# Doing As: Outreach and Engagement in Capacity Building Molly Engle, Ph. D. Oregon State University James Lindstrom, Ed. D. University of Idaho

#### **ABSTRACT**

"Doing as" instead of "doing to" or "doing with" is not only necessary to assure outreach; it is essential to ensure engagement. "Doing as" when the culture, language, and/or expectations are different is challenging. Building skill capacity requires engaging "as" a member of the target community to ensure skill is built.

#### BACKGROUND

By employing the concept of "doing as", engagement is fostered among participants. The Western Regional Evaluation Capacity Training (WECT—say 'west') is a 17-month program that is designed to build evaluation capacity in Extension professionals throughout the Extensions' Western Region. Engaging these disparate faculty members, who come from five different program areas (agriculture, natural resources, 4-H, family and community science, and nutrition), present a challenge. Recognizing that the culture of evaluation is different from that of other programs, and has its own language and culture, the program leaders (ME&JL) make efforts to interweave evaluative language and culture into the language and culture of program providers; an attempt at "doing as". This effort results in increased access to and connections with evaluation resources. This engagement is evidenced by increased participation frequency and the communication types participants use. At the mid-point of this program, participants are reporting more engagement in evaluative activities; ability to incorporate their learning into their programs, and are more engaged in exploring evaluative activities. At the end of the program, participants will attend a capstone event, present their evaluative projects, and prepare their papers for publication. We anticipate that engagement in this evaluation capacity building program will foster willingness and interest in engaging in more evaluative activities in the Western Region; by "doing as" we anticipate those activities will be sustained.

## Oregon State UNIVERSITY Outreach and Engagement



#### QUESTION

Can applying the concept of "doing as" to two participant cohorts (n=36) from five disparate program areas (agriculture, natural resources, 4-H, family and community science, and nutrition) increase evaluation capacity by participating in a 17-month long comprehensive evaluation capacity building program?

#### **APPROACH**

Drawing upon the cross cultural literature, which is identified as a distinct type of community-based engagement, the approach employed the following ideas:

- ♦ Build long term working relationships;
- ♦ Include alternative perspectives;
- ♦ Create approaches that are inclusive of multiple world views; and
- ◆ Stimulate discovery by bringing divergent ways of knowing¹

In addition, the co-director (JL) has foundational experience in one of the programs in the capacity building program. This past experience has allowed us to develop the a "doing as" approach. The model proposed by Daryl G. Smith (see box) also provided a framework for us to use

<sup>1</sup>Hassel, C.A. (2005). The craft of cross-cultural engagement. Journal of Extension [On-line], 43 (6). Available at: http://www.joe.org/joe/2005december/a1.php

#### FINDINGS

A mid-term evaluation was conducted after three modules were completed; two modules were still outstanding. (Qualitative Data Management and Analysis, Utilization Focused Evaluation). Twenty-eight participants (of 36) responded to this mid-term evaluation. As expected, the majority (14 [50%] to 21 [75%] of participants believed that the amount of material delivered on the first three modules (Program Planning and Logic Modeling; Program Implementation, Monitoring, and Delivery; and Quantitative Data Management and Analysis) was sufficient. However, 57% (n=16) said they needed more information on Quantitative Data Analysis. Thinking about he two modules which were yet to be covered, between 14 (52%) and 18 (67%) believed they needed more information. For these last two modules, only 27 responded.

### **MODEL** Climate and Institutional Intergroup Viability and Relations Vitalitiy Mission Global Consequences Local Context Access Education and and Success Scholarship

#### EVALUATION IMPLICATIONS/QUESTIONS

"Doing as" is recognizing the value all participants bring to a program. This educational program applies the above model by being sensitive to climate and intergroup relations, allowing access to information, and focusing on education and scholarship. The mission of evaluation capacity building is foremost.

Applying the model generated additional evaluative questions:

- 1. How accessible is the program to faculty across the Western Region?
- 2. What measures of success could be used?
- 3. How have the local economic conditions affected vitality? Would those conditions affect viability as well? (A question not specifically addressed.)
- 4. How welcoming and inclusive is this program?
- 5. How does background and program area affect participation?