

Evaluation Consultation: Maria and Preston's Conversation (Transcript)

Maria: Hi Preston! I need your advice. We drafted our five-year logic model, and I'm not sure it aligns with our five-year strategic plan.

Preston: Sure! As you know, the strategic plan and logic model both describe your program but in different ways. Let's talk through first where they describe the same program components and then where the logic model provides additional details.

Maria: Great. We had some of our strategies listed in our draft logic model, but not all of them. I studied the table you sent, and now I realize that all our program strategies should be listed in the logic model.

Preston: You're correct, Maria. The strategies listed in the "strategies/activities" column in your logic model should be the same as those in your strategic plan.

Maria: Do they need to be written word-for-word?

Preston: No. To save space in your logic model, you can use fewer words to describe each strategy.

Maria: So, let me ask this, should you have strategies in your logic model that are NOT in your strategic plan?

Preston: No, in a five-year program logic model that is integrated with a five-year strategic plan, the strategies should be the same.

Maria: Thanks Preston. That makes sense. Are there other components of the strategic plan that should be represented in the logic model?

Preston: Yes. The five-year goals in your strategic plan indicate what your program expects to achieve in five years. These expected effects are the same as the long-term outcomes in the logic model.

Maria: So, let me verify. The expected effects from my five-year program goals can be plugged into the long-term outcomes column of the logic model?

Preston: Correct. The five-year program goals and strategies of the strategic plan help you complete the "strategies/activities" and "long-term outcomes" columns of the logic model.

Maria: Excellent! We've already done a lot of the work!

Preston: You have. But remember, the strategic plan doesn't have all the details you'll need to finish your logic model. Working with your team—and maybe your stakeholders, too—you'll need to identify the outputs and outcomes that logically exist between the implementation of your strategies and the achievement of your five-year goals. Of course, you'll also need to include the program inputs that make your work possible.

Maria: OK, I get it! I think that the rationale we gave in our strategic plan for our strategies and implementation timeline will help us make these logical connections.

Preston: Absolutely. You should also include your program's SLIMs in the short-term or intermediate outcomes column and your state's School Health Profiles as a data source for measuring progress towards your SLIMs.

Maria: OK, that makes sense. And, speaking of data sources, I included the Indicators for School Health Programs as a data source for assessing program outputs. What other data sources should I include?

Preston: Look back at the evaluation process you outlined in your strategic plan. The associated data sources, like questionnaires, policy documents, and training feedback forms, should appear in your logic model.

Maria: Good advice all around, Preston. I'll be calling again, perhaps when we start writing our annual workplan. I know that both the strategic plan and logic model will inform the development of our workplan.

Preston: Right. And remember, you can always visit the CDC DASH Evaluation website to find some helpful resources for program planning. In particular, Evaluation Brief #5 discusses how to integrate all three planning tools—strategic plan, logic model, and workplan.

Maria: Oh yeah, I'll remember. I love that site!

Preston: Me too! I'll talk with you soon, Maria!

Maria: See you, Preston!