

PROMOTING EVALUATION USE WITHIN DYNAMIC ORGANIZATIONS:
A CASE STUDY EXAMINING EVALUATOR BEHAVIOUR

by

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ABSTRACT

In this thesis I describe a research study to further our understanding of the role of the evaluator as a facilitator of evaluative inquiry within organizations. I assumed dual roles as both the evaluator and the evaluation-use researcher to examine the effect of my behaviour on the evaluation of a dynamic organization. My approach as the evaluator was influenced by a decade of experience as a practising evaluator and by the insights I gained from my readings of organizational theory and three evaluation theories responsive, participatory, and developmental.

My study of the nature, quality, and consequences of the evaluator/stakeholder interactions while participating in the process was anchored by approaches from the fields of educational research and organizational theory informed by complexity science. Using data generated from modifying the traditional case study method, including reflective journal entries related to my decision-making process, I generated critical episodes as a way of understanding the circumstances surrounding shifts in my behaviour. My iterative analysis of the critical episodes and the insights gained from them enabled me to track the transformations of the six personal evaluation principles that guided my evaluator approach and led to the creation of a seventh principle. The cross-case analysis revealed the evaluation process as a non-linear progression whereby the evaluator and the individual stakeholders engaged in establishing trust, fostering collaborations, and promoting learning.

This study contributes three implications for evaluation practice including providing empirical data on what it means for an evaluator and individual stakeholder to develop close engagement through evaluative inquiry, bringing to the forefront the value of systematic and purposeful reflection as a means of enhancing the quality of this engagement, and pointing to the importance for evaluators continually integrating past experiences and new theoretical frameworks with understandings gleaned from close engagement. Finally, I posit a new approach documenting the complexity of the influence of the evaluator on shaping organizational and program development within the dynamic context.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Chapter Overview

This chapter describes my research study, which is intended to further our understanding of the role of the evaluator as a facilitator of evaluative inquiry within dynamic organizations. The focus of this study is two-fold: the examination of the relationship between the users of the evaluation and the evaluator, and the influence of these interactions for evaluation use. In the design of the study, I first situate the research within the field of evaluation and introduce the field of organizational theory as informing my evaluator orientation. I then provide an overview of the thesis and describe the context and rationale. I explain the purposes of the evaluation and the research and I conclude this chapter by outlining the guiding questions and providing a chapter summary.

Introduction to the Research

Situating the Research within the Field of Evaluation

Although traditional evaluations remain useful to inform programs and organizations operating in stable organizational contexts, they may be limited in their ability to adapt to the demands of dynamic organizational contexts. Instead, dynamic contextual conditions may require a shift in the role of the evaluator if she is to accommodate both the established and emergent program and evaluation needs. Recent research in organizational theory suggests some evaluation program contexts may be in a stage of adaptation to dynamic and unpredictable pressures (Eoyang & Berkas, 1998). These organizational contexts are considered to be dynamic and the pressures can either

arise within the program's organizational structure or be imposed by people or policies that have an indirect relationship with the program being implemented. Dynamic organizational contexts are more likely than stable organizational contexts to be connected to their environmental influences and thus open to opportunities for change.

In dynamic organizational contexts affected by dynamic pressures, evaluative inquiry has the potential to provide insights into the organization's ability to respond to change by fostering an ongoing process for investigating and responding to critical organizational issues (Preskill & Torres, 1999). To that end, the role of the evaluator may need redefining. Traditional evaluations have focused on reducing the complexity of an evaluation by simplifying the pathways of use. However, it is possible that some possibilities of use are constrained when these pathways are used to guide the role of the evaluator responding to change.

In this study, organizational theory informed by the field of complexity science shifts the role of the evaluator from being detached from the organization to being involved with the organization and participating in its complexity at multiple levels. As the evaluator seeks a more active relationship with evaluation users, she interacts with organizational members within their dynamic context and critically adapts her behaviour to the changing needs of the users. As she engages in this process she recognizes that present interactions affect the direction and substance of future interactions. When the evaluator is cognizant of these implications she has the capacity to respond to the evolving organizational needs without prejudice and to inform ongoing organizational development. Such a shift in the evaluator's orientation demands a re-examination of the current models of evaluator behaviour and precipitates the search for an approach that

assesses the value and implications of the interactions between evaluator and evaluation users.

Thesis Outline

The present thesis is organized into six chapters. During the remainder of the first chapter, I present the study's context, rationale, purposes of the evaluation and research, and introduce the guiding questions. In Chapter 2, I trace the need for this study from both an experiential and theoretical perspective. I also present the principles guiding the initial evaluator approach, my approach as the evaluation-use researcher, and establish the theoretical foundations guiding my approach. In Chapter 3, I outline the qualitative research design and the methods used in the study. I describe the case study methodology as an appropriate approach with which to document the evaluation process as the interactions among stakeholders and the participating evaluator. I introduce the addition of a reflective journal that modifies the traditional case study approach. In Chapter 4, I present the findings from the post-evaluation analysis, including a description of the 10 emergent critical episodes, the transformations to the initial principles guiding the evaluator's approach, and the progression of individual stakeholder engagement in the evaluation process. In Chapter 5, I discuss the findings and present the implications of the research to evaluation practice and evaluation research. In the final chapter, I provide my concluding thoughts, describe the significance of the research to the field of evaluation, and I propose further areas of research.

Context for the Study

It is well established that the pace of organizational change has increased tremendously and that an organization's ability to accommodate change has become predictive of organizational survival (e.g., Morgan, 2006; Wheatley, 1999).

Organizations develop a relationship with the environment in which they operate.

Organizations that monitor and respond to change are classified as dynamic organizations; in contrast, organizations that shield themselves as much as possible from change are considered stable organizations (Wheatley, 1999). Organizations that are designed to operate in a stable environment are characterized by centralized control and predetermined goals. They are not intended for innovation, but rather for high efficiency in the specific environment for which they are designed. Organizations operating within stable environments do not experience the same demands as those operating within dynamic environments. Many organizations designed to operate in a stable environment experience difficulty when the context in which they operate changes.

In contrast dynamic organizations are characterized by distributed control and are able to adapt to changes in their environment. The dynamic nature of organizations has the potential to place unprecedented demands on the evaluation process. A dynamic environment may require the evaluator to maintain close contact to monitor and accommodate the changes within the evaluation process. Although responsive, participatory and developmental approaches precipitated the transformation of the evaluator from a provider of evaluation expertise to a facilitator of evaluative inquiry focused on the stakeholders' needs, the implications of a sustained close relationship between evaluator and evaluation users has yet to be explored. Increasing evidence

establishes the usefulness of evaluations as a form of individual, collective, and organizational learning (e.g., Jenlink, 1994; Preskill & Torres, 1999; Preskill, Zuckerman, & Matthews, 2003; Torres, Preskill, & Pointek, 1996). This recognition of evaluation as useful for learning has given rise to a broadened understanding of the conditions required to support organizational development. What remains to be investigated is the following question: Does an evaluation process informed by an extensive interactive relationship by the evaluator with the organizational members provide useful insights for an organization to effectively respond to its changing needs? The answer to this question requires a careful examination of the role of evaluator and of the evaluation within a dynamic organizational context.

In the present study, I assumed dual roles as the evaluator and the evaluation-use researcher to examine the influence of my behaviour on the evaluation of a dynamic organization. The evaluation of an education program in a mid-sized Ontario university provided a suitable context. The program itself was embedded in a reality where adjusting to a changing landscape of needs was prevalent and where the organizational members were interested in and committed to using the evaluation process for program development.

This particular organization can be described as operating within a dynamic context because it is highly interconnected within the larger university context. As a result, it is subject to political and cultural institutional influences either specific to a faculty or to an individual. For example, when an education initiative was mandated by faculty accreditation processes, increased pressures on the program and program personnel to respond were observed. When an individual faculty member demonstrated

interest in providing an education initiative, increased pressure was reported on the individual organizational members to support the faculty's initiative. As a result, pressures originated not only from outside influences but also from within the organization itself as the organization struggled to clarify its vision and the types of initiatives that were required to support it. As a result, both internal and external forces, including people, programs, and policies, contributed to the dynamic organizational context.

To understand the organizational reality in which the evaluation was initiated, I provide the following details about the organizational members' previous evaluation experiences. I was approached to undertake the evaluation at the end of the program's first year in operation following the program developers' discovery that their original evaluator had not met their informational needs and the decision was taken not to renew the evaluator's contract for year two. At the first meeting involving a program developer (Jackie) and a project manager (Amy), they explained that the evaluator had failed to collect baseline data that they had explicitly requested to meet their accountability focus of the evaluation. They expressed frustration with the lack of production of any outcomes they deemed useful from the first-year evaluation. They explained that they were seeking an evaluator who would listen to their requirements and produce information to meet their accountability needs. It was at this same meeting that I outlined my orientation towards conducting a responsive, participatory, and developmental evaluation and stated my commitment to meet their accountability needs. At the same time I suggested that the evaluation could also serve an ongoing program development role. This initial exchange had important implications for both the evaluation and the research. It provides a context

for my attention to how the organizational members viewed me and their pre-occupation with accountability. In addition it provides background for my focus on developing trust in my primary role as the accountability-focused evaluator.

Rationale for the Study

My approach to crafting my role as an evaluator within this dynamic organization was shaped by two influences: a decade of experience as a practising evaluator and my growing knowledge of the literature describing organizational theory as well as theories and approaches supportive of evaluation use (e.g., Cousins & Earl, 1995; Kirkhart, 2000; Patton, 1997). My interest in the issue of evaluation use grew out of my early experiences working with program managers on accountability-focused evaluations. While I would work hard on behalf of program sponsors and clients, I rarely saw any benefits from the evaluations for front-line program personnel. The frustration associated with these experiences motivated me to seek a better way so I learned about and then engaged in more participatory forms of evaluation. I felt that I could increase the ownership and use of the evaluation by engaging in a mutually collaborative process. By conducting evaluations in this manner, my strategies not only addressed my need to be more responsive to stakeholders, but they also led to some identifiable evaluation uses for participants. With each successive evaluation experience, I increased the collaborative aspects of my approach and conventional participatory approaches served me well until I worked with a large number of evaluation users in an organization operating in a dynamic context. Here I experienced an evaluation context where stakeholder needs were continually evolving, emerging, and outdistancing our initial evaluation design.

To understand my experiences better, I began exploring the multi-layered and dynamic nature of the program context. I observed program decisions and personnel behaviours being influenced by unpredictable events and pressures. Some of these stressors originated within the program organization because of competing stakeholder needs, but many emerged due to outside influences, such as changes in externally imposed deadlines for program products, and emergent opportunities for funding that required a restructuring of program priorities. To that end, the organizational context was described as dynamic in that it was tasked with responding to forces from multiple sources and the evaluation design evolved throughout the two year venture in response.

To maintain the relevancy of the evaluation for the stakeholders, I needed to learn how to be flexible in the way I approached all aspects of the evaluation. I adapted my approach to include maintaining a sustained and close relationship with organizational members by engaging them in all aspects of the evaluation, from planning and data collecting to reviewing emergent evaluation findings and negotiating the next steps of the evaluation. The success I had over my two-year relationship with this organization was eventually attributed by our evaluation team to my staying in close touch with the stakeholders' aspirations for the program, my efforts to continually learn about the personal and political dynamics of the program context, and my willingness to work in an unpredictable evaluation context.

Upon reflection I began to consider that the goal of evaluation use was promoted when I focused on my surroundings, paying attention to the changing nature of the program context and the evaluation needs that arose within this context. These needs that arose from the interactions required me to respond in a timely manner to ensure the

maintenance of a collaborative climate. This approach is in contrast to the traditional approach, where the evaluation goals and activities occurring throughout the process are negotiated at the beginning of the evaluation. Moving from my practical experience during this evaluation, I began to reflect upon my reading of the literature on organizational theory and its influence on my notions of the evaluation process.

Organizational theory is emerging within the field of evaluation as a way to gain understandings of the demands of dynamic organizations. Organizational theorists use insights from complexity science that pertain to unpredictability and self-organization to inform their thinking about organizations (Stacey, Griffin, & Shaw, 2000). They view an organization as evolving interactions between local agents (i.e., organizational members) that cannot be predicted. The distinct human ability to think and intentionally influence behaviour, as well as the ability for agents to participate simultaneously at both the individual and organizational levels, contributes to the complexity of studying human organizations. Organizational theory has influenced my orientation to conducting evaluations within dynamic organizations and led me to focus on the interactions between evaluator and stakeholders.

My interest in and knowledge about responsive, participatory, and evaluation approaches have emerged over the past decade. In a departure from the pre-ordinate evaluation, where the goals and criteria for the evaluation are specified prior to the beginning of the evaluation, *responsive evaluation* focuses first on becoming acquainted with the context of the evaluation including the concerns of the stakeholders (Stake, 1975, 2004a). Only afterwards did the responsive evaluator use these concerns to organize the evaluation and then adapted the evaluation design to concerns as they

emerged. However, further research is necessary to explore the emergence and integration of stakeholder concerns within this process. *Participatory evaluation* has become a popular approach for many educational and social program evaluators, and it is widely accepted as a means to promote use by involving stakeholders in all aspects of the evaluation (e.g., Cousins, 2001; Greene, 2000; Weaver & Cousins, 2004). The participatory approach seeks to build ownership in the findings by involving the stakeholders in most aspects of the evaluation process. However, further empirical data is necessary to explore what and how stakeholders learn from their participation in the evaluation process.

More recently my interest in *developmental evaluation* has been piqued as it became known as an evaluation approach supportive of ongoing organizational and program development (Patton, 1994, 1997, 1999). Developmental evaluation represents a radical shift from traditional evaluation approaches in that conducting evaluative inquiry is not predicated on pre-establishing evaluation goals, time constraints, or a detached role for the evaluator. For Patton, the developmental evaluator is charged with stimulating discussions and using evaluative logic that in turn will facilitate data-informed decisions. What is implied in the successful implementation of this approach is that evaluators conduct their work as adjunct members of the organization. What needs to be examined is how evaluators establish credibility and acceptance in this role.

In order to further examine the influence of these theories on my evaluator behaviour, it is useful to review how the definition of *evaluation use* has expanded during the last four decades, and how it remains a central research focus in the field of evaluation. The term evaluation use, initially describing how evaluation findings were

used, has expanded to include the usefulness of the evaluation process itself. At one time, evaluation use research attempted to reduce the complexity of use by its focus on distinguishing among types of use and predictors of use (Cousins & Leithwood, 1986; Patton, 1997; Shulha & Cousins, 1997).

Recently, researchers have argued for a further expansion of the notion of use beyond the immediate intended effects. For example, Kirkhart coined the term *evaluation influence* to describe “a framework with which to examine effects that are multidirectional, incremental, unintentional, and noninstrumental, alongside those that are unidirectional, episodic, intended, and instrumental” (Kirkart, 2000, p. 7). Alkin and Taut (2003), while acknowledging that studying the impacts of evaluation outside of an evaluation context and timeframe is important, nevertheless considered the measurement of these impacts as beyond the role of the typical evaluator. Important considerations for the present study, however, are the recognition of the non-linear nature of evaluation use, the inability to predict all intended uses, and the need for an approach to study evaluation use that captures both unintended and intended uses.

Models continue to broaden the field of evaluation use and, even though they are based on previous evaluation use studies, their usefulness is limited by their assumption of predictability. For example, two current models (Cousins, 2003; Mark & Henry, 2004) use causal links in their pathways of use; yet to be examined is whether the models are useful to predict what will happen in the future. The risk of using current models to guide evaluator practice is that we may inadvertently constrain other potential pathways of use. What is needed is an alternative approach to study the evaluation process that captures the conditions supportive of multiple possibilities of use.

Emerging from the field of educational research, *complexity thinking* describes an approach to the study of complex human phenomena. With its focus on the interconnections and the consequences of interactions within and across organizational levels, complexity thinking is useful to understand phenomena while we are part of the phenomena we are trying to understand (Davis & Sumara, 2006). In this study, complexity thinking anchored the analytical framework that was used to examine the nature, quality, and consequences of the interactions within and across the organization.

Purposes of the Evaluation

The clients contracting the present evaluation articulated two needs at the beginning of the evaluation: namely, evidence that the program was being accountable to its funders, and information that would support their organizational and program development. Specific to the second need, they were interested in using the evaluation as a mechanism to enable data-informed decision making, to facilitate reflection on their experiences as an organization, and to clarify their shared vision.

Purposes of the Research

The overarching purpose of this research was to add to the theoretical understandings of the conditions supportive of evaluation use in organizations operating in dynamic contexts. An examination of the effects of reframing the role of the evaluator served as the primary contribution of this study. Unique to this study is that, as the evaluator, my orientation to the evaluation was guided by the principles of organizational theory informed by the insights gleaned from complexity science as well as my actions

guided by responsive, participatory, and developmental evaluation approaches. From this perspective it was important for me to document:

- The pressures at work both within and around the program and the responses of program personnel and evaluation users to these pressures during the evaluation process;
- The effects of these pressures on the needs of evaluation users and on my decision making during the evaluation process;
- My strategies for becoming situated within the organization during the evaluation process; and
- The interactions between me and the organizational members and among the organizational members created and emergent during the evaluation process.

Indeed, the primary focus of my attention was the exploration and analysis of my responses to emerging organizational dynamics and my role in triggering the actions and interactions that facilitated and/or constrained organizational development. This study extends the current work in the field of evaluation use by (a) capturing the multiple possibilities of use that may be missed or constrained by our current approaches, and (b) documenting evaluator behaviours supportive of learning, and (c) exploring my decisions related to creating a close relationship with stakeholders in order to maintain relevancy of the evaluation in dynamic organizational contexts.

My work contributes to our understanding of evaluation practice and evaluation research in dynamic contexts. This study advances evaluation practice in three ways: (a) It contributes empirical data to a growing body of literature on what it means for an evaluator to implement close engagement with stakeholders through evaluative inquiry;

(b) it brings to the forefront the value of systematic and purposeful reflection and demonstrates how this activity can enhance the quality of engagement with individual stakeholders and the collective organization; and (c) it points to the importance of having evaluators continually integrate past experiences and new theoretical frameworks, with understandings gleaned from close engagement. This study also advances evaluation research by introducing a new approach to studying the engagement process focused on the evaluator/stakeholder interactions in order to capture the complexity inherent in the evaluation process.

Guiding Research Questions

This study examines three questions:

1. How does organizational theory as informed by complexity science and theories of evaluation (responsive, participatory, and developmental) influence evaluator decision making in a dynamic organizational context focused on accountability and program development?
2. What is the nature of evaluator/stakeholder interactions and what impact do these interactions have on the evaluator's decision making?
3. How is evaluation use promoted through stakeholder engagement?

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I describe my research study, which is intended to further our understandings of the role of the evaluator as a facilitator of evaluative inquiry within dynamic organizations. First, I situated the research within the fields of evaluation and organizational theory informed by complexity science and provided an overview of the thesis. Then, I described the context and my dual roles as both an evaluator and an evaluation-use researcher working within a dynamic organizational context. I outlined my rationale for the study as being rooted in the lack of empirical data related to understanding the influence of the evaluator behaviour during an accountability and developmental focused evaluation. I presented the purposes of both the evaluation and the research. The purposes of the evaluation were focused on providing accountability to external funders and using the evaluation for organizational decision-making whereas the purposes of the research were focused on adding to the theoretical understandings of the influences of the evaluator supporting evaluation use within dynamic organizational contexts. I explained the three contributions of the present study to both evaluation practice and research in dynamic contexts. Finally, I outlined the research questions guiding the present study. A review of the literature informing my study is reported in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Chapter Overview

This chapter explains the theoretical foundations of the present study. These guiding constructs stem from my evaluator experiences and my readings of the literature related to evaluation use, evaluation approaches, organizational theory, and complexity theory. In my review of the literature I found that evaluation use continues to be a focus of research in the field of evaluation but little of the research investigates methods that are used in a dynamic organization. While the conception of evaluation use itself has broadened, researchers call for methods to study evaluation use beyond evaluator descriptions and self-reported accounts of stakeholder use (e.g., Ginsberg & Rhett, 2003; Leviton, 2003). The current methods do not provide an adequate framework for evaluations which have expanded beyond the immediate and intended results-based notions to include process use as well as the unintended use of both the results and the process beyond the completion of the evaluation. Process use involves the learning and changes in thinking that occur while participating in an evaluation (Patton, 1997) and evaluation influence involves evaluation use that was both intended and unintended during and beyond the life of the evaluation process (Kirkhart, 2000).

I trace the influence of my experiences as an evaluator on my approach and as an evaluator-use researcher on the present evaluation. I argue that current approaches to the study of evaluation use do not acknowledge the importance of the evaluator as a co-participant in the evaluation process and as a result I investigated the constructs of organizational theory informed by complexity science. My evaluator approach focused

on use within a mutually interactive relationship with stakeholders. This allowed me to monitor and adapt the focus of the evaluation to meet the emerging needs of the stakeholders working within a dynamic organizational context. I outline the characteristics from evaluation models that I integrated from previous evaluations and explain the influences they had on my present evaluator approach.

My readings of the literature related to current approaches to studying evaluation revealed a focus on reducing the complexity of evaluation uses for organizational stakeholders. Instead of limiting my approach to describing the predictors of use and pathways of use, my approach as an evaluation-use researcher, informed by the fields of education and organizational theory, provides a comprehensive means of capturing the influence of the participating evaluator on evaluation use. Emerging from the field of education, complexity thinking describes a way of approaching the study of phenomena while participating in their creation (Davis & Sumara, 2006). I argue the use of complexity thinking in combination with research methods used by organizational theorists offers a way to study the influence of my interactions with stakeholders.

Structuring the review by interweaving a review of my experiences with the literature reveals to the reader the journey that was taken to resolve my dilemmas in activating an evaluative process that responded to the demands of a dynamic organization. I conclude the chapter with a summary of the theoretical foundations guiding the present study and a chapter review.

Tracing the Influences on my Approaches as the Evaluator and as an Evaluation-Use Researcher

In the next four sections organized chronologically by my evaluator experiences, I review the literature that I found relevant to making sense of each of my evaluator experiences, and I present my unresolved dilemmas relating to my experiences and my approach. The literature related to accountability-focused evaluation helped make sense of my frustrations related to the limited usefulness of my first evaluation of a science program in South America to the program staff. Expanding my definition of evaluation client to include program staff led me to the literature related to pre-specifying the intended use and users of the evaluation findings at the beginning of the evaluation. Emerging stakeholder concerns during my second evaluation of a literacy program in East Africa led me to consider a responsive approach to stakeholder concerns. Understandings gleaned from the participatory evaluation approach literature related to my role as a facilitator of learning processes influenced my approach to the evaluation of an early childhood education curriculum in Ontario. Developmental evaluation led me to consider the usefulness of an evaluation approach lacking pre-determined goals and time constraints; I facilitated stakeholders in using evaluative inquiry in a dynamic context. Challenges keeping pace with organizational changes led me to seek a framework from organizational theory informed by complexity science to guide my orientation towards and the study of the influence of the evaluator situated within a dynamic organization.

Accountability for Program Funders

One of the earliest uses of evaluation was to provide information for accountability decisions. My approach to the South America evaluation was characterized by a distanced relationship between evaluator and stakeholder, and its purpose was focused on informing the program funders in their decision making. This approach was similar to those advocated by the early evaluation literature and led me to consider a broader conception of the evaluation client to increase evaluation use.

Guiding Literature

The field of evaluation gained importance following the launch of the Russian satellite Sputnik in 1957, when the United States government responded by initiating massive funding of math and science curriculum development programs. A condition of funding was the completion of an evaluative component whereby measurable objectives were specified and the attainment of these objectives was systematically measured (Cronbach et al., 1980). When objectives-focused evaluations were found to lack the positive and statistically relevant findings that were sought from these programs, the use of accountability-focused evaluations was proposed to inform program judgments.

Accountability-focused evaluations were characterized by the desire for objective information about a program's merit or worth (Alkin, 1972). These evaluation approaches reflected a belief that the relationship between evaluator and client should be distanced and involve minimal interactions. It was as if too much interaction would somehow jeopardize the reliability and validity of the evaluation. The evaluator had the primary responsibility to provide evaluation expertise and to conduct the evaluation to produce technically reliable and valid findings. At the conclusion of the evaluation, it was

the evaluator's role to produce the report that would be used to inform subsequent decision-making and resource allocation by the funding agency. The program personnel (i.e., the evaluation clients) were responsible for determining the accountability focus of the evaluation purpose, the evaluator was responsible for providing program recommendations. The use of information generated by an evaluation and eventually used by the clients to inform judgments was known as *evaluation use*.

While the evaluator remained detached by conducting the accountability-focused evaluation from an objective stance, he or she typically engaged with the program staff primarily as a source of program information. Stufflebeam (2001) conceptualizes staff involvement as providing the evaluator with opportunities to engage program personnel to record and show their achievements and the evaluator to provide an independent assessment of accomplishments. With prospects for continued funding threatened, accountability-focused evaluations were high-stakes activities for program managers and personnel.

Accountability-focused evaluations were used to inform program judgments, and each of three types of such evaluations provided information to judge the worth of a different aspect of the program (Alkin, 1972). *Outcomes accountability*, the most common type, provided information about the extent to which pre-specified outcomes had been attained. Outcome accountability evaluations were important to provide information to guide decisions about the future of the program. *Goal accountability* evaluations examined whether appropriate goals had been established and contributed to making decisions about whether the program had the ability to attain the goals. *Process accountability* evaluations investigated whether appropriate procedures for

accomplishing those goals had been established and implemented. Process accountability served to inform decisions about the future of program activities. Supporting judgments about outcome or goal attainment were examples of the tangible and observable uses of evaluation findings known as *results-based use*; the use of results-based findings to inform decision making first limited to use at the end of the evaluation was known as *instrumental use*.

A tool developed to guide accountability-focused evaluations was the logical program framework, also known as a theory of action or a program logic model (Patton, 1997). Program logic models continue to be popular conceptual tools for evaluators and for program managers and their personnel. This visual tool allows the program intentions to be made explicit, and it helps evaluation users establish criteria for decision making (see Weiss, 1972a). The logic model presents the program goals, participants, activities, and outcomes in a linear progression: “the logic model is the basis for a convincing story of the program’s expected performance” (McLaughlin & Jordan, 1999, p. 66). Although a strong demand for the use of logic models remains in traditional evaluations where the key deliverables are based on predetermined goals, their use is limited in some evaluation contexts where the program goals are constantly evolving (e.g., Patton, 1994, 1999).

Although great numbers of evaluations were completed during the 1960s, many of them were undertaken for the sole purpose of fulfilling a requirement to account for the use of funds. By the early 1970s, evaluators had become uneasy with the lack of relevancy and limited use of their findings for decision making, and they began to question the efficacy of traditional methods of inquiry and purpose (Weiss, 1980). As the purpose for evaluations expanded to include informing program improvements, research

focused on evaluation use increased (Cousins & Leithwood, 1986). No longer was evaluation use defined only as the observable use of evaluation findings for decision making (i.e., instrumental use at the end of the evaluation); instead, notions of evaluation use broadened to include the ongoing use of evaluation information during the evaluation. What remains to be examined is how the evaluator goes about using the evaluation for ongoing decision-making.

The continued need for and use of evaluation for decision making is highlighted not only by the American Evaluation Association (AEA) surveys but also by prominent evaluation-use researchers (e.g., Mark, Henry, & Julnes, 2000; Preskill & Catsambas, 2006). The 2006 AEA survey identified the use of evaluations to provide information for decision making as one of the three most common purposes for conducting an evaluation (Fleischer, 2006). The findings from the recent survey are consistent with both the initial survey undertaken a decade ago (Preskill & Caracelli, 1997) and the findings from a review of literature from 1986-1996 (Shulha & Cousins, 1997). It is impossible to isolate the use of evaluations for accountability from the broader decision-making use category in the literature. Given the current accountability-driven US educational context, it may be argued that decision making remains at least one of the most frequent uses for educational evaluations.

Personal Experience

My first evaluation experience of a science education program in South America (1995-1996) serves as an illustrative example of an accountability-focused evaluation. The evaluation was undertaken to inform a funding judgment by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) of a four-month science education project

involving three program staff, eight science educators, and 200 children in a rural village. I willingly adopted the role as an external evaluator although this was complicated by my previous involvement in the program's application for funding. Consequently, I already possessed a good understanding of the program goals and the operating context before the evaluation began. In an effort to take an objective position, I approached the evaluation using a rational three-step process: in Phase 1, I would create the program logic framework; in Phase 2, I would plan the evaluation and collect the data; and in Phase 3, I would analyze the data and write the evaluation report.

During the initial phase, I involved the program staff in the development of the logic model. Using the original proposal submitted for funding, together we identified the program goal and desired outcomes. Then we discussed the program activities we would undertake in order to achieve each of the outcomes. The overall goal of the program was to increase science literacy and the desired outcomes were an increase in teachers' knowledge of science teaching strategies and an increase in students' knowledge of science concepts. The program featured activities with teachers, such as classroom consultations and workshops, as well as the organization of a science camp for students.

In the second phase, I used the context – input – process - product (CIPP) model to guide the design of the evaluation (Stufflebeam et al., 1971; Stufflebeam, 1983). The funding agency had already stipulated accountability of the resources as the goal of the evaluation. I designed the evaluation activities intended to achieve this goal. Among the activities, I used individual and small group interviews with teachers and community members to assess the program impact. I also invited the program staff to share their perspectives of the program and evaluation experiences with me. From these interviews, I

understood that they viewed the evaluation as an important investment of time and energy in order to gather accurate data about the program. As a group, the program staff expressed a desire for the funding agency to judge the program worthy of continued funding. They also expressed a desire to continue to improve the program.

At the completion of the final phase, I proudly submitted the evaluation report to CIDA, and a few weeks later I received notice that they deemed the program worthy of continued funding. I was elated but at the same time frustrated that the evaluation had only been used to inform the funding decision. Even though the accountability framework allowed the program staff to continue the work they were doing, I felt they were missing something, so I took the initiative to share the evaluation report with them. They expressed satisfaction that the evaluation had documented some of the impacts they had also observed, and they lamented the lack of specific recommendations to inform program changes.

Implications, Meanings, and New Questions

The request by the program funders that the evaluation provide evidence of fiscal accountability was not an unreasonable one, and the evaluation report was used to inform the decision to continue funding. Although the report contained accurate information about the resources used, it was only in monitoring my own responses both during and following the accountability-focused evaluation that I began to see the limitations of the approach – for program staff, program participants, and myself. The lack of relevancy of the outcomes for the program staff stimulated my thinking about how to go about increasing evaluation use for program development.

Reflecting on my approach, I realized that I had fostered the program staff's interest in the evaluation by including them in the process. Through their involvement in developing the program logic model and participating in the interviews, I had developed a working relationship with them. It was at the end of the evaluation that I realized that I had little to offer in return for their participation and interest, other than sharing the evaluation report with them. I recognized the program staff as a potential *user* of the evaluation and broadened my view of an *evaluation client* beyond the funding source.

In a subsequent review of the field's literature, I discovered similarities between the early researchers' approaches and my approach to accountability-focused evaluations: both were characterized by minimal interaction between client and evaluator (see Guba & Lincoln, 1981; Torres & Preskill, 2001). With a focus on the funding source as the client, and the purpose limited to accountability, many such early evaluations had elicited criticisms similar to "[having] little relevance and utility to their potential users" (Alkin & Taut, 2003). Indeed, it was Carole Weiss who first called attention to the lack of use for decision making and prompted the focus of research on evaluation utilization. Identifying underutilization as one of the foremost problems in evaluation, Weiss wrote: "A review of evaluation experience suggests that evaluation results have not exerted significant influence on program decisions" (1972b, p. 10-11).

I felt limited by the traditional accountability approach and considered two questions to broaden my future approach. First, how could I reframe an accountability-focused evaluation to simultaneously meet the accountability requirements of a funding agency and also produce information that would be useful for the program staff? Second,

how could I alter the reporting practices to provide not just a final evaluation report but also ongoing accessibility for program staff to evaluation findings as they emerged?

The literature reveals I was not alone in my concern about use. Evaluation use has been an ongoing concern for evaluators since the 1960s (see Alkin & Taut, 2003; Shulha & Cousins, 1997). Historically, dissatisfaction with the lack of use of findings precipitated the creation of evaluation approaches and tools to involve clients in an effort to increase the application of findings. I noted the expansion of the conception of evaluation use beyond its function for decision making to include program improvement. The concepts of formative and summative evaluation were first introduced by Michael Scriven in 1967. He defined formative evaluation as "...evaluation designed, done, and intended to support the process of improvement, and normally commissioned or done by, and delivered to someone who can make improvements" (Scriven, 1991, p. 20). Alkin and colleagues further broadened the notion of formative evaluation use as a way to increase the results-based use by program personnel (Alkin, Kosecoff, Fitz-Gibbon, & Seligman, 1974). Scriven defined summative evaluation as "the rest of evaluation: in terms of intentions, it is evaluation done for, or by, any observers or decision makers (by contrast with developers) who need valutive conclusions for any other reasons besides development" (Scriven, 1991, p. 20). My CIDA-project experience involving program staff in the use of our findings contributed to broadening my conception of evaluation use beyond summative evaluation use.

My South American experience highlighted the limitation of using an accountability-focused evaluation guided by a linear program logic model. As my understandings of the purposes for evaluation evolved, I began to imagine a new

evaluator role that would broaden my relationships with my clients and support the ongoing use of results-based evaluation findings for program development.

Instrumental and Conceptual Evaluation Use for Program Development

Evaluation use research of the 1970s and 1980s focused on distinguishing among types of use and describing predictors of use. My approach to the East African project included stakeholder involvement at the beginning of the evaluation. This approach applied notions in the literature advocating the identification of how the evaluation would be used and by whom during the planning stages of the evaluation.

Guiding literature

The increased research related to the types and predictors of use (e.g., Cousins & Leithwood, 1986; Patton, 1997; Shulha & Cousins, 1997) expanded the conception of evaluation use beyond decision making to include all results-based uses. Evaluation use studies revealed examples of *conceptual use* (sometimes called enlightenment use) and *symbolic use*, in addition to instrumental use (see Leviton & Hughes, 1981; Patton, 1978; Weiss & Bucuvalas, 1977). Instrumental use described the use of evaluation findings to inform decision making, conceptual use described the use of evaluation findings to gain new ideas and insights about the program being evaluated (Weiss, 1998). Symbolic use described the use of evaluation findings to mobilize support for a position that people already hold about the changes needed. Research during this era focused on identifying the types of results-based use and the factors affecting use.

With a focus on identifying and manipulating predictors of use, individual studies and reviews of studies created various conceptual frameworks in an attempt to identify

the human, contextual, and evaluation factors related to increased use of findings (see Alkin, 1985; Alkin, Daillak, & White, 1979; Cousins & Leithwood, 1986; King, 1988; Patton, 1986; Patton, Grimes, Guthrie, Brennan, French, & Blythe, 1977). Although the researchers varied in their weighting of these predictors, the most common factors were the following: (a) evaluation factors, design and implementation factors, referring to the relevance and quality of the evaluation itself; (b) human factors, including involvement of the users and the credibility of the evaluator; and (c) contextual factors, namely, the evaluation's sensitivity to the organizational, social, political, and cultural dimensions of the evaluation setting (Shulha & Cousins, 1997). A shortcoming of this research was the lack of examining how these three factors interact when monitoring the quality of decision making (Alkin & Taut, 2003).

Attention to the clients' perceived needs was found to increase use, and this precipitated a shift in the role of the evaluator to involve clients in the evaluation process. Identifying the users, involving the clients, and identifying the intended use informed Patton's (1978) development of the *utilization-focused evaluation* (UFE) approach. UFE advocated planning for both *who* will use the findings as well as *how* the findings will be used; this was more succinctly stated by Patton as "intended use for intended users" (1997, p. 63). In the UFE approach, the evaluator served as a facilitator in the process of negotiation with the stakeholders. Although the term stakeholder was already part of the evaluation lexicon, Patton used it to describe persons with "a vested interest in [the] evaluation findings" (Patton, 1997, p. 41). For any evaluation, he suggests there are multiple stakeholders; for example, program personnel, funders, and participants.

In the UFE approach, Patton advocated the need to identify primary intended users. He argued focusing on these primary users supported what he described as the *personal factor*, defined as “the presence of an identifiable individual or group of people who personally care about the evaluation and the findings it generates. Where such a person was present, the evaluations were used; where the personnel factor was absent, there was a correspondingly marked absence of evaluation impact” (p. 44). He suggested the choices the evaluator made in terms of who were the intended users had an influence on the future evaluation use.

The evaluator role, characterized as an active promoter and cultivator of use, emerged from the now famous debate between Michael Patton and Carol Weiss in the late 1980s. The debate focused on whether the evaluator could or should be held accountable for use (see Patton, 1988; Weiss, 1988a, 1988b). Weiss argued that, in decision-making contexts, the responsibility of an evaluator is limited to the generation of accurate and adequate findings to serve the information needs of the evaluation purpose. Patton alternately argued that the purpose of an evaluation is to generate findings for the informational needs of the user; in order to accomplish the purpose, he advocated for a more active evaluator role to facilitate and foster use of evaluation findings. Emerging from the debate was a general understanding of and agreement on the kinds of factors affecting use, the role of the evaluator, and the importance of client involvement.

Involvement of the stakeholders in the planning stages of an evaluation became an essential feature of the building of a working relationship between evaluator and stakeholders. Given the emerging importance of the way the evaluation is conducted, and

of the relationship between the evaluator and stakeholders, it may not be surprising that the importance of considering the contextual factors and dissemination practices has been highlighted recently by evaluation-use researchers (Shulha & Cousins, 1997). Indeed, current evaluators are called upon to communicate evaluation findings in an appropriate and timely manner in an effort to strengthen relationships with stakeholders (Cousins, 2003). What remains to be examined is how an evaluator maintains the relevancy of the evaluation findings to the intended uses of the evaluation users.

Personal Experience

Reflecting on my experience of evaluating a literacy program in East Africa (2003) has caused me to explore the subtleties and limitations of utilization-focused evaluation undertaken to inform both program improvements and a funding judgment. The literacy project involved working with four program staff, 20 educators, and 200 children in a rural East African village. The project activities focused on literacy strategies including: conducting teacher workshops, working one-on-one with children, and creating the infrastructure for a school library. With a focus on meeting the perceived needs of the evaluation stakeholders, I included both the program staff and the funding agency personnel in the planning stage of the evaluation. Unique to this evaluation was the opportunity for dialogue with the funding agency because two members of its board of directors were on site serving a dual role as program staff.

At the evaluation planning meeting, I undertook a facilitative role by inviting the stakeholders to articulate their informational needs. The funding agency easily identified its need for the evaluation to inform accountability judgments, but the program staff found it more difficult to articulate their informational needs. This was understandable

because they had no prior experience within the program of actually voicing their needs. Consequently, I facilitated a dialogue with them, and together we articulated the need for the evaluation to provide findings that could inform the development of their teacher workshops.

Our subsequent design was an effort to foster evaluation use that reflected program staff input. Over the course of the data collection and analysis, my field notes captured examples of both instrumental and conceptual uses by the program staff. An example of intended instrumental use was revealed during an interview with one of the program staff. She commented that she would use the findings from workshop participants to guide her decisions about the types of teaching strategies that would be used for the subsequent workshop. An example of conceptual use was revealed during an interview with a program staff member who noted that the feedback provided by an evaluation activity had brought to his attention how the project was impacting the teachers. During the subsequent months, I observed several more examples of the use of the evaluation's findings to inform program changes.

Following my interactions with program staff, I carefully documented the questions I had asked and the responses of the program staff in my field notes. An analysis of the notes revealed new concerns of the program staff emerged during the evaluation process. For example, one of the program staff expressed a concern that not all the workshop participants were attending all the sessions and that it would have an impact on the ability for the attendees to work together in the months to come. Near the end of the evaluation I reviewed my field notes and noticed that my questions had guided the program staff to engage in reflecting upon their experiences. Their reflections had

revealed over time increasing details about their concerns and a movement from simply sharing to the probing for greater detail on specific aspects of the program. I hypothesized that my efforts at developing a mutual comfort level with the participants encouraged a deeper sharing and personal reflection.

As I started to think about the evaluation report that would be submitted to the funding agency, I decided it was important for the program staff to be involved in the interpretation of the data. I organized a session whereby the program staff and I discussed the findings. After presenting several examples of data-based decision making and program changes I invited comments and questions, and it was the content of the ensuing discussion that surprised me. While there was minimal talk about whether the funds had been well used, the program staff and funding agency members engaged in a lively and positive discussion about the program changes that had occurred from applying the findings to decision-making. The talk also focused on the usefulness of the evaluation to inform the program development beyond the intended initial scope of the evaluation. As I was leaving the meeting, one of the program staff approached me and told me he had learned about the impact of the program from having participated in the data collection for the evaluation.

Implications, Meanings, and New Questions

My review of the utilization-focused literature revealed similarities between the UFE approach and my own evaluation approach. The UFE shifted the attention from the program to the intended users of the evaluation information, and so did I. At the beginning of the evaluation, I made it my responsibility to negotiate with all the stakeholders (i.e., program staff and program funders) and to design the evaluation that

would meet all their explicit needs. In an effort to support their ongoing instrumental and conceptual use of the findings to inform program changes, I designed the data collection to provide opportunities for the staff to have ongoing access to the evaluation findings. The UFE views the planning stage as crucial to determine the eventual use of the evaluation: “What happens from the beginning of the study will determine its eventual impact *long before a final report is produced*” (Patton, 1997, p. 20, emphasis in original). I, too, had planned for use. It was my impression that while collaboratively negotiating the evaluation purpose contributed to building a trusting relationship, it had been a very difficult process at the beginning of the evaluation for the program staff to anticipate their uses for the evaluation findings.

The East African experience highlighted both the impact of stakeholder involvement and the potential for the evaluator to play a role in increasing evaluation use. The stakeholders’ participation gave me a deeper understanding of the program and of their concerns and I responded to the program staff’s increased comfort level by asking probing questions. In my later review of the UFE approach, I drew parallels between my approach and Patton’s *active-reactive-adaptive* interactions (Patton, 1997). My approach to the East African evaluation included my identification of the program staff as intended users and the preparation of useful questions to guide our reflective practice. Patton’s UFE approach adequately described the nature of the consultative interaction between me and the stakeholders, but I felt it was limited in its usefulness to guide my approach supporting the ongoing use of the evaluation findings.

The evaluation reporting meeting focused my attention on the limitations of using a traditional evaluation approach guided by a linear program logic model in a context

where the understandings of the program were changing and new concerns were emerging. Evaluators have traditionally focused their attention at the beginning of the evaluation on identifying the evaluation stakeholders and describing the relationship of stakeholder groups to the program, assessing which stakeholder needs can be addressed given the scope of the evaluation, designing an evaluation that will meet these needs, and producing a final report to communicate the results (The Joint Committee for Standards for Educational Evaluation, 1994). While these prescribed actions are meant to ensure that evaluators represent stakeholder interests in evaluation, they do not guide evaluator thinking about how to maintain the relevancy of the evaluation design and subsequent findings to the emerging stakeholder understandings and concerns. Given the purpose of the evaluation to inform program changes, it was possible for some of the results-based uses to be anticipated at the beginning of the evaluation, but it was impossible to plan for all of them.

The East African evaluation caused me to re-examine the usefulness of the reporting aspects of the traditional evaluation approach as well as the usefulness of a responsive evaluation design to meet the emergent stakeholders' concerns. The evaluation helped me to re-assess the most beneficial means of reporting. Traditional approaches produce reports and deliver them to clients at the end of the project. In my approach I shared the findings with individual program staff in an ongoing manner and the feedback helped to direct the evaluation. The result I observed during the reporting meeting was the opportunity for program staff and funders to engage in a meaningful discussion informing subsequent program implementation.

Although as the evaluator I had some success in increasing the usefulness of the evaluation findings to the program staff by involving them in the planning and reporting stages, the pre-specified evaluation design did not allow me the flexibility for the evaluation-in-progress to respond to the emerging stakeholder concerns. Consequently, my readings of Stake's Responsive Evaluation (Abma & Stake, 2001; Stake, 1974/1980) shifted my attention to the potential for the evaluator to conceptualize the evaluation design to respond to the stakeholders' emerging issues. The responsive approach advocated for the ongoing sharing of findings and for the design of the evaluation to emerge over time and to keep pace with the evaluator's growing acquaintance with the program, stakeholder concerns and context (Stake, 1974/1980, 2004a). Stake goes on to describe responsive evaluation as "an attitude more than a model Being responsive means orienting to the experience of personally being there, feeling the activity, the tension, knowing the people and their values. It relies heavily on personal interpretation" (2004a, p. 87). I considered my ability to promote evaluation use would be substantially enhanced if, as I gained a deeper understanding of the program and became aware of the program staff's emerging concerns, I adapted the evaluation design to meet those concerns.

