USING EVALUATION IN THE REAL-WORLD:

WHEN, WHY & HOW?

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Session Objectives

- Answer the questions "when" and "why" we use evaluation in real-world IVP.

- Introduce practical "how" strategies for evaluation that consider:

  – Program design

  – Program infrastructure

  – Phased program outcomes

  – Multiple stakeholder engagement

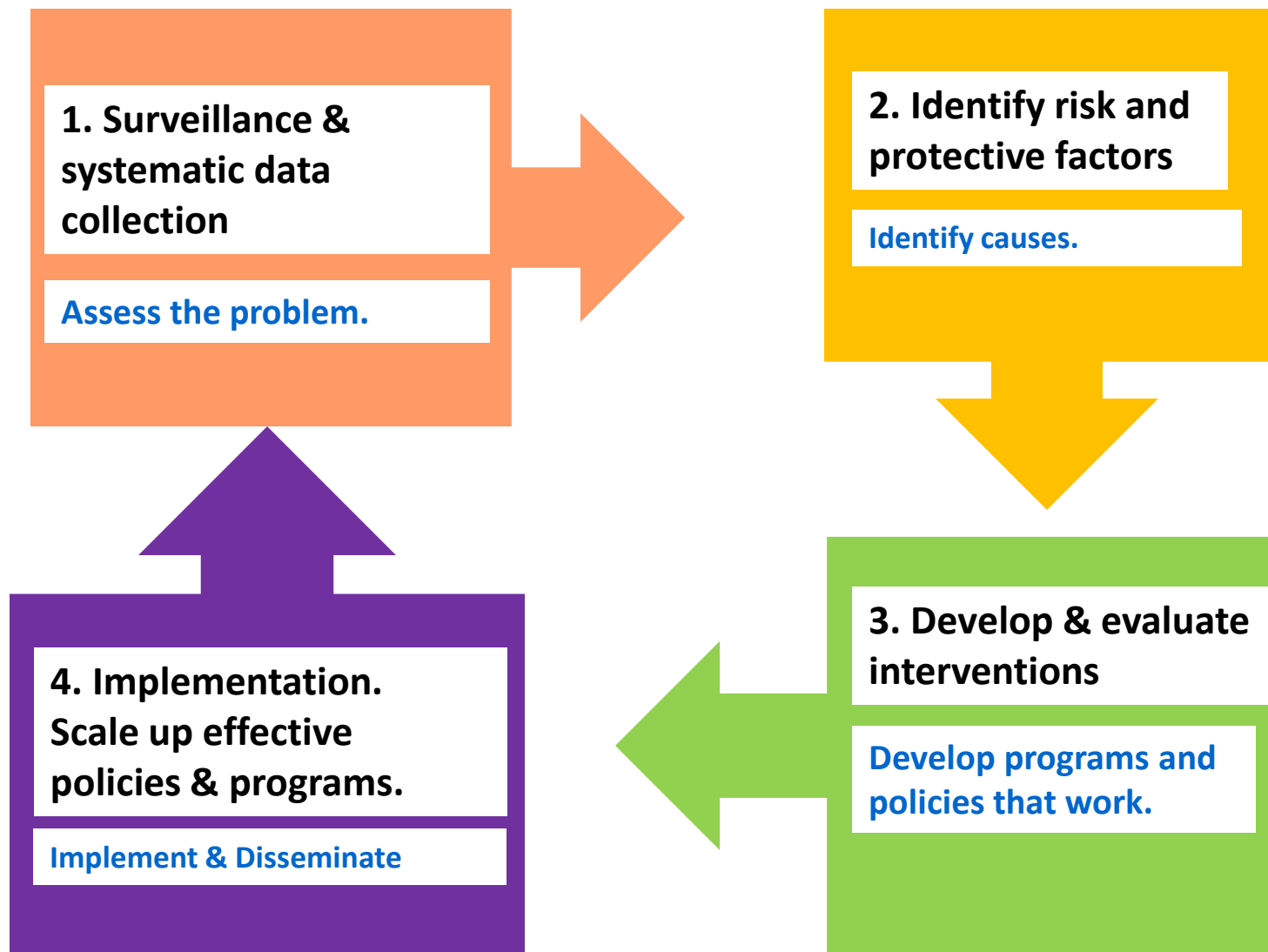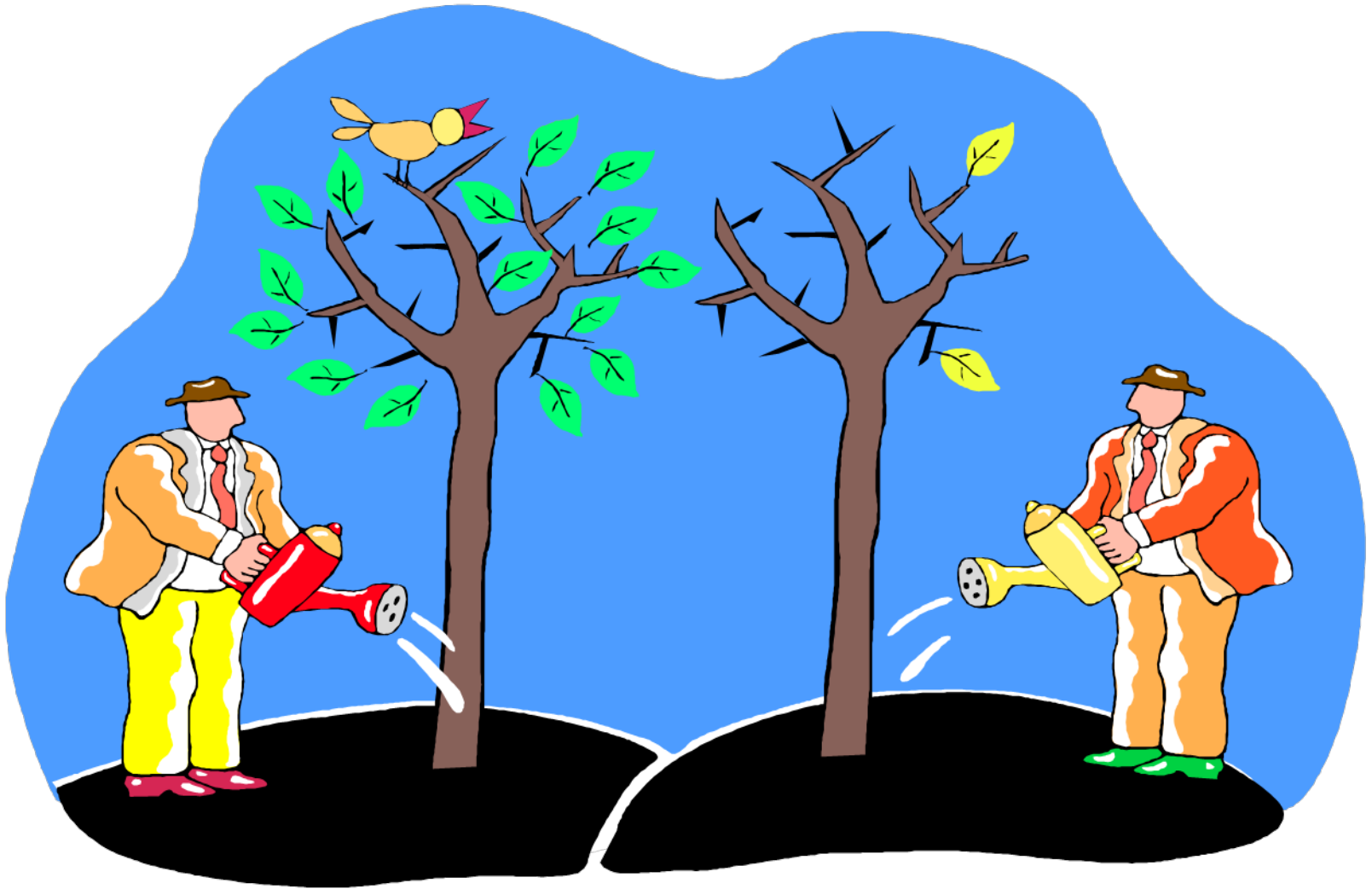BRAIN ENGAGEMENT

Why do you do what you do?

How do we achieve IVP-related impacts?
How do we evaluate the change?

Change is a process, not an event.

Exploring the Process: The Public Health Approach to Prevention

1. Surveillance & systematic data collection

Assess the problem.

2. Identify risk and protective factors

Identify causes.

3. Develop & evaluate interventions

Develop programs and policies that work.

4. Implementation. Scale up effective policies & programs.

Implement & Disseminate

Why do so many IVP programs fail?

Where are the problems located?

1. Surveillance & systematic data collection

Assess the problem.

2. Identify risk and protective factors

Identify causes.

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Develop programs and policies that work.

