CHAPTER 7

Reassessment and Review

CHAPTER OUTLINE

- ***Avoiding failure.*** Failure of an intervention can occur for a number of reasons, including (1) conflicting or overly ambitious goals, (2) poor design, (3) poor implementation, or (4) failure to maintain support of key stakeholders.
- ***Planning for success.*** Ongoing reassessment, learning, and revision are crucial elements of successful interventions. Six tasks increase chances of success: (1) communication with stakeholders, (2) building internal capacities for leading and learning, (3) studying program or policy performance, (4) formalizing procedures to help ensure fidelity, (5) continuously training new staff and (6) increasing the fit between needs and characteristics of the environment and capacities of the program or policy.
- ***Learning and adapting.*** Interventions, their organizations, and surrounding environments change over time, and successful interventions must adapt to change by consciously tailoring the program or policy.
- ***A caution about program and policy survival.*** Interventions sometimes survive long after they are known to be ineffective. Survival is often dependent on how well the intervention serves the personal goals of key stakeholders.
- ***The tasks of implementation.*** Plans from Stages 3 to 6 are finally implemented: Initiating the Design (implementing Stage 3 plans); Initiating the Action Plan (implementing Stage 4 plans); Monitoring Program/Policy Implementation (implementing Stage 5 plans); and Evaluating and Providing Feedback to Users and Stakeholders (implementing Stage 6 plans).

At this point, the program or policy is ready to be launched. Ideally, all six stages of planning should be completed prior to the initial start date for the intervention. We recognize, however, that time constraints imposed on the planning process may result in less than optimal program designs and action plans. Nonetheless, for the first time, our program or policy takes on life. While planning and reviewing is a continuous process, we now begin doing what we have planned.

We rarely have any control over the environments within which policies and programs are implemented: they have lives of their own, driven by visions and goals that may be independent of our new innovation. Or, they may be wholly driven by political and financial arrangements that may seem irrational and at odds with our values. Because our program or policy operates in a dynamic organizational or system environment, we need to pay attention to changes that occur in areas such as political climate, fiscal health of funding sources, key policymakers, and policies related to our intervention. Sometimes these changes will occur independently of our intervention, but in other cases our interventions will cause reactions that require adaptation. As we discussed in Chapter 1 in relation to force field analysis, some of the forces that sustain a problem or issue over time are more potent than others. As these potent forces shift in strength, it becomes critical for programs and policies to change. As an example, consider turnover among CEOs of state agencies.

Example 7.1 Turnover at the Top

When a new governor is elected, it is common for him or her to replace senior public agency administrators with persons more valued than those currently holding those positions. These changes at the top produce other changes within state agencies, and new administrators may view your intervention differently. Building relationships with a new administration becomes an important challenge every time major political shifts occur.

We repeat our warning from the Introduction: *planned change improves the likelihood of successful intervention, but it cannot guarantee it.* Careful and thorough planning increases the odds of success by explicitly considering important factors that might lead to failure or success.

Example 7.2 Criminal Justice Planning and the Lesson of Jurassic Park

Our preference for rational planning is a value that guides our writing and research. We are not so naïve, however, to believe that careful planning always produces successful outcomes. Even the most carefully crafted plans can have no effect, make problems worse, or create unintended effects. There are other times when energy and resources are wasted because planning processes

are terminated prematurely. In general, subtle facets of the criminal justice system (see Chapter 2) can frustrate good planning. In real life, systems don't always behave the way we want them to.

In *Jurassic Park* (Crichton, 1990), Ian Malcolm, a mathematician (played in the 1993 film by Jeff Goldblum; Universal Films, 1993), warns of the larger, more powerful natural rhythms of nature that can undermine what appear to be great scientific advancements. "My point is that life on earth can take care of itself," he raves. "In the thinking of a human being, a hundred years is a long time. . . . But to the earth, a hundred years is nothing. A million years is nothing. This planet lives and breathes on a much vaster scale. We can't imagine its slow and powerful rhythms, and we haven't got the humility to try. We have been residents here for the blink of an eye. If we are gone tomorrow, the earth will not miss us."