To access the emerging issues, the responsive approach calls for ongoing communication with stakeholders and attention to individual instances. Indeed it is "not uncommon for responsive evaluation feedback to occur early and throughout the evaluation period" (Stake, 2004b, p. 213). In this way, the responsive evaluator shared findings as they emerged and created reports that were both informative and comprehensive to various audiences. Paying attention to the outcomes of interactions

with individual stakeholders may lead to a deeper understanding of the context, “episodes that, however unrepresentative, add to understanding the complexity of the evaluand” (Stake, 2004a, p. 88). The East African evaluation played a critical role in stimulating my thinking about an approach that increases the usefulness of evaluations by creating opportunities for ongoing communication between evaluator and stakeholders to better understand and be able to respond to the stakeholders’ emerging issues.

Process Use for Individual and Organizational Learning

The influence of increased stakeholder involvement in all aspects of the evaluation process dominated the research of evaluation use in the 1990s. My initial approach to the implementation evaluation of an Early Childhood Education (ECE) curriculum was characterized by a focus on shared decision-making and increased ownership of findings from stakeholder involvement. Participatory approaches are reflective of similar purposes.

Guiding literature

Stakeholder involvement was found to increase the use of findings by encouraging ownership of the evaluation process (Cousins & Earl, 1992, 1995). Increased use of approaches advocating greater stakeholder involvement in the evaluation process precipitated a need for a way to talk about what happened to individuals as a result of their involvement (Patton, 1997, 1998). Consequently, the conception of evaluation use was broadened beyond traditional notions of results-based use to include the usefulness of the evaluation process itself (Cousins & Shulha, 2006). *Process use* was first described

by Patton (1997) as “individual changes in thinking and behavior, and program or organizational changes in procedures and culture, that occur among those involved in evaluation as a result of the learning that occurs during the evaluation process” (p. 90). Process use challenged preconceived notions of the boundaries of legitimate evaluation use. It was the first time that encouraging stakeholder participation was recognized as a valued and beneficial approach to increasing use.

Attention to the usefulness of the evaluation process and increased involvement of the stakeholders resulted in the generation of the *participatory evaluation* approach (Cousins, 2003; Cousins & Earl, 1992, 1995). Increased stakeholder participation gave rise to a new type of relationship between the stakeholders and the evaluator. No longer was the evaluator viewed as the sole provider of evaluation expertise; instead, the evaluator became a facilitator of the evaluation process, a process “where persons trained in evaluation methods and logic work in collaboration with those not so trained to implement evaluation activities” (Cousins, 2003, p. 245). Participatory approaches are characterized by the extensive participation of stakeholders and shared decision-making throughout the evaluation process.

The direct production of evaluation knowledge is a feature of participatory approaches. Cousins and Whitmore (1998) distinguished two types of participatory evaluation approaches based on their primary function and the stakeholders selected for involvement. Practical participatory evaluation focuses on fostering evaluation use; for example the *practical* application of the knowledge generated for organizational decision-making through the involvement of the primary evaluation users in the evaluation process (Brisolara, 1998). On the other hand, transformative participatory

evaluation focuses on its political use for social justice; for example supporting empowerment through the involvement of all legitimate stakeholders especially those previously marginalized. The resulting relationship from the participatory approach described evaluators and stakeholders as *learning partners* in the generation of knowledge. Participatory evaluation has become a popular approach for many educational and social program evaluators to work with their stakeholders and it is widely accepted as a means to promote use (e.g., Cousins, 2001; Greene, 2000; Weaver & Cousins, 2004).

As the contexts for participatory evaluations expanded, so, too, did the purposes of evaluation. Evaluation purposes shifted from a focus on practical problem solving to a focus on learning (Rossman & Rallis, 2000). Over the past decade, process use and evaluations as a form of individual, collective, and organizational learning have become well established topics in the literature (e.g., Jenlink, 1994; Preskill & Torres, 1999). At the same time, the skills demanded of an evaluator expanded to include various roles such as a collaborator, facilitator, interpreter, mediator, coach, and educator (Ryan & Schwandt, 2002). Even so, Cousins (2003) still calls for data to inform participatory evaluation practices. Specifically, how do evaluators go about creating opportunities for stakeholders to learn?

Recent research supports the prominent focus of evaluators to encourage stakeholder learning. A 10-year follow-up membership survey conducted by the American Evaluation Association (Preskill, 2006) reported that 66% of evaluations are intentionally designed to enhance individual learning (an increase of 19% since 1996) and 69% of evaluations are designed to enhance group learning (an increase of 21% since

1996). Creating opportunities for stakeholders to learn and use evaluation logic has become a focus of evaluation capacity-building approaches, and the use of evaluation logic has potential to become integrated into the organizational culture (e.g., Patton, 1997; Torres & Preskill, 2001). Although process use claims to be grounded in constructive learning theory, the types of interactions among evaluation participants that lead to individual and organizational learning have yet to be examined in any detail.

Evaluation researchers have yet to fully examine how stakeholders derive meaning from their experiences as participants in the evaluation process and from their interactions with the evaluator. Instead evaluation-use researchers remain focused on asking what and how stakeholders learn from their involvement in the evaluation process (e.g., Preskill & Torres, 1999; Preskill & Catsambas, 2006); what are the types of process use (Alkin & Taut, 2003; Forss, Rebien, & Carlsson, 2002; Patton, 1997, 1998) and what are the lessons learned from studies of process use (Forss, Kruse, Taut, & Tenden, 2006; Preskill et al., 2003). The studies exploring these questions have led to discussions about the use of reflective practices as a type of evaluation activity that might support individuals to make meaning of their experiences as a participant in the evaluation process.

Our understanding of how individual and organizational learning occurs during an evaluation is limited. Preskill and colleagues (2003) present their conceptualization of organizational learning as thus:

If stakeholders do indeed learn about evaluation, about the program being evaluated, and about each other from their engagement in the evaluation process, it can be said that individual learning has taken place. However, if they share their

learning with others in the organization, it is conceivable that team and/or organizational learning may occur as well. (p. 424)

Preskill and colleagues' distinction is limited to describing organizational learning as individual learning that is shared within the organization during the evaluation process. They are not alone in their thinking. Organizational learning is conceptualized by Dibella and Nevis (1998) as

A social process whereby some insight or knowledge, created either by an individual working alone or by a team, becomes accessible to others . . . organizational learning is not about how individuals, as individuals, learn in an organization, but about how individuals and work groups working with others learn from one another's experience. (p.20)

Again the emphasis is on the individual and the capacity for individuals to share their experiences. Neither of these descriptions provides details guiding the evaluator's thinking about how they might create opportunities for organizational members to share their experiences nor do they account for the potential process use outcome of the interactions during a participatory evaluation with both the evaluator and participating organizational members.

Personal Experience

My third evaluation experience involved conducting a two-year (2003-2005) implementation evaluation of an early years science curriculum in Ontario where my approach involved stakeholders in many aspects of the evaluation in an effort to increase evaluation use. The evaluation funder was the program developers of the innovative activity-based curriculum, and the purpose of the evaluation was to measure the program

congruency between what was designed and what was actually implemented. I viewed the evaluation stakeholders as not only the program developers but also the 17 early childhood education (ECE) staff hired specifically to implement the science curriculum. The childcare centre provided a unique opportunity to document the implementation because the program developers had already established a working relationship with the program staff. In fact, many of the ECE staff had worked previously with the program developers: one year piloting the activities and one year coaching the full implementation of the curriculum. With the program funders, it was negotiated that we would provide an interim evaluation report at the end of the first year and produce a final report at the end of the second year.

Reflecting on my approach to the first year of the evaluation has enabled me to examine my initial focus on creating opportunities to build a relationship with stakeholders and my attention to sustaining learning opportunities for stakeholders. At the beginning of the evaluation, I viewed my first responsibility as alleviating some of the ECE staff's anxiety about the evaluation and I did this by involving them in the evaluation planning process during our initial meeting. Although I had been told by both the centre administrators and the program developers that the staff members were willing evaluation participants, I wanted to create an environment where the program staff would feel encouraged to share their thoughts both positive and negative. I quickly discovered that the program staff held negative preconceptions of evaluations; their main concerns related to the evaluation process and its potential to interfere with their ability to perform their duties and my role as a judge of their performance. After introducing my evaluation approach, I facilitated the planning of an evaluation design where I promised to take all

precautions to avoid being intrusive to their work. By the end of the interaction we agreed to an evaluation design in which I would make ten monthly visits to the childcare centre to collect data from classroom observations and reflective interviews with ECE staff.

I worked hard to build a working relationship with the ECE staff by valuing their contributions to the evaluation, taking an interest in their professional learning, and showing respect for their daily work at the childcare care centre. To enhance building trust, I made a point of learning about ECE; and I regularly volunteered in their classrooms. By stepping out of the typical evaluator role the staff had expected, I was able to learn experientially how instructors perceived their own roles at the centre and how the goals of the program fit with these perceptions.

My routine throughout the evaluation was to spend a few minutes with each of the five ECE classes when I arrived at the centre. In each classroom, I greeted the staff and children and interacted with them, gradually becoming a recognized member of the community. The informal discussions that occurred over a diaper change or while playing with the children contributed to my understanding of the realities of the ECE context. As the first year of the evaluation unfolded, I facilitated interviews with staff during their lunch whenever they were available either individually or in small groups. My interview protocol included some flexibility to allow me the freedom to use reflective practice as well as direct questions to learn about the specifics related to their program implementation strategies.

Throughout the first year, I noted and documented shifts in their articulated reasons and descriptions related to how they made implementation decisions. I began to share some of my observations with the program staff when I discovered the staff

becoming increasingly comfortable with me. I interpreted when the staff shared personal details that were beyond the scope of my questions as evidence of their increased comfort; for example details about professional goals, information related to educational background and previous ECE experiences, and descriptions of the relationships among ECE staff.

During the first year there were two instances when requests from the program developers caused me to shift my focus from supporting learning of the ECE staff to supporting their needs for information. One such opportunity arose when the program developers, having an opportunity to apply for additional funding, requested a summary of the emerging evaluation findings to support their application. In response to their request, I quickly supplied the required information to meet their deadline.

The analysis of the first-year data revealed that many of the ECE staff had used the evaluation process as a means to becoming more aware of their implementation decisions. At the first-year reporting session, they engaged in an interactive discussion about how they could use the findings to inform their future strategies. The first-year evaluation served to highlight the differences in the way the program was being implemented across classes and this was communicated to the program developers. I became aware that not all the staff members felt competent in their efforts to implement the program. What I had yet to understand fully were the sources of their issues with the program. I considered the need for an evaluator approach that focused on responding to the individual ECE staff members' learning needs.

Implications, Meanings, and New Questions

My review of the literature related to process use revealed exploratory research on the necessary supporting variables. Preskill and colleagues (2003) identified five categories of variables required for process use; they argued the need for these variables to be supported from the beginning of the evaluation: (a) facilitation of evaluation process, (b) management support, (c) stakeholder characteristics, (d) frequency, methods, and quality of communications, and (e) organizational characteristics. My approach during the first year of the ECE science evaluation had featured some similar conditions and I chose the first and fourth to discuss in the following section because of their prominence during the first year.

In the Preskill and colleagues (2003) research of the “facilitation of evaluation process” variable category focused on the need of the evaluator to build and sustain an environment conducive for stakeholders’ participating and subsequent learning. My approach during the first year was similarly characterized by a focus on fostering a trusting relationship with stakeholders in order to encourage their participation. I did this by spending time in each class and learning about the ECE staff’s responsibilities. I also provided opportunities for reflection and dialogue during the interviews and allowed the stakeholders’ responses to guide some of the evaluation process. Building on the staff members’ interests and respecting their individual contributions contributed to developing a trusting relationship with me. I believe this environment was conducive to supporting process use.

In the Preskill and colleagues (2003) study my attention was drawn to the “frequency, methods, and quality of communications” variable category and to the nature

of these interactions between evaluator and client. My attention was drawn to the increased frequency of my interactions with ECE staff throughout the first year. I not only provided both informal and formal opportunities to meet but also remained open and flexible to adapting my interview questions to stakeholders' responses. In addition the interactions were interactive as I shared the evaluation findings with individual stakeholders and sought their interpretations. Throughout the evaluation process, I maintained communication with the staff and with the ECE Director through regular emails. The support of the administrators was apparent by their willingness to correspond with me and to dedicate time during staff meetings for communication purposes. These categories of variables served as a framework in which to consider not only my approach but also the impact of my evaluator behaviour and the conditions supportive of learning.

Researchers recognize the need for further research on the role of the evaluator in facilitating evaluation use (Preskill, et al., 2003); moreover, few researchers have investigated the mechanisms and subsequent impact of the new evaluator/stakeholder relationship on the shaping and usefulness of the evaluation. Although viewing the participatory evaluator as a creator of the conditions necessary for learning is not new (Cousins & Shulha, 2006), little is known about the nature and quality of the interactions among evaluation participants that are required to generate the conditions for process use. As my understandings of the conditions supportive of individual and organizational learning evolved, I began to consider the implications of a close relationship with both ECE staff and program developers for ongoing program and organizational development.

Evaluative Inquiry for Program and Organizational Development

At the beginning of the 21st century, evaluation inquiry emerged as an approach supportive of program and organizational development while evaluation use studies focused on reducing the complexity of doing evaluation (e.g., Cousins & Shulha, 2006; Preskill & Torres, 2000). My approach to the second year of the ECE implementation embraced the expanded notion of evaluation and focused on sustaining a close relationship with stakeholders. Developmental evaluation is reflective of such an approach.

Guiding literature

Evaluation approaches informed by the field of organizational development serve both as a means of supporting the ongoing development of programs and organizations (Patton, 1994, 1999) and also, more recently, evaluation approaches serve as a means of supporting learning on the part of clients operating within dynamic contexts (Shulha & Shulha, 2006; Westley, Zimmerman, & Patton, 2006). Current directions of evaluation encourage organizations to be proactive and to adjust to the pressures of change. Evaluative inquiry has emerged as a method that is supportive of individual, team, and organization learning in organizations operating in a dynamic, unstable, and unpredictable environment (Preskill & Torres, 1999). The importance of relevant evaluation use has expanded the facilitator role of the evaluator within the organizational structure and has become a form of inquiry known as *developmental evaluation* (Patton, 1994).

Patton recently proposed its use for informing the ongoing development of project-based social innovations operating in a highly emergent environment (Westley, et

al., 2006). For example, supporting the work of social innovators in a housing project or a benefit concert, the developmental evaluator documented the contextual interactions in the project and engaged the stakeholders in data-informed decision making. The evaluator was able to facilitate reflective practice with the social innovators so that they could be better aware of how they made decisions about how to proceed. Developmental evaluation has emerged as a useful tool for the social behaviour the innovators were attempting to influence.

The approach first emerged from Patton's reflections on over 20 years of engaging in evaluation logic with groups where the purpose had been ongoing project development. When Patton introduced it in 1994, developmental evaluation was described as a departure from the traditional evaluations focused on narrowly targeted project outcomes; instead it shifted the focus to building "long-term partnering relationships with clients who are, themselves, engaged in ongoing program development" (Patton, 1994, p. 312). In 1997, Patton's expansion of the purpose of developmental evaluation to include organizational development influenced how the evaluator was viewed within the organization (Patton, 1997, 1999). Moving beyond his 1994 description where evaluators were situated as members of the project design team, by the 1999 work, Patton re-identified evaluators as members of the organizational strategic team. Developmental evaluation continues to be characterized by (a) not specifying a time frame in which the evaluation is to be conducted, (b) not predetermining the evaluation purpose, and (c) not describing the role of the evaluator as objective and detached.

Evaluative inquiry provides opportunities for the evaluator to engage stakeholders in an interactive process that develops close productive relationships. Patton described the interactions between evaluator and client as “highly dynamic, interactive process[es] of mutual engagement” (Patton, 1999, p. 111). The relationship, characterized by frequent interactions and an emergent and responsive design, renders formal reporting practices and pre-specified evaluation designs (central in traditional evaluation approaches) redundant. Instead, frequent discussions allow the insights from the evaluation process to be shared and used to inform decisions as the program develops.

As the contexts for evaluations expanded to include dynamic environments, our notions of evaluation use required re-defining. Our understandings of how evaluators respond to emerging program and organizational development concerns demanded a more inclusive view of both planned (i.e., intended) and unanticipated (i.e., unintended) evaluation use. Although some researchers have acknowledged the nonlinearity of evaluation use and the need to encompass both intended and unintended in our understandings of use, much of evaluation use research remains focused on identifying predictors of use (Johnson, 1998; Kirkhart, 2000). Kirkhart made two important contributions to studying evaluation use: she proposes an expansion of the conception of evaluation use to *evaluation influence* and her *Integrated Theory of Influence* created a three-dimensional framework in which to consider the impact of an evaluation. In so doing, she challenges evaluators to broaden their conceptions of use and “[to place the] effects that are multidirectional, incremental, unintentional, and non-instrumental alongside those that are unidirectional, episodic, intended, and instrumental” (Kirkhart, 2000, p. 7).

The Integrated Theory of Influence considers the impact of an evaluation along three dimensions: source of influence, intention, and time. The traditional conception of use includes results-based and intended use that occurs within the time frame of the evaluation (i.e., immediate and end-of-cycle). Kirkhart expands the conventional conceptions of use to also include process use, unintended use, and long-term effect referring to the influence that evolves over time and beyond the evaluation period. Some debate questions if the measurement of these impacts is beyond the boundaries of utilization research (Alkin & Taut, 2003). Even though Alkin and Taut endorse the usefulness of evaluators being aware of the *intended* and *unintended impacts*, they see each of these as having a different priority for the evaluator. They forward that the evaluator should be more concerned with intended impacts, that is, “those impacts that can be addressed and discussed together with potential users, at any point in time during the evaluation process” (p. 10). The researchers state that creating a boundary around evaluation use is important because it informs stakeholders about the time frame, context, and intended outcomes of the evaluation process. Remaining to be generated are empirical data supportive of Kirkart’s framework.

A review of the literature has revealed the lack of empirical studies on the implementation strategies developed specifically for the increase of evaluation use in organizational contexts (e.g., Ginsburg & Rhett, 2003; Leviton, 2003). For the most part, research has remained focused on how to reduce the complexity of evaluation uses for organizational stakeholders. This process is typically done by describing predictors of use and pathways of use (e.g., Cousins, 2003; Mark & Henry, 2004; Preskill, et al., 2003).

Mark and Henry (2004) proposed a framework that focuses on the underlying change mechanisms that lead to results-based use by explaining how the act of evaluating influences participants' attitude, motivation, and action. For evaluators to understand what these mechanisms are and how they work, these researchers suggest the need for multiple levels of analysis (i.e., individual, interpersonal, and collective). By attending to all these data, they suggest, it is possible to track the recursive nature of evaluation influence, as well as how program outcomes as identified by the evaluation can be used to inform and alter organizational processes. They view the consequence of recursive interactions as the capacity to contribute to re-shaping and improving the outcomes. Their model represents an important move to focus beyond the end of the first cycle of evaluation use; and as well, it suggests the need for further research to examine the evaluator behaviours supportive of interactive use or influence.

The continued need for and use of evaluations to inform ongoing organizational development is highlighted by the 2007 AEA conference theme, *Evaluation and Learning* (www.eval.org/eval2007/). During this conference, some of the newer purposes for evaluator/stakeholder engagement were explored by the membership. Growing interest in approaches such as appreciative inquiry (Preskill & Catsambas, 2006) and developmental evaluation (Patton, 2006) suggest that evaluators are becoming more comfortable with what might be called *close engagement*. Typically, this arrangement immerses evaluators in the complex contexts in which the program operates, and it calls for a skill set that promotes decision making by taking this complexity into account. While we continue to develop useful strategies for bringing stakeholders closer to the heart of evaluative inquiry, what remains obscure in the literature about

evaluator/stakeholder engagement is how the dispositions, sensitivities, and behaviors of the evaluator contribute to the stakeholders' responses to opportunities for engagement.

Personal Experience

At the beginning of the second year of the ECE implementation evaluation, with the endorsement of the funders and program staff, I created an innovative data collection method called the *photofolio*. A staff member's photofolio included photographs of the first lesson implementation, observations of both the first and second lessons, and my interviews with that person. The design provided me with more frequent opportunities to engage the staff and allowed me greater flexibility to adapt my approach to better serve the staff's raised needs. To do this, I began to visit the centre twice-monthly, and for each ECE staff member, I created monthly photofolios during the first visit that were then used during the second. My first visit of the month was similar to my visits in the previous year: I documented the science lesson in each classroom and conducted a reflective interview with staff about their implementation strategies. In the second year, significant variations from my method of the previous year were the use of photographs to document the lesson implementation, the emergent nature of my interview protocol, and the purposeful grouping of ECE staff member. The photographs served as visual cues for the children during the second visit, the interviews allowed me the freedom to pursue any avenue of questioning that I felt would support the staff member's professional learning, and the groupings encouraged sharing within the small group of ECE staff. I used the summaries from the science lessons during the interviews to stimulate a discussion about what seemed to work for people in implementing this program and why.

The second visit of the month was a unique feature of year two. During this visit, I observed and documented the strategies that staff in each classroom used to review the science concepts they had covered in the previous science lesson. At the beginning of the post-class interview, I provided each instructor with a written summary based on my first visit to the science class. Over time, these documents allowed the instructors to become aware of their instructional approaches and allowed them to speculate on the relationship between their planning and instructional strategies and the quality of the responses that the children provided during the review session. Although the findings were shared in an ongoing manner with the ECE staff, a final report was planned for the program developers at the end of the second year.

Around the same time, I took advantage of what became a serendipitous opportunity to attend the Second Annual Complexity Science and Education Research Conference (<http://www.complexityandeducation.ualberta.ca/conference.htm>). As a member of the organizing committee, I had become familiar with the distinguishing characteristics of a complex system. Described as phenomena that defy simplistic analyses of cause and effect, complex systems are different from both complicated and simple systems (Weaver, 1948). Complex systems with the capacity to adapt to environmental changes are known as *complex adaptive systems* (CAS) and their study is known as the field of complexity science. My interest and background in the natural sciences subsequently led to my exploration of the roots of complexity science, including the areas of (among others) chaos theory, cybernetics, thermodynamics, and ecology (see Kauffman, 1995; Prigogine & Stengers, 1984; Waldrop, 1992). Even though CAS were first observed to occur in the natural world, complexity science has arisen as a disciplined

and demanding approach to the study of complex phenomena in subjects as diverse as cognition, biology, business, and education (e.g., Capra, 2002; Davis & Sumara, 2006; Johnson, 2001; Lewin & Regine, 2001).

At the conference, I learned how insights from complexity science were being applied to the field of education. Of particular interest to me was how these insights related to the process of emergence were informing our notions of learning and teaching (e.g., Bowsfield, 2004; McMurty, 2004). One of the key characteristics of CAS was *self-organization* (also known as *emergence*) which describes the capacity of a system to accommodate the products of interactions; for example, in a classroom, interactions among students or students and the teacher might produce knowledge or an experience. The system is said to learn because the understandings generated from the interactions build on the previous adaptations. As a result, the knowledge generated is not simply a collection of information or experiences. Instead, according to Davis (2004) learning is seen as, “an ongoing, recursive, elaborative process, not an accumulative one” (p. 130). The process of emergence continues to gain acceptance as a useful conceptualization for describing how learning emerges from the interactions within a CAS (Capra, 2002; Johnson, 2001).

As I reflected upon my past experiences as a high school science teacher, I realized that I had already observed instances of emergence in my classroom. For example, from a class discussion about how atoms interact emerged two metaphors to represent how molecules were formed that I had never considered. Although I had noticed the generation of new knowledge, I previously lacked a framework in which to understand its generation that could not be explained by the simple accumulation of

individual student ideas. In retrospect, I credit complexity science as drawing my attention to instances of emergence during the ECE evaluation process.

I began to consider how I could go about studying my influence as an evaluator with stakeholders if I conceptualized the organization undertaking the evaluation as a complex system. Complexity researchers argue that the behaviour and outcomes of complex phenomena cannot be explained by traditional predictive methods or by examining their parts. Instead, researchers forward the need for a new approach to study such phenomena. My intention to support learning as the evaluator was similar to my intentions as an educator, and I discovered *complexity thinking* during my exploration of the literature related to study approaches used by educational researchers.

Complexity thinking has emerged from the field of educational research as a way of thinking and acting while approaching the study of phenomena in whose creation we participate (Davis & Sumara, 2006). It offers us a powerful alternative to the linear, reductionist approach to inquiry that might be conceptualized as having typically dominated educational research and evaluation use research. Complexity thinking offers a practical orientation towards understanding phenomena as simultaneously co-evolving and studying it. As such, complexity thinking is “fully consistent with a science that is understood in terms of a disciplined, open-minded, evidence-based attitude towards the production of new, more useful interpretative possibilities” (Davis and Sumara, p. 26). Complexity thinking contributed to my conceptualization of my approach as the evaluation-use researcher. My approach focused on documenting the outcomes of my interactions with stakeholders.

Within the first few months after the conference and throughout the second year of the ECE evaluation, I began to monitor the emergence of new understandings and to examine their effects within the program context on the decisions of the ECE staff, administrators, and program developers. For example, from the discussion with ECE staff, a shared understanding emerged about the effect the lack of available materials had on implementation decisions and on the frequency of hands-on activities. During my post-evaluation review, I became aware of several more instances where my reflective practice with ECE staff contributed to generating knowledge that was used to inform program decisions. For example, my review of the field notes and interview transcripts from an interaction related to the science planning cycle allowed me to trace my influence on decisions at the programmatic level with administrators and program developers. In this way, the evaluation not only responded to stakeholders' emerging concerns, but it also documented the effects of my approach supporting ongoing program development.

Throughout the second year, I monitored and tracked how my approach to the evaluation and the program staff's participation in the evaluation were affected by the emerging needs of the program developers. Halfway through the year, even though I had been aware of the program developers' intentions to market the science curriculum, I was surprised by their announcement that they had begun the process before the evaluation was complete. The program developers approached me for information related to the program's impact that the publisher could use. I responded by shifting my focus to meet their informational needs, even though I had been engaged in completing the data collection and had not yet analyzed the data. I provided the program developers with

interim findings and began preparing the final report. By the time the report was written and submitted, the program developers had already published and marketed the curriculum.

The marketing plan for the curriculum had a different impact on the program staff. The program developers shared their idea for the childcare centre and asked the program staff to begin modeling the curriculum implementation in six months and training new ECE staff to use it in twelve months. This caused a great deal of anxiety within the program staff, and as a result my final interviews with them focused around their emerging concerns related to their new role.

The end-of-the-year interactive reporting session with the ECE staff revealed that the evaluation had successfully responded to their needs. During this meeting, each ECE staff member had the opportunity to share personal outcomes from the evaluation process, and I felt encouraged by the testimonies from many staff members about the value of working together as colleagues throughout the evaluation. Although I was disappointed with the limited influence the evaluation had on the program developers, I gained confidence that the frequent interactions and reflective practice with the staff had resulted, in some cases, in changing the ECE staff's professional practice.

Implications, Meanings, and New Questions

Reflecting upon my experiences during the second year revealed a dilemma related to how organizations respond to pressures and how an evaluation approach keeps pace with emerging needs. My approach reflected an expansion from the focus of the first year which was limited to documenting implementation strategies, to attempting to provide information for ongoing program development. What my approach lacked was

the ability for me to monitor dynamic contextual influences in such a way that I would be able to adjust my design for the evaluation to remain relevant to the stakeholders. Even though my approach engaged the ECE staff in evaluative inquiry similar to that described by Preskill and Torres (1999) by providing opportunities to engage in dialogue, employ reflection, ask questions, and clarify understandings, my approach had not kept pace with the project.

I experienced, first hand, the value of engaging staff in many aspects of the evaluation. I engaged staff by first building a relationship based on trust and then sustaining the close relationship by sharing with individual ECE staff how I had documented their actions; I provided them with opportunities to critique my observations, and finally, I helped them describe why they had implemented the program in this way at this time. The only aspect that I retained control over was the actual data collection. As well as being able to provide the sponsor with a much richer understanding of the variety of ways that ECE staff could internalize the program, I also monitored the emergence of new understandings and the influence of my approach. The evaluation of the ECE program implementation highlighted three important considerations for fostering process use: (a) the evaluator's role in creating a climate supportive of a spirit of inquiry, (b) the evaluator's behaviour in sustaining close relationships with stakeholders to monitor evolving needs, and (c) the evaluator's use of reflective practice as a means of informing subsequent evaluator practice. I re-considered my possible influence as a quasi-member of the childcare centre and how I could go about using an approach informed by complexity thinking to document the impact of my behaviour on the stakeholders' use of the evaluation operating in a dynamic context.

Organizational developers (e.g., Eoyang, 2006; Eoyang & Berkas, 1998) have begun to advocate for the use of complexity frameworks in both thinking about programs and designing their evaluations. Evaluations, they argue, are forces that change the context for organizational behaviour, and they need to be understood as such. All evaluation designs, including processes and activities, are shaped by the conceptual and methodological orientations of the evaluator. Evaluation researchers have yet to study evaluation processes by separating the intended and unintended uses, and this would only be possible if they had access to the evaluator's decisions. Therefore the evaluator's behaviours can only be guided if we understand the possibilities of evaluation use — both unintended and intended. As a result, undertaking an examination of the nature of the interactions among evaluator and organizational members requires an approach that allows all the possibilities of use to be documented. Only through using an approach that studies an evaluation process from multiple data sources will we capture the multiple possibilities that are characteristic of an evaluation operating in a dynamic organization. If examining the effect of my behaviour on the evaluation of a dynamic organization was my goal, then I required not only a new approach allowing access to my decision-making processes but also a framework to help me understand how organizations adapt to pressures.

I lacked a framework in which to understand how I influenced the organizational members and how the ECE staff, administrators, and program developers responded to pressures originating both from within and external to the program. My exploration of the literature related to organizational theory revealed that the field had recently undergone a shift toward acknowledging the dynamic contexts in which modern organizations

operate. When organizations performed a routinized action to complete a simple task, replicability, as the desired outcome, was possible within a stable context, and the humans members of the organization were compliant and behaved as they were trained. The shift was essential because the utility of the traditional view of *organizations-as-machines* was limited to stable conditions and did not take into account many of the human characteristics we now recognize. In the same way, tradition evaluation approaches worked well in stable contexts free of pressures and emergent stakeholder needs. Not surprisingly, dynamic contexts required that organizations and their evaluation processes be responsive and creative in the face of uncertainty.

I began to visualize the organizational members, including me as the evaluator, as inter-connected and nested within the dynamic context and the pressures of emergent needs; I understood that my responses introduced a disturbance to the system. My thoughts returned to the literature related to complex adaptive systems, and I discovered a recent body of literature related to organizational theory informed by insights gleaned from complexity science. Organizational theorists (e.g., Stacey et al., 2000; Wheatley, 1999) apply insights from complexity science to account for the unpredictable and self-organizing behaviours that are apparent in much of modern organizational behaviour. These researchers view organizations as evolving interactions between agents (i.e., individual organizational members) emergent as outcomes from local interactions (i.e., two or more people exchanging information or resources). What is significant and unique to these newer organizational theories is the recognition that the outcomes of the interaction cannot always be predicted. Drawing on complex adaptive system theory, organizations are described as a collection of semi-independent organizational members

who have the freedom to act in unpredictable ways, and whose actions are interconnected such that they generate system-wide patterns (Dooley, 1996, 2006).

Viewing an organization as inter-connected with its dynamic context and organizational members as participating in its creation shifts the focus to the interactions within the organizational context. Understanding how organizations accommodate change has challenged many of our basic assumptions, including our understanding of linear relationships and prediction (Wheatley, 1999). The complexities of the interactions occurring within organizations are best understood as metaphors; as organizational theorists shifted the view of organizations from a traditional organizations-as-machines view, where the context was perceived as stable and the outputs as predictable, they created two new metaphors to describe the distinguishing features of human organizations.

The two metaphors, *organizations-as-brains* and *organizations-as-organisms*, are both informed by complexity science, which highlights the unique capacities of human organizational members to influence their own thinking and behaviour connected and co-evolving with their environment (Morgan, 2006). The organizations-as-brains metaphor illustrates the relationship that humans have with their consciousness. Humans have the ability not only to be conscious of their behavior and of the behaviour of others, but also to learn from past experiences and to anticipate the future impacts of their present behaviour. Consciousness is viewed as integrated with the body, as embodied and emerging from both the organism's actions and operation of the brain. Even though consciousness itself cannot act causally in the world, Edelman (2004) argues that humans can base their actions on their higher-ordered consciousness. As a result, not only are

organizational members influenced by the behaviour of others but they have the ability to consciously learn from their past experiences and influence future behaviour. It is the view of the individual as connected with and learning from past experiences that informs our view of organizations as nested within their environment.

The organizations-as-organisms metaphor represents the relationship that humans have with their environment; it is the ability of the humans to accommodate environmental changes that ensures their survival. Organizational members actively participate with their context in the process of co-adaptation and co-evolution. As the context changes, with each adaptation made by an individual organizational member, there are multiple individual members engaged in simultaneous adaptations. The result is a co-evolutionary process where change occurs continually because the system is characterized by an open cycle of input, internal transformation, output, and feedback with its environment. As a result, not only are organizational members engaged in interactions with their context, but they are interconnected and interacting at multiple levels. It is the view of individual and organizational levels as enfolding in and unfolding from all others that distinguishes a complex view of organizations (Stacey et al., 2000).

Organizational theorists forward *complex responsive processing* as a research method to study the emergence of organizations while participating in the development as an organizational member. Focusing on the outcomes of human interactions, the approach was adopted in 2000 by the Complexity and Management Centre, UK, at the Business School of the University of Hertfordshire. Researchers at the Centre have published a series of books called *Complexity and Emergence in Organizations* (e.g., Stacey, 2001, Stacey et al., 2000). Complex responsive processing involves articulating

and reflecting on one's experiences from the first-person perspective. To do this, researchers document their reasons for their actions during the interactions as well as the organizational members' responses to the researchers' actions and the researchers' subsequent behaviours. By creating such an account, the researchers gain understandings of how their personal past experiences shape interactions, how they interpret organizational members' responses and how their subsequent behaviour is influenced.

The complex responsive processing research method addresses the limitations of traditional methods. A first-person perspective complements the traditional ways of studying organizations from a detached view; however, the first-person perspective introduces a limitation related to generalizability: The account is specific to the particular person, his/her previous experiences, and the context in which the interaction takes place. The emergence of organizations can only be understood from the perspective of the local interaction; they cannot be generalized to another context. The complex reasoning processing research method contributed to my thinking about my approach as the evaluation-use researcher by offering a practical method in which to capture my behaviour, including documenting my decision-making process and the consequences of my behaviour.

To maintain the relevancy of the evaluation to emergent needs and to embody the notion of inter-connected, I required an evaluator approach that embraced greater flexibility, not only in my methodology but in my orientation to all aspects of the evaluation. My orientation to the evaluation was informed by the insights from the newer organizational theories; I developed greater comfort with the unknown. What remains to be explored is how this approach, characterized by greater receptivity to what traditional

evaluators would see as problematic, supports conditions for program and organizational development, and a new approach to study my influence on evaluation use.

Theoretical Foundations of the Study

The principles guiding my approaches as the evaluator and evaluation-use researcher in the present study were informed by my previous decade of experiences as an evaluator and my desire to enhance evaluation use in my work. In an effort to improve my abilities to that end, I explored a wide variety of literature to help me in my quest. The path guiding my approaches was influenced by insights I gained from the fields of organizational theory and educational research informed by complexity science and responsive, participatory, and developmental evaluation approaches.

As I acquired a better understanding of the evaluation context and the stakeholders' roles in it, I began using the responsive evaluation approach to concentrate my focus on increasing evaluation use. Following the East African evaluation, I shifted my attention to monitoring and adjusting my evaluation methods in response to the stakeholders' emerging concerns. The theory from participatory evaluation guided how I went about increasing the use of a mutually interactive process with the stakeholders. I involved them in the first year of the ECE evaluation in many aspects of the evaluation while retaining control of its technical aspects. My role shifted towards being more of a facilitator of learning and focused on creating environments that recognized stakeholders' working constraints. The participatory approach influenced my efforts towards sustaining stakeholder involvement in the evaluation process; and encouraged ownership in the evaluation.

Developmental evaluation guided my approach towards developing a relationship characterized by close engagement with stakeholders. During the second year of the ECE evaluation, as an adjunct member of the organization, I facilitated data-based decision making to inform program development. My understanding of the developmental approach influenced how I went about ensuring all voices impacted on program and organizational decision making.

As the contexts in which I conducted evaluations expanded to include the dynamic organization involved in the ECE curriculum implementation, I sought a framework in which to understand how organizations adapted to changes and how I, as the evaluator, could accommodate emerging stakeholder needs. Insights from organizational theory informed by complexity science guided my view of organizations as inter-connected with the context with non-linear outcomes. Only then was I better able to adjust to those changes. Organizational theory led me to focus on the reciprocal impact my interactions with stakeholders had on decision-making outcomes.

My previous experiences and understandings gleaned from the literature led me to articulate six principles that I subsequently used as a code of conduct to guide my approach as the evaluator of the present 18-month study. The following is a list of the initial principles guiding my evaluator approach.

1. I should establish an environment in which the organizational members would feel encouraged to participate in the evaluation process.
2. I should use a responsive and emergent design that would remain timely and Relevant to meet the organizational members' informational needs.

3. I should seek a comprehensive understanding of the program and the program context.
4. I should recognize the working constraints of the organizational members.
5. I should respect differences in the organizational members' views and behaviour as the evaluation proceeds.
6. I should promote use of the evaluation findings and process beyond accountability.

My approach to study evaluation-use was influenced by insights from the fields of education and organizational theory. The orientation of complexity thinking guided how I went about documenting and analyzing the multidimensional nature of the evaluator role because I participated with others in the co-creation of interaction at both local and organizational levels. Complex responsive processing guided my use of a modified case study method as a way to supplement the detached observer accounts of my interactions traditional to the case study approach with first-person reflective accounts. Informed by complexity science, the fields of education and organizational theory contributed to a new research approach when examining the behaviour of an evaluator while participating in the evaluation process.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I have described my approach for each of my dual roles as an evaluator and an evaluation-use researcher. I described (a) the evolution of my thinking as an evaluator over the last decade, (b) how this evolution has coincided with the growth of theoretical frameworks underpinning evaluation use, (c) the dilemmas related to evaluation practice that have triggered my interest in evaluation use research, and (d) how this interest aligns with current research needs for empirical data. Specifically, I

highlighted the usefulness and the limitations I experienced with traditional evaluation approaches and the changes I made to expand this framework.

The literature traced the transformation of the evaluator role from being an external observer in accountability-focused evaluations to an active participant in developmental evaluations. When I reflected upon my experiences and the literature I discovered that it was the lack of appreciation for the dynamic environment within which the evaluation operated that limited the usefulness of the traditional approaches; that is, the relevancy of the evaluation information for the stakeholders. In my experience, when the context was stable, the traditional approach to evaluation was adequate to meet the pre-determined evaluation outcomes; whereas, when the context was dynamic, I needed to move beyond the traditional design to respond to an environment in flux.

Working collegially with stakeholders in conducting needs assessments, developing evaluation questions, collecting and analyzing data, and preparing reports has increased my understanding of how to enhance evaluation use. It also paved the way for an innovative approach that uses complexity thinking emerging from the field of education as a means to examine the impact my evaluator behaviour has on the evaluation. Complex responsive processing, emerging from the field of organizational theory, now guides my research method when examining my interactions with stakeholders from both the detached-observer viewpoint as well as the first-person perspective. I concluded the chapter with a summary of the theoretical foundations guiding my approaches to the present study. In the following chapter, I outline the methodology used in the study.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

Chapter Overview

This chapter sets out the research methodologies used to conduct the evaluation of an education project and to examine my evaluator role (see Figure 1). Each inquiry was guided by a different set of questions, but both were informed by the data generated throughout the evaluation process. In my role as the evaluator, my actions were informed by my previous evaluation experiences and the literature on responsive, participatory, and developmental evaluation approaches. Congruent with these theories, I focused my attention on involving organizational members in the evaluation process in an effort to build relationships and to gain understandings about the program and its context. This process included listening to the organizational members' experiences, using evaluation logic to guide questions, monitoring informational needs, reviewing data collection strategies, and considering meanings and potential uses of the findings. In my role as the researcher, I conceptualized this evaluation project, specifically my decisions as an evaluator and my interactions with others, as a case study of evaluator behaviour in support of learning more about what it means to engage stakeholders and to promote use of the evaluation during an accountability- and developmental-focused evaluation.

To understand the implications of evaluator behaviour, this thesis examined the interactions of program personnel with the evaluator as well as the evaluator's and organizational members' response to the evaluation. These interactions and responses were captured using multiple data sources and multiple methods over 18 months. Conducting the evaluation over a prolonged period of time ensured that both the

individual and organizational responses were more than temporary accommodations to me and to the demands of a single episode of systematic inquiry. The data were organized in a manner that promoted both a holistic analysis of each interaction and then an iterative analysis of the multiple data sources (i.e., interviews, field notes, and journalled reflections) across the many interactions within the evaluation context.

The chapter is organized into four sections. In the first section, I describe the research context, including background information about the evaluation and the organization, as well as how I gained access to the research site. I introduce the study participants and their organizational roles and outline the activities for each evaluation phase. In the second section I develop the rationale for each of the evaluation methods whereas in the third section, I develop a rationale for the use of a modified qualitative case study for the research. I provide a description of the data collection strategies used to address the three guiding research questions and present strategies used to enhance the reliability of the data collected and in the final section, I outline the analytical procedures used in the present study. I explain the four steps involved in the data analysis: organizing the data, creating memos, developing codes, and revisiting the data. I also explain the emergence of critical episodes from the case analysis. The section concludes with an outline of the strategies to promote the reliability and validity of the analysis and interpretive processes and a description of the limitations of the study's methodology.

Research Context

This research was conducted concurrently with a program evaluation. The program being evaluated was intended to promote cross-disciplinary learning within a research-intensive university. The program was multilayered, consisting of many individual initiatives – each one intended to promote the goals of the program with students, faculty, or community members. The clients for the evaluation were the faculty members who had developed the program and obtained a three-year government grant to implement it. These four individuals had been working with the program for one year at the time I was approached to conduct the evaluation. In early conversations, the program developers and I established two purposes for the evaluation: (a) to demonstrate to government funders that the program was achieving its goals and thus was accountable and (b) to gather information that would support ongoing and future program development. This second purpose was intended to complement the efforts of the organizational members, who were already being encouraged to engage in cycles of action, reflection, and program modification. It is important to note that during the first year of the project's operation, the organization worked with an evaluator (whose contract had not been renewed) prior to my involvement.

The 18-month evaluation project enabled me to document and to examine the interactions among organizational members, also known as *stakeholders*, as well as interactions between organizational members and me. Stakeholders are described as anyone having a vested interest in the evaluation (Patton, 1997). In the present evaluation, although both organizational members and the funders could be considered a stakeholder, I limit my use of stakeholders to refer to the organizational members. I did

this because the funders had already published their guidelines for the evaluation and were not interested in being involved. The interactions with stakeholders all occurred within a dynamic context; this organization was required to continually adapt to pressures and changes both within its own membership and in the larger context of the university. The method was intended to carefully document the multiple interactions related to the evaluation and thus capture the organization and evaluation in action. These data, when analyzed, served the multiple purposes of providing important insights into the development of the program and organization (contextual use) and revealed how my own behaviours may have shaped organizational and program development in this context (research use).

A summary of my dual roles as evaluator and evaluation-use researcher within the same organizational context is provided in Figure 1. I illustrate my dual roles in this study, the questions guiding my approach to each of my roles and the uses I seek from participating in the evaluation (i.e., contextual use) and studying my behaviours (i.e., research use). At the same time as I am undertaking dual roles, I integrate reflective processes in several ways to inform my initial evaluator approach, my approach during the evaluation, and my behaviour post-evaluation.

