

Day 7: Policy Analysis in Principle

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Road map

- Teams and Questions
- The Eightfold Path to More Effective Problem Solving

Teams and Questions

Eightfold Path

- 1 Define the Problem
- 2 Assemble Some Evidence
- 3 Construct the Alternatives
- 4 Select Criteria
- 5 Project the Outcomes
- 6 Confront the Trade-Offs
- 7 Decide!
- 8 Tell Your Story

1. Define the Problem

- Stories of excess/deficit (increase and decline)
- Identify market and/or governmental failures
- Quantify, if possible (helps later for evaluation)
- Identify the causal chain (as many links as possible)
- Look for missed opportunities
- Iterate!

Running Example

Problem: Large number of blighted properties in Harrisburg



Figure: Griffaton 2017

2. Assemble Some Evidence

- Two primary activities: Think and hustle data
- Data \longrightarrow Information (meaning) \longrightarrow Evidence (affects beliefs)
- Sources:
 - Data
 - Academic literature
 - Best practices
 - Analogies (Other cities)

2. Assemble Some Evidence

What sources of evidence?



Figure: Griffaton 2017

3. Construct the Alternatives

- Make the options mutually exclusive (variants come later)
- Start wide, then narrow
- Think outside the box
- Bring back the causal model

3. Construct Alternatives

Alternatives? Causal model?



Figure: Griffaton 2017

4. Select Criteria

- Used to evaluate expected outcomes, not alternatives
- Common evaluative criteria:
 - Timeline (5-10 years)
 - Efficiency
 - Equality, equity, fairness, justice
 - Freedom community
 - Procedural fairness (process)
- For us, political process determines values

4. Select criteria

- Practical criteria:
 - Legality
 - Political acceptability
 - Administrative robustness
 - Political sustainability
- Cannot use them all, need to chose

4 Select Criteria

What criteria?



Figure: Griffaton 2017

5. Project the Outcomes

- Toughest step
- Need to figure out how to project into future
- Start with base case (status quo?)
- Break-even analysis
- Scenario-out possible failures
- Consider undesirable side-effects
- Put yourself in shoes of the effected

5. Project the Outcomes

Let's project one outcome, possible failures, side effects, and feelings of Harrisburg residents



Figure: Griffaton 2017

6. Confront the Trade-Offs

- Comparing outcomes, not alternatives
- Try to find common metric (often \$)
- (Informed) Intuition is okay!

6. Confront the Trade-Offs

How can we possibly compare outcomes?



Figure: Griffaton 2017

7. Decide!

- Focus, narrow, deepen, decide
- Consider the politics
- Why has the solution not been done yet? (\$20 bill test)

7. Decide!

Why has the solution not been done yet?



Figure: Griffaton 2017

8. Tell Your Story

- We will cover this next week

Questions?