Evaluation of Bullying Programs

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Overview

1) Introduction & Goals
2) Why Evaluate?
3) How to Evaluate
   - ✓ Key Concepts
   - ✓ A General Model
   - ✓ Closer look at Phases
4) Final thoughts
5) Questions & Discussion

Introduction and Goals

- Thanks
- Goals
  1. Overview of considerations in program evaluation
  2. Encouragement

Why Evaluate?

- Same reason we keep score, give grades, keep a checkbook, etc.
  - Curiosity
  - Accountability
  - Optimism
    - And other good reasons…

Key Concepts

- Program Evaluation and Evaluation Research
- Formative and Summative Evaluation
- Evidence and Evidence-based

Evaluation and Evaluation Research

- ***Definition of Evaluation***
  - ***Evaluation is the systematic acquisition and assessment of information to provide useful feedback about some object***
    - (Trochim & Donnelly, 2007, p. 352)
- ***What makes it evaluation research?***
  - You know, the stuff Dr. Espelage was talking about…
  - To meet federal definition of research, a study must be attempting to add to *generalizable knowledge*
  - So if you plan to use your study for internal program evaluation, it is evaluation but not research.

Formative & Summative Evaluation

- *Formative evaluation*
  - Strengthen or improve the program being evaluated
    - Examine quality of implementation, organizational context, personnel, procedures, inputs, and so on.
- *Summative evaluation*
  - Summarize the effects or outcomes of a program
    - Assess whether the program can be said to have caused the outcome
      - Determine the overall impact
      - Estimate the relative costs associated with the program

Formative & Summative Evaluation Cont.

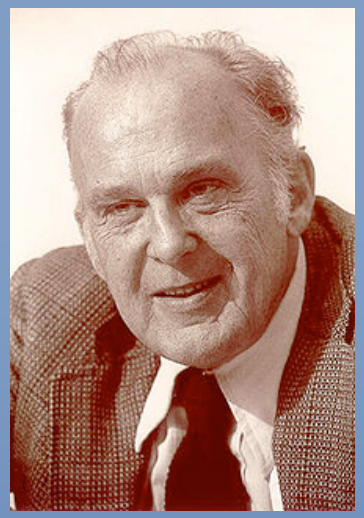
- Don't think of them as entirely separate or independent processes
- A relatively recent review of effectiveness of bullying programs concluded that:
  - "On the whole, programs in which implementation was systematically monitored tended to be more effective"
    - (Smith & Anadiou, 2004, p. 547)

Evidence-based Practice

- The use of the best available programs or treatments based on careful evaluation using critically reviewed research
  - (Sackett et al., 2000)

A very Brief History of Evaluation

- Remember the '60's?
  - A time of social and personal experimentation
    - Mostly uncontrolled
    - An exception:
      - Donald T. Campbell & the Experimenting Society
        - *Fun facts*
          - Contributed to psychology, sociology, anthropology, biology & philosophy
          - Most cited psychologist in history of psychology
          - Inspired Campbell Collaboration
          - Optimistic but wise, as in "Campbell's Law"



Campbell's Law: "The Corrupting Effect of Quantitative Indicators"

The more any quantitative social indicator is used for social decision-making, the more subject it will be to corruption pressures and the more apt it will be to distort and corrupt the social processes it is intended to monitor. (1976, p. 50)

Brief History Continued

- Where are we now?
  - From the Experimenting Society to the
  - Global Interconnected Multicultural Money-driven Evidence-based World
    - The GIMME World
- But let's be positive…
- The Campbell Collaboration
  - Evolutionary Epistemology
- http://www.campbellcollaboration.org/news_/reduction_bullying_schools.php

