Theory of Change Process Tool

Articulate Program Goals

- List the goals your program intends to accomplish.
- Review list with potentil stakeholders to determine if they capture thier perceived needs.

Identify Outcomes for Each Goal

- List the learning and achievements expected as a result of achieving the goal.
- Review and revise based on correspondance with goals and mission.

Identify Key Program Activities

- List all the activities associated with each goal.
- Identify how each activity accomplishes the learning and achievements targeted by each goal.
- Revise goals to increase corresponance between goals, outcomes and activity.

Determine Delivery & Flow of Major Activities

- Determine how the activities work together to achieve goals.
- Deterine how these activities can be grouped together to increase impact of outcomes.

Create Graphic Illustraiton of Program

- Sketch out a logical description of how you intend your program to work based on key activities.
- Represent key components graphically.

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Program Goals are statements of what the program intends to accomplish. They present the kinds of learning you hope program participants will achieve. In other words they describe the learning outcomes in general terms. Program goals should correspond with the mission and provide the framework for determining the more specific program objectives and outcomes. Examples include:

- Students participate in inquiry lesson to develop deep conceptual knowledge.
- Students meet with STEM faculty to increase their confidence in seeking STEM careers.

Checklist for writing program goals:

- Are they consistent with your program mission?
- Are your goals aligned with your values and the values of stakeholders?
- Do your goals describe desired performance?

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Identify Outcomes for Each Goal

- List the learning and achievements expected as a result of achieving the goal.
- Review and revise based on correspondance with goals and mission.

Program goals are important because they are a necessary step in identifying specific program objectives. After writing program goals examine how the program will impact the program participant. Consider the following questions:

- How does the program impact the participant?
- How will completers of your program be distinguished from non-participants?
- What knowledge, skills, and/or attitudes make program completers different from non-participants?

It is helpful to think about an "ideal participant" at various phases of our program in terms of the knowledge, skills and attitudes that this student has acquired as a result of program participation. Then:

1. Generate broad statements about cognitive, performance/skill, and affective abilities that capture this ideal participant.
2. Identify those abilities that you hope your program can develop and support. Be mindful of the duration of your program. Short-term disconnected events generally do not generate effects in deep understanding or long lasting attitudes. Budget constraints should also be considered here.

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- Revise goals to increase corresponance between goals, outcomes and activity.

Think about the ideal experiences your program is intended to provide. Determine the components that are necessary for a participant to gain this ideal experience. How will the program services and operations be conducted to reach this ideal experience? What activities are necessary to achieve the goals?

Determine Delivery & Flow of Major Activities

- Determine how the activities work together to achieve goals.
- Deterine how these activities can be grouped together to increase impact of outcomes.

Think about what the participant should experience in terms of:

- Order of activities/components;
- What is gained from each experience, and
- How that gain was achieved.

Sample Program:

Science Cafe offers the chance for the community to hear discussions on science related topics of importance to our everyday lives. These once monthly discussions are led by leaders in their field and are free and open to the public.