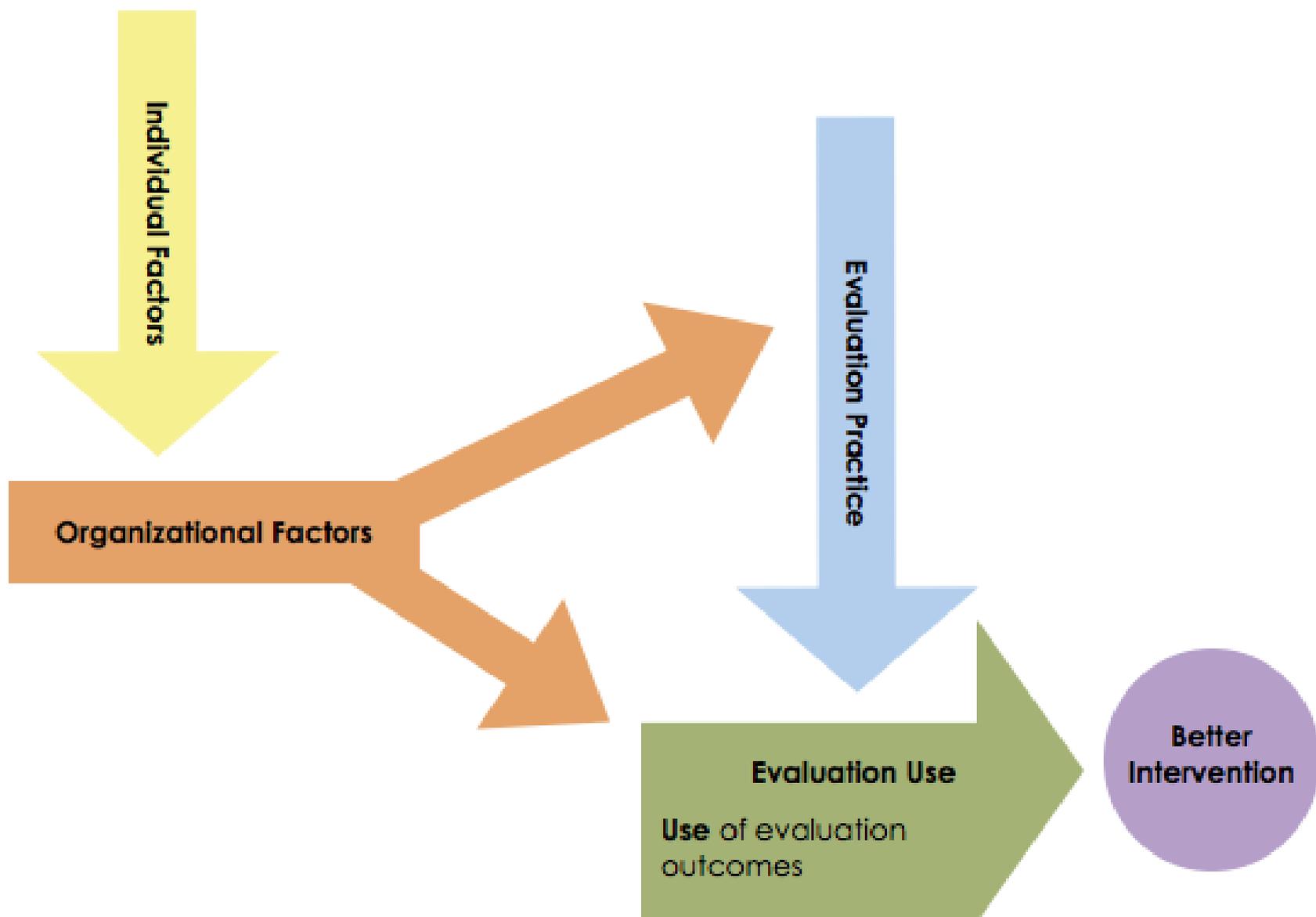