

Evaluation and Assessment:

Methodological Lessons Learned and Best Practices

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Important Questions for an Evaluation

- ▶ **Purpose**: does the program work?
 - What are the goals? What should change?
 - UOF incidents, specific type of interaction, culture, etc.
 - **What does success look like?**
 - Short-term and long-term

- ▶ **Methodology**: how do we judge?
 - What measure/evidence exists?
 - Importance of planning, timing
 - *Can you rule out alternative explanations?*

Best Practices for Evaluation

- ▶ Plan concurrent with implementation
 - After is too late, misses best opportunities
- ▶ Make process structured and transparent
 - Predictions of change
 - Measures of change
 - Validity and reliability
 - Perceptions and behaviors
 - Comparison group
- ▶ Best methods to determine “what works” are tailored and focused
 - Experimental and quasi-experimental
 - Work with research partners
 - Confidence in results

Types of Evaluation

▶ Process

- Short-term
- Did the implementation go as planned?
 - *Curriculum to teachers*
 - *Teachers to students*
- Initial changes post-training
- Provide proper context for subsequent outcomes

▶ Outcome

- Long-term
- Changes out in the field, with citizens

Hypothetical Evaluation

▶ Process

- Random assignment of initial officers to training
- Observation of training
- Develop surveys (perception) and/or scenarios (behavior) to measure responses before and after training
 - Compare to non-trained officers

▶ Outcome

- Compare trained officers
 - Themselves at earlier time
 - Non-trained officers
- Measures depend on your goals, what success is
 - Reduction of shootings (limited outcome)
 - Change in distribution of UOF incidents
 - Community perceptions

Questions?

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