

Event Evaluation

Instructor's Manual

4: A Model of the Evaluation Process

This is the instructor's manual produced to accompany the book *Event Evaluation: Theory and Methods for Events and Tourism*, by Donald Getz, 2018, published by Goodfellow Publishers Ltd.

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Lecture 7

4.1 Introduction (p.37)

“In this chapter a general model of the evaluation process is discussed, with a focus on issues and challenges for event and tourism evaluators. This is not about how to plan or design an evaluation project (the subject of the ensuing chapter) but the main things evaluators have to consider before even beginning an evaluation: paradigms and theories, the “why evaluate?” question, what to evaluate, and ultimate uses of evaluations. ‘Measures’ and ‘methods’ are illustrated in the model but are discussed more fully in the next chapter.”

4.2 A model of the evaluation process (p. 37)

Figure 4.1 (p.38) illustrates the discussion in this chapter. To a certain extent these considerations are hierarchical, starting with paradigms and theories and ending with ultimate uses, but really these elements should all be considered as context for any evaluation challenge or project - and that reflects systematic thinking as well. When we get to designing an evaluation project, and using a logic model, these considerations have either already been made, or they suddenly need to be.

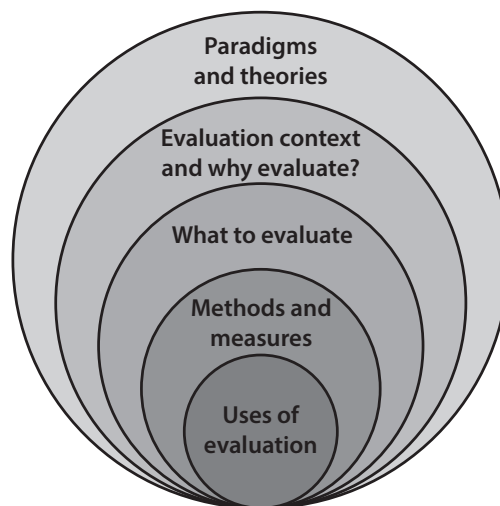


Figure 4.1: Major considerations in the evaluation process

4.3 Evaluation paradigms (p. 38)

Paradigms, theories, philosophy, epistemology, ontology methodology and methods! If learners can sort these all out they are halfway home. Often that is left to graduate seminars, but even undergraduates and practitioners need some basic understanding of where knowledge comes from, how it is validated within disciplines (or by stakeholders), and how it can be used.

This is a key definition in the book:

“Paradigms can be thought of as a guiding model, and in science they are a set of concepts, theories, research methods, postulates, and standards that define legitimate research. As such, they are open to debate and preference. As already noted, most

mainstream evaluations are in the positivistic paradigm, using experiments, quantitative methods and searching for the truth or cause and effect relationships.

