

Developing Evaluators' Capacity Through a Community of Practice

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Regional Comprehensive Centers

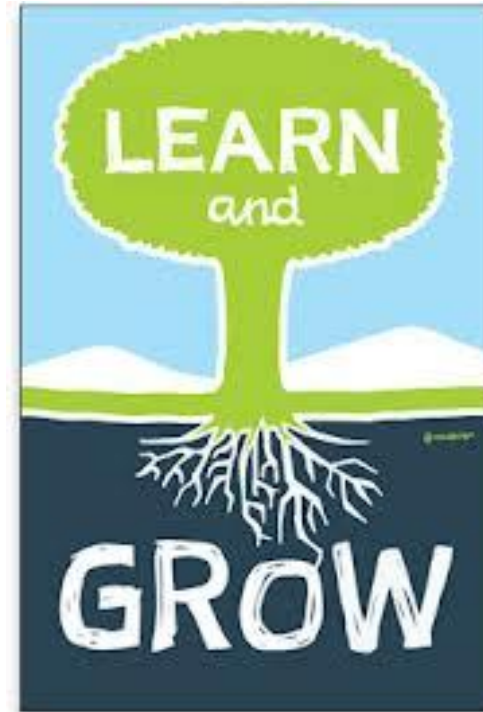
- U.S. Department of Education cooperative agreement
- Initially had five years of funding, which became seven years
- Charge is to provide technical assistance to help increase the capacity of the state departments of education to implement the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)

Objective for Today

- Provide an Overview of the Literature on Communities of Practice (CoPs)
- Discuss Practice and Application
- Reflect on our Learning

Overview of the Literature on CoPs

- CoP Definition
- CoP Characteristics



Overview of the Literature on CoPs

- Importance of Ongoing Professional Development
- Evaluation Capacity Building (ECB)
- Required Evaluator Competencies
- Relationship between Individual Growth and Development to Organizational ECB

Practice and Application

- Edvantia evaluators worked with 3 regional comprehensive centers (3CC):
 1. Appalachia Regional Comprehensive Center (ARCC)
 2. Florida and the Islands Regional Comprehensive Center (FLICC)
 3. Mid-Atlantic Comprehensive Center (MACC)

3CC CoP: The Journey Begins

- ARCC evaluators met in November 2005
- Joined by MACC evaluators in January 2006
- Joined by FLICC evaluators in January 2007
- Continued monthly meetings

Where's Waldo?



Knowledge about Evaluation

- Four types of knowledge pertinent to teaching and learning of evaluation (Levin-Rozalis & Rosenstein, 2003):
 1. Theoretical Knowledge
 2. Methodological Knowledge
 3. Conceptualization of Practical Knowledge
 4. Personal Practical Knowledge

3CC Activities by Knowledge Type

Knowledge Type	3CC Activities
Theoretical Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Book study on <i>Foundations of Program Evaluation</i> (Shadish, Cook, & Leviton, 1991)• Review/discuss articles• Share training resources
Methodological Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Book study on <i>The Logic Model Guidebook</i> (Wyatt Knowlton & Phillips, 2009)• Microsoft Visio software• Conducted logic model workshop for staff• Book study on <i>Made to Stick</i> (Heath & Heath, 2008)
Conceptualization of Practical Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Various methods and results of survey administration• Lessons learned
Personal Practical Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Forum for reflection and learning• Individual capacity building• Organizational growth

Reflections – Theoretical Knowledge

- Discussed relevant literature and reviewed resources
- Connected theory to practice

“Those experiences were shared with me through various discussions and activities which provided the context I needed to conceptualize how CC evaluation can be approached.”

Reflections – Methodological Knowledge

- Online surveying
 - In-depth examination of survey software
 - Tailoring data collection suited to clients
- Logic models
 - Immediate application to work on other projects
 - Professional development to other colleagues

Reflections – Conceptualization of Practical Knowledge

- Communicating report findings and recommendations
- Translating recommendations into client actions
- Collecting salient data using the most appropriate methods

Reflections – Personal Practical Knowledge

- Development of interpersonal and team member skills
- Increased confidence, communication, and trust

“As my understanding and knowledge around program evaluation grew, I was able to apply those lessons to my own work. And as my experiences evolved, so did my opportunity to share and reflect back with my CC colleagues. I eventually became a more integral member of the 3CC CoP and was able to share my own experiences and ideas.”

Closing and Next Steps

- 3CC evolution
- CoPs beyond the 3CC evaluators



Questions



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