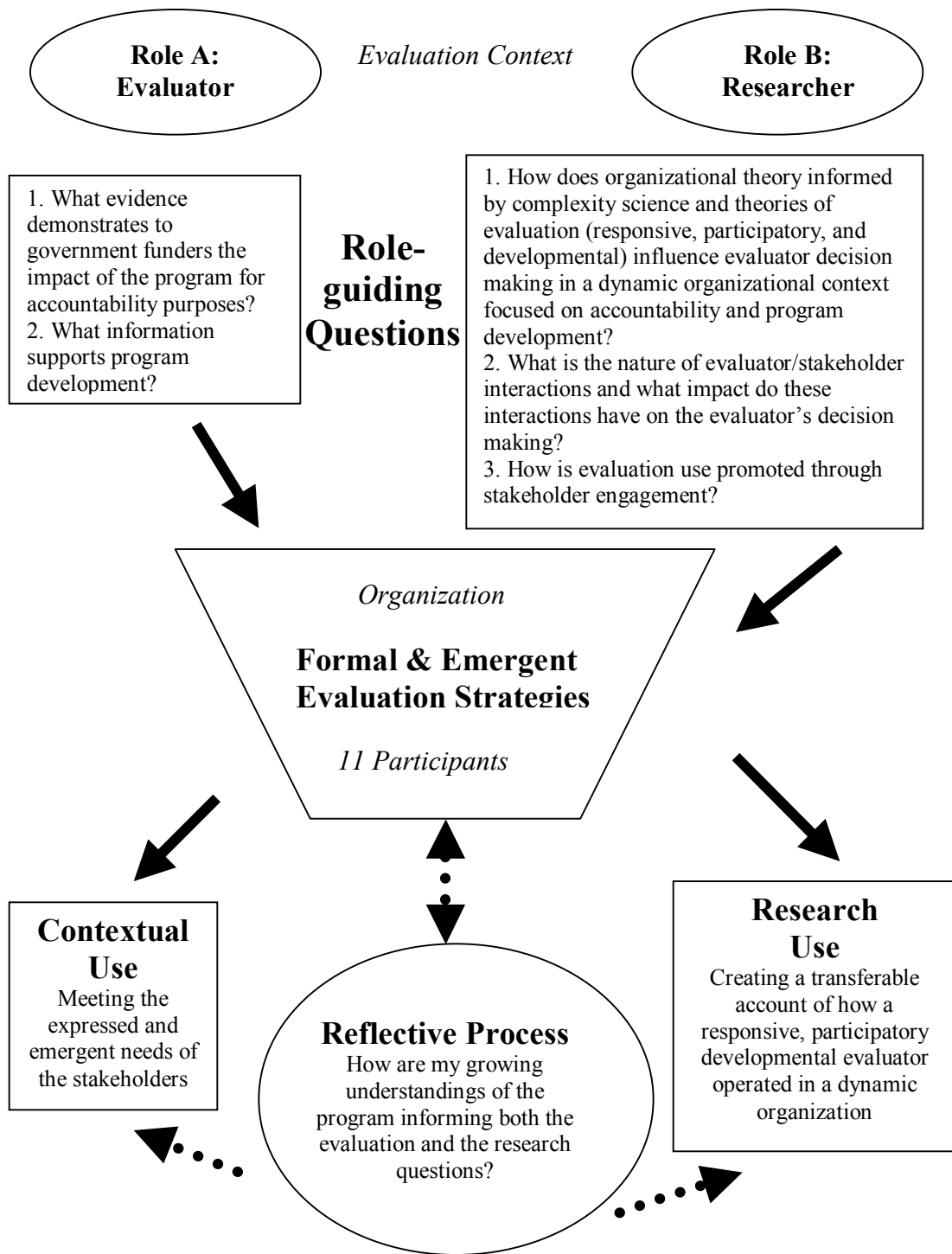


Figure 1. Summary of my Dual Roles as Evaluator and Evaluation-Use Researcher

Site Access and Ethical Considerations

The role of evaluator facilitated my access to the site and provided the opportunity for the case study research that is the focus for this thesis. A proposal for this research was submitted and cleared by the university's General Ethical Review Board and permission from organizational members was granted. Participation in the study was voluntary and letters of information and letters of consent were provided; where letters of consent were not signed, data involving those individuals were not included in the study (see Appendix A and B for letters of information and consent).

Study Participants

In total, 11 organizational members were involved during the evaluation project, although this study focuses on my interactions with eight members (explained below). Each participant was identifiable by one of four organizational roles: program developer, project manager, research associate, or administrative assistant (see Table 1). The four developers were university faculty members whose primary responsibilities included conceptualizing the program and overseeing its operation, being the final authorities in decision making, presenting evidence of program impact and accountability to the external funders, and networking in support of the program goals within the university community and beyond.

There were four program developers and the frequency of interactions was unique for each. Jackie (all names are pseudonyms) was the most involved developer, and as such, it was important that she and I be in contact on a regular basis throughout the evaluation; we were in contact two or more times a month, at least once in person and once via email. Camilla increased her involvement in the second year of the program (the

beginning of the present evaluation); this allowed me to interact with her once or twice a month. Maureen decreased her involvement in the second year of the project due to other faculty responsibilities; this change caused my contacts with her to be less regular and frequent than those with Jackie and Camilla. Shannon, while still a member of the program development team, had distanced herself from ongoing operations before my involvement began because of a change of location; my interactions with her were limited to two interviews during the evaluation and several email exchanges. Whereas Jackie, Camilla, and Maureen were present for the majority of the six large group interviews, Shannon only participated once by phone. These four program developers all provided background about the organization's history, details about external funding requirements, and ongoing information about the greater university context.

At the beginning of the evaluation, the two project managers (Tanya and Amy) were full-time organizational members contracted for the duration of the program funding. Their primary responsibility was the day-to-day operation of the project. Their roles since the program inception (August 2005) included providing leadership to the research associates, communicating with the program developers, and maintaining records of operations. At first they shared these responsibilities, but five months into the evaluation, Tanya assumed all the responsibilities as Amy moved on to a new job directly related to her interests. Early in the evaluation process, it was important for me to have frequent contact with both of the managers to gain an understanding of the organization and how it had functioned during the previous year. Even though I maintained contact with Tanya throughout the evaluation, our contact during the first half of the evaluation

was more frequent; during this time we exchanged at least one email a week and I usually conducted an interview per month with her.

The two research associates (Katie and Courtney) were part-time organizational members contracted for the duration of the project funding. Their primary responsibility was designing and conducting the individual project initiatives, including providing expertise to the project initiatives, communicating with the project managers, and conducting evaluations of the individual initiatives. Although Katie provided me with some background information prior to her departure in July 2006, I had minimal contact with her and my interactions with her are not included in the present analysis. Instead, I interacted more frequently with her replacement, a new research associate (Anita) who joined the organization in October 2006. Anita assumed Katie's responsibilities as well as undertaking the development and implementation of a clinical initiative with learners. The research associate who continued throughout the evaluation (Courtney) assumed more responsibility following the departure of Amy as the project manager. Courtney's role as a full-time employee focused more on developing and implementing education initiatives than their evaluation, I had more frequent contact with her in her new role. In the first year of the evaluation, the research associates were primarily a source of contextual information, and I interacted infrequently with them; however, over time their role in developing the evaluation tools increased, and we connected at least twice a month either through email or in person.

The two administrative assistants (Nadia and Louise) were engaged full time in the organization for the duration of the project. Their primary responsibility was logistical, which included answering the phones, handling organizational emails, and

scheduling meetings. In addition, they managed the files and transcribed data for the organization. My interactions with them were limited to logistics and as a result their interactions are not included in the analysis. The shifts in organizational roles and membership are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Study Participants: Their organizational roles, Membership and Responsibilities.

Organizational Role	Name	Organizational Membership History	Responsibility
Program Developers	Jackie	Ongoing since proposal stage	FS
	Maureen	Ongoing since proposal stage but decreased as of June 2006	FS
	Shannon	Ongoing since proposal stage but decreased due to change of location in June 2006	FS
	Camilla	Ongoing since June 2006	FS
Project Managers	Tanya	Ongoing since project inception	FT
	Amy	Project inception to August 2006	FT
Research Associates	Katie ^a	September 2005-July 2006	PT
	Courtney	Ongoing since September 2005 Change in responsibilities August 2006 to Education Coordinator	PT FT
	Anita	Ongoing since October 2006	PT
Administrative Assistants	Nadia ^a	June 2005-November 2006	FT
	Lauren ^a	Ongoing since December 2006	FT

Note. Proposal stage Fall 2004, Project inception April 2005, Present evaluation began April 2006.

FS=faculty supervisory, FT= full time, PT= part time.

^a Data from this participant is not included in the present analysis.

Phases of the Evaluation

The present study was initiated at the beginning of the second year of project operation (April 2006) was completed halfway through the third year of operation (September 2007). The sequence of the 18-month evaluation included four phases (see Table 2). Even though the stages of interpreting may be integrated with ongoing reporting in some evaluation approaches, generally similar trajectories can be assumed to include a planning stage, conducting stage, interpreting stage and reporting stage in all evaluation

stages. In the same way I assigned four phases to the present evaluation process as a means of grouping together interactions with similar purposes during data collection. I recognize that my use of phase is different from Stake’s (2004a) whereby he uses phases in his conception of Standards-Based Evaluation as a planning tool for an evaluation that does not evolve, he says: “Thinking of phases here reinforces the idea that most evaluators hope the factors will remain largely unchanged during the study” (p. 62). My use of *phase* assumes that the evaluation adapted and responded to the clients’ needs and was an iterative process.

Table 2. Evaluation Phases: Timing and Activities.

Phase (Months)	Main Activities	Participants in the Activities
Focusing the Evaluation (April 2006 - August)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gain site access and introductions • Seek contextual understandings • Focus and design the project evaluation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jackie, Amy • All organizational members • All organizational members
Conducting the Evaluation (September - January 2007)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop evaluation tools • Conduct evaluation activities • Review and interpret the evaluation findings • Apply findings to inform individual initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All organizational members • All organizational members • All organizational members
Reporting the Evaluation (February - April)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiate draft of evaluation report • Review evaluation report • Discuss usefulness of the evaluation • Discuss dissemination of evaluation findings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jackie, Tanya • All organizational members • All organizational members • All organizational members
Refocusing the Evaluation (May - September)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the evaluation’s findings and processes • Discuss purpose of year two evaluation • Initiate development of evaluation tools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All organizational members • All organizational members • All organizational members

The first phase, *focusing the evaluation* (April to August 2006), was characterized by introductory interactions where I sought to gain an understanding of the context. At the same time, I conducted a needs assessment in collaboration with the organizational members to generate an initial evaluation design. The second phase, *conducting the evaluation* (September 2006 to January 2007), emphasized carrying out the evaluation activities. At this time, the evaluation findings were reviewed collaboratively with organizational members and used to inform project decisions. The third phase, *reporting the evaluation* (February to April 2007), featured the planning and the reviewing of the interim report for external accountability. In addition, the dissemination plan was developed to include audiences for the results beyond the funders and the organizational members. During the final phase, *refocusing the evaluation* (May to September 2007), the evaluation processes and findings from the first year were reviewed and the following year's evaluation focus was discussed. Throughout the phases of the evaluation process, I discussed my strategies and emerging findings with my supervisor. These discussions were in turn, used to inform my subsequent decisions.

Rationale for the Evaluation Methods

I conducted the present study using multiple data sources: individual interviews (23); small group interviews (18); large group interviews (6); document reviews (13); and logs of emails, phone calls, and informal in-person exchanges (306). In addition, I kept field notes related to any formal or informal interactions with organizational members and wrote reflections on all of those interactions in a research journal. The longitudinal nature of this study (18 months) allowed me to document and analyze interactions as they

occurred during the evaluation phases. The rationale and procedures for each method of data collection are discussed in the following section.

Interviews

The use of interviews is a well-documented means for gaining access to how people view their world and how that view defines their perceptions of the life experiences within it (Merriam, 1998; Mertens, 2005). Patton (2002) noted the unique contribution of interviews to qualitative studies: “We interview people to find out from them those things we cannot directly observe” (p. 340). In the present study, interviews were conducted as a way to gather multiple perspectives of the program and the organization. These interviews captured the experiences and monitored the perspectives of organizational members over time. The study’s three types of interviews were individual, small group (two or three participants), and large group (more than three participants). The individual interviews with the evaluator in a confidential setting provided a safe environment where each participant could share her personal ideas. The small group interviews provided an opportunity for individuals to talk about their ideas with one another and to learn from their colleagues. The large group interviews provided the organizational members an opportunity to meet as a full group and to discuss a specific topic across all the organizational roles.

Organizational members gave me feedback about the usefulness of the three types of interviews. One member reported the usefulness of the small group interviews for reducing participants’ anxieties (Doc.14), whereas another member described the large group setting as useful for building a trusting relationship with other organizational members (Doc.15). Trust was reported to be a necessary precursor to exchanging ideas

(Doc.16). Common to all the organizational members was the stated belief that the large group setting increased communication within the organization. My focus during all of those interviews was to build a relationship of trust that would encourage individuals to share their experiences, opinions, and feelings.

Individual and Small Group Interviews

The individual and small group interviews were all conducted during a 45-60 minute period using a *semi-structured* format, also known as a *standardized open-ended interview* format that allowed the interviewer flexibility within the interview environment (Patton, 2002). This interview approach is characterized by a pre-established interview guide outlining a set number of questions to be asked across interviews and by the inclusion of unstructured time to allow both the researcher and the participant(s) to be responsive to the situation (Merriam, 1998; Patton, 2002). Patton (1997) noted that the ultimate responsibility rested with the interviewer to create an environment conducive to eliciting participants' perspectives. He also argued that the researcher is largely responsible for the quality of information obtained during an interview (Patton, 2002).

In essence, the quality of the information gleaned in an interview is related to the interviewing skills of the interviewer and on the interview preparation. Preparing my interview guide ahead of time ensured three features: clarity in the wording of the questions, consistency between the interviews, and effective use of interview time. The open-endedness of the interview approach provided an opportunity for me to respond to participants' comments and to fully examine all aspects of the participants' understanding of the evaluation. I used the interview guide primarily at the beginning of the interview to ensure that each interview was focused on exploring the same issues across

organizational members (see Appendix C, D, E for an example of the interview guides I used for individual, small group, and large group interviews).

The frequency and focus of the different types of interviews depended on my informational needs as the evaluator. At the beginning of the evaluation, the interview guide questions were focused on gaining an understanding of the background of the organization and the history of the program whereas, by the end, the questions were focused on how we might maximize the usefulness of the evaluation and the views of the evaluator. Organizational members were invited at the beginning of the evaluation (during the Focusing the Evaluation phase, April - June 2006) to participate in small group interviews, established by organizational role (program developers, project managers, and research associates). The purpose of grouping members in this way was to hear them talk about their responsibilities within the organization. I believed that providing individuals with an opportunity to describe – to an outsider and to one another – what it is they do might trigger subsequent reflections on their work. The grouping also allowed me to acquire an initial understanding of the responsibilities and boundaries embedded in the roles.

As the evaluation progressed, the interviews were scheduled when issues related to evaluation or organizational change arose. These interviews provided further opportunities for organizational members to explore their thoughts and feelings, and for me to learn more about the organization's history and how organizational members tended to interact. The interviews also afforded me opportunities to triangulate the different sources of data and to monitor shifts in perspectives and relationships among organizational members. One such shift occurred in the middle of the first phase

(Focusing the Evaluation) during the summer 2006 when the number of project managers was reduced from two to one, which resulted in an increased number of interviews with the departing project manager (Amy) and with those that were assuming her roles (Tanya and to some extent Courtney).

Large Group Interviews

In comparison to the individual and small group interviews, large group interviews (100-130 minutes in length) were conducted less frequently and had a different purpose in the study. My large group interviews used an approach called *interactive group interviewing and dialogues* (Patton, 2002). This approach is characterized by the involvement of the organizational members in an interactive and cooperative manner. To encourage the contributions of all organizational members to the dialogue, I facilitated a discussion, at the beginning of the first large group interview, about how we, as a group, could maximize the efficacy of our interactions. Emerging from the conversation was a consensus that I would send out an agenda beforehand and that everyone should be given opportunities to talk and to have their opinions heard albeit as concisely as possible. The organizational members suggested that I should intervene if behaviour occurred that did not follow the agreement; for example, if someone was dominating the conversation.

My choice of the interactive interviewing and dialogue approach rather than a focus group approach (Krueger & Casey, 2000) was intended to provide a less formalized venue for sharing evaluation findings and making decisions. Focus groups are characterized by the structured facilitation by a moderator of individual perspectives while following a prepared protocol whereas the aim of the large group interviews was to

be less structured. As the facilitator, I did not set the agenda of the large group interviews in isolation; instead, each agenda was negotiated with the project manager (Tanya) and the principal investigator (Jackie) and then circulated to all the organizational members. The large group interviews were used to facilitate ongoing communication about the project evaluation.

Six large group interviews were conducted, approximately one every three months and each was planned to address a planned topic. Interestingly, a new priority emerged during each large group interview. The first large group interview (July 2006) focused on creating an opportunity for participants to share their individual perspectives; this discussion led to the development of an organizational vision for the upcoming project evaluation. The second large group interview (November 2006) focused on creating an opportunity to collaboratively interpret the initial evaluation data and it stimulated a discussion about how the evaluation findings could be used to inform organizational decisions. The third large group interview (February 2007) focused on planning the interim evaluation report and it led to a discussion about how the evaluation will meet the accountability requirements of the funders. The fourth large group interview (April 2007) focused on reviewing the first draft of the evaluation report, which led to a discussion about the organizational vision for the future. The fifth large group interview (May 2007) focused on revisiting the usefulness of the evaluation findings and that stimulated a discussion about the evaluation focus for the final year. The last large group interview (September 2007) focused on interpreting data generated by the second-year project evaluation activities, which led to a discussion about the usefulness of the evaluation process for the participants. The large group interviews were useful to create

opportunities to discuss planned agenda items as well as to identify and stimulate discussions issues relevant to the emerging needs of the organization. Table 3 summarizes the primary agenda of each large group interview (what was planned) and the priorities that arose during discussions (what emerged).

Table 3. Summary of Planned and Emergent Foci of the Large Group Interviews.

Date	Primary Agenda (Planned)	Emergent Priorities
July 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To share individual perspectives about previous evaluation findings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To develop an organizational vision for the project.
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To interpret the data generated by the initial project evaluation activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To confer about how the evaluation findings could be used to inform organizational decisions.
February 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To discuss the plan for the interim evaluation report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To build credibility about satisfying the accountability needs of the funders
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To review the first draft of the evaluation report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To articulate the organizational vision
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To revisit the usefulness of the evaluation to inform organizational decisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To negotiate the second-year evaluation focus
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To examine the data generated by the second-year project evaluation activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To reflect upon usefulness of evaluation process

Ensuring Confidentiality and Accuracy in the Interview Data

I incorporated common strategies at the beginning, during, and after the interviews to ensure confidentiality for the participants, accuracy in the data, and depth of my understanding of their experiences. First, to ensure confidentiality, I conducted all interviews in a setting where it was impossible for others to overhear what was being discussed. As well, I requested that our conversations during the interview remain confidential to those participating. To promote accuracy in the data and to promote depth

of my understanding, at the beginning of each individual and small group interview, I reviewed my field notes with the participants about what had been discussed in the previous interview and invited any corrections or clarifications. Rather than taking this time during the large group interviews, the following day I distributed an email that summarized the discussion, decisions, and next steps and invited feedback.

During the interviews, in an effort to document all the occurrences during each interaction, I integrated a strategy encouraged by Merriam (1998) to limit my responses to probing questions. I focused on paying attention to the placement and duration of silences. At the end of each interview, I invited participants to add additional comments, leading them with the question: “Is there anything else you wanted to mention?” In so doing, I created space during the interview for additional comments and questions outside the scope of the interview.

With the permission of all participants I taped interviews to ensure that I could capture the participants’ exact words. After the interviews were completed, the audiotapes were transcribed verbatim. My use of tape recording was guided by the work of Lofland (1971): when each of the transcriptions was completed, I compared them to the audiotape to check for accuracy and made the few corrections necessary. To ensure confidentiality, I used pseudonyms in the transcriptions. Although interviews were the main source of data in the present study, they were complemented by my use of detailed field notes.

Field Notes

The use of field notes is well established by qualitative researchers (e.g., Merriam, 1998; Patton, 2002) to serve as a written account of observations. The usefulness of

complete field notes to inform the researcher's interpretations of the observation is forwarded by Lofland (1971) in his description of field notes as "the most important determinant of later bringing off a qualitative analysis. Field notes provide the observer's *raison d'être*. If . . . not doing them, [the observer] might as well not be in the setting" (italics in original, p. 102). In the present study, I used field notes as a way to document my observations that were written following each formal and informal interaction throughout the 18-month period of the evaluation. These field notes included not only a description of the physical setting but also the social environment created by the way the people interacted and when warranted the field note captured my impressions of the interactions. In this way, my field notes followed the tradition described by researchers (e.g., Merriam, 1998; Patton, 2002).

I began my recording of field notes immediately following the initial meeting in April 2006 including Jackie, one of the principal investigators and Amy, one of the project managers and my final field note was written following the sixth large group meeting in September 2007. I initially organized my field notes in chronological order and included not only my accounts of a formal interview interaction (see Appendix F for an example) but also descriptions of the informal interactions that occurred in person (see Appendix G for an example), on the phone (see Appendix H for an example), and via email (see Appendix I for an example).

I found field notes to be useful to focus my attention on *noteworthy events*. I defined noteworthy events as anything (e.g., an event, a verbal exchange) that occurred that I thought had the potential to contribute to my understanding of someone or something (see Appendix J for an example). In particular, I paid attention to unexpected

comments or behaviours during an interaction. Writing the field notes immediately following an interaction contributed to my understanding of what had occurred during the interaction, and it helped me to engage in a preliminary data analysis.

After reading advice about taking field notes (Gay & Airasian, 2003; Merriam, 1998; Patton, 2002; Stacey & Griffith, 2005), I developed a protocol that guided my subsequent organization for data collection. The protocol included answering a series of seven questions about each interaction:

1. Who is involved in the interaction? What roles and mannerisms are evident from their interactions? What is going on during the interaction?
2. What is the physical setting? What is the atmosphere/tone of the interaction?
3. What is the human social environment? How did people arrange themselves? How did the interaction begin and conclude? What was the preparation for the interaction? What follow-up is necessary after the interaction?
4. What seemed to be noteworthy about this interaction? What documents were given and received?
5. What role did I play in this interaction? How did I feel? How do I think others saw me?
6. What insights can I gain from this interaction about a person or notion?

Answers to these questions, in addition to any notes taken during fieldwork, were typed directly after each interaction. Although field notes were the main source of descriptive data in the evaluation, they were complemented by my use of a reflective journal, which will be described in detail later.

Methods of Formal and Informal Data Collection Summary

The data generated by the evaluation process included multiple sources of data from multiple perspectives. Table 4 enumerates the points of data collection by presenting the number of contacts per month by method of data collection.

Table 4. Summary of Monthly Data Collection Points for the Evaluation.

Evaluation Phase	Month	Individual Interviews	Small Group Interviews	Large Group Interviews	Email, phone, informal in-person	Total # of Contacts
Focusing the Evaluation	April 2006	-	-	-	7	7
	May	-	5	-	6	11
	June	3	2	-	4	9
	July	5	-	1	8	14
	August	4	1	-	2	7
Conducting the Evaluation	September	2	-	-	24	26
	October	4	-	-	9	13
	November	1	1	1	17	20
	December	1	1	-	12	14
	January 2007	1	-	-	21	22
Reporting the Evaluation	February	-	-	1	9	10
	March	1	1	-	17	19
	April	-	1	1	32	34
Reviewing the Evaluation	May	-	3	1	42	46
	June	-	-	-	39	39
	July	1	3	-	7	11
	August	-	-	-	10	10
	September	-	-	1	40	41
	Total	23	18	6	306	353

Note. The counting of sources of data was once per interaction; i.e., small and large group interviews were only counted once per group, and an email sent to multiple recipients was only counted as one interaction.

The types of interviews used varied across the phases of the evaluation. Individual interviews were used with the greatest frequency during the first two phases (Focusing the Evaluation and Conducting the Evaluation), whereas small group interviews were used with the greatest frequency during the last phase (Reviewing the Evaluation). Large

group interviews occurred consistently during the evaluation, and the frequency of the email, phone, and informal in-person interactions increased from the second phase (Conducting the Evaluation) onwards.

Data were summarized by organizational role either as in-person interactions or by phone or email (see Table 5). The frequency of in-person interactions remained consistent throughout the evaluation, while an increase in the use of the email and phone interactions occurred during the twelfth month (during the third phase, Reporting the Evaluation). A marked increase occurred in the fourteenth month (during the final phase, Reviewing the Evaluation) with the research associates due to their increased involvement in project evaluation activities.

Table 5. Summary of Data Collection Points for each Organizational Role.

Phase	Month	Program Developers		Project Managers		Research Associates	
		Em/P ^a	In-person	Em/P ^a	In- person	Em/P ^a	In-person
Focusing the Evaluation	April 2006	-	-	7	-	-	-
	May	-	3	3	3	1	2
	June	-	2	2	3	2	-
	July	2	3	4	2	2	2
	August	2	3	-	2	-	-
Conducting the Evaluation	September	3	1	9	1	2	-
	October	7	1	2	1	3	1
	November	3	-	10	2	2	2
	December	3	1	3	-	6	1
	January 2007	5	-	10	1	5	-
Reporting the Evaluation	February	5	4	-	1	9	1
	March	-	-	7	1	10	1
	April	9	2	14	2	9	1
Reviewing the Evaluation	May	8	1	4	1	28	4
	June	4	-	7	-	26	-
	July	5	2	1	1	-	2
	August	3	-	3	-	5	-
	September	10	1	2	1	30	1
	Total	69	24	88	22	140	18

Note. In-person and emailed interactions were counted once per interaction; i.e., if an informal chat or email involved more than one person within a role, it was only counted once.

^aEm/P= email and phone interactions

Because only limited interactions occurred with the administrative assistants (only 11 email and phone contacts and 9 in-person interactions throughout the study, focused on organizing logistics), these interactions were excluded from Table 5.

Reflective Journal

Reflection helps individuals make sense of experiences (Kolb, 1984; Schön, 1983). John Dewey (1910/1933) identified the ability to make connections between aspects of an experience with the process of personal reflection. He advocated using experience (both active and passive) to affect behaviour by promoting reflection to increase our awareness between actions and the possible consequences. Dewey viewed reflection as involving “(a) a state of doubt, hesitation, perplexity, mental difficulty, in which thinking originates, and (b) an act of searching, hunting, inquiring, to find material that will resolve the doubt, [and] settle and dispose of perplexity” (p. 9). Engaging in reflection stimulates and supports the cognitive processes that allow one to move from a state of confusion to a state where one has the freedom to consider all possibilities. As a means of examining possibilities, reflection promotes the iterative cognitive process of nurturing, critiquing, and refining emergent understandings.

During the present evaluation, keeping a reflective journal contributed to informing my subsequent approach and understanding my evaluator behaviour. Engaging in the process of writing the journal following each interaction required me to take the time to review my field notes and to think about my decisions. My reflective process included thinking and documenting my actions before, during and after the interaction; for example, I captured my preparation, my behaviour, and my thoughts regarding the

potential implications of the interaction on my subsequent approach. The length of each reflective journal entry depended upon the type of interaction; I wrote a detailed reflective journal entry for each formal interaction whereas I wrote a single entry with less detail for each day I informally (i.e., email, phone, in-person) interacted with stakeholders. In the latter case, the reflective journal usually included multiple informal interactions. At no time were my reflections shared with organizational members. Although engaging in reflection about field notes has been found to increase the usefulness of these notes (Miles & Huberman, 1994), engaging in reflection served to draw my attention to all aspects of the interaction during the study. In this way, the reflective journal enhanced my understandings of the interaction.

The intertwined processes of reflection and learning became apparent during both the evaluation and during the analyses. Wood Daudelin (2000) has summarized this link: “Reflection is the process of stepping back from an experience to ponder, carefully and persistently, its meaning to the self through the development of inferences; learning is the creation of meaning from past or current events that serves as a guide for future behaviour” (p. 301). Even though the reflective process is not assumed by Wood Daudelin to be a linear process, I highlight my use of reflection as a means to capture the iterative nature of my reflection and learning processes. It is my belief that the iterative processes allowed deeper understandings to emerge over time. In the present study, engaging in reflection during the evaluation informed my future behaviours; more importantly revisiting my journal entries during the analysis allowed me to examine the impact of my decisions on subsequent interactions. Without the reflective journal, these understandings would not have been accessible sources of data.

The reflective journal recorded my stream of consciousness, which otherwise could not be accessed. As a first person experience, consciousness embodies the person, meaning it is “private – it is tied to an individual’s body and brain and to the history of that individual’s environmental interactions” (Edelman, 2004, p. 143). Edelman goes on to suggest that conscious processes are required for most kinds of learning. In the present study, engaging in the thinking and writing process for my reflective journal contributed to stimulating my conscious processes. The journal captured my perspective and the consequences of my decisions and behaviours as an evaluator; it was a means of making my consciousness accessible as a source of data.

Throughout the evaluation, I used the reflective journal as a means to document, revisit my actions and decisions, and make sense of my interactions with stakeholders. To do this my reflective journal writing adapted the questioning technique forwarded by Wood Daudelin (2000) to increase the learning power of reflection. My writing generally followed her four stages of questions that guide reflective practice. The first stage asks the questions: “What occurred?” In my study, this question was useful not only to document a description of the interaction including what I saw, thought and felt but also to articulate the issue that was to be explored during the remaining three stages. The second stage asks the questions: “Why did it [the interaction] happen? Why did I feel that way?” These questions inspired my search for possible explanations about the interaction and my behaviour. The third stage asks the questions: “How did it [the interaction] happen? How was this interaction different from what I’ve experienced before?” The final stage asks the question: “What are the implications of the interaction for the future?” This question motivated my search for further evidence to support my explanation; the

evidence would either accumulate or I would reexamine my explanation and identify another possible explanation. The questions guided my thinking even though I didn't always answer each of them directly in my journal entries (see Appendix K for an example of a journal entry).

Engaging in a reflective process helped me to pay attention to my present experiences and to give credence to my past experiences. I became more aware of my emerging notions and understandings. According to organizational theorists Stacey and Griffin (2005), how past experiences shape an interaction can be better understood with the integration of a reflective component related to our experiences. Since what I do and what the organization does is inseparable from who I am and who the organization is, a meaningful journal had the potential to inform my interactions as I participated simultaneously as an individual and as a member of the organization. A similar notion was forwarded by Bloor and Wood (2006) in their work on *reflexivity*, which they defined as “an awareness of the self in the situation of action and of the role of the self in constructing that situation (p.145). Each of my reflections focused on trying to make sense of how my past experiences shaped my behaviours during the interaction, thus influencing my future decisions. Engaging and documenting my reflective process served a critical function in the present thesis focused on creating a transferable account of how a responsive, participatory, and developmental evaluator operated in a dynamic organization.

Along with making sense of my experiences, the journal captured my reflections about the noteworthy events that I had described in the field notes. These reflections supplemented my field notes and served to capture my impression of the noteworthy

event itself, the interactions that might have occurred prior to it, and the potential consequences that may follow. Although my reflective journal provided the main source of first person data in the present study, it was complemented by a document review.

Document Review

Examining the organization's documents helped me to gain understandings about the evaluation context. McMillan and Schumacher (2005) suggested that reviewing documents that have captured people's experiences, knowledge, action, and beliefs is the most useful way to gain understandings of context. In the present study, the document review supplemented the contextual information I gleaned from interviews and field notes.

The documents I reviewed were specific to the evaluation, with the greater part of them having been produced by the organization. Several documents (i.e., the proposal and newsletters) were recommended and sent to me by one of the project managers. Access to the documents was negotiated at the beginning of the evaluation, and the majority was available in the public domain (on the organization's website), including the initial project proposal, annual report year 1, annual report year 2, report summaries of three individual initiative evaluations, and five public communications (newsletters and emails). Additional documents were a framework that the organization received from the funding agency to guide reporting and the annual evaluation report that I produced. The documents were useful because they revealed the project's complexity and context, and the organization's methods of external communication.

A primary concern associated with a document analysis is ascertaining the authenticity and nature of the documents. To make a decision about whether or not to use

a document, a researcher must understand the document's original intention and its intended audience (Merriam, 1998). In the present study, I served as the judge in deciding whether a source was accurate and whether the information was relevant for the research questions. I reviewed 12 documents, paying particular attention to the documents that triangulated contextual information; for example, the initial project funding proposal served as an additional source of information about the background of the project. I then used this information to inform questions in subsequent interviews. The actual documents names are not included in this thesis in order to ensure the organization's confidentiality.

The Qualitative Case Study as a Research Methodology

The present study uses a qualitative case study methodology of the evaluation process to examine the behaviour of the evaluator. Case study methodology is useful because it creates a boundary around the study that controls, defines the study parameters, and provides rich description about the evaluation context. Indeed, as a powerful means of exploring the *bounded system* created by the evaluation, the case study documents an intensive, holistic description of the research context and its processes over time (e.g., Creswell & Maietta, 2002; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Stake, 1995). Case studies have become not only an accepted but an increasingly powerful method to produce context-dependent knowledge (Flyvbjerg, 2004)

In this study, limiting the context and time was necessary so that, as the evaluation use researcher, I could gain a deep and rich understanding of the complexity of the evaluation case and its context as defined by the boundary (Simons, 1996). Stake (2005) noted that “[evaluation use] cannot be understood in the absence of a detailed understanding of context” (p. 238). The holistic yet context-rich descriptions generated

by the case study in this study make an important contribution to evaluation research.

The case study methodology is well suited to draw attention to the interactions and at the same time to provide a holistic view of the evaluation and the dynamic organization as it unfolds within its naturalistic setting (Hammersley, 2004; Stake, 2005). Multiple data sources rich in description promote a deep understanding of the nature of the interactions both among organizational members and between organizational members and the evaluator. These interactions among organizational members were assessed through direct observations during small and large group interviews, and the organizational members' explanations about their actions and thought processes during these interactions were sought during individual interviews. The interactions between organizational members and me, the evaluator, were captured through both formal (i.e., individual, small, and large group interviews) and informal (i.e., email, phone, and informal in-person) interactions. Explanations about my actions and thought processes were documented in my reflective journal (discussed in the following section). The case study methodology limited the examination of the interactions to those involved within the evaluation process and context yet contributed to calls from evaluation researchers for greater attention to context in evaluation studies (King, 2003)

The present study used interviews, field notes, and a document review consistent with the case study methodology (Patton, 2002; Stake 1995). The use of multiple data collection methods allows the case study methodology to lend "itself to multiple lenses over time" (Anderson, Crabtree, Steele, & McDaniel, 2005, p. 676). Interviews afford an excellent means of accessing the perspectives of participants from all levels of the organization about the same study phenomena; field notes document the researcher

observations and serve as a fundamental data base of contextual information for case studies (Patton, 2002; Stake 1995); documents provide a particularly good source of descriptive contextual data because the data “can ground an investigation in the context of the problem being investigated” (Merriam, 1998, p. 126). Traditional case study methodology limited the case description to the non-participatory observations of the context by the researcher (Goode & Hatt, 1952; Stake, 1988). In the present study, however, my dual roles as the responsive, participatory, and developmental evaluator and as the researcher necessitate a modification to the traditional approach with the inclusion of the reflective journal.

Modifying the Traditional Qualitative Case Study

In the present study, I modified the approach taken in traditional case study research. Rather than the distanced observer, the participatory nature of my evaluator role allowed an *insider* perspective of the case to supplement the traditional observations and case descriptions. As a participating member of the organization, I was part of shaping how events within this context unfolded. As a result, it was essential that I track my participation and contributions. To do this, it was important to document my actions and decisions during the interactions, in addition to capturing my influence on subsequent evaluator behaviours.

Throughout the evaluation, I used my reflective journal as a means of recording and revisiting my actions and decisions. In the previous section related to the evaluation methods and the reflective journal, I described my process of using my entries as a way to capture my decisions. In the following section I describe how I revisited the entries in my reflective journal post-evaluation and added to them in an effort to inform my

research questions. These research uses (see Figure 1) included understanding (a) how the program was being conceptualized, (b) how the program decisions were being made, (c) how the usefulness of the evaluation was being conceptualized, (d) how the evaluation decisions were being made, and (e) how the evaluator role was being conceptualized. The use of the reflective journal post-evaluation was important to inform my research uses whereas the use of the reflective journal during the evaluation was important to inform contextual uses and to document my decision process.

My research design brings into question the traditional notion of a distanced researcher stance in the case study approach. Cousins and Shulha (2006) argue there is a need for a balanced perspective between the evaluator and participants in the analysis. They suggest that case studies and reflections can be used to complement the more conventional evaluation approaches: “Valuing epistemological diversity implies that reflective narratives or case analyses are legitimized ways of knowing. Such choices can provide rich and deep understanding of highly complex phenomenon, such as the use of evaluation” (p. 245). I argue that the use of a reflective journal in the present study made a critical contribution to understanding the behaviour of the evaluator operating in a dynamic organization.

In this study, I used traditional case study methods to capture my observations (in field notes), the perspectives of the organizational members (in interviews), and the context (in documents). I augmented the methodology with my reflective journal to document my perspective and the contributions of my participatory role. In a recent statement, Stake acknowledged the usefulness of including researcher reflections in the case study approach (Stake, 2007, personal communication). My participatory role in the

present case study, and my need to make explicit my decisions during the evaluation provided the impetus to expand the traditional case study methodology.

To summarize, this study's research design used a modification of the traditional case study methodology to incorporate my reflections of the case. In this study, the concern for researcher bias, typically addressed through concerted efforts to make distanced and unbiased observations, was replaced with a systematic and sustained regime of capturing the assumptions and behaviours I used to implement this evaluation. Through this method, I generated data that were analyzed to provide insights into the evaluator behaviours that were conducive to organizational and program development.

Data Collection Strategies

This section begins with a review of the three research questions guiding the present case study and a description of the data generated to inform each of them.

1. How does organizational theory as informed by complexity science and theories of evaluation (responsive, participatory, and developmental) influence evaluator decision making in a dynamic organizational context focused on accountability and program development?

My decisions during the evaluation process as well as my interactions with organizational members were documented by data generated from field notes (including a log of informal interactions that occurred via email, phone or in-person), interviews (individual, small group, and large group), and a document review. Reasons for my decisions were recorded through the accompanying researcher reflections.

2. What is the nature of evaluator/ stakeholder interactions and what impact do these interactions have on the evaluator's decision making?

How organizational members viewed the evaluation and the evaluator was monitored over time by data generated during interviews and emails. Field notes related to this question highlighted noteworthy events where I noted shifts in participants' perspectives of me and our inquiry process. My impressions of the interactions and the subsequent consequences are informed by data generated by my reflective journal.

3. How is evaluation use promoted through stakeholder engagement?

Evaluation use was examined from two perspectives: the contextual use by the evaluation participants, and the research use by the evaluator (See Figure 1). Interviews and field notes provided the data for the contextual use whereas reflections served to inform the research use.

Strategies to Enhance the Reliability of Data Collection

The design of the study incorporated several strategies to enhance the reliability of the data collection. This study used multiple data sources, member checking, verbatim transcripts, and reflective narratives. Multiple data sources are useful because the strength of one approach can compensate for the weaknesses of another (Marshall & Rossman, 1989). As well, multiple data sources can address the reliability concerns associated with a single method design study so that "no single source of information [is] trusted to provide a comprehensive perspective" (Patton, 1990, p. 144). In this way, according to Creswell (2002) the study's use of multiple data sources and member checking promoted

triangulation, as well as to address the concerns of the degree of bias embedded in a single source.

Triangulation among multiple data methods was sought whenever possible; for example, organizational history that was discussed by several organizational members at different times was triangulated with a supporting document. Member checking was undertaken throughout the study, most frequently to begin an interview and as follow-up after the interview; for example, I started the individual and small group interviews with a brief review of the data from previous interviews and following each of the large group interviews, I distributed a summary of the major points of discussion. In all cases, I encouraged the participants to correct any errors or omissions in the data.

Verbatim transcripts and writing my field notes immediately following the interaction enhanced the reliability and validity of the data. Lofland (1971) argued that verbatim transcripts are necessary in order to capture direct participants' quotations. I reviewed all the transcripts and compared them to the appropriate audio-recording to ensure accuracy; any corrections were made and documented.

In sum, the case study methodology enabled the examination of my interactions bounded by the evaluation process. The use of a reflective journal complemented the traditional qualitative case study data collection methods of field notes, interviews, and document review. The use of multiple data sources, member checking, verbatim transcripts, and field notes enhanced the validity and reliability of the data collected.

Analysis Procedures

The analysis focused on the outcomes of the interactions between the stakeholders and the evaluator. During the evaluation, data analyses and reports were developed to

satisfy the clients' evaluation needs (e.g., the interim evaluation report submitted to the external funding agency). The analytic focus of the following section is limited to the research questions that guided the present study.

The first level of analysis in the present study was integrated into the data collection and documented in the field notes whereas the second level of analysis followed post-evaluation. The integration of data collection and analysis is well documented (e.g., Mertens, 2005; Stainback & Stainback, 1988). Throughout the analytical processes my meetings with committee members allowed me share my emerging ideas both during the data collection and subsequently. Thus their input brought reliable and valid judgments to bear on the context given my dual role as both the researcher and the evaluator. In this study the review of the data revealed issues and questions that were then explored during subsequent evaluation interactions. The following section includes a detailed description of each of the four steps undertaken in the present analysis: organizing the data, creating memos, developing codes, and revisiting the data.

Step One: Organizing the data

Data organization was guided by an approach informed by complexity thinking and by my intention to analyze across different sources and types of data. To facilitate this analysis approach, I organized the data in a manner that allowed me to examine the interactions separately in chronological order and holistically. This organization also promoted data analysis between multiple data sources and units of analysis (i.e., individual and organization). The data sources required three types of computer files to be compiled: formal in-person interactions; email, phone, and informal in-person

interactions; and documents. Table 6 summarizes the method of organizing and naming files for each of the three types of data.

Table 6. Summary of File Organization Methods.

Type of interaction	Items contained in file	File name components and Examples
Formal in-person	Separate file for each interaction: Transcription Field note Reflective journal entry	Participants Type of interview Interview date <i>Tanya.Amy.smallgrpInt.June29.06.doc</i>
Email, phone and informal in-person	In chronological order by month: Transcript of email Field note of interaction Reflective journal entry	Abbreviation of email, phone and informal interaction (email.ph.info) month <i>email.ph.infor.July06</i>
Document review	Separate file for each document: Field note Reflective journal entry	Document name Document publisher Publication date <i>DRiniprojprop.org.2006</i>

I created a separate computer text file for each formal in-person interaction (i.e., individual, small group and large group interview). Each file contained the interview transcription, the field notes, and an entry from my reflective journal relevant to the interaction. I assigned a file name incorporating the names of participants, the type of interview (individual, small group, and large group interview), and the interview date; for example, the file *Tanya.Amy.smallgrpInt.June29.06.doc* included the transcript of the small group interview, field notes, and my reflection journal entry for the interview with Tanya and Amy on June 29, 2006.

I organized the email, phone, and informal in-person interactions in chronological order including the transcript of the emails sent to and received from organizational members, field notes, and reflective journal entries. The interactions were then organized in separate month-by-month computer text files; for example, the file *email.ph.infor.July06* included all the email, phone, and informal in-person exchanges during the month of July as well as the accompanying field notes and researcher reflections for each interaction.

Every time I reviewed a document, I created a separate computer text file. The file contained my field notes describing the document and its contribution to the research questions, its publication information, and a researcher reflection. The assigned file name incorporated the document name, the document publisher, and the publication date; for example, the file *DRiniprojprop.org.2004* included the field note and reflection of the initial project proposal that was published by the organization in 2004.

The completed data files were transferred into the qualitative computer software ATLAS.ti (2005) as a hermeneutic project unit, and the entire data set was reviewed and brought together as a case study data base (Yin, 2003). The files were ordered chronologically and each was assigned a document number (see Appendix L). Within the computer program, the data files were assigned to *families*. Each family is distinguished by a unique characteristic; for example each type of data collection method (e.g., large group interviews, individual interviews) and each evaluation phase (e.g., Phase 1, Phase 2); most files belonged to more than one family. Creating a family allows the data files that share an attribute to be retrieved together and studied separately from other files that do not share the attribute; for example, the six large group interviews grouped together

form the family *large group interviews* and all the data collected between September 2006 and January 2007 form the family *conducting the evaluation phase* (see Appendix M for the list of families and the files assigned to each). Once the data organization was completed, the initial reading of the data was undertaken.

Step Two: Creating Memos

Even though the organization and the reading of the data appear, in this chapter, to have followed one another, it is important to note the iterative nature of the analysis procedures in the present study; for example, data organization, the initial reading of the data, and memo writing were initiated prior to the completion of data collection. Memos linked the initial reading of the data collected to the data analysis (Charmaz, 2006). Memos are described as written comments that document the researcher's thoughts about the data analysis (Maietta, 2006). Memos have long been identified by researchers (e.g., Creswell, 2002; Huberman & Miles, 1994; Strauss & Corbin, 1990) as an important technique for analyzing qualitative data. In the present study, although the majority of my memos were written during the initial reading of the data, I revisited them and added to them throughout the analysis. In this way, memos contributed to the iterative and non-linear nature of the data analysis.