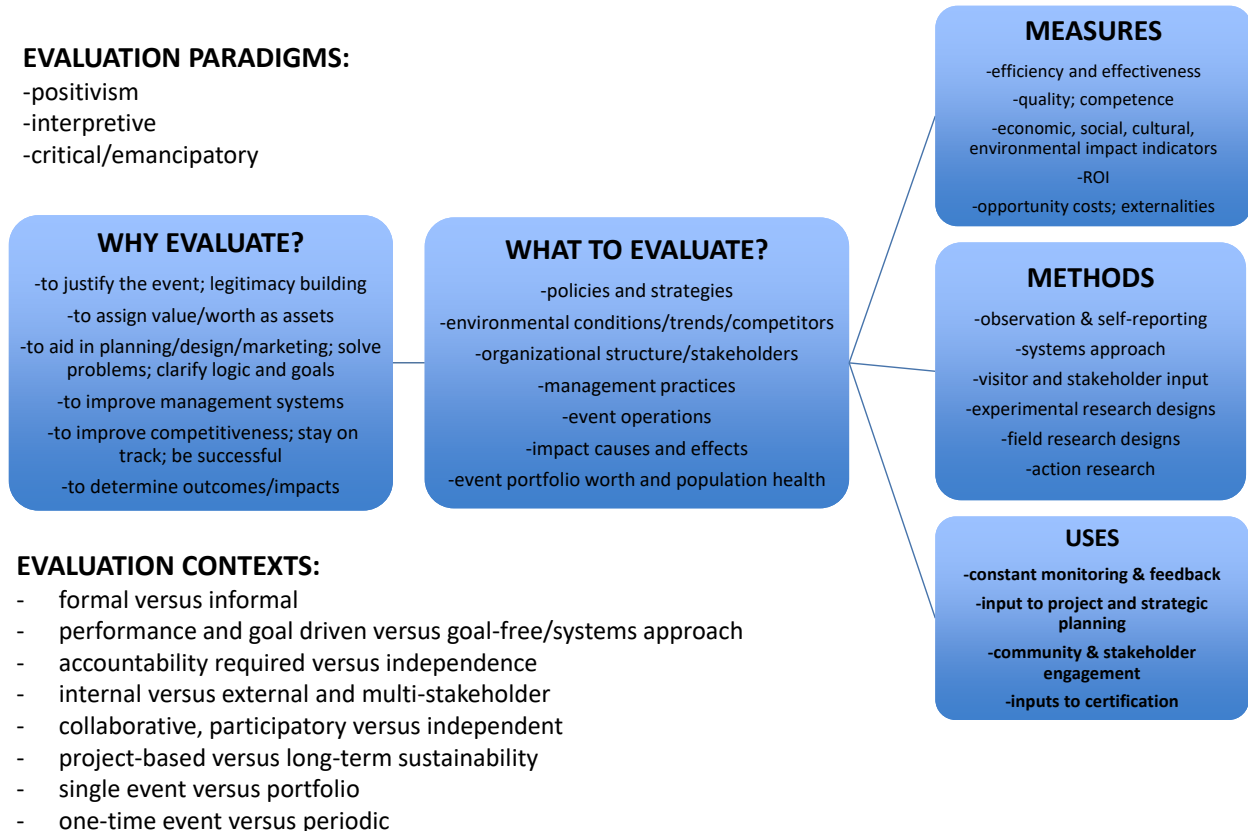
In events and tourism we see this positivism mostly in economic impact studies, but also in technical evaluations such as visitor surveys (factual knowledge of their motivation, activities and satisfaction being of importance), human resources where performance is measured on behaviourally anchored scales, or goal-attainment evaluations in which the evidence consists of quantified or “hard facts” such as one finds in post-event financial accounts.

Many event evaluations, however, will require an interpretivist paradigm, because there is no single truth. Participatory evaluations fall into this category, with users and other stakeholders determining the goals and indicators (at a planning stage) and interpreting the veracity and usefulness of the ultimate results from each of their perspectives.

Exercise:

Discuss paradigms in the context of value perspectives. Who wants, or naturally takes the positivistic route to evaluation, and who might prefer an interpretivist approach? Under what circumstances would an emancipatory/empowerment approach be taken in evaluation - or in event planning? The underlying values or belief systems of some events shine through clearly in their goals and programming, but often they are hidden. What exactly should you look for?

Here is an extra diagram, from the Brown et al. paper cited earlier. It pulls the material together in a kind of logical thought process.



Source: Brown, S., Getz, D., Petterson, R. and Wallstam, M. (2015). Event evaluation: definitions, concepts and a state of the art review, *International Journal of Event and Festival Management*, 6(2), 135-157.

