

Seattle Early Learning Institute

September 5, 2007

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AGENDA

1. Your Outcome Challenges and Opportunities
2. Let's Watch our Words
3. Three Questions an Early Learning Program Should Ask
4. The Result Trail
5. Shared Success Metrics

The
**RENSELAERVILLE
INSTITUTE**

**Harold S. Williams
President**

One Huyck Road
Rensselaerville, NY 12147
518-797-3783
Fax: 518-797-5270
HWilliams@RInstitute.org
www.RInstitute.org



How Non-profits Approach Outcomes

Do you know the difference between a benchmark, an indicator, a goal, an objective, an outcome, a result, an impact? So many words used differently in different frameworks. The consequence is that many non-profits now see outcome frameworks as simply another form of procedural compliance. Tell us what to say and we'll say it.

How sad! If an outcome framework is to become the way you live to achieve – with energy and even joy – it has to be about more than fund-raising and reporting. It has to be about success for those you help.

Forget the funder. Our view is that a non profit group has an outcome framework in place if it can answer for all of its programs these three questions:

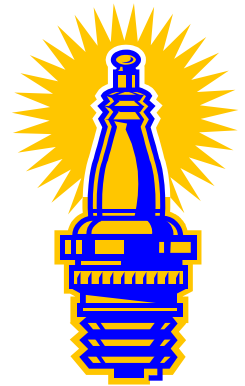
- 1. How do you define success - meaning results from your services?**
- 2. How do you know for sure when success has been achieved?**
- 3. Half way through your program, how do you know that you have enough time and money left to get to the success you have defined?**

The first question asks you to be clear about results - not just activity and process. This means you can tell investors and stockholders what result you are committed to achieve. The second question asks for clarity on the evidence to be used to confirm success. You now know how to verify. By answering the third question, you have a way of tracking progress not just against budget categories and work plans but against participant progress to the gain they are to achieve.

And yes, you can make a more compelling case to your funders!

Human Sparkplugs

are more powerful than great plans, a big committee or even a lot of money in achieving organizational and community change. Sparkplugs are present in all places—although many are inhibited by conventional process models of change.



Key characteristics:

- ❖ **Energy.** Without it many projects will begin, but few will finish. And many will begin boldly, but end up as weak copies.
 - Stamina and staying power
 - Enthusiasm and optimism
 - Sense of humor

- ❖ **Bias to Act.** Many people are at heart critics, planners, or boosters. Sparkplugs are doers. They want to solve problems, not study or decry them.
 - Focus on solutions
 - Sense of urgency
 - Opportunity-driven

- ❖ **Results Orientation.** Sparkplugs believe that the outcome, not process, matters most. Networking and capacity building are the means, not the end.
 - Need for achievement
 - Clear and compelling vision for success
 - Chart and use milestones

- ❖ **Personal Responsibility.** Sparkplugs take responsibility for their own behavior.
 - Acknowledge errors and mistakes
 - Focus on personal more than group accountability
 - Take responsibility before it is delegated

- ❖ **Belief in Common Good.** Sparkplugs look beyond what is good for their families and friends.
 - See and feel impacts on others
 - Build on diversity
 - Activate shared values

- ❖ **Inclined to Teams.** Sparkplugs provide the juice, but know they need an engine!
 - Form teams from differences, not the like-minded
 - Share credit as well as information
 - Seek creation, not agreement

What Goes In



What Comes Out

- Missions/Beliefs ➔.....➔ Core Know-How
- Goals ➔➔ Targets
- Work Plans ➔.....➔ Milestones
- Organization ➔.....➔ Key Persons
- Job Description ➔➔ Result Description
- Budgets ➔➔ Accounted Costs
- Data Base ➔.....➔ Data Use
- Planning ➔➔ Design & Mapping
- Demonstration Projects ➔.....➔ Prototypes
- Informing ➔➔ Persuading
- Evaluation ➔➔ Learning & Verification
- “Institutionalizing” ➔.....➔ “Energizing”