I found memo writing to be useful, not only to document my thoughts but also to draw my attention to the emergence of my insights and evolving understandings throughout the course of the study. My conceptualization of memos as dynamic is supported by Maietta's (2007) view that memos are should be treated as if they were living and evolving. He also argues that memos should be reviewed in an ongoing manner to capture emerging ideas. In the same way, I view my use of memos as a means

to move away from linear thinking is congruent with my approach to analysis that is informed by complexity theory.

I designed three types of memos at the beginning of the post-evaluation analysis to organize the memos distinguished by the level at which the data were analyzed: quotations, documents, and case (see Table 7). It is important to note that during the subsequent analysis I introduce a fourth type of memo, I called a code memo.

Table 7. The Types of Memos Initiated During the Initial Data Reading.

Memo Name	Data associated	Usefulness during analysis
Quotation	Segments of Data within a File	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote active reading of individual files • Capture initial impressions of data • Highlight noteworthy moments within a file • Encourage questions to inform inquiry • Inform code development
Document	A File associated with an Interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Record impressions of the interaction as a whole • Identify distinguishing features of the interaction • Draw attention to key moments in the file
Case	At the case level related to an attribute or issue across files	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document emerging insights across the case • Capture evolving understandings of an issue across the case

I used the first type to describe a memo assigned to segments of data within a file, which I call *quotation memos*, as a way to force myself to read actively, that is, to promote a deeper cognitive process while I was reading (see Appendix N for an example). I conceptualize these actions as following: during my reading of each file, I highlighted the sections of data that I found relevant to the present study. This practice has been previously identified by several researchers, each describing essentially the same process using different terms; for example what is known as *unitizing* (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), is also known as *marking what is of interest in the text* (Seidman, 1991,

p. 89), as *selecting a segment of data* (Dey, 1993), as *identifying a meaning unit* (Miles & Huberman, 1994), and most recently as *selecting quotations* (Maietta, 2007).

The procedure guiding my quotation memo writing associated with the segments of data within a file comprised three stages. The first stage was to select the relevant data to inform the present study and the amount of data for each quotation. These decisions were based on two self-imposed guidelines: to choose data only where I could articulate a reason for its selection and to select a sufficient amount of data to preserve the context. The second stage was to rewrite the name of the quotation so that it would be easily identifiable from a quotation list, whenever possible using content directly from the quotation. The final stage included writing my reasons for selecting the quotation and assigning the date. If the quotation contributed to a noteworthy event in my field notes and reflections, then I identified it as a noteworthy moment in the quotation memo. In the writing of the quotation memos, I aimed to be concise and informal; I was more concerned with capturing my thoughts than with spelling and grammar.

The second form of memo, which I called a *document memo*, was associated with a data file describing an interaction (see Appendix O for an example). The document memo was created after the initial reading of each of the formal in-person files to capture my thoughts about the file as a whole. The procedure guiding document writing comprised two steps. The first was to identify and document the distinguishing features of the interaction; for example, who was involved and what was different about either what happened during or what emerged from the interaction. The second step was to highlight the potential usefulness of the document to the analysis, including the identification of key moments. I defined key moments as moments captured in the

transcript that indicate a shift in views (not dissimilar to what I identified as noteworthy events in my field notes and reflective journal); for example, how an organizational member perceived or understood an issue or idea.

The third form of memo, the *case memo*, captured my thoughts about an attribute common to more than one file (see Appendix P for an example). I found the case memos useful as a means of capturing my evolving thoughts about a common attribute in a way that was easily retrievable during the subsequent analysis. Many of the case memos were initiated during the initial reading of the data and were used to describe families, while others emerged throughout the analysis.

Writing case memos involved two steps. In the first step, I assigned a name that incorporated the subject of the memo; for example, the file *small group interviews* included a series of comments detailing my thoughts about the emerging characteristics unique to the small group interviews and the file *Tanya:views of evaluation* included a series of quotations and accompanying comments providing evidence of Tanya's shifting views about the evaluation and my impressions about the shifts. Each comment within a case memo included the date of the memo, the source of the data (i.e., file name), and my comment. Also included were related direct quotations, a description of a key moment or a question to stimulate further inquiry. If the memo was long, I sometimes summarized my thoughts at the end highlighting the most important aspects.

I focused on developing memos during the initial reading of the data as a means of capturing my thoughts and preliminary ideas for themes emerging from the data. This focus represented a departure from the analysis procedures described by Patton (2002). He suggested focusing on developing code categories during the initial reading: "The first

reading through the data is aimed at developing the coding categories or classification system” (p. 463). However, the process of memoing as opposed to coding during the initial read of the data has become recognized in recent years to be both a viable and desirable alternative; for example, Maietta argued the use of memos not only as an intermediate step between reading and coding but also as a stand-alone analysis technique (2007, personal communication).

What I found most useful about memoing was the ability to record potential themes without having to commit to a code. Indeed, I found memos allowed me to avoid some of the difficulties described by Atkinson (1992) associated with escaping coding once they have been applied. Prior to moving to identifying and applying codes to the quotations, I reviewed the data files and examined the data that had not been selected for a quotation memo. If any segments of data emerged as interesting, I wrote a memo before beginning the coding process.

Step Three: Developing Codes

I viewed coding as a means of identifying outcomes within and across units of analysis. I found identifying and applying codes to be an iterative process and *code memos* to be a means of documenting my coding decisions. As a result, coding and memoing occurred hand in hand as a process by which emerging notions in one influenced the development of the other.

The first step in the coding process was the inductive development of themes from the data. The search for themes emergent from the data is supported by inductive reasoning similar to that of a grounded theory approach (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) and a case study analysis (Stake, 1988). When I reread the first five files, five common themes

emerged from the quotation memos. The five themes, which became the preliminary code list, were: *evaluator approach*, *communication*, *nature of interactions*, *evaluator reflections*, and *project understandings*. In order to track the development of the code list, I created a separate code memo to capture the evolving definitions, examples, and comments for each of the codes over time (see Appendix Q for an example of a code memo). Whenever the code changed, I redefined the code and included an example of a quotation assigned to the code. Whenever possible, to help define boundaries around the code, I also included an example of a quotation I excluded from the code.

As I coded the first five files, I realized the limitations represented by the preliminary code list: I could not accommodate all the quotations. As a result, I expanded the code list to include 15 codes; two examples of new codes included in the expanded list are *researcher impressions of next steps* and *description of atmosphere of the interaction*. During the coding of seven more files, I found redundancy among two codes, meaning that they were not specific enough to be two separate ideas. I again reviewed the code list and reduced it to 13 codes; for example, I was unable to distinguish between the codes *researcher impressions of next steps* and *organization state next steps*; as a result, both codes were reassigned to the new code *next steps identification*. These types of changes are representative of the evolving and iterative process associated with the development of a code list.

As a dynamic and evolving entity, the code list underwent several similar expansions and refinements, which I documented in the audit trail. Reviewing and documenting changes in the evolution of a code list is viewed as a natural process involved in qualitative analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Strauss, 1987). Throughout

the refining process, I added to the code memos to document my evolving thoughts about each of the codes.

Prior to coding the entire data set, I systematically evaluated the usefulness of each of the codes and my ability to apply them in a consistent manner. I used the network diagram function in the Atlas-ti software (as described by Maietta, 2007) to explore the relationships between and among quotes within a code. My process included importing each of the codes one at a time with all the quotations that had been assigned to that code. I then checked to make sure that each of the quotations fit under the current code definition; if the quotation did not fit, I made the necessary changes to reassign the quotations to a different code.

Through the networking process, I realized that several of the codes had more than 100 quotations assigned to them. I identified common sub-themes within the codes and then reassigned the quotations to the new codes created by the sub-themes. Because greater specificity among codes can be helpful for coding and analysis, I expanded the code list to 40 codes; for example, the code *usefulness of the evaluation* was replaced with three, more specific codes: *usefulness of evaluation_document*, *usefulness of evaluation_inform project*, and *usefulness of evaluation_promote communication*. The code *nature of the interactions* was replaced by 11 codes, as was the code *evaluator approach* by eight codes.

The final code list was developed and coding of the files was completed by the end of the summer of 2007. I considered the code list to be finalized when two features were attained: the coding and recoding process had created a list that could accommodate the quotations, and each of the codes had at least 10 quotations assigned to it. This

process has been called *reaching a saturation point* by Lincoln and Guba (1985). A final code list was produced with definitions and examples to guide the coding of the remaining files (see Appendix R). Once the coding was completed, I initiated the search for similarities and differences across the data.

Step Four: Revisiting the Data

The analysis of the case study was ongoing because I was revisiting my memos and continuing to build on them as my understandings evolved. I often used the codes and memos conjunctively to inform one another. The study’s research questions remained the overall focus while I used three methods to examine the data: by individual file, by families, and across the case. Within each of three methods of analysis, I used several analytical strategies: reviewing memos, retrieving quotations assigned to codes, discovering code concurrence, and examining graphics. Throughout the analysis process, I wrote analysis memos to document my emerging understandings. The three methods to detect patterns are introduced in Table 8 and then discussed in detail in the following section.

Table 8. Summary of the Analysis Methods Attending to Patterns across the Data.

Methods of Analysis	Use of the Method	Example of Usefulness of the Method
Individual file	Allowed the direct interpretation of individual instances	Highlighted the noteworthy moments within each file
Family	Facilitated the analysis to move across files that shared an attribute	Drew my attention to the key moments across families
Across the case	Enabled the aggregation of instances	Emphasized the commonalities across key moments and evaluator decisions.

The first method involved examining the individual files, and the data analysis was guided by a direct interpretation of individual instances. According to Stake (1995), direct interpretation focuses on the meanings and significance of a single incident, known in the present study as an interaction. I began the analysis by reading the document memo summarizing the findings and my impressions of the overall file. Then I read the file, including the quotations and accompanying quotation memos. I examined the patterns revealed by the codes across the file using two steps: I reviewed the code list and the quotations assigned to each code, and I used the concurrence tool in the software program to examine where the codes occurred together. The analysis promoted a process that was iterative where the review of one aspect of my review of data within an individual file informed another aspect and my overall understanding of the interaction.

I captured my thoughts and emerging understandings by adding to the document memo that I had begun for each file describing an interaction. My analysis for each file was comprehensive, and I progressed to the next file only when the document memo contained details of the interaction highlighting: (a) the key moments of the quotations and noteworthy moments of the file, (b) the characteristics of my evaluator approach, (c) the features of the organizational members' responses, (d) the preceding actions and interactions, and (e) the planned actions and interactions to follow (see Appendix S for an example of an analysis notes added to an existing document memo).

In the second method of data analysis, I grouped the files by families. The files within a family share a common attribute; for example, large group interviews or occurring during Phase 2. For a list of the documents and the families in which they were assigned, see Appendix M. Families was useful to facilitate the analysis across files in

order to seek similarities and differences among interactions within the same family. The analysis began with the reading the document memos for each of the files within the case and then the case memo about the family. I paid attention to the patterns created by the coding process across the family by creating a filter within the software program that allowed only the quotations within the family assigned to each of the codes to be retrieved. Then I used two steps to examine the codes: I reviewed the code list and the quotations assigned to each code, and I used the concurrence tool in the software program to examine where the codes occurred together within the family.

I used graphics to visually summarize data within a family to facilitate pattern recognition (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Wolcott, 2001). In particular, matrices served to facilitate the examination of patterns related to the nature and frequency of interactions within a family (see Appendix T as an example). The analysis promoted an iterative process across the files that was useful in highlighting the unexpected moments and the differences among interactions within a family; for example, where a code pattern emerged across several files within a family, I re-examined the individual files where the pattern was not present.

For the analysis of each family, I added my analysis notes to the existing case memo as a way to capture my emerging understandings of the interactions within the family. My analysis for each family was thorough, and I progressed to the next family only when the family analysis memo contained details of the interactions highlighting the similarities and differences among (a) the unexpected moments, (b) the evaluator approaches, (c) the responses of the organization and members, (d) the preceding actions

and interactions, and (e) the planned actions and interactions to follow (see Appendix U for an example of the analysis notes I added to the existing case memo).

The final method of data analysis examined the interactions using the analytic procedures associated with aggregation of instances and looking across the case study as a whole. According to Stake (1995), the aggregation of instances allows for the emergence of themes that, when analyzed, can identify either the uniqueness of cases or the associations and linkages that might exist among the instances. In the present case study, the files were organized across the 18-month case study chronologically.

The case analysis was useful to facilitate the movement across the different levels of interactions (i.e., individual, small group, large group) and with the organizational members. I began the analysis by reading the analysis file memos and analysis family memos. I paid attention to the patterns created by the coding process across the case and used two steps to examine the codes: I reviewed the code list and the quotations assigned to each code, and I used the concurrence tool in the software program to examine where the codes occurred together across the case. I used matrices to visually summarize the patterns created by the nature and frequency of interactions with the organization as a whole and with individual organizational members.

My emerging understandings of the influences of the case interactions as a whole on my thinking generated a list of 30 critical episodes that had been noted during the analysis for their potential influence on subsequent interactions. Specifically, within each critical episode, my attention was drawn to the interactions that had led me to reconsider aspects of my evaluator approach. I then re-examined the 30 critical episodes and generated a list of 10 where the consequences of my reconsiderations had been

modifications to my subsequent approach (see Table 9 for list). To gain an understanding of the critical episodes as a whole, I looked across the case, then narrowed my examination to the level of the individual interactions, and then re-broadened it to the organizational interactions. As a result, the case analysis was useful to examine the contexts of each critical episode with respect to both the preceding interactions and decisions and also the consequences of my decisions and behaviour.

Table 9. List of 10 Critical Episodes Generated from the Case Analysis

Phase	Critical Episodes involved a series of interactions and participants
One: Designing the Evaluation	1. Second small group interview with Amy and Tanya (Project Managers)
	2. First large group interview with the organizational members as a group (Amy, Jackie, Courtney, Camilla, and Tanya)
	3. First small group interview involving Jackie, Maureen, and Camilla (Program Developers)
	4. First individual interview with Courtney (Research Associate)
Two: Conducting the Evaluation	5. Fifth individual interview with Tanya (Project Manager)
	6. Email exchange with organizational members as a group following the Project Discussion Day
Three: Reporting the Evaluation	7. Third large group interview with organizational members as a group (Jackie, Camilla, Maureen, Courtney, and Tanya)
	8. Small group interview with Courtney and Anita (Research Associates)
	9. Fourth large group interview with organizational members as a group (Jackie, Maureen, Courtney, Camilla, and Anita)
Four: Reviewing the Evaluation	10. Fifth large group interview with organizational members as a group (Jackie, Tanya, Anita, and Courtney)

To summarize, the analysis process was iterative and focused on the use of codes and memos. Data organization was important in this process to allow the data to be examined using a variety of procedures. The analysis process included the use of memos, which led to the development of codes, and the patterns created among the codes were examined in different groups (individually, in families, and across the case). The use of graphics allowed me to visually examine the data and the analysis memos to capture the

evolution of my understandings. The analysis process revealed the emergence of 10 critical episodes across the case. The accounts of the critical episodes generated as part of the case study will be described in detail in the following chapter.

*Strategies to Promote the Reliability and Validity of the Analyses and Interpretations
Processes*

The design of the study incorporated several strategies to enhance the reliability and validity of the analysis process, including producing documentation, paying attention to detail, and scheduling additional time for revisiting the data. To create an account of the analysis process, I used an audit trail (also known as a chain of evidence); this methodology has been well documented (Mertens, 2005; Patton, 2002). The case study audit trail is thought to enhance external reliability by emphasizing documentation of the study's methods and procedures (Schwandt & Halpern, 1988). More recently, Rodgers and Cowles (1993) described an audit trail as essential to any rigorous qualitative study. In my study, paying attention to detail was accomplished by my thorough analysis of the data, including considering all the evidence and examining even the data that were not coded. Giving consideration to all the evidence, including rival interpretations, is supported by Yin (2003). My careful, detailed analysis allowed the evolution of the code list and the emergence of the critical episodes. Conducting the data analysis over five months allowed me the time to revisit, reexamine, and refine my interpretations several times. Ongoing analysis and attention to triangulating data is supported by Stake (2000), who noted that a case study interpretation gains credibility by the triangulation of both the descriptions and the interpretations.

Limitations of the Study Methodology

A thorough understanding of the particularities of a case is an expected outcome of the case study methodology (Stake, 1995). One must make decisions that focus on certain parts due to the impossibility of designing a study that captures all moments across all levels within a case. Consequently, I acknowledge that any attempt to understand the behaviour and interactions of the evaluator within the present case must be understood as partial and context specific. Given the non-linear nature of organizations, the case understandings cannot be generalized nor duplicated. I chose to focus my research on examining the evaluator behaviour operating in a specific dynamic organization.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I outlined the methodology used for the present study. First, I introduced the research context including information about the evaluation process and methods used to facilitate conceptual use of the evaluation by the organizational members. Second, I explained how I conceptualized the evaluation process as a case study of an evaluation process to examine my evaluator behaviours. I described the creation of a transferable account of my evaluation approach, the cues to which I responded, and my subsequent approach conducting an evaluation within a dynamic context. Third, I introduced an innovative addition to the traditional study methodology with my ongoing use of a reflective journal. I revisited the journal entries for two purposes: (a) to inform the formal and emergent evaluation strategies during the evaluation, and (b) to inform the analysis following the completion of the study. Fourth, I explained the analysis procedures including the organization of the data, creating memos,

developing codes, and revisiting the data. The data organization facilitated the holistic view of each of the interactions by including the transcript, field notes, and the researcher reflection in one file. Creating memos distinguished the study as a means to capture my thoughts and evolving understandings. I described in detail my inductive development of the codes and how they evolved. Finally, I outlined the use of three methods to revisit the data and identify how the 10 critical episodes were generated from the cross case analysis. An analysis of each of the critical episodes along with the study's findings are reported in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS OF THE STUDY

Chapter Overview

This chapter recounts the evolution of my evaluator approach during the 18-month evaluation process. My account focuses on the influential interactions with organizational members and the subsequent decisions that affected my behaviour. I organize my story of the findings into three sections to describe the shifts in my thinking revealed by the analysis of my interactions: the *insights* emerging from the critical episodes, the *transformations* of the principles guiding my approach, and the *view* of the evaluation process as a progression of stakeholder engagement.

In the first section, I describe the insights revealed by the 10 *critical episodes* that shaped the course of the evaluation (see Table 10). A critical episode is comprised of a series of interactions over a relatively narrow time frame related by a common theme. The critical episodes were generated as part of the case study method to both highlight and gain understandings of the context surrounding the insights that significantly influenced my subsequent evaluator actions. Insights were gained about my reasons underlying my evaluator decisions and about the stakeholder cues (their verbal or physical responses) to which I paid attention. Although the intention of recounting the stories of each of the critical episodes is to describe the insights I gained that affected my approach, it is imperative to conceptualize each critical episode as connected to and influenced by the preceding interactions as well as influential on subsequent interactions. As a result, my account includes details about the surrounding context, a description of the interactions, and the adjustments in my thinking that were triggered by the critical

episode. These insights were important in helping me to frame how I was thinking about my approach and making decisions. My learning about myself as an evaluator was greatly deepened through analyzing the critical episodes.

Examining the critical episodes enabled me to track, over time, the congruence of my thinking and behaviour with the initial six personal *evaluation principles* that I had anticipated would guide my approach (see Table 11). I provide an account of when I became conscious of shifts in my approach during the second section including what each of the individual critical episodes contributed to their transformations, and how each of my principles evolved during the 10 critical episodes. The emergence of a seventh principle was important to guide how I subsequently conceptualized my evaluator role within the organizational structure.

I begin the final section with a description of the dilemma I encountered when the case analysis of the critical episodes revealed the responsive nature of my approach to the individual stakeholders' cues during the evaluation. A focus on monitoring the evolving needs and interpretations of the findings in addition to negotiating the design of the evaluation with the stakeholders led me to deem the original phase description as inadequate. The original phase description focused only on the technical aspects of the evaluation. I needed to move away from conceiving the expectations of the evaluator in each phase as responsible for shifts in my approach to viewing the evaluation as a progression. This new view of the evaluation as a *progression of individual stakeholder engagement* required the stakeholders and evaluator to work through establishing trust, fostering collaborations, and promoting learning. The chapter concludes with a summary of my findings including the insights revealed by the critical episodes, my current

personal principles guiding my approach, and a description of my approach and the cues to which I respond to support the progression of stakeholder engagement.

Ten Critical Evaluation Episodes

The critical episodes related the emergence of insights during the evaluation process that significantly influenced my subsequent approach. All 10 critical episodes met the following criteria: (a) each was identified during my analysis as a vehicle for understanding my behaviour as an evaluator and learning about the impact of my behaviour on the participants, (b) each served as an example of my principles-in-action (see Table 11) during the evaluation, and (c) each triggered a transformation, modification, or a refinement in my thinking and thus my subsequent behaviour as an evaluator.

To provide an authentic account of these critical episodes, in my descriptions I quote both from the transcripts of the episode and from my reflective journal entries written after the episode. To construct these stories, I chose data that describes the circumstances that triggered the episode related to the surrounding context, needs, and interactions; the nature of the interactions and decision making during the episode; and the adjustments to my thinking and subsequent behaviour. The examination of the shifts in my approach associated with each of the critical episodes led me to identify the insights I gained. In the following section I present an account of the 10 critical episodes in chronological order as they occurred during the evaluation process. Having analyzed each of the critical episodes individually and engaged in reflection about the 10 accounts, I gained insights that I used to inform the title for each of the following accounts.

Analysis of Critical Episode 1: Listening as a Means of Establishing Trust with Stakeholders

The first critical episode involved a series of small group interviews with project managers (Amy and Tanya) during the second month (May) of the evaluation. During our initial meeting, the project managers had reported their experiences in the program. Afterwards, when I was examining the program proposal, I was confused about how they were implementing the program goals. To help me make sense of their strategies, I sent an email inviting the project managers to create a program logic model with me. The purposes of my request were to clarify my understandings of the program and also to provide another opportunity to build a working relationship with the program developers early in the evaluation process. Both Amy and Tanya agreed to participate, and I sent them a framework for developing a logic model a few days prior to our meeting.

I arrived at Amy's office on campus a few minutes early. I saw that she was seated behind her desk working on her computer and I waited for her to finish. When she looked up, I called out a greeting. Amy smiled and invited me to sit in one of the two chairs opposite her desk, and she and I talked about her current work while we waited for Tanya to arrive. A few minutes later, Tanya appeared, offered an explanation for her delay, and apologized. In response to what I interpreted as her fatigue, I offered to reschedule our meeting. She responded by shaking her head "no" and saying the meeting provided "a nice change of pace at the end of the day." Amy added that she had purposefully suggested we meet at the end of the day and that she had been looking forward to our conversation (Doc. 5).

As Tanya settled into her chair, she pulled out the program logic model framework and suggested that we begin by reviewing the initiatives that had already been implemented. Amy and I agreed, and during the next hour I listened to Amy's and Tanya's descriptions of how the individual initiatives had been transformed between the time the program was proposed and the actual implementation of the initiatives. As they took turns talking, their accounts revealed to me the difficulties they had encountered during year one, their responses to them, and the changes they anticipated for year two. Tanya attributed the majority of their challenges to institutional barriers (e.g., lack of administrative support), whereas Amy viewed the problem as their lack of expertise (e.g., lack of time to develop knowledge of the subject area). In my field notes, I noted my surprise related to the details generated and my understandings gained without my having to use my prepared interview questions or to ask them about their views of the evaluation.

I had the chance to ask my only question during the interview when a natural break in the discussion occurred just before the end of the scheduled hour: "What do you see as the focus of the program evaluation?" Although Tanya and Amy replied with a similar focus on meeting the accountability needs of the funder, they differed on what needed to be reported. Tanya emphasized a need for measurable outcomes and numbers; Amy expressed a need to account for the time spent focused on overcoming the challenges. Being mindful of respecting the allotted time, I brought the interview to a close, saying "Thank you very much for your time and your attention to detail. I have learned a great deal about your experiences, accomplishments, and challenges. I ask for any feedback" (Doc. 5). Both Tanya and Amy replied with comments about the interviews: the former used "enjoyable" as the descriptor whereas the latter

acknowledged their benefit as “useful to reflect on [her] role during the past year.” As we prepared to leave, Amy suggested we meet again during the following month to continue the conversation about planning the program for the upcoming year. I agreed and made plans to contact her.

As I was walking home, I started to think about my approach. By listening, I felt I had gained an in-depth understanding of Amy’s and Tanya’s conceptions of the program and their view of the evaluation. These understandings had been gained without using my prepared interview questions. My goal of building a logic model during the hour had been replaced by my focus on listening, and yet I felt satisfied that we had used our time effectively. Later in my journal I pondered: “Why is it that we [as evaluators] must rush into planning the evaluation and activities? Instead, could we not incorporate an approach where the evaluator focuses on listening and encouraging the sharing of individual perspectives, letting the design emerge over time?” (Doc. 5). I considered the indication from the program managers that they would be willing to meet again to be more important than the information that was gained from this interaction. Their offer to make time and their sharing of experiences led me to think that they trusted me. In my reflective journal I wrote: “They [the project managers] are feeling some comfort and trust towards me. Now I need to sustain and deepen their engagement in the evaluation process” (Doc.5).

I invited the program managers to the subsequent interview with the intention of learning about the context in which the program was operating. Again, my overall approach was to listen but I also incorporated a more active facilitator role by asking such questions as: “You mentioned several challenges that you encountered last year, were any

related to the context and the program outcomes?” (Doc. 14). Tanya attributed her frustration with her inability to stabilize the “constantly changing” context or even to anticipate change; she felt that this was the source of the program’s present scattered vision. Amy explained that the program had been influenced by changing contextual elements; for example, she had received unexpected requests from community members to collaborate because they had received increased funding in the area of research related to the program (Doc. 14, 20). As a result, she described “feeling like there is a kind of ethos here [in the organization] that we have to keep running really, really fast to keep up with the project” (Doc. 20). In my field notes, I wrote: “I am beginning to understand the program as overextended and in need of a different approach.” Indeed, as Tanya was leaving, she credited the interview with helping her to realize that she wanted to approach the second year with a slower and more focused approach.

By the end of the third month, it was evident to me that the individual organizational members had pressing needs that required attention quite apart from the accountability focus of the evaluation. Amy and Tanya’s view of the program and its context as ever-changing led me to realize the impracticality of a predetermined evaluation design. My journal captured my struggle between my desire to respond to the organizational members’ evolving needs and my recognition of my primary role to satisfy the accountability requirements. I wondered: “How do I design an emergent evaluation that also meets my accountability focus?” I considered the usefulness of an approach focused on listening and an emergent design. This approach would allow me to pay attention to changes in the program and in its context and allow the design to respond to evolutions in my understandings and the needs of the organizational members.

These small group interviews emerged as a critical episode because I realized that the essential purpose of listening was to build trust with individual stakeholders. Listening allowed me not only to learn about the program and the organizational members' experiences, but also to gain understandings about the influences of the dynamic nature of the context on the evolving needs of the individual members. These insights led me to establish trust with organizational members and to use a responsive and emergent evaluation design prior to undertaking a facilitator role.

Analysis of Critical Episode 2: Accommodating a Stakeholder-Defined Evaluator Role

The second critical episode involved a series of individual and small group interviews leading to the first large group interview during the fourth month (July) of the evaluation. During the month prior I had interacted at least once with each of the individual organizational members (with the exception of Shannon) and listened to their program experiences. By the end of the month, I came to two realizations: I had not heard about the experiences of two organizational members (Maureen and Courtney) and I had not heard about methods allowing the organizational members to communicate with one another. From those who had shared their experiences with me, I learned that the individual organizational members had not communicated their ideas about how to move forward in the planning of year two among themselves, and they had no idea that they had shared the need for a focused program vision (Doc., 14, 16, 20). In my reflective journal, I considered the lack of communication as hindering the stakeholders' ability to make programmatic decisions. I wrote: "If only they [organizational members] had opportunities to talk with one another, they could learn a great deal from one another's

perspectives and ideas.” I began to think about a participatory activity to promote communication and decision making among organizational members.

My decision to approach Jackie with the idea of a large group interview was based on my assumption that an invitation from both the established organizational leadership as well as the evaluator would encourage individual organizational members to participate. I proposed the use of a collaborative activity to review unexamined data from the previous year as a way to encourage communication among organizational members; my intention was to use the lessons learned from the data to inform program decisions for year two. Jackie agreed: “It would be good to investigate the data and bring people together because I haven’t a clue what we’ve got in the data” (Doc. 19). After she explained that Tanya had access to the data and should be included, I suggested a meeting between Jackie, Tanya, and me to discuss the agenda, and then I organized the logistics.

During the ensuing meeting focused on the agenda for the first large group interview, as I listened to Jackie’s and Tanya’s talk, I realized that each of us had different intended outcomes. In an effort to meet their needs as well as my own, I proposed three parts to the agenda: Jackie would begin with her focus of the meeting to review a data collection tool, I would follow with the collaborative data review activity, and finally Tanya would lead a discussion about the lessons learned from the previous year to inform the planning of year two. After the meeting, I considered that uncovering evidence indicating Tanya’s and Jackie’s support and their willingness to collaborate had been more important than creating an agenda focused only on my intended outcomes. Their willingness to make time to meet with me and to collaborate in the design of the evaluation activity led me to think that I had built credibility with them. Several days

prior to the meeting, Tanya distributed the agenda to all the organizational members by email.

The large group interview took place in a campus conference room, and I arrived before our scheduled time to rearrange the chairs around one end of the large table. Maureen had sent her regrets the previous day, and so the five interview participants were two program developers (Jackie and Camilla), two project managers (Amy and Tanya), and a research associate (Courtney). Jackie began the meeting by welcoming everyone and reviewing the agenda. She initiated the conversation about the data collection tool by explaining its purpose. The conversation that followed was limited to those who had been involved during the previous year. When it was my turn to facilitate, I distributed copies of the data so that each person had a unique part of the data set. I asked them to take a few moments to become familiar with their data, and then I began asking such questions as: “What do you find interesting about your data? What can your data contribute to our conversation?” During the next half hour, each organizational member shared her perspective about what their data could contribute. My field notes described the ensuing conversation:

It was lively and enthusiastic – it was difficult to understand the multiple voices talking at once. Something big happened here among the organizational members – it was as if they finally shared an understanding of the challenges and accomplishments of the past year. I heard Tanya and Amy talking about how this understanding could inform the program planning (Doc. 21).

A few minutes before the end of the two-hour session, and following the discussion led by Tanya, I ended the meeting by soliciting feedback about the usefulness of the meeting

and concerns with my evaluator approach. Several organizational members needed to leave but promised to email their comments. Before she left, in response to Tanya's comment about the timing of the interview, Amy offered her view: "You're right, Tanya, we couldn't have had this conversation before because we didn't have all the initiatives together ... to look for the patterns across the initiatives and to learn from them together" (Doc. 21). Jackie commented that she was pleased with the level of participation from each person. Later the same day, I distributed a summary of the meeting by email to all the organizational members. The purpose of the summary was to build credibility in my role by sharing the emerging evaluation findings and at the same time to verify my understandings of what had occurred during the meeting with the participants.

When I reviewed my field notes the following day, I noted my detailed observations about how the individual organizational members interacted with each other and with me. My impression of the meeting was that it had been successful in promoting communication and that the stakeholders had indicated a level of comfort when they shared their perspectives. The email I received from the Camilla the next day provided further evidence of the collegial atmosphere. She wrote: "People were able to talk freely, to challenge, and be validated. It was a good meeting environment" (Doc. 21). In my journal, I noted that the majority of participations, with the exception of Courtney, had indicated a willingness in their comments to continue the large group interviews. I couldn't help but consider whether Courtney, who had spoken very little during the meeting, shared this view. She had not yet indicated to me that she was willing to contribute to any conversation; indeed, our previous interactions, when she was quiet and

withdrawn, had indicated to me a lack of comfort. I made a note to invite her to an individual interview at some point during the following month (see Critical Episode 4).

I started to think about how the contributions made by the organizational members influenced how I viewed my role as external to the organization. The week following the large group meeting, I received an email from Amy that drew my attention to her use of “team” when referring to the group of individual organizational members, which did not include me. She wrote: “I really do think that you [Cheryl] helped *the team* conceptualize the past year as a very positive, learning experience....I feel better about my contribution to the project....The way you worded things was to encourage us to value what we had done as important and something we can build on” (Doc. 21). I had no doubt that Amy was willing to continue participating but she viewed me as external to the organization. What became apparent was that how I was defined by the organizational members influenced my view of myself. I could not help but think the view of me as external was limiting the potential usefulness of the evaluation. In my journal I conceived a plan: “I have to be patient until the opportunity arises for me to demonstrate to individual organizational members that I can meet their needs at the same time the evaluation satisfies the external accountability requirements” (Doc. 17).

During the following month, I began to think about monitoring the individual organizational members’ views of my role for indications of change. For example, when I conducted my first interview with Shannon, the fourth program developer, I began the interview by listening to her view of the program and her experience of being located away from the program. In an effort to learn about her views of the evaluation, I asked her directly: “What role do you see the evaluator playing and what can the evaluation

findings be used for?” (Doc. 27). Her response: “Meet the accountability requirements of the funders.” Creating another opportunity to monitor change in views, I asked Amy the same question during a subsequent interaction. I wrote in my journal: “Amy talked about my contribution to organizational discussions. She described my role as ‘nudging the review process forward and to remind people of the importance of the evaluation to make decisions’” (Doc. 25).

These interactions emerged as a critical episode because I realized the need for me to assume a role defined by stakeholders at the beginning of the evaluation. By acknowledging their view of my role as being responsible for the accountability requirements of the evaluation, I built credibility. At the same time, I paid attention to individual organizational members and their level of comfort, their evolving needs, and their changing views of me. In this way, I used a responsive and emergent evaluation design to monitor and respond to their needs and at the same time to accommodate their view of me. I began to conceptualize trust as a necessary precursor to engaging in collaborations.

Analysis of Critical Episode 3: Responding to Build Credibility with Individual Stakeholders

The third critical episode involved a series of interactions with Maureen during the fifth month (August) of the evaluation. In our previous interaction two months prior, although Camilla shared her experiences, Maureen’s contribution was limited to sharing a concern about the time commitment involved in the evaluation (Doc. 12). After Maureen’s absence from the first large group meeting, in an effort to gain an

understanding of her perspectives of the program and evaluation, I invited her to an individual interview. She responded by suggesting that I invite the other two local program developers (Camilla and Jackie). I agreed and proposed a focus on informing the design of an evaluation activity.

When I arrived at the campus conference room a few minutes before our scheduled time, I rearranged the chairs around one end of the large table. Camilla was the first to arrive and was followed shortly by Jackie; they greeted me and began to talk between themselves. When Maureen arrived a few minutes later, they immediately looked to me to start the meeting. I began by proposing an agenda: to discuss the monthly evaluation summary, to share comments about the recent large group interview, and to collaborate on the design of an evaluation activity. They agreed, and I distributed copies of the monthly evaluation summary that I had emailed the previous week. The summary described the evaluation activities completed during the previous month, as well as a plan for the upcoming evaluation activities. I proposed to the program developers, if they deemed the summary useful, I would continue sending a summary at the end of each month as a way to communicate with them. Without prompting, Jackie and Camilla offered their opinions: “It was useful” and “It helped me to see what you were doing” (Doc. 24). I looked to Maureen, and she acknowledged that she had previously received the summary but had not read it. I responded by focusing the conversation on the usefulness of the first large group interview.

To Maureen’s comment that she had not been present, Camilla offered the following explanation: “That was the day we sat and brainstormed ideas for the second year. [Maureen] was not here. We brainstormed around what were the things that

occurred in the first year that we wanted to build on and how we saw ourselves moving forward as an organization” (Doc. 24). Jackie interrupted Camilla’s explanation and added: “We also discussed outcome measures to inform the focus on accountability to the funders.... I think we need to be mindful of what our funder wants, as well as what we want from the evaluation” (Doc. 24). Camilla nodded her head in agreement and restated her view of the evaluation as also being useful to inform organizational decisions.

Maureen observed the interaction between Jackie and Camilla about their views of the evaluation in silence. After they finished, she turned to me and asked: “Can I just ask for my own understanding, are we going to be in trouble at any point in time with a perception that you are too closely involved? Are you worried about that or should I or we be worried about that?” I responded by explaining that my participatory approach was informed by a well-established literature base, and that I had previous successful experiences both meeting the accountability requirements as well as supporting an organization in data-informed decision making. Maureen replied: “I just don’t want our funders to turn up in three years and say you didn’t have enough arm’s length. But as long as you can justify that, it’s good enough for me” (Doc. 24). After a moment of silence, I shifted the conversation to talking about the design of an evaluation activity.

The remainder of the hour was focused on collaborating on the design of an evaluation activity to capture the perspectives of the program’s effectiveness from key program participants. I asked the program developers to identify those members whose perspectives were essential. My field notes captured my observations that although all the program developers participated, Maureen was more likely to contribute by supporting or disagreeing with a suggestion made by Camilla and Jackie than to put forward a name.

For example, in response to Jackie's suggestion, Maureen offered: "I would be interested in what her take is of the program and her predictions or recommendations for next year...including whatever she has to say because of her unique position" (Doc. 24). I concluded the interview by thanking them for their time and inviting their feedback.

When I mentally reviewed the verbal exchange about my role as closely involved with the organizational members with Maureen later that day, I discovered that the interaction irked and, at the same time, confused me. During the next several days, I used my reflective journal to make sense of my feelings and questions. I wrote: "Was Maureen concerned about my ability to conduct a valid evaluation? If the primary purpose for the evaluation is for accountability, should I limit my focus and forget about supporting individual and organizational development? What have I done to make her doubt me?" Finally on the fourth day, I realized that I had not lost credibility, but rather I had yet to establish credibility with Maureen. I could not assume that the credibility I had built with Camilla and Jackie would influence how Maureen viewed me. Instead, it became apparent to me that I needed to seek further opportunities to establish a working relationship with Maureen individually.

The following month while I was reading evaluation literature, I discovered a recent journal article highlighting the ongoing discussion related to external and internal evaluator roles. I immediately thought of Maureen and seized the opportunity to follow up with her, I sent her the following message by email along with the article:

Hi Maureen, I hope you are doing well. I came across these articles in the most recent issue of the American Journal of Evaluation, and they reminded me of our conversation about external evaluators. I thought you might be interested in the

fact that, like you, many others are also concerned about the proximity between an organization and its external evaluation. There appear to be loose guidelines, but the debate continues to attract attention. What is clear, however, is an increased acceptance of the blurring of these boundaries. Please see the attached articles and let me know if I can be of further assistance (Doc. 31).

Even though I received no response to my email, I felt satisfied with how I had handled the situation with Maureen because I was making an effort to respond to her concerns about my approach to meet the external requirement. In the end, Maureen and I never again spoke about her concerns and she never indicated to me that I had successfully built credibility with her. For the duration of the evaluation, my interactions with Maureen remained sporadic but collegial as I made a conscious effort to keep her informed of my activities and of the emerging evaluation findings. It is interesting to note that she did not detract from the process.

The interactions with Maureen emerged as a critical episode because I responded to each individual differently; I accommodated her view of my role. I view the responsibility of the organizational member to articulate their concerns and view of my role, whereas the responsibility of the evaluator is to create an environment where the evaluator accommodates the individuals' concerns and views. I considered the unique need to accommodate the stakeholder's view in an effort to establish trust with each stakeholder. For example, these processes might proceed at a different pace, might require different responses from the evaluator, and result in cues indicating the attainment of different levels of participation. By accommodating their view of my role, it was my

intention to build a working relationship and to mitigate any potential detractors from the evaluation process.

Analyzing Critical Episode 4: Engaging an Individual Stakeholder

The fourth critical episode involved a series of interactions with Courtney, including my first individual interview with her during the fifth month (August) of the evaluation. My preceding interactions with Courtney had been limited to two brief, small group interviews during the second month and a large group interview during the fourth month of the evaluation. My field notes from these interactions revealed two common behaviours that she adopted: to observe and to speak infrequently. My resulting impressions of Courtney as a quiet and reserved person had led me to assume that it might be difficult for her to share her perspectives with me. Nevertheless, I invited Courtney to an individual interview by sending her an email proposing her campus office as the venue and describing my intention to dialogue about her experiences and her views of the evaluation and of me as the evaluator. My decisions to conduct the interview individually in a familiar place and to outline my purpose for the interview ahead of time were intended to create an alternative setting; an environment more conducive to her participation.

When I arrived for the interview, Courtney was waiting, and I noted what appeared to be her hesitant smile and tightly held hands (Doc. 19). In response to what I interpreted to be stress and in an effort to increase her comfort, I smiled and reminded her that our conversation was to be focused only on her role during the past year. Courtney's actions during the next few minutes surprised me: After I sat down, she began to talk,

hesitantly at first, and then seeming to respond to my encouraging nods, she relaxed and spoke about her experiences.

Courtney explained that she had felt frustrated and stressed during the past year. She described her frustration with a lack of organizational communication and coordination among organizational members, saying: “Several times when we did not talk, my time spent on work ended up being unproductive because we didn’t know about other things that were going on” (Doc. 23). She cited an example that highlighted the effect of the breakdown of communication on her productivity: “When a decision was made by management, it resulted in a shift in the timing of implementing an initiative, but because no one told me, I continued to work towards meeting the original deadline, which was a waste of my time” (Doc. 23). She attributed her current stress to the lack of coordination about her new role. She explained that beyond the logistical changes that were about to occur with Amy’s departure, including increased responsibilities, full-time status, and a private office, she knew very few details about the work she would be doing. Her great discomfort was caused by not knowing “the big organizational picture where I know where my work fits” (Doc. 23).

When Courtney began to talk at the beginning of the interview, I responded by listening and encouraging her to guide the conversation. We were over halfway into our scheduled hour before I had the opportunity to ask her questions that built on her answers, such as: “Can you see the evaluation being able to contribute to changing the organization’s lack of communication and coordination?” Courtney commented about the usefulness of the first large group interview to provide an opportunity to communicate:

It [large group interview] was really good because there was time to discuss, whereas during the year I found there wasn't much time for all that. As I tried to give people what they wanted, I felt I missed the big picture, having had only snips and pieces, which I find challenging. (Doc. 23)

Without prompting, she explained how the large group interview had been helpful for her to gain confidence and to be able to share her views. She articulated her intention to contribute to future organizational discussions.

A few minutes before the end of our allotted time, I concluded by asking Courtney for feedback about the interview. She described the experience of being asked her opinion as novel: "Seldom had they [program developers] sought our [research associates'] views before. I hope we continue to meet" (Doc. 23). My response to her cue indicating a willingness to participate appeared to be spontaneous, but rather it was actually based on my prior decision to seek opportunities to sustain interactions with Courtney. I asked if she was interested in collaborating with me on the evaluation tools for the faculty initiative. I explained that her involvement in the initiative and knowledge of the participants and of the initiative context would be useful in the creation of tools that would be both appropriate for the intended audience and useful to inform future implementations. Courtney agreed to work with me, and I made plans to contact her by email.

When I reread the interview transcript and reflected upon my field notes, I thought about how my approach, characterized by being responsive to Courtney's needs, had created an environment in which she attained a sufficient level of comfort to participate. My attention to her needs combined with my focus on listening and

responding resulted in an approach that was unique to Courtney. My response to her cues had resulted in my unplanned invitation. In my journal, I described my impressions of Courtney's behaviour during the interview: "I think Courtney has found her voice with me, but is still trying to find her voice within the organization. She was a fountain of information that just needed to be tapped in a situation where she felt comfortable and safe" (Doc. 23). I wondered if I would continue tailoring my approach with Courtney during subsequent interactions or whether once the dialogue had been successfully established if I would stop.

The analysis of my subsequent behaviour during interactions with Courtney revealed my consistent effort to create opportunities to collaborate with her during the next four months. When I became aware that the evaluation of the faculty initiative would be postponed, I sought to create an alternative opportunity to collaborate. After a preliminary meeting with Anita to discuss the evaluation of a clinical initiative in which Courtney was also involved, I sent the following email to both Anita and Courtney:

Hello. I hope you are doing well. This to follow up on the introductory meeting I had with Anita today about the clinical initiative. I thought it was important to put forth a couple of ideas for its evaluation. I propose to document the process of implementation of the initiative by meeting with you as the instructors 2-3 times over the next four months (probably after the meeting next week, approximately in early December, and then at the end of the placements). Then I would conduct focus groups with students, clinicians, and hospital administrators in the winter. I just wanted to make sure we were on the same page. Let me know what you think.
(Doc. 31)

The email created an opportunity for Courtney to collaborate with me in the evaluation of the clinical initiative. She agreed and during the first interview, Courtney openly shared her perspectives. Afterwards, I wrote a description of my impression of Courtney's behaviour in my journal: "There was a real sense of respect for individual contributions. I really felt that Courtney in particular was willing to talk. The atmosphere of the meeting created a special air of trust" (Doc. 36).