More Recent History

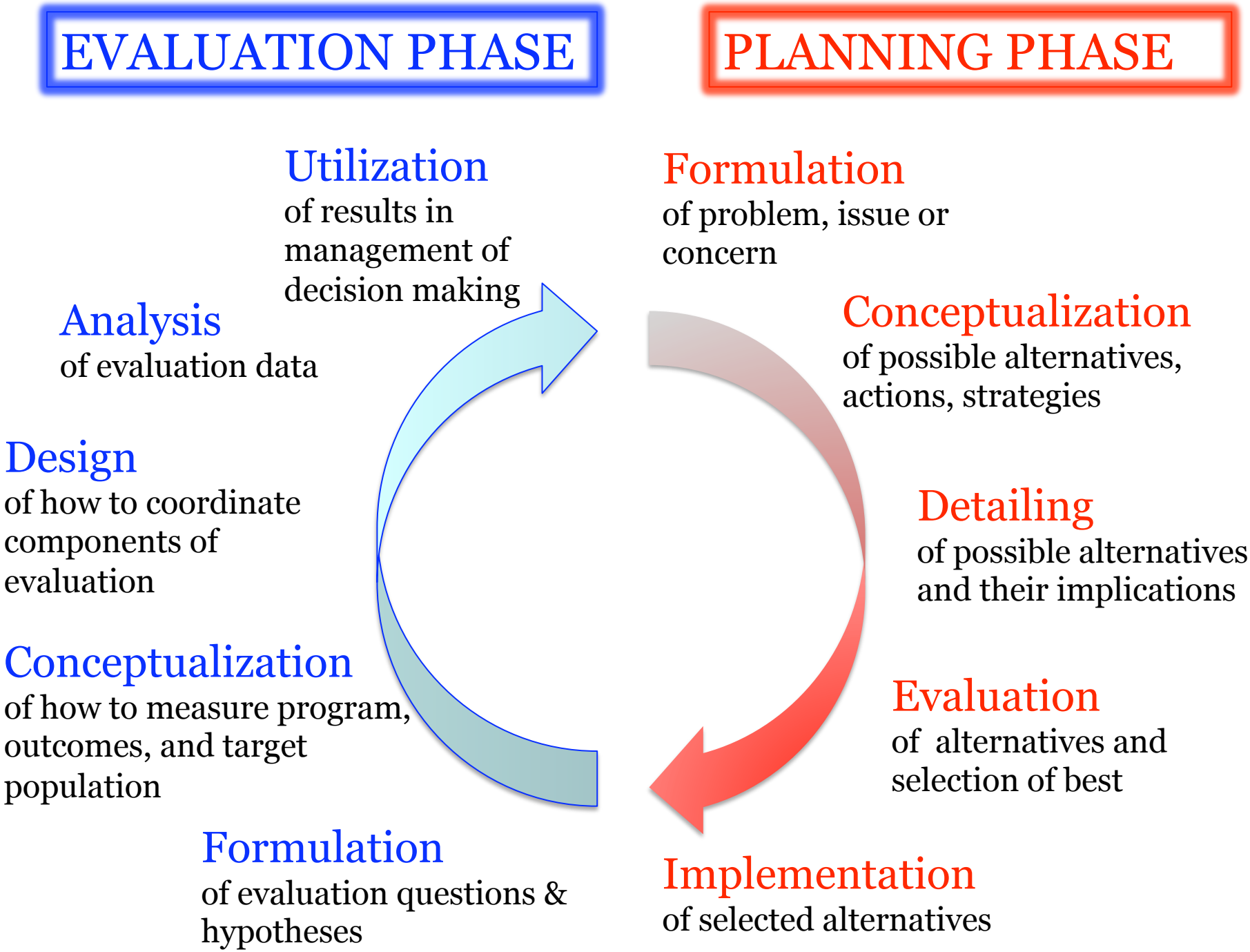
- Campbell's student William Trochim calls for:

Systems Thinking in an Evaluation Culture

- Evaluation can be a threatening activity
- So make it an everyday part of life
- Build an organizational culture that values information and learning
- Keep it simple (whenever possible)

The Planning-Evaluation Cycle

William Trochim, Ph.D.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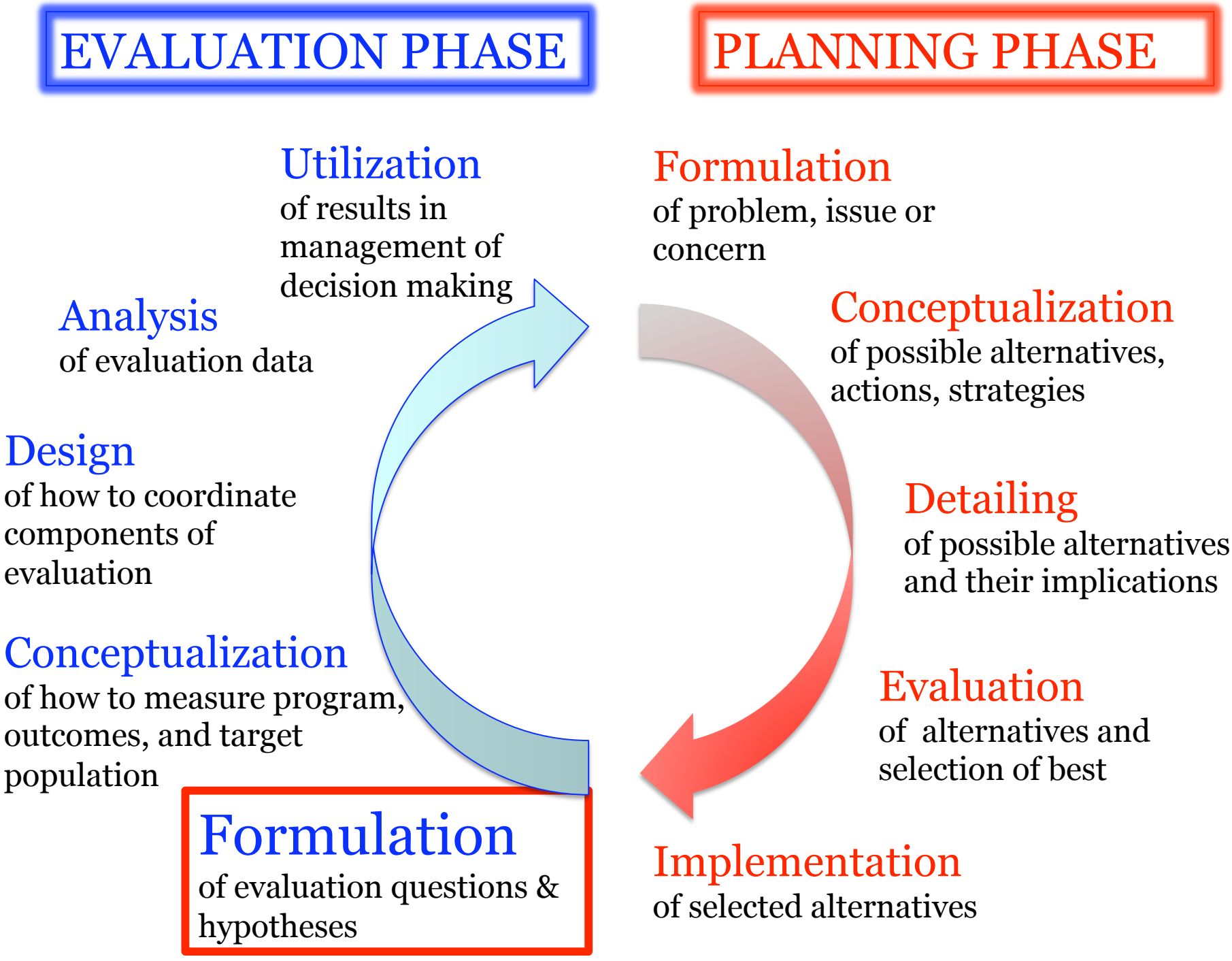
A Closer Look at Some Key Phases in the Evaluation Cycle