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Implement & Disseminate

?
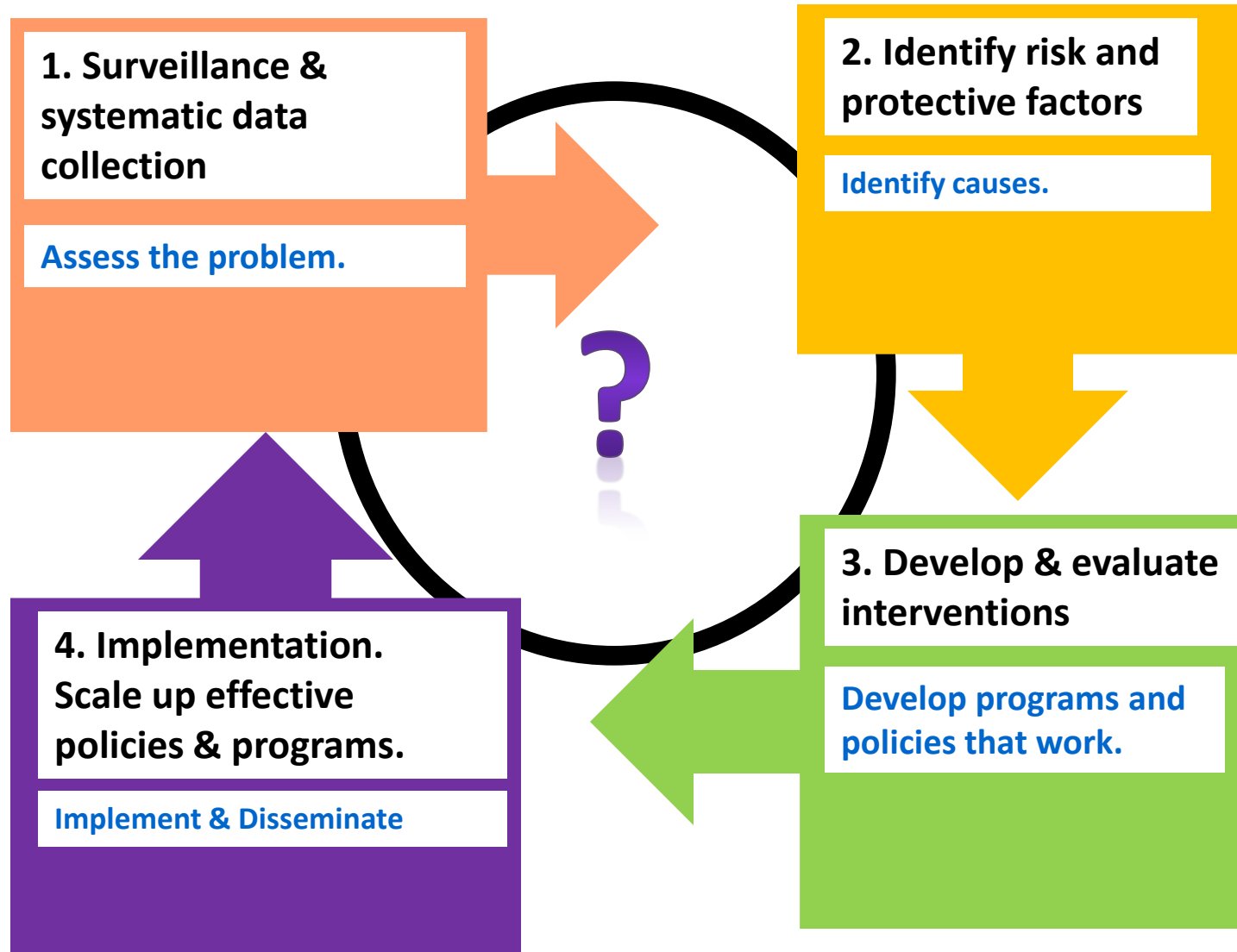
Which is the most critical of these **modifiable** barriers to implementation of effective programs?

- Overly broad problem definition
- Incomplete diagnosis
- Unrealistic goals
- Poorly defined objectives
- Inadequate implementation planning
- Working in a vacuum
- Turf wars
- Planning gaps
- Cruise control and tunnel vision
- Absent or inadequate evaluation

The most critical modifiable barrier to implementation of effective programs:
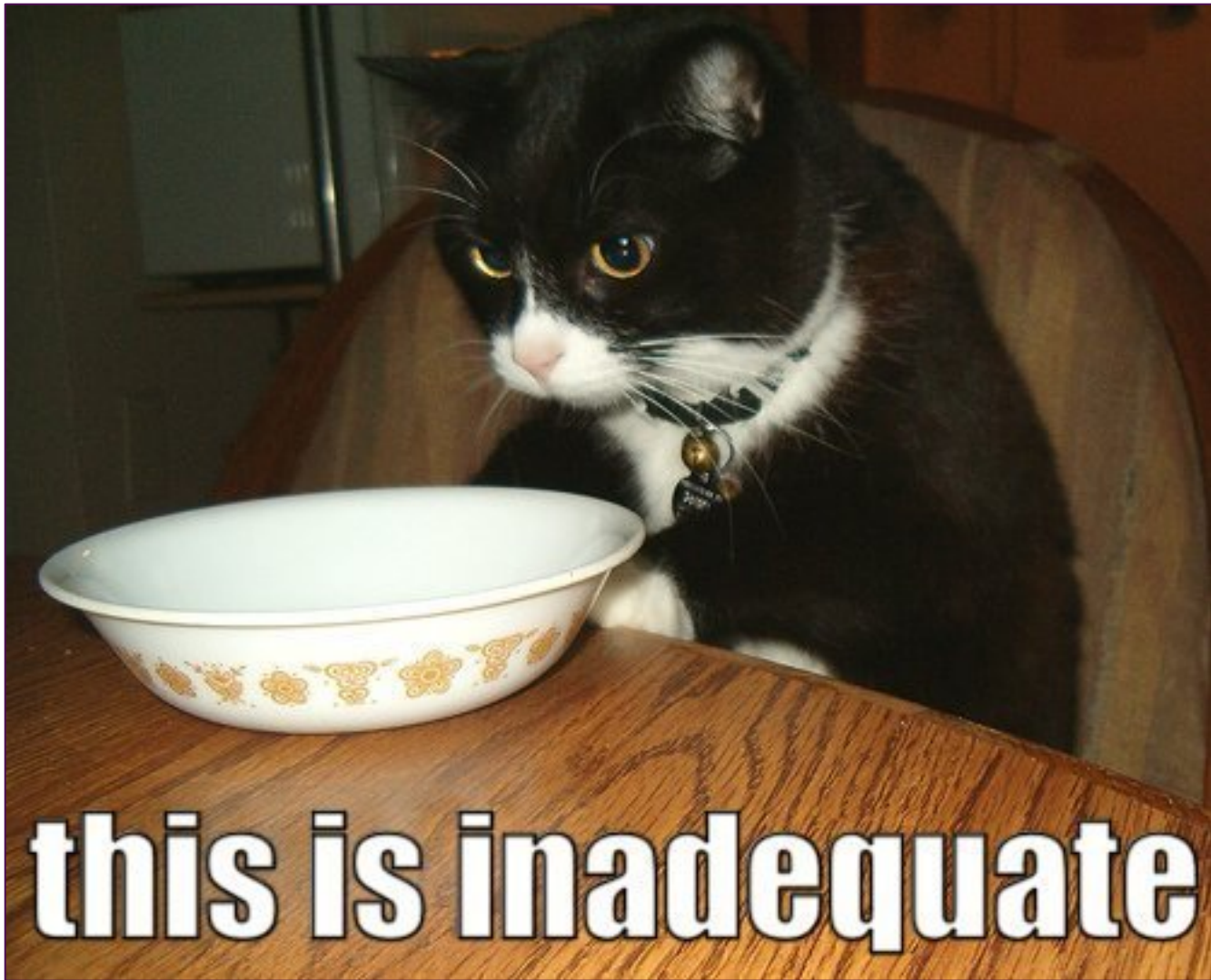
- Overly broad problem definition
- Incomplete diagnosis
- Unrealistic goals
- Poorly defined objectives
- Inadequate implementation planning
- Working in a vacuum
- Turf wars
- Planning gaps
- Cruise control and tunnel vision
- **Absent or inadequate evaluation**

What is **inadequate** evaluation?