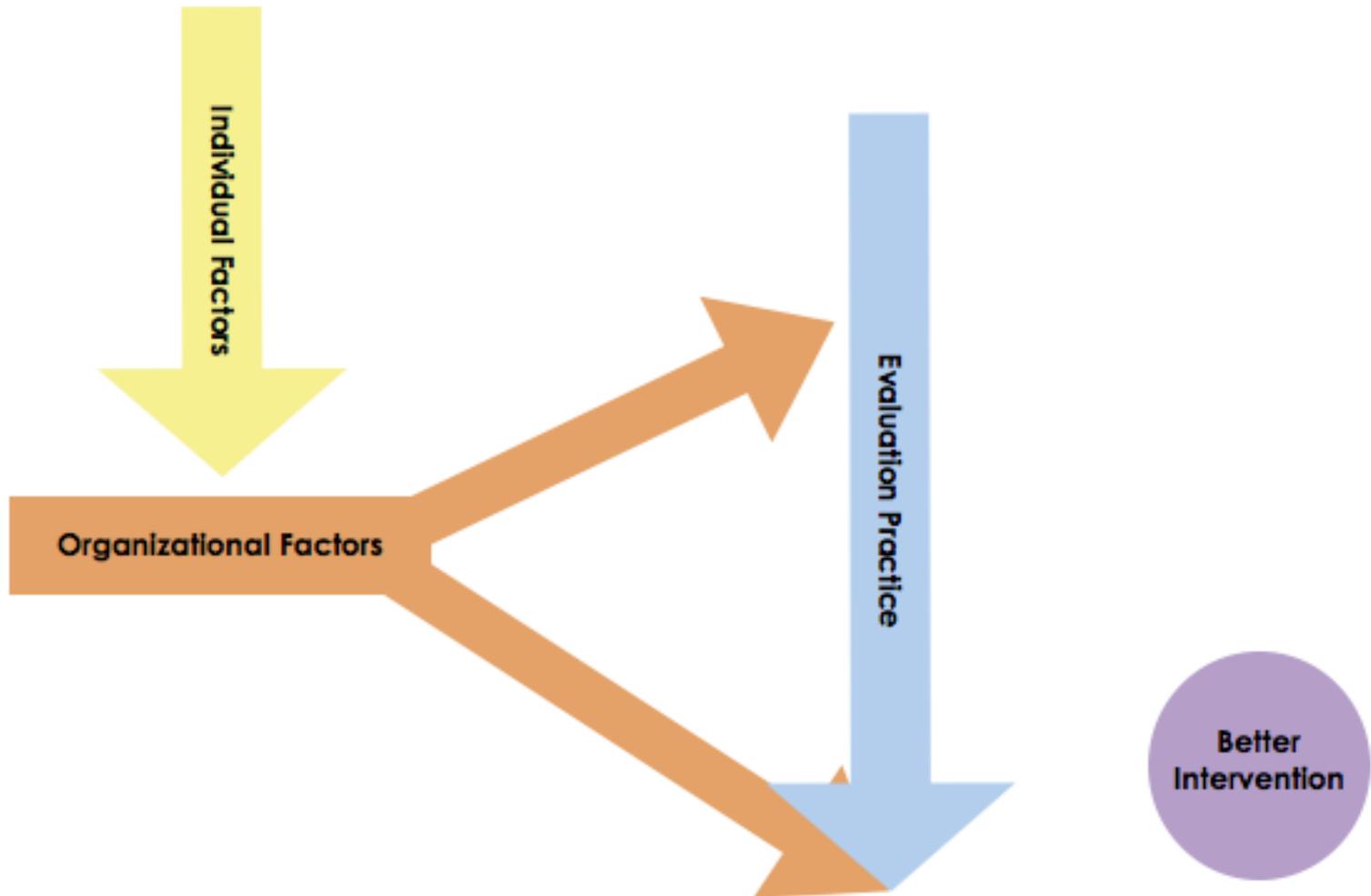
Pumpkin Pie