1) Formulation of the Question/Hypothesis
2) Conceptualization of Measures/Outcomes
3) Design of Evaluation Procedures
4) Analysis
5) Utilization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Formulation of Questions/Hypotheses

Do you want to ask a question or state a hypothesis?

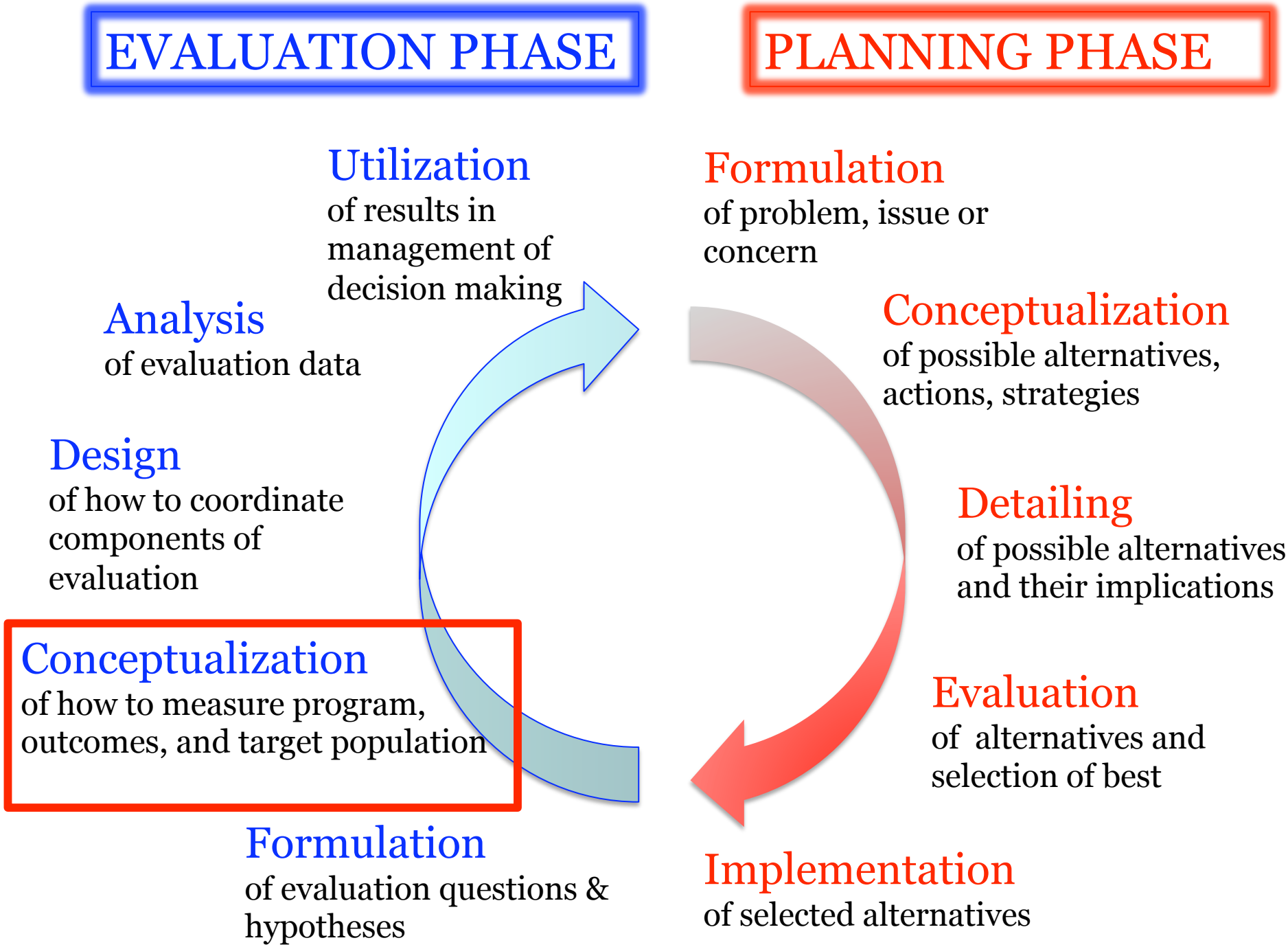
1) Example of a Question:
   - Did *something* change?
2) Example of a Hypothesis:
   - There will be a change in *something* associated with Program X that is not attributable to other things including chance variation

Examples of Formative Evaluation Questions

- *What's the question?*
- *Where is the problem and how big or serious is it?*
- *How should the program be delivered to address the problem?*
- *How well is the program delivered?*