Doleschal (1982) sounded a similar warning, this one directed at criminal justice reform efforts. He argues that forces that continually shape the justice system should be allowed to interact naturally. When reforms are implemented, the results are often the opposite of those intended. For example, many efforts intended to reduce prison populations through the creation of community-based programs have failed to do so. Instead, community programs have often extended supervision and control over less serious offenders. Other examples include policy changes intended to reduce discretion that only moved discretion to other, less visible decision points in the system. For example, mandatory sentencing policies shift discretion from judges to prosecutors, but overall, discretion never disappears. Doleschal likens these reforms to a program conducted in Alaska and Canada to protect herds of caribou from their natural predator, the wolf. By shooting the wolves, environmentalists hoped to increase the caribou population. Instead, old and sick caribou that previously were killed and eaten by the wolves faced death by starvation and disease.

Rather than give up on planning, we can learn from these experiences. In many cases, failures become the means for discovering the nature and strengths of forces we are trying to change. Sometimes we may decide that our knowledge and resources are inadequate to the task, but in other cases we become better equipped to try again.

In the Introduction, we noted that you may be re-assessing an existing program rather than planning the launch of a new one. Evaluating the effectiveness of an intervention involves examining the extent to which it has been adopted by organizations and individuals in its operational environment. By examining strategies used to adapt the innovation locally, we can gain a better understanding of the factors that have contributed to its success or failure, popularity or unpopularity, or even its expansion or demise.

AVOIDING FAILURE

Failure of any program or policy is related to two broad types of difficulties: (1) insurmountable obstacles within the implementing agency or its environment, and (2) breakdowns or omissions in the planning process.

First of all, it is possible for a program or policy to fail even when its designers have planned thoroughly and carefully. It may be the case that certain obstacles are too big or too powerful to overcome, or inadequate resources are available to do so. As we discussed in Chapter 1, such obstacles may be *physical* (e.g., the physical design of a courthouse precludes more efficient case processing), *social* (e.g., existing barriers related to class, gender, or race are unchanged by the program or policy), *economic* (lack of sufficient funding), *educational* (e.g., special training or education is required to implement an intervention), *legal* (e.g., criminal justice agencies are legally obligated to do certain things and prohibited from doing other things), *political* (e.g., motivations of partisan stakeholders can block a specific change), or *technological* (e.g., problems with managing the information system required to implement a new policy). A criminal justice systems analysis and a force field analysis should help planners anticipate such obstacles and develop strategies to overcome them. Such activities increase the probability of success.

The second set of difficulties concerns planning breakdowns, omissions, or deficits: one or more critical planning tasks have not been properly executed. The examples and case studies presented in Chapters 1 through 6 illustrate some of the most likely deficits in the planning process. We reiterate here common difficulties at each stage (see Figure 7.1).

Consider the following example: Wilson and Davis (2006) evaluated a prisoner reentry program in New York City called Project Greenlight, which utilized evidence-based program design components. From the design, we would expect that the program would have been successful, but Project Greenlight was not. In fact, the Greenlight participants did significantly worse than the control group. The authors reject selection bias or program design explanations for this outcome. Instead, they highlight implementation problems such as doubling the number of participants in cognitive skills classes and poor relationships between some case managers and participants, suggesting that some staff were not qualified for the roles they were asked to play. Moreover, the risk-assessment tool originally adopted was dropped, so that some participants were poorly matched to the program. Wilson and Davis observe that poorly implemented programs may not simply fail, but they may actually produce harm.

Implementation failure easily occurs when leaders overstate the goals of a program or policy (Stage 2) in order to garner support from stakeholders in the larger political environment (Stage 1). When innovations are oversold, stakeholders feel deceived and cheated. Clear, Flynn, and Shapiro (1987) observe with humor the range of promises attached to intensive probation services (IPS): "Advocates of IPS programs are not humble in the claims they made for these programs. Commonly, IPS is expected to reduce prison crowding, increase public protection, rehabilitate the offender, demonstrate the value of probation, and save money. Even a skeptic is bound to be impressed" (p. 32). These exaggerated objectives eventually spelled trouble for the evaluation (Stage 6). Petersilia and Turner (1990) found in their

Stage 1: Analyzing the Problem

- Insufficient information about the problem. We don't really know how big the problem is, where it is, or who is affected. We may not even have a clear definition of the problem.
- No theory guided the intervention. We don't know how or why the expected change should have occurred.
- Inadequate examination of previous interventions. We may have recreated the wheel, or recycled an old, broken wheel by failing to learn about previous attempts to change the problem.
- Important stakeholders were not identified or included in the planning process.
- Inadequate examination of the larger system or environment was conducted.