Idea

You invest a lot of time, energy and resources

Outcome

What is expected to change

Inadequate Evaluation: Too Little & Too Late

You invest a lot of time, energy and resources

Outcome

What is expected to change

Outcome Evaluation

At this point, we have very little control over the outcome
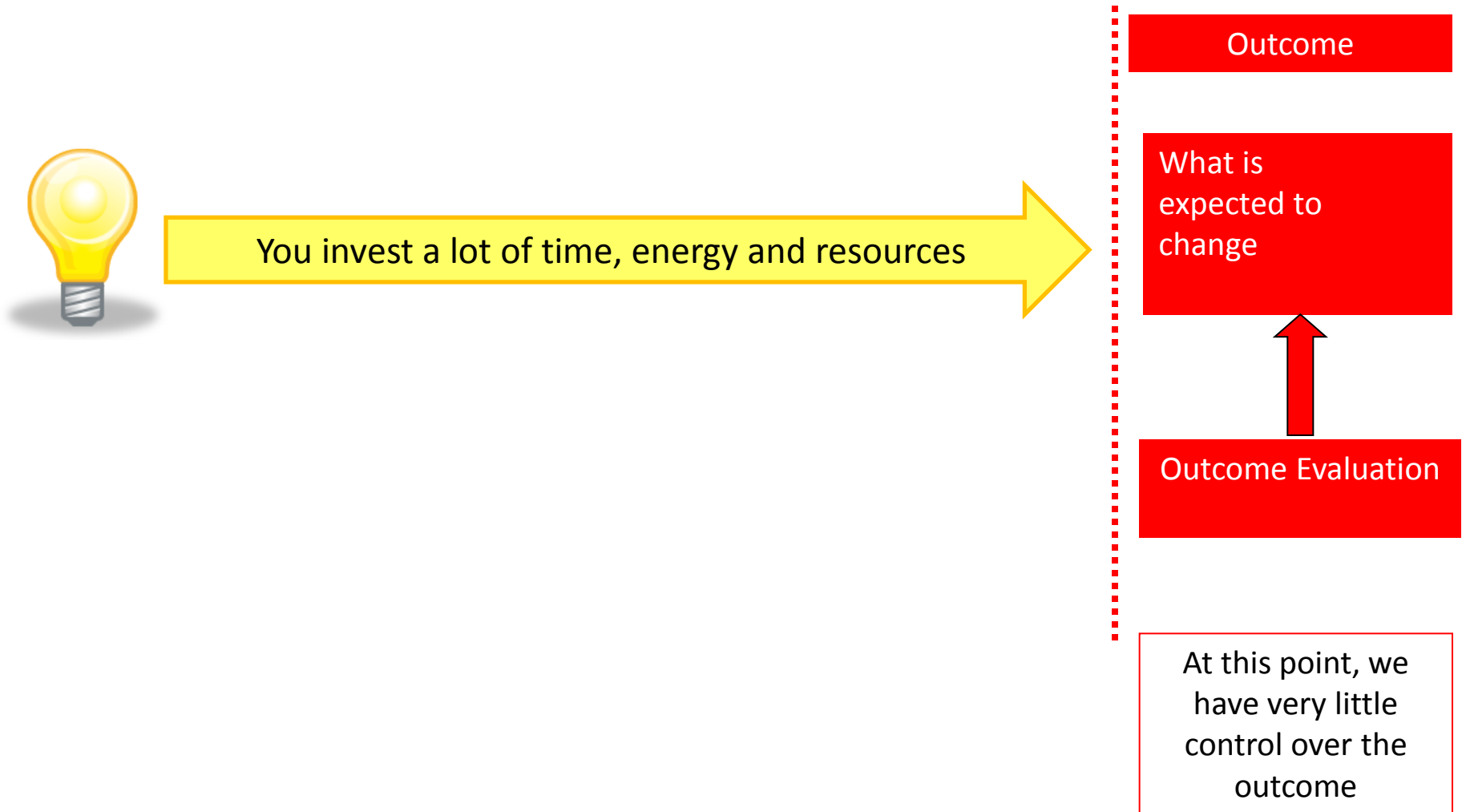
FAILURE
IS THE
OPPORTUNITY
TO BEGIN
AGAIN,
ONLY MORE
INTELLIGENTLY.

HENRY FORD

?

How can we change "intelligently" with inadequate evaluation?

Program Planning | Implementation | Outcome

?...?...?

What is expected to change

Outcome Evaluation

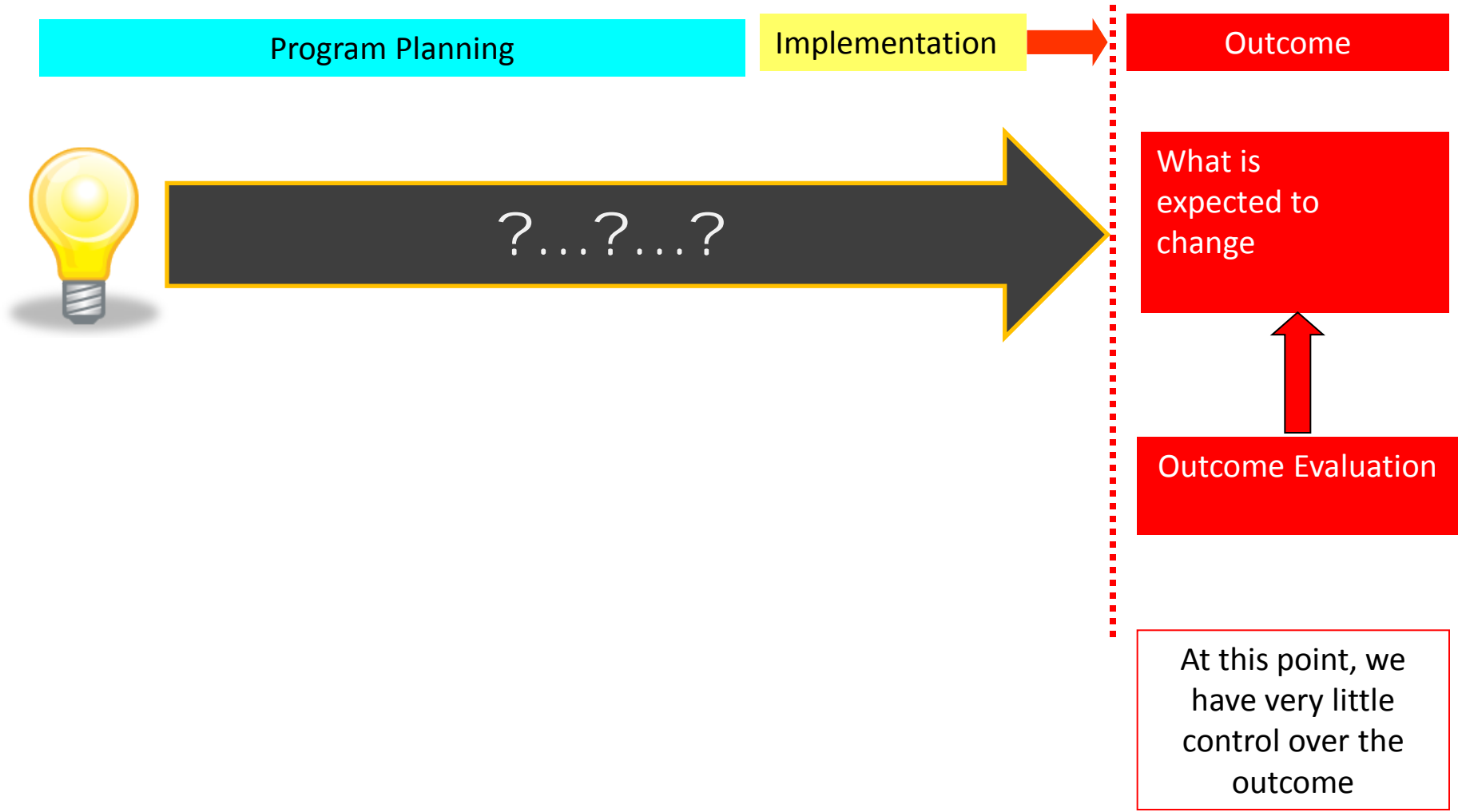At this point, we have very little control over the outcome

Adequate Evaluation Acknowledges Gaps & Problems

| Program Planning | Implementation | Outcome |

| Assess | Plan | Develop or modify activities | Implement activities | What is expected to change |

Outcome Evaluation

Problems **Always** Happen

Evaluation used during planning and implementation increases your ability to influence the outcome