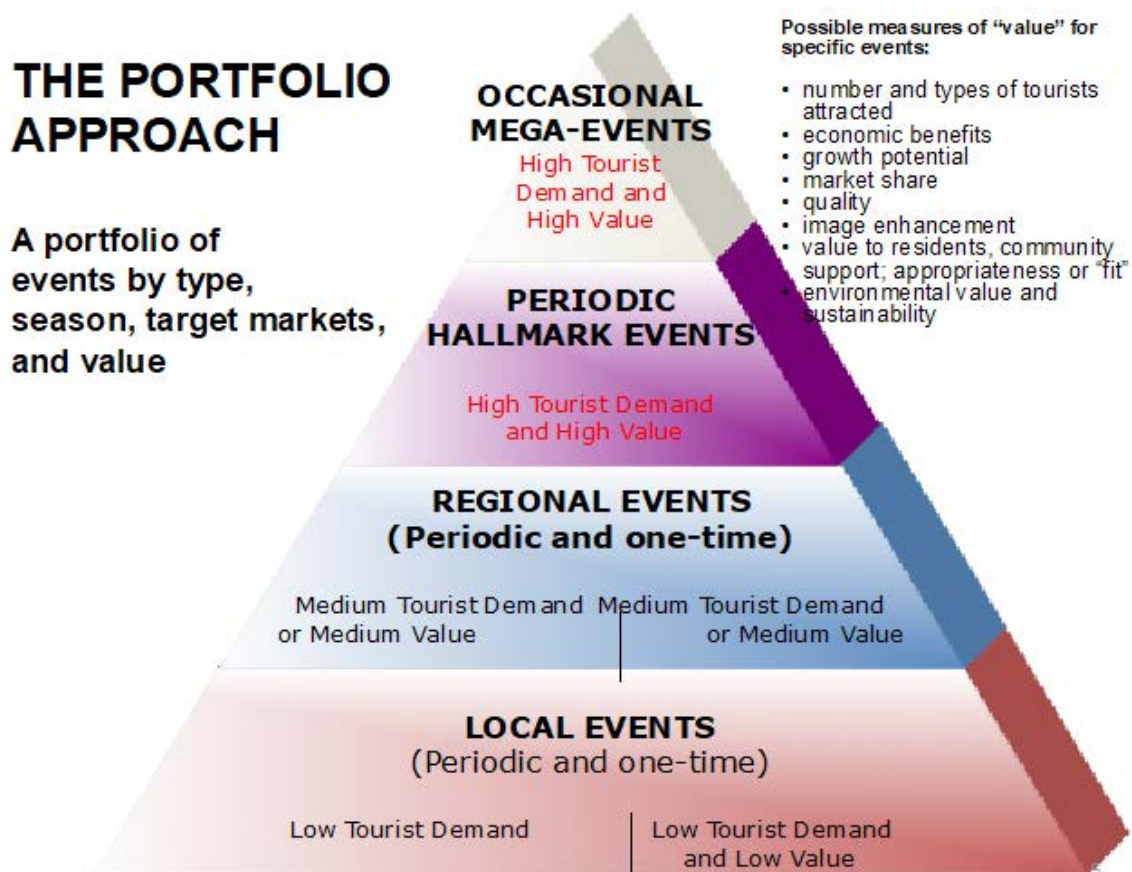
Lecture 8

4.4 Evaluation contexts – why evaluate? (P. 40)

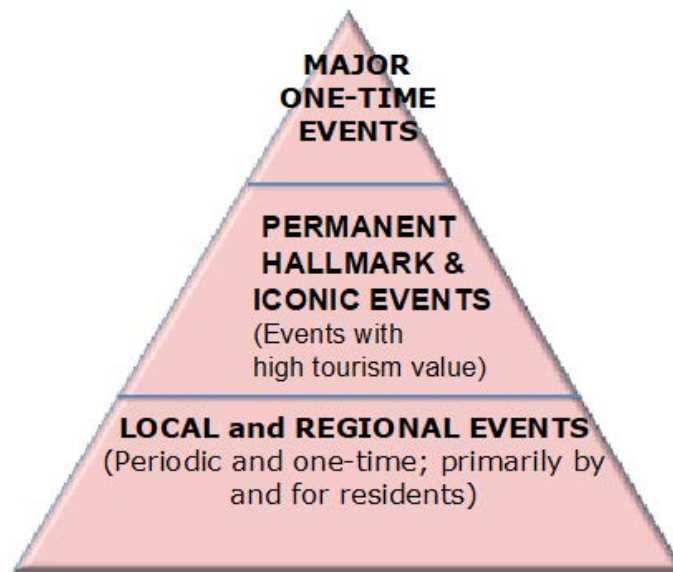
The bullet points on p. 40 contain key terms that have been, or will be defined. We already considered external versus internal evaluations, now its important to look at formal versus informal. Judgments based on experience or opinion are commonplace and often necessary, and these are informal. “Formative, process and summative” are defined and discussed later. The key point is that an evaluation or judgment is never made without context that can be analysed.

Some thought is given in this section to event portfolios and their evaluation, a topic of increasing interest to tourism and other policy domains wherein multiple events are created or supported. They are managed to various degrees, ranging from simple co-ordination to outright ownership and production. Below is my original portfolio model, designed from a tourism perspective, then a second, more recent and unpublished model that favours a community-oriented events portfolio. Note the measures of value.

A community-oriented events portfolio will likely have much less emphasis on mega-events and bidding, and more on permanent events that meet community needs as well as (in some cases) tourism strategy. Hallmark events are traditions that must be preserved and are often co-branded with the destination, while Iconic events hold symbolic value and are aimed at special-interest groups. There is a much more detailed examination of portfolios in Event Tourism.



The Portfolio Approach: Source: Getz, D. (1997; p.113). *Event Management and Event Tourism*. N.Y: Cognizant Communication Corp.



Revised Event Portfolio Model: (B: Community orientation). D. Getz, 2016.

4.5 Why evaluate? (P.42)

This should already be clear to readers, but it will be useful to repeat the reasons for evaluation related to our definitions: to assign value, and the technical reasons. Context will also help answer the question, as discussed above.

4.6 What to evaluate (p.42)

Here is where formative, summative and process evaluations are explained. Some experts do not like these terms, as they imply a rigid typology that in practice might not exist. Within a strategic planning context, for example, all three are brought to bear.

