

# Evaluate My Office or Grant-Funded Program

## Identify Office or Program Goals

### What are office or program goals?

Office or program goals are broad statements about the desired outcome for some group or some thing as a result of the office's or program's activities (or "interventions".)



### Why create office or program goals?

(From Alice in Wonderland)

*"Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?"*

*"That depends a good deal on where you want to get to," said the Cat.*

*"I don't much care where - " said Alice.*

*"Then it doesn't matter which way you go," said the Cat.*

*" - so long as I get SOMEWHERE," Alice added as an explanation.*

*"Oh, you're sure to do that," said the Cat, "if you only walk long enough."*

Clever Mr. Carroll understood how important it is to know where you're going in order to figure out how to get there. Goals are your destinations; from those you can map your road ahead.

### How do I write good office and program goals?

You can draw inspiration from multiple sources: the Strategic Plan, your mission, the activities you're already undertaking, or consultations with colleagues or an assessment professional.

Then fill in the blanks: As a result of the activities of [THIS OFFICE OR PROGRAM}, [THIS GROUP OR THING] will be [CHANGES IN THIS WAY.]

#### Remember!



At Hunter, all office or program goals should be directly aligned to our Strategic Plan. If you haven't done so already, take a look and think about how your office or program fits.

## Map Activities to Impacts: Logic Models

### What is a logic model?

A logic model is a concise way of describing your office or program that shows the path between what goes *into* your office or program and what comes *out* of it. Other terms for it include “road map” or “theory of change,” because it explains how your strategy effectively accomplishes your states goals.



### What does a logic model look like?

Logic models are made up of five linked sections, read from right to left or left to right, plus space for stating your goal, context, and assumptions:

**Goal:** The purpose of your office or program (see [Identify Office or Program Goals](#)).

**Context:** The situation in which the change is taking place: what is the program, what are potential obstacles or opportunities.

**Assumptions:** The assumptions behind the assertion that your strategy will work.

Resources	Activities	Outputs	Near-Term Impacts	Long-Term Impacts
What you have to work with: people, contracts, infrastructure, etc.	What you will do with these resources.	What evidence will show that activities are performed as planned.	What change will happen as a result of the activities in the near term.	What change will happen as a result of the activities in the long term.

## Why create a logic model?

A logic model is a basic tool that can have all sorts of uses:

- To *design* a new office or program - to figure out what resources you'll need and what you'll do with them in order to achieve your stated goal.
- To *create* a management plan for a currently existing office or program—to document what you have and what you need to function effectively.
- To *explain* to others how your office or program works - to show how resources are used in service of achieving your stated goal.
- To *assess* the effectiveness of your office or program - to specify the goals, align them with evidence, design measurement schemes and learn from findings.

## What makes for a good logic model?

To obtain any of the benefits described above, a logic model must make sense to you and your stakeholders. It should be highly focused on the stated goal (you can always make another logic model for another goal) and use clear, consistent language throughout.

## How do I create a good logic model?

1. **Gather pre-existing materials:** As with most assessment tools, you are probably already thinking this way but haven't put it all down in an explicit form. Therefore the best first step is to gather any material you might already have that answers any of the questions in the logic model design: what is the purpose? what do I need to support my activities? what do I expect to come out of it?
2. **Collaborate across diverse groups:** Also as with most assessment tools, logic models are only worth doing if they are useful. The best way to ensure that is to make sure all stakeholders (staff, partners, clients) are part of the creating and/or editing process. You will get the most insight when you draw from people interacting with your office or program in different ways.
3. **Choose a pathway easiest for you:** Finally, you should feel free to approach the diagram from whatever angle seems easiest. Pretty clear on purpose but not how to implement? Start with goals, then move right to left in the diagram from impacts backwards through outputs, activities and resources. Pretty clear on how to implement but not purpose? Start at resources, then move left to right in the diagram through activities, outputs, impacts and then goals. Remember to always keep an open mind as you create - you'll likely be doing a lot of editing in your initial and follow up sessions to get everything just right.

Want examples of good logic models? Visit the [Sample Tools](#) page.

## Assess Evidence: Tracking, Pre-Post Tests, Surveys and Focus Groups

### How do I assess evidence?

Administrative offices and grant-funded programs come in many forms, and will therefore be exploring many different types of evidence to see if their goals are being met. It is possible, however, to break down different types of evidence, and their associated assessment tools, by the type of question you are asking. If you have a logic model, look at your outputs and impacts to determine your question.



