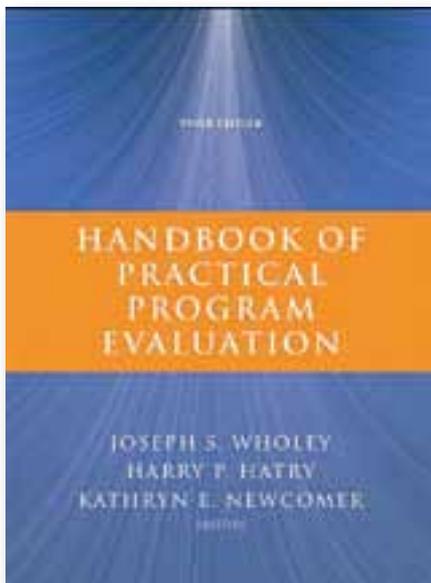


Measuring Nonprofit Performance

Looking for a way to assess program results? You'll find what you need in these books.

By Terrence Fernsler



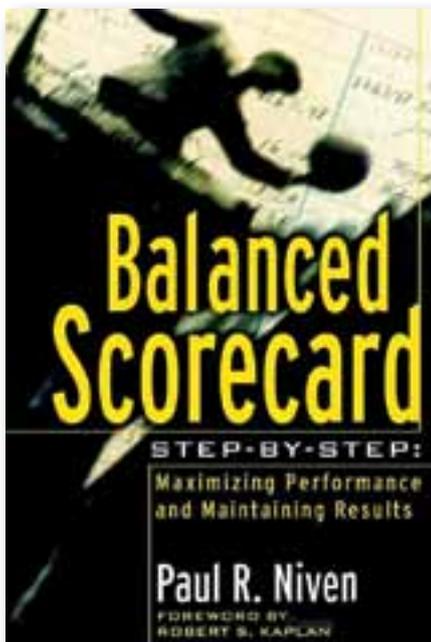
Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation, edited by Joseph S. Wholey, Henry P. Hatry, and Kathryn E. Newcomer. 752 pages. Hardcover. Jossey-Bass, joseybas.com.

Program evaluation provides tools you can use to improve performance. This comprehensive guidebook describes, in nontechnical terms, the advantages and drawbacks of such tools.

“Which method is most appropriate for the situation?”

Before undertaking an evaluation, you should analyze your programs and the environment in which they operate. The authors explain ways to do so and offer guidance in designing ongoing monitoring systems. They also detail how to interpret results and deliver the findings to policymakers, managers, and other stakeholders. They specifically discuss how evaluation can be most useful to nonprofit organizations.

Evaluating programs is necessary to ensure the efficient use of resources. This handbook elucidates a wide variety of ways to evaluate programs — and clarifies which method is most appropriate for any given situation. 



Balanced Scorecard Step-By-Step for Government and Nonprofit Agencies, by Paul R. Niven. 384 pages. Hardcover. Wiley, wiley.com.

Although it arose out of for-profit management practices, the Balanced Scorecard is also a valuable performance measure for nonprofits, as this book attests. The Balanced Scorecard evaluates four main criteria — employee learning and growth, financial indicators, internal processes, and customer value. Input, output, and outcome measures can all be used in each of the four categories.

The Balanced Scorecard gauges actual program results. It can help you demonstrate accountability, attract resources, focus on strategy, produce information (not just data), drive change, and inspire trust. The author of this useful book urges every person in an organization to develop a few key

“The Balanced Scorecard evaluates four main criteria.”

measures to show how they contribute to the overall goals and mission.

With a Balanced Scorecard in place, you can be sure that resource allocation is based on strategic importance rather than emotion. This performance measure can help organizations that seem to have no focus realize their purpose and evaluate their strategies in meaningful ways. 

Terrence Fernsler has been a nonprofit professional for over 30 years and is currently a candidate for a Master's in Nonprofit Leadership degree at Seattle University.