Examples of Summative Evaluation Questions

- *What was the effectiveness of the program?*
- *What is the net impact of the program?*
- *How much did it cost?*
- *Were there any unexpected results (good or bad)?*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Conceptualization of Measures/ Outcomes

- What should your program affect?
  - Consider a program theory or logic model to make your expectations explicit
  - Example Logic Model from Olweus Grant Writer's Toolkit on next slide

    (800-328-9000 hazelden.org/olweus)

RESOURCES	ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	SHORT- & LONG-TERM OUTCOMES	IMPACT	EVALUATION METHODS
In order to accomplish our set of activities, we will need the following:	*In order to achieve our outcomes, we will accomplish the following activities:*	*We expect that once accomplished, these activities will produce the following evidence or service delivery:*	*We expect that if accomplished, these activities will lead to the following changes:*	*We expect that if accomplished, these activities will lead to the following changes in 7–10 years:*	*We will use the following methods to measure our short- and long-term outcomes:*
- Endorsement from school administrators at Appleton and Franklin Middle Schools - Identification and involvement of a Bullying Prevention Coordinating Committee at each school - Training and technical assistance from Olweus-Certified Trainers (Clemson University) - Materials and data collection tools from Professional and Educational Services at the Hazelden Foundation - Funding from the Best Foundation - Commitment from school staff members	- 12 members from each coordinating committee will participate in a 2-day training the first year, a 1-day training the second year, and govern the program throughout the project. - 132 staff members will be trained in the Olweus program and will be given materials to support their efforts. - The Olweus Bullying Questionnaire will be distributed to over 900 students. - Rules and policies will be gathered and reviewed. - Over 1,000 parents will be given information about bullying prevention.	- Teachers of grades 6, 7, and 8 will conduct 20- to 40-minute classroom meetings with over 900 students. - Other school staff will appropriately respond to incidents regarding bullying and will promote anti-bullying behavior. - Teachers will provide information to at least 500 parents about bullying during parent meetings. - Staff members will hold individual meetings with children who bully, with children who are targets of bullying, and with parents. - Schoolwide rules against bullying will be adopted and	- The number of students who report being bullied will be reduced. - The number of students who bully will be reduced. - Reports of general antisocial behavior (e.g., vandalism, fighting, theft, and truancy) among students will be reduced. - Youth attitudes toward schoolwork and school will improve. - Peer relations at school will improve. - The number of students who report being comfortable talking to a teacher and/or a parent about bullying will increase.	- The number of incidents regarding bullying and other violent behavior will be reduced in and out of school. - Young people will report feeling safe coming to school. - School performance will increase as a result of students feeling safe in their schools. - Other elementary and middle schools in the Brighton Public Schools and in Founders Park will adopt the Olweus program as a result of the successful outcomes of this program at Appleton and Franklin Middle Schools.	- School staff members will be given pre-program and post-program questionnaires to determine changes in knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors related to bullying prevention and response. - The anonymous student survey (Olweus Bullying Questionnaire) will be administered in early fall of 2006 and at the close of the next school year, spring 2007. - Data from the Regional Youth Risk Behavior Survey—administered in 2005 and again in 2007—will be analyzed to determine trends in perception of school safety and number of

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From the Olweus Grant Writer's Toolkit
800-328-9000
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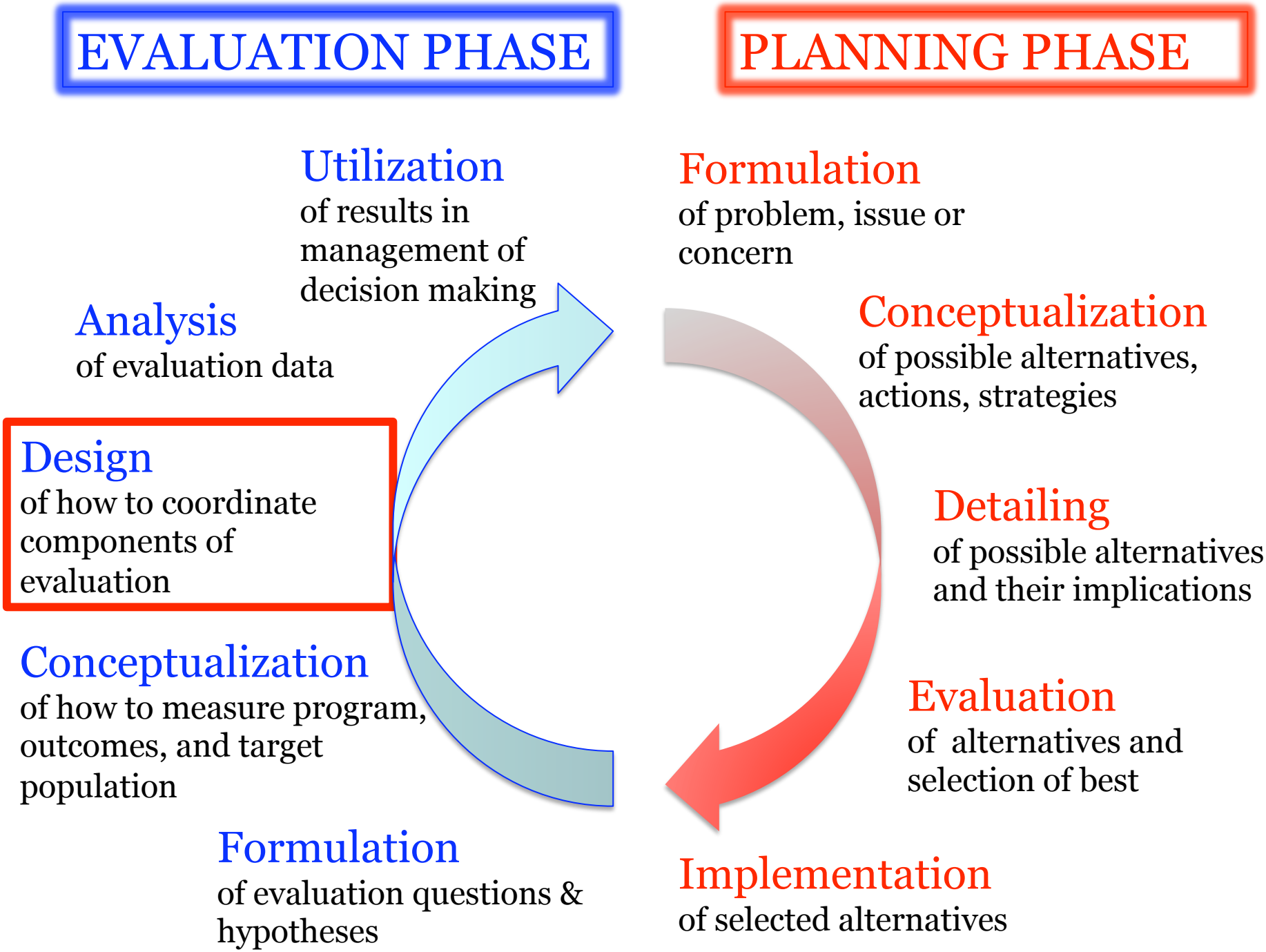
Measures/Outcomes Continued

