

Self-Evaluation in *Making Connections*

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We have seen the enemy and it is us!

Our reputations precede us . . .

- Evaluation, as practiced by many university-based and other contract researchers, is often not helpful to service providers or residents of communities like those involved in *Making Connections*
- Poor working relationships with residents, community-based organizations, and public agencies are grounded in ownership issues that evaluators tend to ignore
- Findings of “no effect” may be attributable to our methods rather than the intrinsic efficacy of interventions

What Self-Evaluation Seeks to Avoid

- Adversarial relationships with service providers and consumers that grow out of evaluators' professional roots in auditing and *objective* research methods

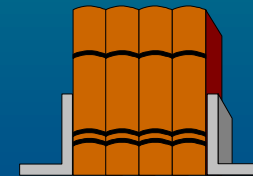


- Detached scientists working at arm's length to isolate the effects of silver-bullet interventions on changes in the *behavior* of individuals.

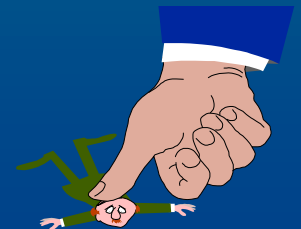
The challenge is to assess whether a complex bundle of supports and services affects *outcomes* for individuals, families, and communities



- Producing after-the-fact *reports* telling you where you went wrong . . . *two years ago!*



- Something done *to* you rather than *with* you or *by* you



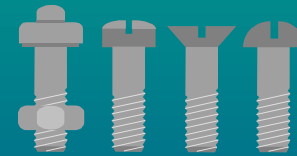
Self-Evaluation . . .

- Seeks to create a flow of information to support mid-course corrections and continuous improvements in *outcomes*

