

Who sets the Nonprofit **Evaluation** Agenda?

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RESEARCH TELLS US THAT THE FOLLOWING SIX FACTORS ARE KEY TO A USEFUL EVALUATION:

A clear,
shared
purpose

Specific
people committed
to meaningful use of
the evaluation

A plan
for ongoing
communication
that ensures buy-in
and transparency

Follow-through

A process to
ensure that there
is a safe space for
critical reflection
and learning

A match
between
expectations,
skills/capacity,
and funding

Evaluation Leads to Action ...



When Communication is Great

Funder-Mandated Evaluation is Common

54%

Nonprofit evaluations for which funders are a primary audience

44%

Nonprofits who experience funders asking for the wrong data

49%

Nonprofits that say funder expectations around outcomes measurement are increasing

Sources: Innovation Network, 2012; Grantmakers for Effective Organizations, 2015, Canadian Centre for Philanthropy, 2003





Typical Approaches to Evaluation Capacity Building

- **Workshops**
- **Measurement tool libraries**
- **1:1 Coaching**
- **Evaluation grants**

Progress is Being Made





DOES FUNDER-MANDATED EVALUATION INCORPORATE THE FACTORS THAT ARE KEY TO USE?

A clear,
shared
purpose



Specific
people committed
to meaningful use of
the evaluation



A plan
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communication
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Follow-through



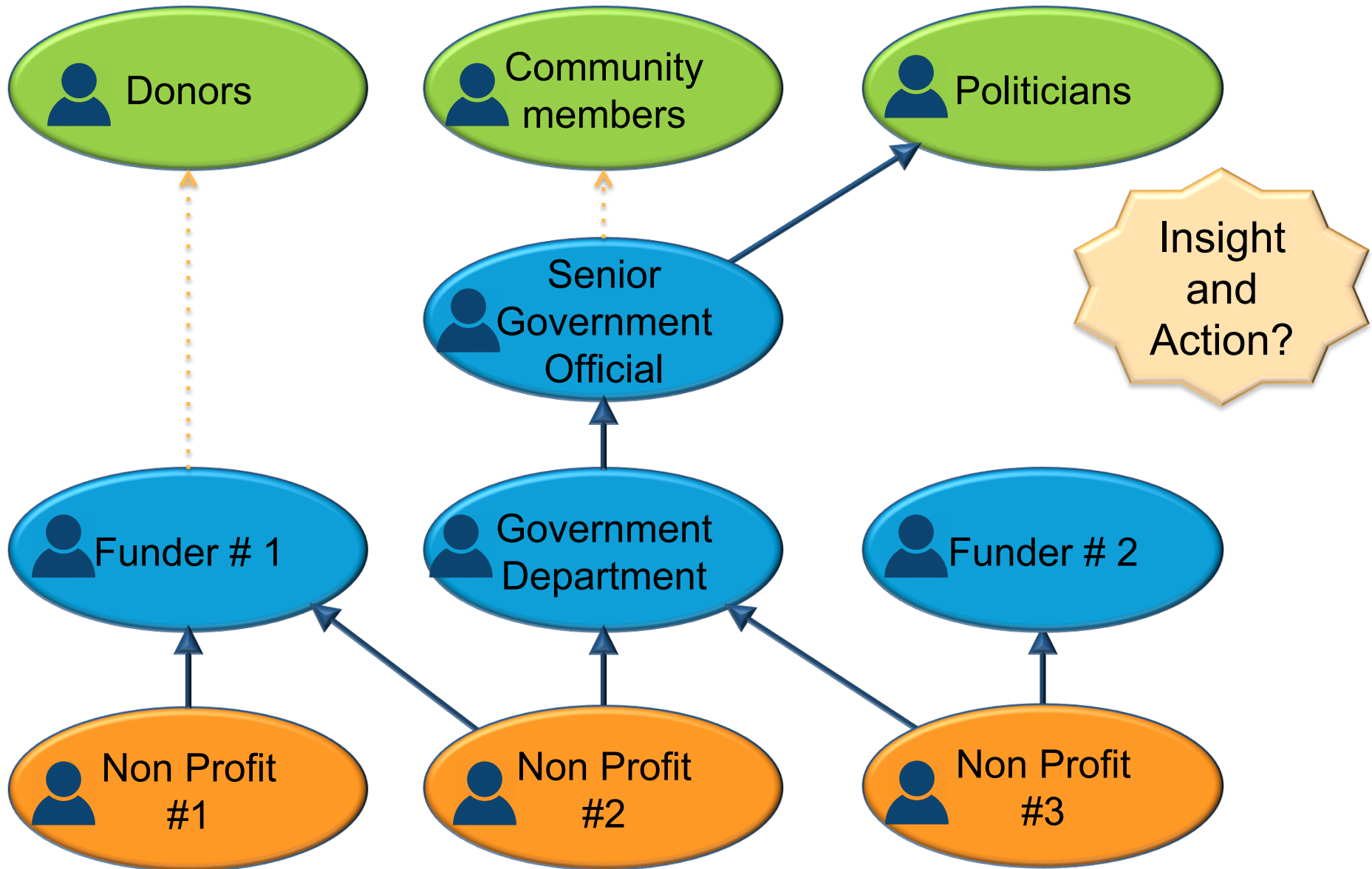
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How Does Evaluation Communication Flow in Funder-Mandated Evaluations?