- Advantages of well developed measures
  - More credible evidence
  - More comparable evidence
- Multidimensional problem needs multidimensional measurement
- Some possible objects of measurement:
  - School climate
  - Teacher, Student, Parent perceptions
  - Costs
  - Counts of naturally occurring events
    - (e.g., suspensions---could be good or bad)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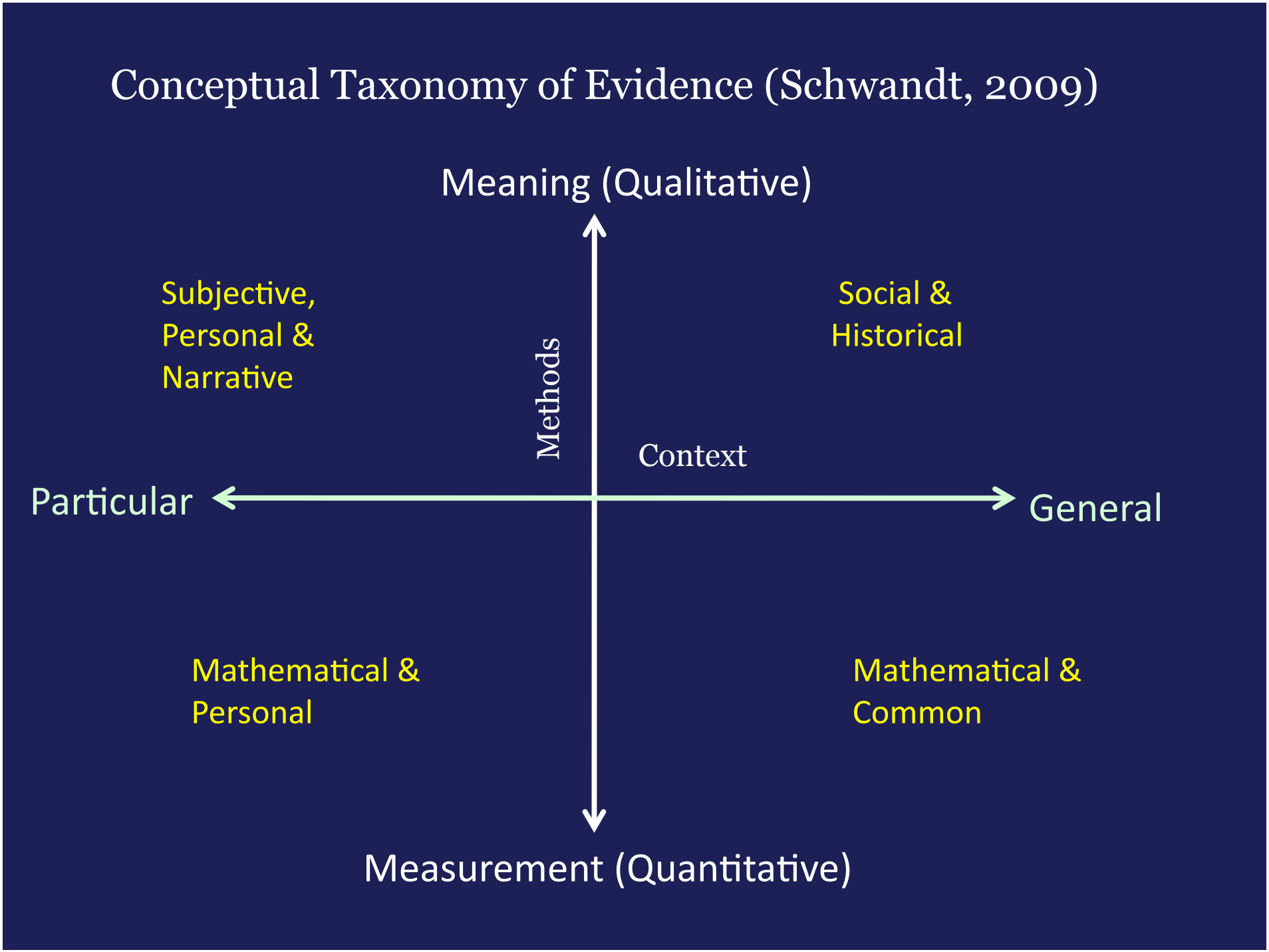
Design

