



Evaluating Transformation: Devils, and Missing Links

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Transformation Evaluation Definition

Mental health system transformation is the process of improving consumer recovery outcomes and satisfaction by making and implementing plans for:

- (1) Organizational integration and other infrastructural changes, and
- (2) The delivery of effective, comprehensive and efficient services.



What Have We Learned from First Generation Transformation Efforts?

Bickman and colleagues (1999): "...taken together, the results of the Stark and Fort Bragg evaluations indicate that **systems of care have little effect on important clinical and functional outcomes.** The current national policy of large investment in system of care infrastructures is unlikely to affect children in the manner intended..."

Friedman & Goes (2001): "...the enormous financial, human, and clinical resources devoted to [healthcare] integration have not borne much fruit. **Evidence of quantifiable, sustained financial or clinical value is scant.**"

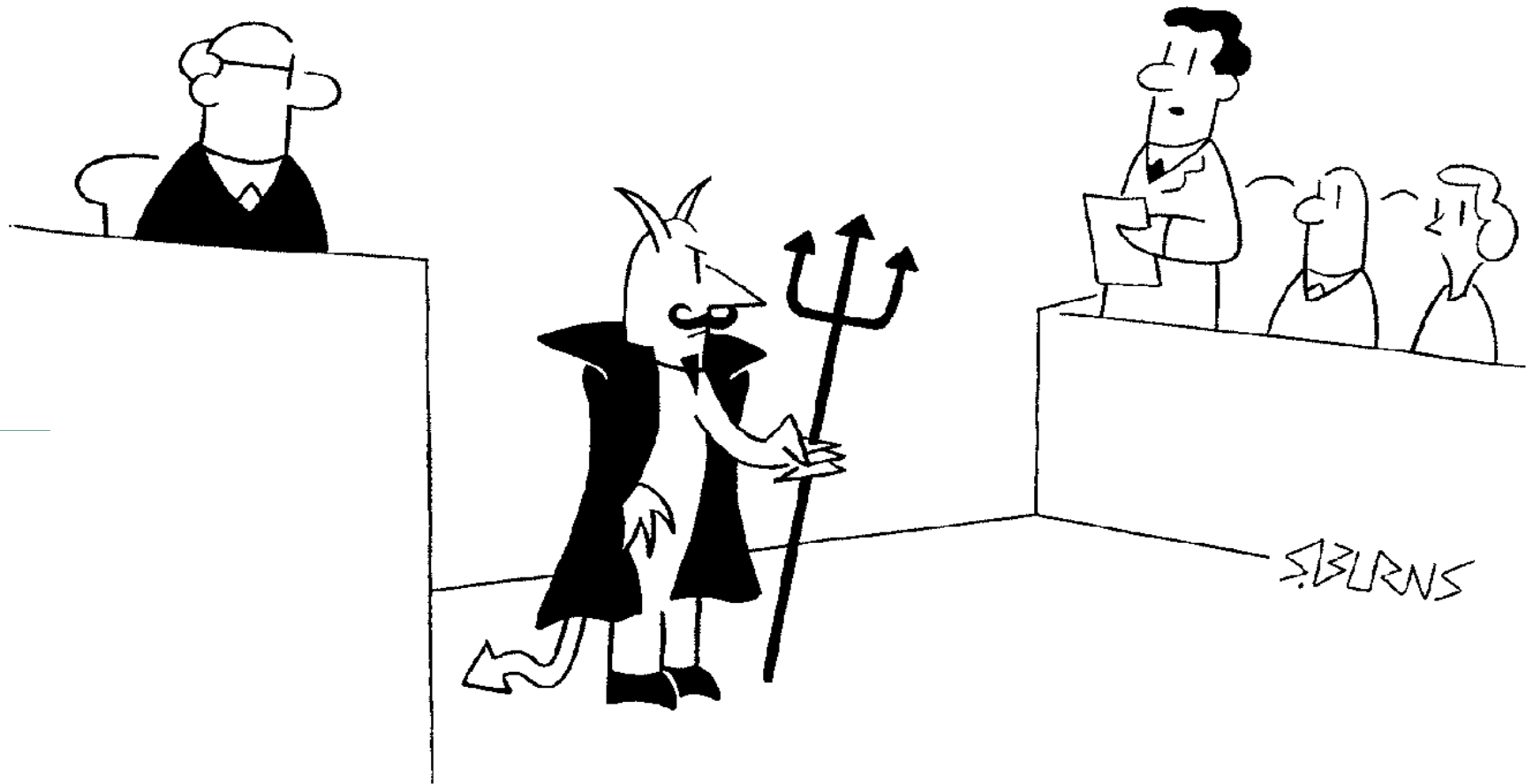
Wolff, (2002): "Integration policy has failed because it is not cost-effective from the perspective of the different systems...Neither the funding nor the motivation for innovation is likely to be forthcoming from resource-strapped public systems; nor does it make sense to expect innovation from large monolithic systems that are entrenched in tradition."

