

PATH TO THE MIRROR LAKES

Reflecting with Evaluative Learning

You have chosen to explore practices of developmental evaluation that encourage learning and innovation. When repeating what works, evaluation is predictable and can be standardized. When facing an environment of innovation, increasing change, and complexity, an organization requires a different approach. Learning, especially a practice or habit of learning that captures the value of new work, becomes an essential capacity. An organization can change its DNA in how it evaluates itself by embracing and including change in its organizational culture. This can become a continuous practice in an organization: learning becomes a daily activity. Let's see how you can create a practice of evaluative learning that can help you, your organization, and work to develop and grow!

WHO SHOULD GET INVOLVED?

It is optimal to include the entire team in evaluative learning to create ownership and commitment. However, a small evaluative learning working group can be created to guide the process until outcomes are integrated into the organization. Evaluative learning implies a specific approach to working and impacts the culture of the organization, so it is important that the organization's leadership agree to the development of this kind of evaluation. If the approach is applied to an innovative project, funders and other key partners can also be involved to ensure joint action.



AT THE END OF THIS SESSION YOU WILL HAVE:

- Created a framework for evaluating your team's performance and innovative projects.
- Identified ways in which this framework can be practiced in the team.
- Experienced prototyping the framework as a team so that either personal, team, or project evaluative learning has been tested.

PREPARATION

For this Path, it is helpful to prepare an overview/-map of all the major projects and core processes your organization or team is involved with (this will save you time in the group process). It may be helpful if group members familiarize themselves with the Background Papers covered in the Path.

MATERIALS

- Flip Chart
- Various Markers
- Moderation Cards
- Sticky Dots
- Notepad/Journal for each person
- Bell or Timer

TOOLS

Method Cards:

- Appreciative Inquiry Discovery Phase (53)
- Group Mind Map (54)
- What, So What, What Now (55)
- Most Significant Change Landscape (56)
- Short Outcome Interview (57)
- Triads (58)

Background Paper:

- Methods of Incorporating Evaluative Learning Practices (37)
- Panarchy Loop and Different Phases of Evaluation (38)
- Action Research (39)

FOLLOW UP

Implement your Evaluative Learning Plan – commit to it! Examples of how to do this include:

- Establishing quarterly meetings as milestones in your evaluative learning process;
- Including evaluative learning in weekly team meetings;
- Incorporating peer to peer sessions.

ORIENTATION 45MIN

HOST / PREPARATION GROUP: Introduce the Path, sharing the purpose of developing an evaluative learning practice in order to evaluate what you are learning from innovative projects or aspects of your team's work that are more complex or not fully known and understood.

First round and discussion:

Check in – In pairs or triads with **Appreciative Inquiry Discovery Phase (53)** , share a story about when you experienced a significant learning that changed you (This could be a failure or a generative experience). What in particular made this learning significant? Based on this, what do you believe the team would be able to achieve if together you evaluated your learning in a more systematic way?

In the whole group: From your stories, what do you believe you can achieve if you develop an evaluative learning practice for your team and work?

INPUT TO PATH CANVAS: Purpose of creating an evaluative learning practice.

GROUNDWORK 60MIN

- Group Discussion: What projects, organizational issues, or individual practices are complex, uncertain, and ambiguous and might require a practice of evaluative learning?

Watch this video on the Panarchy Loop: <https://youtu.be/yKAHNlpVv2Q>, or use **Panarchy Loop and Different Phases of Evaluation (38)**  and **Group Mind Map (54)** , to discover which projects, organizational issues and individual practices fall in the developmental evaluation quadrant.

- Vote individually by using 1-3 sticky dots (depending on the number of issues identified) to choose 3 priority areas where an evaluative learning practice can be applied.

INPUT TO PATH CANVAS: 2 or 3 priority areas where an evaluative learning practice can be applied.

SUMMIT 90MIN

Break into 2 or 3 groups to work in more depth on the priority areas. Choose an approach to explore the area by sharing stories, anecdotes, experiences, and observations:

- **What, So What, What Now (55)**  will help you collect evidence and jointly make sense of a process or project outcome.
- **Most Significant Change Landscape (56)**  will support you in compiling personal experiences of meaningful change in regard to a process or project.
- **Short Outcome Interview (57)**  will give you a framework to step into the shoes of different stakeholders or target groups to explore their experiences with the process or project.

In Plenum: Each group shares what they learned, and reflects on and shares any new propositions/actions they have identified.

INPUT TO PATH CANVAS: 3-5 key learnings and propositions harvested in the group discussions.

OUTLOOK 90MIN

Now that you have gotten a taste of evaluative learning, develop a process for how you can continue to develop and anchor evaluative learning practices in your working routines.

Review **Methods of Incorporating Evaluative Learning Practices (37)** . Choose and adapt the elements that are most suitable for including evaluative learning practices in your work.

INPUT TO PATH CANVAS:

Chosen practices for evaluative learning.

ACTION PLAN 60MIN

Using **Triads (58)** , individually identify where and how you will implement evaluative learning according to the projects, partnerships, and activities you are involved in.

Using **Panarchy Loop and Different Phases of Evaluation (38)** , locate where in the cycle your different projects, partnerships, and activities are so that you can understand what level of evaluation you are working at.

Create individual maps that show where you need to apply evaluative learning.