Stage 2: Setting Goals and Objectives

- Goals and objectives were not clearly stated.
- Substantial disagreement about goals or objectives persists among stakeholders.
- Incompatible goals or values in the larger system were not identified.
- Exaggerated goals were posed in order to obtain support from key stakeholders.
- Needs for interagency collaboration were not sufficiently addressed.

Stage 3: Designing the Program or Policy

- No specific intervention approach was identified.
- Target populations and selection were not adequately identified.
- Program components or policy provisions and procedures were unclear.
- Responsibilities of program staff or policy authorities were unclear.

Stage 4: Developing an Action Plan

- Required resources have not been properly identified and acquired.
- Responsibilities for implementation have not been clearly assigned.
- Staff members have not been trained sufficiently.
- Insufficient attention was devoted to maintaining support and anticipating resistance.

Stage 5: Developing a Plan for Monitoring Program/Policy Implementation

- No monitoring of program or policy implementation was attempted.
- Information systems for monitoring were inadequate.
- Monitoring instruments were unreliable.
- Responsibilities for data collection, storage, or analysis were unclear.
- Monitoring data was not used to make necessary adjustments to the program or policy.

Stage 6: Developing a Plan for Evaluating Outcomes

- Prerequisites for evaluation were not adequately met.
- Outcome measures were not reliable or valid.
- The research design was inadequate to determine outcomes.
- Confounding factors were not adequately addressed.
- Users of evaluation results were not adequately identified or consulted.

Stage 7: Reassessing and Reviewing the Program or Policy Plan

- Inadequate review of the planning process was undertaken before implementation began.
- Substantial obstacles within the implementing agency or its environment subverted the aims of the program or policy.
- Planning breakdowns, errors, or omissions occurred.
- The change agent failed to learn and adapt during implementation.
- The change agent failed to execute plans properly.

FIGURE 7.1 *Common Planning Deficits at Each Stage*

evaluation of 14 IPS programs that the primary purposes of intensive supervision were rarely achieved:

- The programs did not alleviate prison crowding and may have increased it in some sites.
- They cost considerably more than is generally realized (Stage 5).
- They were no more effective than routine probation and parole in reducing recidivism.

The best that can be hoped for in the wake of such disappointing outcomes is a careful reassessment of the entire planning process, followed by necessary adjustments (Stage 7), especially a more realistic accounting of goals and objectives (Stage 2).

PLANNING FOR SUCCESS

The important point to keep in mind at the implementation stage is that the planning process has not yet ended. In fact, it never will. New information pertinent to the program or policy will emerge, some of it through evaluation research, that may suggest modification to the original design. This is what learning is about. The organization's capacity to learn will largely determine the extent to which the goals of the innovation are achieved. There are four tasks that need emphasis at this point in order to increase the chances of success.

1. *Communicate:* Continually communicate to constituents and potential opponents the need for the program or policy. Develop advocates for the program or policy among a wide range of public officials so that the vision of what you are up to is passed on to others who may be asked about the need for it. Publicize widely and frequently information on the program and its performance.
2. *Build internal capacities for leading and learning:* Those persons who are carrying out the activities articulated in the design are your most valuable assets. Their command of the vision, goals, and activities described in the design are critical to the innovation's success. Their ability to lead, support each other, think strategically, adapt, and carry out their assigned tasks are essential to a program's success. Your organization needs to invest in their development.
3. *Study:* The need for information is essential for learning to occur. Data regarding implementation of the program or policy's design, data on performance, and data on changes in the environment need to be tracked and brought into discussions among key stakeholders.

4. *Formalizing procedures:* As use of the program or policy spreads throughout the organization or system, it is critical that fidelity to the design is maintained. By creating formal procedures and record systems, we can help ensure that necessary steps are consistent across persons.

5. *Continuous Training:* Staff turnover is inevitable. In order to maintain continuity in program delivery or policy-related decisions, new staff must receive training so that expectations of their performance are clear.

6. *Improve the fit:* Purposefully permit the innovation to take shape as new information about the needs and characteristics of the environment emerge and as the capacities of the program or policy develop. The better it fits the needs and priorities of the political environment, the greater will be the level of acceptance.

These six tasks will become a permanent part of managing an effective program or policy, and can be used to assess the quality of a program's administration.

