

Toward triple-loop learning



COLLEGE OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT
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Ideas on Accountability, Scale, and Collective Learning



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Triple loop learning



Single loop learning

Measure results; revise strategies
Incremental change; small improvements

What changes can we make to projects to get better outcomes?



Double loop learning

Revisit assumptions about cause and effect
New approaches; same goals

How can we redesign projects to account for things we didn't consider before?



Triple loop learning

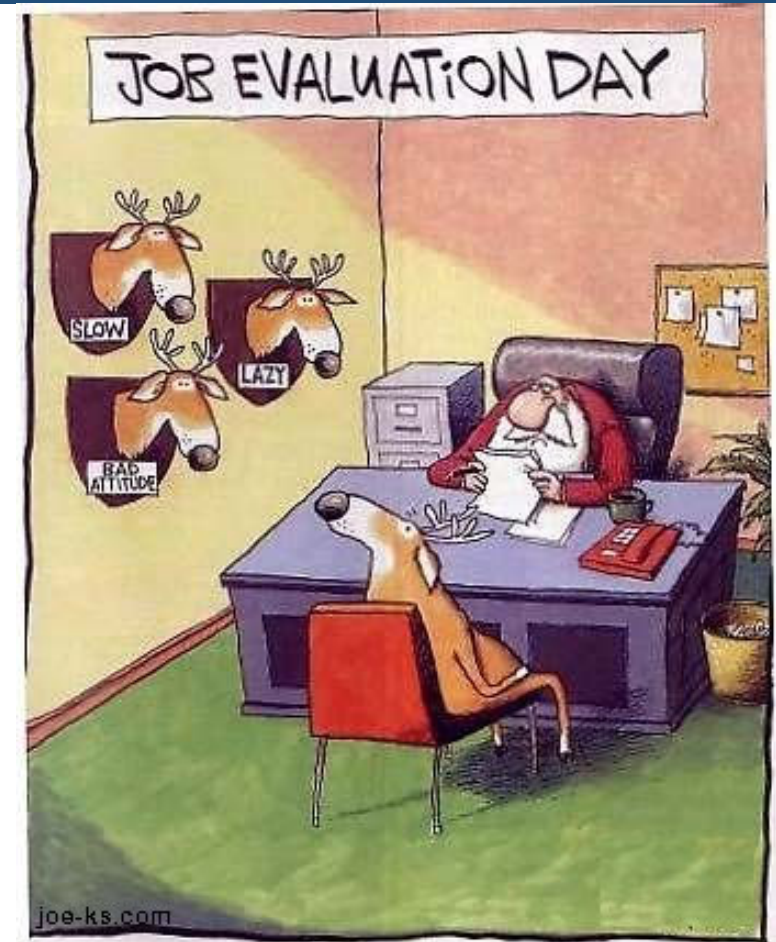
Revisit our worldview
New systems, ways of thinking, goals

Does our overall approach make sense?
Are we measuring the right things?
Are these the right *types* of projects?

Evaluation and accountability

Why do we evaluate?

- Because our funders require it?
- To demonstrate our success?
- To determine if we are successful or not?
- To learn how to do our work better?



Questions of purpose

- **Inputs and outputs**
 - How many? How much?
- **Outcomes**
 - What difference did it make?
- **Questions for learning**
 - What did we do?
 - How did we do it?
 - Why did it work (or not)?
 - Which way worked best?

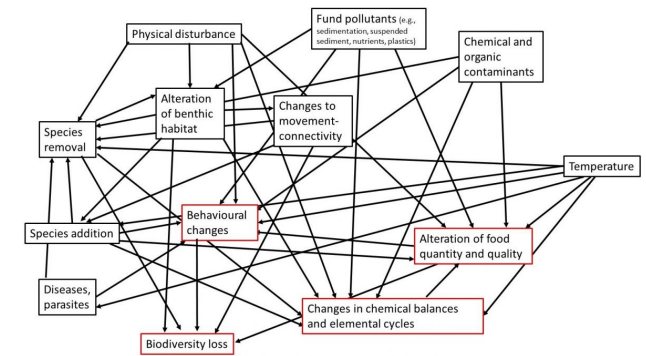


"We've always encouraged our staff to learn by trial and error. Many of our top people have even been convicted."

Questions of scale

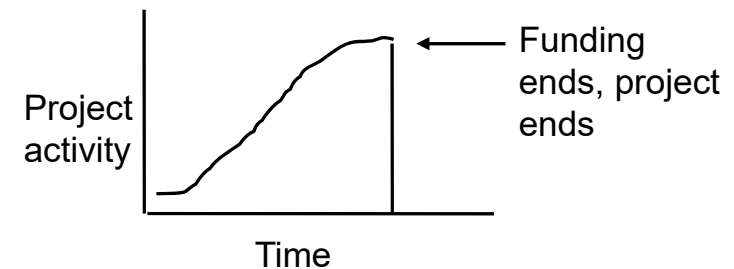
- **Organizational/project level**

- Goals, assumptions, and measurement
- Cumulative effects/influences



- **Network level**

- Goals, assumptions, and measurement
- Granting cycles
- Leveraging learning



An idea

What if we could work together to:

- Evaluate our programs with a focus on why and how?
- Share each other's brilliance about how to make programs better?
- Collectively question, align, diversify, re-orient our overall approaches?



Evidence-Based Learning Networks



Shared outcomes measures



Cycle repeats twice

Train units in data collection

Systematically collect data from projects

Develop sampling strategies

Analyze each unit's data

Ongoing network learning sessions

Lessons about what works

Make and track revisions

Provide each unit a personalized report

Convene learning exchange

Capacity building → Sharing of findings from research → Sharing with each other → Innovating together

Shifting toward accountability for learning

From:

Accountability for
pre-determined
outputs



To:

Accountability for
learning

From:

Counting alone



To:

Experimenting
together

Questions and discussion



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