Courtney's work on the evaluation of the clinical initiative was just the beginning of our collaborations. With each interaction, we continued to develop a working relationship, so that when the faculty initiative was ready for its evaluation, Courtney asked me to collaborate with her (see Critical Episode 10). Her collaborations were not limited to working only with me. She also participated (without any encouragement from me) in two organizational discussions over email and sent an email response to my request to review an online survey: "The survey looks great! I have a few small suggestions.... This is really great to get this on-line! Let me know if there is anything else you need. I hope it all goes well!" (Doc. 28). In my field notes, I commented that Courtney had also contributed her perspective throughout the second large group interview (Doc. 38).

The interactions with Courtney emerged as a critical episode because I realized the essential role of engaging individual stakeholders. The analysis revealed the tailoring of my approach in response to the needs of an individual organizational member. In this way, I was recognizing and making use of individual's strengths and perspectives. Once a level of comfort was attained and Courtney indicated a willingness to participate, I

actively sought opportunities to sustain my interactions with her in the hopes of establishing a working relationship.

Analyzing Critical Episode 5: Mutually Defining the Role of the Evaluator with Stakeholders

The fifth critical episode involved a series of interactions with Tanya (project manager), including my fifth individual interview with her during the seventh month (October) of the evaluation. I had initiated this interaction with Tanya during the previous month by emailing an invitation to collaboratively develop an evaluation tool. I suggested that her familiarity with the specific target population of program participants might inform the suitability of the evaluation tool. In my response to her concerns about the time commitment of such an endeavour (because of her work constraints related to her new responsibilities as the sole project manager), I articulated my expectations of her involvement: I proposed to limit her time commitment to two in-person meetings (1/2 hour each) and several brief email exchanges over a 3-week period. She agreed and the process unfolded: During the first meeting we developed questions; over the next 2 weeks we exchanged emailed drafts of the survey, and during the second meeting we finalized the survey. Finally, as I conducted the survey, I sent weekly updates to Tanya to sustain her involvement. In response to the second update, I received an invitation from Tanya to our fifth individual interview.

Tanya's invitation represented the first time she had requested an interview. She wrote: "I would like to meet with you during the next week to update you about some of my work and about what I have been thinking. Does Wednesday at either 10 a.m. or 2

p.m. work for you?” (Doc. 28). I immediately accepted, writing: “I am delighted to talk with you. I had been thinking it was soon time for us to meet again. Any chance we can also talk about your new role? Wednesday at 10 a.m. it is. See you then” (Doc. 28). She agreed and her response indicated she was willing to focus the interview on both communicating her current work and documenting her current role. When I arrived at her campus office, Tanya greeted me and asked about the emerging findings data from the survey. I responded by promising to share findings as they became available, probably in the next week.

As we sat down, Tanya began describing recent changes to her approach to the development and implementation of program initiatives. She explained noticing the influence of her understandings about the previous year on her approach to planning year two:

Last year was about being reactive and not proactive. We were grabbing whatever opportunity to develop and implement. We were not thinking strategically. If I had the knowledge [then] that I have now, I would have done [things] last year differently My new intention is to do things [initiatives] well rather than [do] a lot of them (Doc. 35).

I responded by listening and allowing Tanya to guide the conversation. When she finished, she looked to me, and I responded by encouraging her to talk about specific examples.

Tanya paused and, after what I interpreted as a pensive moment, she described her new approach as more contemplative and attentive to the contributions of individuals: “I am holding everyone back and putting on the brakes, and I’m sure I am annoying when I

ask: ‘Are we ready for this?’ I think it is time that we ask ourselves the difficult questions about what happened during the past year and listen to one another’s experiences” (Doc. 35). She explained her frustrations with a planning committee of a faculty initiative. She and Courtney had discussed how they had been unable to reach a consensus about how to proceed this year. Tanya decided that an opportunity to share and discuss their experiences might help them to move forward. She described her approach to facilitating a reflective activity that was similar to my approach used during the first large group interview. She stopped, reclined in her chair, and looked to me for a comment. I asked her to verify my understandings: “It sounds as if you have discovered that the challenges from last year are not going to disappear and instead you want to gain understandings of the experiences of individuals from the previous year to inform the best way to proceed.” (Doc. 35). She nodded and replied she had yet to sort out a plan but that she would let me know what happened. She suggested a small group meeting about the initiative with Courtney.

I used the remaining ten minutes of our scheduled hour to ask Tanya about her new role and to update her about the ongoing evaluation activities. She concluded her description of her new responsibilities by explaining an advantage of her new role: as the sole project manager, she enjoyed knowing everything that was going on in the program. I decided it was an appropriate time to tell Tanya about Anita’s (research associate) recent invitation to collaborate on the development of an evaluation activity aimed at informing the implementation of a clinical initiative. The timing of my decision to approach Tanya with Anita’s request was based on my assumption that Tanya wanted also to be informed of the evaluation activities. Tanya responded by asking me if I

viewed this role to inform the initiative implementation as part of my responsibility as an external evaluator: “Was this outside of your accountability focus, was [Tanya] asking me to do too much?” (Doc. 35). I replied that it was indeed part of how I viewed my role. Tanya shrugged her shoulders and encouraged me to support Anita’s efforts in any capacity I was willing. As I prepared to leave, I asked if Tanya was willing to work with me on the development of a second evaluation tool; she agreed, and I said I would email with the details during the following month.

As I gathered my papers and prepared to leave, I started to think about the significance of this interaction with Tanya. I reviewed the dialogue of the interaction in my head and only later captured my thoughts in my journal. I wrote: “I regard my relationship with Tanya as having entered the next level of engagement: She is more comfortable with me and is beginning to see but can’t yet articulate that our roles are not limited by our initial conceptions” (Doc. 37). I interpreted her initiating the meeting and offering to share what happened with the faculty initiative as cues indicating greater comfort. I also considered her to be receptive to expanding her view of my role beyond accountability. Even though she recognized changes to her approach to program development and was trying to make sense of them, she could not yet articulate whether her participation in the evaluation had influenced her approach.

During the following month, my behaviour with Tanya was characterized by a responsive and active approach. I was responsive to her needs and active in seeking opportunities to negotiate my role. For example, during our subsequent individual interview, I proposed using the second evaluation tool to inform subsequent implementations of the initiative. In addition, during an email exchange about the agenda

for the second large group interview, I no longer simply accommodated Tanya's view of my role, but instead was active to define my role as useful to inform organizational decisions. For example, I responded to Tanya's email outlining the agenda: "Do you mind if I include a collaborative review of the survey data at the beginning of the meeting?" (Doc. 36). Her response was:

Hi Cheryl. Of course we can start by looking at data....this is totally your afternoon, not mine, so I apologize for trying to set an agenda...I think I got worried yesterday since I did not really know what I needed to bring to this meeting, so I just wanted to outline some things for my own benefit. Sorry about that. (Doc. 36)

My reply was polite, yet direct:

Tanya, that sounds great. It sounds like we want to look at emerging data, and I just wanted to make sure I had not stepped on any toes either. It looks like if we each bring some data and some copies, we'll work it out from there. See you then. (Doc. 36)

The subsequent large group interview focused on interpreting the data generated by the evaluation which then led to a discussion about how the evaluation findings could be used to inform organizational decisions. Even more important than the success of this large group interview in providing opportunities for the organizational members to collaboratively interpret the data from the online survey was Tanya's invitation at the end of the meeting: she asked me to review the poster she was preparing for a conference about the previous year's accomplishments and challenges. I interpreted Tanya's invitation as further evidence of her broadened view of my role. Later I noted in my

reflective journal: “I am satisfied that Tanya is starting to see my role as useful beyond accountability. I wonder what the impact of this view will be when we talk about the report?” (Doc. 38).

These interactions with Tanya emerged as a critical episode because I realized the importance of mutually defining my role with individual stakeholders. The critical episode illustrates breaking a figurative threshold with Tanya. As she began to expand her conceptions of my role, she began to think about the usefulness of the evaluation beyond accountability to include possibilities she had not before explicitly considered. I interpreted her cues as indicative of her receptiveness to viewing me not only as the external evaluator responsible for accountability and broadened to include documenting the process and informing future implementations. Moving away from accommodating the organizational view, we began to mutually define my expanding role.

Analysis of Critical Episode 6: Emailing as a Tool for Communicating with Stakeholders

The sixth critical episode involved a series of email interactions with the organizational members as a group during the ninth month (December) of the evaluation. Three months previously, using email, I had solicited feedback about an evaluation tool that was to be used with all program participants. I received suggestions from all the organizational members with the exception of Maureen. Even though I interpreted their responses as indicating a successful use of email as a way to communicate with the organizational members as group, I continued to use email sparingly. I attributed my limited use to my desire to be respectful of the expectations of the evaluation on the time of my stakeholders. As a result, using email with organizational members as a way to

stimulate a discussion was not my intention when I received an emailed invitation from Tanya to attend the Program Discussion Day.

I assumed Tanya intended for me to attend the Program Discussion Day in a capacity as the external evaluator. The Program Discussion Day had been planned by organizational members and was focused on providing their community partners with networking opportunities and on promoting discussions about the future direction of the program. I based my decision to offer to play a formal evaluator role on two considerations: (a) my prior knowledge about this program's dynamic contexts and their intended community partners' role, and b) my awareness of Tanya's view of my role as useful beyond the accountability focus (see Critical Episode 5). I could not help but be disappointed when Tanya replied that the project developers (Jackie and Maureen) declined my offer. Tanya attributed their decision to a concern that ethical procedures might be disruptive to the focus of the Program Discussion Day: In order for me to collect data as the evaluator, the procedures required me to gain consent from each of the community partners. Instead, Jackie, Maureen, and Tanya had encouraged me to attend as a participant. Without a formal evaluation role, I attended with the intentions of observing the dynamics between the organizational members and their community partners and gaining understandings about their influences on the program.

During the Program Discussion Day, I participated in the small group discussions with the community partners. When I arrived home, I wrote an account of what I observed and my impressions of the overall day. As I was writing, I realized I had gained a unique perspective as a participant: the other organizational members had only been able to participate minimally because of their logistical responsibilities. It was at this

point that I first considered whether my perspective might be useful to the organizational members. I believed the information would be useful for them to receive, but rather than just sharing my observations, I was more interested in participating in a discussion to elicit their perspectives. I immediately considered the usefulness of a large group interview situation, but the timing (two days before winter holidays) made it impossible to coordinate. I considered delaying until after the holiday, but then I thought about my previous success using email as an efficient means of communicating and of having access to their responses.

The process of composing the email was neither straightforward nor easy. I debated the potential benefit versus the potential liability of sending the email. In my journal I considered the outcomes of two scenarios: The best case scenario would entail us all gaining a shared perspective of the Program Discussion Day that would otherwise not have existed, whereas the worst case would entail being seen as an intruder to an activity in which I had no formal involvement. My decision to send the email was influenced by my impression that some of the organizational members would likely recognize my intention to support a discussion related to program development.

I focused on the accuracy of the content and the appropriateness of my words and tone. The final version of the email began with a greeting followed by an explanation about my attendance at the Project Discussion Day without any formal evaluation agenda. I portrayed my unique perspective as being “a fly on the wall” and explained that the purpose of sharing some of my overall impressions was to stimulate a discussion. I described the day as being “successful” in achieving the organizers’ goals, and I outlined the overall themes revealed by the participant discussions. I congratulated them on the

organization's ability to switch the order of the day's agenda items in response to the community partners' request for increased time for networking during the morning session. I concluded the email by encouraging each of the organizational members to take a few moments to document their impressions of the day in an email to be sent to everyone by the end of the week.

After sending the email, I remained unsure of whether I had properly assessed the risk I associated with it. I soon gained confidence because, within a day, each of the six attending organizational members, in addition to Shannon who had not attended, responded. Three themes were revealed in their responses: an appreciation for my perspective, an appraisal of the "worth" of the day, and an assessment of what had been accomplished. My impression from the responses was that the email had been successful; the organizational members used my observations and the responses of others to stimulate the sharing of their own impressions. For example, Camilla wrote: "I agree with Maureen that the day was very worthwhile....It is true that some of the 'key' players were not there, but I was encouraged by the mix of participants and their interest level." Anita commented: "I agree that the informal conversations and networking opportunities were very important. Thanks for your observations and comments." (Doc. 40). Over the next two days, the organizational members continued to interact with one another by email about the Program Discussion Day.

The responses to my email led me to consider the benefits and challenges of using email. The email provided an opportunity to demonstrate my role as useful to provide means for the organizational members to communicate and as offering potential to inform decisions. Although I viewed my email approach as risky, I noted my time spent and

attention paid to detail in writing the email to be indicative of my approach to proceed with care and informed by my previous experiences. The successfulness of the email to elicit responses from most of the organizational members led me to think about the advantages and new ways of using email for organizational communication. At the same time I considered the disadvantages of using email to communicate; my feelings of anxiety had been influenced by my previous experiences associated with email, where messages had been misconstrued and tones misinterpreted and where the sender had expectations of an instantaneous response.

I became more attentive to my approach to email in the subsequent months; I took care to review the messages before sending them and began to articulate my expectations of the recipients' responses in each email. For example, I wrote in an email to Courtney:

Hi Courtney. I hope you are doing well. It would be great if you could review this list of focus group questions. I welcome any feedback, but I draw your attention particularly to questions five and six because I think these might be the most important questions. I will be conducting the focus group a week from tomorrow. Thanks. (Doc. 46)

As I became more confident and aware of the organizational members' cues of receptivity to my use of email, I expanded my use, which had been previously limited to organizing logistics and sharing drafts of evaluation tools. I began to use email to share emerging findings and as an efficient means of facilitating collaborative interpretations of the findings.

These email interactions with organizational members emerged as a critical episode because I realized the essential role of email as a tool for communicating among

organizational members, including me. In addition to creating an equal opportunity for organizational members to contribute their views, email also created a paper trail of our interactions. I found email efficient to gently nudge each of the organizational members to expand their view of my role by demonstrating my ability to play an expanded role beyond accountability. Through taking risks in my efforts to sustain interactions, I encouraged stakeholders to do the same.

Analyzing Critical Episode 7: Creating an Ongoing Dialogue of Use with Stakeholders

The seventh critical episode involved a series of interactions, including the third large group interview during the eleventh month (February) of the evaluation. During the month prior to the large group interview, I had invited Jackie and Maureen to a small group interview where we could share and collaboratively interpret the evaluation findings from a course initiative in which they had been the instructors. A week before the interview, I sent them a summary of the data I had collected and expressed my desire to listen to their interpretations of the findings. My approach during the interview was to facilitate a discussion by incorporating the emerging findings into my responses as a way of stimulating further interpretations; for example: “As you see, the participants described your approach as the instructors to collaborate in the planning as ‘different’. Talk to me about your perspective of what was different about how the instructors worked together?” (Doc. 43). Following the interview, I noted two important outcomes of the interview with Jackie and Maureen. For the first time, Maureen had dominated the discussion with comments about her experiences, for example:

I think I'm only figuring it out at the same time that Jackie is also figuring it out. We have not even discussed our experiences with one another before now. I am only now beginning to understand how my experiences affected how I approached the teaching of this course. (Doc. 43)

I interpreted Maureen's willingness to share her perspectives as indicating that she had attained a level of comfort and confidence permitting her to contribute to the conversation. The second outcome was related to the usefulness both Maureen and Jackie expressed about the opportunity the interview created for them to talk about the findings. They both encouraged me to organize a large group interview that would create an opportunity for all the organizational members to engage in the collaborative interpretation of the emerging findings. I agreed and proposed to use the same meeting to outline the plan for generating and reviewing the evaluation report. Their support provided the impetus for the third large group interview.

Prior to the large group interview, I emailed Tanya and Jackie to seek their input for planning the agenda. To my surprise, both of them declined being involved in planning and facilitating the large group interview. Tanya offered her support saying: "The only thing I will say is that I think everyone should be involved. It's good for everyone to know what is happening. You are in charge" (Doc. 44). Jackie agreed, and in my journal I recorded my interpretations of their responses and decreased involvement: "I have built credibility with Tanya and Jackie since the first large group interview. I have built confidence in my ability to use the large group interview to provide a meaningful opportunity to communicate about the findings and to collaborate in the planning of the report" (Doc. 43). I considered the importance of my approach to involve the

organizational leadership and to embrace the opportunity to organize the agenda on my own.

I began the third large group interview in a campus conference room asking Jackie, Camilla, Tanya, Maureen, and Courtney the question: “What do we want to accomplish with our reporting efforts?” (Doc. 45). Without hesitation, Jackie responded: “Make our funders happy” (Doc. 45), and I noted in my field notes the nodding heads of every organizational member as they agreed to her comment. I listened to the ensuing discussion about what the funders wanted, which included the contents of the report and the optimal depth of detail and length of the document. When there was a lull in the conversation, I began to speak. First, I acknowledged the focus on accountability as “the overall goal of this evaluation” (Doc. 45). Then, I distributed a one-page summary of the report guidelines created by the funders. During the next twenty minutes, I facilitated a collaborative review of each of the guidelines and the available evaluation data to inform each guideline. I welcomed the suggestions of organizational members and the organizational members indicated a consensus by verbally agreeing and nodding their heads that the evaluation had generated sufficient details to meet the mandated guidelines.

I started the second half of the interview by reiterating my responsibility to the organization to generate a report to meet the funder’s timelines and guidelines. Then I proposed that the accuracy and usefulness of the report would be increased if the organizational members collaborated in reviewing the report prior to submission. There was agreement, and Tanya proposed that the review occur the same morning as the management meeting in two months. I agreed and after settling the timelines, to my

astonishment (and delight as captured in my field notes), Tanya shifted the conversation to focus on the usefulness of the report beyond accountability with her comment: “Cheryl had mentioned an idea that I liked the other day, and that I thought was really interesting: documenting the past, present, and future visions of the program and sharing this information” (Doc. 45). Jackie responded, citing the three aspects of the initiatives in which the funders were interested: the process of implementation, the challenges encountered, and the lessons learned at the end of year one. I acknowledged the funders’ focus, and in an effort to expand our focus on use, I asked: “Who else might be interested in this information?”

The subsequent conversation developed into a brainstorming session that revealed several suggestions for avenues and audiences for dissemination besides the funding report. Tanya suggested using the organization’s newsletter to share information about the lessons learned with the community members. Jackie forwarded the idea of sharing the process of implementation with her colleagues to inform programs who were funded at the same time by the same funders. Courtney proposed using the process of implementation of the clinical initiative as a presentation at a conference. I looked to Maureen and Camilla and encouraged their sharing. When they responded that they had no other idea, I addressed all the organizational members and encouraged them to continue thinking about how the findings could be used. I concluded the meeting within the two hours allotted and promised to distribute the draft of the evaluation report a week prior to our review meeting. As I was leaving, I overheard one of the organizational members remark to another: “I’m looking forward to reading the report” (Doc. 45).

Later the same day, I considered the challenges associated with promoting use of the evaluation findings beyond accountability within an accountability-focused evaluation. Even though I interpreted the organizational members' willingness to engage in a dialogue about use and to participate in the review of the report as indicating an overall interest in the usefulness of the evaluation, some organizational members remained focused solely on accountability. As I reflected upon the comments by individual members, I realized Camilla and Maureen differed in their receptiveness to engage in the dialogue about use compared to the other organizational members. I pondered whether these differences might be dependent upon their view of my role and of the evaluator. In my reflective journal, I asked: "How can an evaluator promote the definitions beyond the organizational members' view of her role?"

My subsequent approach during the next two months was to sustain the dialogue related to use. As I worked hard to complete the report according to the negotiated timeline, I continued to share emerging findings and to monitor and respond to cues related to use. These interactions for the most part occurred over email as I distributed summaries of the evaluation findings for specific initiatives and encouraged the sharing of interpretations. At the same time, I responded to individual organizational members to develop evaluation tools to meet their evolving needs; for example, when I supported Anita and Courtney and their work with the second implementation of the clinical initiative (see Critical Episode 8).

These interactions emerged as a critical episode because I realized the essential role of creating an ongoing dialogue about use with individual organizational members to monitor and then to respond to their views of my role and of the usefulness of the

evaluation. The large group interview and discussion about the evaluation report created an opportunity to engage in the collaborative interpretation of the findings and to begin promoting the use of the findings beyond accountability.

Analysis of Critical Episode 8: Interpreting with Stakeholders to Promote Use

The eighth critical episode involved a series of interactions with Anita and Courtney (research associates) during the twelfth month (March) of the evaluation. Our work together had been initiated four months previously by Anita's request that I collaborate with Courtney and her on the evaluation of the clinical initiative. My approach during the first interview was to invite Anita and Courtney to describe their experiences during the development of the initiative and their expectations of me and of the evaluation. I responded by agreeing to collaborate and reiterated my commitment to support their intended use of the evaluation findings to inform future implementations. We spent the remaining time developing questions for an evaluation tool to be used with the student participants from the initiative.

Following the interview, in my reflective journal I described two features I had noted in my field notes: enthusiasm and an emphasis on learning. Both Courtney and Anita had appeared enthusiastic and dedicated to learning from the evaluation of the initiative: Courtney described her interest in learning about how to implement a clinical initiative, and Anita explained that even though her previous experiences as a clinical coordinator gave her some background, she looked forward to learning about the impact of the initiative's novel approach. Shortly thereafter, I conducted the evaluation activity with the student participants, generated a summary of the data, and then proposed a

meeting with Anita and Courtney to collaboratively interpret the findings. The week prior to the second interview, I distributed the summary by email.

My approach to the second interview was characterized by using the emerging findings as a means to elicit their experiences and interpretations of the findings. To do so, I asked such questions as: “As indicated in the summary, the majority of the learners described their experience of participating in the clinical initiative as ‘valuable’ and ‘eye-opening.’ What are your overall impressions of the initiative?” (Doc. 48). Courtney agreed with the data, explaining that she had seen evidence of the students having learned, and she described her own feelings of being “pleased with the outcomes because everyone learned” (Doc. 48). Without prompting, she reported her reflections on her experiences: “I learned a lot about what I would do differently next time. I have taken some time to think, and the process taught me a lot about what to pay attention to, what changes to make, and what to keep in future projects.” (Doc. 48).

Anita responded to Courtney’s comments describing her feeling of success. Courtney had said that she was: “satisfied that we had all reached our goals to increase our knowledge” (Doc. 48). Anita indicated an agreement with Courtney’s reflection by nodding her head and saying: “I too learned” (Doc. 48), but she did not expand further, even after I encouraged her to take her time. The remaining hour featured similar responses: Courtney shared her experiences and her interpretations of what she thought the students’ comments meant; in comparison, Anita shared her experiences but seemed hesitant to express her interpretations of the students’ perspectives. I concluded the interview with a final question about their willingness to again participate in the initiative implementation. Even though both Anita and Courtney agreed, Courtney indicated she

would be especially interested if the evaluation revealed concrete recommendations about how to improve the initiative, which she defined as increasing its impact.

Following the interview, I thought about the behaviour of each of the research associates during the interviews. In my journal I wrote:

Without a doubt, there was evidence of a sustained focus on use: informing the initiative had been identified by Anita as the intended use of the findings at the beginning of the evaluation and again during the collaborative interpretation and finally their willingness to again participate was dependent upon the evaluation informing improvements. What was not clear to me, however, was what had I done as the evaluator to support the emphasis on use of the findings? (Doc. 48).

I discovered that I was unclear not only about how my approach had supported their emphasis on use, but also why Courtney and Anita were so different in their responses to my questions. I later interpreted Courtney's ability to share her interpretations more openly than Anita to mean Courtney and I had already established a level of comfort, whereas I was still establishing my working relationship with Anita.

Subsequent interactions were initiated the following month by an email from Anita inviting me to continue collaborating with Courtney and her on the second implementation. She wrote: "Our goal for the evaluation is to continue learning, and we cannot imagine doing it without you." (Doc. 50). I agreed to collaborate, and again I asked her to clarify the expectations of my role. Anita wrote:

We would like to continue the same type of process where we collaborate in the development of the tools and then you send us the summary the day before our meeting to interpret. I am not sure of the type of activities at this point, perhaps a

focus group or an email survey. You are the expert on that stuff, and we can decide at the next meeting.” (Doc. 53)

Their invitation seemed to indicate an expanding view of my role beyond simply informing the initiative to include helping them to learn from their experiences.

The interactions with Anita and Courtney emerged as a critical episode because I realized the essential role of collaborative interpretations to monitor the changing views of me as the evaluator and of the usefulness of the evaluation. Through these interactions I began to see my role not only as an active promoter of use by sharing findings and encouraging ownership but also as responsive supporter to the stakeholders’ intended uses. As a result I began to conceptualize the interpretation of findings as a shared responsibility between evaluator and stakeholders. These interactions brought to my attention the necessity of a focus on use throughout the evaluation and, even though I was busy writing the report for external funders, it was still necessary that I respond to the needs of Anita and Courtney to collaborate on the second implementation of the clinical initiative.

Analysis of Critical Episode 9: Dialoguing with Stakeholders About Use of Findings

The ninth critical episode involved a series of interactions related to reviewing the findings and generating the evaluation report for the external funders during the thirteenth month (April) of the evaluation. My interaction with Tanya the previous month represented the first time I had shared the outline for the report, including the challenges I was experiencing. I interpreted Tanya’s offer of suggestions and her comment “Oh! this is going to be so interesting to read” (Doc. 49) as evidence of her interest in the review process. In my reflective journal, I noted the interactions’ usefulness for providing an

opportunity to monitor Tanya's view of my role and the usefulness of the evaluation. For example, I quoted Tanya's reference to my future role: "Your involvement next year will be important to help us document the effectiveness of this program and promote communication of what is going on" (Doc.49) and her comment on the usefulness of the evaluation: "Let us use the findings from this year to inform the planning of the same initiatives for next year" (Doc. 49). I interpreted Tanya's view of my role for the following year was to document and communicate as well as to satisfy the accountability requirements, and her view of the usefulness of the evaluation was to inform planning decisions.

The week before the fourth large group meeting, I distributed by email the evaluation report to the organizational members. The interview took place in a campus conference room and involved Jackie, Maureen, Courtney, Camilla, and Anita. In addition, Shannon connected by phone and Tanya had submitted a draft with her comments the day before because she was unable to attend. At the beginning of the interview, I let the organizational members guide the conversation by first offering their general comments about the report: "It looks good" and "You have captured what I was thinking about" (Doc. 51). Then I asked them: "How will the funders interpret our findings?" (Doc. 51). Their responses led to a discussion that allowed me to learn about how they were viewing the usefulness of the findings; for example, Maureen offered: "I'd forgotten about our role related to networking. This was really good. I would say there are three minor themes coming out of the evaluation. This evaluation has produced some early evidence that we are playing each of these roles" (Doc. 51). To my surprise, she suggested sharing the report with audiences besides the funders: "I really see this

document [the evaluation report] circulating both internally and externally [to funders]. How can we make this happen?” (Doc. 51).

The ensuing discussion did not follow what I interpreted as Maureen’s intention to focus on how the evaluation report could be used. Instead Shannon began to speak about how, as an organization, they were disseminating what they had learned from the program:

My perspective is that there’s been a lot of conversation about and a lack of action in terms of sharing what really we’re learning about this, and two years into it [the program implementation] I think we should be doing more dissemination, but all these conferences just allow people to showcase stuff, and it doesn’t make any sense to me. (Doc. 51)

I interpreted Shannon’s response to indicate her focus on the usefulness of the findings for accountability as she had had only very limited involvement in the evaluation.

As I was driving home, I realized that even though I was satisfied with the outcome of meeting and I interpreted their comments to indicate I had met their accountability requirements, I was disappointed a concrete plan for dissemination beyond the funders had not been agreed upon. I had interpreted their interest in the review process and their beginning interest in the dissemination as evidence of building ownership of the findings. In my reflection journal, I wrote: “How can I foster the use of the findings? How do I go about encouraging individual organizational members, who are all at different levels of understanding, to agree as a group to use the findings?” (Doc. 51).

During the week following the large group interview, I distributed the next draft of the report to all the organizational members several days prior to a subsequent meeting

with Tanya and Jackie. I began the interview by asking if the report met their expectations. Both women nodded, and Jackie replied: “Yes and the report did not contain any shockers,” and Tanya agreed, saying: “The report should not [contain shockers] because [Cheryl] has kept us updated throughout the process” (Doc. 52). Tanya commented that she was both impressed and satisfied with the final report; Jackie agreed that I had generated a report that “met [her] requirements for accountability” (Doc. 52). My field notes documented a friendly tone to the meeting as we agreed the report was ready for submission. I shifted the conversation and reminded Tanya of our earlier discussion in April about ways to disseminate the findings (see Critical Episode 7). Tanya agreed that these remained viable options, but said that she had other priorities at the moment. I reluctantly agreed to meet again after the report’s submission to talk further about potential audiences for the evaluation. The second half of the interview is further discussed in Critical Episode 10.

The interactions related to the collaborative review of the report emerged as a critical episode because I realized the essential role of reviewing the findings as a way to sustain use. These collaborative interactions provided opportunities for me to monitor participants’ views of my role and to actively promote the usefulness of the evaluation findings. I began to see that each individual organizational member underwent a unique process related to their views of the usefulness of the findings and that this process was not always evident. For example, until the accountability requirements had been satisfied Jackie’s focus had remained on use for accountability purposes whereas, early in the evaluation Tanya had become aware of the usefulness of the findings to document and to communicate.

Analysis of Critical Episode 10: Revisiting the Process with Stakeholders

The tenth and final critical episode involved a series of interactions including the fifth large group interview focused on revisiting the usefulness of the evaluation process during the fourteenth month (May) of the evaluation. The interactions the month prior involved an impromptu question at the end of the small group interview with Jackie and Tanya (see Critical Episode 9); desiring to extend our conversation about use beyond the findings, I asked Tanya how she viewed the usefulness of the evaluation process. After what I interpreted as a pensive moment, Tanya replied: “I found it useful to help me to think about how we should approach program planning next year.” (Doc. 52). I responded by asking whether the evaluation process itself had been what she expected, to which she described her participation as involving more time than she had expected. She also mentioned that participating in the process helped her to gain a deeper understanding of the organizational members’ experiences in the program, which helped her to make decisions about the program. Until this point Jackie had watched our interaction, and nodding her head indicating agreement she said: “the evaluation process helped me to communicate with organizational members and to inform the focus of the organization” (Doc. 52). I thanked them for their participation and drew the meeting to a close.

When I reviewed my field notes I realized that this interaction had revealed for this first time, the impact of the process on the organizational members. I was curious to know more details and I invited organizational members to the fifth large group interview in a campus conference room and when everyone (Jackie, Tanya, Courtney, and Anita) had arrived, I began the meeting by asking: “What did you find most useful about either

the evaluation findings or the evaluation process?” Jackie, the first to reply, talked about my role as external to the organization: “Your outside perspective was valuable because it is difficult when we are immersed; sometimes [we] don’t see the forest [we] are just looking at the trees... like when we needed help to communicate, but we did not see it.” (Doc. 57). Tanya agreed and referred to the evaluation process as useful to promote communication about, reflection upon, and documentation of the development and implementation process. She said:

One of the really valuable things is that we got a lot of discussions about what was happening with the various initiatives, and we’re learning so much as a group. We talk [among ourselves] about some of the big lessons learned, but we are not really documenting it. It’s good to have you come talk to us every once in a while, so that we can say, ‘Oh yeah and this is happening, and this is happening, and this is happening.’ You can look at it from a different perspective. (Doc. 57)

Anita responded to Tanya’s comment, by citing the example of the evaluation documenting and informing the clinical initiative by encouraging Courtney and her to think more cognitively about their experiences. She said:

I don’t think we [Courtney and Anita] would have had the information captured around organizing the clinical initiative unless [Cheryl] had helped us find out what we had learned about each other and about the planning process.... It [our meetings with Cheryl] forced us to stop and think about it and talk to each other about it at a higher level, at a more useful level for the future. (Doc. 57)

Tanya replied with a focus on the future; she commented that the findings were particularly useful to generate knowledge to inform the sustainability of the initiatives;

for example, establishing a common vocabulary set that could then be used and understood by all the community partners. She also described the evaluation findings as “useful” to inform the program focus, saying:

The other really good thing was looking at all the different roles of our organization and breaking them down into all of the sub-roles. I think that it is really good for us to recognize how we perceive our roles and also how others perceive our roles. This is going to be really important for the future and for program sustainability. (Doc. 57)

Organizational members were aware of how the evaluation findings and process were useful: uses of the evaluation findings included documenting and informing improvements to initiatives and program decisions, and uses of the evaluation process included supporting communicating, providing an external perspective, and documenting influences on the program.

After listening to their perspectives, I asked the organizational members to reflect upon the evaluation process and, in particular, to comment on my approach as the evaluator. When there was no response, I explained my reasons for asking were to inform my approach for the following year. Specifically, I sought their opinion about the nature of my interactions, asking such questions as: “Did I interact with sufficient frequency? Did my use of in-person and email interactions serve your needs? Were my expectations reasonable?” Jackie described my communication with her as “good,” and she said that I had successfully avoided making the evaluation threatening, explaining:

An external evaluation can be threatening if you think that it’s going to tell about things you don’t really want people to know about There were no surprises in

what you did, and there shouldn't be any surprises because if there were huge surprises it would mean that I was out of touch with what was really happening (Doc. 57).

After a moment of silence, Tanya added: "Next year, we again will need to meet the accountability of funders. I'll send you the new guidelines when they come out" (Doc. 57). I concluded the meeting by thanking everyone for their participation and welcoming their feedback. Following the interview, I sent a summary to all the organizational members and in the accompanying email I invited those who had been unable to attend (Camilla, Maureen, and Shannon) to individual interviews to discuss the usefulness of the past year's evaluation process. I concluded the summary saying I would be in touch in another month or so to discuss the following year's evaluation.

As I considered the comments from the interview, I realized that the organizational members had become aware of some of the uses of the evaluation findings and processes. However, they were still not able to articulate how their participation influenced their outlook about the potential use for next year's evaluation. I thought about the advantage of having a longer term commitment with this organization. I had already established relationships, trust, and credibility, which allowed me to review the evaluation process with them. In my reflective journal I wondered how our previous relationships would affect my approach to the next year's evaluation.

During the following week, I received emails that led me to consider how to approach the beginning of the new evaluation cycle. Anita wrote: "Lovely meeting this morning! I really enjoy these reflective sessions and hearing about others' views of the initiatives Thanks again for all of your interest and involvement" (Doc. 59). I

considered that it might not be necessary to establish working relationships with some organizational members because they would already be in place. Instead, my approach could focus on fostering collaborative interactions and promoting use from the beginning of the evaluation. The following day, I received emails that surprised me and led me to reconsider my assumptions of certain individuals' levels of comfort; for example, Maureen's email explained she had been out of town and was sorry to have missed the meeting; she wrote: "When I look at the attached file of activities, it is very impressive – thanks. I am keen to hear more about how we can use the findings" (Doc. 58). I wrote in my journal: "From Maureen's email, perhaps she has attained trust in me after all." (Doc. 58).

My approach to the planning of the subsequent evaluation was to invite Tanya to an interview during the eighteenth month (September) of the evaluation. Our initial discussion focused on how the evaluation would be used. As well as for accountability, Tanya also suggested its use to inform the sustainability of the initiatives, to document the implementation processes, and to promote communication. She suggested my role and my "institutional knowledge" of the organizational members, the program, and its context had become important to inform the program decisions. At the same time, I received an invitation from Courtney to continue collaborating on the faculty initiative.

These interactions related to revisiting the evaluation process emerged as a critical episode because I realized the essential role of reconsidering the influence of the evaluation process on stakeholders. Knowing that I was working with the organization for two years highlighted the advantages of engaging in a longer-term evaluation relationship. At the end of the first year of the evaluation, I was able to take the time to

reflect and to revisit how the evaluation findings and process had been used. At the same time, a longer-term commitment allowed the organizational members to invest time and energy in their learning to see the possibilities of use.

Summary of the Critical Evaluation Episodes

The 10 critical episodes highlight the insights I gained and subsequently how such episodes triggered transformations, modifications or refinements in my thinking and evaluator behaviour (see Table 10 for summary). As well, they are indicative of the non-linear and iterative nature of evaluation decisions and activities.

Table 10 Summary of the Insights Gained from the Critical Episodes.

Critical Episode	The insights related to the importance of...
1	Listening as a means of establishing trust with stakeholders
2	Accommodating a stakeholder defined evaluator role
3	Responding to building credibility with individual stakeholders
4	Engaging an individual stakeholder
5	Mutually defining the role of the evaluator
6	Emailing as a tool for communicating with stakeholders
7	Creating an ongoing dialogue of use with stakeholders
8	Interpreting with stakeholders to promote use
9	Dialoguing with stakeholders about use of findings
10	Reconsidering the process with stakeholders

The insights revealed by my analysis of the critical episodes allowed me to trace how my principles were modified over time. These modified guiding principles affected how I approached and conducted the evaluation. My understanding of how the insights transformed, modified and refined the principles guiding my approach is described in the following section.

Personal Evaluation Principles In Action: Transformations, Modifications and Refinements

The critical episodes enabled me to monitor the congruence of my thinking and behaviour with the original six personal evaluation principles that I had anticipated would guide my approach. At the beginning of the evaluation, I explained how these six principles had emerged as a code of conduct from my previous evaluation experiences and my reading of the literature (see Table 11). In the following section I describe the influences of the insights on the transformation, modification, and refinement of my six principles over the 10 episodes. In addition, I recount the emergence of a new seventh principle that guided how I conceptualized my evaluation role within the organizational structure. The examination of the modifications to my approach associated with each of the principles led me to identify the pertinent critical episodes to which I refer in each of the following descriptions.

Reconsidering Principle 1: Establishing Environments Conducive to Participation
Initial Principle 1: I should establish an environment in which the organizational members would feel encouraged to participate in the evaluation process.

It was my intention that the organizational members would participate in all aspects of the evaluation. I assumed that creating an environment at the beginning of the evaluation where organizational members were comfortable and were encouraged to be involved would be sufficient to sustain their participation. The cues to which I paid attention included those indicating physical and emotional comfort. My approach was

apparent during a small group interview when I responded to Tanya's cues that I interpreted as fatigue by offering to reschedule the meeting (see Critical Episode 1). When she replied that she wanted to be involved, I assumed the environment was conducive for her participation. Indeed, the willingness of the majority of the organizational members to interact led me to assume that I had been successful. The exceptions were Courtney and Maureen, and it was not until the fifth month of the evaluation that I understood the sources of their discomfort.

My previous interactions with Maureen had perplexed me; although she participated in the small group interviews, her participation was limited and did not include sharing her perspectives. It was only when she articulated the source of her anxiety that I gained an understanding of her lack of confidence in my evaluator approach (see Critical Episode 3). Maureen's concerns created an obstacle to her participation because she had not reached a level where she was comfortable to share her perspectives. I responded as I best could without previous preparation and attempted to alleviate her anxiety. It was not until I had reflected upon our interaction that I realized my approach had not built credibility with her individually. In order to do so, I acknowledged Maureen's concerns by sending her an email with journal articles. Although I received no indication that my email had successfully established my credibility, Maureen and I never again spoke about my approach and later when she engaged with me, she did not appear to detract from the evaluation process.

I started to think about the inadequacy of my focus on establishing an environment that would encourage all organizational members to participate. My interactions with Maureen led me to consider an alternate need to focus on an

individual's level of comfort and to create individual environments responsive to each person's unique needs. I saw this approach as necessary to building a sufficient level of comfort and credibility with each organizational member at the beginning of the evaluation to encourage their participation. I considered the potential for such an approach to provide opportunities to gain an awareness of and to respond to members who could have a negative impact on the evaluation.

My attention to building a level of comfort led to a shift in my approach to actively foster working relationships with individual organizational members. An active approach meant I could no longer assume that establishing an environment that was conducive for one member's participation would automatically encourage the participation of another. I began to monitor individual responses to my approach and to look for cues indicating comfort and a willingness to participate.

I became aware of the effectiveness of the modification to my approach during my interactions with Courtney and Anita (see Critical Episode 8). Whereas previously I had assumed Courtney's lack of participation was a choice, an individual interview revealed the source of her discomfort. When Courtney acknowledged that her discomfort was related to the unknown, I responded by listening, acknowledging her contributions, and then responding to her verbal indication of a willingness to continue interacting. I suggested a plan to collaborate on the development of an evaluation tool for an initiative in which she was closely involved.

As a result, I developed an approach that fostered a level of comfort by creating environments unique for each organizational member while incorporating features including listening, acknowledging their contributions, and responding to their cues. It

became important to me to transform my first principle guiding my approach to: *I should foster environments in which **individual** organizational members participate in the evaluation process.* (Note: the bolded words or phrases are the modifications)

Reconsidering Principle 2: Using a Responsive and Emergent Design

Initial Principle 2: I should use a responsive and emergent design that would remain relevant to the evolving organization members' informational needs.

My use of a responsive and emergent design during the present evaluation was apparent during the second critical episode when I became aware of the pressing needs of the individual organizational members that required attention quite apart from the accountability focus of the evaluation. In response to these needs, I provided opportunities for the stakeholders to communicate during a large group interview in an effort to inform programmatic decisions. I assumed my approach of responding to the needs as they arose would permit the evaluation to remain relevant to the organizational members' informational needs. I did not foresee the potential of the individual views of the evaluation to influence the informational needs of the stakeholders.

During the third large group meeting, as I responded to the organizational members' initial views focused on accountability (see Critical Episode 7), I facilitated a collaborative review of the reporting guidelines from the external funders and the data that had been gathered to inform each guideline. The stakeholders indicated a consensus by verbally agreeing that the evaluation had generated sufficient details to satisfy the accountability focus of the evaluation. The ensuing brainstorming session that revealed several avenues and audiences for dissemination of the evaluation findings beyond the

funding report highlighted the overall interest in the evaluation. In addition to broadening my assumptions about the stakeholders' views of the evaluation, I became aware of the uniqueness of their individual perspectives.

My thinking about their views of the evaluation as useful to document and to communicate led me to consider the need to focus my approach on monitoring the evolution of these views. I considered this approach necessary to be able to respond to their needs, and I modified my approach to seek opportunities with individual organizational members to monitor their views. This approach meant I could no longer assume their views of the evaluation would remain unchanged, and I began to monitor individuals for cues indicating an expanding view of the evaluation, as well as a willingness to use the evaluation beyond accountability.

I became aware of the modification to my approach when Anita approached me to work with Courtney and her on the evaluation of the clinical initiative in which they were closely involved (see Critical Episode 8). Whereas previously I assumed they would be primarily focused on accountability, here I noted their focus to use the evaluation to inform improvements to the initiative. I responded by collaborating with them to support their informational needs and at the same time to gather information to inform the accountability focus. Together we developed the initiative's evaluation tool and when I shared the emerging data, we collaboratively interpreted and applied the findings to the subsequent implementation.

My desire to satisfy the accountability requirements of the evaluation as well as to monitor and meet the individual organizational member needs demanded that I transform the second principle guiding my approach to: *I should use a responsive and emergent*

design that satisfies the accountability focus of the evaluation and remains relevant to meet the evolving needs of the individual organizational members.

Reconsidering Principle 3: Seeking Comprehensive Understandings

Initial Principle 3: I should seek a comprehensive understanding of the program and the program context.

I worked hard at the beginning of the evaluation to seek a comprehensive understanding of the program and its context by listening to the experiences of the individual organizational members. When I was not clear, I sought to make sense by using activities with the organizational members; such an activity was developing the program logic model with Amy and Tanya (see Critical Episode 1). Collaborating in this endeavour allowed me to clarify my understanding about the program and the program context.

As I became more cognizant of my emerging understandings of the program, I also became aware of the changing nature of the program context and the contributing contextual elements. As I listened I learned about the changes in the larger university context that influenced the program; for example, new opportunities for funding. As a result, I realized that it would be impossible for me to attain a static and comprehensive level of understanding of the program and its context. Instead, I would need to take an active approach to constantly paying attention to the surrounding context. I did this by attending and observing the interactions among community partners at the Program Discussion Day (see Critical Episode 6).

I became aware of the shift in my approach to monitor contextual influences and sought feedback as a way of verifying my evolving understandings. I facilitated a discussion with Maureen and Jackie prior to the third large group interview by incorporating my interpretations of the data into my responses as way to verify my understandings (see Critical Episode 7). These actions were important to ensure that my approach remained relevant as the program evolved. Thus I modified the third principle guiding my approach to: *I should **monitor and verify my evolving** understandings of the program and **the influence of dynamic** contextual elements.*

Reconsidering Principle 4: Recognizing Working Constraints

Initial Principle 4: I should recognize the working constraints of the organizational members.