LEARNING AND ADAPTING

In the Introduction, we mentioned the concept of *mutual adaptation:* the program (or policy) and the organizational environment in which it operates will both change during the implementation process. Programs change over time. Not only is there continual reshaping of a program design before it is put into action, but programs continue to change following the point at which "the tire meets the road." It is this change in program characteristics that makes components of a program design poor predictors of program success. Then, too, program staff, program clients, and decisionmakers, rather than being passive participants in the implementation process, directly affect how the innovations are used, adapting the innovations to existing organizational structures and norms, and using them to serve their own purposes.

In addition, the same program design can produce drastically different results in different settings, thus supporting the conclusion that context is critical to outcome. You may recall from our discussion in Chapter 1 regarding systems analysis that the private sector has played a critical role in criminal justice for many years. Some local criminal justice systems, however, have had disastrous experiences with private-sector programs. In corrections, for example, the promised fiscal advantages of private corrections have not always materialized (Shichor, 1995).

But it is not only innovations that undergo change during the implementation process; the organization within which the innovation is used also undergoes change. Specifically with regard to a probation program in Texas, Markley (1989) observed that when program management personnel changed, line staff became "demoralized." Their commitment to the program was dependent on the leadership provided by a few individuals. Other common disruptions include the transfer

of personnel to a new program, the hiring of outsiders (new staff) to staff the new program, and the requirement that staff acquire new skills in order to continue doing their jobs.

Implementation of a program or policy in any organizational setting requires both adaptation by individuals and adaptation of the innovation in order for the implementation process to succeed (Castro et al., 2004; Durlak, 2008). This process of mutual adaptation implies that the same innovation can look very different across different settings (Ellickson & Petersilia, 1983). The crucial point to be made is that unless a program or policy is carefully tailored to the setting in which it is to be used, successful implementation is unlikely (Harris & Smith, 1996).

An excellent example of this kind of tailoring of the innovation can be seen in the approach that the Center for Alternative Sentencing and Employment Services (CASES) in New York City has taken to ensure that its clients fit their target population: jail-bound rather than probation-bound offenders. Data on sentencing in New York revealed that sentencing practices differed across the five boroughs. Judges in Queens, for example, require fewer misdemeanor offenses than do those in Manhattan before sentencing an offender to serve significant jail time. In order to prevent use of the CASES Community Service Sentencing Project (CSSP) from being used as a replacement for probation, criteria for accepting offenders into CSSP are adjusted to sentencing patterns at the borough level (Neises, 1993).

Not only does tailoring itself promote effective adaptation, but so do the structural characteristics of organizations. Decentralization of program control, for example, permits different sites to develop a program design at their own pace and allows the program to adapt to the idiosyncrasies of each site in ways that improve chances for successful implementation. It may be that a program is more effective under some conditions than under others, but it may also be the case that different modes of adaptation make it possible for an innovation to adapt to a variety of organizational environments.

Another way in which programs adapt is when a change occurs in the target population or in our knowledge about the target population. Both adult and juvenile correctional programs have traditionally been designed for males. Girls make up a small proportion of cases in the juvenile justice system, so programs for delinquent youths of both sexes are typically based on problems and needs derived from studies of boys. The risk factors associated with delinquency among girls, however, are different than those found among boys. Granted, there are strong similarities among adolescents of both sexes, but programs need to be tailored to meet the unique needs of girls. Some of the risk factors found among girls that require program modification are: family conflict; sexual, physical, and emotional abuse; low self-esteem; and substance abuse (Bloom et al., 2002). Girls are much more likely than boys to be suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (Dixon et al., 2005). Several states have engaged researchers

and experts to assist them in adapting their correctional programs to the specific needs of girls.

It is critical during implementation to uncover any changes in the intended program or policy design and describe them. These changes are deviations from the original plan and must be understood before a sound evaluation can be conducted.

A CAUTION ABOUT SURVIVAL

Mutual adaptation also means that acceptance of and continued support for an innovation may serve the personal goals of decision makers. For example, if a program can screen cases and make admission decisions rapidly, life is made easier for referring agents such as probation officers and judges. A policy may be passed that gives prosecutors greater discretion (power). This has been the case in many mandatory sentencing schemes in which the charges determine the sentence. Rothman (1980) refers to these latter motivations as *convenience* in contrast to the benevolent interests (what Rothman calls *conscience)* that may have served to motivate the creators of the innovation.