#### Type of Question

How many/ how much of something (time, people, services)  
 Whether population has learned something (knowledge, skills)  
 How a population feels/ experiences something

#### Appropriate Tools

Track totals, averages, and percentages  
 Conduct pre-post tests  
 Conduct surveys, interviews, and focus groups

### What is data tracking?

Data tracking is a way to keep an eye on how your program is running by storing measures that are pulled at certain moments and comparing those measures over time.

For example, a tutoring program might want to track the number of students coming in each day (output), the number of times an individual student comes in (output), and any changes in that student's GPA (impact). At the end of the academic year, the program can count the total number of students who came in, the average number of times any one student came in, and the percentage of students whose GPA increased over the academic year.

To do this kind of assessment, it is best to use some sort of software that allows you to easily calculate these types of summary measures. Most often, people use a spreadsheet program (e.g. Microsoft Excel), but you can also use more sophisticated database software that lets you pull customizable reports based on the information you are interested in (e.g. Microsoft Access).

## What are pre-post tests?

Pre-post tests are a way to measure whether your population knows more about something, or is better able to do something, as a result of participating in your program. In many ways, this type of assessment is similar to student learning assessment found on the academic side of things, but instead of measuring the effectiveness of an academic course or curriculum, you're measuring the effectiveness of training program.

Pre-post tests can take many forms, depending on what you are looking to measure. However there are two critical elements to remember:

- The questions on the pre-test should match exactly the questions on the post-test, and
- Each test should be labeled with an identifier unique to each participant

So, for example, if you are assessing a staff training program, and you ask three questions about compliance regulations when they first start the training, you should ask the same three questions when you end the training. And if you ask for participant identifiers, you will not only ensure the same set of people took the test, but will be able to calculate fancier measures of programmatic impact, such as t-tests.

## What are surveys, interviews and focus groups?

Surveys, interviews and focus groups are used to gather information that is harder to quantify - things like feelings, experiences, and perceptions. All three are built upon asking people questions about themselves. Though it's not a hard and fast rule, surveys generally occur on paper or online and tend to have more close-ended questions (pick among choices), while interviews generally occur face-to-face or on the phone and tend to have more open-ended questions (no defined choices). Focus groups are like group interviews, in which people can respond to the facilitator or to each other.

The more open-ended your questions are, the richer your data will be, offering new perspectives that might not have surfaced if you had given people a pre-defined set of choices. However, open-ended data will require additional analysis, such as qualitative coding, to say anything definitive about your question. Most often, people use survey software to create a survey (e.g. Qualtrics, available for free to the Hunter community).



## **Remember!**

- Matching your tool to your question is very important! If you do not make this match, you will spend a lot of time gathering evidence and it won't answer any of the things you wanted it to answer!
- Hunter's Technology Resource Center is a great place to get started with any of the software described above.
- Feel free to submit draft surveys, interview protocols and focus group questions to the Office of Assessment for review and feedback.

## Close the Loop: Adjust Office or Program Design

### What Does it Mean to “Close the Loop?”

The purpose of office or program assessment is to find where your office or program is achieving or not achieving its goals and make adjustments on the basis of those findings. The “loop” indicates that this is a continuous process of identifying goals, assessing evidence, using this data to improve office or program design, and the once again identify goals. identify outcomes.



### Why “Close the Loop?”

Closing the loop is the part of assessment where the office or program gets to take action, where it gets to innovate and advocate for resources. Based on the office's or program's findings of where and how goals are or are not being met, the office or program can decide how to adjust design or resources. For example:

- Maybe a leadership training program finds that students are not developing leadership skills at a level of mastery expected of them, as evidenced by their participation in a group project. Perhaps the training process needs to seem more accessible to students, so the program decides to restructure itself as peer-led rather than staff-led.
- Maybe a registrar's office finds students are not receiving approval on their degree audit as quickly as they need to in order to register on time, as evidenced by the lapse between audit submission and completion. Perhaps the degree audit workflow needs to be more efficient, so the office decides to automate some processes with the acquisition of a new database.
- Maybe an office of athletics finds that students participating in several sports do not feel their coaches do a good job of building team spirit and morale, as evidenced by a yearly satisfaction survey. Perhaps coaches need to develop their skills in this area, so the office initiates an annual coach development retreat over the summer.