It was my intention to recognize the members' time and effort involved in participating in the evaluation as additional to their day-to-day responsibilities. Hence, at the beginning of the evaluation I articulated my expectations of their involvement to an hour for individual or small group interviews and two hours for large group interviews. It was important to me to adhere to those time limits and to express my appreciation for the participants' time and contributions. My approach was apparent during the first critical episode as I waited for Amy to finish her work when I arrived for a small group interview, and I was mindful of respecting our allotted time for the interview.

The first time Tanya articulated her concerns about the time commitment of evaluation activities, I responded by outlining (and subsequently adhering to) my expectations in detail (see Critical Episode 5). I proposed to limit her time commitment to

two in-person meetings (1/2 hour each) and several brief email exchanges over a 3-week period. Afterwards, I began making explicit my expectations of their involvement at the beginning of our collaborations.

I became aware of the modifications to my approach when my use of email expanded beyond organizing logistics and sharing drafts to incorporate sharing and collaboratively interpreting the emerging findings (see Critical Episode 6). My attentiveness was apparent in my approach as I took care to review my email messages before sending them and to articulate my expectations of the recipients' responses in each email. My view of email as an efficient communication tool began to overshadow my previous concerns related to miscommunication and immediacy of response. As I became cognizant of my expectations, I became more respectful of the working constraints of individual organizational members. Thus I refined the fourth principle guiding my approach to: *I should **acknowledge** the working constraints of **individual and collective** organizational members **and be attentive to both my and their expectations of their participation.***

Reconsidering Principle 5: Respecting Differences in Views

Initial Principle 5: I should respect differences in the organizational members' views and behaviours as the evaluation proceeds.

It was my intention to respect differences among the individual organizational members. To do this, my initial evaluation my approach was characterized by listening to their perspectives and accommodating their views of the evaluation and also their behaviour. In particular, I was respectful that, at the beginning of the evaluation, Jackie's

view of my role had been limited to meeting the accountability needs (see Critical Episode 2). At the same time, I was respectful that Courtney had not offered her views during our interactions prior to our individual interview (see Critical Episode 4). In each case, my attention to their individual needs of time and opportunities to interact with me resulted in unique approaches, which led me to recognize the potential for me to support them individually.

I began to consider adjusting my approach to meet the individual needs of organizational members. I adopted a more active approach to facilitating data interpretation. One such opportunity is described as the eighth critical episode, where I shifted my approach to meet the individual needs of Courtney and Anita. My approach supported Courtney who was ready to share her perspectives and interpretations, and at the same time it established trust with Anita as she shared her perspectives. In both cases, my approach supported their use of the data and allowed me to monitor their views of the evaluation.

I became aware of modifications to my approach during the final critical episode where, after listening to all the perspectives, I undertook an active role in facilitating a reflection upon their experiences during the evaluation process. In particular, I responded to Tanya's indications that she was ready and keen to talk about the influence of her experiences as a participant in the evaluation process and how these experiences influenced her view of the upcoming evaluation (see Critical Episode 10). I changed the fifth principle guiding my approach to: *I should provide opportunities for the individual organizational members' gaining of an in-depth understanding of their program and of their experiences.*

Reconsidering Principle 6: Promoting Evaluation Use

Initial Principle 6: I should promote the use of the evaluation findings and process beyond accountability.

My approach during the first six months of the evaluation was to acknowledge the focus on accountability, reaffirm my commitment to that goal, and monitor the views of individual organizational members. My approach to promote thinking about use beyond accountability was apparent during the fourth large group interview, where I stimulated a brainstorming session about potential audiences for the information generated by the evaluation (see Critical Episode 7). I began to think about how the individual members differed in their receptiveness to thinking about evaluation use beyond accountability and also about the necessity of providing opportunities to create ongoing dialogues about use.

I created such a dialogue during the collaborative review of the evaluation report (fifth large group interview). At this time, I facilitated a discussion about how the funders might interpret and use the information generated by the evaluation (Critical Episode 9). Afterwards, during a small group interview with Tanya and Jackie, I became more direct in my approach to uncover Tanya's view of the usefulness of the evaluation. Even though I only became aware of the modification of my approach during our subsequent interaction, I adjusted my approach in response to stakeholder cues, which I interpreted as their receptivity to use of the evaluation beyond its focus on accountability. Taking the time to reconsider the usefulness of the evaluation process informed Tanya's conceptions of use during the next evaluation cycle (see Critical Episode 10). As a result I transformed the sixth principle guiding my approach to: *I should be mindful of*

individuals' receptiveness to inform the dialogue about the usefulness of the evaluation findings and process beyond accountability.

Principle 7: The Emergent Principle

The most significant shift in my approach resulted from examining my evaluator behaviour and my responses to the individual organizational members' views of the evaluator. At the beginning of the evaluation, how the individual organizational members defined my role influenced how I viewed my role within the evaluation. As a result, I accommodated the organizational members' view of my role as being responsible solely for meeting the accountability requirements of the evaluation and subsequently I viewed myself as external to the organization (see Critical Episode 2). As I shifted my approach to promote an expanded view of my role, I monitored the resulting changes to their individual views. During the fifth critical episode, I realized that the influence of Tanya's changing view of my role was also changing my conceptualization. I interpreted Tanya's cues to indicate a broadened view of my role beyond accountability, and I responded by actively seeking opportunities to mutually negotiate my role with her.

I became aware of the modifications to my approach as I sought opportunities to demonstrate a broadened definition of my role beyond accountability. I sent an email containing my observations from an activity where I had no formal evaluator role to stimulate a discussion with organizational members. My approach, although beyond the traditional boundaries of an accountability-focused evaluator, encouraged the organizational members to broaden their view about the possibilities of my role (see Critical Episode 6). My attention to the members' conceptualizations of my role provided

the impetus for the creation of a seventh principle: *I should be open to adopting a role within the organizational structure that is mutually negotiated.*

Summary of Personal Evaluation Principles In Action

When I examined the critical episodes I discovered that my approach shifted primarily to identify, monitor, and meet the individual needs of the organizational members. My consequent responsive approach featured becoming more engaged with individual organizational members. These behaviours that departed from my initial principles caused me to reconsider them. This examination of my initial principles guiding my approach revealed a transformation of these principles over time and the creation of a seventh principle related to the organizational members' conception of my role. Table 11 presents a summary of my initial and modified principles guiding my evaluator approach. The following section describes how this focus challenged this study's original phase framework that was related to the technical requirements of the evaluator approach and led me to consider a new conceptualization of the evaluation process.

Table 11. Comparison of my Initial and Modified Evaluator Principles Guiding my Approach

Principle	Description of <i>Original</i> Personal Evaluation Principles	Description of <i>Modified</i> Personal Evaluation Principles
1	I should establish an environment in which the organizational members would feel encouraged to participate in the evaluation process.	I should foster environments in which individual organizational members participate in the evaluation process.
2.	I should use a responsive and emergent design that would remain relevant to the evolving organization members' informational needs.	I should use a responsive and emergent design that satisfies the accountability focus of the evaluation and remains relevant to meet the evolving needs of the individual organizational members .
3	I should seek a comprehensive understanding of the program and the program context.	I should monitor and verify my evolving understandings of the program and the influence of dynamic contextual elements.
4	I should recognize the working constraints of the organizational members.	I should acknowledge the working constraints of individual and collective organizational members and be attentive to both my and their expectations of their participation .
5	I should respect differences in the organizational members' views and behaviour as the evaluation proceeds.	I should provide opportunities for the individual organizational members' gaining of an in-depth understanding of their program and of their experiences .
6	I should promote the use of the evaluation findings and process beyond accountability.	I should be mindful of individuals' receptiveness to inform the dialogue about the usefulness of the evaluation findings and process beyond accountability.
7		I should be open to adopting a role within the organizational structure that is mutually negotiated.

A View of the Evaluation Process as a Progression of Individual Stakeholder Engagement

The analysis across the critical episodes revealed similarities and differences related to the evaluator approach, the cues to which the evaluator responded, and the subsequent evaluator behaviour. The view of the evaluation process as a progression of engagement as the evaluator and individual stakeholders worked through *establishing trust, fostering collaboration, and promoting learning* revealed a dilemma. No longer was the four-phase framework adequate to describe the unique processes of engagement between the individual organizational members and the evaluator (see Table 2).

Incongruence with the evaluation phase framework revealed that (a) the evaluator/stakeholder interactions did not follow a phase-compatible linear progression, and (b) the engagement process was unique for each individual. Instead, my approach attended to the individual stakeholder cues associated with the three common elements within the progression: *negotiating the design, monitoring the needs, and interpreting the findings*. Negotiating the design focused on adapting the technical aspects (i.e., the design, evaluation activities, and the report) of the evaluation; monitoring the needs focused on paying attention to the emerging needs of the stakeholders; and interpreting the findings focused on broadening the stakeholders' conceptions of use of the evaluation findings and process beyond accountability. The findings revealed that by establishing trust and credibility during the introductory interactions, I was able to have successful collaborations with the stakeholders; this in turn promoted learning about the usefulness of the evaluation.

The analysis revealed particular cues that I attended to during the progression of individual stakeholder engagement. In Figure 2, three overlapping circles and two types of cues are indicated: each of the circles indicates a stage of the progression beginning with establishing trust, then fostering collaborations, and promoting learning and the cues within the circles indicate that the stakeholder is ready to engage further; cues with the arrows indicate that the stakeholder is not ready to engage further and instead must engage in additional interactions at the present stage.

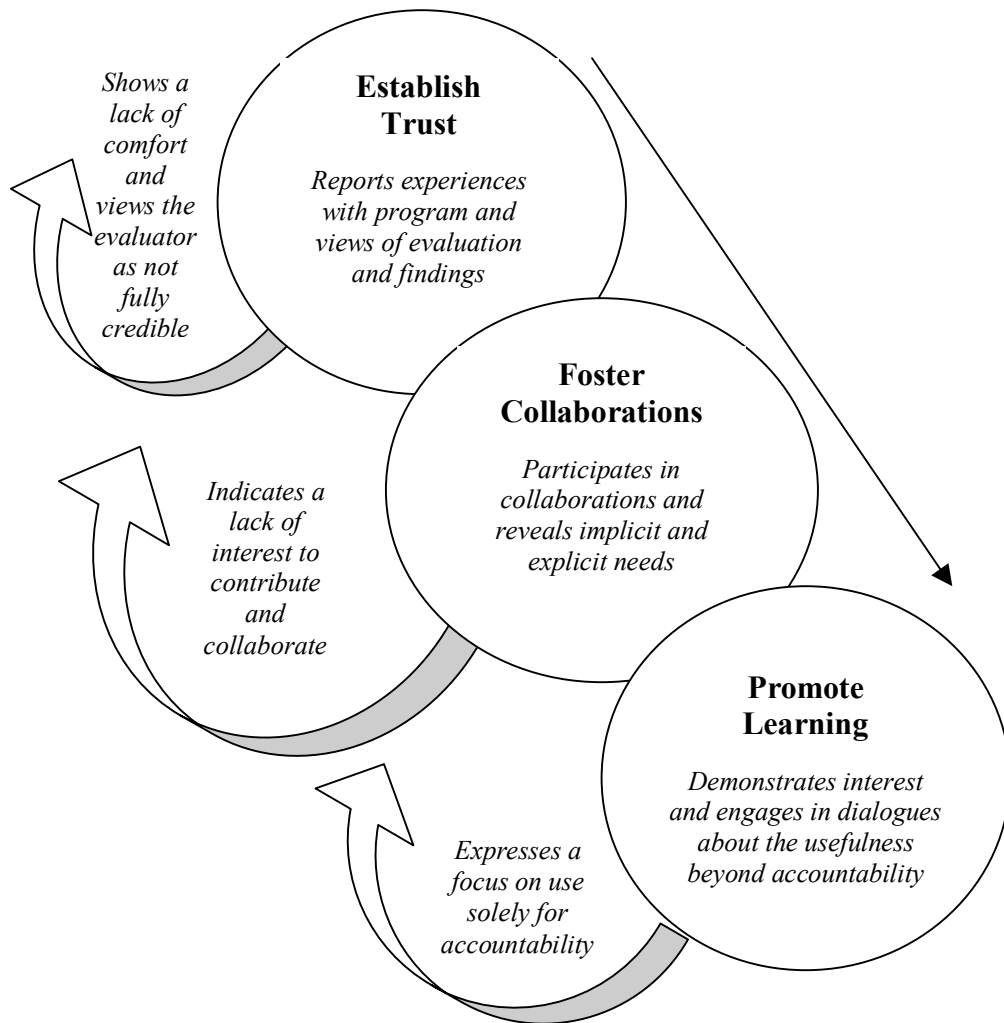


Figure 2. Stakeholder Cues and Evaluator Interpretations

Attention to the stakeholder cues and my interpretations triggered shifts in my approach: when the stakeholders were open about their experiences and views of the evaluation and the findings, I interpreted these responses as indicative of their having attained a certain level of comfort and trust. I considered their participation to be a precursor to their ability and willingness to collaborate in the future interactions. I interpreted stakeholder cues showing a lack of comfort and views of the evaluator as not fully credible to indicate the stakeholder is not yet ready to fully collaborate and instead requires further interactions to establish trust. The interactions involving the collaborative development of the evaluation tools and the interpretation of findings laid the groundwork for the stakeholders to reveal their implicit needs and to make explicit an interest to use the evaluation. I interpreted stakeholder cues showing lack of interest to contribute and collaborate to indicate the stakeholder is not yet ready to engage in learning and instead requires further interactions to foster collaboration and an interest in the evaluation. When the stakeholders articulated a view of the usefulness of the evaluation beyond accountability, I interpreted these cues as indicative of their having attained an expanded view of the usefulness of the evaluation findings and process. I interpreted stakeholder cues showing a focus on the usefulness of the evaluation solely for accountability to indicate a lack of receptivity to a broadened view of the evaluator role.

In the following section, I use the three common elements to describe the progression of engagement of individual stakeholders and my approach to working through establishing trust, fostering collaborations, and promoting learning. As well, the challenges I experienced are described. It is important to note that as the evaluator and

stakeholder work through the progression, they can engage in monitoring the needs in tandem with negotiating the design and interpreting the findings or they can be at different points along the progression of engagement for each of the elements.

Negotiating the Design

Negotiating the design focused on adapting the technical aspects (i.e., the design, evaluation activities, and the report) of the evaluation. In the following section I outline the progression of negotiating the design with stakeholders.

Establish Trust

I involved the stakeholders in negotiating the design by creating environments conducive to encouraging their individual participation. Within these environments, I responded to the stakeholder cues that indicated their desire to participate, and I chose activities where stakeholders guided the conversation to share their experiences and views. Activities where the stakeholders shared their perspectives were particularly useful in establishing trust because I was able to undertake a listening role; for example, the collaborative development of a program logic model during the second month of the evaluation with both project managers (see Critical Episode 1). Prior to developing the logic model, I had met with Tanya and Amy and listened to their comments about their experiences in the program. Afterwards, I was confused about how they were implementing the program goals, and in order to help me make sense of their strategies, I invited the project managers to create a program logic model with me. Rather than requiring them to answer prepared interview questions, I listened to Tanya and Amy and subsequently gained crucial understandings about the program's history and context.

The majority of stakeholders engaged in the activities during our introductory interactions and I interpreted their openness to reporting their experiences as indicating having attained a level of comfort that allowed them to share. The only stakeholders who indicated a resistance to participate were Courtney and Maureen. I realized during my introductory interactions in small and large groups with these two stakeholders that they were reluctant to participate, and so I responded by inviting them to individual interviews. The outcomes of my subsequent interactions were different for each of them: Courtney (a research associate) initially lacked the confidence to participate but later participated with me in the development of an evaluation tool for an initiative in which she was closely involved. This marked the beginning of what was to develop into a close relationship with Courtney (see Critical Episode 4); Maureen (a program developer) remained reluctant to participate even after I responded in a professional and patient manner to continue to seek interactions with her and it was only during a small group meeting many months later (during the eleventh month) that she participated (see Critical Episode 7). At the same time I attempted to establish trust with her, I encouraged the other stakeholders (who had showed evidence of attaining a level of comfort by sharing) to collaborate in the development of tools.

Foster Collaborations

Once the stakeholders had indicated a level of trust by sharing their experiences, my approach shifted to foster collaborations with individual stakeholders around the design of the evaluation. My primary focus during these interactions was to be respectful of the stakeholders' working constraints and to acknowledge their participation in the evaluation as an additional responsibility. I monitored my expectations of their

participation during the design of some of the evaluation tools, and when their concerns arose I responded directly. For example, when I approached Tanya (project manager) to collaborate on the development of an evaluation tool and she expressed concerns about the necessary time commitment, I responded by articulating my expectations of her participation as being only two short meetings and a review of two drafts via email (see Critical Episode 5). When Tanya agreed to participate and to contribute her knowledge of the initiative to inform the development of the evaluation tool, I made sure I adhered to our time allotted for each interaction. When Tanya demonstrated comfort with the use of email, I responded by expanding my use of that medium to foster group collaborations and to monitor emerging stakeholder needs (see Critical Episode 6). Over time, email became an efficient means for me to communicate and to encourage reflection, and it complemented in-person interactions without taking up as much time.

Promote Learning

As the evaluation findings emerged, I created opportunities in which I shared these findings with the stakeholders and engaged them in a dialogue related to the use of them. I used an emergent and responsive design to capitalize on opportunities to promote learning about the usefulness of the findings. My primary focus was to involve stakeholders in reviewing the findings and at the same time encouraging the sharing of their emerging conceptions of use. For example, during the second large group interview, I shared emerging findings from the evaluation to promote the usefulness of the findings to inform decisions (see Critical Episode 5). Sharing findings also allowed the stakeholders to access the findings and for me to gain understandings of their perceptions.

It was important to me to facilitate a discussion about the potential use of the findings as a way to promote an expanding conception of my role.

Monitoring the Stakeholder Needs

Monitoring the needs focused on responding to the emerging needs of the stakeholders. In the following section I describe the progression of monitoring the needs.

Establish Trust

To create opportunities to monitor their needs, I involved the stakeholders in activities that allowed me access to their emerging individual needs. In an effort to establish trust, I asked questions to individual stakeholders to elicit their views of the roles of the evaluation and to gain understandings about the influence of dynamic nature of the context on their evolving needs. I interpreted their cues indicating the primary focus of the evaluation to be to meet the governmental accountability requirements as a limited view of the evaluation focus. At the same time I used the activities to access the participants' previously unspoken needs. For example, I used activities in small groups to reveal a common implicit need for communication among organizational members and then used the first large group interview as a way to ask questions and to promote communication (see Critical Episode 2).

Foster Collaborations

I used several strategies to foster collaborations among the stakeholders and to monitor the individual's evolving needs during the development of tools and interpretation of findings; these strategies included in-person interviews, email interactions, and a combination of the two. Using these strategies, I interpreted the

articulation of the stakeholders' individual needs, both unspoken and articulated, and their expanding conceptions of use to indicate a growing awareness of their evolving needs. I responded by shifting my approach to meet these needs. For example, Anita invited me to collaborate on the development of an evaluation tool with the purpose of informing its subsequent implementation. I responded by providing a further opportunity for her to participate in the interpretation of the findings and unknown to her I also shifted my approach to meet the implicit need she had earlier revealed of documenting the implementation process (see Critical Episode 8).

Promote Learning

Once I had responded to the emerging stakeholder needs by shifting my approach to meet them, my primary focus became to promote learning by encouraging the stakeholders to review the findings and to reflect upon their experiences during the evaluation. I monitored the participants' broadening views of the usefulness of the evaluation by sustaining a dialogue related to use. I interpreted stakeholders' articulation of a view of the evaluator and of evaluation to meet the emerging needs of individuals to indicate that some stakeholders might be receptive to a view of the evaluator as mutually defined. For example, I used the fourth large group interview to collaboratively review the report that we would send to the external funders. The ensuing discussion encouraged the stakeholders to think deeply about the findings and revealed that some of them viewed the potential uses of the findings beyond accountability as well as the role of the evaluator to promote these applications. As well, reflection upon their experiences led some stakeholders to share the impact of their participation on their understandings (see Critical Episode 9).

Interpreting the Evaluation Findings

Interpreting the findings focused on broadening the stakeholders' conceptions of use of the evaluation findings and process beyond accountability. The following section describes the progression the evaluator and stakeholders worked through to interpret the evaluation findings.

Establish Trust

To interpret the evaluation findings, I sought to share and elicit feedback from stakeholders to verify the accuracy of the emerging findings. I used activities to promote participatory data reviews for sharing the findings and eliciting feedback from the stakeholders in order to establish trust in the findings. For example, the accuracy of the emerging findings was verified during the second large group interview, as I listened to stakeholder feedback and I interpreted their cues to indicate they had gained a view of my role as an evaluator focused on maintaining the validity and reliability of the evaluation data (see Critical Episode 4). Making the findings accessible to the stakeholders in an ongoing manner allowed me to both gain a deeper understanding of the program and context and to meet my goal to build trust.

Foster Collaborations

Fostering collaborative interpretations of the findings using both email and in-person interactions led to discussions about the usefulness of the evaluation. I paid attention to cues indicating an interest in and emerging understandings of how the evaluation findings could be used beyond accountability. For example, I asked Tanya an

impromptu question about her view of the usefulness of the evaluation findings, which led to a discussion about potential audiences and uses of the data (see Critical Episode 9).

Promote Learning

After the funders' report had been submitted, I organized the fifth large group interview to promote learning by asking the evaluation participants to revisit their experiences (see Critical Episode 10). Together, the stakeholders and I engaged in a dialogue related to how the process had been beneficial and how I had engaged them. It was only afterwards that I became aware of how the process had been useful for individual stakeholders: Jackie cited the evaluation as instrumental in fostering communication among organizational members and providing an external perspective to inform programmatic decisions; Tanya identified its value in informing planning decisions; and Anita reported the evaluation as useful to promote a deeper cognitive interpretation of the whole program. The feedback I received from the organizational members about my role was that I had been considerate of adhering to the time allotments we had agreed upon and used our time efficiently. Their comments were important to inform my subsequent approach during the next evaluation cycle.

Summary of Progression of Engagement of Individual Stakeholders

There are three common elements within the progression: negotiating the design, monitoring the needs, and interpreting the findings that needed to be attended to while the stakeholder and evaluator worked through establishing trust, fostering collaborations, and promoting learning (bolded are the dominant actions during each stage). In Table 12, I provided a summary of my approach during the progression. My approach to negotiating the design was to first create an environment conducive to stakeholder participation and for me to listen to stakeholders' experiences to establish trust. Then I fostered collaborative opportunities for stakeholders to interact with me in the development of evaluation tools and at the same time I paid attention to stakeholders' cues related to their time constraints. Finally, I used an emergent and responsive design to respond to their emerging needs and to encourage the stakeholders' expression of their conceptions of use. I mitigated the challenges associated with negotiating the design and encouraged participation by directly addressing the concerns of stakeholders.

My approach to monitoring the stakeholders' needs was to first access and then to acknowledge the stakeholders' implicit and explicit needs to establish trust. Then, I fostered opportunities to monitor the individuals' evolving needs through the use of email and in-person collaborations focused on the development of evaluation tools. Finally, I monitored and encouraged a broadened view of the usefulness of the evaluation by reviewing the findings and facilitated reflection upon the process. I mitigated the challenges associated with monitoring the needs by focusing a dialogue related to use on accountability and then broadened beyond.

Table 12. My Progressive Approach to Engaging Individual Stakeholders

	Establish Trust	Foster Collaboration	Promote Learning
Negotiating the Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create environments conducive for stakeholder participation • Use activities to encourage stakeholders to guide the conversation and evaluator to listen 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect stakeholders' working constraints • Use email efficiently 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use an emergent and responsive design to maintain relevancy of evaluation • Promote opportunities for ongoing dialogue to broaden views of the evaluation
Monitoring the Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask direct questions to elicit view of evaluation and influence of dynamic context • Listen for explicit and implicit needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor evolution of individual needs and expanding conceptions of use • Use email and in-person interactions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage reflection of experiences during the evaluation process and a review of findings • Foster dialogue related to broadening evaluation use
Interpreting the Findings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verify accuracy of findings • Design activities to elicit feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor evolving views about usefulness of findings to build ownership • Use strategies interpret findings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflect upon usefulness of process • Sustains dialogue of use emphasize use of findings beyond accountability and to inform subsequent evaluation approach

Finally, my approach to promoting learning was to first share emerging findings with them and to listen to their feedback, which established trust in the accuracy of the findings. Then, I fostered opportunities to collaboratively interpret the findings. Finally, I encouraged reflective practice upon the usefulness of the findings and process beyond accountability to inform a broadened view of the evaluation. I mitigated the challenges associated with promoting learning by sustaining a dialogue with the stakeholders. Table 13 summarizes the characteristics of the progression of individual stakeholder engagement.

Table 13. Summary of the Characteristics of the Progression of Individual Stakeholder Engagement

		Negotiating Design	Monitoring Needs	Interpreting Findings	
Establish Trust <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of activities • Role of evaluator: listen to stakeholders 	Evaluator Approach	Creates environments where stakeholders guide conversations	Ask directly to elicit views of evaluation	Share emerging findings to verify accuracy	
	Stakeholder Cues	Reports experiences with program and perspectives	Articulates initial views of evaluator and evaluation	Offers feedback about accuracy of findings	
	Evaluator Interpretations	Realizes stakeholders have attained a level of comfort that allows sharing	Realizes stakeholders have a limited view of evaluation focused on accountability	Realizes stakeholders have gained a view of the evaluator as credible	
Foster Collaboration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of email • Role of evaluator: monitor stakeholders' emerging needs 	Subsequent Evaluator Behaviour	Accommodates role of the evaluator as viewed by stakeholders. Encourages collaborating in the development of evaluation tools.			
	Evaluator Approach	Respect stakeholder working constraints by monitoring my expectations	Be mindful of evolving individual needs and expanding conceptions of use	Build ownership by attending to evolving views about usefulness of findings	
	Stakeholder Cues	Contributes initiative knowledge to inform development of evaluation tools and demonstrates comfort with use of email	Begins to articulate implicit needs	Discusses interest to use evaluation findings beyond accountability	
	Evaluator Interpretations	Realizes stakeholders have built a working relationship that allows email to be used to complement collaborations	Realizes stakeholders have become more aware of their evolving needs	Realizes stakeholders considered a view of the usefulness of the findings beyond accountability	
	Subsequent Evaluator Behaviour	Meets explicit needs of stakeholders, as well as adapts approach to meet implicit needs. Encourages reflection upon usefulness of evaluation process.			
	Evaluator Approach	Use an emergent and responsive design to share use of findings	Encourage reflection of evaluation experiences during the process and review of findings	Emphasize use of findings beyond accountability and reflect upon usefulness of process	
Promote Learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of dialogue related to use • Role of evaluator: promote reflection 	Stakeholder Cues	Proposes ideas for the use of the findings beyond accountability and demonstrates confidence in accuracy of interpretations	Expresses a view of the evaluator role and the evaluation to meet the emerging needs of individuals	Demonstrates use of evaluation findings beyond accountability and considers usefulness of process	
	Evaluator Interpretations	Realizes stakeholders' understandings are gained through participating in a dialogue related to use	Realizes stakeholders might be receptive to a view of the evaluator as mutually defined	Created a broadened view of the usefulness of the findings and process	
	Subsequent Evaluator Behaviour	Adopts a role as the evaluator that is mutually negotiated. Encourages the application of the understandings gained to inform the subsequent evaluation cycle.			

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I organized the description of findings into three sections. I began with a description of the 10 critical episodes that were generated from the cross case analysis. Critical episodes are delineated as distinctive and separate events that can be understood as consequences of my evaluator decisions and as influences to the evaluation direction. Of primary interest to this study are the insights I gained and subsequently how such episodes triggered transformations, modifications or refinements in my thinking and evaluator behaviour (see Table 10 for summary). A further significance of these critical episodes is that they provide a way to understand the nonlinear, in fact iterative, unfolding of evaluation decisions and activities.

My examination of the critical episodes revealed that I was able to behave in ways that were mainly congruent with my stated personal principles of evaluation practice. However, the findings also revealed that I sometimes thought and acted in ways that represented a departure from these original principles. These departures caused me to reconsider my principles, primarily when I shifted my focus to identifying, monitoring, and meeting the individual needs of the organizational members. My consequent responsive approach featured becoming more engaged with individual organizational members. An examination of my initial principles guiding my approach revealed a transformation of these principles over time and the creation of a seventh principle related to the organizational members' conception of my role (see Table 11 for summary).

The examination of my interactions with stakeholders included my evaluator approach, stakeholder cues, my interpretation of the cues, and my subsequent evaluator behaviour across the critical episodes revealed a dilemma with the study's original phase framework. No longer was the phase framework, focused only on the technical aspects of the evaluation, adequate to describe the unique processes of engagement between the individual organizational members and myself. Instead, the evaluator and individual stakeholders work through a progression of establish trusting, fostering collaborations, and promoting learning. These stages are defined by how I worked with the stakeholder, how the stakeholder worked with me, and how we together became engaged in the process (see Table 13 for summary). Within each stage, I attended to the stakeholder cues associated with negotiating the design (i.e., meeting the technical requirements), monitoring the needs (i.e., attending to the emerging needs), and interpreting the findings (i.e., incorporating the use of findings and process). In the following chapter I discuss the findings and present the implications to evaluation practice and research.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

Chapter Overview

This chapter reports the insights I gained from the examination of my behaviour as an evaluator, and I describe my application of these understandings to both evaluation practice and evaluation research. In my role as the evaluator, I worked during an 18-month period with eight organizational members operating within a dynamic program context. In my role as the evaluation-use researcher, I used a modified case study to document my interactions with stakeholders and created an accessible account of my evaluator decisions in a reflective journal. My use of an iterative approach enabled the deepening of my understandings as I moved between the parts of the interaction to examine the case as a whole. To present the study's insights and implications, I organize the chapter into two sections: The Practice of Evaluation and The Research of Evaluation.

The first section revisits each of the research questions in light of the findings:

1. How does organizational theory as informed by complexity science and theories of evaluation (responsive, participatory, and developmental) influence evaluator decision making in a dynamic organizational context focused on accountability and program development?
2. What is the nature of evaluator/stakeholder interactions and what impact do these interactions have on the evaluator's decision making?
3. How is evaluation use promoted through stakeholder engagement?

The second section describes how the evaluation project provided a useful context for evaluation-use research. I outline the contribution of the modified case study approach as

well as the iterative data analysis approach and use of memos to examine my evaluator behaviour. Finally, I conclude with a chapter summary.

The Practice of Evaluation

The majority of Canadian evaluators report developing knowledge about evaluation practice by trial and error (Borys, Gauthier, Kishchuk, & Roy, 2005). It was more common for these evaluation survey respondents to report developing expertise by building on previous experiences and consulting with colleagues compared with undertaking formal study. Prior to returning to pursue graduate studies and later undertaking this structured inquiry into the dynamics of a responsive, participatory, and developmental evaluation, I was no different. As described earlier, I first engaged in self-directed reading of the literature to help me make meaning of my experience prior to formally studying evaluation.

When I returned to the literature following the completion of my analysis I was reminded of a definition of an evaluator forwarded by Michael Scriven. He argued limiting the designation of *professional evaluator* to someone that competently “does technically challenging evaluations” (Scriven, 1996, p. 159). In order to bound his definition he forwarded a list of 10 competencies that these evaluators must have a good understanding of, and ability to apply, including (among others) basic qualitative and quantitative methodology, needs assessment, and evaluation-specific report design, construction, and presentation. He suggested that those engaging in evaluations whereby a distanced methodological approach was not undertaken (for example, he argues a developmental approach) must instead be referred to as evaluation consultants. In the present study I undertake a responsive, participatory, and developmental approach and I

take issue with his statements that activities undertaken within more collaborative-type evaluation approaches “is better thought of as an evaluation-related exercise” and that “such activities may or may not lead to an evaluative conclusion, and those evaluations may or may not be useless because they are invalid” and this “may just be a way to avoid hearing or bearing bad news” (p. 158). Rather, I argue and this study provides evidence where a close relationship built with stakeholders over time allowed me to establish trust that in turn fostered collaborations and consequently to promoting learning and use within the organization that not only met the stated evaluation purpose but also enabled the evaluation to keep pace with emergent program needs. This study has implications for practice including how as an evaluation field we define (or constrain the definition of) competent evaluators and we embrace (or ignore) new understandings and approaches that have the potential to further our field.

Rarely do evaluators have the luxury of systematically examining their own behaviours. The opportunity to do so has enabled me to formalize my learning around three guiding research questions. The following section focuses on the practice of evaluation organized by my research questions and a discussion of the three implications to practice arising from the research.

Revisiting Research Question 1: The Influence of the Theories

How does organizational theory informed by complexity science and theories of evaluation (responsive, participatory, and developmental) influence evaluator decision making in a dynamic organizational context focused on accountability and program development?

In addressing the study's first guiding research question, I describe the influence on my evaluator decision making of the insights I gained from organizational theory informed by complexity science, as well as from each of the evaluation theories, including responsive, participatory, and developmental. Each of these theories helped me understand my decision making and the consequent shifts to my evaluator behaviour. I first introduce the influence of the newer conceptions of organizational theory, and then I describe how my behaviour endorsed, modified, and extended the current notions for each of the evaluation theories.

Organizational theory informed by complexity science. There is a strong relationship between how organizations are viewed and how evaluation within organizations is conceived (Eoyang & Berkas, 1998). When organizations are considered to be dynamic entities, then understanding the organization requires attentiveness to the shifting outcomes of action that emerge from the distribution of organizational information and from the interactions among organizational members. In such a context, an evaluation is a disturbance to the organization, and the evaluator becomes another agent who is influential in shaping the quality and strength of these outcomes (Eoyang & Berkas, 1998). Attending to and reflecting on evaluator/stakeholder interactions enables

an evaluator to gain insights into the interconnectedness of the organization with its dynamic context. It also enables the evaluator to monitor how the program context influences the organization, its members, and their emerging informational needs.

In the present study, my decision to focus on organizational outcomes meant that I paid greater attention to the quality of the interactions among stakeholders and between stakeholders and me. I sought to understand each encounter as a product of my intentions, my interpretations of their responses, and my decisions. These new understandings guided my subsequent behaviour. I also understood that because I viewed the organization as a complex adaptive system, I could not count on the outcomes of operation formed during my early interactions with members to remain stable over time. Thus, as the evaluator, I would need to be adaptive and responsive to emerging needs and contextual forces and, above all, sensitive to the influence of my presence. In so doing, I adopted what Alkin (2004) proposed as the evaluator's responsibility for choosing an approach enhancing evaluation use to the greatest extent possible.

Responsive evaluation. Both the literature and my experiences in using responsive evaluation (e.g., Stake, 1974/1980, 2004a) suggested that this approach would allow me to keep pace with stakeholders' emerging concerns. What remained to be explored in this study was whether these concerns would influence my organization of the evaluation, a primary principle of the approach (Stake, 2004a, 2004b). Stake (1974/1980) advocates conducting an evaluation in a manner that allows the design to unfold as the evaluator gains more insight into the program context and the stakeholders' roles and responsibilities within that context. I embraced the responsive approach by making these understandings an early priority. Initially, stakeholders viewed the evaluation as my

responsibility. They assumed that I, as a contracted evaluator, had the necessary expertise to conduct the evaluation in a way that would meet the prescribed evaluation purposes, (i.e., accountability to funders) without interfering with their regular responsibilities. They were also willing to give me the authority to proceed in this way. Because my intention was to launch a participatory evaluation, I found myself being very conscious of their expectations.

Subsequent analysis of the evaluator/stakeholder interactions revealed that I adapted my initial design in order to be more responsive to the stakeholders' original perceptions of the evaluation process. I did this in an effort to establish trust. I continually sought to harmonize our expectations of how the evaluation might unfold. For example, after talking with individuals, I orchestrated our first large group meeting where preconceived notions of evaluation were aired. Adopting the role of a facilitator who advances the evaluation agenda while monitoring and responding to stakeholder needs is characteristic of the responsive evaluator (Abma & Stake, 2001).

I was required to modify the normal responsive approach. The evaluation was being funded for the purpose of providing evidence of program accountability to the funders. Typically, this excludes organizing the evaluation around stakeholder concerns. The challenge was to conceptualize how the accountability mandate could facilitate a more responsive approach. During a preliminary meeting with two project leaders, I introduced the possibility of shaping the evaluation around concerns that were emerging related to program development. By studying stakeholder cues (e.g., enthusiasm in their voices when talking about program development) and responses (e.g., their expressed interest in critical reflection), I was able to advance the developmental purpose on their

behalf. This example demonstrates the versatility of responsive evaluation even in contexts where stakeholders feel constrained by external demands. It also demonstrates the importance of evaluators not accepting external constraints as a rationale for rejecting the responsive approach.

I purposefully extended conventional responsive evaluation approaches by advocating for individual and organizational learning as products of our efforts. In making learning an identifiable outcome, I created some disquiet. When uncertainty arose it affected different stakeholders at different times. I learned that when stakeholder talk centered on accountability, it was typically due to some anxiety about fulfilling our primary evaluation mandate. At these times, I asked them to consider evidence of accomplishments to date. I discovered that by revisiting what was already known, it helped to reduce this anxiety and to trigger a more in-depth understanding of how the evaluation was serving multiple purposes without sacrificing the primary goal. Indeed, the accountability requirements of the evaluation were met for the government funders. Both types of encounters (reflective activities and a re-examination of evidence) were meant to be responsive to stakeholder readiness to learn more about our work together. Particularly, such encounters were meant to help the stakeholders gain confidence in their abilities to engage in evaluative inquiry and reasoning, gain insights into how their program and their organization were working, and judge the evaluation as relevant and within their control.

Participatory evaluation. My initial decision to conduct a participatory evaluation stemmed from my previous experience and a review of participatory literature (e.g., Brisolara, 1998; Cousins, 2001, 2003; Cousins & Earl, 1992; 1995; King, 1998); that

participatory approaches increased stakeholders' use of both findings and processes. To assess the degree to which this evaluation had been participatory, I mapped the behaviours in this project onto the three dimensions of collaboration established by Cousins and Whitmore (1998). My analysis revealed: (a) a balanced relationship between evaluator and stakeholders in *controlling the decision making* around the evaluation (e.g., determining methods of data collection, negotiating large group interview agendas, and planning the evaluation reports); (b) a limited diversity of the *stakeholders selected* by organizational role (program developers, project managers, and research associates); and (c) deeper rather than consultative *stakeholder participation* in the evaluation process. In all, my approach fell within the domain of what Cousins and Whitmore describe as "practical participatory evaluation" (p. 12-13). In the technical reports for the present evaluation, the stakeholders also endorsed this description of their participation (Poth, 2007; Poth & Stanbury, 2008).

I modeled the participatory approach by taking on what is typically identified as an evaluator responsibility; that is, managing the technical aspects of the evaluation (Cousins & Earl, 1992, 1995; Cousins & Whitmore, 1998; Weaver & Cousins, 2004). My willingness to do this had the effect of increasing the stakeholders' confidence in my ability to meet their accountability needs. Given the demands on all of us, my taking on the role of quality control counterbalanced their responsibility for contributing rich organizational detail that could inform the context for evaluation use.

I used many participatory strategies. In an effort to establish trust with the stakeholders, I created environments that were conducive to their participation for example, organizing the physical layout of the room so that we all gathered around the

table, using activities as a way to promote involvement, and soliciting feedback as a method of gauging willingness to continue participation. When stakeholders shared their experiences and understanding of the program with me, I used their comments to inform the evaluation design; for example, when a common concern emerged relating to the lack of organizational focus, I adapted the design to create an opportunity for communication as an organizational collective. I fostered collaborations in the development of evaluation tools and in the interpretations of the emerging findings by scheduling meetings at convenient times, facilitating discussions in ways that allowed all voices to be heard, and using email as a time-effective means of interacting. Finally, I promoted stakeholder ownership of the findings by involving them in the decisions related to planning and reviewing the funders' report.

A participatory approach required that I behave in ways that would promote a reciprocal learning partnership. I worked as a facilitator (of problem solving), educator (about systematic evaluative inquiry), and coach (in guiding stakeholder participation). These roles have been identified by researchers in the evaluation community as contributing to collaborative environments supportive of evaluative inquiry (see Barnes, Mataka, & Sullivan, 2003; Caracelli, 2000; Morabito, 2002; Preskill & Torres, 2000).

I modified the participatory approach in the present evaluation by purposefully making the individual stakeholder my primary focus of attention. In particular, I targeted those who Patton (1997) refers to as primary users who, in the present study, were the eight organizational members. Each of us had a vested interest in the evaluation and its consequences and, because each of us could have a significant influence on the quality of our evaluation process, there emerged a strong personal factor in our interactions. My

efforts to enhance the quality of interactions among these eight individuals were grounded in the notion that, both individually and collectively, they would be responsible for defining and guiding evaluation use.

This study extends the notions of the participatory approach by advocating that evaluators can benefit from analyzing the cues and responses of individual stakeholders. Analysis of my reflective journal entries made explicit how, in all the stages of the progression of individual stakeholder engagement, I made a point of attending to both verbal and non-verbal individual stakeholders' cues. For example, during my establishing-trust interactions, I looked for the cues that the individual stakeholder had attained a level of comfort with me. I saw this when they engaged with me in discussions and shared details related to the challenges they experienced. Only then did I encourage them to become involved in the design of the evaluation activities. When the cues of some stakeholders indicated their lack of comfort and a reluctance to participate, I sought to interact with these individuals (i.e., Maureen and Courtney) in alternative, more informal settings. I continued to look for evidence that these stakeholders were developing a level of comfort before encouraging more elaborate evaluation-based collaborations with them.

Throughout all stakeholder interactions, I paid attention to the individual stakeholders' cues related to balancing their commitments to the evaluation and their responsibilities outside the evaluation. When their cues indicated willingness, availability, and interest to continue working with me, I sought to involve them in the evaluation process (such as developing evaluation tools and interpreting the findings). When their responses indicated a hesitation to become involved, I listened carefully to

their concerns. For example, when Tanya expressed anxiety about the time required to participate in the development of an evaluation tool, we negotiated what the time involvement might be and explored the potential payoffs of her involvement. When she realized that the time commitment did not have to be onerous, she agreed to participate. This experience influenced my subsequent evaluator behaviour; I expanded my use of email as a strategy to communicate and negotiate the next steps, and the roles and responsibilities involved in taking these steps. I also sought evidence to reassure myself that I was respecting the stakeholders' working constraints prior to promoting further opportunities for learning.

Developmental evaluation. A developmental evaluator is one who is accepted into the circle of stakeholders for the purpose of adding capacity to the organization and its ability to respond to emergent inquiry needs. The interactions between evaluator and stakeholders are characterized as a relationship of close engagement (e.g., Patton, 1994, 1999; Westley, Zimmerman, & Patton, 2006). Patton (1999) advocates the evaluator as the creator of an open-ended, long-term partnership with stakeholders, where the evaluator's use of evaluative logic influences the evolution of the evaluation over time.

My behaviour paralleled that of a developmental evaluator on many fronts. First, I was engaged with the stakeholders in this program for an average of two hours per week for 18 months. This intensity of contact, coupled with attention to their needs, soon placed me as a program insider. After four months of close engagement, I was invited to contribute directly to organizational decision making about the refocusing of the organizational vision. Second, my advocacy for data-informed decision making soon

found acceptance. This was evident when data from the clinical initiative was used to inform the second iteration of program implementation.

Another feature of developmental evaluation is that its boundaries are intended to be unspecified in order that it might be responsive to any emerging inquiry need. I modified the developmental approach by placing both a time and goal constraint on the evaluation process. In particular, all of us engaged in the evaluation knew that my ability to collaborate with them was constrained by the life of the accountability evaluation contract. In order to take advantage of the dynamics that we had established together, we were proactive in specifying potential targets for inquiry. This led to a purposeful effort to examine the intricacies of program implementation.

This study extends notions about how an open-ended, long-term partnership is typically established by developmental evaluators. It is true that proximity plays a large part in establishing evaluator/stakeholder alliances around inquiry during a developmental evaluation (Gamble, 2006). What I discovered, given the time constraints of my contract, was that the time required to foster these alliances can be abbreviated with purposeful evaluator behaviour. For example, early in the evaluation more than one stakeholder demonstrated reluctance to embrace the evaluation process. Rather than hope that others would sway these dispositions, I became proactive. I sought meetings with these people at their convenience and listened actively to their concerns. I reflected on ways to engage these people without making their concerns warranted. Additionally, I paid attention to cues. When individuals showed interest in any aspect of the evaluation, I followed up immediately to establish ways to involve them, and I usually did this in person. The consequence of these behaviors was a stakeholder group who felt

comfortable engaging in the evaluation and who did so in individually-appropriate ways. This outcome demonstrates the utility of active evaluator approaches to creating evaluation partnerships and suggests that long-term engagement may not be a critical factor in advocating developmental approaches. This is good news for evaluators who do not have the luxury of open-ended commitments.