Unfortunately, even in the face of clear evidence that an innovation is failing, these interests of convenience may be powerful enough to sustain the innovation. Valuable resources can then be wasted that could be put to better use in the service of promising programs and policies. For example, in spite of overwhelming research evidence that the DARE program does not work, DARE programs continue to exist (Birkeland et al., 2005; Rosenbaum & Hanson, 1998). Reasons for this phenomenon include (1) the fact that school administrators never expected DARE to prevent drug use, but no other program has been proposed, and (2) DARE is believed to be useful for generating positive relationships between young students and the police, an outcome unrelated to any of DARE's stated objectives. To counter this problem, evidence of what works and what doesn't should be shared as widely as possible. If evaluation data are not collected and results are not disseminated, or if they are kept confidential to protect the political interests of individuals, we run the risk of "convenience" (self-interest) winning out. As the DARE example demonstrates, however, even widely accepted evidence of ineffectiveness may not be sufficient to counter purposes other than achievement of a program's objectives.

THE TASKS OF IMPLEMENTING A NEW INNOVATION

Reviewing the program or policy plan (Stage 7) involves putting into motion the program design (Stage 3) and the action plan (Stage 4), monitoring implementation (Stage 5), and, if appropriate, evaluating outcomes (Stage 6). Once evaluation data are analyzed, feedback is provided to all stakeholders, and the program should be thoroughly reassessed to determine where revisions are necessary. At the end of

the process, the change agent asks whether further adjustments are necessary to meet program objectives. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the program? Decisions may have to be made about whether the program should be continued, and whether it should receive further funding. Reassessment and review of the program or policy should occur periodically from this point on.

Initiating the Program/Policy Design

In Chapter 3, we examined how a program or policy is constructed. Every program or policy must have a clearly defined design that includes: targets (e.g., eligibility, numbers to be served, access, screening, intake), program staff or individuals responsible for implementing the program or policy (e.g., selection, training, duties), and program components or policy provisions (e.g., specific goods, services, opportunities, or interventions to be delivered). Initiating the design, then, requires doing everything that was previously specified. Together with the action plan, the design lays out the major tasks for implementation.

Initiating the Action Plan

In Chapter 4, you learned how to develop an action plan that specified the entire sequence of tasks that need to be completed in order to successfully launch or implement the program or policy. These included technical and interpersonal tasks (e.g., identifying and acquiring the necessary resources; locating office space and/or meeting space; hiring and training staff; designing client intake and reporting forms; purchasing equipment and supplies; setting dates and assigning responsibility for the completion of specific tasks). The action plan is, in essence, a "blueprint" explaining how to translate a vision of the program or policy into reality.

Like the director of an orchestra, the change agent must coordinate the program or policy activities of all the different individuals and groups associated with the program or policy. Managers must hire and train their staff; they must build good relations with potential referral sources (e.g., police, schools, probation); they must train staff to use required intake forms and keep client records; they must build good relations with citizens and businesses in the neighborhood; and they must provide regular reports of progress to their funding providers. Remember three guidelines to ensure smooth coordination: (1) maintain consistency between staff job descriptions and actual tasks, (2) maintain clear and frequent communication among staff members, and between staff and supervisors; and (3) keep an eye on the timeline: make sure that activities required for successful progression from one step to the next are carried out on time (e.g., make sure that staff are hired and trained by the dates specified in the action plan; make sure that all record-keeping forms are printed and procedures are clearly understood by staff).

Remember that some resistance is inevitable with the start-up of a new program or policy. Resistance may come from any of the participants involved: clients,

targets, or even the intervention's own staff (i.e., the action system). Resistance that appears should be dealt with fairly and seriously. Conflict is not something to be avoided at all costs. It may provide the opportunity to identify and resolve misunderstandings, and it may also point out difficulties in implementation that truly deserve attention.

Begin Monitoring Program/Policy Implementation

At Stage 5 (see Chapter 5), you laid out a plan for monitoring program or policy implementation. As program or policy operations begin, it is time to start monitoring. *Implementation* refers to the initiation, management, and administration of the action plan. This topic is so important that there is now a journal, *Implementation Science*, devoted to the topic.

Once the intervention actually begins, we want to minimize discrepancies between what was planned (i.e., the program or policy on paper) and what is actually done (i.e., the program or policy in action). *Monitoring* attempts to determine whether program/policy implementation is proceeding as planned. Monitoring is a process that attempts to identify any gaps between the program or policy on paper (design) and the program or policy in action (implementation).