Goldman and colleagues (2002):"In policy terms, although the theory that links systems integration and individual outcomes was supported for [housing outcomes], **across the board efforts to implement systems integration strategies cannot be recommended as a means of achieving desired clinical outcomes...Extensive and targeted efforts to promote systems integration do not produce desired social and clinical outcomes at the individual client level.**"

Hanrahan and colleagues (2006): "State efforts to integrate service systems through methods such as interagency agreements **did not lead to successful employment outcomes.**"



Why First Generation Efforts Were Not More Successful



"We find the defendant guilty of being in the details."



Why First Generation Efforts Were Not More Successful

Insufficient attention to operational details or “logic chains”.

Logic chains are sequences of actions linking policy goals and consumer outcomes.

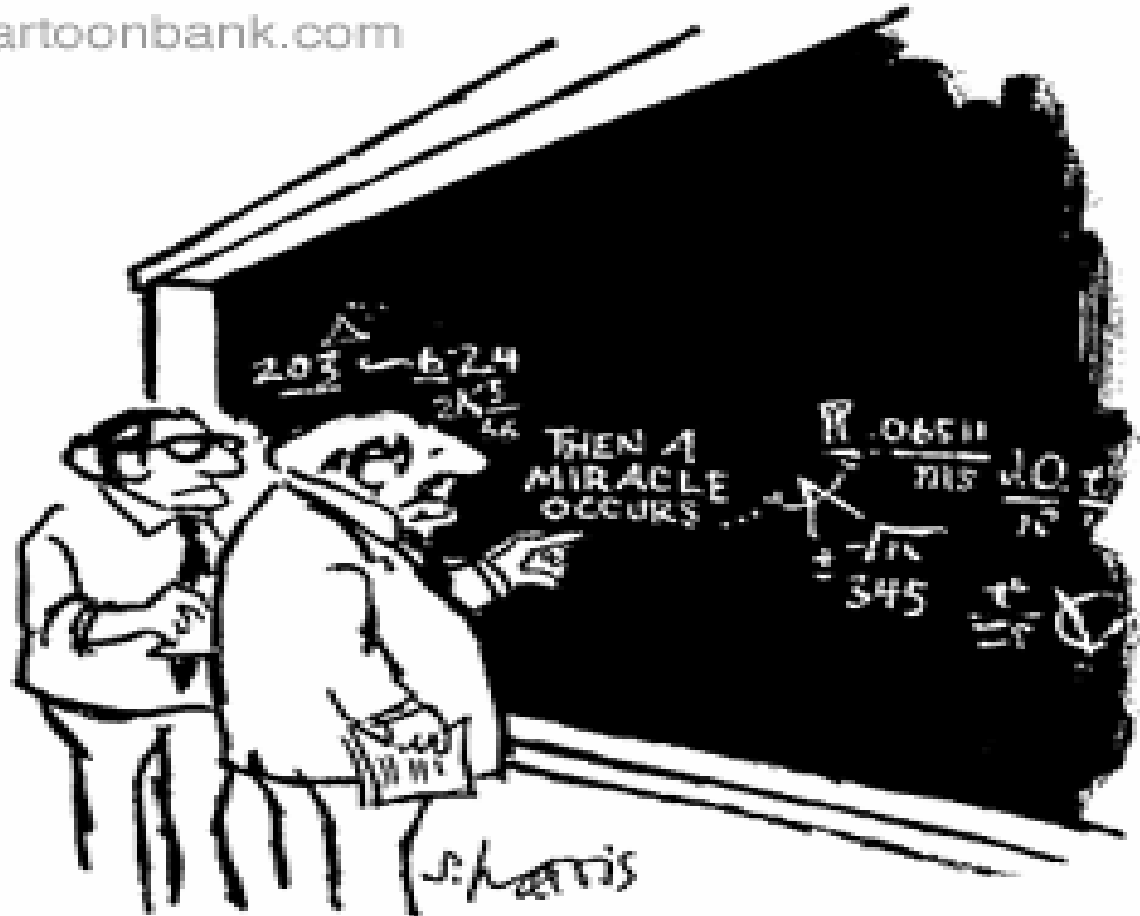
First generation transformation efforts lacked certain logic chains or were missing important links