At this point, we have very little control over the outcome
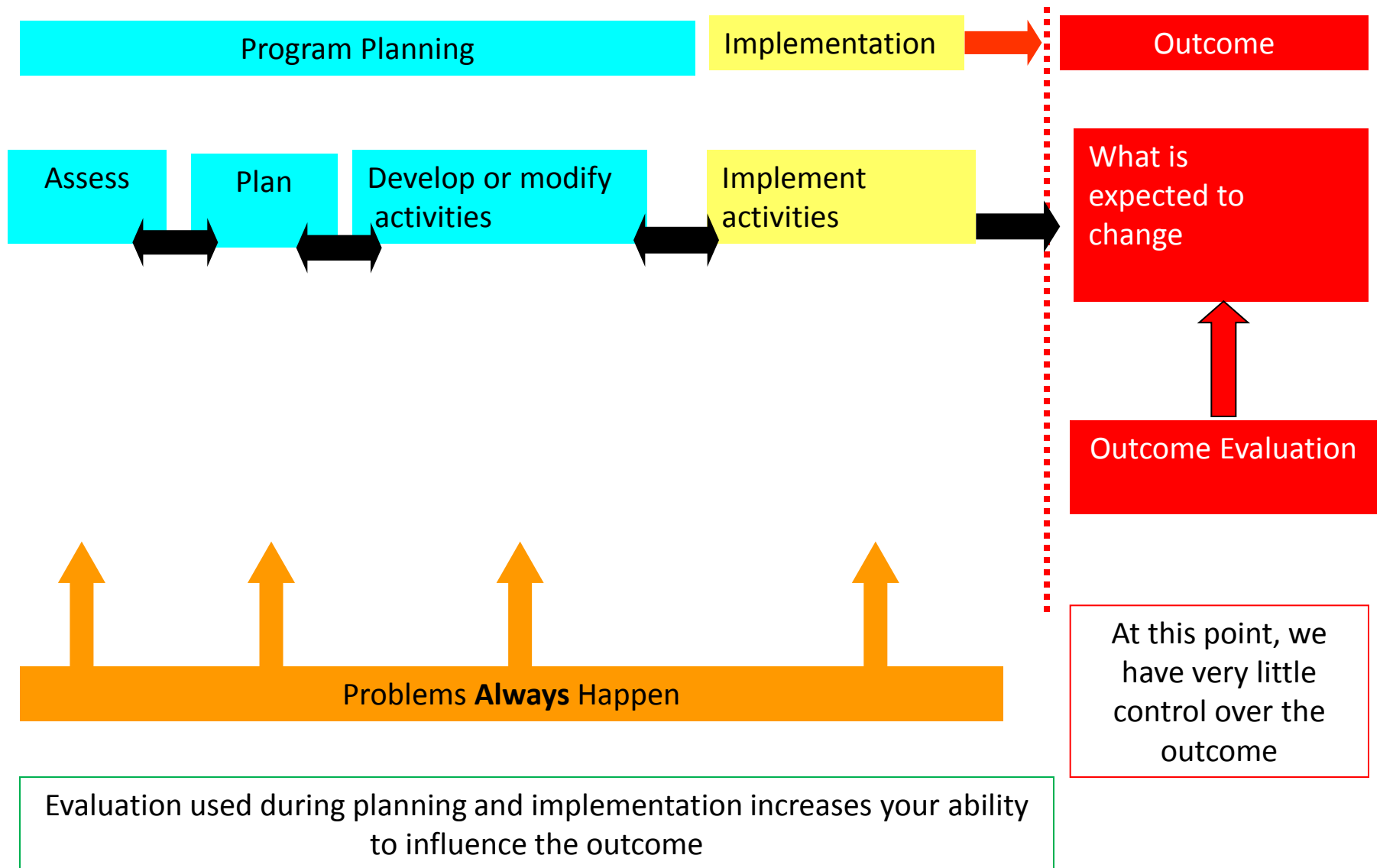
Adequate Evaluation = Thoughtful A-Z evaluation

This graphic is adapted from one originally developed by Carolyn Cumpsty-Fowler and Ronda Zakocs in 2004
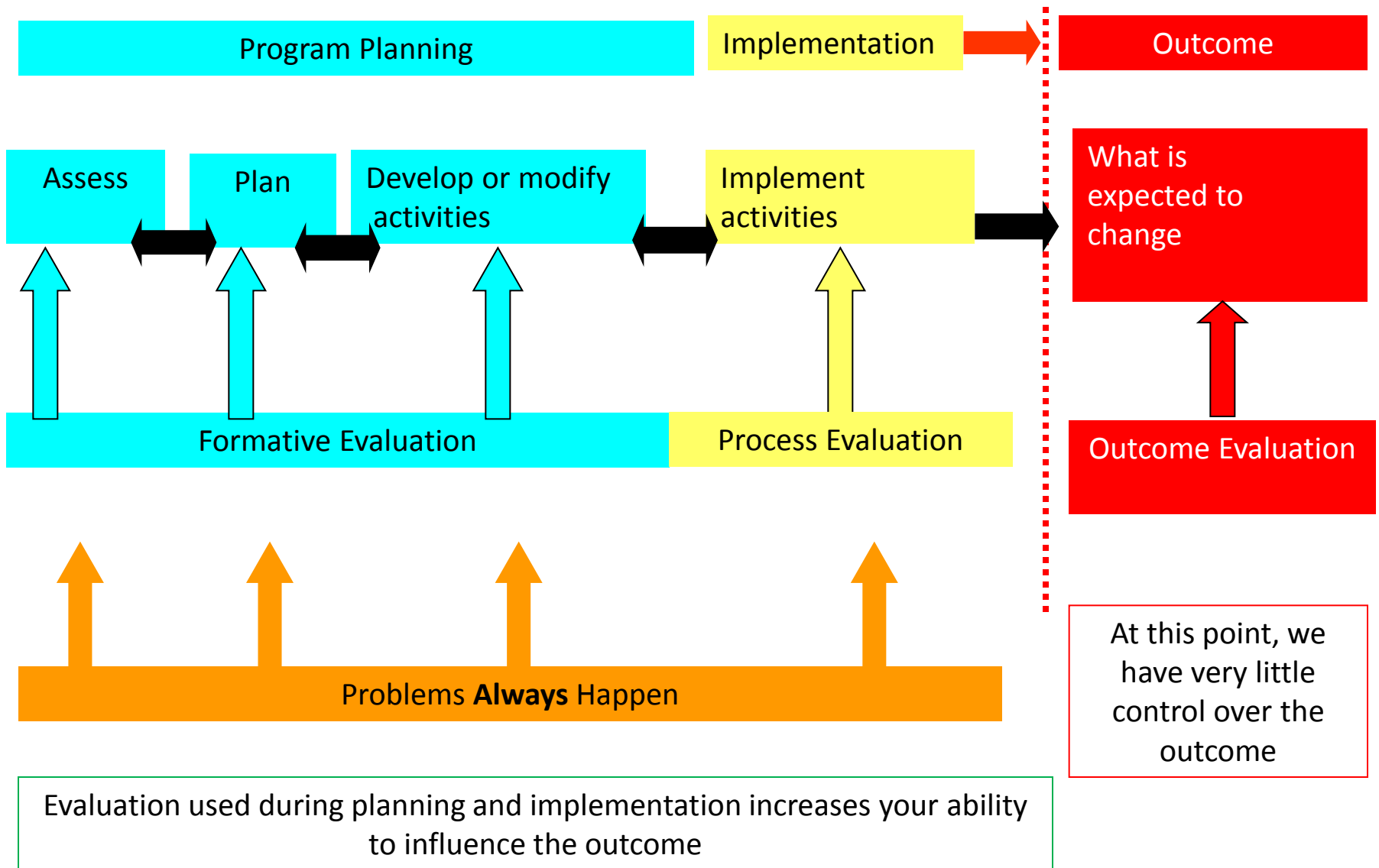
Adequate evaluation

is designed to provide

extremely **valu**able inform**ation**

in all program phases

GOAL: Evaluation-informed program decisions

Evaluative thinking must be done BEFORE you act because

...and not all changes are beneficial

"Without reflection [evaluative thinking], we go blindly on our way, creating more unintended consequences, and failing to achieve anything useful."
—Margaret J. Wheatley

The Public Health Approach …with key evaluation questions

1. Surveillance & systematic data collection

Have we asked the right questions? Have we defined the real problem? Have we checked?

2. Identify risk and protective factors

Have we identified modifiable critical factors: causal, predisposing, enabling & reinforcing?

3. Develop & evaluate interventions

What works and for whom? Who should deliver? What are the costs, risks, benefits, & potential to sustain?

4. Implementation. Scale up effective policies & programs.

How do we take effective & promising interventions to scale, & demonstrate impact?

Mission Critical: Evaluation-Informed Beginnings

If the first button of one's coat is wrongly buttoned, all the rest will be crooked.

Giordano Bruno (1548-1600)

Avoid the "been here, done that" certainty trap:
It may narrow focus and lead to diagnostic error

Assess the Problem

Identify the "Causes"

Design & Evaluate Programs & Policies

Implement & Disseminate Programs & Policies

Start with the end in mind & then back up.
What steps are needed to get there? What resources do you need?