In sum, each of these theories influenced and supported my decisions as an evaluator. They guided my efforts to promote evaluation use at both the individual and organizational levels. What is also significant about these theories is that each demonstrated malleability, allowing me to treat evaluation as a dynamic enterprise and giving me the freedom to adapt my approaches as needed in response to contextual assets and constraints.

Revisiting Research Question 2: The Nature of Evaluator/Stakeholder

Interactions

What is the nature of evaluator/stakeholder interactions and what impact do these interactions have on the evaluator's decision making?

In addressing the first part of the study's second research question, I describe my attempts to develop closer engagement with stakeholders. I called this process *the progression of individual stakeholder engagement*; the progression comprises three stages wherein the stakeholders and I engage in a process that establishes trust, which in turn fosters collaborations, which promotes individual and group learning. The progression identifies the inherent features of the interactions between evaluator and stakeholder as being non-linear and individualized. Consequently, the post-evaluation analyses revealed the inadequacy of my original phase framework to account for the

unique processes of engagement between evaluator and individual stakeholder. At the beginning of the evaluation, as a means of grouping together interactions with similar purposes during a specific period of time (3-4 months each), I had assigned four phases: Focusing the Evaluation, Conducting the Evaluation, Reporting the Evaluation, and Refocusing the Evaluation (see Table 2). I had assumed that, during these interactions, the stakeholders would progress through each of these phases sequentially as a group and advance together through the four phases. Instead, the analysis revealed that the interactions did not follow a phase-compatible linear sequence but pursued the needs of the individual stakeholders. Interactions focused on the individual stakeholders were evident in the three stages of the progression that occurred throughout the evaluation. When I re-categorized the interactions by type, I did so under the descriptions of the types of interactions employed during each of the three stages of the progression: establishing trust, fostering collaborations, and promoting learning (see Table 14).

Each stage featured different frequencies and uses of the types of evaluation interactions. When I engaged in *establishing trust* with stakeholders, I primarily used individual or small group interviews that focused on organizational roles. During this stage, my email interactions were limited to organizing the logistics for the operations of the individual and small group interviews. When I engaged in *fostering collaborations* with stakeholders, I began by using small group interviews organized by those closely involved in a specific initiative. During this second stage, my email interactions expanded to sharing drafts of the evaluation tools and data summaries. When I engaged in *promoting learning* with stakeholders, I used large group interviews almost

exclusively. In this final stage, email was limited to organizing logistics and sharing drafts of the evaluation report.

Table 14. Summary of the Types of Interactions during Individual Stakeholder Engagement.

Stages	Individual Interviews	Small Group Interviews	Large Group Interviews	Email, phone, informal in-person ^a	Total # of Contacts
Establishing Trust	14	5	1	29	49
Fostering Collaborations	6	10	2	218	236
Promoting Learning	3	3	5 ^b	59	68
Total	23	18	6	306	353

^aPredominantly email interactions ^bTwo large group interviews with planned agendas focused on fostering collaborations also had emergent priorities for promoting learning.

Further examination of the interactions not only revealed the type of interactions I used during each of the three stages but also the reasons associated with my choice. It was not until the post-evaluation analysis that I traced in retrospect the impact of previous interactions with stakeholders on these interactions and their influence on my subsequent evaluator decisions. In the following section, which is organized by the three stages involved in the progression of individual stakeholder engagement, I describe the impact the interactions during each stage had on my subsequent approach.

Establishing trust. The dynamic characteristics of the organizational context included a changing stakeholder membership and individual differences in their receptivity towards participation in the evaluation. In response to this reality, I began focusing my efforts on establishing a relationship of trust with each of the stakeholders. For example, when Anita joined the organization during the seventh month, I made sure

that she was informed of the status of the evaluation, and I listened to her personal concerns about becoming involved at such a late date; when Maureen was hesitant about participating in the evaluation, I sought to interact with her and helped her become more comfortable during the first evaluation cycle. I maintained my focus on and individualized my trust-building efforts with the stakeholders according to my interpretation of their level of comfort and my understanding of the dynamic influences on the program and its context.

My decision to begin by using small group interviews was based on my desire to bring together those stakeholders who shared similar organizational roles. Within these groups, I used activities to stimulate a discussion about their experiences, showed interest by listening to what they had experienced, and encouraged the stakeholders to guide the conversation. I did not assume that participation in the discussion would lead to shared understandings among those working in similar organizational roles, and I was surprised when new understandings about the program and its context were generated that had not previously existed. For example, when the program managers Amy and Tanya were finalizing the program logic model, the conversation between them led to a common understanding about the challenges they experienced the previous year. Therefore the stakeholders had become actively engaged with me and collaborated with one another. The outcomes of these early interactions influenced my subsequent decisions to create opportunities for stakeholders to communicate their thoughts in group settings.

At the end of the small group interactions, I began to seek feedback from each of the stakeholders, and by monitoring their individual responses, I was able to gauge their willingness to continue participating. When I interpreted that a stakeholder had attained a

level of comfort, I immediately responded to any opportunity that supported the building of a working relationship with that individual. For example, when Amy suggested that she and I meet again at the end of an interview with Tanya, I agreed; and we made plans. During this stage, I also responded to a lack of readiness of some individuals by pursuing opportunities to build mutual trust in alternative settings. For example, at the end of the small group interview with Maureen, Jackie, and Camilla, I sought to continue interacting with Maureen individually because I sensed that she was not yet comfortable. When she declined, I invited her to another small group interview and worked to keep her connected. Throughout this stage establishing trust became an important feature of developing a closer engagement with individual stakeholders.

Fostering collaborations. The changing demands of the organization caused changes in the stakeholders' needs and in their willingness to contribute to the development of evaluation tools. In response to this situation, I began fostering collaborations with stakeholders involved in the initiatives. For example, pressures originating from within the larger University community delayed the implementation of a faculty initiative which resulted in changes to the stakeholders' design for the evaluation tool. I responded to these problems by re-designing the evaluation tool to adjust for the changing realities of the stakeholders by meeting with Courtney and Tanya during the fifth, seventh, and fourteenth month and by maintaining regular contact with both through email. I individualized my efforts to foster collaborations according to my interpretation of stakeholder needs and to my understandings of the needs and emerging contextual realities.

My decision to first use small group interviews was based on my desire to bring together stakeholders who were closely involved in the implementation of the same initiative. These groups operated in an environment where they had already established trust in the evaluation process, and with one another and with me. I facilitated a collaborative development of an initiative's evaluation tool in a manner that enabled everyone to be heard and where their opinions could be safely shared. As well, following the data collection, I shared the emerging findings with group members and then facilitated an opportunity to collaboratively interpret the findings. I did not assume that participation in the data interpretation would lead to new evaluation uses, so it was unexpected when, during the collaborative data interpretation, the stakeholders recognized uses of the findings that had not been anticipated. For example, the outcome of Courtney and Anita's participation in the data interpretation was a common understanding of their implementation experience during the clinical initiative. This unanticipated use was in addition to their intended use of the evaluation findings to inform implementation decisions. Therefore the stakeholders contributed their individual sensemaking during collaborations with me and with one another. The outcomes of these interactions influenced my subsequent decisions to provide ongoing access to the data, as well as opportunities for stakeholders to participate in the data interpretation process.

Following our initial interactions in small groups, I sought feedback from each of the stakeholders. Some stakeholders reported that the time necessary for the interviews had prevented their participation (i.e., they had been absent). I responded by increasing my use of email as an efficient means to communicate. I began emailing drafts of the evaluation tool and later, as the findings emerged, I also used email to distribute data

summaries prior to meeting in person to stimulate discussions about the findings. For example, after Tanya and I had successfully collaborated on the evaluation of an initiative, I sought to involve her again. In response to her concerns about time, we accomplished this with a combination of email and in-person interactions. During this stage, I also promoted email use as a way to promote feedback. For example, following the Program Discussion Day, time constraints encouraged me to use email as a new venue for stimulating an organizational discussion by first sharing my observations and then requesting the recipients' feedback. Fostering collaborations with individual stakeholders was important to further develop our relationship which was increasingly characterized by close engagement.

Promoting learning. In light of the pressures of accountability within the organization, I felt it was important to sustain a dialogue with individual stakeholders about evaluation use and how the evaluation could serve the program's needs beyond the accountability demands of the funders. To meet this challenge, I focused my efforts on creating learning moments about the usefulness of the evaluation. I facilitated discussions related to the scope of evaluation use during five of the large group interviews; these interviews involved individual stakeholders in the preparation of the accountability report. As well, I organized large group activities during the eighth, eleventh, thirteenth, fourteenth, and eighteenth months that included reviewing the evaluation tools, interpreting the data, and planning the report. I promoted the application of the evaluation findings and process with the stakeholders based on my interpretation of their individual willingness to consider evaluation use beyond accountability issues and their acceptance of my role as a contributor to program development.

My decision to use large group interviews in this stage was based on my desire to provide opportunities for the stakeholders to communicate individual ideas in a group forum. The stakeholders had already established a productive level of trust with one another and with me, and this in turn supported how they easily expressed their individual thinking. Within this group I involved stakeholders in the funders' report planning and reviewing. Only after I had submitted the report did I facilitate a discussion with the stakeholders. This discussion included reflecting on the merits of their having participated in the evaluation process. I made no assumption that stakeholders' participation in the report process would lead to their viewing me as an organizational member, but I was encouraged when they identified my actions as having supported program development. For example, the dialogue involving all the stakeholders during the fifth large group interview showed a common view of the value of my contributions beyond meeting the accountability requirements of the funders. Therefore the outcomes of these interactions influenced my subsequent planning decisions for the following evaluation cycle to include opportunities for stakeholders to engage in dialogues related to use.

Following the last large group meeting, I began to seek feedback from each of the stakeholders about their conceptions of the evaluation and me as the evaluator. I used their individual responses about the usefulness of the evaluation findings shared during the fifth large group meeting to inform thinking about how I would approach the subsequent evaluation cycle. Jackie, for example, commented that I had alleviated her negative conceptions of evaluation and that she hoped I would play a role in documenting

and informing future decision making. Maintaining engagement with individual stakeholders was important for promoting learning during the next evaluation cycle.

To conclude, I responded to the dynamic organizational context during each stage of the progression of individual stakeholder engagement using different types of interactions. The outcomes of these interactions were nonlinear and my influence could not be predicted. Only through disturbing an organization to a level of uncertainty, also known as operating at the edge of chaos, does novelty arise in complex adaptive systems (Lewin & Regine, 2001). As a source of disturbance for the organization, I sought evidence of my influence on the organization by paying attention to the emergence of new understandings from interactions with stakeholders. I could not assume my interactions would translate into what I would view as desired actions and directions in the evaluation; instead, I maintained interactions and was open to what unfolded during the evaluation.

Revisiting Research Question 3: The Promotion of Evaluation Use

How is evaluation use promoted through stakeholder engagement?

In my response to this question I describe three distinct features of my approach that promotes evaluation use by stakeholders. Evidence of these features was revealed during the analysis of the evaluator/stakeholder interactions. I begin by describing the three features of stakeholder engagement. These include monitoring individual sensemaking, responding to implicit stakeholder needs, and developing a culture of inquiry that promoted active participation. I conclude the section with a comment on my use of the concept of evaluation influence. My actions were supported by Kirkhart's (2000) belief that evaluation influence includes our conventional conceptions of use that

are intentional, results-based and occurring immediately and end-of-cycle as well as use that is long term, unintended, and process use.

Monitoring individual sensemaking. My efforts to establish individual sensemaking was predicated on the belief that a supportive environment was necessary for stakeholders to risk sharing their ideas with one another. This belief was an overarching principle in all of my actions. During the development of the evaluation tools I focused on providing an environment conducive to sharing. I then involved individual stakeholders in the interpretation of data and I monitored the stakeholders for assurances that what they were involved in had meaning for them. I did this by creating opportunities for stakeholder participation in collaborative data interpretations within small groups. I facilitated discussions with group members using the emerging findings and monitored the individual contributions to the interpretations. I made every effort to ensure that all individuals shared in the task of making sense of the data and individual contribution of ideas was the basis for the group's effort at sensemaking. For example, I interpreted a lack of individual sensemaking in Anita's contributions when interpreting data with Courtney. I asked her directly for her interpretation of what the data meant to her and clarified any misunderstandings. The small group interpretations were then shared with the organization and again I monitored individual contributions to the collective sensemaking effort.

My approach expands the responsibility of the participatory evaluator, from facilitating stakeholder involvement and controlling the technical aspects of the evaluation to monitoring stakeholders' contributions for evidence of individual sensemaking. Although attention to stakeholder contributions provided access to their

thinking, it had the added benefit of allowing evaluator to assess the fit of the findings to the stakeholders' pre-existing realities (Leviton, 2003).

Responding to implicit stakeholder needs. In my approach I responded to both the implicit and explicit needs of the individual stakeholders. I did this by creating opportunities where I could progressively develop a close relationship with individual stakeholders and sustained this process throughout the study. As I interacted with stakeholders I became aware of their needs; I did this by first listening and building on their comments by asking questions in an effort to discover their explicit needs. I discovered their implicit needs as the stakeholders shared their concerns and frustrations indirectly. For example, during my conversations with Tanya, although she articulated the need for data on which to base implementation decisions and the impact of the initiatives on the future decisions of participants, she also implied the need for greater communication when she talked about her frustrations during the past year of not hearing about program decisions that affected her. From this discussion I identified her explicit need for accountability measures and her implicit need for increased organizational communication. My subsequent interactions with other stakeholders revealed that there was an unspoken common need for opportunities supporting organizational communication. I responded by organizing the first large group interview and subsequently encouraging individuals to share their thoughts during the large group interviews. Evidence that the implicit need for communication was met emerged at the end of the first evaluation cycle where several individual stakeholders identified the sharing of ideas with organizational members as one of the most important outcomes they experienced from participating in the evaluation process.

My approach expands the responsibility of the responsive evaluator from not only attending to stakeholders' explicit or articulated needs, but also to pay attention to their implicit needs. This approach is congruent with the fifth utility standard of the Joint Standards for Educational Evaluation. The *Selection of Relevant Information* states that "the evaluation should access information that addresses established evaluation purposes and serves the identified and *emergent needs* [italics added] of the participants and evaluation users" (The Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation, 2007). By definition, emergent described as "newly formed" (Merriam-Webster, 2007) encompasses both explicit and implicit needs.

Developing a culture of inquiry. I define a quality culture of inquiry as integrating systematic processes into daily work practices whereby the stakeholders are engaged in a dialogue related to what they do and how they do it. I focused on engaging individual stakeholders by observing the stakeholders' attitudes and listening for any indications that the evaluation process was supporting their view of program development and individual learning. I solicited feedback from stakeholders following each interaction and adapted my methods when stakeholders were feeling overloaded with their daily tasks and participating in the evaluation. For example, I created data summaries for the emerging findings for each of the initiatives. By doing this, I made interpreting the data more manageable during the times I had allocated for this activity.

My approach expands my responsibility from facilitating the evaluative inquiry to monitoring the quality of inquiry within the organization. This action was one of the essential components to increasing stakeholder commitment to evaluation use. My approach is congruent with the first feasibility standard, *Practical Procedures*, which

states: “Evaluation should be responsive to the *customary way* [italics added] programs operate” (The Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation, 2007). By following this precept I was able to adapt the evaluation process by introducing ways of making stakeholder involvement in the evaluation easier and with a greater understanding and commitment to evaluation use.

The basic tenet in my approach was the focus on the needs of the individual stakeholder. My approach in reinforcing the notion of evaluation use was informed by monitoring the impact of the evaluation on the individuals and on the collective. A comprehensive view of evaluation influence (Kirkhart, 2000) guided my approach to be attentive towards evidence of all types of use.

Implications for Evaluation Practice

This study informs evaluation practice in three ways. First, it contributes empirical data to a growing body of literature on what it means for an evaluator to implement close engagement with individual stakeholders using evaluative inquiry. Second, it brings to the forefront the value of systematic and purposeful reflection and demonstrates how this activity can enhance the quality of engagement with individual stakeholders and with the collective organization. Finally, this study points to the importance of having evaluators continually integrate past experiences and new theoretical frameworks with understandings gleaned from close engagement.

Creating a Closer Relationship between Evaluator and Individual Stakeholders

This study contributes empirical data that supports the creation of a new relationship characterized by close engagement between *individual stakeholders* and the evaluator. In particular, this study provides evidence that evaluators must establish trust in advance of fostering collaboration and that collaboration is a central feature of a learning environment. It is by working through this progression and paying attention to the responses of individual stakeholders that the evaluator develops relationships of close engagement. Close engagement may be the foundation that allows both the stated purpose of the evaluation (in this case, the generation of an accountability report for funders) and the additional goals of the evaluator (in this case, the usefulness of the evaluation for program and organizational development) to be well served.

A focus on creating a working relationship characterized by ongoing interactions with evaluation stakeholders is not new. A relationship whereby the evaluator and stakeholders mutually engage with the intentional outcome of increased use has previously been described as sustained interaction (Huberman & Cox, 1990) and more recently as evaluative inquiry (Preskill & Torres, 1999). Common features are the focus on the part of the evaluator to spend time becoming familiar with the context in which the evaluation occurred and will be used and to offer findings beyond the intended scope of information. What the present study contributes is an account of how interdependencies developed between the evaluator and the individual stakeholders. This occurred, in part, because of my intentional reading and analysis of the verbal and behavioral cues provided by stakeholders during each interaction. In addition, I purposefully reflected on my responses to these stakeholder cues and reconsidered their influence on the

stakeholders' dispositions toward evaluative inquiry. My approach also attended to the dynamic contextual influences. The result was an ever-deepening understanding of stakeholders, both as individuals and as a collective within their context. This understanding subsequently guided my decisions about how to adapt the design to meet the stakeholders' explicit and emerging needs. In this way, my approach of focusing on developing close engagement served to enhance opportunities for evaluation use and influence.

During the present study, I developed close engagement with individual stakeholders by paying attention and responding to stakeholder cues during each stage of the progression. In Table 15, I describe these stakeholder cues. I forward this rubric as an example of an approach that might be used by a beginning evaluator to gain experience related to the type of stakeholder cues that he/she might pay attention to during each element of the three stages of developing close engagement.

Table 15. Individual Stakeholder Cues that Guided my Approach to Developing Close Engagement with Individual Stakeholders at Each Stage of the Progression.

Elements of Engagement	Stage 1: Establishing Trust	Stage 2: Fostering Collaborations	Stage 3: Promoting Learning
Negotiating Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports experiences with the program and her perspectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributes program knowledge to inform development of evaluation tools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrates knowledge gained from reflecting; proposes ideas for the use of the findings beyond stated purpose
Monitoring Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shares initial views of the evaluator's role and the intended evaluation use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begins to articulate emerging needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflects upon perspectives; expresses her view of the evaluator role and the evaluation to meet the emerging needs of individuals, as well as the stated need of the organization
Interpreting Findings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offers feedback about the accuracy of findings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makes explicit her intention to use the evaluation findings for purposes beyond stated purpose 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates use of the evaluation findings beyond stated purpose; reflects upon usefulness of process

Engaging in Reflective Practice

Using reflection to increase awareness of the connections between actions and the possible consequence is not new (Dewey, 1910/1933). This study demonstrates how engaging in systematic and purposeful reflection enhanced the quality of engagement with individual stakeholders and the collective organization. Journal writing after each interaction enabled me to document both stakeholder and evaluator behaviours, as well as the immediate outcomes of these interactions. Allowing access to my cognitive processes enabled me to capture my decision-making processes as they occurred. Periodically during the evaluation, I reviewed and added to my recent entries in an attempt to discern the nonlinear outcomes generated from the interactions as they emerged. I thought about how my approach to subsequent interactions was influenced by my current understandings of people and their context.

In addition to informing my approach as the evaluation unfolded, I used my reflective journal entries during the post-evaluation analysis. As new understandings emerged of my earlier behaviour when I reflected on an entry, I added a comment to that entry. This examination of my behaviour across the evaluation, also called a metaevaluation, was guided by my use of criteria. I compared my behaviour during the evaluation process to criteria associated with my conceptualization of good evaluation practice. The criteria I used included my initial principles guiding my approach, as well as the principles from the American Evaluation Association ([http://www.eval.org/GP Training/GP%20Training%20Final/gp.principles.pdf](http://www.eval.org/GP%20Training/GP%20Training%20Final/gp.principles.pdf)) and the Program Evaluation Standards (The Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation, 2007). Exploring my practice in this way helped me to develop a deeper awareness of how my

approach was influenced by my interpretations of stakeholder responses. My examination of my own behaviour supports Stake's (2004a) suggestion that metaevaluation should be integrated as a major part of ongoing evaluation methodology. In this way, reflection enabled me to closely monitor the influence of my contributions to the establishment of trust, collaboration, and learning with individual stakeholders.

Integrating Past Experience and New Understandings

My evaluator approach was greatly influenced by my past experiences, readings of the literature, and emerging understandings of the present program and its context. Throughout my past evaluation experiences, as I identified dilemmas and sought new literature to guide my approach, I continually gained new insights about how I approached the evaluation and responded to the stakeholders. This study points to the importance of having evaluators continually integrate past experiences and new theoretical ideas with understandings gleaned from close engagement with stakeholders. In this case, I identified a critical episode when these three sources of learning became misaligned. I needed to think about how my approach was transformed. Paying attention to the critical episodes during this evaluation helped me to think more deeply about the complexity inherent in the evaluation and to respond to this complexity in more situationally appropriate ways. By integrating my past experiences, insights from the literature and understandings about close engagement, I developed an evaluation approach that was theoretically sound, relevant to the organizational context in which I operated, and authentic to my personal orientation as an evaluator. How I went about examining my behaviour as the evaluator is explored in the following second section about the Research of Evaluation.

The Research of Evaluation

I purposefully sought a dynamic context in which to study the influence of my behaviour on the interactions between evaluator and stakeholders using a new approach. I recognized the need for a new approach when I conceptualized the organization as complex and interconnected with its environment and the evaluation as a disturbance to the system. As I began to understand the challenges related to an approach that sought to reduce its complexity (i.e., identify variables and pathways of use), I sought an approach that would document my interactions with enough detail allowing the examination of my influence across levels of the organization. When I considered the limitations of our current approaches (i.e., self reports and descriptions), I revisited the literature related to studying complex adaptive systems. Insights gleaned about the nonlinear behaviour of complex phenomenon led me to a new approach informed by methods from two fields: from educational research and from organizational theory, which is used to study organizations operating in dynamic contexts. It is not often an evaluator has the opportunity to select their evaluation context; however, in the present case the changing nature of the organization implementing the education initiatives provided a useful context in which to formalize my learning related to studying evaluation processes within a dynamic organization. In the following sections focused on the research of evaluation use, I describe my orientation to the research, outline my methods of data collection and analysis, and provide a discussion of the implications to this approach.

Orientation to the Research

During the present study, I investigated how my behaviour may have shaped organizational and program development within the dynamic context. In order to do so I

required an approach that documented my influence as a force that changed the context for organizational behaviour while participating across the levels of the evaluation. The in-depth examination of the influence of my evaluator behaviour was made possible by combining two approaches: complexity thinking from the field of educational research and a modified case study approach based, in part, on my readings about complex responsive processing from the field of organizational theory. Applying the principles of complexity thinking allowed me to study the influence of my participation at multiple organizational levels. My new approach allowed me to collect data with enough detail to gain a comprehensive understanding of the outcomes created by the interactions between stakeholders and the evaluator across the evaluation process.

Methods of Data Collection and Analysis

My new approach included a modified case study with the addition of a reflective researcher journal and the use of an iterative approach to data analysis. Modifying the case study was necessary because, although the approach was the most suitable method for bounding the study and for drawing attention to the outcomes within the interactions (Hammersley, 2004; Stake, 2005), it did not take into account the participatory nature of my evaluator role. As a result, I supplemented the traditional data collected from traditional case study methods (i.e., interviews, field notes, and a document review), with a researcher reflective journal. Writing in this journal allowed me to create a transferable account of my cognitive processes during the evaluation, so that during the post-evaluation analysis, I had access to the insider's perspective because I was a participant in the evaluation interactions.

I used an iterative approach during the analysis of the interactions between evaluator and stakeholders. Each time I revisited my understandings of my behaviour, my thinking was influenced in some way as I brought new ways of thinking to each analysis; for example, deepening my understanding of what happened later in the evaluation or reconsidering the influence of my previous experiences. At the completion of the evaluation, I reorganized the data in a manner so that all the data sources for each interaction were in one file, facilitating moving between levels of data in an iterative manner. During the post-evaluation analysis, I used memos as a way of documenting my emerging understandings: I created quotation memos during my initial reading of the data for each interaction; then I used file memos to document my understandings of the interaction as a whole; finally I applied case memos to document my understandings of the case as a whole. During the subsequent analysis, as I revisited the data and new understandings emerged, I added comments to existing memos.

Examination of the parts of the interaction as well as the interaction as a whole allowed me to gain a deeper understanding of how the sources of data informed the other. The only way I could make meaning of the evaluation process was to examine the interactions that occurred within it, and, in the same way, I could only make meaning of an interaction by looking at the words from the transcript, field note, and journal entry describing the interaction. These words within the data file did not have meaning until I examined the interaction as a whole and then the interactions across the evaluation process. The result of undertaking such a process was an ever-deepening understanding of the dynamic influences on each interaction.

As I generated understandings of the case, memos drew my attention to occurrences I had highlighted as noteworthy in my journal entries. Ten of these events generated what I called critical episodes; these episodes were important for understanding the insights that transformed the principles guiding my evaluator approach. The analysis of the critical episodes revealed how I went about developing engagement with stakeholders. The iterative process supported the emergence of understandings related to the influence of my behaviour, and writing memos documented my thoughts throughout the analysis process.

Implications for Evaluation Research

A New Approach to Studying Evaluator Behaviour

This study contributes a new approach to examining the influence of the evaluator as a participant in the evaluation process. In particular, this study demonstrates how using an approach acknowledging and inclusive of complexity deepens the understandings of the evaluator's behaviour. The modified case study approach provides a comprehensive method of examining the evaluator's decision-making process related to both the influences surrounding the process and the cognitive processes involved. The iterative data analysis method allows the interactions to be examined in a manner where the interactions are examined taking into account their nonlinear nature. This study contributes to thinking about an evaluation not as a chronological sequence of events to be documented but rather as a complex process in flux. I propose the need for a new approach to studying human organizational interactions documenting not only the occasions where new ideas and unanticipated understandings emerge but also the interactions and contextual influences surrounding the emergence.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I presented the insights gained from the present study and the resulting implications for evaluation practice and research. In the first section, I revisited each of the study's three research questions related to my evaluation approach. First, I explored the influence of the theories on my decision making during the evaluation. Organizational theory informed by complexity science focused my attention on the outcomes from my interactions with individual stakeholders. I described how each of the three evaluation theories was endorsed, modified, and extended by my approach. In particular, the theories demonstrated an ability to be adapted to the context of the individual stakeholder: the responsive approach focused on individual stakeholder learning; the participatory approach focused on individual stakeholder involvement, and the developmental approach focused on the active role of the evaluator to engage individual stakeholders.

Second, I described the impact of the nonlinear nature and individualized quality of interactions on my evaluator decision making as I attempted to develop closer engagement with stakeholders. I devised a three-stage progression of individual stakeholder engagement to frame my discussion about the influence of the dynamic context on my approach to establishing trust, fostering collaborations, and promoting learning. During each stage, the outcome of new understandings generated by the interactions of groups of stakeholders guided my subsequent efforts at engaging individuals in a variety of groupings.

Third, I described three features of my approach promoting evaluation use: monitoring for individual sensemaking, responding to explicit and implicit needs, and

fostering a quality culture of inquiry. The implications for practice include developing a closer relationship with stakeholders, engaging in reflective practice, and integrating past experience and new understandings.

In the second section of the chapter, I described my approach to examining evaluator behavior operating within a dynamic context. My approach was informed by complexity thinking from the field of educational research and the modified case study approach, based, in part, on my readings from organizational theory. The case study was modified with the use of a reflective researcher journal, which served two purposes: it informed my approach during the evaluation, and I accessed my cognitive processes during the post-evaluation analysis. The iterative data analysis approach allowed me to gain a deeper understanding of how each source of data informed the others. The implication for research is a new research method focused on documenting the complexity of the evaluation process.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS OF THE STUDY

Chapter Overview

In this chapter, I describe my concluding thoughts about the examination of my behaviour during an accountability and developmental evaluation operating within a dynamic organizational context. I conclude by summarizing the study's significance for the field of evaluation, and present suggestions for future research.

Concluding Thoughts

The path I took in this evaluation was to develop a close relationship with the stakeholders as I kept pace with their responses to pressures both originating both within and outside the program context. It was my belief that for stakeholders to perceive the evaluation as having value, they had to see the evaluation as having the ability to meet their accountability requirements as well as to provide insights into and possible solutions to their challenges. For that to happen, I believed it was important for them to see me as understanding their needs through an interactive process that engaged them in the evaluation process. As I developed a close relationship with individual stakeholders and I became aware of the fluidity of their program, I was better able to respond to the emerging individual and organizational needs. In response to these needs, I adapted the evaluation methods so that they respected the stakeholders' working constraints and actively fostered a culture of inquiry. The implementation of this process was guided by the understanding that the orientation and actions of the evaluator contribute significantly to the quality of evaluation and indirectly to evaluation use (Mathison, 2005) and when evaluators orient their approach to integrate understandings from past practice in

response to new program demands and are closely engaged with stakeholders, the evaluator is more likely to choose situationally appropriate evaluation methods.

The present case study was limited by a boundary of an 18-month time period and the restrictions of the organizational context surrounding the project. I used multiple methods of data to generate a thick description of the interactions and used these as guides for my decision-making. My focus on providing sufficient detail of events enabled readers to make connections between the study and their own experiences. In this way, I promoted what Stake (1978) describes as the type of learning that readers might experience from encounters with specific case studies. Stake and Trumbull (1982) described *naturalistic generalization* in detail, and Stake recently defined it as “the act of drawing broad conclusions primarily from personal or vicarious experience, rather than from formal knowledge, however obtained” (2004a, p. 174). My description of ten critical episodes, the account of shifts in my principles, and the progression of individual stakeholder engagement provides an opportunity for readers to vicariously experience and make meaning about the case study.

Significance for the Field of Evaluation

This study suggests that evaluation use might be better served if we integrate reflective practice as an important part of the evaluator’s behaviour in the entire evaluation process. The use of this practice in this study provides for a much richer understanding of the values and needs of the stakeholder, and their contribution towards the implementation of evaluation use. As we seek new ways to increase evaluation use our efforts could benefit from an expanded approach informed by the fields of educational research and organizational theory informed by complexity science. The

research methodology employed in this study was informed by the above and it provided useful methods for examining the evaluator influence on individual and organizational use. The present study contributes to our understandings of the potential of how close interactive evaluative inquiry supports individual and organizational learning, how it works in dynamic contexts and how it can enrich evaluation use.

Directions for Future Research

The impetus for this study was my interest in how evaluative inquiry might support ongoing program development within a dynamic organizational context. As dynamic contextual influences require organizations to continually adapt to changes, this study demonstrates the effectiveness of an evaluator's response to emerging individual and organizational needs while meeting a predetermined evaluation purpose (in this case, the external accountability requirement for funders). Additional research is needed to further our understandings of (a) methods for evaluators to use when developing close engagement with individual stakeholders, and (b) the degree to which close engagement and data-informed decision making have a residual effect on stakeholders' thinking and operating within the dynamic organization, and (c) how to protect against evaluator bias when in close contact.

A Final Word or Two

In *The Book of Tea*, Japanese philosopher Kakuzo Okakura explores the history of tea in the Japanese culture (Okakura, 1906). As I read his account I drew parallels between his descriptions about the evolution of the tea-ritual and my current conceptions of the evaluation process. Traditionally, drinking tea and conducting evaluation were used to achieve an end product: tea was for medicinal healing, evaluation was for

rendering judgments. Gradually, a new meaning emerged from the ritual of drinking tea; the tea ritual became recognized as a means of self-realization. In the same way, a new meaning has emerged for me from engaging with individual stakeholders in an evaluative inquiry within a dynamic context. In the present study, both stakeholders and I learned as we engaged in the process of the evaluation. As I reflect upon my actions and behaviours I realize I was constantly readjusting my responses to the changes in my thinking. I monitored and responded to individual stakeholders' needs. I encouraged myself to modify and extend current notions of evaluation models and approaches to the study evaluation.

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APPENDIX A: LETTER OF INFORMATION

for

“A case study examining evaluator behaviour”

April, 2006

Dear organizational staff

I am writing to invite your participation in research aimed at understanding evaluation use within the evaluation of the initiatives of the organizational project. I am a doctoral candidate at the Faculty of Education, Queen’s University. This research has been cleared by the Queen’s University General Research Ethics Board and will be conducted during the evaluation of the organizational project. While I am the evaluator for this project, at the same time I will undertake my doctoral research. The study is entitled “A case study examining evaluator behaviour.”

In order to better understand evaluation use within a complex system, I will document our weekly interactions that will not exceed 10 hours. The interactions will take place in the organizational offices between April 2006 and April 2007 and will include email communication, field notes of our informal exchanges, and observations. In addition to the interactions, I invite you to participate in a maximum of ten semi-structured interviews taking place in the organizational offices. The interviews invite organizational staff members to describe their experiences with and thoughts about the organizational initiatives. Each interview will be tape recorded and will last 30 to 60 minutes. The taped interviews will be transcribed, and then all the tapes will be destroyed. You will have the opportunity to review the transcript for accuracy and make additions and deletions as you feel would represent your experiences and thoughts of the organizational project. All measures possible will be taken to ensure your confidentiality including the use of pseudonyms to replace all names.

I do not foresee risks in your participation in this research. Your participation is entirely voluntary. You are not obliged to answer any questions you find objectionable, and you are assured that no information collected will be reported to anyone who is in authority over you. You are free to withdraw from the study without reasons or consequences to the evaluation study at any point, and you may request removal of part or all of your data.

This research may result in publications or presentations of various types, including journal articles and conference presentations. The only other person who will have access to the data is my doctoral supervisor Dr. Lyn Shulha and all measures to protect confidentiality will be taken including the use of pseudonyms in all forms of the data and the storage of data in a secure location and password protected.

Should further information be required before you can make a decision about participation, please feel free to contact me Cheryl Poth at Queen's University, Faculty of Education at 613-331-0300, or contact me by email at pothc@educ.queensu.ca or my supervisor Dr Lyn Shulha at Queen's University, Faculty of Education at 613-533-6000 ext. 75016 or by email shulhal@educ.queensu.ca. For questions, concerns , or complaints about the research ethics of this study, I may contact the dean of the Faculty of Education, Dr. Rosa Bruno-Jofré, 613-533-6210 or by email brunojor@educ.queensu.ca or the chair of the General Research Ethics Board, Dr. Joan Stevenson 613 -533-6081 stevensj@post.queensu.ca.

Yours sincerely,

Cheryl Poth

Letter of Information

for

“A case study examining evaluator behaviour”

April, 2007

Dear organizational staff

I am writing to invite you to continue your participation in research aimed at understanding evaluation use within the evaluation of the initiatives of the organizational project. I am a doctoral candidate at the Faculty of Education, Queen’s University. This research has been cleared by the Queen’s University General Research Ethics Board and will be conducted during the evaluation of the organizational project. While I am the evaluator for this project, at the same time I will undertake my doctoral research. The study is entitled “A case study examining evaluator behaviour”

In order to better understand evaluation use within a complex system, I will document our weekly interactions that will not exceed 10 hours. The interactions will take place in the organizational offices between April 2007 and September 2007 and will include email communication, field notes of our informal exchanges, and observations. In addition to the interactions, I invite you to participate in a maximum of ten semi-structured interviews taking place in the organizational offices. The interviews invite organizational staff members to describe their experiences with and thoughts about the organizational initiatives. Each interview will be tape recorded and will last 30 to 60 minutes. The taped interviews will be transcribed, and then all the tapes will be destroyed. You will have the opportunity to review the transcript for accuracy and make additions and deletions as you feel would represent your experiences and thoughts of the organizational project. All measures possible will be taken to ensure your confidentiality including the use of pseudonyms to replace all names.

I do not foresee risks in your participation in this research. Your participation is entirely voluntary. You are not obliged to answer any questions you find objectionable, and you are assured that no information collected will be reported to anyone who is in authority over you. You are free to withdraw from the study without reasons or consequences to the evaluation study at any point, and you may request removal of part or all of your data.

This research may result in publications or presentations of various types, including journal articles and conference presentations. The only other person who will have access to the data is my doctoral supervisor Dr. Lyn Shulha and all measures to protect confidentiality will be taken including the use of pseudonyms in all forms of the data and the storage of data in a secure location and password protected.

Should further information be required before you can make a decision about participation, please feel free to contact me Cheryl Poth at Queen's University, Faculty of Education at 613-331-0300, or contact me by email at pothc@educ.queensu.ca or my supervisor Dr Lyn Shulha at Queen's University, Faculty of Education at 613-533-6000 ext. 75016 or by email shulhal@educ.queensu.ca. For questions, concerns , or complaints about the research ethics of this study, I may contact the dean of the Faculty of Education, Dr. Rosa Bruno-Jofré, 613-533-6210 or by email brunojor@educ.queensu.ca or the chair of the General Research Ethics Board, Dr. Joan Stevenson 613 -533-6081 stevensj@post.queensu.ca.

Yours sincerely,

Cheryl Poth

APPENDIX B: CONSENT FORM

for

“A case study examining evaluator behaviour”

- I have read and retained and copy of the letter of information concerning the study “A case study examining evaluator behaviour” and agree to participate in the study. All questions have been explained to my satisfaction. I am aware of the purpose and procedures of this study.
- I understand that my participation will involve up to ten hours of week of interactions (April 2006-April 2007) with the researcher including email communication, informal exchanges, observations and interviews that will take place at the organizational office on campus. I have been informed the ten interviews will be between 30 and 60 minutes in length and will be recorded by audiotape. I understand that I will have the opportunity to review the transcript and make additions and deletions.
- I have been notified that participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw at any point during the study without any consequences to the evaluation study. I understand that all measures to protect confidentiality will be taken with appropriate storage, access of data, and the use of pseudonyms.
- I understand that, upon request, I may have a full description of the results of the study after its completion. I understand that the researchers intend to publish the findings of this study

I am aware that I can contact the researcher, Cheryl Poth by telephone at 613-331-0300 or by email pothc@educ.queensu.ca if I have any questions about this project or her supervisor Dr Lyn Shulha at Queen’s University, Faculty of Education at 613-533-6000 ext. 75016 or by email shulhal@educ.queensu.ca. I am also aware that for questions, concerns, or complaints about the research ethics of this study, I may contact the dean of the Faculty of Education, Dr. Rosa Bruno-Jofré, 613-533-6210 brunojor@educ.queensu.ca or the chair of the General Research Ethics Board, Dr. Joan Stevenson 613 -533-6081 stevensj@post.queensu.ca.

- Please sign this copy of the consent form and return to Cheryl Poth

I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTOOD THIS CONSENT FORM AND I AGREE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY.

Participant’s Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Please write your email or postal address at the bottom of this sheet if you wish to receive a copy of the results of this study.

Consent form

for

“A case study examining evaluator behaviour”

- I have read and retained and copy of the letter of information concerning the study “A case study examining evaluator behaviour” and agree to participate in the study. All questions have been explained to my satisfaction. I am aware of the purpose and procedures of this study.
- I understand that my participation will involve up to ten hours of week of interactions (April 2007-September 2007) with the researcher including email communication, informal exchanges, observations and interviews that will take place at the organizational office on campus. I have been informed the ten interviews will be between 30 and 60 minutes in length and will be recorded by audiotape. I understand that I will have the opportunity to review the transcript and make additions and deletions.
- I have been notified that participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw at any point during the study without any consequences to the evaluation study. I understand that all measures to protect confidentiality will be taken with appropriate storage, access of data, and the use of pseudonyms.
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- Please sign this copy of the consent form and return to Cheryl Poth

I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTOOD THIS CONSENT FORM AND I AGREE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY.

Participant’s Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Please write your email or postal address at the bottom of this sheet if you wish to receive a copy of the results of this study.

APPENDIX C: EXAMPLE OF AN INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW GUIDE

Shannon

August 2006

1. From your perspective, what has the organization achieved during its first year implementation?
2. How would you describe the roles you have played thus far in the organizational project?
3. What roles do you see yourself playing in the future?
4. Some of your responsibilities have recently shifted to Camilla.
 - a) In what ways do you see her role changing in the coming year?
 - b) What challenges do you anticipate she will experience?
5. What are the organization's challenges in the coming year? Specific to:
 - a) Their leadership role within the University
 - b) Developing a faculty initiative
 - c) Developing initiatives for learners across disciplines
6. Do you view learner involvement as an important aspect of the organization's vision?
7. What role do you see the external evaluator playing within the organization and what can the external evaluation findings be used for?
8. Are there other comments you would like to make or experiences you would like to share at this point?

APPENDIX D: EXAMPLE OF A SMALL GROUP INTERVIEW GUIDE

Camilla and Courtney

June 4

1. Tell me about your experiences during the planning process of the faculty initiative.
 - a) How did you go about recruiting members for the planning committee?
 - b) What were the challenges you experienced?
 - c) What adjectives would you use to describe how the committee worked together?
2. Tell me about the participants from the first implementation of the faculty initiative.
 - a) How did you go about recruiting them?
 - b) What appeared to be their motivation for participating?
 - c) What appeared to be the greatest challenge for them?
3. Overall, what have you learned from the faculty initiative experience?
 - a) About working on an inter-professional planning team?
 - b) What would you do differently in the planning of a second implementation?
 - c) What is the next step for you? How will you apply your knowledge or understandings gained?

4. For the evaluation tool for the planning committee:
 - a) What do you want to know about their experiences?
Probes: characteristics of the working relationships, motivation for their participation, challenges they experienced, impact of the experience, changes they would like to see
 - b) Which members of the planning committee are essential for me talk to?
4. Are there other comments you would like to make or experiences you would like to share at this point?

APPENDIX E: EXAMPLE OF A LARGE GROUP INTERVIEW GUIDE

September 2007

1. Just before we begin interpreting the most recent data, I would like to spend a few minutes talking about the data and anticipated uses for the *Final Evaluation Report*
 - a) How do you see the findings being used
 - i) Immediately?
 - ii) At the end of this year?
 - iii) Long term?
2. Let's review the *Project stipend* summary of data distributed last week
 - a) Comments? What struck you when you read the summary?
 - b) How can these findings be applied?
 - c) Are there additional questions that should be pursued?
 - d) What can we learn from this data to inform the next implementation?
3. Let's review the *clinical placement* comparison and summary of data distributed last week.
 - a) Comments? What struck you when you read the summary?
 - b) How can these findings be applied?
 - c) Are there additional questions that should be pursued?
 - d) What can we learn from this data to inform the next implementation?

4. Let's review the *faculty initiative planning committee* summary of data distributed last week.
 - a) Comments? What struck you when you read the summary?
 - b) How can these findings be applied?
 - c) Are there additional questions that should be pursued?
 - d) What can we learn from this data to inform the next implementation?
5. Let's discuss the *learner survey* to be developed for this year.
 - a) What aspects do we want to be able to compare to the first year?
 - b) What additional questions do we want to ask?
 - c) How do you intend to use this data?
6. Let's review the focus group protocol for the *advisory committee*.
 - a) How do you intend to use the data?
 - b) Do the questions meet your intended use related to:
 - i) Organizational effectiveness
 - ii) Organizational roles
 - iii) Time commitment
 - iv) Recommendations for the future
7. Are there other comments you would like to make or experiences you would like to share at this point?

APPENDIX F: EXCERPT OF FIELD NOTES FOR A FORMAL INTERVIEW

INTERACTION

Sixth large group Interview

Location: Campus conference room

Duration: 1.5 hrs

1. Attendance and Roles

In attendance: Courtney, Anita, Jackie, Cheryl, Camilla

Roles: It was evident that Jackie wanted to be seen as contributing because she always answered first. Everyone was attentive to what the others said. There was a lot of equal sharing in this interaction.

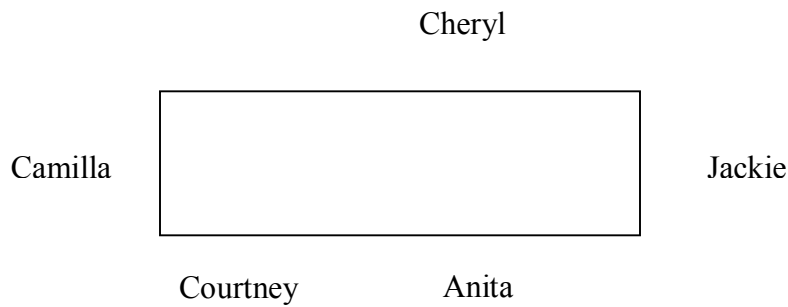
2. Physical Setting and Atmosphere

Physical Setting: There was a large table in the middle of room, and we sat in the chairs around it. I brought some whiteboard markers in case we wanted to use the whiteboard on the wall.

