

Overview of Health Communication Evaluation Game

The Scenario

You are the manager of a communication campaign that has run for 9 months and has cost \$25,000 in above-the-line costs. You have kept good program records and had planned to write a simple evaluation report based on them. Your boss now tells you that with the end of the fiscal year coming up, and the political climate being what it is, you need to produce some "hard evidence," preferably a cost-benefit analysis for the program. You only have \$1,500 left for evaluation.

The Options

- A. Although the request seems unfair, you
- B. Argue for **more program resources** if they want to see demonstrable changes.
- C. Argue that **more time** is needed if they want to see any effect
- D. Argue for **more evaluation dollars**.
- E. Provide some **tracking data** showing improved health behaviour in your community and province (Rice & Atkin, impact monitoring model)
- F. Provide some impressive **data about the reach** of your campaign (Rice & Atkin, advertising model)
- G. Hire or find an evaluator to design and implement a **cost-benefit quasi-experimental design** (Rice & Atkin, experimental model)
- H. **Run & hide** until the next election.
- I. Prepare a **logic model**. They're really cool & describing your program will take up a lot of time at the management meeting.
- J. Find someone who benefitted from the campaign. Have them tell their **story**.
- K. Tell them that after attending a THCU workshop you learned that **formative evaluation** is the key to success. Now, having spent 50% of your energy and your evaluation money on formative research, you are convinced you are meeting real needs.
- L. Tell them that the program is based on a proven intervention in the literature and that you will develop a process evaluation showing that it was replicated "**with fidelity**".
- M. **Call it a pilot**, feasibility study or something along those lines and tell them that an evaluation is inappropriate.
- N. Tell them they are crazy to expect a change in behaviour, citing Coke's \$7 gazillion **advertising budget** that brings about a 1% change in market share.
- O. **Other** (the three jokers) in your pile of cards.

The Game

- Review the above options and decide your strategy.
- *What option cards would you definitely play? In what order? What cards would you not play?*
- Your group has **20 minutes** to decide. Have someone ready to report your decision back to the large group.

1 Atkin, C., and Rice, R. *Public Communication Campaigns*. Newbury Park: Sage Publications, 1991. 2nd ed. Chapter 8.