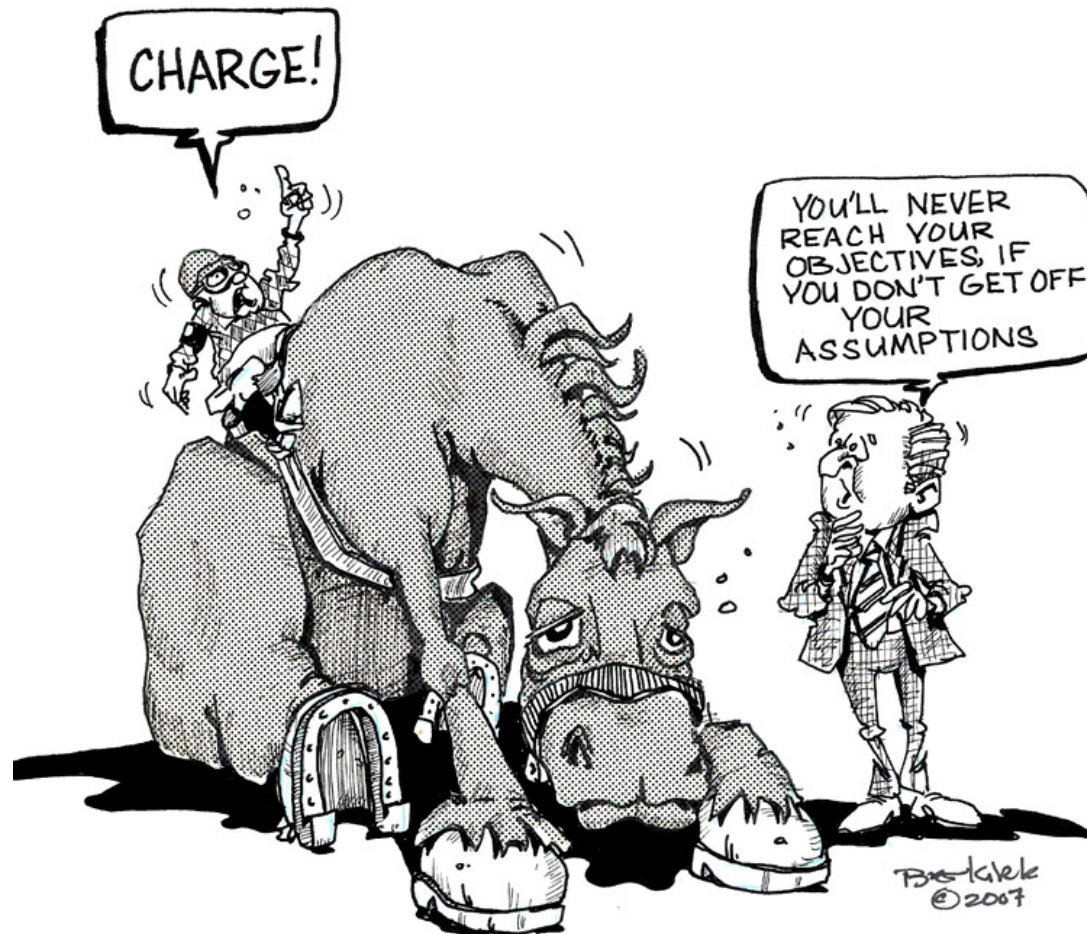# Real-world example of inadequately evaluated project design

The "Bridges to Nowhere"

Cape Town, South Africa

LOGIC
The beginning of wisdom, not the end

The Golden Rule of Evaluative Thinking: ALWAYS Question Assumptions

The path to insight is never linear – but it is disciplined

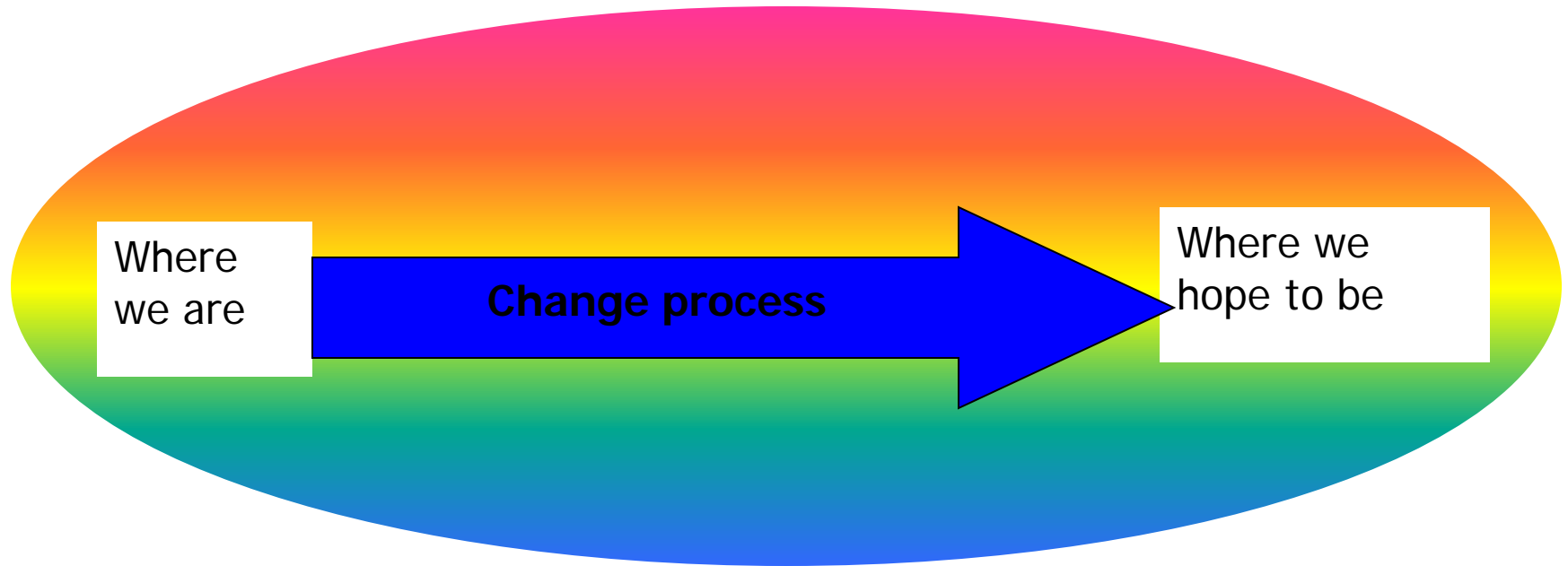A [person] should look for what is, and not for what [s]he thinks should be.

Albert Einstein

What should we

consider during the design phase?

Always consider the intervention context

| Where we are | Change process → | Where we hope to be |

- **Factors that will support or inhibit our program**
  - resource issues
  - physical environmental issues
  - social environmental factors (social ecological)
- **Can we achieve this program; if yes, should we?**

What else do we need to know about context?

Social and Political Contextual Influences

| Problem Identification | → | Problem Analysis | → | Program Design | → | Program Delivery | → | Injury Prevention Impacts |

Capacity & Infrastructure

-Internal

- External

Epidemiology & Assessment, Program Design, Implementation, Evaluation, Information-Sharing, Human & Other Resource Issues, Funding, Partnerships, Socio-Political Influence