Evaluation is a process, not a report



- Requires technical expertise to ensure defensibility and adaptability

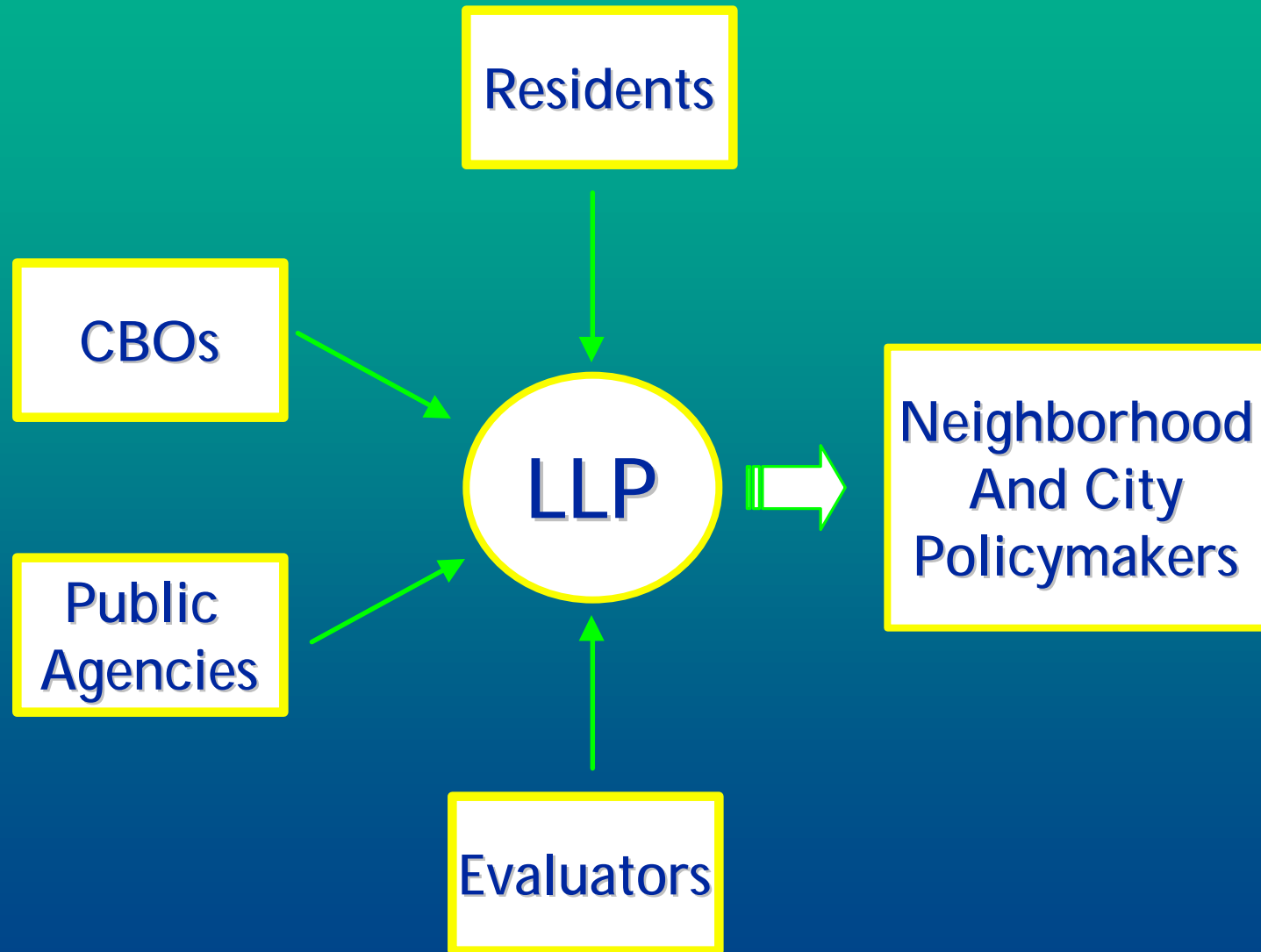


- Assumes evaluation is most effective when it includes diverse perspectives

- Residents
- Community-based organizations
- Managers and staff of public agencies
- Funders and policymakers
- Evaluators



Expanding Self-Evaluation Into the Community



Accountability Grounded in Self-Evaluation

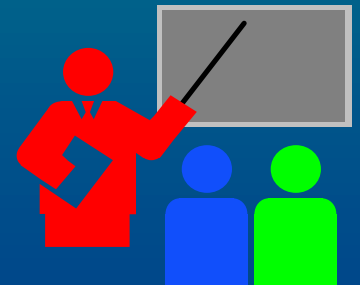


- Evaluation is not auditing, auditing is not evaluation.

You can be honestly ineffective

- Unless you can change policy and redirect resources based on what you learn, self-evaluation is merely an academic exercise.

There must be a "self" in self-evaluation!

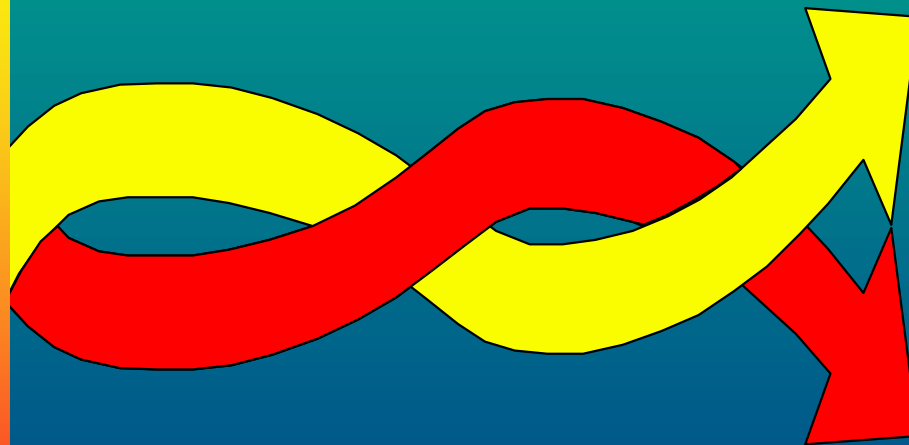


Local and National Self-Evaluation

Local
Interests

*Making
Connections*

Foundation
Interests



*Making
Connections
Evaluation*