- The evaluation design should match the evaluation question
  - Which designs produce credible evidence?
    - Consider Schwandt's theory of credible evidence
      - (adapted from Upshur, VanDenKerkhog & Goel, 2001)


Conceptual Taxonomy of Evidence (Schwandt, 2009)
Meaning (Qualitative)
Subjective, Personal & Narrative
Social & Historical
Methods
Context
Particular
General
Mathematical & Personal
Mathematical & Common
Measurement (Quantitative)

Implications

1) Useful evaluation knowledge might be numerical but it might not
2) Usefulness of evidence is not determinded by a hierarchy, but by "a mediation of the context of its use and method of its production"

(Schwandt, 2009, p. 207)

Four Major Kinds of Evaluation Designs

1) Scientific/Experimental Models
2) Management Oriented Evaluation Models
3) Qualitative & Anthropological Models
4) Participant-oriented Models

Scientific/Experimental Models

- Well known methods aimed at:
  - testing hypotheses
  - identifying threats to valid inference
  - utilizing objective measures
  - statistical analysis

Scientific/Experimental Models

- Common/simple quantitative designs:
  - Post-test only
  - Pre-post
  - Pre-post with comparison group
- Uncommon/more complex quantitative designs:
  - Randomized experiment
  - Regression-discontinuity
  - Interrupted time series

Management-oriented Systems Models

- **PERT, the Program Evaluation and Review Technique**
- **CPM, the Critical Path Method.**
- **Both have been widely used in business and government in this country.**
- These management-oriented systems models emphasize comprehensiveness in evaluation, placing evaluation within a larger framework of organizational activities.

Qualitative & Anthropological Models

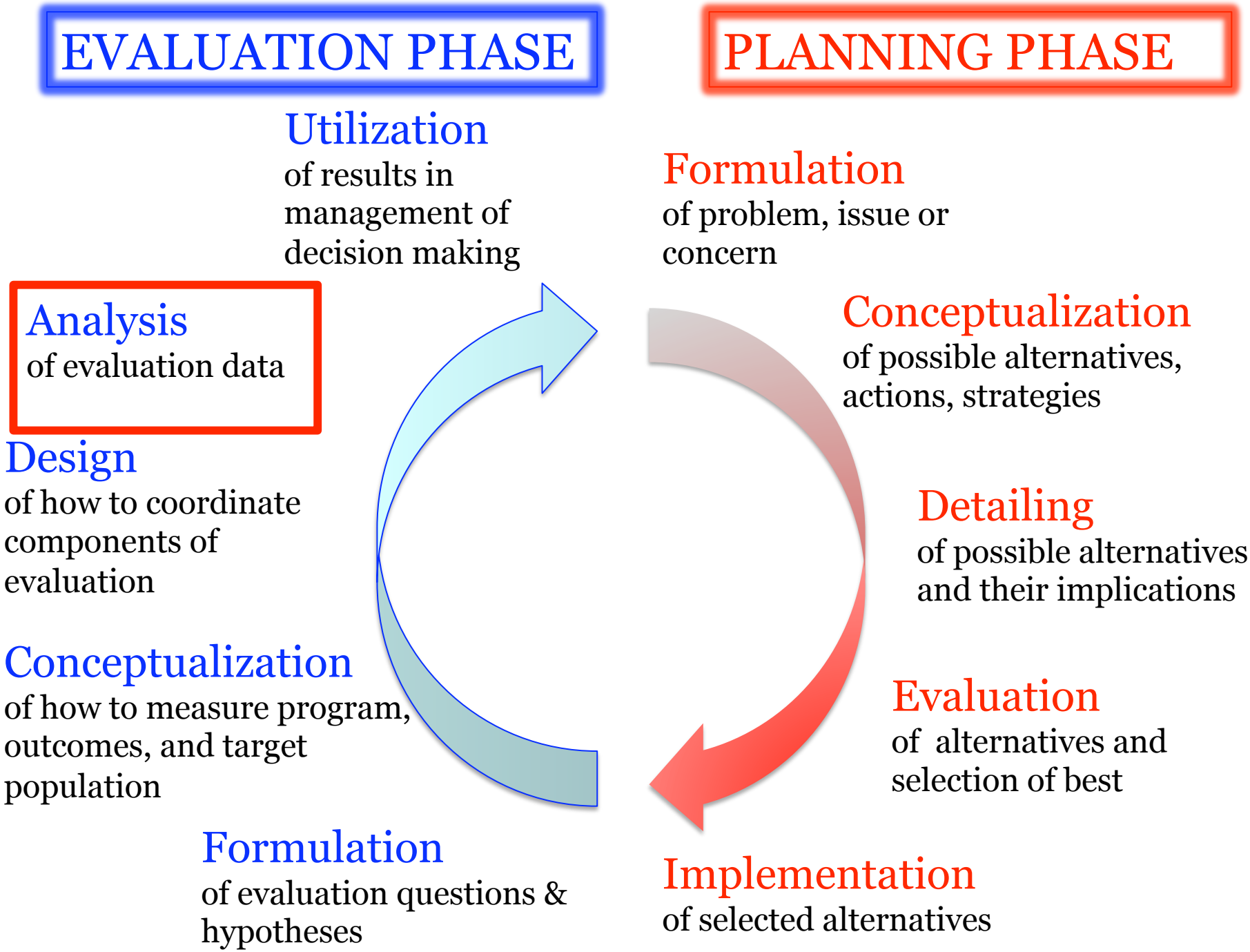
- Emphasize importance of
  - observation
  - need to retain the phenomenological quality of the evaluation context
  - value of subjective human interpretation in the evaluation process.

