

# 37 METHODS OF AN INCORPORATING EVALUATIVE LEARNING PRACTICE

METHOD	APPLICATION	DESCRIPTION
<b>Journaling</b>	Recording individual reflection throughout a process	Each member of the team keeps a journal where they capture their personal learnings, key insights, accounts of significant moments, etc. This can be both a tool for reflecting individually or an artefact for sharing collectively and creating common understanding.
<b>Videoing</b>	Visually capturing key insights of a process	Like journaling, taking videos can help capture key insights, learning, and moments. Each member of the team can use their smart phone to take short videos daily or weekly to capture highlights. These can be reviewed individually or shared collectively.
<b>Graphic Images</b>	Facilitating individual and collective sensemaking	Many people remember images more than text, so using graphic images or recording can also be a way to capture learning and insights. This is mainly done individually, but it can also be done collectively: a large role of paper can be used and different images of the project drawn and discussed to create collective understanding.
<b>Team Meetings</b>	Establishing formal routines for reflection and sharing learnings	Ensuring that reflection is included in each team meeting, e.g., on an individual, project, or team level. People can share their personal key learnings for the projects they are working on. This creates a culture where inquiry, curiosity, and sharing of both successes and failures is valued and seen as a way to grow.
<b>Working with Failures</b>	Enabling individual and collective learning from mistakes	Holding sessions where failures are shared, rather than hidden or avoided, to discover and illuminate the learning in that failure so that it becomes a generative experience for future working. Essential questions to ask are "What can I/we learn from what did not work?" and "How can we apply this learning in our team, project, or personal practice?"
<b>Theory of Change</b>	Describing how an intervention is expected to affect impact	<p>A Theory of Change takes the idea of logic modelling further by explicitly stating the fundamental assumptions we have about how we believe change occurs. This can be done by working backwards from a desired future state. In a developmental approach, one of the implications is that any model will have built-in assumptions and areas of uncertainty. Because of this, it's helpful to update that model periodically based on any changing priorities or new understandings. In a developmental mode, we move from a logic model as a static instrument, to one that we expect to change and evolve over time.</p> <p>One technique is to build the model from scratch more than once over a period of time. While it may be more practical to simply update the original model, insights about how people's thinking is evolving may be revealed through a comparison of new and old models.</p> <p>In a complex and innovative environment, a systemic approach is helpful. A logic model is linear and as a result there are limitations about how it can reflect complex phenomena or living systems. Diagrams hold greater capacity for documenting the relationships and can free up thinking that is bound by simplistic cause, and effect approaches.</p>



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<p><b>Appreciative Inquiry</b></p>	<p>Anchoring development in positive experiences and aspects that work</p>	<p>Appreciative Inquiry is an organizational development technique that involves the art and practice of asking questions in ways that strengthen a system’s capacity to understand, anticipate and heighten its potential. Appreciative Inquiry is a systematic search for what gives “life” to a system, such as an organization, when it is most effective and constructive. The underlying premise of Appreciative Inquiry is that asking the question is not only a query, it is also an intervention. Appreciative Inquiry focuses on positive attributes – what works rather than what does not. Case examples are collected and then examined to uncover key themes and patterns about what succeeds.</p> <p>Appreciative Inquiry tends to contribute to trust-building in organizations because it acknowledges individual contributions and supports the overall effectiveness of the change effort.</p> <p><i>Web resource: The Appreciative Inquiry Commons has extensive resources on Appreciative Inquiry at <a href="http://appreciativeinquiry.case.edu">appreciativeinquiry.case.edu</a>.</i></p>
<p><b>Network Mapping</b></p>	<p>Visualizing the actors and relations within a partnership</p>	<p>When an initiative involves multiple partners working in collaboration or when the development of a network is the goal of a project, network mapping can provide insight into the dynamics and health of these relationships. Tracking how ideas are shared and spread and where participants take joint action can help support developmental processes. Mapping a network is a process of identifying connections between people and graphically displaying those connections. This can be done by hand, although increasingly powerful and accessible software can enable a more comprehensive analysis of networks and their behavior.</p> <p>Being able to generate data about a network can inform the development of strategies. Mapping a network can reveal that certain individuals are particularly influential, as sources of expertise or as connectors. It can also outline the strengths or vulnerabilities of a system and reveal how densely connected a network is or whether there are connections just outside the network core that could stimulate innovation. Analysis may suggest strategies for communicating and organizing within the network. Network mapping may also provide an indicator for how different strategies are unfolding. Monitoring a network over time can reveal how the network responds to different kinds of interventions.</p> <p><i>Web resource: For an interesting perspective on weaving networks, see <a href="http://www.networkweaving.com/blog">www.networkweaving.com/blog</a>.</i></p>
<p><b>Data Collection</b></p>	<p>Gathering evidence about a problem or an initiative’s impact</p>	<p>Capturing key statistics and stories of impact is important for creating an archive of evidence that can be used with community you are serving, funders, partners, etc. This can link well with a Theory of Change to show how assumptions were tested and turned into practical application.</p>

