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How to Chain Logic Models (for Aligning and Integrating Systems)

Logic models can be used to depict systems that are directly integrated with each other. From that depiction, you can work to more closely align those systems. To use logic models to align systems in organizations, consider the following guidelines. In the following, the presenting priority is the area of the issue or goal that your client described to you as needing to be addressed by your project, such as Board operations, strategic planning, programs or marketing.

1. **Always work with your client to identify directly integrated systems.**
The following guidelines should be followed with your client – your client knows at least as much as you do about which activities are directly related to other activities in their organization.
2. **What other systems provide direct input to the area having the issue?**
For example, organizational evaluation results should provide direct input to the Board, strategic planning to program planning, strategic planning to staff planning, strategic goals to performance goals for Board committees and staff, and financial planning to fundraising activities.
3. **What other systems use the direct outputs from the area having the issue?**
For example, does the domain produce program planning from strategic planning? Staff planning from strategic planning? Performance goals from strategic planning? Fundraising from financial planning?
4. **Now develop a logic model for each directly integrated system.**
Again, follow the guidelines in the above step.
5. **Now chain the logic models of the directly integrated systems.**
Refer to the diagram below for an idea of how to link your logic models.

Of course, the integration and alignment between systems in organizations is usually not in the complete and orderly sequence as that depicted below. However, use of the logic model for aligning systems is useful as a frame of reference during discussions with your client about which systems are directly connected.

In the following diagram, “I” represents input, “P” is process and “O” is output. The links between processes are shown by the shaded boxes. Systems in the left-hand column are for use of this example only. You should include systems relevant to the main issue in your project.

Example of Chaining Logic Models

Strategic planning	O										
Program planning	I	P	O								
Financial planning			I	P	O						
Fundraising planning					I	P	O				
Fundraising activities							I	P	O		