

Session #4 Check-Forward to Change

Names:

Developmental Evaluation Roles

Use these different mindsets to help you think about your goals, what questions you should ask, what information and data you can collect, to answer them. And to help you further your idea.

The Critical Friend

One of the 'super powers' of the critical friend is that of perspective. When this role is working well, the Critical Friend is able to climb up on the balcony and watch the initiative from their vantage point, from a distance, and call out what they are seeing in constructive ways.

- Naming patterns, pivots and developmental moments
- Raising curious questions to help challenge assumptions and thinking, flag blindspots
- Holding the team to account for agreed principles and intentions

The critical friend role requires a reasonable degree of trust and enabling behaviours. The developmental evaluator needs to be comfortable speaking up and being candid.

The Facilitator

The 'Facilitator' role adds value to developmental evaluation in three ways:

- Evidence based reflection to enable learning from important lessons
- Supporting the team to build and refine key design elements
- Drawing conclusions and linking evaluation insights to decisions

The Facilitator should not be responsible for the design. The Facilitator also keeps an empty glass in this role e.g. not adding to the content, remaining non-judgmental, free of preconceived ideas, aware of own bias/assumptions.

The Scientist

The Scientist role adds value to developmental evaluation in two ways.

- Working with the team to test ideas, assumptions and prototypes
- Baking evaluation into activity and service design

The Scientist brings the strong discipline of evaluative thinking and tools to the team. The Scientist helps with real-time data collection and learning.

The Scientist should be careful about locking things down too soon, and stifling the innovation. The Scientist will need to try to master the perfect evaluation plan in an emergent initiative

The Journalist

The Journalist adds value to developmental evaluation in two ways.

- Tracking what is tried, what happens and what is learned
- Making the innovation process and findings compelling and accessible to others

The Journey is the innovation journey documenter who also provides some form of accountability while everyone else is busy doing the work. By documenting:

- Key moments: what is tried, what happens; and what is learned.
- Sharing this, internally and externally, can help keep funders in a developmental/innovation space by giving them insight into what is happening and developing.