For the target population, monitoring data should assess the following questions: What were the characteristics of the actual individuals targeted by the intervention? Were targets selected who were truly in need or at risk? Is the intervention meeting its specified criteria in terms of target eligibility (e.g., age, sex, income, region) and numbers to be served? Were proper recruiting, screening, and intake procedures followed? How were referrals made? For program components, monitoring data should answer the following questions: who did what to whom in what order, how much, and how often? Were there variations in service delivery or activities? Did different staff deliver programming in a different manner? Was there more than one program site or location, and if so, were program activities administered consistently across different sites? Make sure that monitoring data also provide information about service tasks and responsible authorities: Were proper staff or authorities identified? Did they fit the specified roles and job descriptions? Did they all receive the appropriate training? Did they understand their duties and perform them as expected?

Begin Evaluating and Providing Feedback to Users and Stakeholders

If any evaluation is to be useful, it should serve the information needs of the intervention and its stakeholders (see Chapter 1). Most notably, the program or policy's major stakeholders include its funding agency, but any intervention has multiple stakeholders such as the community, businesses, politicians, criminal justice agencies, volunteers, clients, and so on. The time spent previously (at Stage 1) identifying stakeholders should not be wasted. Evaluation (Stage 6) is a critical means

of demonstrating accountability, and hopefully effectiveness, to stakeholders. The change agent should now assign individual responsibility for packaging and communicating evaluation results to different users. If the results are to be useful, and used, one must create means of communication that intended audiences could understand and react to.

PLANNING TASKS FOR AN EXISTING PROGRAM OR POLICY

In reassessing an existing program or policy, we will want to ensure that planning tasks are continuing. After all, our experience with an innovation over time generates valuable information that can be used to improve the innovation or more effectively replicate it elsewhere. In the Introduction, we laid out the core of those planning tasks that are ongoing. First, we need to examine the goals and objectives in terms of whether they were realistic and whether we were able to measure the objectives in a way that is informative. If, for example, a program is attempting to increase employment among participants in a prisoner reentry program, and the objective is 100 percent employment within six months of admission, it may be that 100 percent employment is overly ambitious.

Another critical question is whether there is ongoing reassessment, learning, and revision of the program design (this step is less relevant in the case of policy). Evaluations of intermediate and long-term outcomes should be ongoing. After all, client turnover, staff turnover, and changes in the larger system may affect the delivery of program services. We should never assume that because a program was evaluated once, it will be effective forever. Evaluation is also a tool for continuous program development.

Changes in the environment surrounding an intervention may require a program or policy to change—to adapt. If a city that had implemented a community policing strategy is encountering rapid gentrification of an area, the police will need to adapt both to the changing population of that area and to pressures put on areas where poorer citizens are relocating. Expectations of and attitudes toward the police will be quite different in the gentrified area compared to the situation that had existed in the past. In addition, the area to which lower-income residents are being displaced may become less stable, producing higher levels of conflict among neighbors.

Changes to a program design, then, are likely as time passes. Both knowledge development and changes in needs and demands of the local environment make it necessary to revisit the design of a program or policy, consider changes to the action plan, improve monitoring methods, and upgrade evaluation procedures.

CONCLUSION

Implementation is an ongoing process of adaptation, negotiation, and communication. In order to maximize the mutual fit between a program or policy and the

environment within which it is initiated and allowed to develop, both the innovation and the environment must change.

At this point, we hope that you have a good idea of the kind of analyses and kind of questions we need to ask to figure out what works to reduce or prevent any specific problem. We have argued throughout this book that many criminal justice interventions fall short of their goals because of poor planning, poor implementation, and poor evaluation. What we truly need is not *more* programs and policies, or *new* programs and policies, per se: we need *better* programs and policies. We need a better understanding of planned change to improve the effectiveness of criminal justice interventions. Such change is ubiquitous in governmental, community, private, and nonprofit agencies. This book has attempted to provide a systematic, seven-stage framework for analyzing and improving existing interventions, but also for planning new ones so as to maximize chances of success. Major steps of analysis were summarized in Table I.1 and Table I.2.

Which of the following interventions are effective? How would you know, or how would you find out?