4.5.1 Formative evaluation (p.43)

Is it needed and feasible are the two initial questions to ask for an event or project, then how should it be designed?

4.5.2 Process evaluation (p. 43)

Fixing problems and making improvements “on the go” is a necessary event-management responsibility. But this also applies to long-term policy or programme implementation, including the management of event portfolios.

4.5.3 Summative evaluation (outputs, outcomes and impacts) (p.44)

Demonstrating goal attainment and identifying and analysing impacts are complex tasks for expert evaluators. The term “externalities” is mentioned here, being the costs or other impacts experienced by others and not accounted for in an event’s budget or reports. Looking for externalities is something evaluators often miss because of the tunnel vision imposed by the goal-attainment model of planning and evaluation - we deal with

this later.

Exercise:

In small groups develop a feasibility study (first the outline with sub-headings, then a flow chart or critical path if possible, to show the process) for proposed event (any type). Address specific questions: is it needed? is there economic demand? how much will it cost and where does the money come from? who will benefit or pay? what marketing research do we need to do? whose input is desirable or necessary? What is the best design/programme and location/site? how will the final decision be made?

4.7 Uses (P.45)

No matter the stated purpose, evaluations often get buried or misused. As indicated in the bullet points, evaluators have to take steps to ensure appropriate use of their work.

Tourism-specific considerations start on p.46. These are in addition to the earlier discussion of event portfolios. A key point will always be the instrumentalist nature of event tourism for destinations as it concerns the exploitation of events for economic goals, but

from the traveller's perspective it is a form of leisure.

Questions

Q: Define "paradigm" and explain the meanings and importance of these three paradigms for evaluation: positivistic; interpretive; critical/emancipatory).

A: The key points are not the definitions but in explaining how and why positivism differs from the others paradigms (and related evaluation models and methods, as discussed later). Stakeholder or value perspectives should be mentioned, such as the propensity of artists and art lovers to prefer an interpretivist, qualitative, approach to evaluation with emphasis on intrinsic worth.

Q: Explain these major evaluation contexts: formal versus informal, and internal versus external, in terms of the evaluator's roles and challenges.

A: Formal evaluation takes the form of a project or at least a structured report, while informal evaluation goes on all the time - as reflected in judgments and opinions, or biased decisions. A professional evaluator might have to do informal evaluations using information at hand, but of course while thinking systematically.

Q: What is different about event evaluation in a tourism context?

A: Mention the instrumentalist nature of event tourism, with emphasis on economic development and place marketing.

Q: Specify the key questions to be asked on each of formative, process and summative evaluation for events.

A: The suggested exercise related to formative evaluation, above, provides specific questions.

Q: In the context of both systems thinking and summative evaluation, explain the differences between outputs and outcomes.

A: In this book "output" refers to intended consequences, while "outcomes" has a meaning synonymous with "impacts". Usually a single event does not set long-term goals for change, although they might be part of a process or portfolio with such aims.

Q: What can evaluators do to ensure the appropriate use of their work?

A: see p. 45 in the text for specific points.

Essay-Style

Q: Discuss the philosophical and ethical issues involved in the three evaluation paradigms, with reference to planned events.

A: This is a difficult question, requiring first an explanation of the meanings of the three paradigms, then discussion of issues that require some lateral thinking, and sources elsewhere in the text. The philosophical issues pertain to who values events, and why, which brings in intrinsic versus extrinsic approaches, political ideology and religious beliefs or personal morality. What possible reason could a person or group have, for example, for claiming that the arts or sports are inherently good and no measure of event impacts is required to justify government support? As to ethics, each paradigm imposes certain requirements on the evaluator. In the positivistic paradigm the evaluator looks for the truth, for cause and effect, and that might result in an experimental approach that excludes stakeholder opinions. In an emancipatory paradigm the evaluator might be part of a movement to change society, and that entails some soul-searching on whose interests are being included or excluded.

Q: Explain formative, process and summative evaluation and their relevance to (a) starting a new event and (b) planning for event tourism in a city.

A: The essay should explain each of the stages of evaluation and what in general each includes, then deal with the two applications. For starting a new event it might seem that only the formative stage is required to determine need, feasibility, and make a design, but it is always wise at the planning stage to determine how process evaluation will occur (during the event) and what the goals are for summative evaluators to investigate. Planning event tourism for a city is much more complex and will require constant monitoring, inputs from stakeholders and feedback - all of which are formative, no matter when they occur. There is no final stage to an on-going programme or strategy, but impacts/outcomes must be investigated regularly. Process evaluation consists of monitoring plus dealing with issues as they arise, such as bad publicity. In event tourism, the three stages are blurred.