Atmosphere: There was a friendly tone to the meeting. The organizational members were enthusiastic about interpreting the data, and I was glad to have their feedback. There was generally a lot of talking and a few side conversations that were distracting but we mostly waited for the speaker to finish before the next speaker began.

3. Human Social Environment

Arrangement: Jackie sat at the head of the table and Camilla at the opposite end; Anita was on the left of Jackie, and I was on her right, with Courtney sitting opposite to me in between Anita and Camilla



4. Begin/Conclude

Begin: Once everyone arrived (and they were all on time), I began with an exchange of info. I shared my objective to negotiate timelines for reviewing the Final Evaluation Report, and Jackie offered suggestions about meeting dates. We decided the last meeting with the organizational members will take place in April. Jackie shared her view that one of the goals of the evaluation was to document how the organization had created opportunities for networking and the other was to inform how the project would be sustained. She updated us about how planning for the new office that would take over the projects was proceeding.

Conclude: I concluded within the 1.5 hours allotted by soliciting feedback about the learner survey. I shared that the goal is to follow up and build on last year's survey. The feedback I got from Jackie asked for a different definition to be used and provided the source. I explained the timeline.

5. Preparation/Follow up

Preparation: I negotiated the agenda with Jackie and distributed it to organizational members one week prior. Maureen sent her regrets as did Tanya. I had exchanged several emails with both Tanya and Jackie during the prior week about the new evaluation guidelines.

Follow up: The meeting finished, and Anita stuck around to ask some more questions about the data from the clinical initiative. I said I would follow up with her and with Jackie within the next week.

6. The interaction

Noteworthy: The exchanges between people were very different from the first large group interview where Jackie and Tanya had dominated. This time there seemed to be a lot of equal sharing, and everyone took their turn.

Documents exchanged: I shared a number of documents with the organizational members, including a comparison between the two clinical initiative evaluations, a draft of the learner survey, a draft of the faculty participant survey, and a summary of the findings emerging from a learner focus group.

5. My role

I facilitated the discussion by introducing a topic, be it either a summary of data or a draft of an evaluation tool, and I let them discuss it among themselves. I felt as though I had their attention and that they valued what I had to say. I think the others saw me as an active contributor to the organization. I was glad to see Jackie ask for permission to use the evaluation reports/summaries/quotes from data in the summaries for her upcoming conference presentation. I, of course, had encouraged it.

6. Insights

I think they do see me as part of the organization. At one point, Jackie asked me to go along with them to a meeting with other project leadership. They are certainly interested in my activities, and I think they are beginning to see the evaluation as useful to inform sustainability of the initiatives in the future. I proposed its use to generate information to inform groups undertaking similar initiatives; informing development of curriculum and placements, etc. Some of the ideas I saw for including in the final evaluation report were

- a) Main goal seems to be informing curriculum
- b) Learners reported important – long-term impact on their professional future
- c) There is need for authentic opportunities

APPENDIX G: EXCERPT OF A FIELD NOTE FOR AN INFORMAL IN-PERSON INTERACTION

I dropped in to see Tanya today (June 12) because I had been away and I wanted to catch up with her. We briefly discussed the interviews I will be doing in July about the faculty initiatives. Tanya seemed keen to have another perspective on the challenges the planning committee experienced. Previously she had been very comfortable sharing with me her perspectives and we did not have a chance to expand this time as she was running out for another meeting. I said I would follow up and share the draft of the interview protocol the following week. Atmosphere was friendly. Encounter duration: about 7 minutes.

APPENDIX H: EXCERPT OF A FIELD NOTE FOR AN INFORMAL ON-THE-PHONE INTERACTION

I spoke briefly with Courtney today (April 25) to follow up on her email about the faculty initiative. We had hoped to meet in March, but she cancelled because she was too busy. I was impressed that she had taken the time to write her thoughts and to answer my questions on the email. My reason for calling was that I just wanted to ask her to expand her thoughts on what she saw as the challenges to the group working together. She talked about the differences in roles at the University and wondered if the hierarchy had any impact. As well, she said the group would have benefitted from some team building, but she was not sure how she would get any buy-in. I said I would summarize the data from the other committee members and participants and share it with her in the next month.

Encounter duration: about 5 minutes.

APPENDIX I: EXCERPT OF A FIELD NOTE FOR AN INFORMAL EMAIL INTERACTION

I believe this interaction (March 6) between Anita and myself was initiated by a last-minute comment during our interview the previous day. I must have said something about having data to inform thinking about the clinical placement, when in fact I still have to conduct the focus groups. When she emailed me later in the day writing:

Hi Cheryl. Today was great. Is there anything specifically that they feel they need from us to better prepare them for this type of placement? (to be effective in their role in this type of placement). Anita

I had to backtrack and admit that I must have made a mistake; I said:

Hi Anita. Sorry for the confusion, I don't have specific information to inform the second implementation at this point. We need to gather information from the participants in order to have any solid information to guide the development, which would be good to do, but we just have to figure out when this can happen.

Cheryl

Although I was sorry this miscommunication occurred, it also highlighted for me Anita's interest in using the evaluation findings, and that I will definitely follow up with her as soon as I have anything. I also think she will now help me to get the focus group organized, as I was having trouble getting in touch with the coordinator.

APPENDIX J: EXAMPLE OF A NOTEWORTHY EVENT FROM FIELD NOTES

I think my use of email (Doc. 40) was noteworthy because it was the first time that I used email to first stimulate and then to facilitate a discussion among the organizational members. I'm still not sure how I gained the confidence to actually use email in this way. All I know is that after I got home from the Program Discussion Day I needed to share my observations with the organizational members. I also knew that calling a large group meeting was not going to work because of time constraints.

There were two things I noted that supported what I have heard to be the organization's approach of the second year. First, the meeting provided an arena for networking and discussions among community members. Not only were discussions held informing the formal agenda of the day, but also a lot of informal discussions. A number of exciting side conversations among the professionals went on, and plans for collaboration and sharing of resources were made. By providing an opportunity for the organizational members to communicate their work in progress they a) sought input from the community members, and b) shared some of the challenges faced by them and by other professionals interested in engaging in activities. It was important for the organizational members to know that they had provided a venue for these conversations to take place.

Second, the organizational members modeled their vision to respond to opportunities when the agenda was shifted during the second part of the morning. I heard a couple of participants' comments about feeling like their input mattered and was taken into consideration in order to make the most of the time they had together. Of course, there

was a lot more that was accomplished during the meeting, but those were the key observations from my perspective to share. I think this exchange may very well become a key moment where I asserted myself in my role and situated myself as an active contributor to the organization.

APPENDIX K: EXCERPT OF AN ENTRY FROM THE REFLECTIVE JOURNAL

The following is an example of a reflective journal entry for an interview with one of the program developers during the third (June) month of the evaluation (Doc. 10).

My first individual interview with Jackie was a success! I found she spoke openly about her experiences during the past year in the program, and I discovered that she sees the focus of the evaluation on meeting the accountability needs. I do not think at this point that she can see other uses, but perhaps in time she will. From my field notes before the interview, my goals were to establish trust by listening to her experiences and gaining an understanding of her view of the evaluation focus. I had also wanted to talk to her about communicating via email. I understand from her comments that there will be differences in the levels of involvement among the four program developers because of their other responsibilities, and that she will be the most involved. I am glad she is keen to receive a monthly update from me about my activities because I think it will help to maintain contact.

As the interview progressed, I felt that she had gained confidence in my commitment to meet her accountability needs as she was receptive to my suggestion of involving all the organizational members in a large group meeting to review the data from the previous year. This individual interview was different from my small group interview all the program developers because here we had a chance to talk about how the evaluation might unfold. When I shared the logic model with her and explained my challenges with understanding how the multiple initiatives were unfolding, we both laughed and she

described the project as “indeed complex.” For the first time, I learned that she may well understand that this project is not going to unfold as we plan at the beginning: She said that she did not want an evaluation plan because she knew it would change over time. As a result, I no longer feel it’s necessary to give her one, and we agreed the next step would be for her to invite the organizational members to the large group interview and I would follow up with her in two weeks to plan the agenda together. This interaction made me think about how my interactions with each organizational member are going to be different. Overall comment: a good start to building a relationship with her.

Analysis Note added Oct. 2, 2007.

This entry is about my first one-on-one discussion with Jackie and allows me to see the start of a working relationship. She is supportive of my suggestions of using email to communicate and of using a large group interview to collaboratively review data. It is also the first time I get a sense of how she views the project and openly shares her views. There is a trust here, and this is a noteworthy event. This is also the first time I reflect and share about the complexity of the project, and she talks about how this is a different evaluation for her, too.

APPENDIX L: LIST OF FILES FOR ANALYSIS

#	Document Name	Distinguishing Features
1	<i>email.ph.infor.March06</i>	Initial meetings
2	<i>email.ph.infor.April06</i>	Introductory emails
3	<i>email.ph.infor.May06</i>	Emails focused on logistics of setting up meetings
4	<i>Tanya.Amy.smallgrpInt.May12.06</i>	First small group interview with project managers Focus on learning about project and organization
5	<i>Tanya.Amy.smallgrpInt.May14.06</i>	Second small group interview with project managers Focus on learning about project context
6	<i>Courtney.Kate.Nadia.smallgrpInt.May16.06</i>	First small group interview with research associates and administrative assistant. Focus on my evaluator role
7	<i>Amy.Tanya. smallgrpInt.May26.06</i>	Third small group interview with project managers Focus on planning project evaluation
8	<i>Courtney.Kate.Nadia.smallgrpInt.May26.06</i>	Second small group interview with research associates and administrative assistant Focus on planning project evaluation and solicited feedback on first evaluation tool.
9	<i>email.ph.infor.June06</i>	Emails focused on logistics of setting up meetings
10	<i>Jackie.IndInt.June15.06.</i>	First individual interview with Jackie Focus on the evaluation process
11	<i>Amy.IndInt.June 20.06.</i>	First individual interview with Amy Focus on organization
12	<i>Maureen.Camilla.smallgrpInt.June28.06</i>	First meeting with Maureen and Camilla Focus on the evaluation and the evaluator
13	<i>Tanya.IndInt.June28.06</i>	First individual interview with Tanya Focus on year 1 evaluation
14	<i>Tanya.Amy.smallgrpInt.June 29.06</i>	Fourth (and final) small group interview with project managers Focus on project and organization year 1
15	<i>email.ph.infor.July06</i>	Emails where I first solicit feedback to the entire group and first time I receive individual feedback from organizational members
16	<i>Camilla.IndInt.July 12.06</i>	First individual interview with Camilla Focus on her role and initiatives

17	<i>Amy.IndInt.July12.06</i>	Second individual interview with Amy Focus on her organizational role
18	<i>Tanya.IndInt.July13.06</i>	Second individual interview with Tanya Focus on communication and learning about project
19	<i>Jackie.IndInt.July 13.06</i>	Second individual interview with Jackie Focus on large group interview agenda
20	<i>Amy.IndInt.July20.06</i>	Third individual interview with Amy Focus on relationships within organization and University context
21	<i>LargegroupInt.July20.06</i>	First large group interview Focus on sharing individual perspectives about previous evaluation findings
22	<i>email.ph.infor.August06</i>	Emails about logistics Introduction of first monthly evaluation update
23	<i>Courtney.IndInt.Aug3.06</i>	First individual interview with Courtney Focus on project and organization year 1
24	<i>Jackie.Camilla.Maureen.smallgrpInt. Aug.3.06</i>	First small group meeting with three program developers Focus on communication and soliciting evaluation feedback
25	<i>Amy.IndInt.Aug8.06</i>	Fourth (and final) individual interview with Amy Focus on organizational roles
26	<i>Tanya.IndInt.Aug8.06</i>	Third individual interview with Tanya Focus on soliciting feedback about an evaluation tool
27	<i>Shannon.IndInt.Aug10.06</i>	First individual meeting with Shannon Focus on communication about evaluation and solicit feedback
28	<i>email.ph.infor.September06</i>	Emails about logistics and for the first time I disseminated evaluation findings to whole group Second monthly evaluation update
29	<i>Tanya.IndInt.Sept8.06</i>	Fourth individual interview with Tanya Focus on finalizing an evaluation tool
30	<i>Camilla.IndInt.Sept27.06</i>	Second individual interview with Camilla Focus on use of evaluation to inform project and document
31	<i>email.ph.infor.October06</i>	Emails focused on communication of evaluation activities and my role as evaluator Third monthly evaluation update

32	<i>Anita.IndInt.Oct3.06</i>	First (and only) individual interview with Anita Focused on evaluation
33	<i>Jackie.IndInt.Oct4.06</i>	Third individual interview with Jackie Focus on her understanding of the evaluation
34	<i>Katie.IndInt.Oct5.06</i>	First (and only) individual interview with Katie Focus on project and organization
35	<i>Tanya.IndInt.Oct13.06</i>	Fifth individual interview with Tanya Focus on evaluation and project
36	<i>email.ph.infor.November06</i>	Emails about agenda of second large group meeting and fourth monthly evaluation update
37	<i>Tanya.IndInt.Nov7.06</i>	Sixth individual interview with Tanya Focus on project and evaluation
38	<i>LargegroupInt.November16.06</i>	Second large group interview Focus on interpreting the data generated by the initial project evaluation activities First time I am asked to contribute to an organizational publication
39	<i>Anita.Courtney.smallgrpInt.Nov30.06</i>	First small group interview with these research associates together Focus on project
40	<i>email.ph.infor.December06</i>	Emails about December University-wide information day about the project and first time I solicit feedback about my impressions
41	<i>Maureen.Jackie.smallgrpInt.Dec6.06</i>	First small group meeting with these project developers Focus on their role in an initiative
42	<i>Courtney.IndInt. Dec7.06</i>	Second individual interview with Courtney Focus on her role in an initiative
43	<i>email.ph.infor.January07</i>	Emails about agenda for third large group interview. I solicit and receive feedback to inform evaluation tools. First time project summaries are sent to me without request
44	<i>TanyaInd.Int.Jan21.07</i>	Seventh individual interview with Tanya Focus on evaluation report
45	<i>LargegroupInt.February1.07</i>	Third large group interview Focus on discussing the organizational focus for the interim evaluation report
46	<i>email.ph.infor.February07</i>	Emails focused on logistics of evaluation activities

47	<i>email.ph.infor.March07</i>	Emails focused on logistics of evaluation activities and evaluation report
48	<i>Anita.Courtney.smallgrpInt.Mar5.07</i>	Second small group interview with these researchers Focus on sharing evaluation findings from evaluation and I solicit feedback for evaluation tools
49	<i>Tanya.IndInt.Mar 26.07</i>	Eighth individual interview with Tanya Focus on evaluation report, planning the second year evaluation, her role, my role.
50	<i>email.ph.infor.April07</i>	Emails about evaluation report and feedback received from organization.
51	<i>LargegroupInt.April5.07</i>	Fourth large group interview Focus on reviewing the first draft of the evaluation report
52	<i>Jackie.Tanya.smallgrpInt.Apr.26.07</i>	First interview with both a program developer and project manager Focus on discussing usefulness of year 1 evaluation and planning year 2 evaluation
53	<i>email.ph.infor.May07</i>	Emails focused on logistics of development of conference poster
54	<i>Courtney.Anita.smallgrpInt.May5.07</i>	Third small group interview with these research associates Focus on development of conference poster
55	<i>Courtney.Anita.smallgrpInt.May11.07</i>	Fourth small group interview with these research associates Focus on development of conference poster
56	<i>Courtney.Anita.smallgrpInt.May17.07</i>	Fifth small group interview with these research associates Focus on finalizing conference poster
57	<i>LargegroupInt.May23.07</i>	Fifth large group interview Focus on revisiting the usefulness of the evaluation to inform organizational decisions
58	<i>email.ph.infor.June07</i>	Emails focused on logistics of summer interviews and evaluation activities
59	<i>email.ph.infor.July07</i>	Emails focused on
60	<i>Camilla.Tanya.smallgrpInt.July4.07</i>	First small group interview that involved Camilla and Tanya Focused on usefulness of evaluation and plan for second year evaluation
61	<i>Courtney.Camilla.smallgrpInt.July4.07</i>	First small group interview that involved Courtney and Camilla Focus on the evaluation of an initiative

62	<i>Courtney.Anita.smallgrpInt.July5.07</i>	Sixth small group interview with these research associates Focused on dissemination of evaluation findings for an initiative and solicit feedback
63	<i>Shannon.IndInt.July26.07</i>	Second individual interview with Shannon
64	<i>email.ph.infor.August07</i>	Emails focused on
65	<i>email.ph.infor.September07</i>	Emails focused on
66	<i>LargegroupInt.September26.06</i>	Sixth (and final) large group interview Focus on examining the data generated by the second year project evaluation activities
67	<i>iniprojprop.org.2004</i>	Document review of Initial project proposal
68	<i>Eval.framework.ext.funder.2006</i>	Document review of External Funder Evaluation Framework
69	<i>Annualreport.Org.2006</i>	Document review of Annual Report year 1
70	<i>Annualreport.Org.2007</i>	Document review of Annual Report year 2
71	<i>DR.Int.Projecteval.evaluator.2007</i>	Document review of Interim Project Evaluation Report
72	<i>DR.Ind.initiative1.org.2006</i>	Document review of Summary of Individual Initiative Evaluation 1
73	<i>DR.Ind.initiative2.org.2007</i>	Document review of Summary of Individual Initiative Evaluation 2
74	<i>DR.Ind.initiative3.org.2007</i>	Document review of Individual Summary of Individual Initiative Evaluation 3
75	<i>DR.Newsletter1.org.2006</i>	Document review of Public Communication: Newsletter 1
76	<i>DR.Newsletter2.org.2007</i>	Document review of Public Communication: Newsletter 2
77	<i>DR.Newsletter3.org.2007</i>	Document review of Public Communication: Newsletter 3
78	<i>DR.Publicemail1.org.2006</i>	Document review of Public Communication: Email 1
79	<i>DR.Publicemail2.org.2007</i>	Document review of Public Communication: Email 2

APPENDIX M: LIST OF FAMILIES AND ASSIGNED FILES

		<i>Families</i>
1	<i>email.ph.infor.March06</i>	<i>Email, phone and informal interactions Evaluation Phase 1</i>
2	<i>email.ph.infor.April06</i>	<i>Email, phone and informal interactions Evaluation Phase 1</i>
3	<i>email.ph.infor.May06</i>	<i>Email, phone and informal interactions Evaluation Phase 1</i>
4	<i>Tanya.Amy.smallgrpInt.May12.06</i>	<i>Small group interviews Project Manager interactions Evaluation Phase 1 Tanya Amy</i>
5	<i>Tanya.Amy.smallgrpInt.May14.06</i>	<i>Small group interviews Project Manager interactions Evaluation Phase 1 Tanya Amy</i>
6	<i>Courtney.Katie.Nadia.smallgrpInt.May16.06</i>	<i>Small group interviews Evaluation Phase 1 Research Associate interactions Courtney Katie Nadia</i>
7	<i>Amy.Tanya. smallgrpInt.May26.06</i>	<i>Small group interviews Project Manager interactions Evaluation Phase 1 Amy Tanya</i>
8	<i>Courtney.Katie.Nadia.smallgrpInt.May26.06</i>	<i>Small group interviews Evaluation Phase 1 Research Associate interactions Courtney Katie Nadia</i>
9	<i>email.ph.infor.June06</i>	<i>Email, phone and informal interactions Evaluation Phase 1</i>

10	<i>Jackie.IndInt.June15.06.</i>	<i>Individual Interview Jackie Program Developer interactions Evaluation Phase 1</i>
11	<i>Amy.IndInt.June 20.06.</i>	<i>Individual Interview Project Manager interactions Amy Evaluation Phase 1</i>
12	<i>Maureen.Camilla.smallgrpInt.June28.06</i>	<i>Small group interviews Program Developer interactions Evaluation Phase 1 Camilla Maureen</i>
13	<i>Tanya.IndInt.June28.06</i>	<i>Individual Interview Project Manager interactions Evaluation Phase 1 Tanya</i>
14	<i>Tanya.Amy.smallgrpInt.June 29.06</i>	<i>Small group interviews Evaluation Phase 1 Tanya Amy</i>
15	<i>email.ph.infor.July06</i>	<i>Email, phone and informal interactions Evaluation Phase 1</i>
16	<i>Camilla.IndInt.July 12.06</i>	<i>Individual Interview Evaluation Phase 1 Program Developer interactions Camilla</i>
17	<i>Amy.IndInt.July12.06</i>	<i>Individual Interview Project Manager interactions Evaluation Phase 1 Amy</i>
18	<i>Tanya.IndInt.July13.06</i>	<i>Individual Interview Project Manager interactions Evaluation Phase 1 Tanya</i>
19	<i>Jackie.IndInt.July 13.06</i>	<i>Individual Interview Evaluation Phase 1 Program Developer interactions Jackie</i>
20	<i>Amy.IndInt.July20.06</i>	<i>Individual Interview Evaluation Phase 1 Project Manager interactions Amy</i>

21	<i>LargegroupInt.July20.06</i>	<i>Evaluation Phase 1 Large group interview Jackie Courtney Tanya Amy</i>
22	<i>email.ph.infor.August06</i>	<i>Email, phone and informal interactions Evaluation Phase 1</i>
23	<i>Courtney.IndInt.Aug3.06</i>	<i>Individual Interview Research Associate interactions Courtney Evaluation Phase 1</i>
24	<i>Jackie.Camilla.Maureen.smallgrpInt.Aug.3.06</i>	<i>Evaluation Phase 1 Small group interviews Program Developer interactions Maureen Jackie Camilla</i>
25	<i>Amy.IndInt.Aug8.06</i>	<i>Individual Interview Project Manager interactions Amy Evaluation Phase 1</i>
26	<i>Tanya.IndInt.Aug8.06</i>	<i>Individual Interview Project Manager interactions Tanya Evaluation Phase 1</i>
27	<i>Shannon.IndInt.Aug10.06</i>	<i>Individual Interview Program Developer interactions Shannon Evaluation Phase 1</i>
28	<i>email.ph.infor.September06</i>	<i>Email, phone and informal interactions Evaluation Phase 2</i>
29	<i>Tanya.IndInt.Sept8.06</i>	<i>Individual Interview Project Manager interactions Tanya Evaluation Phase 2</i>
30	<i>Camilla.IndInt.Sept27.06</i>	<i>Individual Interview Program Developer interactions Camilla Evaluation Phase 2</i>
31	<i>email.ph.infor.October06</i>	<i>Email, phone and informal interactions Evaluation Phase 2</i>

32	<i>Anita.IndInt.Oct3.06</i>	<i>Individual Interview Research Associate interactions Anita Evaluation Phase 2</i>
33	<i>Jackie.IndInt.Oct4.06</i>	<i>Individual Interview Program Developer interactions Jackie Evaluation Phase 2</i>
34	<i>Katie.IndInt.Oct5.06</i>	<i>Individual Interview Research Associate interactions Katie Evaluation Phase 2</i>
35	<i>Tanya.IndInt.Oct13.06</i>	<i>Individual Interview Tanya Evaluation Phase 2</i>
36	<i>email.ph.infor.November06</i>	<i>Email, phone and informal interactions Evaluation Phase 2</i>
37	<i>Tanya.IndInt.Nov7.06</i>	<i>Individual Interview Project Manager interactions Tanya Evaluation Phase 2</i>
38	<i>LargegroupInt.November16.06</i>	<i>Evaluation Phase 2 Large group interview Jackie Maureen Tanya Courtney Anita</i>
39	<i>Anita.Courtney.smallgrpInt.Nov30.06</i>	<i>Small group interviews Research Associate interactions Anita Courtney Evaluation Phase 2</i>
40	<i>email.ph.infor.December06</i>	<i>Email, phone and informal interactions Evaluation Phase 2</i>
41	<i>Maureen.Jackie.smallgrpInt.Dec6.06</i>	<i>Small group interviews Program Developer interactions Maureen Jackie Evaluation Phase 2</i>
42	<i>Courtney.IndInt. Dec7.06</i>	<i>Individual Interview Research Associate interactions Courtney Evaluation Phase 2</i>

43	<i>email.ph.infor.January07</i>	<i>Email, phone and informal interactions Evaluation Phase 2</i>
44	<i>TanyaInd.Int.Jan21.07</i>	<i>Individual Interview Project Manager interactions Tanya Evaluation Phase 2</i>
45	<i>LargegroupInt.February1.07</i>	<i>Evaluation Phase 2 Large group interview Jackie Camilla Tanya Maureen Courtney Camilla</i>
46	<i>email.ph.infor.February07</i>	<i>Email, phone and informal interactions Evaluation Phase 3</i>
47	<i>email.ph.infor.March07</i>	<i>Email, phone and informal interactions Evaluation Phase 3</i>
48	<i>Anita.Courtney.smallgrpInt.Mar5.07</i>	<i>Small group interviews Research Associate interactions Anita Courtney Evaluation Phase 3</i>
49	<i>Tanya.IndInt.Mar 26.07</i>	<i>Individual Interview Project Manager interactions Tanya Evaluation Phase 3</i>
50	<i>email.ph.infor.April07</i>	<i>Email, phone and informal interactions Evaluation Phase 3</i>
51	<i>LargegroupInt.April5.07</i>	<i>Evaluation Phase 3 Large group interview Jackie Maureen Anita Shannon Courtney</i>
52	<i>Jackie.Tanya.smallgrpInt.Apr.26.07</i>	<i>Small group interviews Jackie Tanya Evaluation Phase 3</i>

53	<i>email.ph.infor.May07</i>	<i>Email, phone and informal interactions Evaluation Phase 4</i>
54	<i>Courtney.Anita.smallgrpInt.May5.07</i>	<i>Small group interviews Research Associate interactions Courtney Anita Evaluation Phase 4</i>
55	<i>Courtney.Anita.smallgrpInt.May11.07</i>	<i>Small group interviews Research Associate interactions Courtney Anita Evaluation Phase 4</i>
56	<i>Courtney.Anita.smallgrpInt.May17.07</i>	<i>Small group interviews Research Associate interactions Courtney Anita Evaluation Phase 4</i>
57	<i>LargegroupInt.May23.07</i>	<i>Evaluation Phase 4 Large group interview Jackie Tanya Courtney Anita</i>
58	<i>email.ph.infor.June07</i>	<i>Email, phone and informal interactions Evaluation Phase 4</i>
59	<i>email.ph.infor.July07</i>	<i>Email, phone and informal interactions Evaluation Phase 4</i>
60	<i>Camilla.Tanya.smallgrpInt.July4.07</i>	<i>Small group interviews Research Associate interactions Camilla Tanya Evaluation Phase 4</i>
61	<i>Courtney.Camilla.smallgrpInt.July4.07</i>	<i>Small group interviews Courtney Camilla Evaluation Phase 4</i>
62	<i>Courtney.Anita.smallgrpInt.July5.07</i>	<i>Small group interviews Research Associate interactions Courtney Anita Evaluation Phase 4</i>

63	<i>Shannon.IndInt.July26.07</i>	<i>Individual Interview Program Developer interactions Shannon Evaluation Phase 4</i>
64	<i>email.ph.infor.August07</i>	<i>Email, phone and informal interactions Evaluation Phase 4</i>
65	<i>email.ph.infor.September07</i>	<i>Email, phone and informal interactions Evaluation Phase 4</i>
66	<i>LargegroupInt.September26.06</i>	<i>Evaluation Phase 4 Large group interview Jackie Camilla Courtney Anita</i>
67	<i>iniprojprop.org.2004</i>	<i>Document Evaluation Phase 1</i>
68	<i>Eval.framework.ext.funder.2006</i>	<i>Document Evaluation Phase 1</i>
69	<i>Annualreport.Org.2006</i>	<i>Document Evaluation Phase 1</i>
70	<i>Annualreport.Org.2007</i>	<i>Document Evaluation Phase 2</i>
71	<i>DR.Int.Projecteval.evaluator.2007</i>	<i>Document Evaluation Phase 2</i>
72	<i>DR.Ind.initiative1.org.2006</i>	<i>Document Evaluation Phase 1</i>
73	<i>DR.Ind.initiative2.org.2007</i>	<i>Document Evaluation Phase 2</i>
74	<i>DR.Ind.initiative3.org.2007</i>	<i>Document Evaluation Phase 3</i>
75	<i>DR.Newsletter1.org.2006</i>	<i>Document Evaluation Phase 1</i>
76	<i>DR.Newsletter2.org.2007</i>	<i>Document Evaluation Phase 3</i>
77	<i>DR.Newsletter3.org.2007</i>	<i>Document Evaluation Phase 4</i>
78	<i>DR.Publicemail1.org.2006</i>	<i>Document Evaluation Phase 1</i>
79	<i>DR.Publicemail2.org.2007</i>	<i>Document Evaluation Phase 3</i>

APPENDIX N: EXAMPLE OF A QUOTATION MEMO

Name of Quotation Memo: *Depletion of our brains of issues and problems.*

Quotation:

Tanya says “Even if we make this [the present conversation] an initial depletion of our brains or emptying of our brains of information, what we want to focus on are the lessons so far learned, obstacles that we’ve met or that we’ve had to address. Maybe some information of how we’ve actually dealt with those [obstacles] if we have already, and some of the big issues and problems, all related to implementing the project. I don’t know how you want to start.” (*Doc. 14*)

Memo:

This is the first time I have sat down with Tanya and Amy formally during the evaluation. This quote may be useful to inform how Tanya viewed the evaluation at the beginning. Right now I think she is unsure of how to give up control and to go about the evaluation. She suggests that the evaluation may be useful to document the trials and tribulations of the past year related to the project implementation. I think it also may inform how she views me as the evaluator as being flexible as to how we proceed to best meet their needs and comfort. I need to pay attention to how Tanya’s ideas evolve about the evaluation. Potential codes: what the organization shares about the evaluation, barriers to implementation (memo date: 05/28/07 02:46:31 p.m.).

APPENDIX O: EXAMPLE OF A DOCUMENT MEMO

I found the following document memo useful during the subsequent analysis as a way to remind myself of the important features of the interaction documented by the file. In this memo I described the features of the file as (a) my first individual interview with Camilla; b) the first time Camilla shared her views about the evaluation, and c) a file to revisit because of its potential to inform how the present interaction influenced our future interactions.

Document Memos File Name: *Camilla_Int.July.12.06* (Doc.16).

Memo:

This is the first time Camilla and I talk alone and she shares lots about her background and experiences with the project. She sees the evaluation as useful to bring together the organization members and to make them slow down and reflect upon what has occurred in the project. This may be a key moment where Camilla communicates openly with me because she starts to share concerns about her role and about the faculty initiative (memo date: 07/08/07 10:25:04 p.m.).

APPENDIX P: EXAMPLE OF A CASE MEMO

Memo Name: *large group interviews*

Memo:

In the first large group interview (*Doc. 21*), I interjected but did not dominate the conversation. The organizational members talked among themselves a great deal. The group interview is useful as a means of communicating not only from the evaluator to the organizational members but also among themselves about the evaluation data and the vision of the organization (date: 07/09/07 02:28:51 p.m.) Amy said, “I also thought that your being there allowed for more equitable discussion than what happens sometimes where there is a tendency to fight for air space, which means that quieter individuals often get left in the dust if they can’t muster to the occasion.” (*Doc. 15*). This quotation leads me to think about the large group interviews as a way for everyone to be able to speak (date: 07/22/07 04:38:28 p.m.).

In the second large group interview (*Doc. 39*), I participated in frequent exchanges where I asked questions to clarify my understanding. My view was sought and the group interview was useful to promote interactions among organizational members as they made sense of the data. The discussion about the data sparked interesting conversations about how the evaluation data can be used and about the future focus of the organization. Noteworthy event: Tanya sought my advice on the poster, which may indicate a shift in viewing me as part of the organization (date: 07/14/07 10:52:22 a.m.). Camilla said, “I see evaluation as a learning experience and the group meetings as a way to talk.” (*Doc. 16*). This leads me to think about the large group interview as a means of communication (date: 09/12/07 06:39:45 p.m.).

In the third large group interview (*Doc. 45*), I led the discussion about the type of data and approach needed to meet the requirements of the report for the external funding agency. We agreed on an outline of the external report, and each person shared their vision of the organization's role in the future (date: 07/19/07 10:55:46 a.m.).

In the fourth large group interview (*Doc. 51*), I facilitated a review of the draft of the interim evaluation report. When members shared their opinion they were respectful of others and of me. Noteworthy: It was the first time where I really saw an iterative process, where we are all making sense of the evaluation data and report together to build on our previous understandings. (date: 07/23/07 10:58:23 a.m.).

In the fifth large group interview (*Doc. 57*), I asked questions about the understandings gained from the interim evaluation and guided the planning for the next year's evaluation. A lot of discussion occurred among the organizational members about the usefulness of the evaluation for each of them. Noteworthy: Tanya mentioned its value in documenting lessons learned and challenges from all perspectives. The group interview provided an opportunity for the organization to together decide on the emphasis for sustainability of the project. (date: 07/26/07 11:22:24 a.m.)

Overall, I see the group interviews as supporting the organization to revisit the evaluation data and to use the evaluation to inform the future direction of the organization. The group interviews served as a communicative method and as a means for me to document changing views of the evaluation and evaluator as usefulness became more prominent over time. (date: 07/29/07 11:21:20 a.m.)

APPENDIX Q: EXAMPLE OF A CODE MEMO

Code Name: *evaluator approach*

Code Definition:

What I do during my interactions with organizational members. As my main study focus, this code should be useful to gain an understanding of my behaviours during the interactions with organizational members.

Examples:

Data assigned to the code includes, for example: “But it helps, and I appreciate your openness as well, because it certainly helps me to get an idea of where the group is at” (*Doc.16*).

Not included under this code is data about what others tell me I do; for example “ The way you worded things was to encourage us to value what we had done as important and something we can build on.” (*Doc.15*).

Comment:

I expect I will have to expand this code as what others say about me is also important. (memo date: June 20, 2006).

APPENDIX R: FINAL CODE LIST

Code Name (shortform)	What I hoped to learn	Rules for application
*Evaluator approach all (eapp_all)	Overall about the evaluator approach	-includes all codes related to evaluator approach as a supercode
*evaluation use all (euse_all)	Overall about the evaluation purpose	-includes all codes related to evaluation use as a supercode
*feedback interactions all (feedback_all)	Overall about the interactions related to feedback between the organization and the evaluator	-includes all codes related to organizational feedback and evaluator feedback as a supercode
Evaluator project understandings (epro_j_und)	What am I learning about the project? The evolution of my understanding of the project and its context	-describes from <i>my perspective</i> my impressions about the project Includes references to nonlinearity, the initiatives itself and contextual influences -does not include organizational member views
Evaluator follow up (efolup)	What did I do after an interaction?	-describes <i>my actions</i> to a request and what I did on my own after an interaction -does not include organizational members' actions
Evaluator request meeting (ereq_met)	What leads me to request meetings?	-describes where and reasons for requesting a meeting -does not include when organizational members request
Evaluator approach to promote cognitive learning (eapp_coglearn)	How do I support the organization in thinking deeply, examining, revisiting their thoughts	-describes when I ask things like "have you thought about" "do you think..."
Evaluator approach to member checking (eapp_memche)	How do I clarify my understandings and promote accuracy in my understandings	-describes when I ask things like "do you mean..." "What I am hearing you say is"
Evaluator approach to findings dissemination (eapp_findim)	How do I go about sharing evaluation findings with organizational members	-describes when my actions to sharing findings, summaries both formally and informally in conversation

<p>Evaluator approach to learn about organization (eapp_learnorg)</p>	<p>What I say/do that leads to the organizational members telling me about the organizational relationships and interactions</p>	<p>-describes when I ask things like “was there was a time where you noted either yourself or someone else changing the organization?” “how would you describe your working relationship with _?”</p>
<p>Evaluator approach to learn about views of the evaluator (eapp_learnevaluator)</p>	<p>What I say/do that leads to the organizational members telling me about their view of the evaluator</p>	<p>-describes when I ask things or offer things I can do as the evaluator either directly “How do you view the role of the evaluator?” Or indirectly “If you want I can play a role in terms of helping you to document”</p>
<p>Evaluator approach to learn about views of the evaluation (eapp_learnevaluation)</p>	<p>What I do that leads the organizational members to tell me about their view of the evaluation</p>	<p>-describes my direct asking about their views of the evaluation, “one of the comments that you made was just talking about like what kind of usefulness can you see the evaluation playing?” -does not include when they offer on their own.</p>
<p>Evaluator approach to learn about project challenges (eapp_learnprojchall)</p>	<p>What I do that leads organizational members to telling me about their view of the challenges to the project</p>	<p>-describes my direct questions, “what do you think were some of the biggest challenges that either you or the organization face?” -does not include when they offer on their own</p>
<p>Evaluator approach to solicit feedback about evaluation (eapp_solfeedbckeval)</p>	<p>What I do that leads organizational members to share feedback about their evaluation experiences</p>	<p>-describes my actions to directly request feedback about their experiences, “how was this interaction useful to you?” -does not include when they offer on their own</p>
<p>Organizational members give unsolicited feedback (org_unsolfed)</p>	<p>What do organizational members offer on their own about their views to the evaluator?</p>	<p>-describes when organizational members tells me something about their views of the evaluator and evaluation without my asking</p>

Organizational members give solicited feedback (org_solfed)	What do organizational members respond about their views to the evaluator?	-describes the organizational members responses to questions related to their views of the evaluator and evaluation
Examples of open communication with organizational members (ex_commorgmem)	How does the evaluator and organizational members communicate openly	-describes what organizational members share openly with me and what I share openly with them -does not include where I ask probing questions
References to atmosphere of interaction (ref_atmos)	How do the organizational members interact with me but not with words that I think can help me to understand how the relationships develop with different people and when.	-description of my impressions of the atmosphere or comments that organizational members make related to the atmosphere of the interaction.
Identification of next steps (id_nextstep)	What are the next steps in the evaluation?	-describes references when organizational members or myself identify next steps in the evaluation
References to the objective of the interaction (ref_obj)	What was the purpose of each of the interactions?	-describes references to the objective of interaction made by either organizational members or myself
Organizational members share information related to the institution (org_infinst)	What are the things about the project that the organization shares with me that are related to the institution?	-describes the institutional information that the organizational share with me with the logistics -does not include barriers
Organizational members share about evaluation impact on organization (org_evalimpac)	What impact has the evaluation had on the organizational members?	-describes references related to how organizational members view one another and their relationship with each other, their personal strengths and things that are going on. -does not include what they describe as their learning
Organizational members share about views of the evaluator (org_vieweval)	How did the organization's understanding of the evaluator and her role evolve over time	-describes what organizational members say about their of the role of the evaluator
Organizational members share focus on accountability (org_viewacc)	What is the impact on the organization by the external funding requirements	-describes what organizational members shares about a focus on accountability

Organizational members share other stories during evaluation (org_otherstor)	What use are stories in building a relationship and what did I learn from them?	-describes the use of organizational members to use other stories to relate to their experiences
Organizational members share view about project changes (org_projchang)	What are the types of things the organization shares with me about their changes in thinking about the project	-captures the evolution or key moments where organizational members shifts the project vision
Organizational members share view about project (org_proj)	What does organizational members share with me about the project	-Describes things that they told me about the project that helped me to understand - does not include references to initiative evaluations
Organizational members share logistics challenges (org_projlog)	What are the types of things that the organization shares about logistics with me	-describes things shared by organizational members associated with the logistics of running the project -does not include challenges or institutional logistics
Organizational members request beyond evaluation (org_reqbeyeval)	What do they want from me beyond the evaluation? How do they view me?	-describes any request made by organizational members beyond the evaluation focus on accountability and program development
Evaluator reflection of the evaluation process (eref_eval)	What was the outcome of the interaction from my viewpoint	-describes my perspective of what was accomplished during the meeting
Use of evaluation to document (use_doc)	What are the ways that the evaluation is used by the organization to document?	-describes whenever organizational members or I mention how the evaluation is used to document, for example “organizational members invited me to be part of discussion about the process of the project and that I could “keep them on track” and “guide their talking” and “record the process.”

<p>Use of evaluation for communication (use_com)</p>	<p>What are the ways that the evaluation is used to communicate among organizational members</p>	<p>-describes whenever organizational members or I mention how the evaluation is used to communicate, for example, “my objective for the first large group meeting is to look at data and results and what was the most interesting and what was the most useless so that we can start to see what are the most interesting differences and share with one another”</p>
<p>Use of evaluation to inform project (use_infproj)</p>	<p>What are the ways that the evaluation is used to inform the project</p>	<p>-describes whenever organizational members or I mention how the evaluation is used to inform the project, for example, “Tanya mentioned that I instigated a process of reflection to help focus this year to nudge and remind people about what we learned from implementing the initiative that will inform its next implementation.”</p>

APPENDIX S: EXAMPLE OF AN ANALYSIS NOTE ADDED TO AN EXISTING DOCUMENT MEMO

In the following instance, my analysis was useful to draw my attention to the recurrent theme in this interaction – focus of the evaluation on meeting the accountability needs of the funder. I also started to notice the nature of the interactions between Jackie and myself, which I interpreted as establishing a working relationship.

June 15 interaction with Jackie (*Doc. 10*).

The key moment of this file was that it represented the beginning of a relationship with Jackie characterized by open communication. Within the file there are several noteworthy moments including: (a) where she shares her views of the project (line 13), (b) where she shares context information about the politics of the institution (line 16), (c) where she shares her view of the evaluation as focused on meeting the requirements of the funding agency (line 13).

My evaluator approach is limited to providing opportunities for Jackie to learn about me as an evaluator who develops relationships first (line 11, 13, 17) and about the evaluation as being able to both meet the funding requirements (line 18) and to meet some organizational needs (line 20).

In my reflection, I noted Jackie's response to me as being quite warm and her body language indicated that she was comfortable (leaning in and some smiles).

My field note indicates that I had asked for this meeting to occur and that my objective for the meeting was to find out about the project, how she viewed me as the evaluator and

the evaluation in general. I noted the next step was to work with Jackie in organizing the first large group meeting to review some of the initiative evaluations the organizational members had gathered during the past year, “We agreed that it would be helpful to spend a day in July on the data and revisiting it. I mentioned that it would be helpful if she spearheaded bringing the research associates on board” (line 5).

From examining the code *organizationsharefocusonfunder* in this file, I see a focus on the funder. Does this theme emerge from other files? From other organizational members?

What are the common themes across my interactions with Jackie? Do our interactions start the same way? How do we decide to meet?

APPENDIX T: EXAMPLE OF MATRIX THAT FACILITATED THE EMERGENCE
OF PATTERNS ACROSS PHASES

Evaluation Phase	Individual Interviews	Small Group Interviews	Large Group Interviews	Email, phone, informal in-person ^a	Total # of Contacts
Establish (April 2006-Aug.)	12	8	1	27	48
Sustain (Sept.-Jan.2007)	9	2	1	83	105
Foster (Feb.-Apr.)	1	2	2	58	63
Review and Revisit (May-Sept.)	1	6	2	21	30
Total Number	23	18	6	306	

^aThe majority of these informal interactions were email.

APPENDIX U: EXAMPLE OF AN ANALYSIS NOTE ADDED TO AN EXISTING CASE MEMO

In this instance, families were particularly useful to examine the codes *nature of interactions* during the evaluation phases and to examine the presence of the emerging themes: evolution of views about the evaluation and the role of the evaluator. Examining families allowed the different types of interactions to be examined together for the same attribute.

Analysis of Jackie case memo: *Jackie*

The key moments in this family include when Jackie's view of my role as the evaluator shifts, for example, I interpret that she starts to view me as a valued member of the team with her invitation to travel with the organization (Doc 21). Then there is a clear indication that I'm not yet part of the decision making (Doc 24) and then she retracks the invitation due to logistics (Doc. 30) and invites me again (Doc. 66).

My evaluator approach is primarily to listen to Jackie and slowly I started to ask her questions. Jackie's response to me is friendly and accommodating. She becomes more comfortable over time with the large group interviews and my facilitating role. By the 3rd she allows me to lead them.

My field note indicates that I get some good feedback from Jackie and Tanya about how they view my role as the evaluator and the usefulness of the evaluation- they are happy to have me continue- but notice that I didn't assume. This was getting them to buy into the evaluation and me as an evaluator. Respectful of them. (Doc. 52)

Her focus on meeting the needs of the funders is consistent but she starts to see the other uses of the evaluation in the fourth and fifth large group interviews.

What is the nature of the majority of our interactions? Why does the frequency of our interactions diminish over time? Why is her view of my role not consistent over time?