Why Systems Change Efforts Have Not Been More Successful

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"I think you should be more explicit here in step two."





Why First Generation Efforts Were Not More Successful

Some missing logic chains and links identified in first generation efforts:





Missing Logic Chains or Links

Actions to guarantee consumers received services of proven effectiveness matched to needs.

Without these consumers received ineffective services.





Missing Logic Chains or Links

Detailed estimates of

- Costs of making infrastructure changes
- Costs of delivering effective services and
- Availability of resources needed.

As a result systems often under-resourced



Missing Logic Chains or Links

Actions for realizing anticipated economies of scale

In their absence, economies of scale prove to be illusory





Missing Logic Chains or Links

Actions to guarantee frontline managers and direct care staff

- Training in new skills
- Assistance in giving up previous mental and technical routines.
- Assistance dealing with job security issues (integration often aims at eliminating duplication of effort)

Without these actions staff not motivated or competent to implement system changes



Missing Logic Chains or Links

Actions to identify and operationally define meaningful and realistic benchmarks

Without these stakeholders could not hold system leadership accountable.



Missing Logic Chains or Links

Actions to support the collection of service and outcome data needed for benchmarks on a continuous basis.

Without these data managers could not use benchmarks to identify and redesign underperforming components and processes.





Missing Logic Chains or Links

Actions to maintain focus on and responsiveness to consumers in face of increased complexity.

Without these actions consumers dissatisfied with care.