Mission Critical

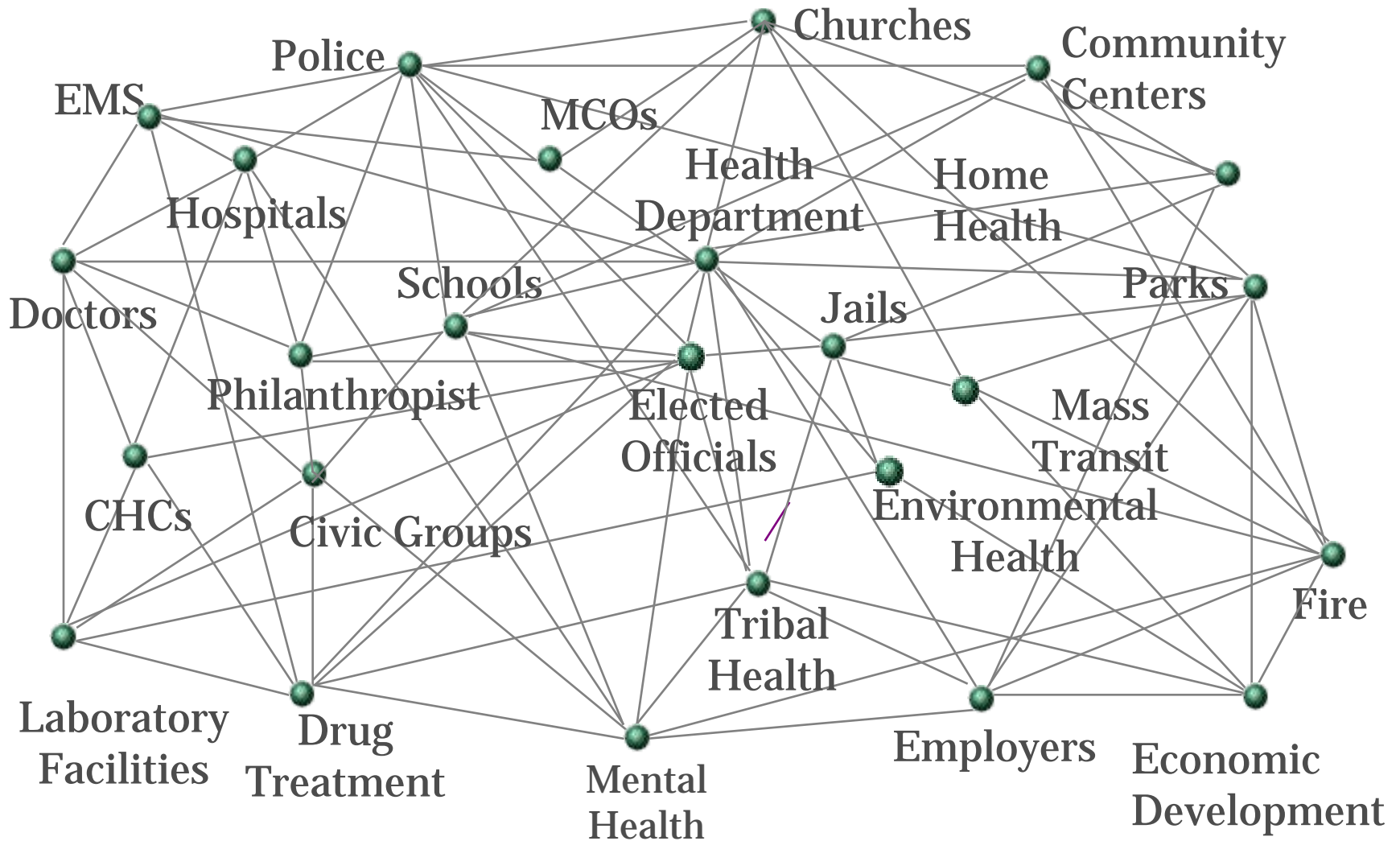# HUMBLY FINDING OUT WHAT WE DO NOT KNOW

FACT - All Injury & Violence Prevention & Control Achievements Require:

- Coordinated

- Comprehensive

- Organized Community Effort

Because of resource challenges and the often "political" nature of effective prevention strategies, working with stakeholders is critically important.

Challenge or Opportunity?

Diverse stakeholders = diverse opportunities

Sharing Ideas

Do we have input from stakeholders within our intended level(s) of influence?

Influencing policy and legislation
Changing organizational practices
Fostering coalitions and networks
Educating providers
Promoting community education
Strengthening individual knowledge and skills

The Spectrum of Prevention

Larry Cohen (1991); Cohen and Swift (1999) - www.preventioninstitute.org

Single stream strategies usually fail.

Which intervention components will you need to pave the way for others.

Evaluation Challenges

- Multi-component interventions
- "Creative" resources utilization

- Challenges to validity
  - Temporality
  - Association
  - Confounding
    - Hard to control
    - Appropriateness of RCT has been questioned

Building an evaluative culture in the real-world requires a different evaluation focus:

- Understanding and demonstrating best principles in your context-specific change process

as opposed to

- A "traditional" focus on evaluating stable interventions that are held constant during evaluation.

Real-world Evaluation: How?

- Using "dicing and slicing" methods to strengthen
  - evidence for temporality and association
  - our ability to evaluate infrastructure development and effectiveness

Examples of flexible evaluation approaches that are community & "real-world" friendly
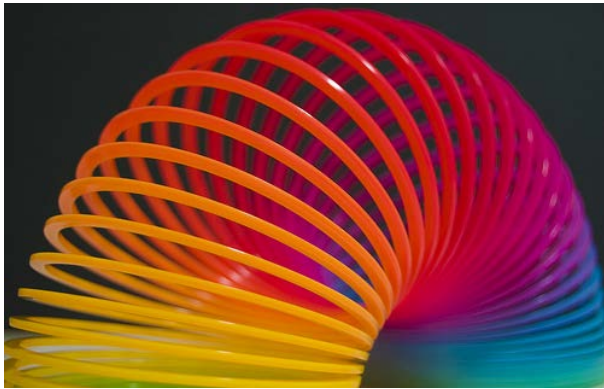
- Appreciative Inquiry
- Collaborative Outcomes Reporting
- Outcome Harvesting
- **Developmental Evaluation**

BetterEvaluation
Sharing information to improve evaluation

http://betterevaluation.org/

Developmental Evaluation

Developmental evaluation offers a process for periodic reflection - systematically looking back and seriously looking ahead – to gauge progress, harvest important lessons and rigorously examine what's working and what's not. Developmental evaluation supports standing still* as a foundation for the next move forward.

* The standing still periods may be momentary reflection or much longer.

Westley, F., Zimmerman, B., Patton, M.Q. (2007) Getting to maybe: How the world is changed: 84

What is the "it" we are evaluating

The Expanded Program Cycle:

The set of activities involved in initiating, planning, implementing, evaluating, and improving programs.

Problem ID, Definition, & Measurement → Integrity of Diagnosis → Intervention Selection Strategy → Plan Quality → Resource Mobilization → Monitoring of Program Quality → Reactive, Adaptive, Proactive Program Responses → Dissolution or Institutionalization
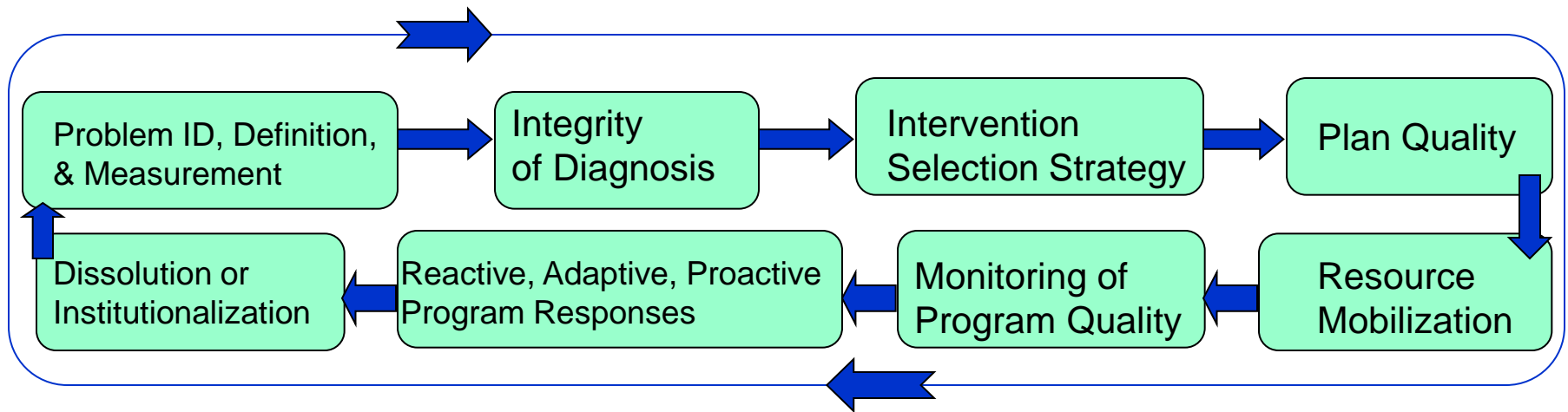
The Expanded Program Cycle can be viewed as a series of stages – each with a desired outcome/product

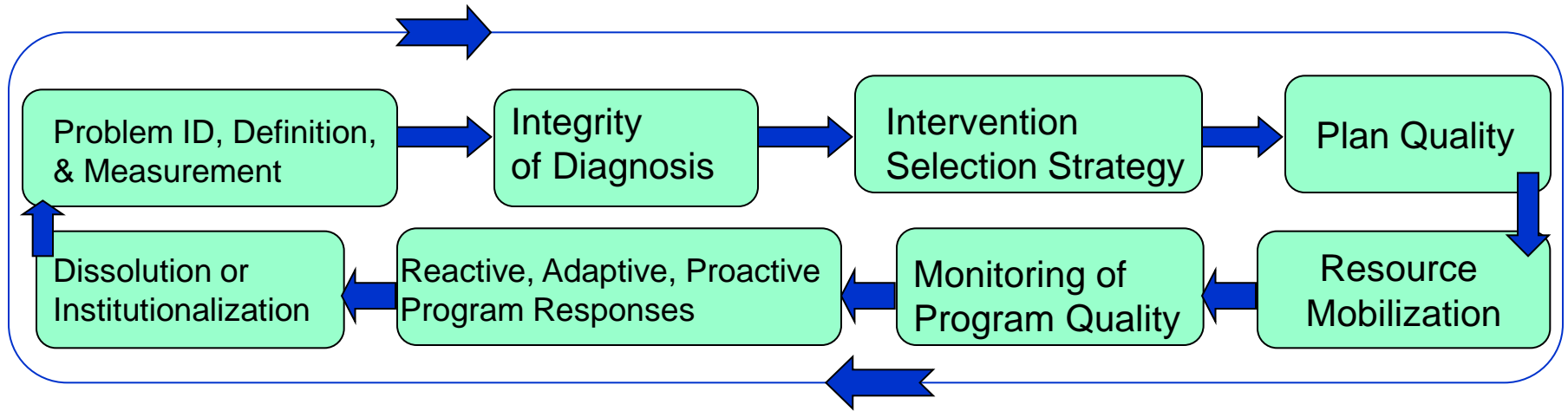|			
Problem ID, Definition, & Measurement	Integrity of Diagnosis	Intervention Selection Strategy	Plan Quality
Dissolution or Institutionalization	Reactive, Adaptive, Proactive Program Responses	Monitoring of Program Quality	Resource Mobilization

Critical, evaluative thinking used throughout each step of the program cycle, can serve as a program coach and build program capacity.