Design Continued

- Some relatively simple qualitative designs
  - Case study
  - Open-ended survey
  - Focus group
- Some more complex qualitative designs
  - Multiple case study
  - Grounded theory
  - Causal networks cross-site design

Participant-oriented Models

- Emphasize the central importance of the evaluation participants, especially clients and users of the program
- Client-centered and stakeholder approaches are examples of participant observer models, as are consumer-oriented evaluation systems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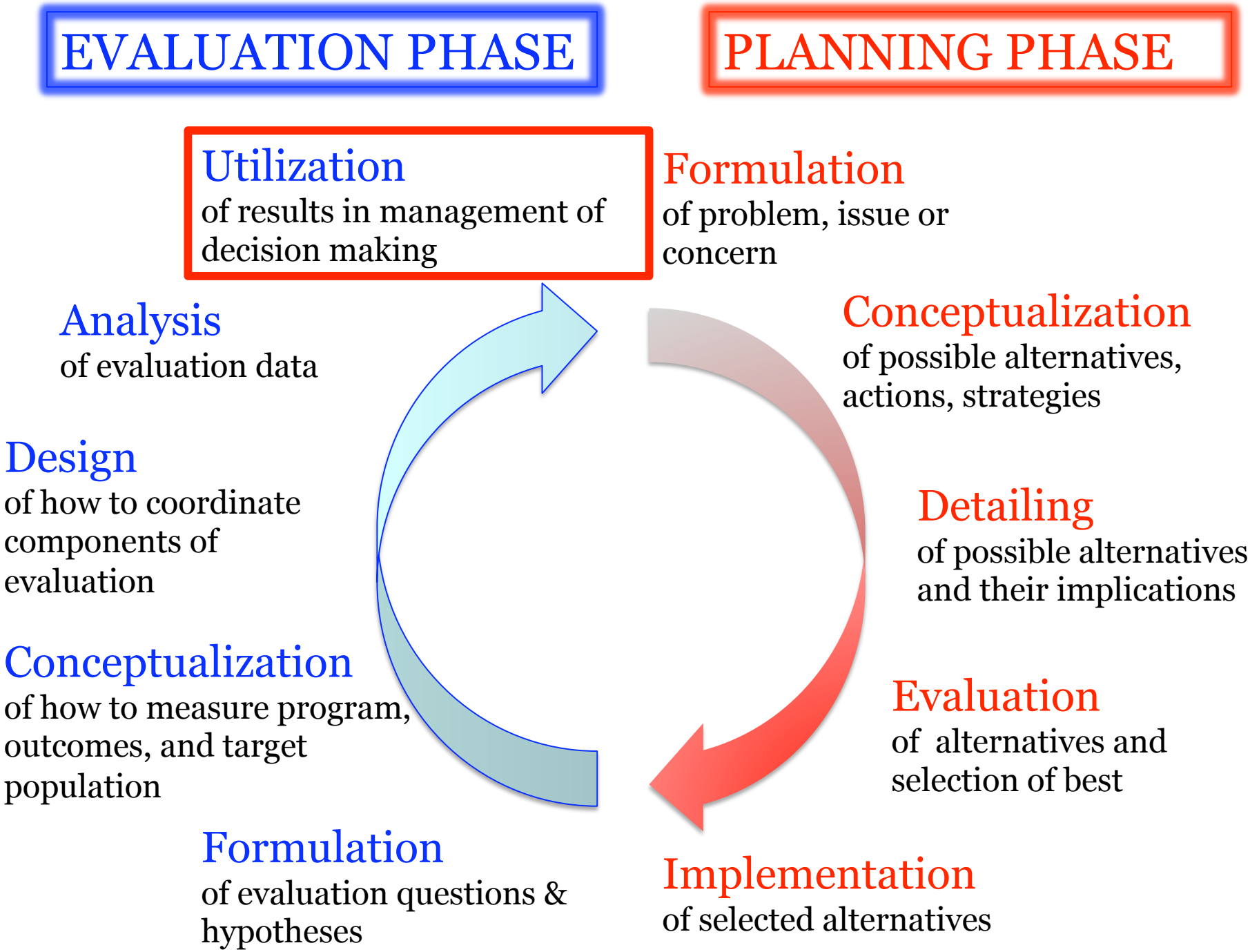
Analysis