Missing Logic Chains or Links

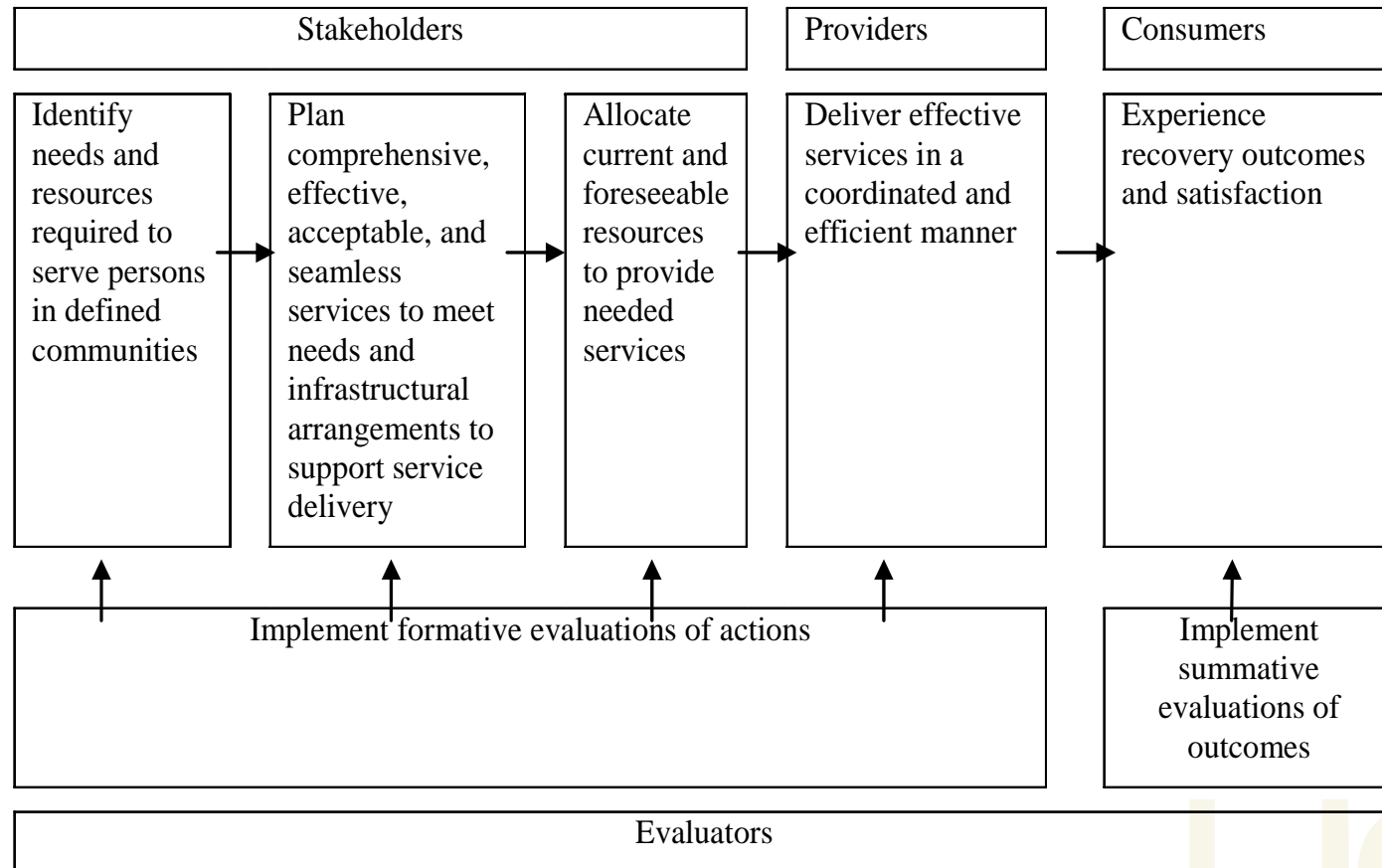
Actions to insure leadership skills matched to tasks:

- Transformational leadership skills for helping employees to view work from altruistic perspective and develop innovative solutions to system problems
- Transactional leadership skills for setting goals, allocating resources, and designing feedback and reinforcement strategies.

As a result leaders did not always have necessary skill sets to implement sustainable change.



Evaluation Role in Transformation





Evaluation Role in Transformation

For formative evaluation:

Advocate for articulation of logic chains and find ways of measuring degree to which actions in chains are implemented.

System planners and implementers will push back against attention to logic chains as too detailed and resembling micromanagement.

Nevertheless, this may be exactly what, if anything, will lead to system changes that cause changes in consumer recovery outcomes.

It will also provide specifics for replication.



Evaluation Role in Transformation

For summative evaluation:

Advocate for evaluation designs that include control groups, difficult as finding such groups can be.

Without control groups, it becomes even more important to have measures of logic chains in hopes of inferring causality from dose-effects.

Stakeholders deserve the best science possible!



Contact Information

HSRI has additional information and tools to assist with planning and evaluating mental health system transformation. HSRI's tools can be used for needs assessment, system planning, resource allocation, outcome evaluation, and project management.

For more information please contact:

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