Expanded Program Cycle Model developed by Carolyn Cumpsty Fowler PhD, MPH with input from Dr. Ronda Zakocs (2004)

Execution-as-learning
Amy C. Edmonson, Harvard Business School

"Execution-as-learning means operating in a way that allows organizations to learn as they go. It means that work groups, departments, or entire companies can adjust, improvise, or innovate while at the same time successfully delivering products or services to customers.

It is a way of operating that is deliberately and consciously iterative, where action and reflection go hand in hand." (Emphasis added)

Edmonson, A.C. (2012) *Teaming: How Organizations Learn, Innovate, and Compete in the Knowledge Economy*: 222

A MULTI-LAYERED EVALUATION STRATEGY IS NEEDED TO SHED LIGHT ON THE REAL-WORLD CHANGE PROCESS

Once we really believe this, we are more likely to prioritize and do evaluation

KEY REAL-WORLD EVALUATION SKILL:

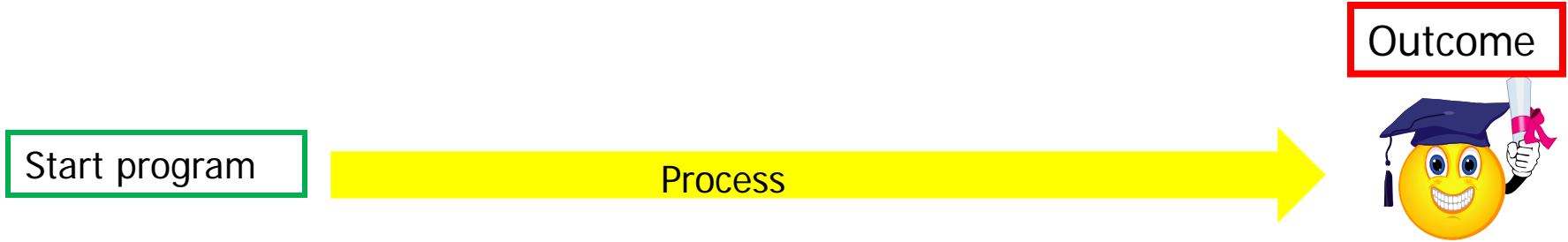## Understanding Phased Outcomes

Using Phased Outcomes

Example: Completing a two-year degree

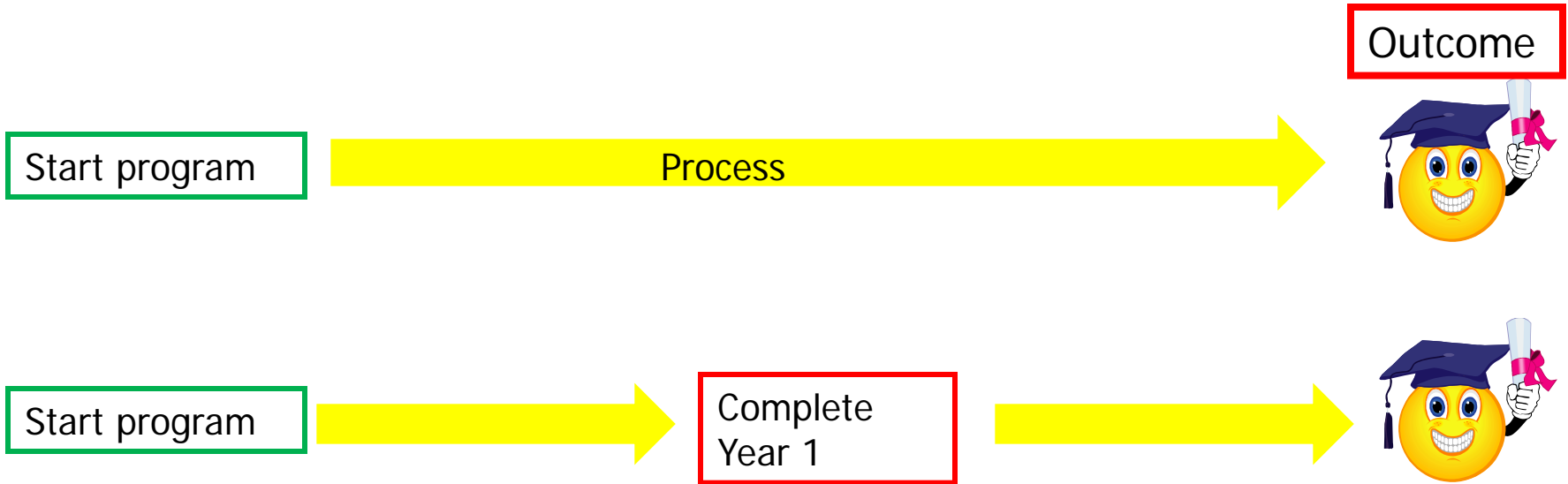Outcome

Using Phased Outcomes

Example: Completing a two-year degree

Outcome

Start program

Process

Using Phased Outcomes
Example: Completing a two-year degree

Outcome

Start program | Process →

Start program | → | Complete Year 1 | →

Using Phased Outcomes

Example: Completing a two-year degree

Outcome

Start program → Process →

Start program → → Complete Year 1 → →

Start program → Semester 1 → Semester 2 → Semester 3 → Semester 4 →

Using Phased Outcomes
Example: Completing a two-year degree

Outcome

Start program → Process →

Start program → Complete Year 1 →

Start program → Semester 1 → Semester 2 → Semester 3 → Semester 4 →

Start program → Semester 1 Courses → Semester 2 Courses → Semester 3 Courses → Semester 4 Courses →

Keep your program "stepping stones"
 - and related evaluation steps –
close together

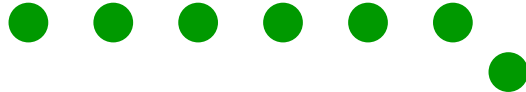# Building successful IVP programs

What's wrong with this picture?

Effective IVP programs collaborate to achieve impacts; this does not mean doing the same things or doing everything together
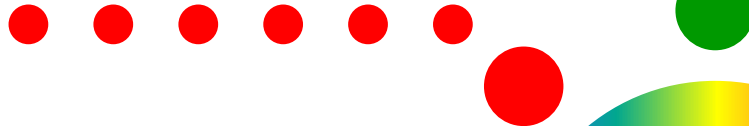
Examples of programmatic threads

Understanding the issues & opportunities
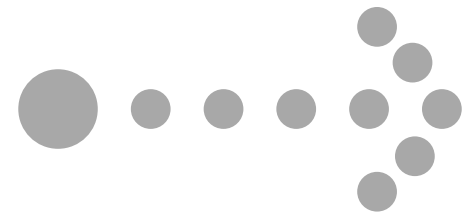
Building social & political will

Mobilizing resources

Your Combined Impact

Planning & evaluation

Implementation

Tease out which stakeholders & participants are engaged in which activities and when.

Problem ID..Impact →

	Time period 1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9	T10
S/CP1	██	██								
S/CP2	██	██	██	██	██	██	██	██	██	██
S/CP3				██	██	██				██
S/CP4			██				██			
S/CP5	██	██					██	██	██	
S/CP6			██	██	██	██	██	██	██	
S/CP7			██							██

Practice: Developing your **"If I knew…"** wish list

Think about your own group's work

1. **What do you know** about:

- Why the group decided to focus on this issue?

- How and why the various activities were selected?

- Who has been responsible for:
  - Planning/funding/advocating for/managing/implementing/evaluating the activities?

- What was actually done (as opposed to planned)?

- What was the response?

- What changes occurred because of this activity?