Accountability



Learning

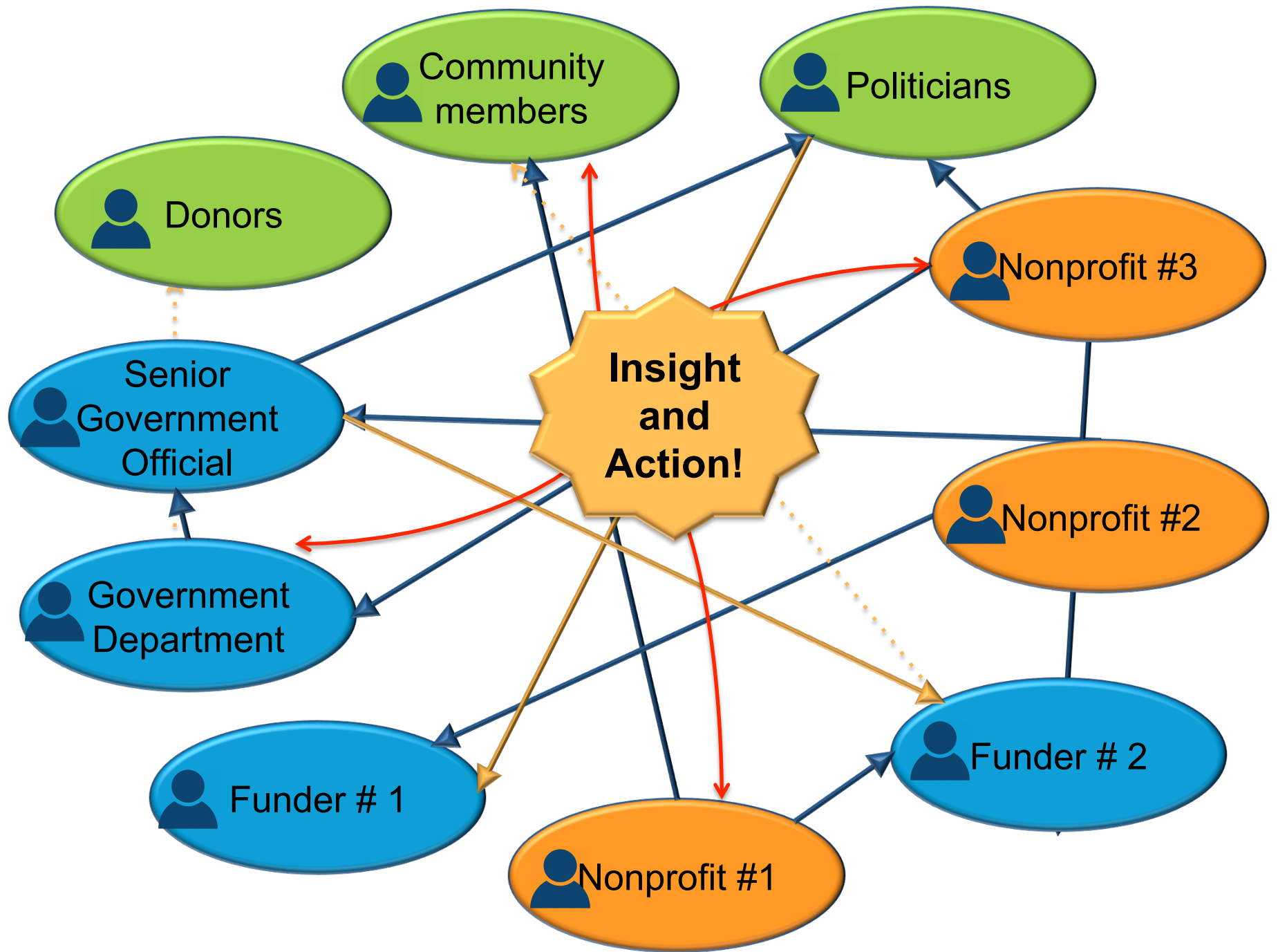


**Does the Design of
Funder Mandated
Evaluation Limit the
Potential for Insight
and Action Within
Nonprofits?**

Who is Asking the Questions?



Sharing perspectives = Better evaluation.









Reciprocal Respect

An evaluation that is treated as a partnership is more likely to lead to positive action.

Includes evidence of:

An agreement on a clear, shared purpose

Accommodations for altering the evaluation approach when needed

Plain language

Creating a safe space for making mistakes and sharing honestly

Consideration of transparency, respect for privacy, and the risk of harm



Commitment to Use & Learning

Evaluation should be concerned primarily with learning and action.

Includes evidence of:

A clearly articulated plan for how an evaluation will be used and by whom

A plan for how and how often users will communicate

A discussion of how other stakeholders should be engaged noting that evaluation is most effective when those involved feel they have a voice

A design to ensure that this approach will lead to reflection, learning and helps to answer the key evaluation questions

A plan for reflection on the process itself noting that carrying out an evaluation (e.g., collecting data and asking questions) can have an effect on the community



Matching the Why to the How

Good evaluation is not wedded to a single approach but employs a range of methods designed to maximize the chances of achieving the evaluation's intended use.

Includes evidence of:

A detailed estimate of the time and resources required

A match between funding, reporting requirements, and evaluation goals

A basic understanding of existing research on the subject and a discussion of whether more can be learned through an evaluation

An exploration of whether a review of existing research, new applied research, or performance measurement might be a better fit

An openness to explore the full spectrum of evaluation approaches including alternative approaches (e.g., arts-based evaluations)



**LEARNING
TOGETHER**

**FIVE
IMPORTANT
DISCUSSION
QUESTIONS**

to make
**EVALUATION
USEFUL**