Jack-o-lantern

Individual Factors

Organizational Factors

Evaluation Practice

Evaluation Use

Use of evaluation outcomes

Better Intervention

Individual Factors

Organizational Factors

Evaluation Practice

Better Intervention

Add "story" to delivery

CONTEXT

- ## McCormick Foundation
  - Communities Program grantee cohort
    - Not getting good return-on-investment on external evaluations
    - Reported multiple assessment tools to foundation
      - Hard for foundation to compare across programs
      - Hard for organizations to report their outcomes

PROJECT GOALS

- Agree on a set of outcome data to be collected across all organizations
- Create communities of practice (CP), in conjunction with evaluation coaching (CPC),
- Build evaluation capacity within participating organizations, and
- Promote cross-organizational learning.

PHASE ONE: UNIFYING OUTCOMES

Table 1. Grantee Tools Before and After Unifying Outcomes through Communities of Practice (CP).

	Child Trauma	**Domestic Violence**	**Positive Parenting**
Before CP	16 different tools	10 different tools	11 different tools
After CP	1) Child Behavior Checklist 2) Trauma Symptoms Checklist for Children	1) Strength and Difficulties Questionnaire 2) Devereux Early Childhood Assessment for Infants and Toddlers 3) Child Behavior Checklist	1) Adult- Adolescent Parenting Inventory 2) Parental Stress Scale 3) Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale

PHASE TWO: EVALUATION CAPACITY BUILDING

- Communities of practice
- Communities of practice with coaching

METHODOLOGY

- Mixed-Methods case study
  - **Quantitative**: ECAI pre/post (n=33)
    - 18 months between administrations
  - **Qualitative:** Purposive sample of interviews (n=12)
    - Post interviews

OUTCOMES: PRE/POST

Construct	Level	Pre	Post	Change
Individual Factors	CPC	3.12	3.23	0.11
	CP	2.78	2.96	0.18
Motivation	CPC	3.77	3.63	-0.14
	CP	3.50	3.29	-0.21
Competence	CPC	3.35	3.27	-0.08
	CP	3.23	3.18	-0.05
Leadership	CPC	3.40	3.45	0.05
	CP	3.45	3.33	-0.12
Learning Climate	CPC	3.20	3.30	0.1
	CP	3.13	2.94	-0.19
Resources	CPC	2.77	3.08	0.31
	CP	2.69	2.36	-0.33
Mainstreaming	CPC	3.00	3.27	0.27
	CP	3.27	3.07	-0.2
Evaluation Use	CPC	2.81	3.05	0.24
	CP	3.14	2.83	-0.31

*Denotes a statistically significant difference from pre to post at the p<.05 level
** Denotes a statistically significant difference from pre to post at the p<.01 level

OUTCOMES: RETROSPECTIVE

Table 4. Retrospective Results of ECB Outcomes of Grantees.

Construct	Level	Retrospective M (SD)	Difference
Individual Factors	CPC	3.6 (.69)	+.83*
	CP	2.77 (1.17)	
Motivation	CPC	3.5 (.7)	+.25
	CP	3.25 (.87)	
Competence	CPC	3.44 (.73)	+.34
	CP	3.1 (.94)	
Leadership	CPC	3.13 (.84)	+.13
	CP	3.0 (.67)	
Learning Climate	CPC	3.5 (.76)	+.6
	CP	2.9 (.74)	
Resources	CPC	3.38 (.74)	+1.18**
	CP	2.2 (.83)	
Mainstreaming	CPC	3.22 (.83)	+.78
	CP	2.44 (.73)	
Evaluation Use	CPC	3.11 (.78)	+.81
	CP	2.3 (.95)	

*Indicates a statistically significant result at the $p < .05$ level

**Indicated a statistically significant results at the $p < .01$ level

DISCUSSION

- Response-shift bias (Howard, 1979)

- "I think it's one of those, I think when it comes to evaluation, partly **it's challenging because I don't know what I don't know, right**? So I can't think, 'hey how can I do this kind of evaluation better?' ….because I don't know. And so, we do a lot of learning and figuring out on the fly…."
    --Grantee organization

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

- Jay Wade, jwade1@luc.edu
- Leanne Kallemeyn, lkallemeyn@luc.edu
- David Ensminger, densmin@luc.edu
- Tania Rempert, rempert@msn.com

Wade, J., Baltman, M., Kallemeyn, L., Ensminger, D., & Rempert, R. (2016). The United Outcomes Project: Evaluation Capacity Building, Communities of Practice and Evaluation Coaching. *The Foundation Review,* 8(1).

Available at:
http://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1278&context=tfr

Preparing people to lead extraordinary lives

Recommendations for using the ECAI model and measure in practice

1. Using the model to facilitate conversations with evaluation stakeholders;
2. Combining use of the model with qualitative methods;
3. Using the ECAI measure to collect, analyze, interpret and share data with program stakeholder on
   1. gaps between program administrators, managers and program staff and
   2. pre-post changes in evaluation capacity by capacity component.
4. Further refining the model to
   1. attend explicitly to culture and context
   2. create a shorter form

For more information…

Taylor-Ritzler, Suarez-Balcazar, Garcia-Iriarte, Henry, D. B, & Balcazar, F. E. (2013). Understanding and measuring evaluation capacity: A model and instrument validation study. *American Journal of Evaluation, 34*(2), 190-206.

- Yolanda Suarez-Balcazar ysuarez@uic.edu
- Louis Lafrado lafrado@landd.net
- Sharon M. Wasco sharon.wasco@gmail.com
- Tania Rempert Rempert trempert@luc.edu
- Jay Wade jwade1@luc.edu
- Leanne Kallemeyn lkallemeyn@luc.edu
- David Ensminger Densmin@luc.edu
- Tina Taylor-Ritzler tritzler@dom.edu