- How did/will this change support future changes?
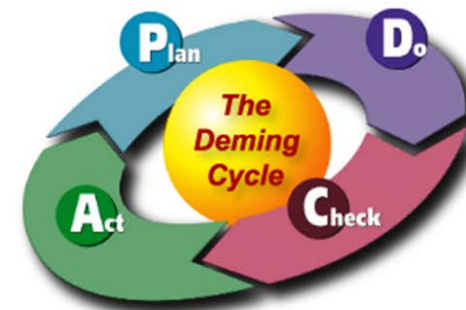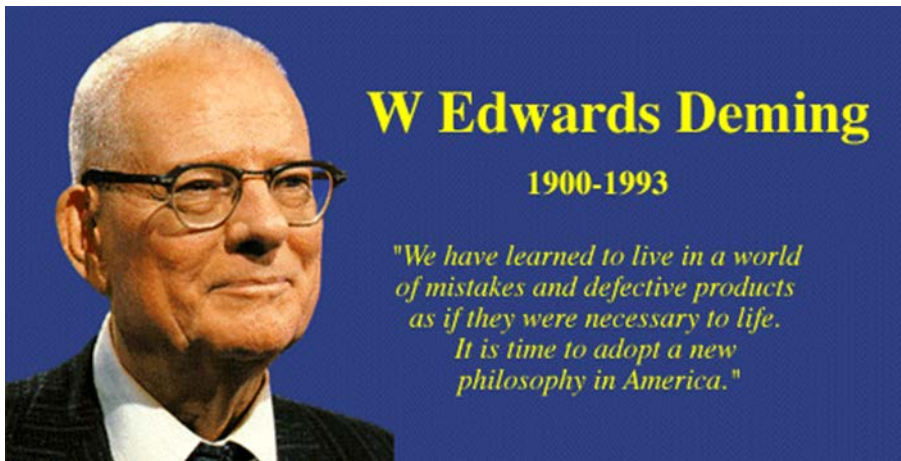
2. **How could you answer these questions?**

Challenge: so many questions, so little time!

Strategy 1: Embed asking & answering evaluation questions into your routine work

The emphasis should be on **why** we do a job.

The big problems are where people don't realize they have one in the first place.

Plan - Do - Check – Act (Adjust)

If you can't describe what you are doing as a process, you don't know what you're doing.

If you do not know how to ask the right question, you discover nothing.

"Useful" reasons for conducting process improvement evaluation **before** and during implementation

Identify barriers to implementation &

Take corrective action to change implementation

Improve program implementation

Improve outcomes

Review: Starting earlier increases chances of identifying problems and making changes

Original slide concept: Ronda Zakocs, PhD, MPH

Strategy 2: Prioritize the evaluation questions you ask.

Jerry Sternin

Father of the Positive Deviance Movement

Avoid Collecting TBU Evaluation Data

"**T**rue **B**ut **U**seless"

Six Criteria to Guide Convergence
(help us prioritize questions)

Cronbach (1982) *Designing evaluations of educational and social programs*

#1 - Users

- Who will/would use the information?

- Who wants to know?

- Who will be upset/disappointed if this information is not provided?
  - Is one of these a critical audience?

#2 - Uncertainty

Would this evaluation question:

- reduce uncertainty?

- provide new information?

#3 - Importance

Would the information provided be:

- "nice-to-know"?

- important to know?

#4 – Sustained importance

Would the information provided by this question:

- Be of passing interest?

- Be of continued value/interest?

#5 - Scope

- How comprehensive does this evaluation have to be?

- Would the scope of this evaluation be compromised if this question was left out?
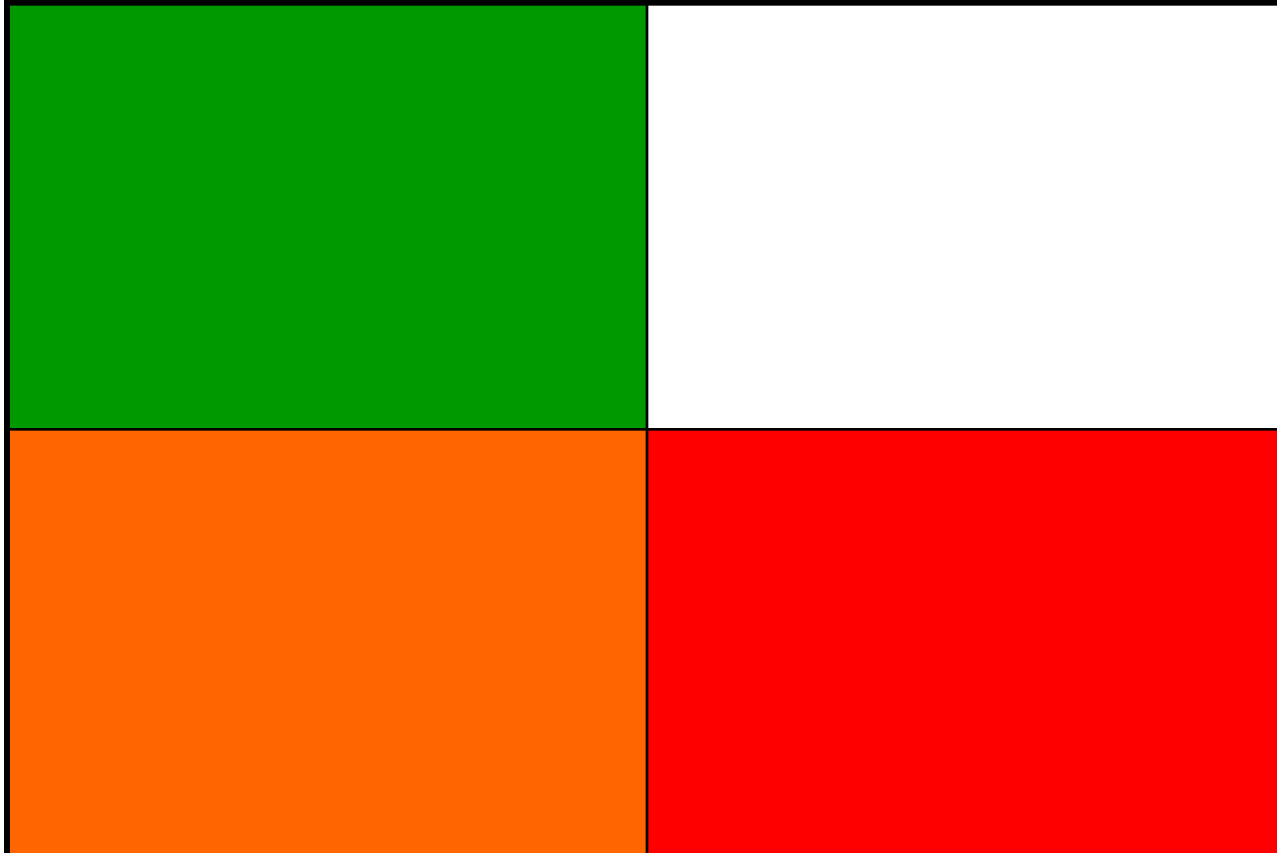
Issue: Breadth versus depth

#6 - Feasibility

Feasibility criteria:

- Financial resources
- Human resources
- Time
- Methods
- Technology

The simplest evaluation decision matrix is not the most helpful

Feasible

	Yes	No
Important — Yes	🟩	⬜
Important — No	🟧	🟥

Multi-component matrix: ID high yield questions

Would the evaluation question:	Evaluation Question				
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q …
Be of interest to key audiences?					
Reduce present uncertainty?					
Yield important information?					
Be of continuing value?					
Be critical to scope & comprehensiveness?					
Have an impact on the course of events?					
Be answerable in terms of:					
A. Financial & human resources?					
B. Time?					
C. Available methods & technology?					

Fitzpatrick, J.L., et al (2011). *Program Evaluation (4th ed*) Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson Education

Engage stakeholders in decisions

Many people undervalue evaluation

.. often because they don't know what they're missing

Looking at evaluation with new eyes

Valuable Free Web Resources:

http://www.uwex.edu/ces/pdande/index.html

http://betterevaluation.org/

http://ctb.ku.edu

More excellent resources:

◆ W. K. Kellogg Foundation www.wkkf.org
  ◆ *Evaluation handbook***
  ◆ *Logic Model Development Guide***
        ** These texts are free and available (as a pdf file) online

◆ Coley, S.M., Scheinberg, C.A. (2013). *Proposal writing: Effective Grantsmanship* (4th ed.) Los Angeles, CA: SAGE

◆ Issel, L. M. (2013). *Health Program Planning & Evaluation (3rd ed.) Sudbury, MA: Jones and Bartlett

THANK YOU

FOR EVERYTHING YOU DO TO KEEP KIDS SAFE!

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443-287-0541

Johns Hopkins Center for Injury Research and Policy: www.jhsph.edu/InjuryCenter