- Analysis should fit the question, measures & design
- Keep it simple/Answer the question
- Think about what a meaningful change would look like
  - A “clinically significant difference”
  - Important in both planning and evaluation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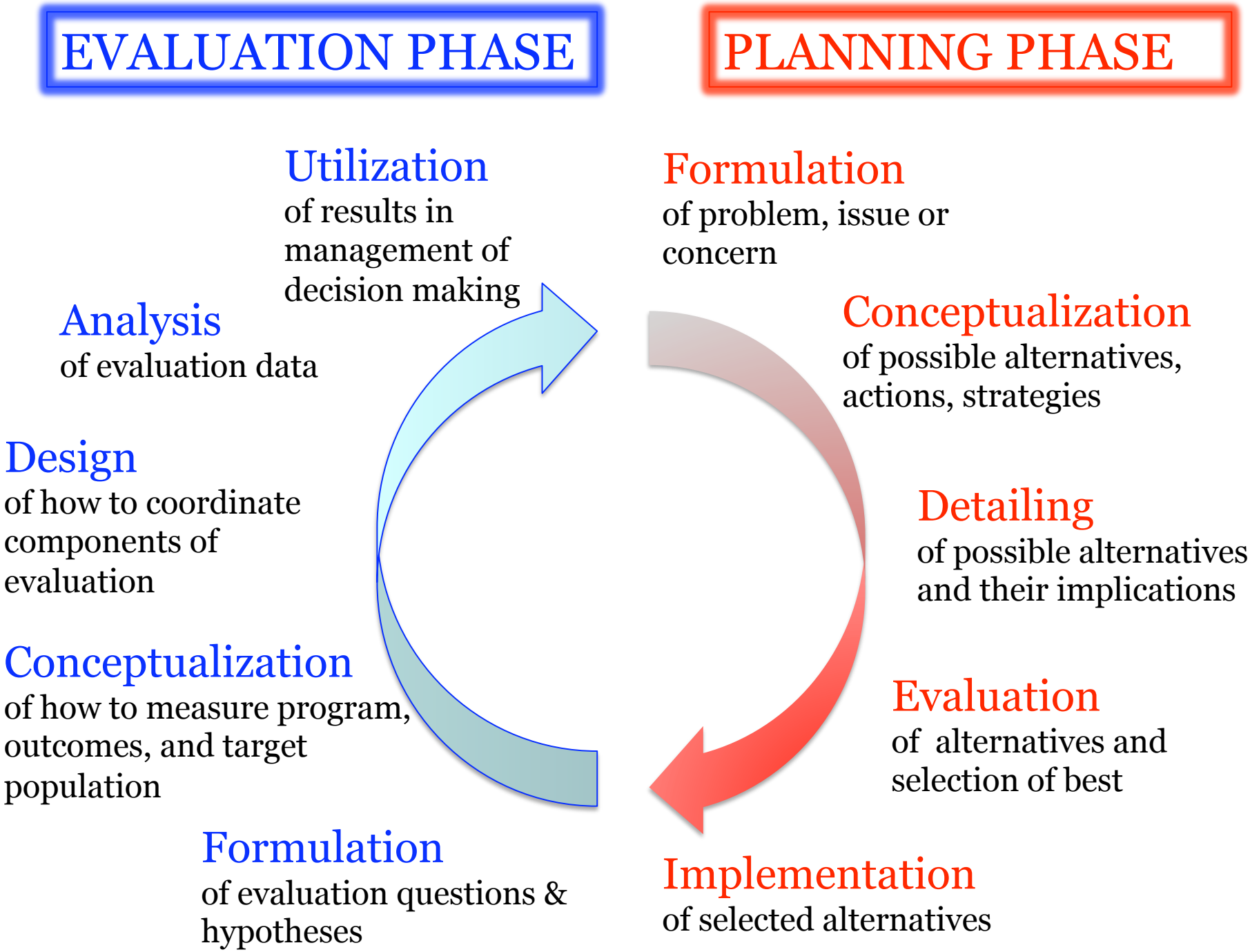
Utilization

- How will the results be used?
- How will you report to stakeholders & maintain engagement?
- What changes in programs and policies should be considered?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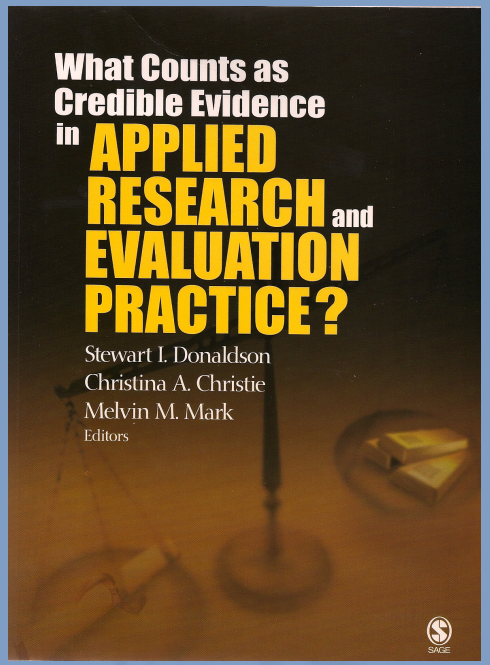
Semi-Final Thoughts

- Remember the concept of an evaluation culture
  - If we all participate, we may all benefit
- Don't reinvent the wheel
  - But try to keep your wheels aligned
  - And the pressure about right
- Engage others
  - Responsibility & Expertise:
    - You don't need a meteorologist to tell you it is snowing
    - but if you want to know the details ("Did we break the record?") it helps to have someone assigned to keeping track of things

Actual Final Thoughts: Getting Help

Summer reading→



- American Evaluation Association
  - http://www.eval.org/
- Call us
  - Faculty & students may be able to help
- Consider contracting with professional evaluators
  - AEA has a directory

Thank you!

Questions & Discussion…