- Prisoner reentry initiatives and programs, including prison-based drug treatment and community aftercare, vocational and basic education, post-release employment assistance, and reentry courts that provide assessment and treatment services in conjunction with traditional criminal sanctions.
- Drug Awareness Resistance Education (DARE) for elementary, middle, and high school students.
- Cease Fire programs, designed to reduce gang violence.
- Shelters, counseling, and victim assistance for abused women.
- Mandatory arrest policies for suspected wife abusers.
- Juvenile waiver laws (serious juvenile offenses may be transferred to adult courts, or automatically tried as adult offenses).

We reiterate a few major propositions to conclude this endeavor. First, we need a systematic plan for any change effort. Interventions, both new and old, need to be subjected to thorough scrutiny and analysis. Successful interventions are a product of hard work, careful planning, and a willingness to revise where necessary.

Second, good intentions are rarely sufficient to bring about successful change. Beware of the "activist bias" (Sieber, 1981), by which well-intentioned advocates of change assume that they already know what the problem is and what is needed. Such advocates may insist that we desist all this prolonged planning and simply "get on with it." The perils of unplanned or poorly planned change should by now be obvious: expensive, poorly articulated, poorly implemented, ineffective programs and policies that are unable to successfully compete for scarce funds.

Third, program or policy planning is an interactive and ongoing process. It is crucial to review and modify planning (where needed) at each stage of the analysis. This takes time, but it is time well spent.

Fourth, a rational planning approach provides a framework for developing logical and effective programs and policies. The default (all too commonly) is to use unarticulated and untested assumptions to guide planning. Fifth, participation of and communication with all key actors, or stakeholders (e.g., program staff, clients, individuals or agencies whose cooperation is needed, funding sources, citizens affected by the intervention, elected representatives), throughout the change process are keys to success. While careful planning and analysis cannot guarantee success, it will increase the probability of success. And finally, in order to sustain a program over time, formal procedures must be created and staff training must be continuous.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why should intervention planning and evaluation occur on a regular basis? Why is it necessary to continually revise and reassess?
2. What can be done to increase the chances that an innovation will succeed? What factors increase the chances of failure?
3. What steps (activities) are involved in "initiating the program or policy plan"?
4. What are some ways that stakeholder or constituent support can be maintained after a program or policy is implemented?
5. Why do programs continue to change even after they are implemented?
6. How can sustainment of a program over time be assured?
7. What is mutual adaptation, and why is it important? Give an example.
8. Why might a program that is known not to work continue to receive support?
9. How can you tell when a program or policy is ready to be evaluated?

Case Study 7.1 Implementation Woes: Providing Residential Substance Abuse Treatment (RSAT) for Inmates in State Prisons

Instructions: *First read the background below, and then read the article that follows. Answer the question at the end of the case study.*

"The best-laid schemes o' mice and men gang aft agley. . . ." Scottish poet Robbie Burns said it well. No matter how carefully "wee timorous beasties," or humans, plan for the future, things never work out exactly as planned. Even when planned change is successful, it may not be permanent. Why not, you may ask? People who play critical roles (stakeholders), including leadership roles, come and go over time, initial enthusiasm abates, the political environment changes, the priority assigned to a specific public problem shifts, and the actual change that resulted may not have been sufficiently dramatic to maintain or recruit new support. Planned change is dynamic, like the problems it seeks to address. The need for substance abuse treatment among prison inmates is widely accepted. Developing effective methods to address those needs is quite another matter. The following case study summarizes some of the implementation problems that were faced by a federally sponsored initiative known as the Residential Substance Abuse Treatment (RSAT) Program (Harrison & Martin, 2003).

Background

The RSAT Program was created as part of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994 to meet the needs of state correctional systems for resources to address a growing problem. Through the act, state authorities gained access to funds, technical assistance, and a network of innovators that could help them build their own local treatment programs. Every state took advantage of these funds, and by March of 2001, more than 2,000 RSAT programs were involved in providing services to adult inmates and parolees, as well as juvenile offenders.

With so many programs in place, the need to learn about the effectiveness of different treatment approaches was immense. Consequently, the federal government sponsored a national evaluation program. From a monitoring perspective, large numbers of inmates and parolees were receiving treatment, but to learn about what works takes time. In the meanwhile, information regarding implementation was assembled and became part of the strategy for continued program development. Some of the major implementation difficulties encountered by RSAT programs are summarized below.

Program Difficulties

The most severe problems reported by state officials involved locating or constructing appropriate facilities, recruiting trained treatment staff, and contracting with treatment providers under lengthy or complex bidding and proposal processes. More than half (53 percent) reported